THE SPATIALISATION STRUGGLE: THE HERITAGE OF OPEN SPACES IN BAGHDAD

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This article explores the significance of open space to the formation of local culture and identity. Rejecting any absolute categorisation of open-public and closed-private space, the essay attempts to redefine open space, in order to make it more suitable to specific case studies outside the western democratic discourse within which it is often used. Space is a process, shaping the world around it as much as it is shaped by its own circumstances. This also implies that the experience of space is highly pluralistic, a notion made exceedingly clear in the changing structure and meaning of space throughout Baghdad's history.
In light of recent crises in Baghdad the discussion of its spaces has become critical. By analysing the evolution of Baghdad from a spatial perspective, I will explore how embodied experiences interact with the cognitive readings of space within the case of Baghdad. I aim to show the significance of open space to the self-identification of an urban population. This to suggest its immense value to the improvement of cultural heritage management, especially in conflict areas.

Keywords: Baghdad, Open Space, Urban Planning, Heritage, Urban History

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Introduction

In the sky
The poles bow,
searching for what deserves illumination,
But the streets are overcrowded
With void.
Sinan Antoon (1989, cited in Snir 2013, p.304)

Not just events, people and discourses define the understanding we have of an era and a place, but also its architecture and monumental art. This is especially the case in urban environments, spaces that easily become focal points of national and international politics, economy and culture. For example, Rome, the eternal city, studied by artists, antiquarians and archaeologists for centuries, is not just the city of emperors, but also of their palaces, it is a city of gladiators, but also that of the Colosseum. Paris is as much defined by the Revolution as by the Eiffel Tower in popular thought. Built space dominates the historical narratives of these cities. The structures of cities come to synecdochically represent their identities, characters and developments. While these features remain the focus of archaeological investigation and heritage management, they form the foundations for our characterisation of the past and its impact on present identity.

Useful as such elements are, their hegemony over our interpretive capacity has developed at the expense of other forms of evidence requiring different processes of investigation. While architects construct and arrange these monuments, they also design the spaces in and around which they are constructed. Urban theory now includes a strong body of literature on the importance of public spaces, not just buildings or artworks, as defining areas within a city scape (Carr *et al.*, 1992; Low & Smith, 2013). Places like Tiananmen Square, Constantinople's hippodrome or Constitution Avenue, for example are the locations for some of history's most memorable moments. However, the term public space implies the opposite of private space, a division that incorporates notions of accessibility and a particular social function in defining public authority. A number of spaces that are part of the urban realm do not necessarily adhere to such definitions, these are open spaces. This concept includes subtle spaces, such as spaces between houses, courtyards, intersections and everyday walkways. Such "in-between spaces" have long been regarded as blank spaces. However, together they form part of the urban fabric and thus have the potential to alter the lived experience of the city.

Analysing these spaces and the process by which they are made into places of meaning and action is something that is essential to understanding how a particular city functions and how it compares to other urban environments. This understanding is essential to how we

implement conservation and development strategies, and how we perceive urban heritage. If open spaces can become places of identity, then they equally need to be considered within heritage planning. The method of isolating buildings and areas to be demolished or preserved is no longer appropriate. In order to ensure the life of these structures and spaces they must remain part of their surroundings and included in the activities of the people living within them. This inclusion must occur in a way that acknowledges their dynamism as potential areas of passage and movement.

This paper will draw on the case study of Baghdad to demonstrate the significance of open space within the historical fabric of the city and the self-identification of its population through heritage and narrative. Baghdad's case is particularly acute due to its long history of politically oriented restructuring of space, in particular its recent history of political unrest and spatial upheaval (Marozzi, 2014). Until October 2015 Baghdad was still divided into green and red zones, cutting lines of conflict into the cityscape (Chandrasekaran, 2006). While not entirely unique in urban history, just think of the Berlin wall of the later twentieth century or the Parisian barricades of the French revolution, the current conflict has introduced novel elements. The violent targeting of heritage sites and the looting of cultural materials does make a heritage plan for the city more pressing. By analysing the long history of urban development in Baghdad through open space, and comparing it to other examples, this study explores the potential of open spaces to engender both feelings of exclusion and belonging, movement and confinement, thereby contributing to an under-researched area in heritage planning.

The Founding of Baghdad

The spatial history of Baghdad is a difficult one to write. Archaeological evidence for early inhabitation of the site is scanty at best and cannot aid this interpretation. The only account of archaeological discovery relating to the early city is of Sir H. Rawlinson uncovering an mudbrick embankment, dating from the time of Nebuchadnezzar II, along the western bank of the Tigris in 1848 (Levy, 2011, p.6). However, no other discoveries have been made in this area. Rapid urban development, environmental change and repeated invasion have led to the destruction of much of Baghdad's early architecture. Even later medieval remains of Baghdad are uncommon, with only the odd mosque or madrassa fragment remaining.[1] Maps of the early city (Figure 1) are reconstructions based on historical narratives of the early city combined with the city's modern appearance and its surrounding topography. The course of the Tigris has also changed since the city's foundation, adding an additional challenge to such reconstruction projects (Ahola & Osti, 2013, p.221).

[1] For example, the monumental entranceway to the Mirjaniya Madreassa built in 1357/758.

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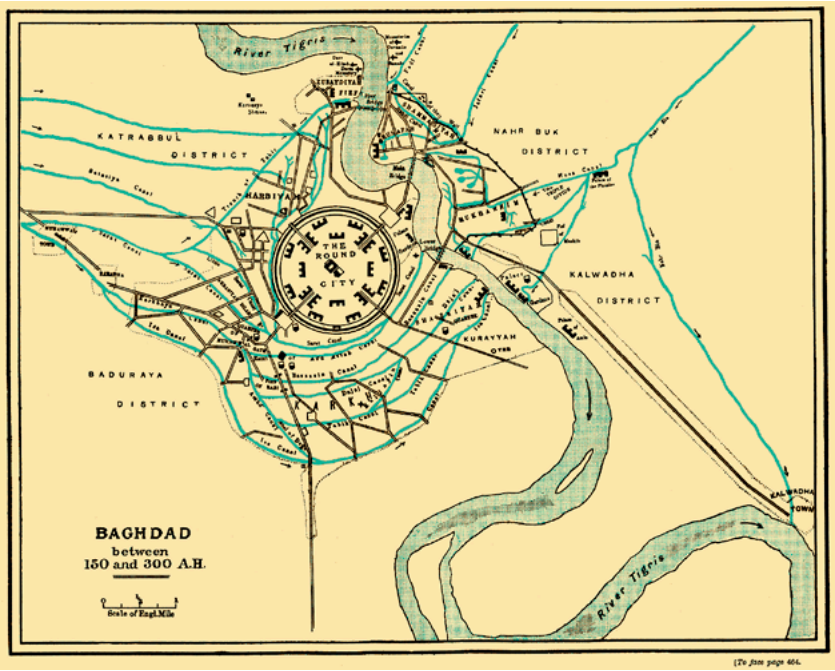

Figure 1: The Round City of Baghdad soon after its founding. Source: William Muir (1883). Creative Commons (Mark 1.0 (PD-old-100)).

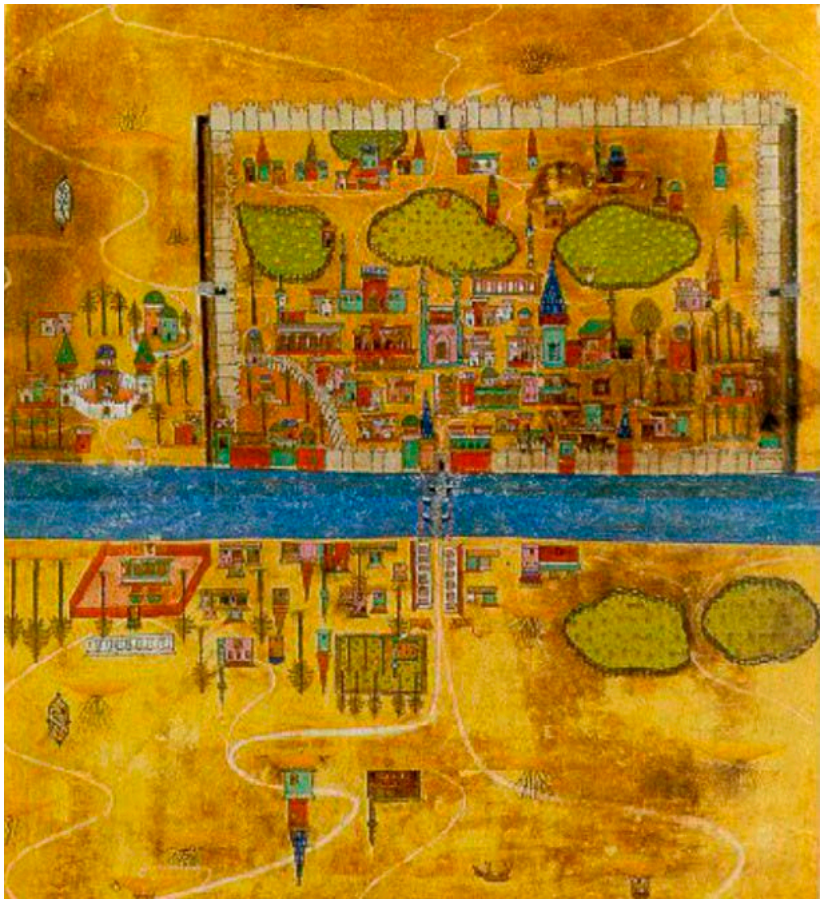

Figure 2: Medieval Baghdad. Source: Created in the 16th Century by Matrakçi Nasuh. Bilkent University. Creative Commons (Mark 1.0 (PD-Turkey)).

Most of the information available is cobbled together from a series of local histories, poetry, illuminations, stylised maps (Figure 2), collections of folk tales and later travel writing. The difficulty of interpreting these sources is shown in the comparison of the work of early twentieth century scholars Louis Massignon (1910) and Guy LeStrange (1900). Both attempted to recreate the conditions of early Baghdad based on local literary accounts and both developed very different interpretations of its development and layout (Lassner, 1966). The history of Baghdad is one that has been written time and time again by a wide assortment of people writing in different periods with various motives, so unsurprisingly each account focuses on different elements. A number of these accounts feature stories about the founding of the Round City, the legendary capital of the Abbasid Caliph Al-Mansur. While these early histories were clearly poeticised, written with the flair of classical panegyrics or Arabic *fada'il*s, they cannot simply be dismissed. They contain elements of truth that can give indications of early urban planning methods; one example of this is Al-Tabari's telling of the origins of Baghdad in the year of its construction 762 CE (Al-Tabari, 1989-1999, XXVIII, 276) (Figure 1).

His story is centred on the character of the Abbasid caliph Al-Mansur and his intimate involvement in the planning of the original Round City or City of Peace on the West bank of the Tigris River (Antrim, 2012, pp.33-60). He describes Al-Mansur obtaining divine approval for the location of his new city and its structures, a custom with a long tradition in the region that can be traced back to the foundation inscriptions of pre-Islamic rulers.[2] Unless the city and its various divisions and structures were approved by a deity, they could not be assured protection. Al-Mansur then commanded that an outline of his new city be drawn in ashes so he could walk through it and assess its design. Next he ordered that cotton seed be placed along the outline, covered in oil and lit on fire, so he could have a better impression of the arrangement of the city's walls. The tale is a popular trope among writers and may indicate something of the power and influence of the city. While these early histories often focussed less on urban development and more on the glorification of singular historical figures, political or religious rulers, and their great deeds, they still contain interesting details about life in early Islamic Baghdad (Zahm, 1922, p.411).[3] The history of Al-Tabari in particular indicated what urban planning ideals were at the time – the importance of circularity, order and clarity – while also indicating the real-world effects that this new establishment had upon the wider realm.

[2] For an example of this see the Ashurbanipal and Cyrus Cylinder found in Babylon or Arrian's account of Alexander's founding of Alexandria.

[3] There are scholars who would disagree with this. For example, Lassner (1968) argued for a more intimate involvement of the Caliph in the planning of the city, making him the head draftsman of the project.

This narrative shows that from its very beginnings Baghdad was conceived as a city of controlled spaces and as a new settlement on virgin ground, 'an artificial construct' (Ager & Faber, 2013, p.167). Though it is no longer assumed that the city was a complete new foundation, as archaeological finds have been excavated from an earlier settlement, Baghdad does not fit the general trend of an Islamic city evolving from a temporary military camp to a permanent urban centre (Lassner, 1968, p.24). It was conceptualised as a circle mirroring a long tradition of ideal cities, including those of Aristotle and Vitruvius (Figure 3), their circularity suggesting ideas of equidistance, unity, purity and eternity. In the specific case of Baghdad, it is influenced by pre-Islamic practice cosmology through its resemblance to Assyrian military camps, Sasanian royal cities and central Asian nomadic settlements, as well as to Islamic cosmology in its reference to God's creation of the world, and the paradise of the afterlife (Negoita, 2011, p.113). The city as described was a microcosm of the Abbasid Empire, a vision of its social ideals, ideals that include the absolute authority of the Caliph. This is displayed not only by the prominence of the Caliph's palace and the grand mosque in the centre of the city, but also its equidistance from all sections of the round city (Al-Bagdadi, 1904, p.104). The sectors, divided according to ethnic groups, could thus be centrally supervised. The strict policing of the streets, the removal of market areas from the *rabah* or public square, and the privatisation of much of the central plaza ensured that people understood the city's social hierarchy.

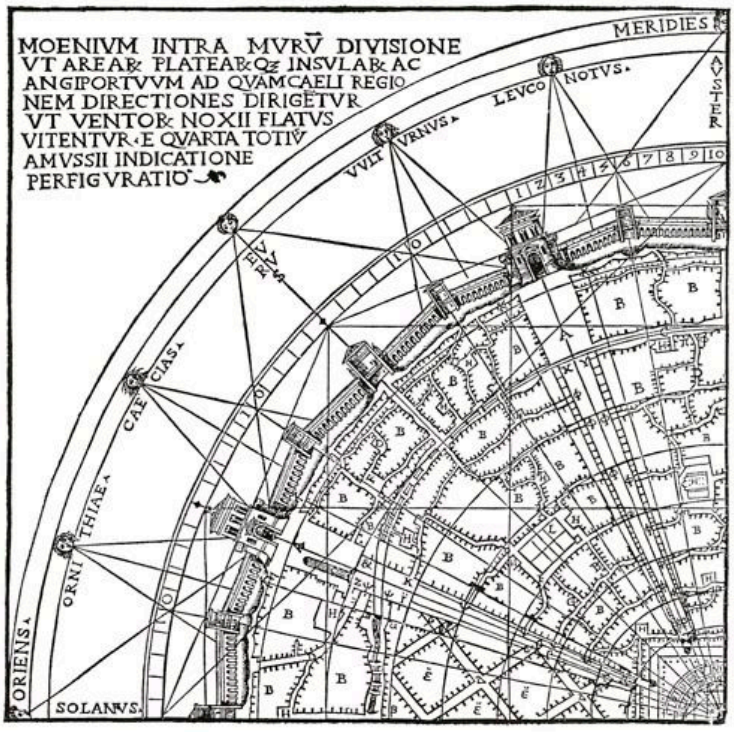

Figure 3: *Vitruvius' Design of a City Source: Cesare di Lorenzo Cesariano (1521). Creative Commons. (Mark 1.0 (PD-old-70)).*

These elements are all reminiscent of Arrian's account of Alexander's design of Alexandria (Arrian, 2004, III, 3, 1-5). Alexandria was also a city predated by other settlements, most prominently Rhakotis, though the new city, like Baghdad was a new foundation. Arrian describes Alexander laying out the city walls with grain in a typical Hypocratean grid plan. A layout that was ordered with space being made for Alexander's own royal housing as well as religious structures and quarters for various ethno-religious groups. It was also a highly prosperous city, functioning as an economic, cultural and political hub. Much like Baghdad it was built along various trade routes in an area with access to water and a good climate. In contrast to Baghdad however, history has left us with some archaeological remains of the city, in the harbour area, though the rest of the urban centre is superseded by the modern city. The similarities between the two foundation stories show the significance throughout history of not just political but also spatial manifestations of rule, and what better to show a ruler's power than the radical alteration of a landscape through the foundation of an elaborately planned capital city.

From Medieval to Modern Baghdad

The foundation stories show that Baghdad was not just another Arab camp that gradually became more permanent as the Islamic conquest fell to the past. However, such a strictly planned and conscribed capital was not able to support a rapidly expanding population and trade network (Bosworth, 2007, p.33). Beyond its foundation, accounts of Baghdad's spatial development are drawn from a variety of sources including poetry, histories, biographical dictionaries, government manuals, religious accounts and iconographic references.[4] The medieval periods still feature most strongly in most modern imaginings of the city. This has much to do with the prominence of the 'Tales of the One Thousand and One Nights' (Burton, 1885) in public imagination (Roose, 2009, p.13). Despite its prominence in our own views of Baghdad, the nights are questionable as a primary account, not least because our own compilation was created by a French translator: Antoine Galland, in the eighteenth century. The stories are also highly romanticised and have uncertain temporal and authorial origins. Many of the tales described are probably fanciful fabrications or adaptations of stories belonging to other mythical and historical figures (Marzolph, 2006, p.69). This being said, the tales of the nights are clearly urban ones that require a very particular social and physical navigation by its inhabitants (Al-Musawi, 2009, pp.127-31). The impression given is one of a loud and colourful sprawling city, a city of common people disconnected from the spaces of court and palace life (Irwin, 2003, p.121). A similar but perhaps more reliable source is the 'Maqamat' stories. Like 'the

[4] Concurrent sources such as Mas'udi's 'Meadows of Gold' add to this mosaic of spaces and characters featured in medieval Baghdad. See also the articles by Massignon & Blanchere, Sourdel, Canard and Cahen in the 1962 special edition of Arabica for an extensive description of Baghdad in the Medieval period.

nights' they are a compilation of narrated episodes giving a 'street level view' of the city, however with the case of the Maqamat the authors are known making it easier to frame the texts they created (Prendergast, 1915). The image created by these tales is one of a tangle of narrow streets and covered souks, looking like much of the old quarter would today (Figure 4).

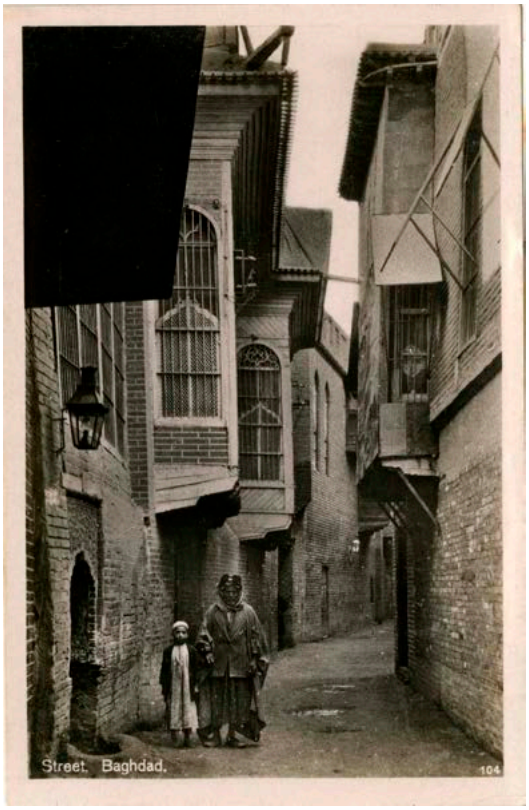

Figure 4: Traditional Baghdadi street in the 1920s/30s. Source: Published online in 2013 by The British Museum. Used with Permission.

Though highly idealised and subjective, poetic tales serve as an irreplaceable source of information for the changing public perception of the urban landscape.[5] The authors of these tales reveal an early air of wealth: a city of canals, palaces and gardens, a jewel of the Arab world. The early expansion of Baghdad and its rise to intellectual and economic predominance in the region heralded the golden age of Islam. After the civil war and a series of natural disasters, there was a switch in this poetic atmosphere. Such devastation had a negative effect on the upkeep of urban infrastructure and the city lost much of its splendour (Kennedy, 2004). Ibn Jubayr mourns this decline within his travel writings, ascribing it to the arrogance of the people, and their moral debasement (Nassar, 1992, p.267).

[5] For an example of this see Muti' ibn Iyas 'Raindrops of Dust', Abd Allah ibn Al-Mubarak before The Pious Ascetic in Baghdad' and Amr ibn Abd Al-Malik Al-Warraq 'An Evil Eye', all translated in Snir (2013).

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Despite the loss of its economic and political hegemony within the Islamic world, we know that Baghdad retained some of its urban dynamism throughout the fourteenth century through the tales of travel writers. Ibn Battuta, a travel writer who visited Baghdad in 1327, described the state of the city almost a century after its destruction by the Mongol army in 1258. He deplores the state of the western city, but also notes liveliness of the eastern part of the city, its markets and mosques (Ibn Battuta, 1982, I, 361-370). German traveller Leonhard Rauwolff gives us a glum impression of the city. He describes the slum-like streets, the ruined buildings and the lack of western defences (Dannenfeldt, 1968, p.115-116). This is supported by a variety of alternate reports from the same period. The poverty of the city in relation to its early greatness is reiterated by European diplomat Tavernier (1677) and its broken defences described at length by Ottoman courtier Evliya Celebi (1988). After a long period of instability and maladministration, the Mamluk governors began to rebuild the city, most notably the walls around the neighbourhoods and gardens on the west bank of the Tigris River, predominantly the Al-Karkh district (Dumper & Stanley, 2007, p.59) (Figure 5). Based on the accounts written by travellers and foreign officials and their accompanying maps we can trace the changes to the urban fabric that occurred over the following centuries, stagnating until the drastic series of reforms enacted upon Baghdad's urban fabric in the late nineteenth to twentieth centuries (Susa, 1952).

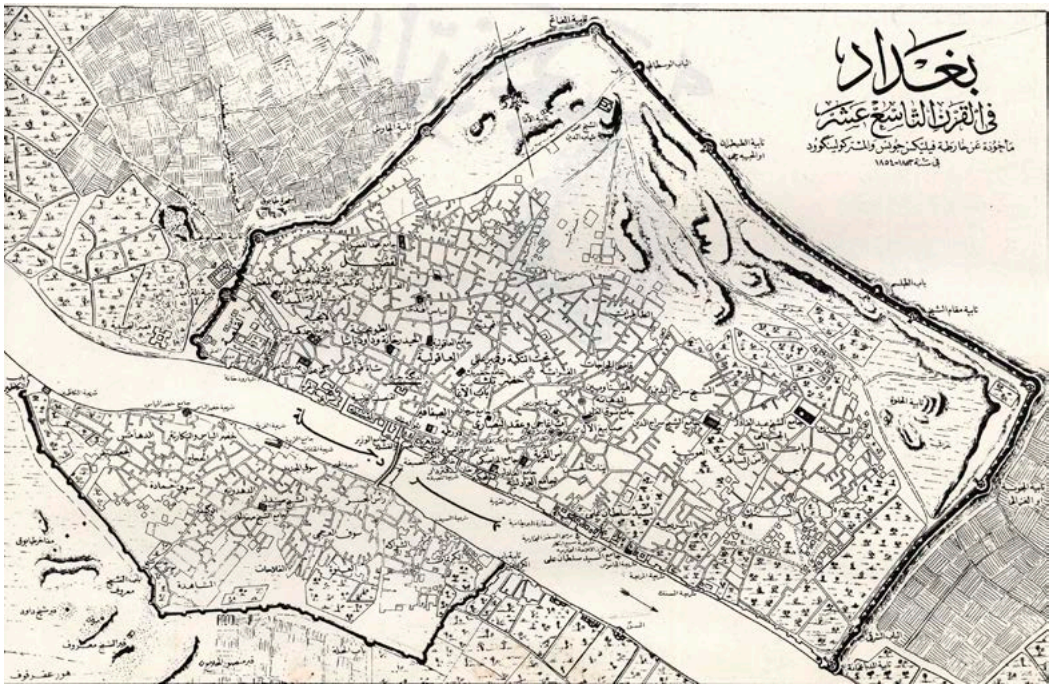

Figure 5: Plan of Baghdad in the 19th century. Source: Felix Jones (1854) (accessed via Encyclopedia Britannica). Creative Commons (Mark 1.0 (PD-Britannica)).

By this point the city had become a 'vast, rambling, unplanned metropolis' (Kennedy, 2004), with the only truly private spaces being within the confines of the courtyard

houses. The narrow thoroughfares of the city, with its network of winding streets, created a strong sense of local allegiance with limited movement throughout the wider urban sprawl. Though seemingly more constrained in terms of spatial mobility, the argument has been made that the space was more open in terms of accessibility. Rather than being centralised around the government, the new city had various nodes: mosques and markets became the beating hearts of the city, as well as being spaces for political contestation. Issues of sectarianism becoming violent in the streets and squares of the city are attested in official historical writings of Islamic scholars (Khalidi, 1994, p.40). This is especially prominent in histories connected to the biographies of important religious figures like that of Al-Baghdadi (1904). Significant within these accounts is the idea that such events are transgressions of urban order, one regulated by strict laws and government supervision. Urban order was upheld through rules of conduct like the *hisbah*[6] manuals. These set the moral and legal guidelines for city inhabitants, determining their range of movement. The definition of private space emphasised in these sources is not delineated by an opposition with publically accessible space, but rather a space out of earshot of the street (ibid, pp.33-34). This is connected to notions of privacy, rather than democratic capitalist conceptions based on ownership.

The late Ottoman period marked a series of social and urban changes (Mantran, 1962). The city walls were demolished in 1870, the first step away from the fortified medieval city as a bounded defensible space to a city based around centres of production and consumption, and networks of transportation and communication. From the early 20th century, plans were put into action to make the city more open and accessible, more appropriate to the 'modern' world. Transportation systems were elaborated, bridges were built, public squares were incorporated into the urban fabric and streets were widened. One of these projects was Al-Rashid Street opened to the public in 1915 by Khalil Pasha (Figure 6). Houses were demolished for a stretch of three kilometres to make room for a new paved two-lane carriageway. On either side of the street they erected neo-classical facades with arcades and shop-fronts (Abbas & Al-Dujaili 2013, p.1078). After numerous reconstructions, Al-Rashid Street remains one of the main thoroughfares through the city.

The Ottoman initiative is comparable to Haussmann's project in Paris in the mid nineteenth century though on a smaller scale. As early as 1869, Midhat Pasha's municipal council issues orders to clear the streets providing better cleaning, drainage and lighting (Elsheshtawy, 2004, p.64). The development of photography around this period means that we have evidence of the changes being made to the city. These are especially striking

[6] The word hisbah is defined by Yaacobi (1996, p.14) as the denouncement of the incorrect behaviour of others. The hisbah manuals were a number of written works indicating the appropriate moral code for the urban population to be enforced by the muhtasib, the examiner of conduct (ibid, p.18).

Figure 6:
Al Rasheed Street in 1932
Source: Published 1932 by Library of Congress. Creative Commons. (Mark 1.0 (PD-Matson)).

when compared to photos of areas that did not undergo the same process of renovation. The redevelopments and their documentation become both symbols and instruments of modernisation. The project included the definition of networks of transportation, the broadening of streets, the segregation of classes and the introduction of plazas, all meant to better the hygiene, loyalty and morality of those living in the city (Yamada, 1985). This connection between spatial order and behaviour is one that has continued to be prominent within urban planning. Spaces that are open, well-lit and well-monitored are meant to ensure the smooth governance of the city. However, as the barricades proved in Paris, even the most well thought out spaces can be re-appropriated for resistance, whether violent or subtle. In Baghdad, this resistance took on the form of vendors selling their wares in uncertified makeshift shops within the pedestrian porticoes of Al-Rashid Street and in 1948 it served as a key site in the demonstrations against the Anglo-Iraqi Oil Treaty (Powers, 2012, p.266). Thus, a space that was meant to function as a modernised stately thoroughfare was able to retain some of its historically local and popular quality.

Spatialising Modernity

These early attempts at modernisation fell short of their ultimate aims, both due to financial and political limitations. By the early-twentieth century there was a practical need to integrate the city, at that time defined by nodes of activity, into one unified provincial capital (Kiet, 2011, pp.41-42). Integral to this is the opening of space, funnelling people from constricted local environments to extended communal spaces, allowing mobility from one area into another. What began with the widening of a few key thoroughfares in the late nineteenth century soon turned into plans for the complete redevelopment of the

city, plans that would uproot entire communities (Ghaidan, 2008, pp.86-87) (Figure 7). Far from being a method for democratising space, such projects were meant to homogenise, to break down localised power structures and bring greater control over the people. This involved not only the introduction of new squares, but also the reorganisation of urban circulation and the spacing of private living. These attempts to control the populace through the creation and maintenance of open space however also have the potential to backfire, as they can give space and opportunity to the presentation of difference. Difference is seen to threaten social order, a threat that is mediated by forcing those not following the government line to either be absorbed by the hegemonic power or marginalised and excluded (Lefebvre, 1991, p.373). Lefebvre (1991) in his neo-Marxist urban theory calls this the conflation of 'absolutist and abstract space' (pp.285-91).

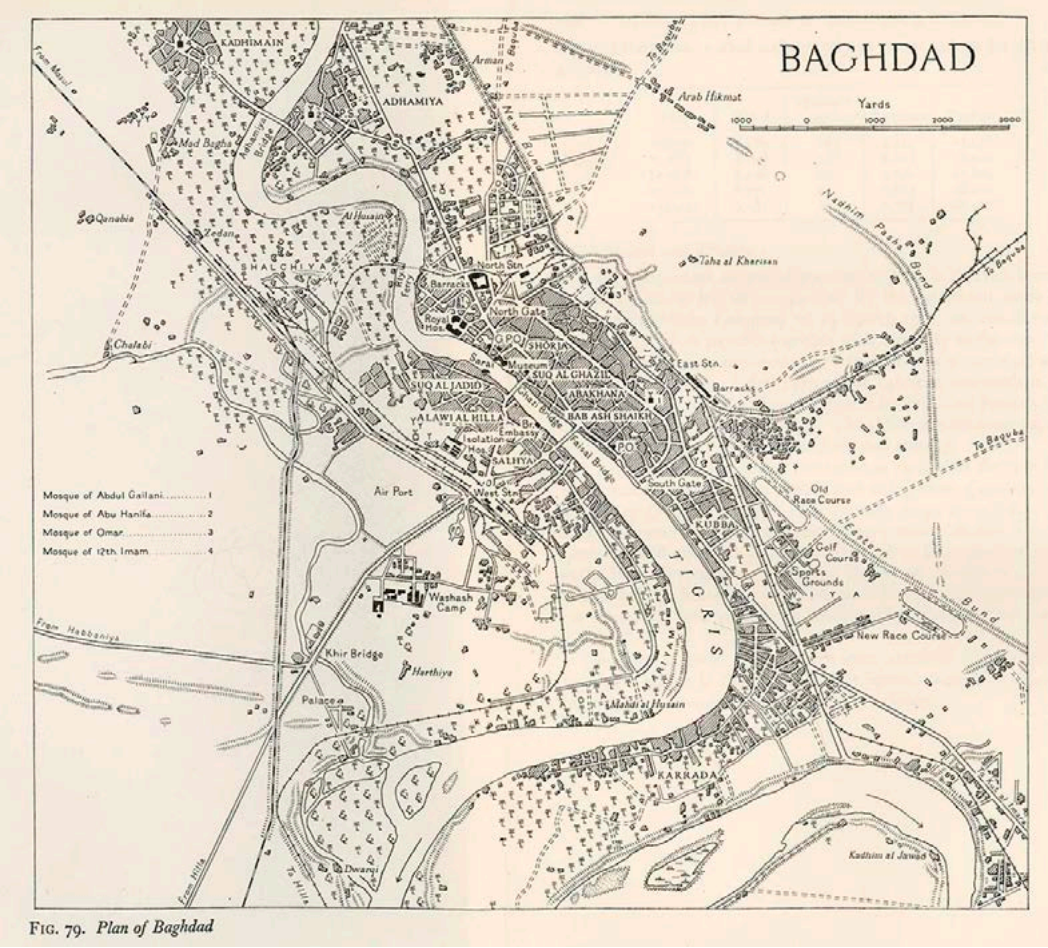

FIG. 79. *Plan of Baghdad*

Figure 7: Baghdad during the Monarchy. Source: Published in 1944 by the British Naval Intelligence Division (accessed via The University of Texas Libraries). Creative Commons (Mark 1.0 (PD-UK-Gov)).

Over the next few decades, population levels grew exponentially, putting pressure on the urban landscape. This required plans for expansion and planning beyond the initial isolated development of single areas and streets. The Hashemite monarchy capitalised on this prospect by commissioning a plan for the redevelopment of Baghdad (Mattar, 2004, p.361). Their modernisation scheme would include a number of Western architects and planners.[7] New networks were cut into the ancient fabric of the city creating an artificial order unknown to the city since its mythical founding. The project's scale was enormous as it was meant to completely reform the traditional urban landscape, demolishing the remnants of old Baghdad. It may have been implemented had it not been for the violent and public overthrow of the Monarchy in 1958 (Levine, 2015). However, their interests in 'orderly expansion', 'visual order, uniformity and regularity', continued in the plans of later regimes (Pyla, 2008, p.10).

These highly choreographed renovation plans continued under the revolutionary government under General Abd Al-Karim Qassim. Specific areas in the city were targeted for modernisation: main thoroughfares, places of historical significance and prominent religious centres. Changes were often informed by politico-ideological goals, like the development of squares and streets as focal points of political propaganda and control (Shabout, 2014) (Figure 8). The Ba'th government and especially the government under Saddam Hussein were quick to jump onto the modernisation bandwagon, completely reforming the cityscape with the help of some newly acquired oil money. Shopping centres, parks, a metro network, even a zoo were incorporated into the new city plan. Again a master plan was developed to modernise the area of Greater Baghdad in 1973 (Polservice, 1973), one that was designed to be more integrated into the existing infrastructure than its predecessors in the fifties (Al-Akkam, 2013, p.43). The plan focussed on decentralisation and a development of an internationally-inspired local design. However, in such master plans local elements are often limited and they rely on an orientalist reading of the city obtained through a foreign education. Thus while decorative and design elements of traditional housing can be incorporated, the motivations behind using these elements are often ignored. Regardless of the measures taken to ensure continuity in style, the plans completely altered notions of local spatialisation. As policies and priorities were only controlled through the central government, the ideologies of the ruling party could be homogeneously mirrored in the new urban plans (Elsheshtawy, 2004, p.68). Though only a few of these plans were ever executed due to the pressures of war and international embargoes, their plans provide a record of the image of Iraq that the regime had envisioned.

[7] During the monarchy there were multiple contenders including most prominently the architects and urban planners Anthony Minoprio, Hugh Spencely, P.W. Macfarlane, and Constantinos Apostolou Doxiades.

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Figure 8:
Bus map showing the redevelopment of Baghdad under Qassim. Source: Published in 1961 by the Institut Graphique Egyptien (accessed via The University of Texas Libraries). Creative Commons. (Mark 1.0 (PD-United Arab Emirates)).

In 1979 a rushed urban redevelopment programme was inaugurated as a display of the regime's ability to modernise the nation. This mainly focused around commercial and residential districts both on the eastern medieval vestiges and the more recently renovated western bank of the Tigris. The main areas included, as described in Makiya (1991), where Khulafa Street, the Bab Al-Sheikh area, the Al-Kadhimmiyya shrine, the Al-Karkh area, Abu Nuwas Street and Haifa Street (p.22). However, the war and the international embargo against Iraq drained national resources, meaning these large scale renovations were abandoned in favour of projects on a smaller scale. The Victory Monument, the Shaheed Monument and a new Tomb to the Unknown Soldier stem from this period (Figure 9). All three feature a large open space, spaces that seem communal, but are actually rarely accessible to the public. Rather than being spaces of lived experience, these modern-ist-kitch monuments and their surroundings symbolise the promise of a unified Islamic and imperial Iraqi nation, but one that was never truly enacted. The Grand Festival Square for example is flanked by two giant victory arches each modelled after Saddam's own arms holding swords. Rather than marking empowered spaces, they give the impression of an

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uninviting space, one only open to a select elite for festive celebrations of the divinised ruler.[8] These structures, advocating a particular Ba'thist brand of nationalism, pan-Arabism and anti-imperialist have in recent years been systematically eradicated by foreign and local forces alike in an attempt to suppress the trauma of history (Isakhan, 2011).[9] This has once again changed the face of Baghdad, leaving scars within its urban fabric, many of which have remained untended due to continuous warfare in the region.

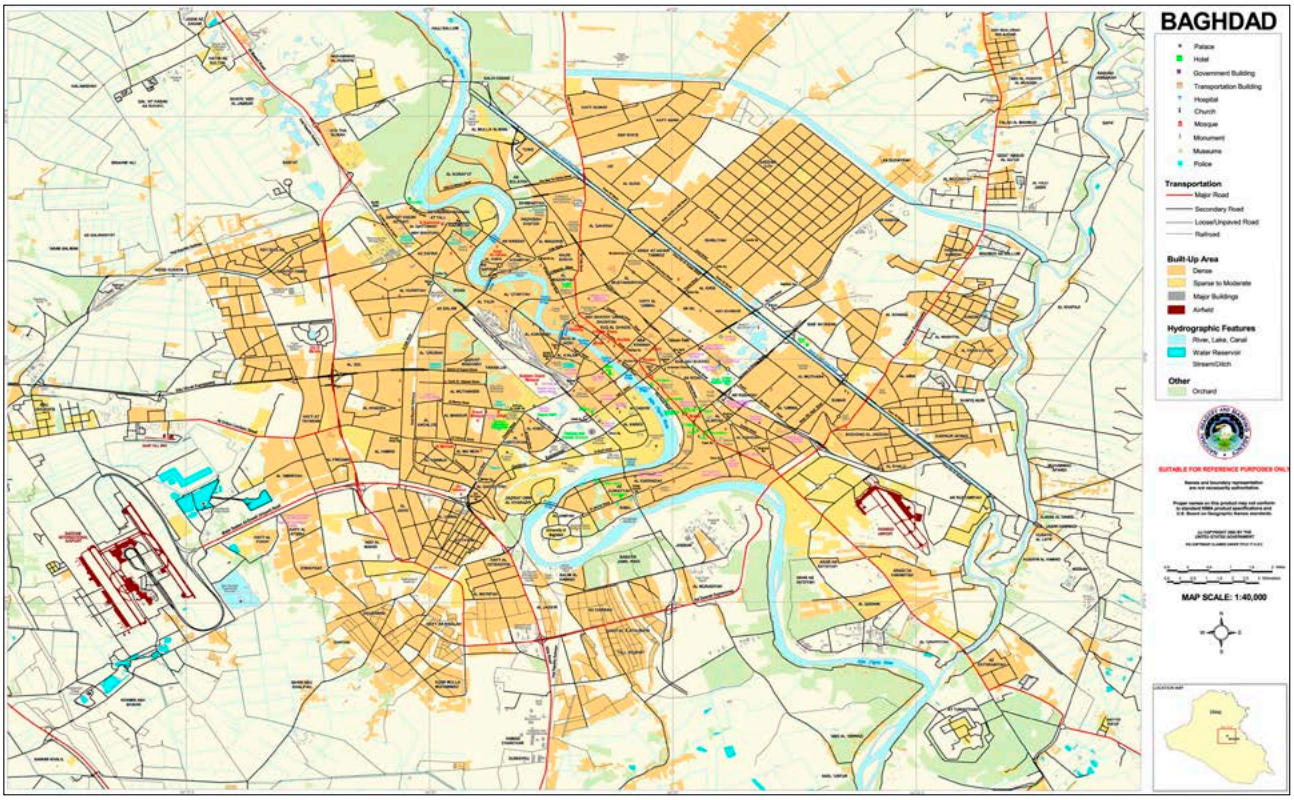

Figure 9:
Map of Baghdad in 2003.
Source: Published in 2003 by the National Imagery and Mapping Agency of the United States Government (accessed via The University of Texas Libraries). Licenced under TITLE 17 U.S.C. Section 107 (PD-USGov).

This is not unique to Baghdad, and a parallel can be drawn between these attempts at control and the Stalinist and modernist reforms of the Soviet Union. The early five year plans for economic development along communist lines designed by the Soviet government from 1928 were heavily focussed on collectivisation and industrial

[8] For a comparable example see Rappaport's (1999, p. 201) description of the winning plans for the Palace of the Soviets designed by Boris Iofan, Vladimir Galfraikh and Vladimir Shchuko in the 1930s. This new structure replacing the recently demolished Cathedral of Christ the Savior featured a statue of Lenin elevated more than 400 meters above the city of Moscow.

[9] For examples of this see the famous case of the Firdows Square statue of Saddam torn down in 2003 and the unfulfilled proposal of the international committee for reviewing monuments to demolish the Victory Arch in 2007. This rejected proposal and the revised plans to restore the Victory arch years later is discussed in Myers (2011).

development, leading to a need for new urban infrastructure (Rappaport, 1999, p.43). Much like Ba'athist Iraq, these political and economic developments also manifested in a new ideological focus and the exponential growth in urban population. In the Soviet Union, the 'social realist' style was developed as an integration of this new ideology, industrial needs and architectural aesthetics (Balina & Dobrenko, 2011, p.191). Neo-classical, utopian civic buildings were constructed, colossal statues of government leaders were erected and wide, straight roads were planned with dramatic viewpoints and streamlined facades.[10] While these new government structures became more ornate and monumental, creating a larger-than-life almost divinised effect, housing was modern and modular, moving away from the landed housing of previous decades. This new spatial allocation was meant to 'inculcate socialist values, to affect how people thought and acted and thus help to produce a new man' (Lodder *et al.*, 2013, p.173). The ultimate alienating effect of this urban reorganisation and its association with the absolutist regime can be traced in their swift removal and alteration after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. An example of this is the re-painting of Soviet-era buildings in the Albanian town of Tirana (Pusca, 2008). Along with the Iraqi example, the Soviet attempt at spatial reorganisation reflects what Lefebvre (1968) refers to when he discusses the concept of spatial justice. In his view the organisation of space reflects and impacts on social relations. While the plans were made with specific, some might say utopic, social outcomes – unity and loyalty – in mind, their outcomes reflected a history of spatial injustice based in oppression and inequity.

Ordering the City

While the history of Baghdad's spatial development clearly shows a number of changes and interventions into the urban landscape, there are a number of concepts that remain present throughout the various periods. Notions of order, authority, tradition, modernity, flexibility, resistance and the public are key to the planning and experience of open space in Baghdad. These are also the concepts that need to be considered in any heritage initiatives that take place within the city. Conservation is after all not just a matter of keeping things the way they are. It should be a process of interpretation and adaptation, one that takes into account the past, present and future of the object, structure or space being conserved. Therefore, heritage planning must include the associations accrued by the material as well as its place within current configurations – economic, political, cultural and social – and how its future relevance can be ensured.

[10] For examples of these see the standardised facades of the new Kalinin Prospect, the monumental architecture of the Lomonosov Moscow State University (MSU) and the planned Palace of the Soviets in Lang (2005). Many of these ideas were also included in the Moscow Master Plan of 1935.

As an element of urban planning, open space is necessarily connected to the concept of order. This includes the creation of categorisation, a logical model with clear divisions between various groups, and a sense of what is right and what is wrong. This notion of order is embedded even within the foundation narrative of the city. Al-Jahiz describes the round city as so perfect 'as if it were poured into a mould and cast' (Hourani & Stern, 1970, p.103). Space was structured and controlled, radial streets were laid out and movement through the city was guided. The open spaces remained controlled by the government and administration rather than being truly open to the people. This sense of order and control returns with the nineteenth and twentieth century attempts to transform the city into a modern entity. These initiatives clearly show the utopics of modernisation within Iraq (Widmer, 2014). If utopia was conceived of as a placeless space of modernity, order, obedience and homogeneity, these plans were an attempt to imbue real space with those qualities. Not only would space reflect a modern state, it would create the conditions for one. In Lefebvrian terms these theorisations account for physical space as perceived and mapped, cognitive representation of space in its existence as an idea or ideal, as a plan rather than a lived reality, and a representational space that is symbolic and can be appropriated, re-ordered through its use (Lefebvre, 1991, p.39).

What such projects ultimately fail to account for is that people do not live in a homogenous empty space that can be transformed towards specific aims (Foucault, 1984, p.47; Bachelard, 2010). Open space has the potential to take on meanings and behaviours not intended by its planners through the interactions occurring with and within it. Within Baghdad public space had to be carved out, often violently, for any opposition to be made apparent. An example of this is the various coups that took place in Baghdad from the late fifties to the seventies. These were not just sectarian spats, but full blown revolutions, reversing the homogenising utopics of open space to divisive heterotopias. However, these heterotopias needed to be made hegemonous upon the establishment of new power in order to avoid any repeated occurrence of public uprising, a feat that no one movement was fully able to achieve, though within independent Iraq Saddam's reign surely held on longest. Under Saddam architectural critic Nicolai Ouroussof (2003) describes this as a war against the public realm. Saddam's policy of using open space for the manifestation of authoritarian rule was not unique within Iraqi history. However, as his rule far outlasted that of his immediate predecessors, his own spatial policy was able to develop further, integrating the open spaces of the urban sphere into ideological performances buttressing his own power. In this way he was able to neutralise any opposition, making 'the spectacle of the public dissolve into public spectacle' (Mitchell, 1995, p.123). In fact, the open spaces he created became spectacles in and of themselves. The subsequent government regarded his so-called 'gifts to the city', including the Victory Arch, Monument to the Unknown

Soldier, Martyr Monument and his palace, as 'black holes in the city's fabric' (Ouroussoff, 2003). They were called public spaces, but a large proportion of the public was unable to access them bar with explicit invitation or with military escort. The restriction of space expresses the monopoly of the government in defining what it means to be part of the Iraqi nation. Rather than the expressive performance of individual identity, Saddam's nation was defined by its homogeneity in compliance, most clearly marked through its conformity to the rules of open space (Isakhan, 2011, p.258). This displays the inherent flaw in ascribing blanket definitions to public space (Marston, 1990, p.457).

From a purely democratic point of view, public spaces are meant to be spaces of construction and representation, where citizens are able to equally imagine and perform their identities in relation to each other and to the politics of the state. In totalitarian political reality, however, public spaces are rarely planned as sites of engagement, but rather function as 'platforms of display' (Shabout, 2014, p.163), whether that be the space of the market where 'bodies, words, actions and produce are on mutual display' (Hartley, 1992, pp.29-30), or the display of political propaganda. Especially in the latter case, open spaces become detached stage sets where public interaction with one another and the state is mediated through institutions and activities (Howell, 1993). The 'public activities' that occur within such spaces are inherently constricted to account for state interest in security. Like the liminal spaces defined by Turner (1969) in his rites of passage, the organisers recognise an imminent threat of diversity in the urban crowd. In the case of Baghdad social plurality was repeatedly discouraged, by the Ottomans, the British occupation, the monarchy, the republican government and the various installations of pan-Arab totalitarianism (Makiya, 1998). As Young (1990) would put it, the public here is a 'normative ideal', not an 'empirical description' (p.119). In such a theory public space is not a readily present space, it is one that must be materially constituted through appropriation; 'political movements must create the space in which they can be represented' (Mitchell, 1995, p.124). This then not only applies to the political bodies building these spaces, but also those groups who wish to oppose the government's propagated ideology.

If public space is truly a space for action, one 'created and maintained through an ongoing opposition of visions' (Mitchell, 1995, p.115), it needs to enable unmediated interaction, and access to the structures of power within a society. It is for this reason that Mitchel claims that public space is dying, its direct democratic role being curbed by constricting orderings of space, deliberately shaping the public realm into a theatre (Crilley, 1993, p.153). If we adhere to this theory then open space and public space are far from synonymous. Open space becomes a subaltern discursive arena where oppositional representations can thrive. This requires 'transformation from a monumental and official space into a genuine place of political discourse' (Calhoun, 1989, p.57). Open space can now be seen in broader terms as a complex but materially present layer of experience within a city,

one that is culturally diverse; one to which we respond and with which we interact. This is especially significant when discussing the development of urban areas in the Islamic world. Here the classificatory system often used for urban features, the division between public and private, open and closed, doesn't seem appropriate. In his chapter on the 'Construction of the Public Sphere in the Middle Eastern Medina', Anton Escher states that much urban space does not fit within these traditional categories of thought, but rather that it falls within a 'zone of transition', where the opposing forms of public and private are constantly intersecting (Nielsen & Skovgaard-Petersen, 2001, p.164).

Conserving the Heritage of Baghdad

How then can we create a heritage plan that is flexible enough to allow for ideology and resistance, traditional ways of life and modern needs? In light of the current heritage crisis, the looting of artefacts and destruction of monuments within Iraq, most heritage plans focus on retrieving stolen antiquities and protecting the major listed sites such as Babylon or Ashur (ex. Global Heritage Fund). Though many plans include conservation efforts within Baghdad their focus has been limited to the museums, libraries and major historical buildings, and quite disconnected from wider urban restructuring plans (ex. Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs; Embassy of the United States in Baghdad, 2011; UNESCO, 2003). While these priorities are understandable in the current crisis, experience in urban sites like Beirut show that integrated urban heritage projects are necessary to avoid the stalemate that ensues from contradictory plans for developers and conservationists (ex. Kullab, 2014). Beirut is another city with a long history of settlement and has also suffered a number of wars and invasions. After the 1975-1990 wars the city underwent a blitz archaeological assessment and a series of redevelopment plans. The city was in desperate need of new infrastructure and development companies were lining up to 'create a new city', but there was also a local movement to claim their own homes and heritage (Gebhardt, 2008). Edward Randall (2014) labels Beirut as a city of 'hybrid sovereignties' (p.5) a term borrowed from Sara Fregonese (2012), with projects being developed by various powerful interest groups with little cooperation and exchange, turning the urban landscape into another ideological battlefield. This title could also be ascribed to Baghdad, a city where ideology driven master plans followed one another in short succession in accordance with changing political and economic interests.

In discussing the recent sleuth of master plans developed for Baghdad, Yana Golubeva (2011) calls for an 'evolutionary approach'. The typical top down blanket-approach simplifies the urban setting to a series of modules ignoring the reality of the city as a process (Swyngedouw & Kaika, 2000, p.577). Just look at Al-Rashid Street, planned to stop the dense crowding of streets and disorderly conduct, its arcades were re-appropriated by the population to create narrow souk-like market atmospheres. Analysing such spaces in both their original design and their various alternate uses exemplifies the dynamism of

urban life, a dynamism that opposes the inflexibility of a master plan. These alternative uses mark change not only in its spatial configuration, but also government ideologies and to what extent the identities of the population actually coincide with these visions. In taking on the notion of open space through its lived experience, as a place, rather than just as a lifeless abstract category, it becomes clear that such spaces do indeed contribute to the heritage of the city. Al-Rashid Street for example contributes not only as a thoroughfare, but also as a market, a meeting place, and a place of resistance and of celebration of local culture.

According to UNESCO's *Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape* 'the urban area is understood as the result of a historic layering of cultural and natural values and attributes, extending beyond the notion of 'historic centre' or 'ensemble' to include the broader urban context and its geographical setting' (UNESCO, 2011, article 8). This broader urban context includes the open spaces of the city, these alternate nodes of resistance. In a city of 'hybrid sovereignties' the need for an integrated heritage plan in order to preserve such in-between spaces becomes more apparent. The existing plans for heritage conservation feature tools that could be repurposed to fit a more integrated plan. The use of GIS, or geographical mapping for example, allows for collaborative documentation with various layers coinciding with different urban conservation and development plans (ex. Agnew, Myers & Palumbo 2009; Global Heritage Fund; UNESCO, 2003). The necessity of public input is also one that can be transposed across both types of conservation. Many of the traditional archaeology-focused heritage plans incorporate initiatives for training local communities in conservation (ex. Agnew, Myers & Palumbo 2009; Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs; Embassy of the United States in Baghdad, 2011; Global Heritage Fund; UNESCO, 2003). This gives local populations additional skills, but also a forum in which to voice their expertise and to determine how spaces can be usefully and effectively reused. By allowing for dynamic use of space within heritage planning you empower people to give their own identity to their city, something that will become increasingly important in the future rebuilding of Baghdad.

Conclusion

However modern Baghdad may have become, especially in the past century, it is important to note its political trajectory in order to understand its spatial development. The history of Baghdad reveals a number of influences on the structuring of the city, both formative and destructive. The notion of order as something imposed by an authority over a public, recurs throughout the history of Baghdad, as do tales of resistance to this order. Both these forces have come to shape the identity of the city that exists today, enhancing or concealing divisions that exist within its fabric and among its people. Already before the war space had become fragmented, the hurried modernisation affecting the meanings and types of spaces in the city. The resulting open spaces have no clear identity, as Al-Hasani (2012) argues

they have lost their references in the confusion of various spatial languages (p.84). This provides problems for heritage management, as there is no longer a coherent urban space to preserve, but rather a scattered array of urban patterns that, due to their brash construction, have not yet developed into a strong relationship between the people and their living space (Hillier 2007, p.20). This has meant that habits and values have not developed analogous to the alteration of physical space. The solution to this within heritage management has often been the preservation of what is perceived as traditional, historic space, while labelling any modern spatial alterations as invasive and not worth protecting (Al-Salam, 1998; Bakare, 2011). Though it can be argued that much of the modern open spaces of the city were constructed after the demolition of much of the historic centre, it is still an important part of Baghdad's urban history and of the morphology of spatial function. Therefore rather than rejecting modern alterations as invalid, efforts should be made to reconcile the spaces, and integrate existing social processes and spatial needs. This will help to reorient the use of open space, recognising its formative qualities, while simultaneously subverting the negative encounter with recent urban transformations. In light of recent developments in Iraq, including the 2003 Iraq War, sectarian violence, the new Iraqi government, the continued instability in the current conflict with ISIS, and the associated destruction of urban landscapes, heritage management has become even more central to post-conflict rehabilitation in Iraq. In order to conserve the heritage of an area that has undergone acute redevelopment, it is necessary to have an in depth understanding of the conditions within which these changes occurred in the past, and continue to occur in the present. This does not only apply to the life cycle of built structures, but also to open spaces. The description of Baghdad provided herein integrates this need to analyse urban planning, historiography and local experience to facilitate a management plan that reconciles a series of diverse functions and forms of space and spatialisation.

Baghdad offers a further incentive as it challenges commonly held notions of public and open space. The dominant tendency to conflate the two has led to an urban analysis that is deterministic, applying a rigid structure to incommensurable urban forms. More suitable is a definition that allows for variation in spatial relations across cultures, genders, classes and the like. In cities like Baghdad – where urban reform has tended to originate in totalitarian, rather than democratic, decision making – there has been a need to reconsider the traditional categorisation of space. Open space, without necessarily functioning as public space, has the power to influence and transform both local identities and the city within which it operates, recognising open space as an essential and integral part of the urban fabric is therefore critical for both informing and guiding cultural heritage management.

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