Built Cultural Heritage in an Urban Planning Context

Literature Review

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Luleå University of Technology
Department of Civil, Environmental and Natural Resources Engineering
Division of Architecture and Water
INTRODUCTION

This literature review is part of a study of built cultural heritage in urban transformations, with a specific focus on issues concerning the evaluation and re-evaluation of buildings and built environments when physical urban changes occur. The research study focuses on the assessment process in which built environments are evaluated and turned into cultural heritage, but also the opposite: how buildings and built environments lose significance and cease their status as being cultural heritage. The research also studies how protected built cultural heritage is managed in urban planning processes.

The research is carried out as a single case study of the urban transformation of Kiruna, a mining town in the northernmost part of Sweden. A major urban transformation is currently taking place due to the mining activities. LKAB, the mining company that established Kiruna as a model town in 1900, is expanding its iron ore mining. These mining activities cause subsidence, which in turn affects the settlement. This means that the town centre and several residential areas need to be relocated to new developments; this is a process that will continue over the coming decades. Kiruna is a cultural heritage site of national interest, protected by the Environmental Code. Several buildings and built-up areas are also protected by the Heritage Conservation Act and by the Planning and Building Act and are, as such, part of an ‘official heritage’. So far, I have investigated how the cultural heritage is managed in the on-going urban planning processes in Kiruna. This is approached from a discourse analytic perspective that draws particularly on Laurajane Smith’s work concerning the ‘authorised heritage discourse’ (Smith 2006). This literature review is influenced by this concept and by issues addressed in my previous research.

Objective

The objective of this literature review is to be exploratory in searching for previous research within the field of cultural heritage in an urban planning context, especially with a focus on urban transformations. An ‘exploratory’ review is carried out “to satisfy curiosity, provide better understanding or for general interest; to examine the feasibility of further study by indicating what might be relevant to study in more depth; to provide illumination on a process or a problem” (Hart 1998:47). This literature review is presented as a ‘state-of-the-art review’, with the purpose of bringing the “readers up to date on the most recent research on the subject” (Jesson, Matheson & Lacey 2011:15). This includes investigating general questions that can be answered by such a literature review, such as: “What are the major issues and debates about the topic?”, “What are the main questions and problems that have been addressed to date?”, “What are the key sources?” and “What are the key theories, concepts and ideas?” (Hart 1998:14).

This literature review was carried out using a more systematic approach compared to my earlier literature studies, in order to supplement these. This literature review is not, however, a systematic review as described by Jesson et al.,
who defined the ‘systematic review’ as a specific methodology following certain stages in a precise order (Jesson, Matheson & Lacey 2011:104). This state-of-the-art review is what Jessop et al. called a ‘traditional review’, which is characterised by its aim for “a broad understanding of the field”, being exploratory and being based on articles deliberately selected by the reviewer (Jesson, Matheson & Lacey 2011:105).

Focus
The literature review is exploratory, but the scientific articles have been selected based on three main issues in order to narrow the search result. First, there is a focus on literature in which built cultural heritage is examined in a contemporary urban planning context, especially related to various types of urban transformations. Second, the concept of ‘heritagisation’ is investigated in order to comprehend how the term is used. Also, articles examining how cultural heritage ’is made’ in more general terms are included. Third, the databases are searched in order to find previous research relating specifically to my case study. This includes the geographical area of Kiruna and Malmfälten, but also cultural heritage issues connected to mining activities.

Method
In literature studies prior to this literature review, I have searched for books and articles through various databases; in texts then selected for reading, I have continued the literature search by investigating relevant references. In addition to this, journals that are of importance within the research field have been searched, such as the International Journal of Heritage Studies. Based on these previous literature studies, a number of keywords were selected (Figures 1 - 3) in order to explore the connection between ‘cultural heritage’ and ‘urban planning’. These keywords have now been used to perform systematic searches of three different databases in order to avoid partial or biased state-of-the-art review.

The search has been carried out on the international databases Web of Science, Scopus and the Swedish database Libris. The searches were broad in order to cover as many relevant articles as possible, regardless of discipline. Being an exploratory search, all kinds of documents provided in the databases have been included, such as journal articles, conference proceedings, book reviews and editorial material. For Web of Science, I used document searches based on topics, using all citation databases, with no time limit. For Scopus, I made document searches using “Article Title, Abstract, Keywords”, searching for all document types, in all subject areas, with no time limit. For Libris, I used a regular search.

The use of keywords, phrases and the combination of keywords and phrases was pragmatic, depending on the number of items found in the databases. With approximately 300 items or more, I made the search narrower by using phrases. I also used the Boolean operator “AND” to combine keywords and phrases. In Figure 1, single keywords and phrases are listed, with the number of items found in the databases. In Figure 2, the keywords I used in combination with ‘cultural
heritage’ are listed. In Figure 3, the keywords and phrases I used in combination with searching for ‘cultural heritage’ as a phrase are listed.

I judged the search results firstly by titles and then by abstracts provided in the databases. If the abstracts indicated relevant articles, I downloaded the documents for closer inspection. Only articles in English were used and, having limited time, only articles either published in open access or available in journals subscribed to by Luleå University of Technology were studied beyond reading the abstracts. This was the procedure for Web of Science and Scopus. Libris does not provide abstracts; using English keywords also resulted in limited search results in the Swedish database. I included the search in Libris to explore the possibility of obtaining an overview of the international literature used in a national context within the research area. Also, Libris provides book titles, whereas Web of Science and Scopus mainly list articles, conference proceedings etc.

<table>
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*Figure 1 Word search using one keyword or phrase, with number of items found in the databases*
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*Figure 2 Word search combining Keyword 1 with Keyword 2, with number of items found in the databases*
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</table>

Figure 3 Word search combining Keyword 1 with Keyword 2, with number of items found in the databases

RESULT

Performing an exploratory literature search in the databases, using broad search criteria, obviously resulted in the finding of a vast number of articles, spanning numerous topics. An overall impression is that articles about built cultural heritage in an urban context often focus on issues such as ‘tourism’, ‘sustainability’, ‘gentrification’, ‘adaptive re-use’ or ‘regeneration’. Since none of these topics are key issues in this literature review, I have not studied these topics as such. Most papers found in the database search are based on case studies, or using specific buildings, towns or landscapes as examples; often, world heritage sites serve as empiric material.

Articles explicitly relating to ‘cultural heritage’ could be divided into two categories: articles that have the premise that cultural heritage ‘is’ and articles that argue that cultural heritage ‘is made’. Articles about cultural heritage that ‘is’ often perceive the cultural heritage as being threatened and accordingly suggest solutions to the predicament, which may be problems related to air pollution or fire hazards, careless renovations, or insufficient implementing of legislation. These articles about management and maintenance have been excluded from this
review. Instead, articles concerning the process of ‘heritagisation’ and the making of cultural heritage have been selected.

The articles found within the focus of the literature review could roughly be divided into the following topics: urbanisation and urban conservation, heritage, authorised heritage discourse and mining. These are discussed in further detail. I also discuss the lack of articles that might have been expected to appear in the database search.

**Urbanisation and urban conservation**

Urbanisation and its various effects on the built cultural heritage is analysed in the articles found. There is an interest in relating built cultural heritage to place-making and using it to diminish what is perceived as negative effects of urbanisation and globalisation, where all cities end up looking alike.

This is discussed, for instance, by Swensen, who, drawing on a study on four medium-sized Norwegian towns, argued that “cultural heritage has the potential to be a platform for developing the place-specific character of urban regions”, but concluded that urban planning is performed based on an international context and ‘glocal’ images rather than the uniqueness of the specific towns and their fabric and environment (Swensen 2012:387).

Zhang (2008) investigated conservation in the context of urban renewal in Beijing, identifying the outcome for built cultural heritage as the result of a ‘symbolic urban preservation’. Zhang described how immense urban transformations are taking place in Beijing in order to stimulate urban growth; old neighbourhoods are being replaced with modern high-rise buildings. Simultaneously, parts of a selected architectural heritage are being conserved in order to ”create a better image for the city” and to “promote the development of the tourist economy” (Zhang 2008:188). Zhang interpreted this as a consequence of not only land being an economic resource, but also that “culture, entertainment and amenities are incorporated into the arsenal of the growth machine” (Zhang 2008:189). Zhang argued that the ‘symbolic’ conservation that is taking place has a number of negative effects. It prioritises architectural monuments rather than the urban context; the cultural heritage is exploited but not protected; visitors are to be entertained but inhabitants are ignored. Zhang’s conclusion was that this symbolic use of the cultural heritage is not sustainable and the city will lose its character if the built cultural heritage is to be limited to a number of monuments that are used as decoration in urban planning.

In Singapore conservation has become an issue for urban planning. Yuen (2006) investigated a changing approach to cultural heritage in Singapore; in previous decades, urbanisation and urban planning resulted in vast destruction of built cultural heritage in order to create a ‘tabula rasa’ and restructure the city. Yuen argued that “heritage conservation is celebrated as a key theme for making the city more livable” (Yuen 2006:832). The reasons in favour of conservation are twofold. As Singapore experienced a decline in the tourism industry, the city’s historical sites were recognised as important to attract visitors. Yuen also pointed out the importance of cultural heritage in maintaining a sense of place and
identity, as well as collective memory to avoid “the homogenizing force of globalization” (Yuen 2006:834).

A Norwegian case study, based on study of the towns Stavanger, Mosjøen and Risør in Norway, indicated that there are numerous reasons for urban conservation taking place (Nyseth, Sognnæs 2012). A general phenomenon, not only in Norway, was the vast demolition of historic areas in towns that took place after the Second World War, causing an emerging counter-movement, striving for urban conservation. In Norway, this conservation movement coincided with the ‘green movement’ (Nyseth, Sognnæs 2012:70). However, Nyseth and Sognnæs described a much more complex set of motives behind the outcome of urban conservation in the Norwegian context. According to their study, an effective implementation of urban conservation strategies requires an agreement between all stakeholders, such as the local population, property owners and businesses. The case study also showed that initiatives for urban conservation could emerge both from local inhabitants and from authorities. Nyseth and Sognnæs explained a number of motives for conservation; it may be based on arguments supporting the town’s identity, a part of the ‘green movement’, or encouragement from heritage professionals. In Risør, the urban conservation was carried out within an economic discourse, but this was not the case in Stavanger, where the motive instead was “preserving the character of a unique part of urban history” (Nyseth, Sognnæs 2012:74). In Mosjøen, “the discourse was related to a struggle between urban regenerating and renewal of a slum area versus rescuing the old town from demolition” (Nyseth, Sognnæs 2012:75). Nyseth and Sognnæs concluded that what the different cases have in common is the collaboration between actors within public, private and civil sectors at different levels of authority. Also, there had been flexibility in addressing homeowners’ wishes for modernisation, avoiding conflicts with heritage officials.

**Heritage**

Searching for articles about ‘heritagisation’ resulted in a number of results, where the word was used either as a keyword or in the main text in the articles. However, the concept as such was not explicitly defined; rather, it was the concept of ‘heritage’ as a phenomenon that was discussed and defined. My conclusion is that ‘heritagisation’ is to be understood as a cultural process in which objects and places, such as buildings and built environments, are attributed certain meanings and significances and thus turned into ‘cultural heritage’. This heritagisation process is in contrast to the idea of cultural significance being defined as intrinsic values of objects and places.

Heritage can be defined as something that “is concerned with the ways in which very selective material artefacts, mythologies, memories and traditions become resources for the present” with that selection being dependent on contemporary requirements (Graham 2002:1004). Also, “heritage is more concerned with meanings than material artefacts” (Graham 2002:1004). As a consequence, heritage – and the artefacts connected to it – might be rejected when values change and new meanings of the past are reflected in the present. Heritage is therefore “as much about forgetting as remembering the past”
According to Graham, heritage also has multiple uses and interpretations, which make dissonance an intrinsic feature and complicates the assessment of it (Graham 2002:1015).

Heritage is defined in a similar way by Ashworth and Tunbridge, who stated that “heritage is the contemporary usage of a past and is consciously shaped from history, its survivals and memories, in response to current needs for it” (Ashworth, Tunbridge 1999:105); they argued that pasts may be rejected and new pasts be (re)constructed in the creation of heritage.

Negussie (2004) explored how the assessment of built cultural heritage changes over time, arguing that meanings and values are not fixed, but constantly change as the built environments are re-evaluated. Accordingly, she described the shifting attitudes towards conservation in Ireland and Dublin from the 1930s and onwards. Negussie argued that “built environments are shaped by changing ideas and values and are culturally constructed places” (Negussie 2004:220). She also identified various motives for conservation, such as political dimensions, arguing that “value judgements on what to conserve must constantly be re-assessed. It is important that the debate on conservation is not limited to a discussion on individual buildings and areas, but that it forms part of a culturally and politically conscious approach to the built heritage” (Negussie 2004:220).

Other examples of how heritage is interpreted as being socially constructed is analysed, for example, in the context of the renovation of a chapel in Vievola, in southern France, as a political act to reinforce its power by strengthening the collective memory and the local identity (Isnart 2012). Another example is the official effort to construct a heritage site in Lijiang Old Town in China, in order to attract tourists, which resulted in interpretations that were contested by the town’s inhabitants (Su 2011).

**Authorised heritage discourse**

Several articles indicate that there is a connection between heritage as a social and political process and an ‘authorised heritage discourse’ (AHD). The ‘authorised heritage discourse’ is a concept introduced by Laurajane Smith (2006), who suggested that there is a specific, hegemonic discourse that “acts to constitute the way we think, talk and write about heritage” (Smith 2006:11). ‘Heritage’ is, in this perspective, defined as “a cultural practice, involved in the construction and regulation of a range of values and understandings” (Smith 2006:11).

The ‘authorised heritage discourse’ is problematised in an Australian context by Ashton (2009), who argued that the AHD shapes a stereotypical history by reproducing certain narratives and, in doing so, constructs a forged national history, which omits certain disgraceful parts of the country’s colonial and post-colonial history.

Smith framed the ‘authorised heritage discourse’ as having evolved as a Western concept of heritage and how that heritage should be managed (Smith 2006). This phenomenon is problematised, for instance, in the context of urban conservation in the city of Pingyao, in China, that is listed as one of UNESCO’s World Heritage Sites (Wang 2012). Wang argued that, despite an increasing criticism of the AHD, the concept has been introduced in the urban conservation
practice in China. This is partly because China has a short history of urban conservation, hence lacks analytical skills and experience and therefore has implemented Western theory and practice in conservation. According to Wang, the urban conservation of Pingyao focuses on developing the town as a tourist attraction, which has led to displacement of the inhabitants and an exclusion of the community. Contradictions between Western conservation practice and local traditions are claimed to occur also in South East Asian countries such as Brunei, Thailand, Vietnam and Taiwan (Jones 1997).

Another statement is that the ‘authorised heritage discourse’ is “a professional discourse that privileges expert values and knowledge about the past and its material manifestations” (Smith 2006:4). This AHD perspective is challenged, for instance, in the context of a revitalisation program of a historic downtown area in Anderson, South Carolina, USA (Wells 2010). Wells criticised the traditional architectural conservation approach, supported by the AHD, that favours authenticity in material fabric rather than “the socially and culturally constructed meanings that come from the experience of being in the historic downtown” (Wells 2010:479). The revitalisation is carried out through using historicised design in new buildings rather than constructing the new buildings in a contemporary style. Keeping the existing buildings is preferred, both by those in favour of conservation and those in favour of revitalisation; however, the arguments for this strategy differ. The conservationists want to preserve buildings to keep their information values; those in favour of revitalisation want to preserve the sense of place that is created by the old buildings (Wells 2010:474).

Smith (2006) argued that community participation is a discourse dissenting from the AHD. This is reflected on, for instance, by Swensen et al. They studied the planning process in two medium-sized regional towns in Norway and concluded that “local stakeholders were often invited to participate in planning processes, but that their contributions were largely kept out of the official plans at the final stage” (Swensen et al. 2012).

Another Norwegian study compared the value assessment of old schoolhouses made by the national authorities and by the local communities (Mydland, Grahn 2012). They concluded that there is a divergence between national and local definitions of cultural heritage. The national authorities prioritised professionalism in management and used predefined criteria in assessing the values of the buildings, whereas the local initiatives wanted to restore the schoolhouses “as a medium to develop and maintain social fellowship and a common identity”, where people could “gather around a joint project to do some meaningful work together” (Mydland, Grahn 2012:583).

**Mining**

A number of articles concerning mining and ‘cultural heritage’ studied closed mines and their potential as heritage resource. One example is discussed by Conesa et al. (Conesa, Schulin & Nowack 2008), suggesting that the Mining District of Cartagena-La Unión in the Southeast Spain has economic potential to attract tourists due to the combination of there being significant historic and cultural values and being located near a mass tourism area. Conesa et al. also
referred to the mining heritage of Rio Tinto in the Southern region of Andalucía, and the heritagisation process that has taken place, resulting in a mining museum, the restoration of a railway, urban areas and archaeological sites, as well as the arrangement of tours around the mining area. One crucial issue, however, is to manage the environmental risks, such as handling polluted materials and mine tailings, as well as securing shafts and building ruins. The potential to revitalise the economy through tourism in former mining areas is also discussed in, for instance, the context of an ancient iron mine in Llumeres in the north of Spain (Fernandez Alvarez, Garcia-Lengomin Piteiga & Suarez-Lazare 2010) and of the former mining settlement of L’Argentiera in Sardina (De Montis, De Montis 2008). The mining landscape of the Røros area in southern Norway, a World Heritage Site on UNESCO’s list, is also problematised (Daugstad, Grytli 1999). The area is a multifaceted landscape, containing overlapping historic layers that are difficult to comprehend since they are scattered and sometimes subtle, in a large landscape.

A different perspective on the connection between mining activities and cultural heritage is investigated by O’Faircheallaigh (2008), in a study of how ongoing mining activities affect the cultural heritage of indigenous people. O’Faircheallaigh scrutinised a large number of agreements between mining companies and Australian Aborigines and concluded that there is a potential to protect the indigenous cultural heritage through negotiations, but that the bargaining position of the indigenous people must be improved in order to succeed.

Key references

Looking through the reference lists in all the articles presented above, a number of authors, books and articles occur in many of them. Reading all of these has been out of the scope in this literature review, but should be done in the continued research study.

Among the key authors are Laurajane Smith and particularly her book Uses of heritage (Smith 2006). Other authors frequently referred to are G.J. Ashworth and J.E. Tunbridge (e.g. Tunbridge 1984, Tunbridge, Ashworth 1996, Ashworth, Tunbridge 2000, Ashworth, Graham & Tunbridge 2007). There are also a number of anthologies included in the reference lists, such as The heritage reader (Fairclough 2008), Valuing historic environments (Gibson, Pendlebury 2009) and The Ashgate research companion to heritage and identity (Graham, Howard 2008). Articles by David Harvey (e.g. Harvey 2001) and Emma Waterton (e.g. Watson, Waterton 2010) are also repeatedly referred to. There are also a number of books such as Townscapes (Burke 1976), The heritage industry (Hewison 1987) and Conservation and the city (Larkham 1996) that are of significance. Furthermore, books such as The past is a foreign country (Lowenthal 1985) and Consuming places (Urry 1995) have been influential.
**RESEARCH GAP**

The literature study indicates a research gap about heritagisation processes in the built environment. There are articles that address urban conservation, but how buildings and built-up areas turn into heritage seem to be insufficiently investigated. There are also surprisingly few articles about ‘cultural heritage’ relating to mining activities. However, specific articles are missing in the databases searched. There are, for instance, a number of relevant articles published in the *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, a journal included in both Scopus and Web of Science, which I have found during recurring searches of this specific journal, which did not appear in the database search. Relevant articles not found using the selected keywords in the databases include articles referring to the authorised heritage discourse (e.g. Pendlebury 2012, Smith 2012, Storm, Olsson 2012), but also to Malmberget (Storm, Olsson 2012) and to Kiruna (Nilsson 2010).

Whether the lack of articles depends on the paucity of research carried out about these issues, or if the selected keywords are not adequate in finding the research, is difficult to say. Refined literature reviews should be performed as this research continues, in order to determine this.

**CONCLUSION**

This literature review aimed at being exploratory, but focused on three issues. The first was the issue of how built cultural heritage is perceived in a contemporary urban planning context. This resulted in articles analysing the significance of cultural heritage in urbanisation processes and the role of urban conservation. The second issue investigated was the concept of ‘heritagisation’. The term as such was not defined in any of the articles, but the main idea is that heritage is socially constructed. In this aspect, the concept links to the ‘authorised heritage discourse’. The third issue was that very few articles were found relating directly to my case study.

Carrying out the literature review based exclusively on database searches provided a great number of articles. This study indicates that there is a research gap about heritagisation processes in the built environment. However, more refined searches need to be carried out in order to have a sufficient outline of the research area. This should be combined with studying the references in articles found through the databases.
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