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Community Participation in Conservation Proposals of Islamic Pilgrimage Sites

Azin Saeedi

The University of Queensland

Keywords

Islamic pilgrimage destinations
Heritage conservation
Community participation
Historic urban landscapes
Sustainable development

Abstract

There is increasing pressure on urban landscapes surrounding Islamic pilgrimage sites to accommodate growing numbers of pilgrims. Recent developments have responded to this issue with comprehensive clearance of historic urban landscapes, constructing grand open spaces and dislocating local residents. The traditional expansion of Islamic pilgrimage sites was characterised by a layering of interconnected structures with continuous functions that merged gradually over time into the surrounding landscape. The rift between the traditional urban growth and the recent expansion approach across the Muslim world is inconsistent with international developments that seek to incorporate sustainable development into urban heritage conservation. To achieve sustainability, developments should meet intergenerational equity and protect the interests of stakeholders including the community. Literature has established two operational characteristics for sustainable development that helps gauging the extent to which it is integrated into practice: Stakeholder participation and strategic planning. Participatory processes create shared visions among stakeholders and facilitate long-term directions. However, in non-Western contexts where decision-making power and financial control reside in the central state, participation is either considered a threat to the state or its potential benefit is unrecognised. This paper argues where conservation objectives are determined by experts in isolation from the community's interests, the plans fail to be achieved. This will be demonstrated by undertaking a comparative analysis of conservation proposals prepared by international heritage experts for Islamic pilgrimage sites of Mecca, Medina, Kāzīmāyn and Shiraz. Visited by millions of pilgrims annually, the four sites have similar clearance and expansion patterns. This paper analyses the extent of community participation integrated into these proposals as one of the significant operational dimensions of sustainable development and a crucial link that enhances strategic planning. Finally, by reflecting on site specifics and social methods, this paper recommends participatory methods to enhance community engagement.

1. WCED, *Our Common Future*, <http://www.un-documents.net/wced-ocf.htm>, 1987, Ch 2 art 27; S. Quick, "Brundtland report," in *The sage international encyclopedia of travel and tourism*, edited by L. Lowry, 173-174. SAGE Publications, Inc, 2017. <https://www.doi-org.ezproxy.library.uq.edu.au/10.4135/9781483368924.n68>

2. K. Simpson, "Strategic planning and community involvement as contributors to sustainable tourism development," *Current Issues in Tourism* 4, 1 (2001): 3-41; L. Wilson and E. Boyle, "Interorganisational collaboration at UK World Heritage Sites," *Leadership & Organization Development Journal* 27, 6 (2006): 501-523; P. Williams, "The governance of sustainable development in Wales," *Local Environment* 11, 3 (2006): 253-267. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13549830600558754>; D. Rodwell, "Sustainability and the Holistic Approach to the Conservation of Historic Cities," *Journal of Architectural Conservation* Vol. 9, no. 1 (2003): 58-73.; D. Rodwell, "The World Heritage Convention and the exemplary management of complex heritage sites," *Journal of Architectural Conservation* 8, 3 (2002): 1-21; Lisa Ruhanen, "Strategic planning for local tourism destinations: An analysis of tourism plans," *Tourism and Hospitality Planning & Development* 1, no. 3 (2004): 239-253. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1479053042000314502>; C. Aas and A. Ladkin and J. Fletcher, "Stakeholder collaboration and heritage management," *Annals of Tourism Research*, 32, no.1 (2005): 28-48.

3. A stakeholder is defined as a person who has the right and capacity to participate in the process; thus, anyone who is impacted upon by the action of others has a right to be involved (B. Gray, *Collaboration Finding Common Ground for Multi-party Problems* (San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 1989) in Aas et al., *Stakeholder*, 31).

4. Aas et al., "Stakeholder"; Jamal and Getz, "Collaboration"; J. McCann, "Design"; Jamal and Getz, "The environment-community."

5. The paper uses Sullivan's perception of the local community as the 'present local populations regardless of whether they can be shown to have traditional associations with the place' (Sullivan, "Local involvement," 54).

6. Simpson, "Strategic"; Sullivan, "Local involvement"; Jamal and Getz, "The environment-community"; Jamal and Getz, "Collaboration"; Aas et al., "Stakeholder collaboration"; C. Landorf, "A framework for Sustainable Heritage Management: A Study of UK Industrial Heritage Sites," *International Journal of Heritage Studies* Vol 15, no. 6 (2009): 494-510. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13527250903210795>; C. Landorf, "A Future for the Past: A New Theoretical Model for Sustainable Historic Urban Environments," *Planning, Practice & Research* 26: 2 (2011): 147-165. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02697459.2011.560458>; E. Rojas, "Governance in historic city core regeneration projects," in *The Economics of Uniqueness: Investing in Historic Cores and Cultural Heritage Assets for Sustainable Development*, ed. G. Licciardi and R. Amirtahmasebi (Washington, DC: The World Bank, 2012), 143-181; D. Throsby, "Investment in urban heritage conservation in developing countries: Concepts, methods and data," *City, Culture and Society* xxx: (2015): 1-6; M. Reza Shirazi and Ramin Keivani, "Critical reflections on the theory and practice of social sustainability in the built environment – a meta-analysis," *Local Environment* Vol 22, 12 (2017): 1526-1545, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13549839.2017.1379476>; F. Bandarin and A. P. Rodgers, *Reshaping Urban Conservation: The Historic Urban Landscape Approach in Action* (Singapore: Springer, 2019); Brandon and P. Lombardi, *Evaluating Sustainable Development in the Built Environment* (Oxford: Blackwell Science, 2005).

This paper first reviews strategic dimensions of sustainable development and explains the gap in the literature. Before analysing conservation proposals in the cases, the paper provides a background to the conceptual core of pilgrimage and its spatial practices. Then, it examines large-scale demolitions and developments in the sites since mid-twentieth century. This part investigates conservation proposals that international heritage experts adopted in each case to assess (any) community participation in the standard-setting conservation frameworks. The paper finally proposes alternative ways of enabling participation in the contexts of cases that may render conservation objectives more sustainable.

Sustainable Development and Community Participation

'Sustainable development' is a development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.¹ Literature shows two strategic dimensions are widely accepted as operational characteristics of sustainable development: Stakeholder participation and empowerment, and strategic orientation (long-term and holistic planning).² The dimensions are recognised in international heritage frameworks and guidelines through reflecting intergenerational approach to cultural heritage and long-term and holistic approach to planning processes. This paper focuses on stakeholder³ participation as a key factor in fostering a sense of ownership and responsibility for the sustainable development of heritage.⁴ Among the broad scope of stakeholders, the paper narrows down the focus to the community⁵ because of their role in ensuring long-term viability of agreed-upon ends.⁶

Community participation is an active process by which beneficiary or client groups influence the direction and execution of a development project with a view of enhancing their well-being in terms of income, personal growth, self-reliance or other values they cherish.⁷ Inclusive participation leads to empowerment and helps implementing long-term change and increasing the effectiveness of decision-making.⁸ Participation must be seen as an underlining operational principle which should underpin all activities.⁹ Nonetheless, the practical implementation strategies for achieving authentic participation are non-specific.

In contexts with centralised structures of authority, participation is thought of as 'a fertile soil out of which trouble can grow.'¹⁰ Jukka Jokilehto and Ken Taylor recognise that power differences in non-Western contexts do not allow for deep listening to community voices and participatory processes.¹¹ Moreover, Ginzarly et al. argue identifying local values in places dominated by centralised planning is problematic.¹² Yet, further research is required to investigate the challenges of participatory processes in non-Western contexts and identify potential solutions.

7. S. Paul, community participation in development projects (Washington, DC: World Bank, 1987).

8. Chris Landorf, "Managing Industrial World Heritage Sites: Preservation, Presentation and Sustainability," PhD thesis, Deakin University, 2011; E. Rocha, "A Ladder of Empowerment," *Journal of Planning and Education Research* 17: 31–44.

9. UNDP, *Empowering*.

10. John Warren and Roy Worskett, "Conservation and Redevelopment of the Kadhimiyeh Area in Baghdad," in *Adaptive Reuse: Integrating Traditional Areas into the Modern Urban Fabric*, ed. Margaret Bentley Sevckenko (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Laboratory of Architecture and Planning, 1983), 46.

11. Jukka Jokilehto, "Evolution of the Normative Framework," in *Reconnecting the city: the historic urban landscape approach and the future of urban heritage*, edited by Francesco Bandarin and Ron Van Oers (John Wiley & Sons, 2015), 205–219; K. Taylor, "Cities as Cultural Landscapes," in *Reconnecting the City: The Historic Urban Landscape Approach and the Future of Urban Heritage*, ed by F. Bandarin and R. Van Oers (Oxford, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2015), 179–202.

12. Manal Ginzarly and Claudine Houbart and Jacques Teller, "The Historic Urban Landscape approach to urban management: a systematic review," *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 25, no. 10 (2019): 999–1019.

13. Kathryn Kueny, "Pilgrimage," in *Encyclopedia of Islam and the Muslim World*, ed. Richard Martin (New York: Macmillan Reference USA, 2004), 529–530.

14. A.J. Wensinck and J. Jomier, "Ka'ba," *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Second Edition, ed. P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs (Online edition, 2012); Sophia Arjana, "Islamic pilgrimages and sacred spaces," Published Sep 23, 2019, <https://www.bl.uk/sacred-texts/articles/islamic-pilgrimages-and-sacred-spaces#>; Sami Angawi, "The Hajj and conservation," in *Conservation as Cultural Survival*, ed. Renata Holod (Philadelphia: Aga Khan Award for Architecture, 1980), 41–43.

15. Angawi, "The Hajj"; Kueny, "Pilgrimage"; Carol Delaney, "The 'hajj': Sacred and Secular," *American Ethnologist* 17, no. 3 (1990): 513–30, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/644859>.

16. R. I. Lawless and G. H. Blake, "The future of historic centres: conservation or redevelopment," in *The Changing Middle Eastern City*, edited by Gerald Blake and Richard Lawless (Routledge, 1980), 178–208.

17. R. Bsheer, "The property regime: Mecca and the politics of redevelopment in Saudi Arabia," *The online journal of Jadaliyya*, published on 8/9/2015. <https://www.jadaliyya.com/Details/32436>; Hossein Sadri, *Neo-liberalism and the Architecture of the Post Professional Era* (Springer International Publishing, 2018).

18. Stefano Bianca, *Urban Form in the Arab World - Past and Present* (Zurich: vdf, 2000); "Hajj Statistics," General Authority for Statistics Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (2019), https://www.stats.gov.sa/sites/default/files/haj_40_en.pdf

Conservation and Development

Islamic Pilgrimage Sites: Mecca and Medina

Islamic pilgrimage sites attract large number of pilgrims who perform practices in particular times and places. Iran, Iraq and Saudi Arabia are homes to the most prominent Islamic pilgrimage sites. The holy cities of Mecca and Medina, with the pilgrimage sites of Ka'ba, the Holy Mosque and the Prophet's Mosque, are destinations for about two million Muslims from approximately 160 countries annually (fig 1).¹³ Every year pilgrims make the greater pilgrimage (Hajj-al-Tamattu) during the seventy-day pilgrimage season or the lesser pilgrimage (Hajj Umra) during the year.¹⁴ The practice of Hajj dates back to 632 AD and includes certain rites tied to a specific time and place, such as performing the circumambulation of the Ka'ba (tawāf) seven times, making seven trips between the hills of Safa and Marwa (Sa'y), drinking from the Well of Zamzam, and the Sacrifice at Mina.¹⁵



Figure 1: Pilgrims praying around the Ka'ba in Mecca in 2019. The background shows buildings under construction (Photograph by Abd-al-Ghani Bashir on CNN News, <https://edition.cnn.com/2019/08/08/world/gallery/hajj-pilgrimage-mecca-2019/index.html>).

Since mid-twentieth century, the physical structures around Islamic pilgrimage sites that corresponded to cultural and social practices were cleared (fig 2, 3). A primary enabler of this approach is what Richard Lawless calls the 'ill-conceived monument-objective approach' where the policy is to free public buildings from their surroundings.¹⁶ The other drivers are practicing religious hegemony associated with these sites and increasing revenue from pilgrimage.¹⁷ In Mecca and Medina, the sevenfold increase of pilgrims since 1950- reaching 2,489,406 annually- has put development pressure on the holy cities with demand for vehicular access to the sanctuaries, paths for pedestrian movement, and large-scale construction of apartment buildings for seasonal pilgrim accommodation.¹⁸

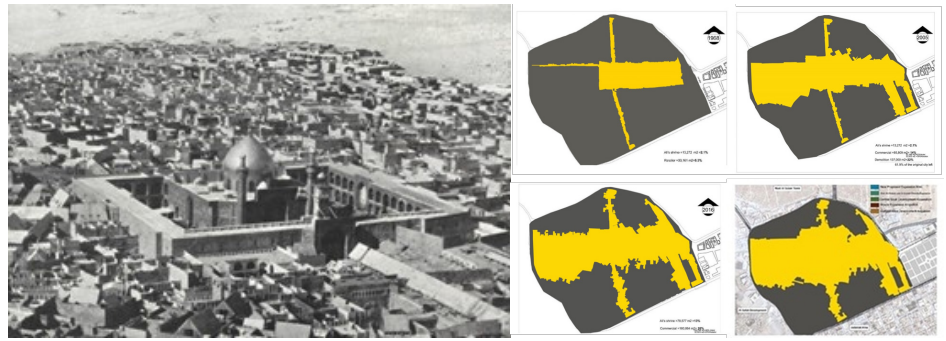


Figure 2: Left: An aerial view of Najaf Old City in 1945 shows the Imām Ali's shrine and the roofed Grand Bazār sitting in the middle of the cluster of houses (Edward Lewis, "Edward Lewis explores the city of Najaf," *The Architectural Review*, originally published in July 1945 and republished in April 2016, <https://www.architectural-review.com/author/edward-lewis>; Right: the progressive clearance of the historic urban landscape surrounding the shrine in 1968, 2005, 2016; the plan for the site's re-development by 2030 (Dewan Architects, Stage Five Report, cited in Falah, "the shrine," 137, modified by the author).



Figure 3: The shrine of Hosayn and Abbās in the historic city of Karbala in 1932 sitting in the heart of the city (Eric and Edith Matson Photograph Collection from the Archive of the U.S Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/matpc.07402/?co=matpc>); The map of Karbala in 1918; the proposal for the development of the two sites in 1975 by local Iraqi authorities after Fotiadis Associates recommended the entire old town should change its function to be dedicated to pilgrimage (Fethi, "Urban conservation," 202-4, modified by the author).

19. According to UNESCO Recommendation 2011, 'The historic urban landscape' is the urban area 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. This paper uses urban landscape instead of fabric to evoke the lived landscape unless the term 'fabric' is used in sources.

20. Angawi, "The Hajj," 42

21. Angawi, "The Hajj"; Richard I. Lawless, "The future of historic centres: conservation or redevelopment," in *The Changing Middle Eastern City*, ed. Gerald Blake and Richard Lawless (Routledge, 1980), 178-208; Bianca, *Urban Form*.

22. Bianca, *Urban Form*.

23. The HAJJ Research Centre was set up in 1975 at the King Abdul Aziz University, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, with the aim of studying the environment of Hajj—the annual pilgrimage to the Holy City of Mecca. See Z. Sardar (1978), "The Information Unit of the Hajj Research Centre," *Aslib Proceedings* Vol. 30, no. 5 (1978): 158-164, <https://doi.org/10.1108/eb050627>

24. Dr. Stefano Bianca is an architect and urban designer specialized on conservation in the Islamic world.

25. Bianca, *Urban Form*.

26. Bianca, *Urban Form*, 225-230.

The historic urban landscape¹⁹ of Mecca was noted for its three-to five-story buildings facing the Ka'ba.²⁰ However, the traditional townscape has been transformed by high-rise hotels and highways to respond to the needs of the increasing flow of pilgrims (fig 4 and 5).²¹ Major issues with this urban development are unsympathetic nature of the extensions to the historic structures and obstruction of the mountainous topography of Mecca.²² In 1984, the Hajj Research Centre in Jeddah²³ decided that urban problems in Mecca needed urgent attention and thus, started a collaboration with Stefano Bianca.²⁴ Bianca advised that the urban design scheme for Mecca should improve public transportation efficiency while considering aesthetic, economic and environmental dimensions.²⁵ His proposal included alternative transportation solutions for the inner city, construction of temporary pilgrim villages, adoption of height codes, and repairing the original historic urban form (fig 6).²⁶ This proposal involves a spatial evolution analysis, adopts a holistic approach to conservation and development and integrates the protection of historic urban form into broader planning programmes for the city (advised by UNESCO 1972, 1976 and ICOMOS 1976). While it focuses on the urban morphology, it does not illustrate thorough social analysis of the context (advised by UNESCO

27. Bianca, *Urban Form*.

1976); nor community participation (advised by UNESCO 1976 and ICOMOS 1979). The project was discontinued due to a lack of support from local authorities and was replaced by a denser scheme with high-rise apartment and hotel buildings.²⁷



Figure 4: Mecca townscape in 1885. The surrounding urban landscape faces the Holy Mosque and represents the influence of Hajj (photograph by the Dutch Orientalist Scholar, Christiaan Snouck Hu Hurgronje, available on The Online Khalili Collection).

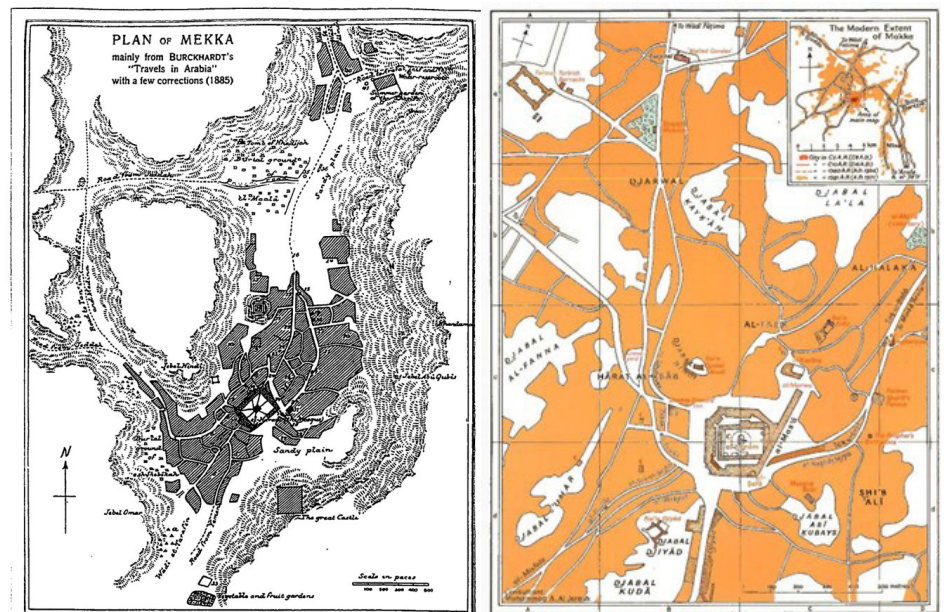


Figure 5: Left: The plan of Mecca in 1818 before mid-twentieth century demolitions, shows the Holy Mosque was integrated into the neighbouring landscape (El Sayed M Touba, "Conservation in an Islamic context a case study of Makkah" (Master thesis., Durham University, 1997), Available on Durham E-Theses Online: <http://etheses.dur.ac.uk/4981/>, page 58 after John Lewis Burckhardt); Right: Mecca in 1970, after the first major extension of the Haram (W.C. Brice, *An Historical Atlas of Islam* (Leiden: Brill, 1981), 23 (North sign corrected by the author)).

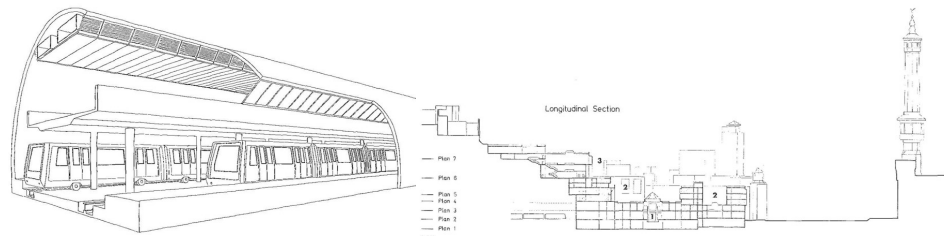


Figure 6: Left: Schematic drawing shows how the 'People Mover system' as an alternative transportation system; Right: A cross-section through the infill complex proposed above the outlet of the Kodey tunnel (including the terminal hall and commercial facilities (1), hotels (2), and a conference centre (3)) to improve the townscape disruption caused by cutting the mountain slope in the developments (Bianca, *Urban Form*, 228, 9).

28. Bianca, *Morphology* as.

29. Bianca, *Urban Form*, 234; Stefano Bianca, "Madinah Al-Muniwarah: Planning and Urban Design Concepts for the Central Area," in Mimar 12: *Architecture in Development*, ed. Hasan-Uddin Khan, (Singapore: Concept Media Ltd, 1984), 40-46.

30. Bianca, *Urban Form*, 235-236.

31. Stefano Bianca, "Designing Compatibility between New Projects and the Local Urban Tradition," in *Proceedings of the fourth seminar in a series offered by Continuing Education Program of the M.I.T. Laboratory of Architecture and Planning and the Harvard Graduate School of Design in collaboration with Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture at Harvard and M.I.T: Continuity and Change Design Strategies for Large-scale Urban Development*, edited by Margaret Bentley Sevcenko (1984): 21-35.

32. Stefano Bianca, "The Threat to Historic Islamic Cities through western style development: The case of the holy city of Medina." *Islamic Quarterly* 26, no. 2 (1982): 108-116; Bianca, *Urban Form*.

Similar to Mecca's proposal, there is limited evidence that indicates community engagement in Medina's conservation planning strategies. The focus of this project (1982) is on repairing the urban morphology to revive the traditional interrelations between single components and the overarching spatial system.²⁸ Three-quarters of the historic landscape around the Mosque have been progressively demolished between 1952 and 1978 to provide wider open spaces, vehicular access and car parks for pilgrims (fig 7).²⁹ Bianca proposed a plan for a 'Cultural Area' around the Mosque as the keystone of a Master Plan rooted in the traditional image of Medina; a sanctuary embedded in a cluster of houses.³⁰ The Cultural Area included a complex of interconnected blocks of auxiliary buildings such as hotels, shops, pilgrim centres, cultural institutions, etc., to reweave the fragmented urban fabric (fig 8).³¹ During the development of this Master Plan, national government authorities commissioned an independent scheme for the Mosque's extension with grand open spaces.³² This intervention received minimal objection from the community.

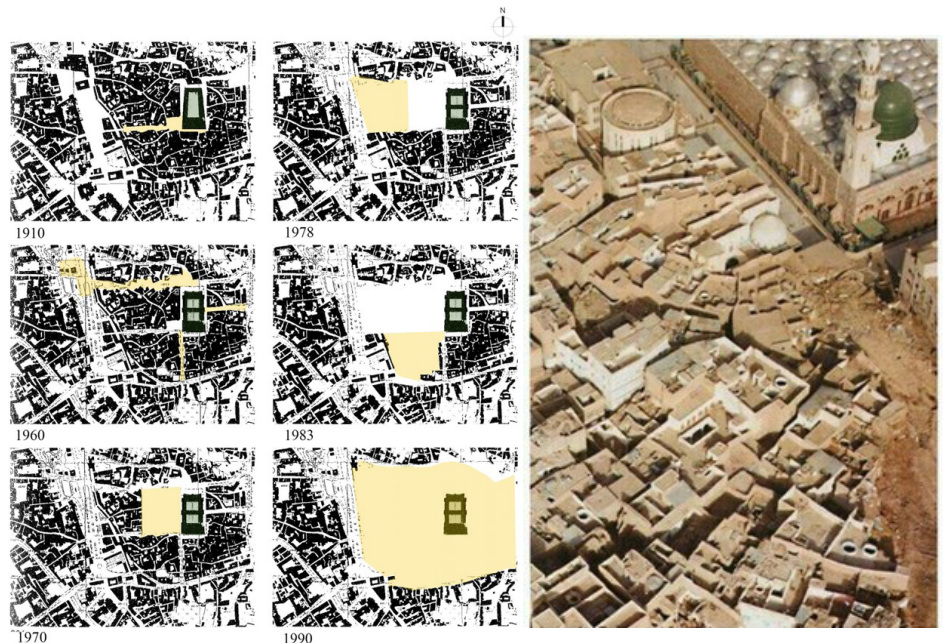


Figure 7: Left: The progressive clearance of the historic urban landscape around the Prophet's Mosque from 1910 to 1990 (Bianca, *Urban Form*, 232, modified by the author); Right: The Mosque used to be integrated into the surrounding urban landscape (@ Anaserafi, "al-Masjed Nabavi in the past, before the modern expansions, and the Al-Aghāt lane, Aref Hekmat library, and Abu Ayyūb al-Ansari house appear before removal," Twitter post, Dec 4, 2013, <https://twitter.com/anaserafi/status/407909444140691456>).

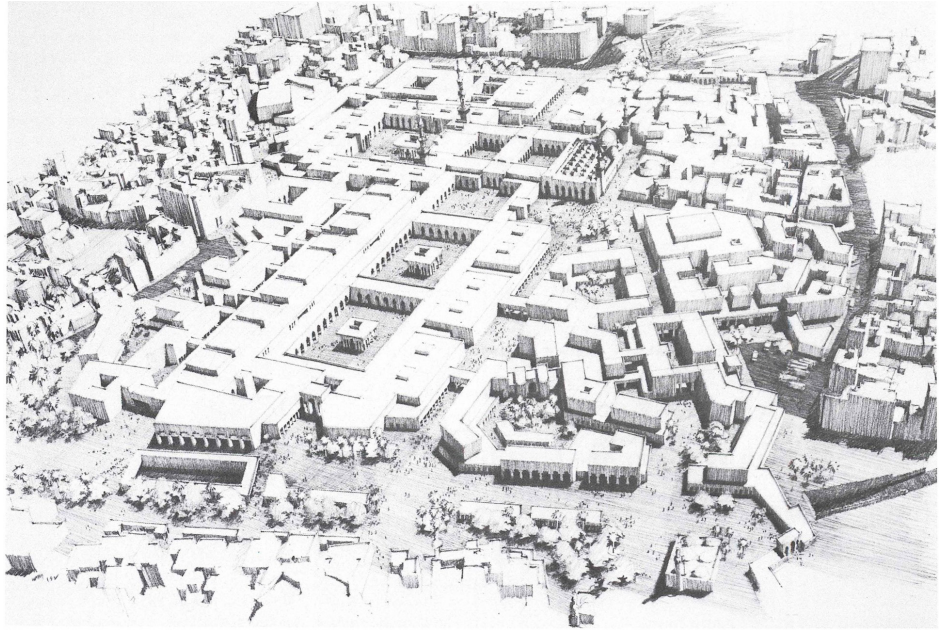


Figure 8: Bianca's unrealised proposal for the Haram extension seen from southwest: A new volumetric arrangement for the rehabilitation of the large open spaces is visible in the central area (Bianca, "Madinah," 44).

The Shi'i shrines in Kāzimiya and Shiraz

33. Hamid Algar, "Emamzade," *Online Encyclopedia of Iranica* (1998, last updated 2011), <https://iranicaonline.org/articles/emamzade-i>

34. Richard Martin, "Ziyāra," in *Encyclopedia of Islam and the Muslim World*, ed. Richard Martin (New York: Macmillan Reference USA, 2004); A.K.S Lambton, "Imāmzāda," in *Encyclopedia of Islam*, Second Edition, ed. P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs (2012), http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.library.uq.edu.au/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_SIM_3552

35. Shubber Falah, "The Shrine that Consumed Its Town: The Role of Religion and Politics in Reshaping the Iraqi City of Najaf" (PhD diss., University of Cincinnati, 2018); Sadiq Abid, "An examination of heritage protection and conservation practices in the pilgrimage city of Najaf" (PhD diss., University of Sheffield, 2016); Bianca, Urban Form; Lawless, "The future"; Ihsan Abdul Wahab Fethi, "Urban conservation in Iraq: the case for protecting the cultural heritage of Iraq with special reference to Baghdad, including a comprehensive inventory of its areas and buildings of historic or architectural interest" (PhD diss., University of Sheffield, 1978).

36. Fethi, "Urban conservation"; Stanek, *Architecture*.

37. John Warren, "Baghdad: Two case studies of conservation," in *The Arab city: its character and Islamic cultural heritage. Proceedings of a symposium held in medina, kingdom of Saudi Arabia* (28 feb.-5 mar.1981): 242-250.

Similar to Hajj, other forms of pilgrimage include time- and place-oriented rituals. Pilgrimage to Shi'i shrines (the burial sites of the Twelve Shi'i Imāms or their descendants) is called Ziyāra and dates back to 680 AD. Common rituals of Ziyāra include performing daily prayers, circumambulation of the tomb, and seeking the intercession of the Imām or making a vow to them (nazr).³³ Compared to Hajj, Ziyāra is less formalised, less dependent on time and place, and includes local variations in ritual performance and architecture.³⁴ Despite differences among practices of Hajj and Ziyāra, patterns of development are very similar in the Holy Mosques and Shi'i shrines. For the purpose of this paper, the shrines of Mūsā-al-Kāzim (d. 802 AD) and Muhammad Taki (d. 834 AD) in Kāzimiya (Iraq) and the shrine of Ahmad and Muhammad Ebn-al-Musā-al-Kāzim (d. 817 AD) in Shiraz (Iran) are selected. The cases both demonstrate similar patterns of expansion.

Since 1960, the cluster of houses abutting Shi'i shrines gave way to open spaces, accommodation for pilgrims, and commercial tenancies pushing the residents to the boundaries of the historic city. Early intentions for this model of expansion were focused on monumentalising the shrines and freeing them from their surroundings.³⁵ In 1976, the shrine of Kāzimayn was separated from its close-knit surrounding by a Polish firm- Miastoprojekt-Karakow (1967-73)- whose planners were charged by Baghdād Municipality to prepare a conservation plan for the historic core (fig 9).³⁶ The extensive demolitions caused social degradation in the area and created an urge for the city of Baghdād to commission conservation work to conserve both the fabric of the city and a way of life which reflected Islamic traditions and architectural values.³⁷ UK-based architects, John Warren and Roy Worskett, were appointed by Baghdād municipality to prepare a proposal for rebuilding the demolished landscape around the shrine,

38. John Warren was a conservator in UK, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. Roy Worskett was the appointed Bath city architect and chief planning officer in the aftermath of The Sack of Bath (Rodwell, *The historic*).

39. This was done very briefly due to inadequate time assigned to the initial phase of the project by government. '... we were simply not given the opportunity. We had to rely on *intuition*' (Warren and Worskett, *Conservation*).

40. John Warren and Roy Worskett, "Conservation," 45.

41. John Warren and Roy Worskett, "Conservation," 32.

impart new life and commercial vigour to the area.³⁸

The conservation proposal does not reflect an in-depth examination of the community's values and interests. The interviews with leading architects of the project show they paid attention to the socioeconomic profile of residents,³⁹ insufficient amenities in the city, and the loss to substantial historic areas. However, the experts were specifically told by the government 'not to be involved in any form of citizen participation'.⁴⁰ Their planning process reflects long-term and holistic planning (advised by UNESCO 1972, 1976, 1979) with some levels of community consideration (advised by UNESCO 1976). Despite this, the architects decided to 'design for a gradual upward change to entice back, if not the original population, at least a comparable middle-income group' instead of designing for current residents.⁴¹ This project remained unrealised too.

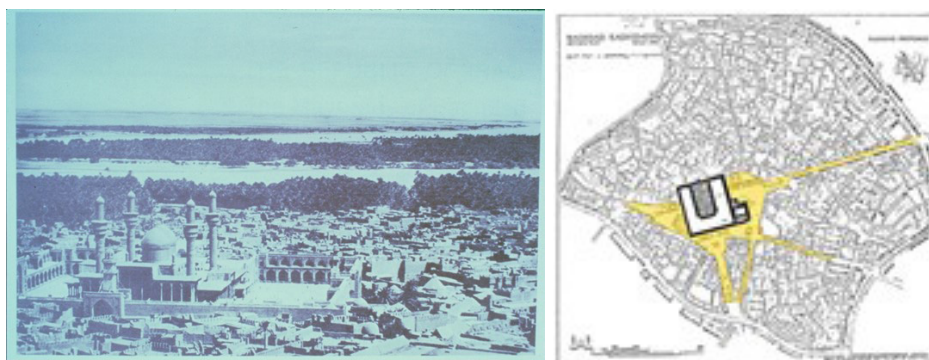


Figure 9. Left: The shrine in its original setting in 1920 (MIT Libraries, <http://hdl.handle.net/1721.3/28042>); Right: The progressive clearance of the historic urban landscape around the shrine, 1973 (Fethi, "Urban conservation," 305, modified by the author).



Figure 10: Left: Warren suggested reconstructing the demolished buildings sympathetic to the character of the past but designed for the needs of future (Warren, "Baghdād," 6, modified by the author); Right: New buildings were designed to create a ring of bazar around the shrine and allow circumambulation https://www.archnet.org/sites/3848?media_content_id=5330.

The last case, although indicates the application of heritage best practices, do not represent a process of community participation at any levels. In 2015, a team of international heritage experts, was appointed by national authorities to prepare a Conservation Master Plan (CMP)

42. Meysam Deghati and MohammadMehdi Norouzian, "The measures taken by UDRC in an attempt to revitalise historic and cultural areas," in *Abadi Journal*, no. 77-78 (Autumn and winter 2017): 106- 123.

43. Ginzarly et al., "The historic," 1008.

44. ICOMOS, "European Charter of the Architectural Heritage 1975," <https://www.icomos.org/en/charters-and-texts/179-articles-en-francais/ressources/charters-and-standards/170-european-charter-of-the-architectural-heritage>, Article 1.

45. UNESCO, "Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape," (Paris: UNESCO, 2011), <http://whc.unesco.org/en/activities/638>, Article 10.

46. UNESCO 2011, Article 11.

for the historic city of Shiraz. The objective was to enhance the living environment, and balance conservation and development in the historic city including the demolitions around the shrine of Shah-e Cherāgh. The site has undergone several clearances and developments since 1950s with a view to re-enacting a notable building and expanding pilgrim-oriented services (fig 11-15). The heritage experts adopted the Integrated Conservation approach to maintain the significance of the historic city and the Historic Urban Landscape approach (HUL) as a management system for implementing the conservation plan.⁴²

The HUL and Integrated Conservation approaches do not offer precise implementation strategies for different local contexts with complex political and economic structures. Ginzarly et al. (2019) note, to substantiate the operational dimension of the HUL, future research needs to address, to a greater extent, the different levels of governance, the tension between universal and national norms, and the procedural and discursive issues in the process of achieving sustainability.⁴³ The Integrated conservation emphasises the significance of groups of lesser buildings, all areas of historic or cultural interest as the architectural heritage besides the individual buildings.⁴⁴ The HUL provides the basis for an integrated approach to the identification, assessment, conservation and management of historic urban landscapes within an overall sustainable development framework.⁴⁵ It aims to preserve the quality of the human environment, enhance the sustainable use of urban spaces, while recognising their dynamic character, and promoting social and functional diversity.⁴⁶ Yet, transferring these practices to local contexts requires further research.

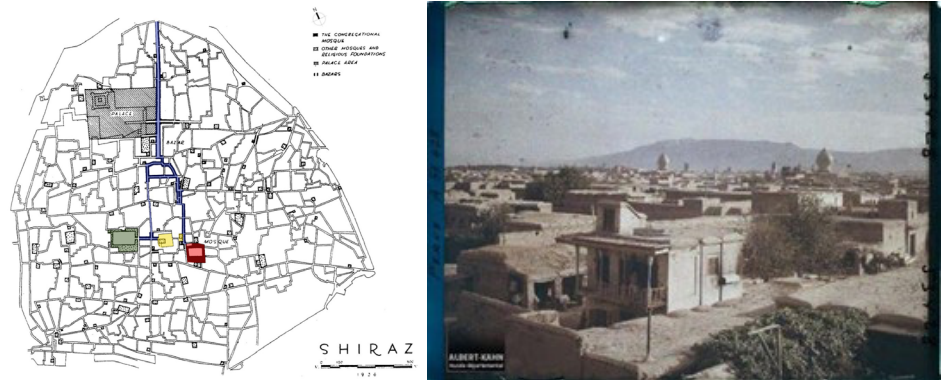


Figure 11: Left: The last map of Shiraz (1936) before the changes in the surrounding landscape of the Sha-e Cherāgh. The Shah-e Cherāgh is highlighted in yellow, The Heritage listed Atābeg Mosque in green, the Ancient Mosque in red, and bazārs in blue (Donald Wilber, *The Masjed-e Atiq of Shiraz* (Shiraz: Asia Institute, Pahlavi University, 1972), 67, modified by the author); Right: Photograph of Shiraz townscape on 17/09/1927 shows how the shrines sit in the urban landscape (Albert Kahn, "Archives de la Planète," Operateur: Frédéric Gadmer, 1927, <http://collections.albert-kahn.hauts-de-seine.fr/>)



Figure 12: Aerial photographs show the progressive demolition of the landscape surrounding the Shah-e Cherāgh in 1964 and 1975 (The Archive of Iran National Cartographic Centre).



Figure 13: The aerial view shows the demolitions between 1964 and 1975 (Old_Shiraz. 2020. "Old map of Shiraz," Instagram Photo, December 20, 2020. https://www.instagram.com/old_shiraz/?hl=en)).



Figure 14: Changes to the shrine's surrounding from 1981 to 1996 (The Archive of Iran National Cartographic Centre).



Figure 15: Demolitions in the urban landscape surrounding the shrine. Number 1 is the Shah-e Cherāgh, the light gray mark shows 1995 demolition, the dark gray mark shows the demolished landscape after 2009 (Google Map, modified by the author).

47. Jukka Jokilehto and Carlo Cesari and M.A. Soheil, "Report on mission to Iran," Oct 2015, 1-24; "Report, documentation of preparing the Conservation Master Plan for the historic city," UDRC, MRUD, February 10- 28, 2016 (b), 1-84; "Report: Re-development and Revitalisation scheme of the Shah-e Cherāgh Complex and its surrounding urban fabric," UDRC, MRUD 2016 (c), 1-7; "Report, documentation of preparing the Conservation Master Plan for the historic city," 2016 (a), UDRC, MRUD, May 28- June 11, 2016, 1-81; M.A. Soheil and A. Soltāni, and Z. Mahzūn, 2017. "Report, A general report of the CMP project, Shiraz (A collaboration between the international team and the Office of Shiraz Urban Conservation Plan," Translated by Homā korāsāni from English to Persian, October 25, 2017, 1-126.

48. "Report 2016 (a)," 46-55; "Report 2016 (b)," 27- 37.

49. "Report 2016 (b)," 29.

However, the available evidence from Reports and Action Plans⁴⁷ prepared by the team between 2015 and 2017 shows conducting a comprehensive survey did not advance to further steps as well as 'reaching consensus on what values to protect and transmit to future generations and determining the attributes that carry these values.' Also, documentation sheets indicate the collected information mainly hinged on physicality of the urban fabric such as the state of conservation of the existing buildings, function, typological characteristics of buildings and open spaces, street networks, ownership status, ethnicity of residents, and population.⁴⁸ The social survey included limited information including living satisfaction and safety, sense of belonging (familiarity with neighbours, having relatives living in the area, immigration status), socio-economic information (living costs, education level, residents' occupations).⁴⁹ The community has not been involved in the planning process to date. After struggling with 'reaching an agreement about what values to protect,' the project was finally stopped in December 2021.

Islamic pilgrimage site	Re-development issues	Conservation proposal	Design Considerations	Available documents
The Ka'ba and Holy Mosque Mecca (1984)	Large-scale demolition of the immediate neighbourhood surrounding Ka'ba Disrupted townscape of the city Traffic congestion in the area	Re-development scheme for the urban landscape surrounding the Ka'ba Summary of main objectives: Maintain the traditional urban form and (physical) continuity, an integrated approach combining public transportation efficiency with environmental improvement, maintaining an underlying coherence, preservation of a human-scale environment benefiting the religious experience	Pilgrimage requirements at different times of the year (such as space required for performing rituals, accommodation required in peak seasons, efficient transportation during Hajj) considered	Conceptual guidelines in Bianca, <i>Urban Form</i> .
Prophet's Mosque, Medina (1982)	Large-scale demolition of the immediate neighbourhood surrounding the Mosque	A Master Plan for Medina Summary of main objectives: An integrated approach, re-establish a continuous urban fabric with a new Volumetric Arrangement (including auxiliary buildings, such as hotels, shops, restaurants, pilgrim centres, cultural institutions, a conference hall, etc.), re-organise vehicular traffic	Pilgrimage requirements considered/ Flexible design considered to leave an opportunity to coming generations to decide according to their needs and convictions, Rehabilitating a community courtyard Bianca defined pilot projects to receive feedback and improve decisions accordingly.	Conceptual guidelines in Bianca, <i>Urban Form</i> ; Bianca, "Madinah."
Shrine of Kāzimayn, Iraq (1980)	A major loss to substantial historic areas in recent re-developments	Design and arrange the construction of the re-development around the shrine Summary of main objectives: An integrated approach, restore community life, defining a Conservation Area with regulations that control physical intervention tie the historic and new areas around the shrine together, re-establish some of the previous functions	Architects were told by government NOT to be involved in any form of citizen participation. However, they considered the following: Urban landscape to adapt to the life of what they thought would go on for the next 50 years (cater only to the middle- and higher-income groups). The owners to be entitled to receive grant aids towards the cost of approved schemes of house improvements.	John Warren and Roy Worskett, "Conservation," John Warren, "Baghdad."
Shrine of Shah-e Cherāgh, Shiraz (2015)	Large-scale demolition of the immediate neighbourhood surrounding the Shah-e Cherāgh and in general in the historic city of Shiraz	Prepare a Conservation Master Plan and a Conservation Management Plan Summary of main objectives: Integrated conservation of the historic city, re-arranging street networks, socio-economic revitalisation, improving touristic infrastructures and facilities.	The integrity of the urban morphology considered. Limited evidence of exploring local community values and considering the community groups as part of the landscape.	Jukka Jokilehto et al., "Report on mission to Iran"; M.A. Soheil et al., "Report"; "Report 2016 (a)"; "Report 2016 (b)"; "Report 2016 (c)."

50. "We do not register historic buildings to avoid safeguarding responsibilities," ILNA News, June 13, 2015, <https://www.ilna.news/fa/tiny/news-283351>; "We will not allow the demolition of historic houses. Said Head of SCC," Khabaronline News, July 7, 2018, <https://www.khabaronline.ir/news/788264/>

51. The author does not intend to argue this was the only reason behind unsuccessful conservation proposals, but a significant factor.

The findings indicate all four proposals included limited interpretation of Islamic pilgrimage sites as part of the larger political and economic context (Table 1). They were initiated by governmental organisations and designed by experts in isolation from the community. They were interrupted or discontinued by governments without receiving much objection from residents despite their dissatisfaction with radical developments.⁵⁰ While conservation plans have been developed to improve the physical integrity in all four cases, the analysis shows little consideration was given to understanding the values that the contemporary society attributed to their urban heritage. The paper argues lack of informed involvement of the community was one important factor that rendered conservation proposals unsustainable.⁵¹ In the following section, this paper looks for alternative perspectives to integrate this element into planning processes.

Community Participation; An alternative perspective

52. UNDP, *Empowering people: A guide to participation*. United Nations (1997).

53. M. Ripp et al, "Heritage-Based Urban Development: The Example of Regensburg," in *Reshaping Urban Conservation: The Historic Urban Landscape Approach in Action*, edited by Francesco Bandarin and Ana Pereira Roders (Singapore: Springer), 435–458.

54. 'Information: when stakeholders are informed about their rights, responsibilities, and options, the first important step towards genuine participation takes place. The main drawback at this stage is that emphasis is placed on one-way communication, with neither channel for feedback nor power for negotiation.

Consultation: this level entails two-way communication, where stakeholders have the opportunity to express suggestions and concerns, but no assurance that their input will be used at all or as they intended. Therefore, it could be said that at this level stakeholders are 'participating in participation'. The most frequent approaches to consultation are chaired meetings where stakeholders do not contribute to the agenda, public hearings, and surveys.

Consensus-building: here stakeholders interact in order to understand each other and arrive at negotiated positions which are tolerable to the entire group. A common drawback is that vulnerable individuals and groups tend to remain silent or passively acquiesce.

(UNDP, *Empowering*)

55. Setha Low is a professor in environmental psychology. S.M. Low, "Social Science Methods in Landscape Architecture," *Landscape Planning* 8 (1987): 137–48.

56. Low, "Social Science."

57. Low, "Social Science."

58. Low, "Social Science."

To identify strategies of community participation, it is important to rethink and contextualise potential areas of participation in individual contexts. According to United Nations Development Programme, there is no universal model for the process of participation. However, participation has critical stages- decision-making, implementation, benefit sharing, evaluation- and areas of development- participation as a MEANS, participation as an END.⁵² To contextualise community participation in cities with complex structures of authority and institutional arrangements, possible arenas of participation should be identified according to specific analysis of the social, cultural and political climate. When it is not possible to employ civic participation models common in European contexts such as the inclusive working groups created in Regensburg in Germany,⁵³ it is necessary to design alternative civic engagement tools to balance conservation and sustainable development. This will help conservation proposals to progress from 'non-participation' and 'information' to 'consultation' and an achievable extent of 'consensus building.'⁵⁴

To put this into practice in non-Western contexts with power imbalances, this paper suggests employing social methods proposed by Setha Low (1987).⁵⁵ Low proposes various sampling techniques and methods to collect data about stakeholders' needs, desires and potential conflicts: Questionnaire (to obtain representative data on population indicators), unstructured interview of a selected sample (to provide depth of information), participant observation (to gain perception of social interaction), and demographic analysis (to present an overview of the population characteristics).⁵⁶ A further step in data collection is identification of conflicts that may impact the future success of the plan.⁵⁷ To address this issue, Low proposes network analysis and unstructured interviews to perceive the local community associations, interconnections and their attitudes concerning group equanimity.⁵⁸ Considering the difficulty of inclusive participation in the contexts of examined cases, the paper suggests Low's methods be integrated into 'mapping of the city's resources.' This step can be anchored to enhance community participation, identify their values, and raise awareness regarding the significance of heritage and conservation projects. This is by no means a definitive strategy, but suggestions to trigger alternative ways of promoting community participation rather than simply excluding it from planning in contexts with centralised systems of governance. One final consideration is that the choice of methods depends on available funds in the project, the size and composition of the population, and acceptability of a method in a particular political climate.

Conclusion

This paper set out to examine community participation in conservation proposals of Islamic pilgrimage sites (and their extended settings) in Mecca, Medina, Kāzimiya, and Shiraz. This was achieved through a critical analysis of Project Progress Reports, Action Plans, design alternatives, interviews, maps and photos provided in publications of heritage experts who have worked in these sites. Urban heritage conservation around Islamic pilgrimage sites where state-sanctioned

expansion threatens the integrity of surrounding historic urban landscapes and communities is challenging. These sites have evolved over centuries and have unique spatial qualities and functional densities. Recent expansions have, however, followed a different model based on unsubstantiated value system focusing on aesthetics of sites and evaluating the surrounding historic urban landscape as slums with no value to be conserved. The sites have undergone progressive clearance of the urban landscape, imposing vistas, and central interventions motivated by State economic interests.

The conservation proposals in all cases mainly hinge on creating a coherent urban fabric, maintaining the traditional urban form and (physical) continuity, upgrading the physical environment and providing facilities mainly for pilgrims while leaving community participation out of the planning processes. Although the paper acknowledges the political and administrative complexities in non-Western contexts further complicate heritage initiative, it argues lack of context-specific situation analysis, identification of local values and community capacities limited the long-term influence of conservation proposals in all four cases. For heritage conservation to be sustainable, it is significant to give a voice to the community. Although community participation is a dominant dimension in sustainable development, strategies of engagement remain problematic. Therefore, the paper suggests identifying possible arenas of participation in particular contexts and applying social methods to data collection stage may enhance community engagement with their heritage.