



Context, birth and regeneration strategies for distressed urban areas

four case studies on global parallels and differences

ABSTRACT

Marginalised, dilapidated, deprived, often centres of crime, poor living conditions and even poorer life prospects. It is common knowledge that this is the reality of many urban areas in numerous mega cities and not only. Each developing country has struggled with uncontrolled urban sprawl in the rapid urbanization processes that commenced with the industrial revolution almost two centuries ago. Furthermore, natural calamities, war aftermath and poor economic outlook led to the desolation of many parts of the world. Part of a vicious circle of self-enforcing and intertwined dynamics of various character, these areas usually seem beyond salvation. However, history proves that this is not the case and although difficult, change is possible.

This paper focuses on the relatively new challenge of urban regeneration by examining four case studies with the aim of pinpointing the underlying political, economic and social circumstances which generate such negative zones and the subsequent urban strategies employed for their improvement.

A comparative study between four urban transformations, each of varying scale, geographical location and different respective prerequisites, draws the parallels and margins in an attempt to underline the main agents of change and the activation of dormant capital. The comparison is carried out following a structure, based on recurring patterns and themes, which consider various parameters such as historical context, political scene, economic dynamics, urban strategy and public involvement.

By analysing examples of successful strategies from the recent past in relation to their context, connections are made between various criteria and strategic courses of action are presented as tools in the quest of making our environment more sustainable and healthy to its users. This thesis work contributes to the urban regeneration discourse and could be of use for future revitalization projects.

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Fig. 1:
Geographical locations of the four case-studies

CHAPTER 1

EXPOSITION

INTRODUCTION

In a dynamic and rapidly changing environment, where countless factors are at play, the issues of rapid urbanization and struggle to impose efficient urban planning are of pressing importance for the sustainable future development of our cities. A general absence of experience in some of the circumstances, which characterize our present settlements, is not uncommon - it is for the first time in history that the ratio of city-to-village inhabitants takes on such a dramatic slant. According to UN's World Urbanisation Prospects 2018 report¹, the figure stands at 56.2% (2020) urban population, as compared to 1950s' 29.6%. Striking but not unexpected, the prognosis for 2050 reaches the alarming 68.4%. Furthermore, the current number of people, that the planet has to sustain, is greater than ever before.

Big data and statistics have made it possible to create an outline of the prospects, but the quest of quality of future urban settlements is not yet explicitly solved in practice. The aims seem clear, the tools are known, their effects and limitations are researched and quantified. However, slums continue to be real and to persevere in their uncontrolled sprawl in many parts of the world. Inhumane living conditions seem to be the status quo for zones, which many would consider beyond salvation. What's more, those are not isolated cases. Programmes, policies, organisations, immense financial capital and manpower are directed towards tackling the issues of deprived areas - a process, which could take decades with no certainty to success. However, history proves that although difficult, change is possible.

Perhaps an obvious fact but still one that is worth noting is that so far a universal formula has not been discovered. It is likely that one will not be found, as each case represents a distinct conundrum, where multiple different components intertwine and affect each other. These sometimes lead to a vicious circle of self-enforcing dynamics of deprivation, which last years before the continuum is broken. What can be said with certainty about today is that the journey towards healthy cities is still a work in progress; it is a process of trial and error, where every segment of society influences the course of transformation, consciously or not.

In that line of thought, the purpose of this paper is to retrace precisely the journey of four transforming areas, belonging respectively to the cities of Favara, Rotterdam, Beijing and Medellín, which have proven their resilience, sustainability and success over time. Furthermore, the thesis work aims to answer the question: What are the common circumstances surrounding the birth of distressed urban areas and how can they possibly relate to subsequent rehabilitation strategies? By choosing cases, which differ greatly in geographical location, history, causes of deprivation and political, economic and socio-cultural dimensions, the paper focuses on drawing the parallels and margins of various approaches of urban rehabilitation in an attempt to underline the main agents of transformation. Additionally, based on the findings of the research, the paper suggests a hypothesis: the transformed citizen as a driving force for change.

The organisation of the thesis work follows the logic of the comparative method. After an initial introductory part, that acquaints the reader with the basic parameters of the four case studies, the second part deals with the deconstruction of each and its analogous juxtaposition with its counterparts. Criteria of interest are grouped in two parts: 1. Political & Economic Setting and 2. Physical and social dimensions. Finally, the ending third part includes a brief personal reflection on the basis of the research and a conclusion that summarizes the findings of the history thesis.

What sets this work apart from existing research done on the topic, is its comparative methodology which explores four greatly contrasting examples. It is this prerequisite of the seemingly incomparable cases and their in-depth analysis that could qualify the correlations derived as comprehensively pertinent and valid for a variety of settings. The agents, courses of action and tools, pinpointed in this work as crucial in the quest of making our environment more sustainable and healthy, will contribute to the urban regeneration discourse and could be of use for future rehabilitation projects.

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1. World Urbanization Prospects - Population Division - United Nations. (n.d.). [https://population.un.org/wup/Download/File 2: Percentage of Population at Mid-Year Residing in Urban Areas by region, subregion and country, 1950-2050](https://population.un.org/wup/Download/File%20Percentage%20of%20Population%20at%20Mid-Year%20Residing%20in%20Urban%20Areas%20by%20region,%20subregion%20and%20country,%201950-2050)

1.2 THE FOUR CASE STUDIES

Four urban areas are selected to be critically compared and analysed in depth for the purposes of this paper. Each is of varying scale, geographical location and different respective prerequisites, context and culture background. For this reason, the comparisons are based on a set of patterns and themes, which organize the cases in different groups.

Geographical and historical context, political scene and economic dynamics, urban issues and strategy, scale of intervention, public involvement and reaction are discussed holistically to deliver an exhaustive investigation of each case study.

The strong contrast makes it possible to pinpoint common elements, which link the cases despite the multiple differences and divides, and to elicit possibly widely-applicable and adaptable conclusions.

The case studies are the following:

1. Farm Cultural Park, Favara, Sicily, Italy
2. The Old city quarters, Beijing, China
3. Katendrecht, Rotterdam, The Netherlands
4. Medellín, Colombia

Fig. 1.2.1:

Farm Cultural Park, Favara, Italy



Fig. 1.2.1

Fig. 1.2.2:

Nanluoguxiang, Beijing, China



Fig. 1.2.2

Fig. 1.2.3:

Katendrecht, Rotterdam, The Netherlands



Fig. 1.2.3

Fig. 1.2.4:

Medellín, Colombia



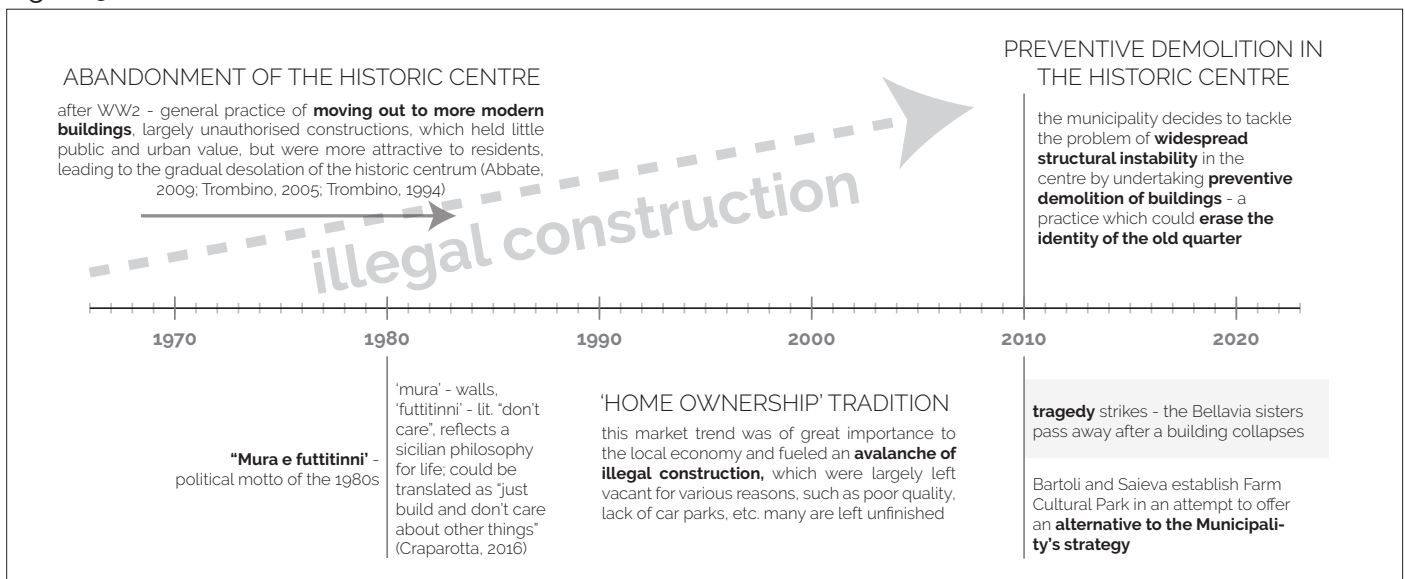
Fig. 1.2.4

THE FOUR CASE STUDIES/HISTORY OVERVIEW

FAVARA

1.2

Fig. 1.2.5: Timeline of Favara



Favara, a town in the Agrigento region in Sicily, only 15km away from the Valley of the Temples, has a long and controversial history, marked by a recent tragedy. In 2010, a string of long-overlooked issues finally snapped, claiming the lives of two young girls - the Bellavia sisters. A collapsed building in the centre of Favara was not an uncommon sight but it was not until this incident that the full extent of the general structural neglect, abandonment, local government inadequacy and the static inertness of residents were so painfully acknowledged. This tragedy was a culmination of a decades' long process of poor planning, intertwining economic interests and lack of control. In order to understand this, we need to look back to the second half of the twentieth century. There are two crucial factors: the steady movement of people from the historic centre to

more modern buildings, fuelling an already rising trend of illegal construction; and a deliberate government strategy supporting the uncontrolled sprawl under the 80s motto "Mura e futtitinni", in a vain attempt to aid the local economy. The aftermath was an avalanche of illegal construction, and the desertification and falling in disrepair of buildings in the historic centre. In recent years the direction the town is taking is characterized by two key actors: the inability of the government to appropriately tackle the issue of the distressed historical quarter, and the self-initiative of citizens, which act as a counter-point to inadequate municipal actions. The latter gave birth to Farm Cultural Park - a private cultural institution and a regenerative force, which has been steadily growing in the last 10 years, proving that change is possible.

FARACI, Giorgio. 2017. "Farm Cultural Park: An Experience of Social Innovation in the Recovery of the Historical Centre of Favara." *Procedia Environmental Sciences* 37: 676-88. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.proenv.2017.03.054>.



Fig. 1.2.6: New construction



Fig. 1.2.7: Collapsing buildings in the historic centre

Fig. 1.2.6:

new construction is often left incomplete and opened to exploitation without proper approved documentation declaring its building regulation legitimacy

image credits: https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parco_della_Favara, accessed 15.03.2021

Fig. 1.2.7:

the historic centre of Favara falling apart due to prolonged lack of finances, absence of maintenance and neglect of the old edifices

image credits: https://qds.it/favara-recupero-area-via-del-carmine/?refresh_ce, accessed 15.03.2021

1.2 THE FOUR CASE STUDIES/HISTORY OVERVIEW

KATENDRECHT

Fig. 1.2.8: Timeline of Katendrecht until 1950s

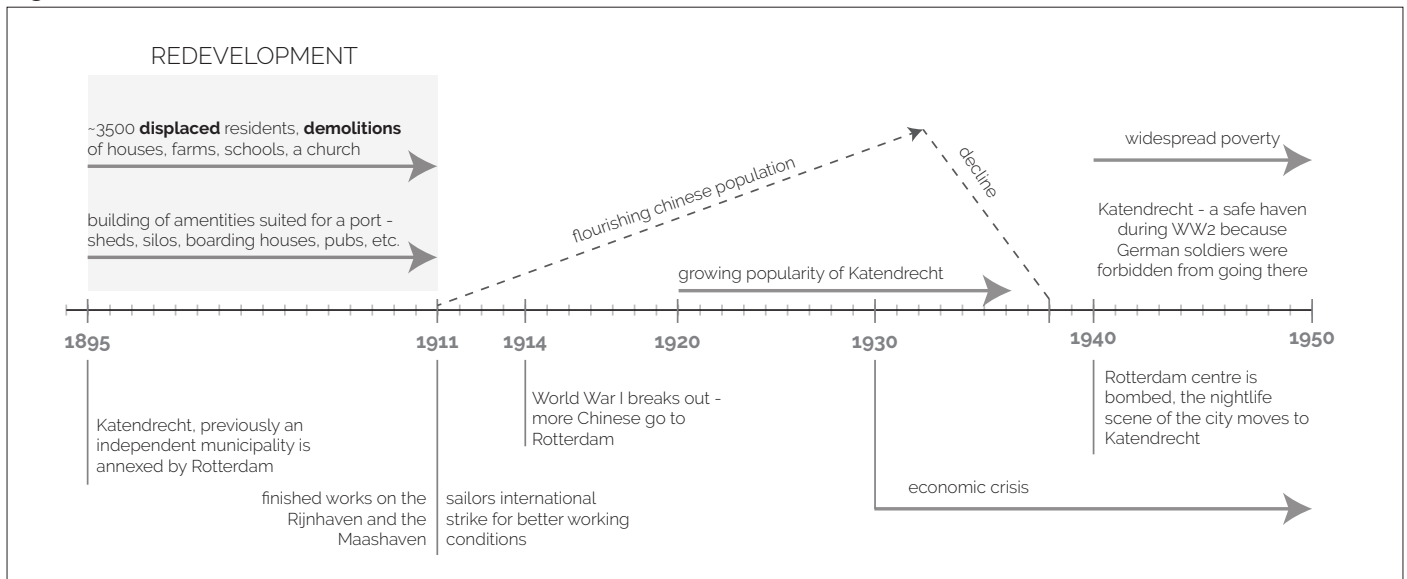
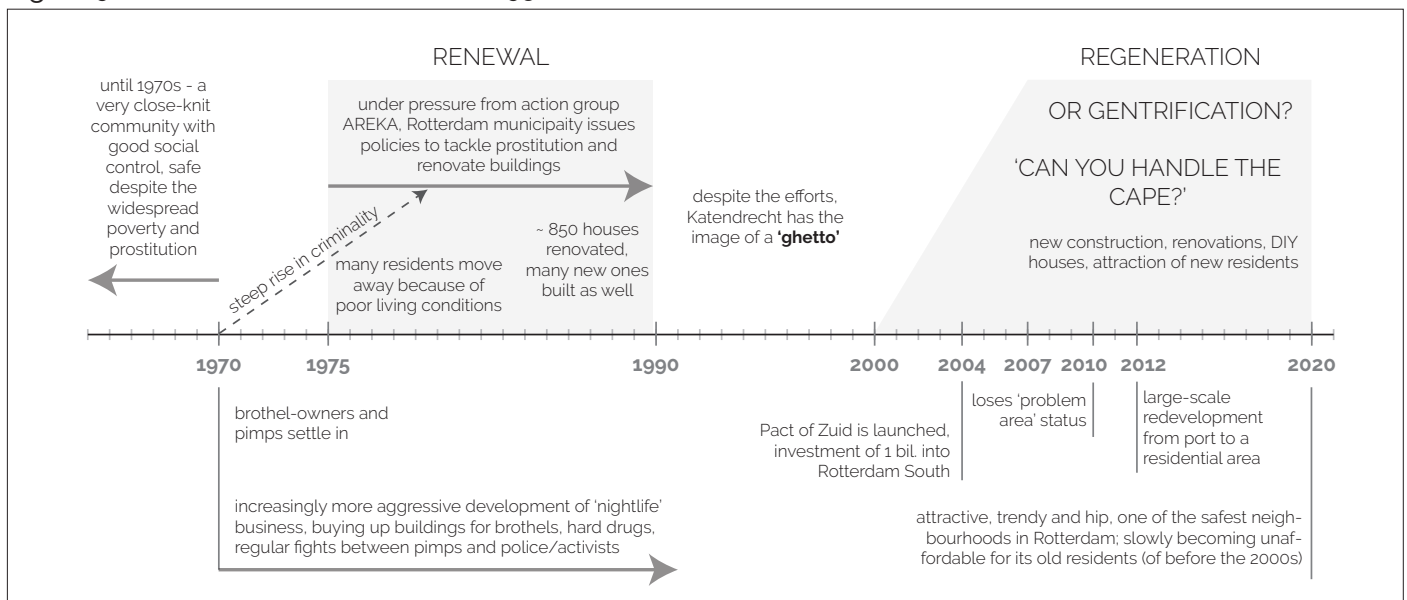


Fig. 1.2.g: Timeline of Katendrecht after 1950s



TEUNISSEN, Marcel. 2020. The Hague. Notes on Katendrecht, Typoscript (Unpublished).

Transforming from a village, through an industrial harbour, through a 'ghetto', to a trendy neighbourhood in a bit over a century, Katendrecht is a typical example of the changing Dutch landscape. The area has been subject to large-scale redevelopments guided largely by economic dynamics and municipal planning. First, annexed by Rotterdam, Katendrecht was completely reshaped by the Rijnhaven and Maashaven - excavated to become a peninsula - a port for sea trade. These were major topographical alterations to the land, but also to the population and urban fabric of Katendrecht, resulting in substantial displacement of people and demolitions. The appearance and functions of the whole neighbourhood was reconstructed towards catering to the sea-trade industry.

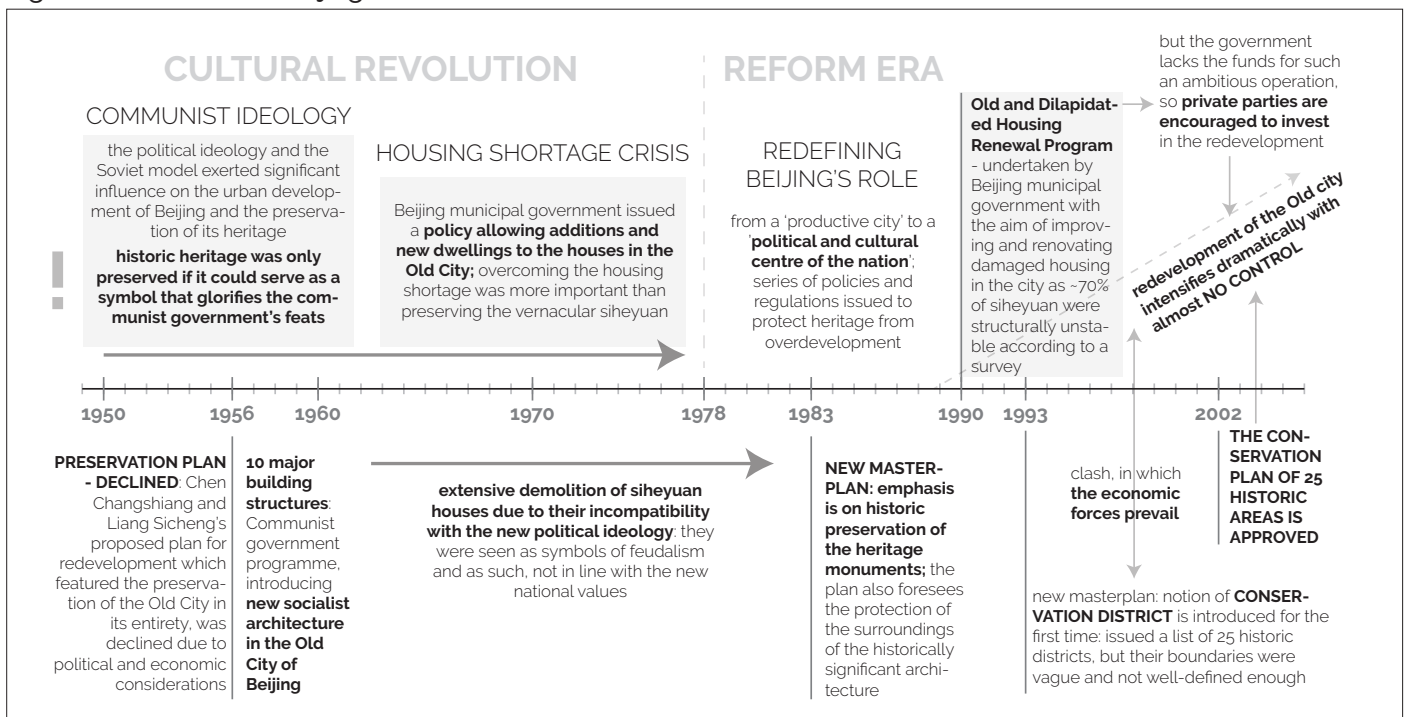
Rising in popularity, with flourishing Chinese population until in 1930s an economic crisis set in. The World War II bombings destroyed the city centre of Rotterdam, redirecting a big part of the night-life business towards Katendrecht. In the 1970s the situation in the neighbourhood became dramatically more violent. Urged by citizen action groups, the municipality of Rotterdam began issuing policies to tackle crime, prostitution and dilapidated state of buildings. But renovations and a safer neighbourhood were not sufficient to repair the image of a ghetto. In 2004, Pact of Zuid, a partnership between the municipality and four private housing corporations, was launched with the aim of regenerating Katendrecht. However, currently this process resembles gentrification.

THE FOUR CASE STUDIES/HISTORY OVERVIEW

OLD CITY, BEIJING

1.2

Fig. 1.2.10: Timeline of Beijing



The Old city quarters in Beijing all share roughly the same fate. Subject to demolition due to large-scale redevelopments for decades, nowadays less than a third of the urban fabric of old Beijing is preserved. This process can be traced back to the 1950s, the Cultural Revolution and the first Preservation plan, devised by L. Sicheng and C. Changshiang. The political ideology and the preservation of feudal symbols, such as traditional Beijing architecture, conflicted, which led to the dismissal of the plan. Afterwards, extensive demolition ensued, additions to houses were allowed officially in order to tackle housing shortage crisis, altering the traditional edifices. The decades between 1980s and 2000s

showed official institutions aiming to conserve heritage but impeded by economic inability to do so, leading to encouragement of private capital, which backfired and intensified redevelopment dramatically. Recently, efforts have been made to conserve the remains of the traditional hutongs and siheyuans, but the strategy employed is still very much economically dictated and more similar to gentrification, rather than true conservation. For these reasons, the results are controversial: while the conservation districts are no longer in jeopardy of being bulldozed, the displacement of people continues, although less forcefully and by means of the changed economic circumstances and social structures of the areas.

ORSINI, MARGHERITA. 2014. "Dashilar Hutong." Italy. <https://www.politesi.polimi.it/handle/10589/90646>



Fig. 1.2.11



Fig. 1.2.12

Fig. 1.2.11:

"A mandarin Chinese character spray-painted on the side of a building indicates the building will soon be demolished in Tianjin, China."

Fig. 1.2.12:

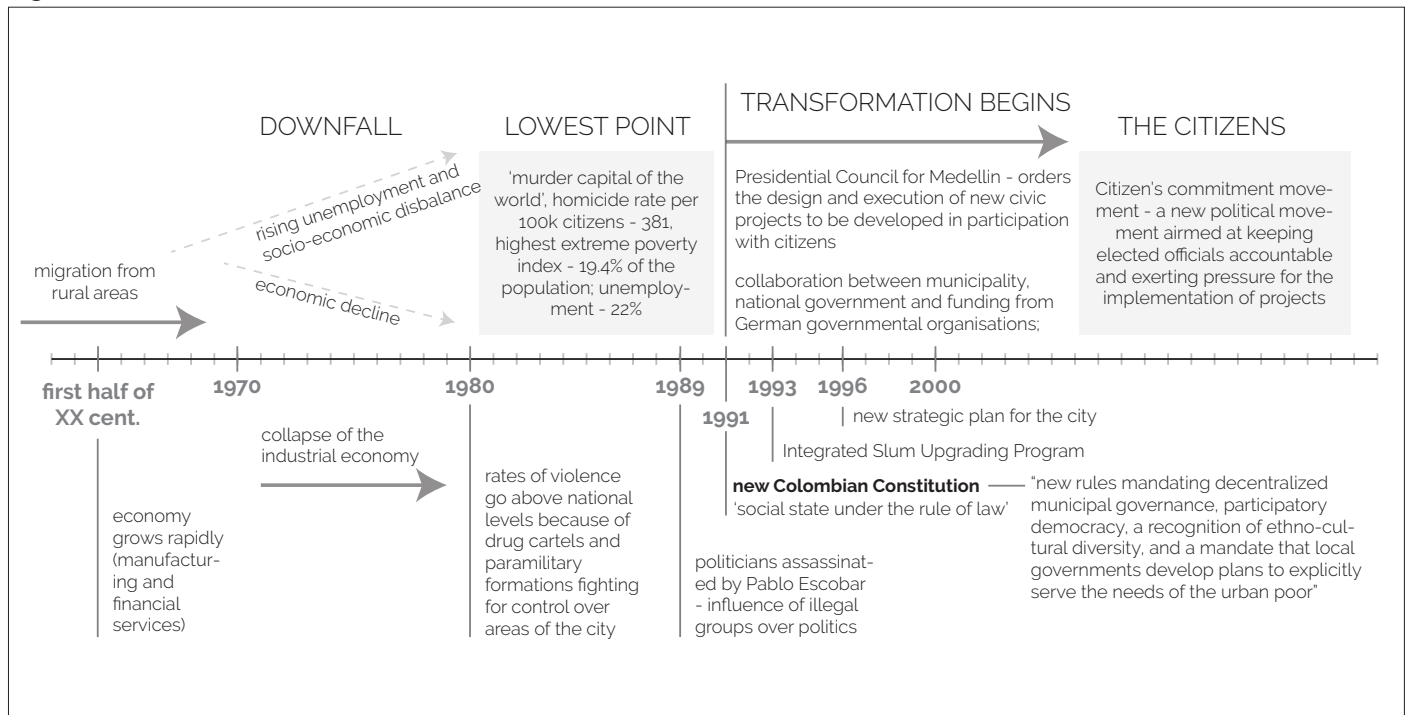
"Welders look over a demolition site where hutongs, small residential alleys, once stood in the centre of Tianjin, China. A local resident said that the relocated residents were compensated for their houses but it was "not enough."

Description and photo credits: M. Scott Brauer. <http://www.mscottbrauer.com/demolition/>

1.2 THE FOUR CASE STUDIES/HISTORY OVERVIEW

MEDELLIN

Fig. 1.2.13: Timeline of Medellin



CORBURN, Jason, Marisa Ruiz Asari, Jorge Pérez Jamarillo, and Anibal Gaviria. 2020. "The Transformation of Medellín into a 'City for Life': Insights for Healthy Cities." *Cities & Health* 4 (1): 13–24. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23748834.2019.1592735>.

Medellin has nowadays become a synonym for successful urban regeneration. Before that, the city bore the notorious title of 'murder capital of the world'. To explain this striking transformation, two key moments must be taken into account. First, the culmination of decades-long economic decline, poverty and unemployment, drug cartels and gang wars - a time, commonly referred to in articles as a 'crisis of violence', and second, the new Colombian Constitution of 1991.

A bit broader overview would point out that violent clashes have been part of Colombia's history more than half a century. Medellín's rapid economic growth in the first half of 20th century drew substantial migra-

tory masses from the provinces, however, those were not attracted only by economic benefits, but were fleeing armed conflict in the countryside. The subsequent collapse of industrial economy left a large part of the population with no formal employment opportunities, and as a result extreme poverty reached nearly 20% of the population in the 1980s. Drug-cartels were openly controlling politics with violence and homicide rate soared to 381 per 100k citizens. The turning point was a political shift which allowed for decentralization and local elections, giving power to the citizens. The so-called 'social urbanism', which is practiced in Medellín, is an outcome precisely of citizen participation and their organised involvement.

Fig. 1.2.13:

Favelas

<https://chasesun.online/highlights/Medellin-favelas>, accessed 15.03.2021

Fig. 1.2.14:

The notorious operation Orion was an attempt by the central government to control violence by using armed forces. The operation was widely criticized and condemned by both the public and human rights groups. (Corburn et al., 2020)

<https://www.semana.com/nacion/articulo/la-foto-que-dejo-al-descubierto-los-desmanes-de-la-operacion-orion/438656-3>, accessed 15.03.2021

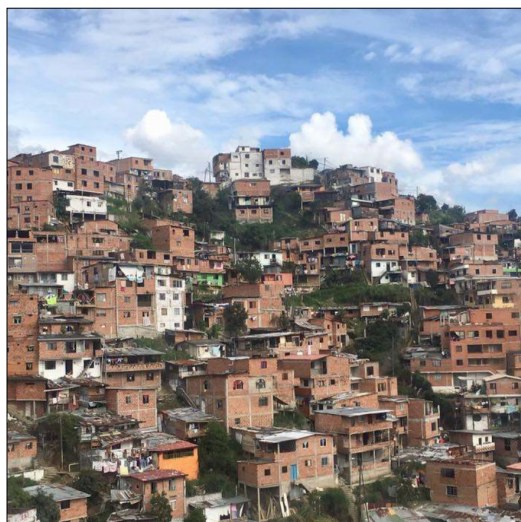


Fig. 1.2.13

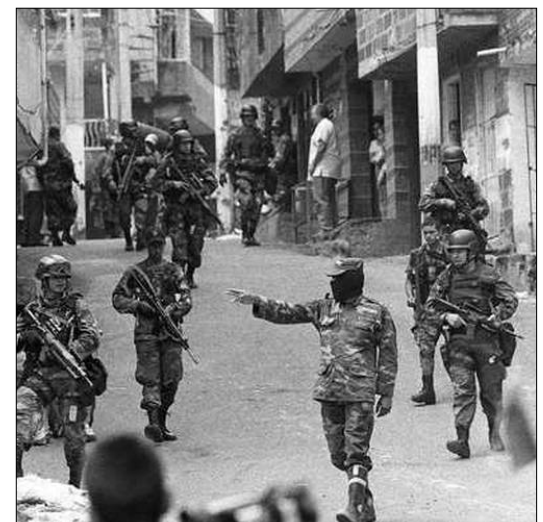


Fig. 1.2.14

CHAPTER 2

COMPARISON

2.1 POLITICAL & ECONOMIC SETTING

2.2 THE PHYSICAL AND THE SOCIAL DIMENSIONS

2.1 POLITICAL & ECONOMIC SETTING

As demonstrated in the historical overview of the four case-studies, the regeneration of each area is strongly linked to the economic and political scene of its respective context. The joint influence of those two factors could act as an incentive for civil mobilisation through private initiatives and government-institutionalised participation, or as a force of detriment, where market gains and growth-oriented politics dictate the course of development and overwrite the voice of citizens. Despite the geographical and cultural differences, the four case studies demonstrate some recurring patterns - in terms of the prerequisites, leading up to the transformation, and of the regeneration strategies employed. The purpose of this sub-chapter is to review those repetitive

formulas, which were discovered during the initial literature research on the cases, and compare in greater detail their respective cases. For the sake of clarity and for the purposes of this paper, those will be referred by 'nicknames', which, according to the author, synthesize their most characteristic trait. Therefore, the three main patterns discovered are as follows: 1. Critical point (Favara, Katendrecht, Medellín), 2. Market focus (Beijing, Katendrecht), 3. Culture as a tool (Favara, Beijing). It must be noted, that the patterns are hypothetical and refer to specific similar factors between the case-studies and by no means claim complete resemblance. The various nuances of each example is additionally discussed in the paragraph focused on the pattern at hand.

POLITICAL & ECONOMIC SETTING | PATTERN 1:

CRITICAL POINT

FAVARA | KATENDRECHT | MEDELLIN

2.1 POLITICAL & ECONOMIC SETTING | CRITICAL POINT

FA, KA, ME

ABBATE, Giuseppe. n.d. "Processi Di Edificazione Abusiva Nel Territorio Di Agrigento: Una Questione Irrisolta."

The cases of Favara, Katendrecht and Medellin are all representative of this formula a long process of gradual deterioration of multiple dimensions of urban habitation, followed by a catalyst element, unlocking the beginning of a transformation. That element is not a single occurrence in all cases; it can be generalized as a culmination of public dissatisfaction, generated by decades of decline - the physical state of building, employment, of rising rates of poverty and crime, and of civil-market-government relationship.

In order to compare the case studies, we will first analyse in depth the processes which led to the deterioration in each case. These processes are usually not local and affect the whole city or region.

For the case of Favara, the culmination point was the tragedy of 2010. A crumbled building in the historical centre costed the lives of two children. This is superficially attributed to the loss of structural stability of the building due to lack of maintenance. However, this fact is a mere consequence of a vicious and long-operating mechanism of decline. The gradual abandonment of the historic centre can be traced back to a phenomenon, for which Lucio Libertini coined the term "abusiveness of necessity" (Abbate, n.d.).

In the second post-war period the shortage of housing due to the sudden demographic growth and changes in the socio-economic conditions of the country created a favourable precedence for the proliferation of illegal construction which

started roughly in the end of the 1950s and continued steadily until the 1970s. In Abbate's work this practice is also referred to as 'ethical abuse', due to developers taking advantage of the lower classes' need for a home in order to speculate with the housing market. The need for housing indeed was a pressing issue in the first years of the post-war period, but towards the 1960s and 70s the volumes of construction being built were far greater than what was needed to tackle the dwelling deficiency, leaving a large part of the new constructions unused. This deplorable turn took place in the 1960s, when the focused shifted from the economically weak classes and spread to encompass the middle classes as well, taking advantage of the new-found demand for second homes.

The result of this market-oriented development resulted in whole neighbourhoods of multi-storey buildings, erected in transgression with the local building and planning regulations, if there were any. In fact, during those years a large amount of Sicilian municipalities lacked clearly outlined plans and urban programmes, which acted as an incentive for developers to take advantage of the inability of government officials to answer public demand or control urban development. This process of illegal construction continued through the decades and was even enforced - by bills, aimed at healing whatever preventive and repressive actions local administrators attempted to enforce; by joint-stock companies with foreign investors as well as considerable public support and support of the local political class.



Fig. 2.11



Fig. 2.12

Fig. 2.11 & 2.12

examples of illegal construction in Agrigento

image source: "Processi Di Edificazione Abusiva Nel Territorio Di Agrigento: Una Questione Irrisolta." Abbate, Giuseppe. n.d.

POLITICAL & ECONOMIC SETTING | CRITICAL POINT

FA, KA, ME

2.1

The official numbers of illegal buildings in the 1980s exceeded 70 thousand (Abbate, n.d.). Remarkably, the excessive anthropic pressure on the region caused a sequence of natural disasters, including landslides.

Despite the ostensible injection of benefit for the local economy, this process of uncontrolled construction was a double-edged blade. On one hand, the migratory flows triggered by the movement of people from the centres of cities into cheap modern houses, usually built on agricultural land, as commanded by local trends, resulted in central quarters falling into disrepair, abandoned and neglected, explaining the situation in Favara but also of many other towns in Agrigento. On the other hand, the new construction, generated by massive speculative activity, was designed for the sole purpose of maximizing profit, which meant that it lacked quality, oftentimes left half-finished, with no urban amenities, green spaces, parking spaces or even functioning sewage systems (Faraci 2017).

To summarize, the mechanisms at play in the urban degradation of Favara are the following: opportunistic activity of the private sector speculating with real estate market and taking advantage of the inability of local government to exert control, leading to proliferating illegal building on the outskirts of towns in Agrigento region in Sicily, and a parallel migratory flow from the centres to newer buildings; thus resulting in the abandoned and degraded state of historical quarters of cities.

The story of the second case at hand - Katendrecht, is both similar and different. A joint action between the municipality and the private sector is present here as well, especially towards the 2000s (discussed more extensively in Market Focus pattern). However, the location of the neighbourhood within Rotterdam - an important harbour both for the Netherlands and Europe as a whole, played a crucial role in the decisions for its development: the land's key position excluded abandonment as an option for developers.

Furthermore, for Katendrecht, it is not possible to pinpoint an exact historical moment to label as a critical point. Despite that, this Dutch example nonetheless displays characteristics which are in coherence with the presented here pattern-counterparts. Perhaps the happening, which is most closely comparable to a critical point, is a municipal survey regarding citizen satisfaction, due to being one of the main incentives for Rotterdam's officials to undertake the regeneration of Katendrecht. The civil disapproval, albeit not informally manifested, was generated by the degraded state of the neighbourhood, and as such, falls into the category discussed here.

Tracing the reasons for this degradation, it would be incorrect to call the transformation of the annexed village of Katendrecht into a port the beginning of the process of decline, but it would also be wrong to not acknowledge the subsequent adverse effects this had on the neighbourhood. This change affected substantially the neigh-

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ABBATE, Giuseppe. n.d. "Processi Di Edificazione Abusiva Nel Territorio Di Agrigento: Una Questione Irrisolta."

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FARACI, Giorgio. 2017. "Farm Cultural Park: An Experience of Social Innovation in the Recovery of the Historical Centre of Favara." *Procedia Environmental Sciences* 37: 676-88. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.proenv.2017.03.054>.



Fig. 2.13

Fig. 2.13

The dilapidated state of the historic centre of Favara

image source: Giuseppe Moscato, <https://flickr.com/photos/pinomoscato/14825844177/in/photostream/>, accessed 25.02.2021

2.1 POLITICAL & ECONOMIC SETTING | CRITICAL POINT

FA, KA, ME

TEUNISSEN, Marcel. 2020. The Hague. Notes on Katendrecht, Typoscript (Unpublished).

"Stories from the Cape - WordPress." n.d. <https://blackcatsaremagic.wordpress.com/2018/11/06/verhalen-van-de-kaap/>.

"Chinezen Op de Kaap: Van Stoker Tot Pindachinees." n.d. <http://www.vergetenverhalen.nl/2015/09/16/van-stoker-tot-pindachinees/>.

bourhood. This change affected substantially the area on a multiplicity of levels: social, economic, architectural, as well as its role in the context of a wider urban area. Wide-spread demolition ensued in order to free up space for the construction of the harbour, causing the destruction of a significant part of the built tissue of Katendrecht - about 700 houses, the local church and some rural estates were demolished. This affected the social composition of the area as well, as more than 3000 people were permanently displaced. The infrastructure was upgraded and new facilities were constructed with the aim to cater to the raised flux of sea trade staff. Bars, boarding houses, venues for gambling and adult services quickly took over the area as profitable businesses thanks to the concentration of prospective clients and the neighbourhood's safety suffered.

There was another population shift in 1911, triggered by a sailor strike. In order to avoid financial losses, sea trade business owners counteracted this by bringing in Chinese workforce to Katendrecht. This community grew and expanded to other businesses, establishing a secure foothold in the area and giving birth to one of Europe's first Chinatowns. The dealings occurring in the neighbourhood were not always within the confines of the law; as opium smoking and gambling flourished, so did crime.

During the Second World War the centre of Rotterdam was bombed, leading to the relocation of many night-life businesses towards Katendrecht, which created favourable prerequisites for further development of illegal businesses later on. However, while

the local economic scene revolved mainly around such enterprises and poverty rates were high, the neighbourhood was relatively safe for its inhabitants thanks to the close-knit community spirit. This points to the importance of societal links between residents to ensure a level of trust and security despite external factors. ("Stories from the Cape - WordPress," n.d.)

The 1970s presented another turn in the history of the neighbourhood. Prostitution was a commonplace line of work in the area since before and even constituted a significant part of the local economy, but the arrival of certain criminal agents such as pimps and brothel owners radicalized the practice. With an aggressive profit-oriented approach, the situation escalated resulting in a plethora of brothels, hard drugs and daily clashes with police forces. The hazardous circumstances forced many residents to relocate, but it also triggered sporadic and organized civil mobilization to tackle the issues. An action group under the name AREKA set a clear aim of saving Katendrecht from the widespread illegal activities and improving the poor living conditions. This was the critical moment for Katendrecht: under pressure from an organized civil group the Municipality of Rotterdam was forced to implement policies to counteract prostitution and upgrade the built environment, resulting in a period of urban renewal which continued roughly 15 years (1975-1990). However, the efforts were insufficient and Katendrecht was still considered a 'problematic' neighbourhood throughout the 1990s. Thus, a more extensive redevelopment began in the 2000s under the slogan "Can you handle the Cape?".

Fig. 2.1.4

Katendrecht around 1961. Image posted by Koert B.

image source: <http://fotos.serc.nl/zuid-holland/rotterdam/rotterdam-74285/>, accessed 25.03.2021



Fig. 2.1.4

Fig. 2.1.5

Katendrecht c. 1965

source: <http://fotos.serc.nl/zuid-holland/rotterdam/rotterdam-74284/>, accessed 25.02.2021



Fig. 2.1.5

POLITICAL & ECONOMIC SETTING | CRITICAL POINT

FA, KA, ME

2.1

In the case of Medellín, violence has left a deep mark both on the history of the city and on Colombia as a whole. A flourishing industrial city in the first half of the 20th century, Medellín's economical surge was short-lived. This, in combination with the ongoing national conflict between left-wing guerrilla and right-wing paramilitary groups at the time (Corburn et al. 2020), triggered waves of migratory population from the countryside towards cities since the early 1950s, leading to uncontrolled and rapid urbanization. The incoming flux of people arrived in the city with little resources, applying further strain to the already struggling economy in the 1970s. (Samper 2012) The demand for housing was disproportioned to the available financial capital, resulting in the massive spread of informal settlements, called comunas and which nowadays constitute 40% of the urban area of the city - mainly set up on the then yet unutilized steep hillsides surrounding the city of Medellín.

Housing was not the only issue immigrants faced - the economic decline led to a steep growth of unemployment rates, boosting the socio-economic gap between the residents of Medellín. Extreme poverty affected nearly a fifth of the population of the city. These circumstances, in combination with the government's disregard for the dire state of the marginal communities, set off a wave of "regular crimes", which swiftly evolved into more severe offences. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, comunas became the cradle of organized crime, drug trafficking, violent clashes of armed actors and pervasive poverty. Rates of violence

exceeded the national levels and soon topped the world list (Corburn et al. 2020). Gangs found themselves in perpetual power struggle, made physical in the quest for territorial dominance, which rendered the comunas a battle ground for armed conflicts. The reason for this incessant reshuffling of authority on small scale was rooted in the multiplicity of competing criminal groups and the inability of any one of them to exert total control over the whole city, leading to fragmented territorial distribution of power (Samper 2012).

At the same time, conflict was not limited to the affairs within the comunas. The government and violent groups were at a constant war. At some point criminal actors breached the border between the state and the illicit dominion and began an open quest for power. In 1989, several presidential candidates and politicians fell victim to the narco-terrorist group of Pablo Escobar (Corburn et al. 2020), making visible the extent of control such groups had over national and local politics. On the other hand, operations by the central government were largely performed employing police and military troops in what seemed to be an approach of 'fighting fire with fire'. They failed to alleviate the situation and, despite being the force intended to counteract violence, themselves assaulted both civilians and criminals. What was happening in Medellín was not just a 'crisis of violence' as it's often referred to in research papers, but a crisis of governmentability as well. The inability of the state to effectively intervene in the illegal mechanisms, or reinforce and maintain social order was evident.

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CORBURN, Jason, Marisa Ruiz Asari, Jorge Pérez Jamarillo, and Anibal Gaviria. 2020. "The Transformation of Medellín into a 'City for Life.' Insights for Healthy Cities." *Cities & Health* 4 (1): 13–24. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23748834.2019.1592735>.

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SAMPER, Jota Jota. 2012. "Urban Resilience in Situations of Chronic Violence Case Study of Medellín, Colombia." https://www.researchgate.net/publication/279821839_Urban_Resilience_in_Situations_of_Chronic_Violence_Case_Study_of_Medellin_Colombia.

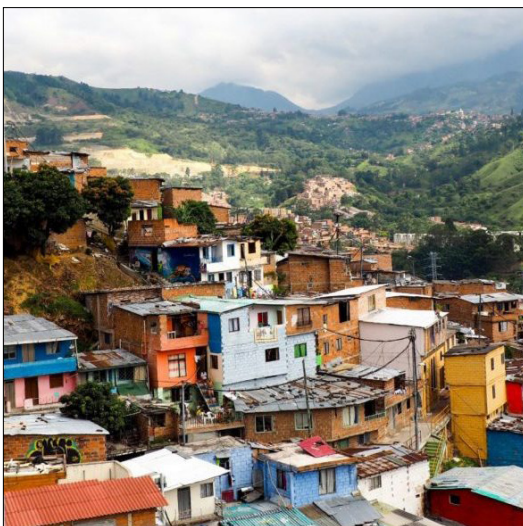


Fig. 2.16



Fig. 2.17

Fig. 2.16

Comuna 13

image source: <https://adventurecatcher.com/comuna-13-the-most-dangerous-district-in-medellin/>, accessed 28.03.2021

Fig. 2.17

"A Colombian police officer patrols the streets of Comuna 1, a comuna that had one of the highest rates of violence. Photograph: Raul Arboleda/AFP/Getty Images"

image and caption source: <https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2016/may/13/story-cities-pablo-escobar-inclusive-urbanism-medellin-colombia>, accessed 28.03.2021

2.1 POLITICAL & ECONOMIC SETTING | CRITICAL POINT

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 SAMPER, Jota Jota. 2012. "Urban Resilience in Situations of Chronic Violence Case Study of Medellín, Colombia." https://www.researchgate.net/publication/279821839_Urban_Resilience_in_Situations_of_Chronic_Violence_Case_Study_of_Medellin_Colombia.

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 CHAU, Rebecca, and Owen GUTFREUND. 2015. "Social Urbanism: Transformational Policy in Medellín, Colombia." <http://www.semanariovoz.com/2014/04/02/foro-urbano-mundial-en-medellin-en-busca-del-tiempo-perdido/>.

In such a context it would not be an overstatement to say that violence found a stronghold in the comunas of Medellín, a separate territory with its own rules, beyond the reach of the state. It was this abandonment and isolation that further enhanced the dissemination of crime throughout the poor neighbourhoods and caused the internal displacement of over 200 thousand residents.

The divide was further amplified by a physical boundary - the city's topography, which did not lend itself readily to traditional forms of transport. The challenging accessibility was one of the reasons why for decades the residents of the comunas had insufficient access to other parts of Medellín. This limited their chances of participation in the legitimate economy of the city. Any employment and business opportunities were physically bound to their immediate proximity, which did not have the necessary framework for a reliable and safe source of income, effectively trapping them in a vicious circle of poverty and crime. Furthermore, the peripheral situation of the residents was not a prerequisite to economic exclusion only, it also bolstered a deep-rooted mental state of isolation, an identity of outlaws, which almost all residents of the self-built settlements were formally considered to be by the state, when it declared the tenure of the area illegal (Samper 2012). This led to an ever-present risk of eviction which characterized the relationship between inhabitants of the comunas and the state for years.

Stigmatized and marginalized, communities were left to fend for themselves in a lawless state within the state. In spite of being vulnerable and exposed to ceaseless local wars between contesting claimants for power, the people of Medellín's comunas found ways to resist by creating self-managed public organizations.

The turning point for Medellín was the new Colombian constitution of 1991. Greater autonomy and decentralization were some of the factors which created the necessary political context for a change. However, as Chau and Gutfreund state in their 2015 work:

"It was the severe misery in Medellín that readied the political elite and the comunas for an urban revolution (...)"

What makes this pattern common for the cases reviewed is not only a process of decline which is present in all three of them. That process set the scene for the ensuing regeneration by becoming a catalyst for social action, which, in turn, triggered change. In the case of Favara, that is the Bartolis, but it would be wrong to attribute Farm Cultural Park and its impact solely to the efforts of two people, as hundreds of people have taken part since its establishment in 2010; the desire to make a difference was already in the people of Favara, who embraced this project, the volunteers and collaborators who helped make it a reality. For Katendrecht, civil mobilization took place for the first time in the 1970s when an organization (AREKA) was set up in order to pressure officials into taking action to improve the neighbourhood. Same is true for Medellín, where people, first independently in the comunas and then supported by their newly discovered civil rights, institutionalized by the 1991 Colombian Constitution, became aware of their social responsibility and power to hold governmental officials responsible for projects concerning the city.

To conclude on this pattern, it was noticed that in the reviewed examples severe and multifaceted decline leads to the activation citizens through self-initiative and civil mobilization. However, there are external factors that are necessary for such a change to become materialized and generate a beneficial outcome. In the case of Favara, that factor was the private financial resources of the Bertolis; in Katendrecht - the municipal response to the citizen's dissatisfaction; and in Medellín - the new political situation which created a suitable environment for change.

The Beijing case is not present in this pattern, despite exhibiting comparatively detrimental processes, such as widespread demolition due to large-scale redevelopment, striking rates of displacement and overall poor urban quality, prior to the redevelopment. Despite the evident process of decline, civil action and protests were generally dismissed by the state, which pursued a market-oriented agenda.

POLITICAL & ECONOMIC SETTING | PATTERN 2:

MARKET FOCUS

KATENDRECHT | BEIJING

2.1 POLITICAL & ECONOMIC SETTING | MARKET FOCUS

KA, BE

SHIN, Hyun Bang. 2009. "Residential Redevelopment and the Entrepreneurial Local State: The Implications of Beijing's Shifting Emphasis on Urban Redevelopment Policies." *Urban Studies* 46 (13): 2815–39. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042098009345540>.

ORSINI, MARGHERITA. 2014. "Dashilar Hutong" Italy. <https://www.politesi.polimi.it/handle/10589/90646>

In the Market focus pattern, two case studies will be explored: Katendrecht and Beijing. They are both characterized by a strong market-oriented redevelopment, in which a partnership between the state and private companies can be observed, forming a so-called growth machine mechanism.

In the case of Beijing inner city, the redevelopment of dilapidated historic quarters has been state-led for more than 30 years. As already mentioned, heritage siheyuans suffered greatly ever since the 1950s Cultural Revolution. Although the value of historic neighbourhoods was acknowledged during the Reform era and the Old and Dilapidated Housing Renewal Program was introduced in 1990, the government lacked funds to tackle the widespread structural instability and need for renovation of the siheyuans. According to a census of 1990, up to 70% of the siheyuan were structurally unstable and under risk of crumbling (Orsini 2014). Such a large-scale operation was beyond the economic capacity of the district level government which after the decentralization of the land market was singularly responsible for the implementation of the Old and Dilapidated Housing Renewal Program. Therefore, in order to upgrade the historical quarters, the municipal government undertook a deliberate and calculated shift in strategy: market principles were adopted, investments from real estate developers and potential home-buyers were seen as financial contributors necessary to realize the program and therefore encouraged. It was at this moment that real estate business entered the redevelopment scene of the Old City.

It must be noted that Beijing is a specific case for property-led redevelopment also due to its particular legal framework of ownership. Property rights of siheyuans were fragmented, while indisputable private property was not the predominant politics in Beijing's Old city as a whole. Instead, public rental tenure characterized the estates in historic quarters, rendering the role of the state crucial as a de facto 'landlord' with the power to grant or trade with land use rights (Shin 2009). Thus, land lease, in combination with the authority to issue policies, became an instrument for the realization of state land-based interests, resulting in a strategy focused almost exclusively on local economic growth. This phenomenon was described by scholars as "local state corporatism" (Oi 1995), "state entrepreneurialism" (Duckett 1998).

The district government's strategy was to attract private capital, which would cover the costly renewal of dilapidated housing and upgrade the district infrastructure. In order to compensate the developer, the state offered pieces of land outside the Old city where more profitable constructions could be build. However, this approach proved to be greatly unsuccessful due to the lack of clearly outlined regulations. Generally, whenever a private company acquired the land use rights of an estate, it would aim to maximise its profits. Residents were relocated and siheyuans demolished, replaced by high-rise residential buildings which were sold at market price. This real-estate market speculation persevered throughout the 1990s and altered the

Fig. 2.1.8

"Many old buildings have been demolished in downtown Beijing in recent years to make way for the construction of new landmarks. The picture shows a demolition site in Beijing's old Qianmen area in 2005 (WANG XIANG)"

image and caption source: http://www.bjreview.com/nation/txt/2010-01/04/content_237935_2.htm, accessed 25.03.2021



Fig. 2.1.8

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overall character of the affected neighbourhood permanently. As a consequence, out of the 3600 courtyard houses (1980), less than 1000 survive today (Orsini 2014).

Such emerging market forces overpowered any efforts by the government to conserve the area, taking advantage of the poorly organized policy system or the lack thereof. Although this process slowed down in the 2000s, redevelopment continued to be executed in a joint fashion between government and private companies. Furthermore, the designation of conservation districts, acted as an incentive for an even more fervent redevelopment of the zones left 'outside' (Shin 2010). The so called 'growth machine' phenomenon featured a practice of isolating cultural heritage zones for preservation and converting them into urban amenities, often neglecting social improvement. As a result, the conservation neighbourhoods were turned into islands of vernacular buildings set in a context of high-rises and modern skyscrapers, creating a landscape of not just architectural, but also of social and economic polarities.

In 2002, a comprehensive conservation plan of 25 historic districts was approved by the municipal government. Despite the fact that guiding principles were incorporated, the vicious cycle of expropriation, displacement, demolition and redevelopment continued. New buildings often-times copied the vernacular architecture in an attempt to avoid public disapproval. While academics deemed historically-correct conservation as the best course of action, government and the private sector asserted the importance of financially feasible and sustainable interventions. This points to the increasing tendency of Chinese local governments to assume entrepreneurial attitude, especially in relation to urban planning, and work in partnership with private businesses. (Shin 2010)

Curiously, the redevelopment approach employed was not the same throughout the 25 conservation areas. For example, the Nanluoguxiang district - one of the neighbourhoods in Beijing with greatest concentration of traditional dwellings, became a model instance for commercial redevelopment. Large-scale demolition was avoided by the use of incremental upgrading and "micro-circulation" renovation - a house-by-house method of upgrading, which re-

lies on voluntary application of the respective residents to relocate and allow for restoration. Such displacement, albeit permanent, was not forceful. Furthermore, the financial burden on the local government was lessened and living conditions upgraded.

Nanluoguxiang underwent revalorization through the promotion of vernacular architecture and its preservation, rather than by modern construction. It contributed to the national and culture identity of Beijing in the global context. For this purpose, beautification and 'facelift' were key in order create a more appealing front to be presented on the real estate market. This generated interventions that were questionable in terms of authenticity, catering to a specific view for 'cultural', which does not necessarily align with the historically correct. As Shin notes in a 2010 paper:

"Walls were repainted in grey to provide a uniform and pseudo-ancient look, and very often, an additional layer of brick was applied in order to hide dilapidated façade."

However, commercialization was not abrupt and many smaller businesses of local entrepreneurs emerged in the process, landlordism developed, benefiting a part of the original population as well. As a result of this and the partnership of state and private capital, Nanluoguxiang was transformed into a "culture-led consumption space" attracting many national and global tourists. Consequently, the social composition experienced a turnover, both due to the deliberate displacement of people in order to reduce population density and as a result of the rising property and amenity prices.



Fig. 2.19

ORSINI, MARGHERITA. 2014. "Dashilar Hutong." Italy. <https://www.politesi.polimi.it/handle/10589/90646>

SHIN, Hyun Bang. 2010. "Urban Conservation and Revalorisation of Dilapidated Historic Quarters: The Case of Nanluoguxiang in Beijing." *Cities* 27 (SUPPL. 1): S43–54. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2010.03.006>.

Fig. 2.1.9

"Demolition of Shanghai's last old quarter, destroyed to make space for new high-rise buildings."

image and caption source: <https://www.featureshoot.com/2018/01/a-fascinating-glimpse-at-life-in-the-old-city-of-beijing/>, accessed 27.03.2021

2.1 POLITICAL & ECONOMIC SETTING | MARKET FOCUS

KA, BE

TEUNISSEN, Marcel. 2020. The Hague. Notes on Katendrecht, Typoscript (Unpublished).

Clarisse, Marijke, S4394682 Mentor, and Ritske Dankert. 2016. "You Cannot Live with the Present, If You Forget the Past' An Insight on How 'in between' Residents Experience the Effects of Gentrification in Middelland and Katendrecht Bachelor Thesis Geography, Planning & Environment." <https://theses.uhn.ru.nl/handle/123456789/2433>.

The strategy used in the Katendrecht case is exemplary for The Netherlands' customary approach to redevelopment of distressed areas. Use of private capital via partnership between local government and developers is a commonplace practice to regenerate, revalorize and raise the quality of living conditions in a neighbourhood. (Teunissen 2020)

As already mentioned in the pattern Critical point, a civil action group, called AREKA, first pressured the municipality in tackling local issues. In the late 1980s, this intervention largely consisted of demolishing the most dilapidated housing stock. However, despite being an urban renewal undertaking, that point in the history of Katendrecht could hardly be referred to as belonging to the market focused redevelopment, as its main goal was the alleviation of detrimental factors and improving living conditions for the distressed locals, rather than aiming to facilitate selling of renovated properties.

The organized redevelopment of Katendrecht began in 2004 with Pact op Zuid: a partnership between the municipality of Rotterdam, the three municipalities of Charlois, Feijenoord and IJsselmonde and four housing corporations, as well as later involvement of smaller investors, entrepreneurs and residents. The first step for regeneration was tackling image problems, similarly to Nanluoguxiang. As the district was struggling with crime, outdated built environment and a predominantly lower-income bracket residents, a campaign was launched to invert the neighbourhood's unappealing reputation. Under the slogan "Can you handle the Cape?", referring to an old jargon name of Katendrecht, an urban acupuncture strategy was employed, focused on boosting social facilities and public spaces. Financial injections were made into a health centre, a school, a child-care facility and a Chinese Church, as well as high-quality outdoor communal places. Image plays a crucial role in market-focused redevelopment due to the fact that profit, which is the driving force of private land-based enterprises, is realized through buying, renting and selling estates. It would be impossible to secure the support of the private sector unless benefits are considerable, although to some extent hazardous. It must be noted, that monetary input is also provided by the municipality, but focuses mainly on public spaces and

facilities, while residential, office and semi-public developments are shouldered by private capital. However, local government cooperates with the various companies and stakeholders in order to ensure the success of the undertaking. Without those joint efforts, neither party would be able to achieve meaningful results. A coordinated action between municipal infrastructural strategy and a private development could guarantee successful revitalization. An example of that is the improvement of public transport and infrastructure, essentially a boost in accessibility, which immediately elevates the neighbourhood's market position in the context of the city and its level of attractiveness in the eyes of current and potential residents. Metro, water taxi, tourist amphibious bus and parkings are all foreseen in the plans for Katendrecht in order to meet the needs of new prospective residents, as well as to invite them to consider Katendrecht as a preferred living area.

Due to Katendrecht's strategic position in the heart of Rotterdam, it presented a favourable potential to cater to an upper-economic societal stratum - mainly middle class and students due to the similarities of their preference, and therefore, to supply greater returns to the financial capital invested for its renovation. In order to attract this specific target public, a theme explicitly formulated as "culinary, cultural, creative" was chosen for the redevelopment and strictly adhered to. Alongside this, the predominant housing method is intended to change from rent-based accommodation to purchasing estate, as statistics from 2010 point that only 27% of the housing stock consists of owner-occupied homes. In order to achieve greater purchase percentage, either buildings are renovated, or new property is built over existing one, which in the case of Katendrecht largely means demolishing social housing: "The government of Rotterdam has the plan to demolish 20.000 social housing buildings to make room for middle and high income people" (Clarisse, Mentor, and Dankert 2016).

Although differentiation within the neighbourhood is planned and facilitated through municipal pressure for variegated prices for rent and sale, there is yet another effect that must be considered: local businesses either realign their supply to the demands of middle-class residents or

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struggle to survive in the increasingly demanding rent scenery. Consequently, lower-income residents are left with less local shops and services that are corresponding to their own economic situation and as a result, all living costs are gradually increased. (Clarisse, Mentor, and Dankert 2016)

The redevelopment in Katendrecht can be characterised to some extent as a state-led gentrification. Highly-educated residents, students and creatives are deliberately drawn to Katendrecht, in order to boost the economic prowess of the neighbourhood, as well of the city.

We can conclude several similarities between the two case studies. In both examples, the property-led redevelopment is realized through public-private partnerships. A second thing, which could be noted, is that in both cases the redevelopment strategy aims to create an image of the area that would attract people with the ultimate goal to rent or sell property. By making the neighbourhood commercially attractive (the case of Beijing) or attractive for living (Katendrecht) by employing respectively culture and food industry tools, capital is cultivated and the market value of the properties is boosted. As a consequence, the prices of local amenities rise, as well as rent costs. The local businesses focus on catering to a higher income bracket in order to offset the increased rent prices to perform their business, which makes it difficult for

the residents of before the redevelopment to meet the new financial demands for living in the area. Consequently, this leads to a displacement of the original residents and their substitution with middle class citizens. This population replacement phenomenon is a part of gentrification mechanism, strongly linked to this type of redevelopment.

Furthermore, another common characteristic of the market-oriented redevelopment is the use of tourism-boosting facilities as a tool to raise the attractiveness of the area. A place in demand for tourists is a 'hot-spot' for investments due to the heightened circulation flux. The effect of this on the local residents is rarely given enough consideration by the actors, initiating the process. Overcrowding, commercialization, noise, inability of the established infrastructure to serve the increased amount of people are some negative side-effects which are largely left ignored.

The locals were not disregarded only in the aftermath of the redevelopment strategy. During the process of its implementation, overall citizen participation was low. This is especially true for the case of Beijing. Despite some organized efforts to incorporate citizen's point of view in the redevelopment, the original population remains greatly under-represented in the decision-making process. The market-led redevelopment remains a predominantly top-down approach.

Clarisse, Marijke, S4394682 Mentor, and Ritske Dankert. 2016. "You Cannot Live with the Present, If You Forget the Past' An Insight on How 'in between' Residents Experience the Effects of Gentrification in Middelland and Katendrecht Bachelor Thesis Geography, Planning & Environment" <https://theses.uibn.ru.nl/handle/123456789/2433>.



Fig. 2.110: Construction in Katendrecht, 18.07.2020

Fig. 2.110

image source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Rotterdam_Katendrecht_bouw_in_2020.jpg, accessed 25.02.2021

POLITICAL & ECONOMIC SETTING | PATTERN 3:

CULTURE AS A TOOL

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Culture-led regeneration has long established itself as a successful strategy of revalorization and regeneration of deprived urban areas. Some earlier examples include policies for art and culture, which had a positive influence on regeneration projects in 1980s United Kingdom (Y. Zhang, Kang, and Koo 2019). Among the four urban projects, reviewed in this paper, the Favara and Beijing cases belong to the pattern Culture as a Tool and will be compared in this sub-chapter, beginning with the origin of change, its incentives, approach to heritage and finally concluding with the effects.

First and foremost, we must understand the origin of the transformation, its main agents and how it came into being. An important differentiation must be made between Farm Cultural Park and the Plan for 25 conservation areas of Beijing as these two cases represent polar opposites in that regard: the Favara transformation is exemplary for a grassroots undertaking, whereas the Beijing Old city regeneration is exclusively state-led. Furthermore, the beginning of Farm Cultural Park in fact, albeit a proposal for an alternative approach, was in its essence also an act against the local government's strategy of preventive demolition. By acting within the confines of the private sector and with personal finance, Bartoli and Saieva could operate with greater freedom and at an accelerated rate as compared to a hypothetical situation where the state is the main actor. The reason for that is mainly bureaucracy and the involvement of many stakeholders when it comes to public monetary capital. The two patrons of the arts

were free of such considerations and this let them act swiftly and effectively and realise their idea without having to argue its future assumed effect - they alone bore the responsibility and risk of its success or failure. In Beijing, however, we may observe the lengthy and difficult process of implementing policies for conservation, the difficulties of exerting control and monitoring for compliance. Despite the first laws to preserve monuments were issued in the beginning of the 1980s, and additional regulations to protect heritage from the over-development of the city were introduced shortly after (Regulation on Building Heights in 1985 & Control of Land Use and Floor Area Ratio 1987) (Orsini 2014), furthermore supported by other policies throughout the years (e.g. Old and Dilapidated Housing Renewal Program 1990), it took about 20 years to reach a comprehensive Conservation Plan. And even then, after its completion in 2001 by a team of academics and professionals, it was submitted to the district government for a final approval, which was received in 2002. All of this serves to underline the lengthy and difficult bureaucratic process state-led enterprises face. Furthermore, as already described in the Pattern Market focus, the district government of the respective conservation area had to bear the financial costs for rehabilitation, making it the sole liable party in the transformation. This led to the involvement of private capital, facilitating the Growth machine mechanism, and would later affect the character of the interventions which, although themed as "cultural regeneration", would rather lead to an over-commercialization of the area and

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 ZHANG, Yuqi, Sungik Kang, and Ja Hoon Koo. 2019. "What Is the Critical Factor and Relationship of Urban Regeneration in a Historic District?: A Case of the Nanluoguxiang Area in Beijing, China." *Sustainability (Switzerland)* 11 (23). <https://doi.org/10.3390/su11236772>.

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 ORSINI, MARGHERITA. 2014. "Dashilar Hutong." Italy. <https://www.politesi.polimi.it/handle/10589/90646>



Fig. 2.111



Fig. 2.112

Fig. 2.111

source: <https://www.wwfgiarre.org/33-farm-cultural-park-favara.html>, accessed 25.02.2021

Fig. 2.112

"Vacant space after being used for temporary exhibition and shop during Beijing Design Week"

Image and caption source: Zhang, A. Y. 2020. Address Urban Regeneration Challenge with Temporary Creative Uses: The Case of Beijing's Dashilar Area. Urban Book Series. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-61753-0_13

2.1 POLITICAL & ECONOMIC SETTING | CULTURE AS A TOOL

FA, BE

SHIN, Hyun Bang. 2010. "Urban Conservation and Revalorisation of Dilapidated Historic Quarters: The Case of Nanluoguxiang in Beijing." *Cities* 27 (SUPPL 1): S43-54. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2010.03.006>.

enhance the detrimental process of losing identity, which began with the large-scale redevelopments of the 90s. Meanwhile, by virtue of initially relying on charitable injections and by being a private cultural institution, Farm Cultural Park follows a leitmotiv of "museum of people", where tourism and art are the tools but not the end goal of the establishment. Diversity, flows, a search for identity and alternative living styles through experimentation is what sets Farm Cultural Park apart. Citizen participation is another key component related to the origin of the transformation. In Beijing, that is almost totally absent, unless organised and even then inefficient, residents remain a passive element which, although experiencing the change, rarely has a say in the planning phase.

This observation contributes to a more general statement: state-led regeneration, in spite of attempting to involve citizens in the decision-making process, invariably is less successful in that aspect compared to grassroots processes, which stem from the citizens themselves. Put this way, the validity of this assertion seems obvious. However, the key difference is not the starting point of the regeneration, but rather the 'sense of responsibility' that cannot be institutionalized and instead needs to be cultivated over time.

The motives for regeneration are different in both cases, as well. On one hand, the conservation of the Old Town in Beijing is connected to a deliberate redefining of image where the government sought to re-establish the capital's image to the world

as a metropolitan city with rich history, despite the fact that heritage monuments were destroyed for decades with little concern. This shift in Beijing's role began in the Reform era, roughly in the end of the 1970s. As already mentioned, it was not until the 2000s that active measures began to be undertaken but even then the strategy was largely one of beautification and face-lifting. The interventions on the conservation areas were part of a larger mission of creating a saleable urban landscape, rather than a liveable one. Upgrades in living conditions did take place, but on many occasions not for the original residents - many of whom were displaced, albeit voluntarily. A strategy of "micro-circulation" was employed by the district government and street office and allowed for a restoration process without forceful evictions. The process required all dwellers of a courtyard compound to sign a collective application, agree on a relocation plan and receive compensation, resulting in their permanent displacement from their houses, which would then undergo renovation, executed either by corporate or individual investors. In Nanluoguxiang in the period 2004-2008, more than 80 siheyuans were restored using this model of action (Shin 2010). Although vernacular architecture was preserved, the existing social ties and community landscape was irreversibly severed and replaced with upper income residents, landlords and business owners.

In a way, the derived property revalorization was a sought-after effect of the redevelopment - for private investors financial gain was the leading impetus behind the



Fig. 2.113
Nanluoguxiang

source: <http://news.takungpao.com/paper/q/2016/0429/3312545.html>, accessed 20.04.2021

Fig. 2.113

POLITICAL & ECONOMIC SETTING | CULTURE AS A TOOL

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operation. This is also the reason why over-commercialization is not an uncommon sight in the conservation areas and especially in Nanluoguxiang - an area, praised for its allegedly successful regeneration. There, the number of stores increased from 2 in 2006 to 172 in 2010 - most revolving around the creative arts - in line with the topic of this pattern, as culture has a magnetic quality of attracting people and uplifting an area's image. Local businesses reached 200 in 2017, as catering accounted for nearly half, and souvenir shops - for 35% (Y. Zhang, Kang and Koo 2019). Overly-crowded, full of tourists, both national and international, the authentic atmosphere of the historical neighbourhood was diminished in a generic amalgam of souvenir shops and trendy cafés, that have little to do with local culture. As Martínez asserts in the 2016 work *Authenticity as a Challenge in the Transformation of Beijing*, "*the continuity of community life, activities and different uses within the form and typology of architecture—is not always compatible with the commercial exploitation of cultural and heritage resources*". Overall, the attitude towards vernacular courtyard housing in hutong neighbourhoods in Beijing was refracted through a prism of entrepreneurial behaviour: the built environment was commodified, rather than seen as a heritage asset to be preserved in all its dimensions - urban, architectural, cultural and social.

Farm Cultural Park is both similar and different to the Beijing case in that regard. The private cultural organization does reinvent the image of Favara and makes it

attractive to visitors, but that is more of a welcome side-effect rather than the goal of the establishment. The reasons behind the regeneration that began in Sette Cortili are of protective character: Farm was created as a means to safeguard and restore the dilapidated historical centre of Favara from the preventive demolition. Culture, in that context, became a tool of Bartoli and Saieva - the patrons of the arts, who established Farm. With a personal vision, influenced by experiences from their travels and taste for the arts, the couple used various cultural references, such as Camden Town in London, Palais de Tokyo in Paris and Jemaa El Fna Square in Marrakesh (Faraci 2017), to construct the idea of Farm as a cultural and social hub. Farm does not restore the built environment in order to profit economically; the physical refurbishment of crumbling buildings is used as a method to mend an intangible element of the context - the declining cultural and social environment of Favara, which was slowly losing its identity due to widespread neglect, unauthorized development and poor planning. In that sense, the recovery was not just of the urban fabric, but of the local identity, the citizens' dignity and faith in the future.

For that reason, the approach to the dilapidated buildings is also quite different compared to the siheyuans in Beijing Conservation Areas. In Favara, contrast and minimal low-cost interventions were used due to the limited financial resources and the fact that the transformed buildings were not heritage assets so authenticity was not a prime objective; instead, social revitalization and building recovery were.

ZHANG, Yuqi, Sungik Kang, and Ja Hoon Koo. 2019. "What Is the Critical Factor and Relationship of Urban Regeneration in a Historic District?: A Case of the Nanluoguxiang Area in Beijing, China." *Sustainability (Switzerland)* 11 (23). <https://doi.org/10.3390/su11236772>.

FARACI, Giorgio. 2017. "Farm Cultural Park: An Experience of Social Innovation in the Recovery of the Historical Centre of Favara." *Procedia Environmental Sciences* 37: 676–88. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.proenv.2017.03.054>.

MARTÍNEZ, Plácido González. 2016. "Authenticity as a Challenge in the Transformation of Beijing's Urban Heritage: The Commercial Gentrification of the Guozhijian Historic Area." *Cities* 59: 48–56. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2016.05.026>.



Fig. 2.1.14

Fig. 2.1.14

Farm Cultural Park

source: <https://paesaggisensibili.com/tag/favara/>, accessed 25.02.2021

2.1 POLITICAL & ECONOMIC SETTING | CULTURE AS A TOOL

FA, BE

Jayne, Mark. n.d. CHINESE URBANISM.

"Farm Cultural Park, Favara, Sicily on Vimeo." n.d. <https://vimeo.com/209135550>.

"Farm Cultural Park | Favara - Collettivo CLAN." n.d. <https://www.collettivoclan.it/farm-cultural-park-favara/>.

Occhipinti, Fausta. 2017. "Farm Cultural Park as an Urban Regeneration Lab." *AGATHÓN | International Journal of Architecture, Art and Design* 1: 61–68. <https://doi.org/10.19229/2464-9309/1102017>.

"FARM Cultural Park | PaesaggiSensibili." n.d. <https://paesaggiSensibili.com/2016/07/21/farm-cultural-park/>.

CONTATO, Annalisa. 2015. "DIALOGO SU FARM CULTURAL PARK." <https://iris.unipa.it/handle/10447/173935?mode=full362#YAhNuOhKiUk>.

Revalorization of property occurred in both cases with the difference being the fact that the Beijing regeneration sought after rising property prices by virtue of being a profit-driven enterprise, shouldered economically by private developers; in Favara, despite Farm being a private organization as well, Andrea Bartoli asserts: "*The main mission of Farm Cultural Park is to use the tools of art and culture to offer the city of Favara a new identity and new future*" ("Farm Cultural Park, Favara, Sicily on Vimeo," n.d.). Therefore, the effects of the revalorization are also experienced differently. In Beijing, the conservation areas are gradually being gentrified at a different rate. Neighbourhoods are undergoing significant changes also in terms of the built environment, albeit concealed, in order to accommodate the requirements of contemporary living. In Favara, the influx of tourists - 120 thousands in 2017 ("Farm Cultural Park | Favara - Collettivo Clan," n.d.), constituted a beneficial financial boost to the local economy, that brought about a business revival of functions in the catering and hotel industry (Occhipinti 2017), creating new job opportunities and revitalizing the whole area. As Andrea Bartoli points out, "*There isn't a single building in the historic town centre that hasn't been the subject of sale, and today isn't being transformed for tourist and cultural purposes. Favara used to have just one hotel with 15 rooms; now there's a continual proliferation of holiday homes, country retreats and B&Bs*" ("Farm Cultural Park | PaesaggiSensibili," n.d.)

The way culture is employed as a tool is also different in the two examples. For Favara, the cultural aspect may be referred to as mixed between "external" and "innate" sources: external being the art, as foreign national and international artists are invited to create site-specific installation for the city as well as showcase their work in exhibition spaces, housed in the renovated buildings in the historic centre; and "innate" being the culture-saturated urban environment of the Sicilian town, situated in a area of millennia-long history. Furthermore, Farm was gradually set in a greater cultural context by collaborating with domestic and global cultural institutions and established itself as one of the leading touristic sites for lovers of contemporary art world-wide (Contato 2015).

In Beijing, the methods of utilizing culture are a subject of experimentation, as approaches vary between the different conservation areas. However, in all cases culture is in some way related to the vernacular of the historic quarters. Usually, siheyuans and hutongs are exploited for their historic status that is of interest to tourists looking for an 'authentic' experience of local culture. In Dashilar for example temporary pop-up art installations were used, hosting some of the events of Beijing Design Week (Jayne, n.d.). That approach is more similar to the one employed in Favara, but holds its own paradoxes in the way it is implemented: while Farm's strategy uses abandoned and dilapidated buildings and renovates them in order to house temporary exhibitions throughout the year, the vacancy of the Dashilar siheyuans is deliberately created by displacing residents. This forced abandonment of areas, which usually struggle with overpopulation, is with the aim of aestheticizing edifices through cultural activities for a limited time only, so that their economic value could be increased. This way, they could potentially be rented or sold on the real estate market. This strategy is also state-led and capitalizes on creative uses to create a continuous interest towards the area. As a result, the whole process could be described as an art-led gentrification, where consumer culture replaces authentic perception of history, architecture and communal relationships between inhabitants and their everyday spaces.

To conclude, Favara and Beijing both use the idea of culture, but in dramatically contrasting ways and for just as different purposes. Although culture is used as a tool for regeneration in both cases, the underlying motivation and its executive agents are entirely different. For this reason, it is difficult to evaluate the success of each case. In Beijing, estates were sold and rented at a higher price and the appearance of conservation areas was to some extent preserved, so considering the initial aim of the undertaking, it could be considered a success. In Favara, crumbling buildings in the historic centre were saved from demolition and the area was socially and economically revitalized. Grassroots vs state-led, mending a town's identity vs an entrepreneurial agenda of revalorization; these characteristic disparities explicate the differing outcomes of the two urban transformations.

POLITICAL & ECONOMIC SETTING | CULTURE AS A TOOL

FA, BE



Fig. 2.115

Fig. 2.115

Farm Cultural Park

source: personal archive, October 2019



Fig. 2.116

Fig. 2.116

Yandai Xiejie

caption and image source: <https://www.easytourchina.com/blog-v1350-the-10-most-famous-hutongs-in-beijing>, accessed 22.04.2021

CHAPTER 2

COMPARISON

2.1 POLITICAL & ECONOMIC SETTING

2.2 THE PHYSICAL AND THE SOCIAL DIMENSIONS

THE PHYSICAL & THE SOCIAL DIMENSIONS

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Politics and economics impact greatly the urban situation of the four case studies, but are not the only factors which shape the realities of those cities. Curiously, the built environment and social capital are both a consequence of politico-economic interests, as well as active agents in themselves, capable of bringing about change and continuously transforming the environment. Large-scale architectural developments and infrastructure are often expressions of economic interests or a governmental policy, as they require a substantial monetary investment to be realized. However, once realized, they exert a novel influence on their context, one which did not exist before. That influence can either reinforce the status quo or generate

change, being part of a bigger transformation shift. Similarly, the social composition of an urban area can both be influenced by the described dynamics and affect them at the same time. It is impossible to reach a thorough understanding of the analysed case studies without taking into account the intertwined action of these elements as well and their specific relation to the factors discussed in the previous sub-chapter. Therefore, this sub-chapter explores in a comparative way the prerequisites and impacts of urban regeneration in its physical and social dimensions, including the components analysed this far as well. The four case studies will be holistically discussed through two thematic topics: built environment and the people.

THE PHYSICAL AND THE SOCIAL DIMENSIONS | THEME 1:

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TEUNISSEN, Marcel. 2020. The Hague. Notes on Katendrecht, Typoscript (Unpublished).

The built environment is an expression of all those previously described processes and agents operating in cities. For this reason, it is precisely in the physical dimension that we can see materialized the seemingly intangible strategies of urban regeneration. In this topic, we will cover the main architectural and infrastructural interventions of each case and how they are related to the general scheme of the respective urban strategy.

DEMOLITION

Strongly linked to the context of distressed urban areas is the phenomenon of demolition - that, occurring naturally as buildings gradually decline, or the deliberate organized action of bulldozing. In all four cases, at some point in time in their history, the urban tissue experienced such an event.

For Katendrecht and the Old city of Beijing especially, demolition played a significant role in the shaping of the current state of the areas. In the Dutch example, demolition was a natural process in the transforming land- and city-scape of Rotterdam. First, the digging of the Maashaven and Rijnhaven, and then with the sporadic, yet constant, updating of the buildings within the quarter. In recent years, a more organized process of demolition has been taking place as a part of the redevelopment strategy, as space needs to be freed up for the construction of residential estates catering to the middle classes. However, such a practice is more the exception, rather than the rule in the case of Katendrecht, as upgrading and reuse is much more common. Furthermore, local

buildings of historical importance and of community value are preserved and treated as part of the identity-constructing elements of the neighbourhood. The 19th century harbour aesthetic - a trademark of the neighbourhood, is carefully considered and revitalized with projects such as the renovation of the Deliplein and the Kaappark.

In Beijing, the situation is slightly different. During the vehement redevelopment which roughly spans the time of the second half of the twentieth century and accelerates dramatically in the 90s, little attention was paid to heritage buildings. At first an ideological consideration signed the death sentence to the Old City's siheyuans as symbols of feudal power and therefore unworthy for preservation. Then, in the century's last decade emerging market interests overpowered the academics' position and municipal plans for preservation, in an attempt to maximize profits from the valuable pieces of land located at the heart of the growing metropolis. The one-storey formula of the courtyard houses did not fit the financial gain-oriented agenda of developers and without protection from the state, a third of the historical urban fabric of the city was destroyed. However, it was not only the corporate interests that fuelled this process. The extreme population density of the area - 6.9 sq.m. per person housing space in the conservation districts, which is one quarter of the Beijing average (Shin 2010), combined with the lack of basic facilities (for example, lack of in-house kitchen and sharing public sanitary amenities), and the uncontrolled makeshift additions to the siheyuans were all elements culpable for

Fig. 2.2.1

"At Katendrecht in Rotterdam, the demolition of the residential block that is to make way for the new building project Kaapvaarder has started "

caption and image source: <https://nieuws.top010.nl/sloop-woonblok-katendrecht-locatie-kaapvaarder.htm>, accessed 17.04.2021



Fig. 2.2.1: Katendrecht, demolition

Fig. 2.2.2

image source: <https://edition.cnn.com/style/article/china-heritage-architecture/index.html>, accessed 17.04.2021



Fig. 2.2.2: Beijing, demolition

2.2 THE PHYSICAL & THE SOCIAL DIMENSIONS | BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Zhang, Chun, and Bin Lu. 2016. "Residential Satisfaction in Traditional and Redeveloped Inner City Neighborhood: A Tale of Two Neighborhoods in Beijing." *Travel Behaviour and Society* 5: 23–36. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tbs.2015.08.001>.

the deteriorated standard of life. A long history of neglect and the current configuration of the houses, that did not meet the present demands for living conditions, played a role in the choice to demolish buildings for the redevelopment of the area. Furthermore, one of the reasons why renovation of the quarters was beyond the district government's financial capacity in the first place, was their dilapidated state. A careful restoration would be much more time-consuming and require greater man-power, both in terms of quantity and regarding expertise-level of the personnel. Nowadays, demolition continues, albeit in a different form: copycat architecture of old vernacular houses is erected in place of demolished siheyuans. This has become a fairly common practice. Although authenticity of such edifices is up for debate, the perspective on the matter is heavily reliant on the cultural context. In China, where Siheyuans are traditionally rebuild anew generation after generations, the "Xiu Jiu Ru Jiu" method ("repairing the old to look old") (C. Zhang and Lu 2016) has been revered with public approval.

In Medellín, the demolition practice takes the shape of disruptive conflict between the state and the residents of illegal dwellings in the comunas (Samper 2012). Due to the safety hazard of such self-built constructions as well as their illegitimate tenure, the municipality is by default set at odds with their population. There are instances of illegal dwellings being demolished, rebuild and destroyed again - a cycle, occurring several times and executed by various governmental or private agencies.

However, the quest of demolition of such dwellings is not fuelled solely by their status of illegitimacy. Given the topographical context of their sites, the buildings constitute a hazard, both to their inhabitants and to neighbours' safety: landslides and structural instability are not uncommon sightings. Despite such reasoning, during the process of demolition the state rarely offers rehousing options suitable for the dwellers, leading to: first, temporary homelessness and, second, to re-erecting the same makeshift buildings after some time. The result of this process is a futile clash between state and the residents of the comunas.

Favara, in contrast with the other examples, presents a case of demolition which never occurred coordinatedly prior to 2010. The abandonment of the historical quarters and the declining interest towards those urban areas made for passive neglect, which did not even require the deliberate destruction of the buildings. They were bound to crumble at some point and the ground beneath them was of little to none value for residents and investors. Indifference and lack of maintenance led to the degradation of centuries' old buildings, which started falling apart. The local government's intervention consisted of the erection of tuff brick walls to isolate the most structurally perilous zones of the city, but little was done to tackle the issue of structural instability, until 2010 when a strategy of preventive demolition was undertaken. With no plans regarding what would replace the buildings once they are bulldozed, such an approach would have left the historical centre of Favara dotted with barren lots.

Fig. 2.2.3

image source: <https://www.rcnradio.com/colombia/antioquia/once-inmuebles-ilegales-de-una-comuna-de-medellin-fueron-demolidos>, accessed 17.04.2021



Fig. 2.2.3: Medellín, demolition of illegal buildings

Fig. 2.2.4

image source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LJ7aSbr5J-c&ab_channel=SICILIATV, accessed 17.04.2021



Fig. 2.2.4: Favara, tuff wall

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RENOVATION

Another key intervention on the built environment used in urban regeneration, is renovation. According to Cambridge Dictionary, renovation is: "the act or process of repairing and improving something, especially a building"; in the context of this paper this term will be used to refer to any upgrading activity, performed on existing edifices or infrastructure, with the aim of improving its state in structural, functional or aesthetic aspect. Although applied differently in the four case studies, renovation always serves a similar purpose: it raises the living conditions and as a consequence creates a positive public perception of a building or an area. Abandonment, structural instability, problematic urban space and run-down state of buildings are all tackled through (albeit not exclusively but always including) renewal and repair.

In Favara the refurbishment was minimalistic and low-cost. It began in 2010 with two buildings that were part of the so-called Sette Cortili (lit. translated "Seven Courtyards"). First, the structural integrity of the buildings was restored by consolidating the walls and floors and refurbishing roofs, façades and the systems of the buildings. Subtle materials were chosen for the renewal - plaster, grey metal, grey and black resins. (Faraci 2017) Farm's creative philosophy was declared in the white, often boldly decorated façades, dramatically contrasting the crumbling sand-coloured context (Fig. 2.25 to Fig. 2.27). Such interventions were applied in an acupuncture fashion, gradually reactivating various building clusters and connecting them together in a new urban network. These strategic injections made a beneficial impact on their respective areas, raising the quality of living conditions, attractivity and economic value of properties.

As already mentioned in the demolition topic, in Beijing renovation often takes the form of copycat architecture or refurbishment of vernacular siheyuans which does not always follow an academically correct conservation approach. Instead, buildings are adapted to the new demands, dictated by commercial and consumerist trends. Houses façades and layouts were altered to meet as successfully as possible the new business opportunities or to ensure a contemporary living standard in buildings of a completely different era. For example,

in Guozijian street, houses undergo a "typological reconstruction" (Martinez 2016). Although the renovations conducted on some shops there seemingly respect the original typology of the siheyuan and even offer a return to the original feudal glamour, marketing their service as one of authentic experience, in fact severe alterations were implemented. In order to tackle the space shortage, in the case of FJNI store a basement level about as big as the plot area was created. Another example is the daoziuo fang (first bay of the courtyard house) of the Wudaoying Hutong, for which Martinez writes: "what used to be the traditionally blank wall of the daoziuo fang facing the street has become permeable, so that spaces that used to belong to the private realm are now exposed to the public". Such an action ransacks the whole functional logic of the siheyuan and renders the vernacular building a scenographic asset in an artificially manufactured idea of authenticity - one that caters to commercial and touristic expectation and experience. Pervasive use of popular themes and global aesthetics of what is deemed attractive for visitors led to a homogenization of the urban landscape. In the quest of creating an alluring appearance, ostensibly harmless reconstructions and small acts of freedom in interpretation during the building renovation led to the treatment of heritage as a historical skin, rather than as an invaluable patrimony to be protected.

In the case of Katendrecht, renovation played a significant role in the redevelopment process. Generally, it was of functional and hygienic considerations and aimed at rehabilitating the unfavourable image of the area, as well as providing the necessary environment to attract and host new dwellers and visitors. Beautification and facade uplifting took place in order to create an impression of a welcoming and safe neighbourhood, which Katendrecht indeed became thanks to the multifaceted regeneration strategy of the Municipality. Renovation was implemented mainly in three ways: building refurbishment, DIY houses and additions.

The residential needs and living standard requirements of the neighbourhood were tackled through renovation of historic houses since the 1970s. Initially, in 1974 the Municipality began a large-scale operation of buying out houses, which had been ne-

RENOVATION | meaning in the Cambridge English Dictionary. (n.d.). <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/renovation>

FARACI, Giorgio. 2017. "Farm Cultural Park: An Experience of Social Innovation in the Recovery of the Historical Centre of Favara." *Procedia Environmental Sciences* 37: 676-88. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.proenv.2017.03.054>.

MARTÍNEZ, Plácido González. 2016. "Authenticity as a Challenge in the Transformation of Beijing's Urban Heritage: The Commercial Gentrification of the Guozijian Historic Area." *Cities* 59: 48-56. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2016.05.026>.

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Fig. 2.2.5 & 2.2.6
FCP - Farm Cultural Park

caption and image source:



Fig. 2.2.5: State of Sette cortili before FCP*

Fig. 2.2.6: A building in the Sette cortili nowadays



Fig. 2.2.7

source: personal archive, October 2019

Fig. 2.2.7: Le Corbusier wall art in Favara

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Fig. 2.2.8 & 2.2.9
introduction of folding french windows in walls facing courtyard in a vernacular house

source: <https://www.gooood.cn/fnji-beijing-guozejian-space.htm>, accessed 22.04.2021

Fig. 2.2.8: FJNI Store



Fig. 2.2.9: FJNI Store



Fig. 2.2.10

Fig. 2.2.10
glazed hutong roof

source: <https://www.thebeijinger.com/blog/2016/03/20/wudaoying-hutong-new-he-kitchen-co-space-incredible-rooftop-food-disappoints>, accessed 22.04.2021



Fig. 2.2.11

Fig. 2.2.11
"The hutongs gradually grow into the same pattern"

caption and image source: <https://www.163.com/dy/article/FKVQC-BLD051285EO.html>, accessed 22.04.2021

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Fig. 2.2.12
Delistraat 50a, Katendrecht

source: <https://www.minkemakelaardij.nl/delistraat-50a/>, accessed 25.02.2021

Fig. 2.2.12



Fig. 2.2.13
The Fenix I warehouse, Rotterdam, Katendrecht, 1980

source: <http://fotos.serc.nl/zuid-holland/rotterdam/rotterdam-28215/>, accessed 24.04.2021

Fig. 2.2.13

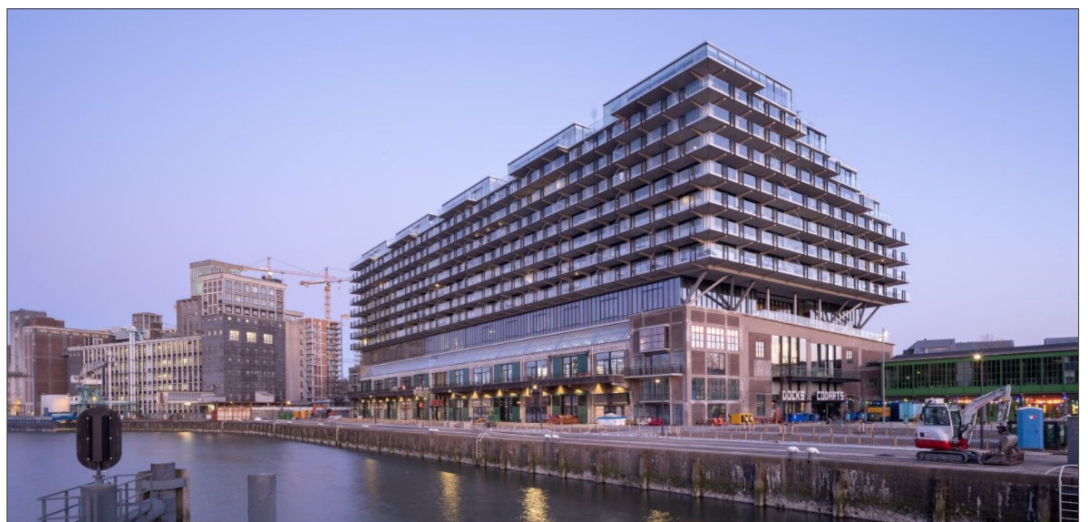


Fig. 2.2.14
Residential volume built on an independent steel structure over of the warehouse

source: <https://archello.com/story/32662/attachments/photos-videos/23>, accessed 22.04.2021

Fig. 2.2.14

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glected by their private owners, in order to acquire land-rights for possible future redevelopments or renovation actions. As a result, 850 homes and 57 commercial spaces were renovated, marking the first critical step in the redevelopment (Teunissen 2020). Afterwards, many other housing programmes were launched. For example, in the Pols area, a planned development until 2015 introduced 1700 new homes on previous port sites. Furthermore, the municipality planned for deliberate diversification in the real estate tenure, as in 2010 only 27% of the houses were owner-occupied. For that purpose, a conversion of property towards purchase-based occupation rather than leasing was favoured. In recent years, the residential development has been falling behind the municipal plans, so provision of DIY programmes, in which owners renovate dwellings with personal resources, and new developments ensure the involvement of more stakeholders in the regeneration process.

Then, in the 2000s, the next stage of the physical upgrading was of public-attracting character in order to boost the human current in the area and revitalize it socially. For this purpose, the interventions focused on elements that were specific to Katendrecht, as identity-constructing agents. The 19th century harbour allure was accentuated and authentic facade details are preserved during renovation processes. Examples of projects, that rely on the cultural-historical value of the existing building, include the Walhalla theater, Table d'hotels De Jonge De Jong and the European China Centre, as well as the iconic Fenixloodsen (Fig. 2.2.13 & 2.2.14). These contribute to the reconstruction of the ima-

ge of Katendrecht, often under the guiding theme of the redevelopment: "culinary, cultural, creative". The Fenix I warehouse project is a curious example, as not only does it preserve the historical shed, built in 1922 by architect van Groor, but it also introduces a considerable amount of new housing stock ("Fenix Warehouses converted and topped with housing by MEI Architects," n.d.). This provides Katendrecht with a necessary mass of wealthy residents, who would relieve the financial burden on the municipality. The new dwellings are part of a concrete volume supported by a steel frame placed within the walls of the existing harbour building.

In Medellin, the PRIMED plan of 1993 included physical improvements and refurbishment of informal housing. Other than that, the renovation has been mainly focused on public space and in that sense, we could say that one of the main components of physical transformation has been the city's infrastructure, and in particular - the infrastructure connecting the urban centre and the comunas. Various forms of public transport, as well as urban street space have been upgraded in an integrated attempt to boost circulation and urban quality and to reclaim the street from the reigning criminal groups. Furthermore, the improvement of accessibility and connectivity between the city's centre and periphery aims to battle social and physical marginalization.

With a clearly outlined goal to become a City for Life, the first step towards transformation for Medellin was the reconquering of the public realm. Pedestrian circulation was stimulated through better urban spaces in order to make neighbourhoods livelier and

TEUNISSEN, Marcel. 2020. The Hague. Notes on Katendrecht, Typoscript (Unpublished).

"Fenix Warehouses Converted and Topped with Housing by Mei Architects." n.d. <https://www.dezeen.com/2020/04/02/mei-architects-fenix-apartments-docks-rotterdam-warehouse-architecture/>.



Fig. 2.2.15



Fig. 2.2.16

Fig. 2.2.15 & 2.2.16

Example for street transformation in Medellin

source: <https://twitter.com/BrentToderian/status/835596542501216256>, accessed 25.02.2021

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safer and to foster encounters, strengthening community spirit and fellowship between residents. The urban space is given back to its rightful owners and users: the citizens. Furthermore, the marginalization of the comunas was grounded not only on social segregation, but also on the topographic characteristics of the neighbourhoods' situation. Therefore, mobility back and forth from the comunas to the city posed a physical difficulty to be overcome. An example as to how this issue was tackled, are the "Stairs of Social Transformation" - electric escalators installed in Comuna 13. These became a driving force for change of the surrounding environment. Their function was simple: the previous climb of 350+ stairs was to be reduced to a three-minute ascent. Moreover, with the use of art and culture, a simple infrastructural gesture has greatly exceeded its original intention. According to statistics, the monthly rate of tourists,

coming to visit the escalators is 36,000 (In Comuna 13 of Medellín Are the Stairs of Social Transformation - Eje21, n.d.). However, the largest and perhaps most impactful infrastructural undertaking in the transformation of Medellín is undoubtedly the metrocable - an innovative transportation system, employing skilift technology. The first aerial gondola cable cars (Line K) opened in 2004, linking areas along a north-south axis, and was jointly funded by the municipality and Metro de Medellín. The metrocable transportation network consolidated the city and created tangible opportunities for the disadvantaged communities. Besides the clear economic advantages, the new quicker access to the business heart of the city provided to residents of the comunas, a study conducted between 2003 and 2008 revealed another remarkable impact of the new infrastructure: there was a 66% greater decline in homicide rates

Fig. 2.2.17

source: <http://www.eje21.com.co/2019/09/en-la-comuna-13-de-medellin-estan-las-escaleras-de-la-transformacion-social/>, accessed 25.02.2021

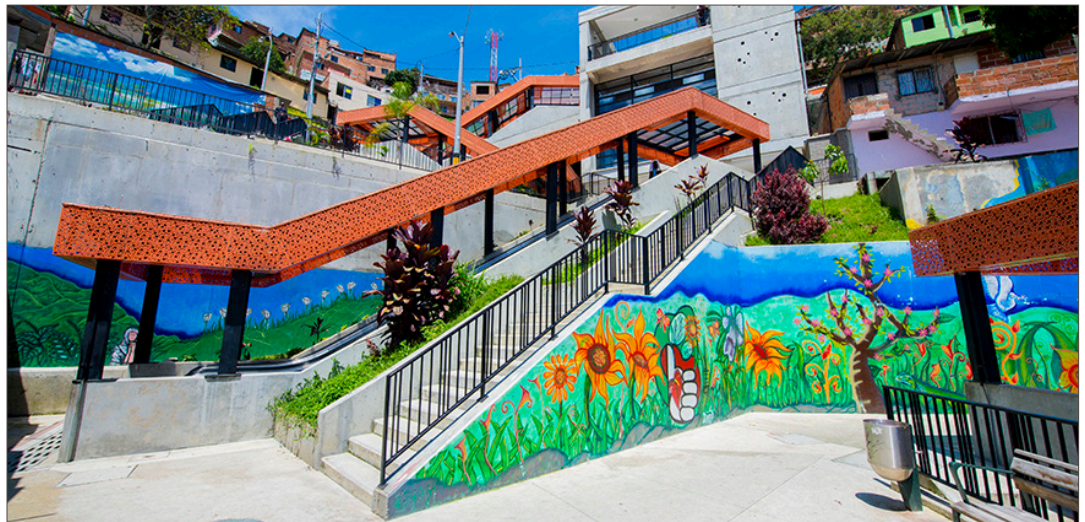


Fig. 2.2.17

Fig. 2.2.18

source: <https://blogs.worldbank.org/endpovertyinsouthasia/what-can-south-asian-cities-learn-colombias-medellin>, accessed 25.02.2021



Fig. 2.2.18

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in neighbourhoods where a Metrocable was installed, as compared to those without. Furthermore, overall reported violence marked a 75% decrease in those same areas where Metrocables were present. As Corburn quotes in the 2020 work *The Transformation of Medellín in a 'City for Life'*:

"We observed a lot of new things happening around the cable cars that we thought could be important for violence reduction, like improvement of the built environment, creation of small businesses, creation of areas where people could talk and build trust amongst one another."

NEW ADDITIONS

New built developments as a part of a deliberate regeneration strategy are not common in all four examples: they are present in the Katendrecht regeneration but constitute a crucial element in the transformation of Medellín. The latter will therefore be discussed in the following paragraphs. It ought to be noted that the demolition of existing and subsequent building of new edifices as a method of "upgrading" urban areas is not considered a "regeneration" in the context of this paper, as that is a redevelopment practice which annihilates the existing urban tissue and alters it completely.

In Medellín, the construction of buildings and injection of functions in key positions in the city, and more precisely in the comunas, was a part of a larger scale philosophy of transformation, which was described by Corburn as "ethics of aesthetics": "*a governmental and civil society commitment to projects and programs that reflect functional beauty, human dignity and serve the urgent needs of the poor*" (Corburn et al. 2020). The first focused step towards change in Medellín began in 1993 with the PRIMED - Integrated Slum Upgrading Program. This plan aimed at reducing violence and improving living conditions in informal settlements, through upgrading urban infrastructure and public amenities, as well as lowering the risks of accidental and natural collapses due to the structural instability of the illegal dwellings. The methods employed included physical refurbishment of settlements, legalization of tenure and providing basic infrastructural amenities, which in many places were missing (Chau and Gutfreund 2015). Although short-lived, PRIMED paved the road for

further developments and community participation, as it was the first program to operate in a holistic manner, combining multifaceted planning solutions. Afterwards, in the early 2000s, the PUI (Integrated Urban Projects) was introduced with the aim of creating comprehensive projects that would connect spatially various layers of the urban fabric: grey and green infrastructure, public spaces, social and economic services.

An example of these projects, are the parque bibliotecas (library parks). These did not host regular library functions, but instead facilitated a plethora of different uses, ranging from basic services like child-care to cultural activities, such as cultural centres, galleries, auditoriums, to public spaces and administrative assistance. This type of buildings was specifically conceived to become social urban centres, that bridge the gap between different layers of society by providing a safe zone for interaction and exchange. There were located in the most vulnerable areas with the aim of disrupting violence activity and restore the dignity of locals. These establishments are often regarded as one of the pillars of social urbanism and saw an exceptional success with about 1.4 million visitors in just over a five-month period (Chau and Gutfreund 2015).

Another physical intervention that was deliberately installed in the poorer part of the city, was the Jardín Circunvalar - a green belt with ecological, planning and social functions. On one side, its goal was to halt urban sprawl and contain the city within certain boundaries, but it was also an infrastructural improvement to mobility and accessibility. Furthermore, it had an identity reconstructing power as well: the El Camino de la Vida (lit. translated "The Road of Life") replaced Camino de la Muerte, previously known as a place where criminal gangs would hang the bodies of their opponents. Now, it is a 12 km long pedestrian path connecting areas that were once separated. (Corburn et al. 2020)

For the purpose of these interventions, community-engaging public workshops were institutionalized, which became the melting pot of the various perspectives of the city's inhabitants, professionals and government officials, ensuring a democratic and non-discriminatory planning of the future of Medellín.

.....
CORBURN, Jason, Marisa Ruiz Asari, Jorge Pérez Jamarillo, and Anibal Gaviria. 2020. "The Transformation of Medellín into a 'City for Life': Insights for Healthy Cities." *Cities & Health* 4 (1): 13–24. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23748834.2019.1592735>

.....
CHAU, Rebecca, and Owen GUTFREUND. 2015. "Social Urbanism: Transformational Policy in Medellín, Colombia." <http://www.semanariovoz.com/2014/04/02/foro-urbano-mundial-en-medellin-en-busca-del-tiempo-perdido/>.

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Fig. 2.2.19
Jardin Circunvalar

source: <https://cinturonverde.wordpress.com/tag/camino-de-la-vida/>, accessed 24.04.2021

Fig. 2.2.19



Fig. 2.2.20
Parque Biblioteca San Javier

source: <https://mapio.net/pic/p-60541148/>, accessed 24.04.2021

Fig. 2.2.20



Fig. 2.2.21
Parque Biblioteca San Javier

source: <http://2030palette.org/mountainside-settlements/>, accessed 24.04.2021

Fig. 2.2.21

THE PHYSICAL AND THE SOCIAL DIMENSIONS | THEME 2:

THE PEOPLE

2.2 THE PHYSICAL & THE SOCIAL DIMENSIONS | THE PEOPLE

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 "Stories from the Cape - Word-
 Press." n.d. <https://black-catsaremagic.wordpress.com/2018/11/06/verhalen-van-de-kaap/>.

It is impossible to speak of urban regeneration without considering the social dimension of the transformation: the people. Citizens might be engines of change or not, but are invariably recipients of it - they experience first-hand and day by day the effects of the urban evolution. Both good and bad, these effects impact their environment and with that - their lives, on a variety of levels: economic, social, emotional. In the so far described four case studies, two significant phenomena were exposed and will be hereby discussed: displacement and citizen participation in the future development of the city.

Displacement and migration flows can be observed in all of the case studies presented. Almost by definition, regenerative strategies aim to attract people to the previously deprived area and allegedly elevate living conditions. However, we ought to ask ourselves: who are the ones being displaced from the areas, subject to transformation, and who takes their place? Is this a phenomenon of social development in which the original population experiences a metamorphosis and acquires an identity coherent with the urban happenings of their environment, or does an entirely new social stratum infiltrate the area due to the favourable conditions created there? Gentrification seems to be a recurrent topic in the contemporary urban redevelopment discourse and the regeneration projects, reviewed in this paper could contribute to the topic. Indeed, the cases of Katendrecht and the Beijing conservation areas display gentrification trends, but it can be argued that those are within the confines of what was initially planned. Also, it must be kept in mind that the methods, employed in the different conservation areas are various and some more socially-conscientious than others. However, generally the district governments of Beijing pursued partnerships with private developers and sought after the arrival of an affluent middle class in order to alleviate itself of the financial burden bestowed upon it by a higher-level juridical level. For similar reasons, Rotterdam municipality required a financial ease, achieved through owner-funded dwellings - those purchases funded redevelopment projects which beneficially influenced the image of the neighbourhood and the area itself. Furthermore, diversification and social mixing are a part of the Dutch urban planning approach and therefore, a segment of the housing stock

within an area is often policy regulated. However, it must also be considered that the change of functions and living costs outside of rental exerts additional pressure on lower-income residents and contribute to the gentrification process.

On the other hand, there are examples, such as Farm Cultural Park in Favara and the comunas of Medellin, where the existing population experiences an immaterial transformation alongside the physical changes in the built environment. In these cases, we could assert we are observing a social, as well as an urban regeneration: intangible notions such as identity, dignity and community spirit among others, also become object to metamorphosis. Citizens in those examples rediscovered their roles as active elements in the decision-making process of their future environment, making them more engaged and active and with a renewed civil pride. To some extent, the Katendrecht case could also be considered such an instance. The identity restructuring process, resulting from the regeneration of the neighbourhood towards the end of the 20th century, produced a tangible impact on the collective consciousness of Katendrechters ("Stories from the Cape - Wordpress," n.d.); T., aged 69 years and a long-time inhabitant of the neighbourhood, shares*:

"In the past you didn't dare to say where you came from, because of course it was a notorious name. It was in the beginning of "Where do you live?" "Near the Maashaven," you would say. And now you can say it to almost anyone with appropriate pride: "I am a natural Katendrecht." I like that."

Citizen participation in the regeneration process could either be spontaneous - occurring in a grassroots fashion, or organized by governmental institutions. These are interconnected and could often lead to one another. For example, an initially municipally organized participation initiatives could later lead to the emergence of community leaders and engaged citizens, who would hold governmental officials accountable for the execution of developments, such as in the case of Medellin (Corburn et al. 2020). Or a private enterprise such as Farm, could reach into political circles and engage officials or grow into a legal cooperative. A joint stock company registered in Favara under the name of



Fig. 2.2.22 - 2.2.27
 Screenscapes from 2010 documentary film Cycle of Change - Beijing, my old home by Enno Ladwig.
 source: <https://vimeo.com/7649580?f-bclid=IwARoHi6hQzxPFaNSexbjFAdS-FyNxKigoKwpbCOPB6cquRbDH-jPqubygNJWIE>, accessed 20.03.2021

Fig. 2.2.22 - 2.2.27



Fig. 2.2.28 - 2.2.31
 Screenscapes from FARM CULTURAL PARK - Museo delle Persone by Farmculturalpark.
 source: <https://vimeo.com/170282461>, accessed 28.03.2021

Fig. 2.2.28 - 2.2.31

2.2 THE PHYSICAL & THE SOCIAL DIMENSIONS | THE PEOPLE

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 "Countless Cities: A Favara La Biennale Delle Città Del Mondo - Giornale Dell'Architettura," n.d. <https://ilgiornaledellarchitettura.com/2019/07/10/countless-cities-a-favara-la-biennale-delle-citta-del-mondo/>.

BUONE is one such instance. Its goal is the establishment of a connection between owners of strategically located estates in Favara, investors able to provide funds and professionals with the required skill-set to execute the regeneration process. As L. Pierro and M. Scarpinato write in *Il Giornale dell'Architettura*, "The idea is essentially that of transforming each citizen into a civic leader capable of contributing to the change of their territory, investing their capital and skills in projects of social and collective utility." ("Countless Cities: A Favara la Biennale delle Citta del Mondo - Giornale dell'Architettura," n.d.)

All in all, regeneration projects present a less abrupt shift in the population composition than redevelopment projects do. Top-down transformations may indeed impose an authoritative view on the distribution of different social groups within an area, but there are approaches that ensure the engagement and participation

of the original communities in the process of transformation. There is no universal recipe that could guarantee the success of these methods, as each process is strongly linked to characteristics of the local population, such as culture, social relations, collective consciousness, ethics and so on. In that line of thought, each initiative for organized participation is largely an experiment at first. It requires a sustained and perpetual updating and adjustment based on the latest received results - a process, which may well take years. As cities are everyday grounds for an incredible variety of processes, the success of a regeneration project must be measured in just as many dimensions. For that reason, incorporating as many factors and stakeholders in the decision-making process as possible, as well as feedback and two-way communication, are crucial for the achievement of an integrated and inclusive strategy and as a result, a better urban environment for all.



Fig. 2.2.21
 Farm Cultural Park garden

source: personal archive, October 2019

Fig. 2.2.21

CHAPTER 3

CONCLUSION

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CONCLUSION: THE TRANSFORMED CITIZEN

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 ("FARM CULTURAL PARK - Museo Delle Persone on Vimeo." n.d. <https://vimeo.com/170282461>.)

In order for any process to be sustainable and resilient, it requires a closed loop, a self-enforcing cycle of cause-effects. The transformed citizen is an element, which both signifies the success of a transformation and, also, fuels it, constantly rekindling its fire. As it has become clear from the case studies reviewed in this paper, the beginning of change does not always happen from a single individual who sets out to battle depravity in urban areas. The social landscape of an area must be appropriate and ready for regeneration; a certain resonance is required for the act of change to unlock a self-sustaining chain reaction. Transformation is rarely easy even for more highly-functioning urban zones, so it may seem even more difficult in distressed areas. There are different catalysts for its activation, but at the bottom of it all is a simple human longing - the aspiration towards a better tomorrow. As already seen, in all of the examples the wish for change is present and any transformation starts with it. It may be individuals or a group of people, or a government unit that takes action first, and if successful, a snowball effect ensues. Hope is, in the best possible terms, infectious and becomes a collectively sensed entity. That gives it the function of a safe keeper of positive transformation that protects the continuity of the regeneration process - through time, through different political climates and not always favourable economic situations. Furthermore, there is no better method of appraisal for the quality of the urban environment than citizens' satisfaction - residents experience the effects of transformation first-hand and

on a daily basis and encounter both the positive sides of change and the inherent unforeseen detrimental consequences.

Also, it cannot be deduced which course of development of the phenomenon of civil engagement is more likely to produce a successful regeneration. There is hardly a way to proportionate amount of public involvement to the future success: there are examples of sustained state-organized participation (Medellin) and such of less fruitful attempts (Beijing Conservation areas), of spontaneous civil group formations (Katendrecht - AREKA) and of individual initiatives (Favara - Bartoli and Saieva). What this observation shows us is that change could begin at any level of society and that the transformation agents could be in the form of a singular unit or a significant mass of people, or, for that matter, anything in between: a citizen, a family, a group of people, a neighbourhood or an amalgamation of multiple areas to protest and fight for a better future. In a short demonstration in Sicily, caught on film, we hear the words*:

"I know a notary, who lives in the city of Favara in ruins. There was nothing there anymore. He invests to restructure the center and invites young artists from all over the world. Where there was nothing, now there's a cultural center!"

What we can assert with certainty based on this research, is that every citizen has the potential and power to be the architect of their city's future.



Fig. 3.1.

Fig. 3.1

Screen caps from FARM CULTURAL PARK - Museo delle Persone by Farmculturalpark.

source: <https://vimeo.com/170282461>, accessed 28.03.2021

APPENDIX

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