Research in urban history: recent Ph.D. theses on heritage and the city in Britain

TOSH WARWICK

Urban Studies, University of Glasgow, Bute Gardens, Glasgow G12 8QQ

Writing in *Urban History* in the spring of 1991, Peter Borsay considered how the gap between the 'popular presentations of the urban past' produced by the growing heritage industry and 'the booming academic study of urban history' might be bridged.[1] Heritage, he argued, was 'deeply bound up with the meanings and functions of towns' and urban historians should play a crucial role within communities 'engaged in a complex discourse with the past…that for many was fundamental to their livelihood and identity'.[2] Twenty seven years later Borsay's concerns continue to be mirrored in academic discussions surrounding heritage and materiality, echoing wider questions that surround the relevance of urban history beyond the academy.[3] Recent conferences have also demonstrated the continued salience of Borsay's argument, considering the potential of the study of cities to shape approaches to their management through work with local communities, heritage partners, cultural institutions and professional groups.[4] This emphasis on knowledge exchange and partnership has also attracted the support of funding bodies through collaborative doctoral awards that have sought to 'increase opportunities for all researchers to develop their work in collaboration with public, private and third sector partners that increase the flow, value, and impact of world-class arts and humanities research from academia to the UK's wider creative economy and beyond'.[5] This has included the author's own work on the heritage of Middlesbrough's iron and steel industries, which has involved working collaboratively with local archives and heritage partners.[6]

The theses reviewed here demonstrate how a new generation of historians has continued to explore the relationship between the urban environment and the often challenging concept of heritage. Though diverse in geography and time period, the theses reviewed here all represent attempts to

---

[1] P. Borsay, 'History or heritage: perceptions of the urban past: A review essay', *Urban History*, 18 (1991), 32–40.

[2] Borsay, 'History or heritage', 39.

[3] For discussion of approaches to materiality and heritage in urban history see: K. Fennelly, 'Materiality and the urban: recent theses in archaeology and material culture and their importance for the study of urban history', *Urban History* 44:3 (2017), 564–73.

[4] 'Urban History Group Conference Programme 2016', https://www2.le.ac.uk/departments/urbanhistory/uhg/past-conferences/2016/uhg-booklet-2016 accessed 2 Dec. 2017; European Association of Urban History Conference 2016: Session Papers, https://eauh2016.net/programme/sessions/ accessed 4 Dec. 2017.

[5] 'Knowledge Exchange and Partnerships' AHRC, http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/innovation/knowledgeexchange/ accessed 21 Nov. 2017.

[6] T. Warwick, 'Middlesbrough's steel magnates: business, culture and participation', University of Huddersfield Ph.D. thesis, 2016.

understand how notions of heritage are integral to British towns and cities physically, culturally, economically and socially. The review is divided into two parts that deal with the mutually constitutive relationship between discourses of heritage and the material environment of urban Britain. The first section considers theses that explore narratives of heritage in the city as created, embodied and articulated through individuals, infrastructure and institutions. Attention then turns in the second half of the piece to the ways in which heritage shapes the contemporary urban sphere, even as it is itself contested by a host of urban actors and interested groups.

Susan O'Connor's doctoral thesis, awarded by the University of Bath in 2016, draws attention to one of the most emblematic centres of urban civic life – the town hall – as a mechanism for articulating and creating a local area's particular concept of heritage.[7] In a case study of Scottish towns from 1833–1973, O'Connor highlights how town halls 'enable a degree of civic access and ritual, and encapsulate important messages about local culture and heritage' by harnessing civic consciousness and legitimizing political authority.[8] In examining the interplay between the built environment, civic ritual and political power, O'Connor brings a new dimension to the understanding and purpose of this key civic institution. In particular, the exploration of the way constructions of particular pasts are used to support contemporary agendas sheds new light on heritage appropriation in the Scottish civic, urban context. The application of Hobsbawm's work on the invention of tradition to town halls in Dundee and Kirkcaldy underlines the importance of the buildings as a site in which heritage is articulated, created and enacted in the pursuit of distinct outcomes. The symbolic significance of Renfrew Town Hall's adoption of the Scots Baronial style, for example – 'borrowing the language of the buildings of an independent Scotland without any intention of seeking self-government' – shows how this urban landmark functioned not simply as a symbol of local pride, but as a mechanism for emphasising certain key aspects of national heritage.[9]

The importance of the town hall beyond mere bricks and mortar is evident throughout, with O'Connor pointing to how the buildings create a sense of nostalgia and heritage based on their wider environment. The intention to harness these elements is encapsulated in the design of Paisley's Civic Centre, which is orientated with nearby Paisley Abbey as a focal point to create an unspoken, historical continuity between the two. This was in marked contrast to Hamilton's 1950s and 1960s Lanark County Buildings, which purposely broke with tradition through the adoption of modernist designs. In

---

[7] S. O'Connor, 'Architecture, power and ritual in Scottish town halls, 1833-1973', University of Bath Ph.D. thesis, 2016
[8] O'Connor, 'Architecture, power and ritual', 2.
[9] O'Connor, 'Architecture, power and ritual', 141.

this instance, the material rejection of history as a supporter of future success mirrored trends in other municipal buildings across Britain. O'Connor's work is also valuable when she turns her attention to the inside of town halls to understand the ways in which urban heritage is articulated within. In her examination of Dundee City Chambers (1932) and Kirkcaldy Town House (1956), O'Connor shows how both adopted a selective approach to urban heritage in the aesthetics of their interiors. Dundee prioritized medieval heritage alongside commemoration of the lost built heritage of the city, by featuring the 1732 Town House (demolished 1932) in the design of both a stained glass window and on an external brass model, despite the lost building having been considered by Dundee's councillors as a 'dead artefact from a past era'.[10] Conversely, O'Connor points to an absence of the urban past in the case of Burntisland and Renfrew Town Halls, with little evidence of municipal history or input from the local authority in the case of the Burntisland design, and a prioritization of modern requirements over reference to the past in Renfrew.[11] The urban historian can thus take much from O'Connor's thesis in understanding the conflicting approaches and values attributed to urban heritage through the lens of town halls and municipal buildings in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The study is revealing of the complex web of actors and institutions at play in determining how far these symbolic municipal institutions embraced, reflected or rejected both the wider urban heritage of the local areas. Moreover, the work also reflects how concerns regarding the destruction of heritage landmarks form part of wider urban histories of towns and cities, and shows how the loss of buildings is worthy of further exploration beyond the more commonplace focus on the preservationist movements of the inter and post-war periods.

Creating, shaping and reinventing heritage are, of course, not limited to the built environment, but are also reflected through processes and meanings explored in recent works on community identity, performance and public culture. One such work is Dion Georgiou's 'From the fringe of London to the heart of fairyland: suburban community leisure, voluntary action and identities in the Ilford Carnival, 1905–1914'.[12] Taking as a case study the Ilford Carnival, held annually as a fundraising initiative for the local hospital, Georgiou views this event as a performance of a version of community, using it to explore the different groups, individuals and organisations involved in voluntary action and urban governance in the suburbs. In doing so, he illuminates the ways in which public events can reimagine

---

[10] O'Connor, 'Architecture, power and ritual', 143–4.
[11] O'Connor, 'Architecture, power and ritual', 164–5.
[12] D. Georgiou, 'From the fringe of London to the heart of fairyland: suburban community leisure, voluntary action and identities in the Ilford Carnival, 1905–1914', Queen Mary University of London Ph.D. thesis, 2016.

and embed specific interpretations of local and national identity as well as heritage. In chapter eight Georgiou explores the manner in which the class dynamics of the carnival and expressions of local life, amusement, business, charity and pride were enacted within the suburban confines of Ilford. The chapter reveals the various stakeholders that contributed to the endurance of particular heritages, through emphasis on both Ilford's spatio-historical location as a component of the metropolis and via a somewhat contrasting depiction of it as a rural haven.[13]

The thesis then goes on to show the ways through which connections to the urban past were highlighted by aspects of the carnival. Props such as the 'Fairlop Boat' – a relic of the Fairlop Fair held in Hainault Forest in the nineteenth century – connected a rural past with the suburban present by referencing or, in other examples entirely reintroducing, older traditions.[14] Georgiou also illustrates how the carnival route was grounded in a heritage of its own, underpinned by a continuity in older narratives of place. Moreover, the research highlights how the carnival championed the continuingly growing Ilford's multifaceted heritage. The lack of a homogenous master narrative within the carnival reflected the competing agents and shifting agendas at play, which shaped the ways in which identity and history were performed amongst both organizers and spectators.[15] By drawing upon a range of historic maps, press reports, published personal reminiscence and institutional records, the study thus demonstrates how heritage has been projected, interpreted and negotiated through pageantry and ritual.[16]

The associations between Georgiou and O'Connor's studies and wider discourses of urban heritage are, on the surface quite apparent. Though their arguments point to a process that is often synthetic and selective, both town halls and carnivals were created in dialogue with historic narratives that were rooted in long periods of urban or suburban occupation. Debates concerning the place of heritage have, nevertheless, still surfaced in the newly built towns of post-war Britain. Indeed, recent years have been characterized by an 'increasing realization that the iconic architectural and urban heritage of post-war New Towns in the UK and mainland Europe is now in danger of being eroded and destroyed'.[17] Lauren Piko's 2017 University of Melbourne thesis 'Mirroring England? Milton Keynes,

---

[13] Georgiou, 'From the fringe of London to the heart of fairyland', 236.

[14] Georgiou, 'From the fringe of London to the heart of fairyland', 237.

[15] Georgiou, 'From the fringe of London to the heart of fairyland', 253.

[16] For example, see the AHRC supported 'The Redress of the Past: Historical Pageants in Britain, 1905-2016' project which has produced a number of articles, exhibitions and digital resources offering insights into 'the role of heritage in leisure activities, the interaction between local, national and imperial identities, and the changing character of community life in twentieth and early twenty-first century Britain'. http://www.historicalpageants.ac.uk/about/ accessed 12 Dec. 2017.

[17] B. Colenutt, S. Coady Shabetiz and S.V. Ward, 'New towns heritage research network', *Planning Perspectives*, 32:2

decline and the English landscape' considers how the new town has embodied the conflict between contemporary planning and notions of national heritage.[18] The thesis tracks the ways in which the new town of Milton Keynes was portrayed over three decades. Beginning with its designation under the New Town Act in 1965, Piko traces the development of attitudes to the Buckinghamshire town up to the early 1990s, examining a variety of responses from politicians, residents and the media. In considering how Milton Keynes has reflected and challenged traditional ideas of the typical British or English urban landscape, the study highlights how the discourse surrounding certain towns or cities plays a part in altering national attitudes to the place of heritage and, indeed, what might be considered heritage. By charting the rejection of tradition that underpinned post-war planning, Piko draws out a series of narratives, centred on new towns and their relation to wider ideas of the place, that questioned the specific values and judgements associated with what might constitute heritage in the urban sphere and its importance to national identity.[19]

In the mid- to late-1970s Milton Keynes was portrayed as both a cause and symptom of national decline, with criticisms centred on planners' move away from the design principles that governed the organization of traditional, historic townscapes.[20] Milton Keynes' perceived lack of authenticity drew opprobrium from the culturally conservative, which combined with apathy towards its built form found the new town further at odds with understandings of what British towns and cities should be. Piko argues that Milton Keynes' 'newness' opposed the ideals of heritage itself, which located the town outside of national ideals.[21] The thesis highlights the relationships between the place of history and national heritage and the role (or even expected responsibility) of the town in embodying these two ideas in British urban planning since the 1960s. As Piko suggests, the methodology adopted in the thesis in tracing the wider responses to new towns over a period of several decades helps shed new light on the ways in which these sites of 'anti-heritage' have developed a cultural history of their own. Moreover, such an approach offers the potential to understand how notions of heritage have developed across several decades in relation to these new urban centres. As their 'newness' has diminished, their historical value has become enhanced and a place in national heritage recognized. The plethora of high-profile national media features and local celebrations in 2017 to mark the fiftieth anniversary of Milton

(2017) 281–3. The network is timely given the changes to the new town urban landscape posed by debates around refurbishment, renewal and threat of demolition coupled with a number of significant anniversaries.

[18] L. Piko, 'Mirroring England? Milton Keynes, decline and the English landscape', University of Melbourne Ph.D. thesis, 2017.

[19] Piko, 'Mirroring England?', 119–20.

[20] Piko, 'Mirroring England?', 138–9.

[21] Piko, 'Mirroring England?', 296.

Keynes' designation thus speak to the constantly evolving set of values attached to built heritage.[22]

Heritage values associated with buildings and spaces that fall outside those traditionally acclaimed as embodying authentic, venerated histories of the town or city have also been reflected in a number of other recent studies. In particular, sites of dereliction, economic failure and regeneration have attracted the attention of scholars seeking to understand the function of heritage in the protection and reshaping of historic landscapes. Three recent theses to emerge in this area have shed new light on the role of history and heritage in contesting and informing changes to the cityscape, reflecting changing attitudes to the urban past that can be loosely traced back to preservation movements since the Second World War. In his February 2018 article in this journal, Andrew McClelland outlined the emergence of Northern Ireland's architectural conservation system, focusing on Belfast's Victorian buildings and industrial archaeology in the 1960s and 1970s.[23] The work builds on McClelland's 2014 University of Ulster thesis on the social construction of architectural values in Belfast's evolving urban landscape from 1960 until 1989 and draws upon his experience working for the Ulster Architectural Heritage Society.[24] McClelland's position as a practitioner is reflected in the study's identification of implications for policy and practice in the area: it explores the destruction of Belfast's Georgian and Victorian architectural heritage at Bedford Street, The Markets and Royal Avenue/Smithfield, all demolished in the 1970s and 1980s. It also considers the limitations of wider national legislation and organizational approaches as Northern Ireland played 'catch up' with architectural heritage conservation elsewhere in the UK.[25] The destruction of the Victorian linen warehouse at 9–15 Bedford Street is chronicled from initial demolition plans in 1969 through to the completion of the 23-storey Windsor House that has been the subject of unceasing criticism since its completion in 1976. McClelland highlights how the loss of urban heritage following demolition did not mean that campaigns were entirely fruitless in arguing that even failed efforts to retain buildings eventually helped secure more stringent forms of protection in later policy. He also considers the economic considerations in retaining historic buildings and points to how a perceived lack of architectural and historic merit had severe consequences for the warehouse's survival.[26]

The 1970s 'slum clearance' of The Markets area provides further insight into campaigns

---

[22] Piko, 'Mirroring England?', 297–300.
[23] A. McClelland, 'A 'ghastly interregnum': the struggle for architectural heritage conservation in Belfast before 1972', *Urban History*, 45:1 (2018), 150–72.
[24] A. McClelland, 'Contesting destruction, constructing heritage: the social construction of architectural heritage values in Belfast, circa 1960-1989', University of Ulster Ph.D. thesis, 2014.
[25] McClelland, 'Contesting destruction, constructing heritage', 32–3; 152–4.
[26] McClelland, 'Contesting destruction, constructing heritage', Ch.5, 155–88.

promoting preservation of urban heritage in a residential context, underlining the role of local residents in making sense of history. Those campaigning placed a stronger emphasis on the intangible, community ideals of the area, stressing a 'way of life' as a central constitutive element of heritage, rather simply advocating the preservation of unique or remarkable buildings.[27] In contrast, McClelland's study of The Royal Avenue/Smithfield area of central Belfast highlights how the destruction of buildings like the Grand Central Hotel and Head Post Office to make way for the Castlecourt shopping complex exemplified the way economic concerns took precedence in the regeneration over campaigns to save landmark structures. McClelland's thesis thus showcases the interactions between the multiple agencies at play in defending, creating and destroying urban heritage in the wider context of 1970s and 1980s, particularly during the Troubles. At the same time he tells the story of the changing attitude to what might be worth preserving and, indeed, shows the sometimes uneven progress of heritage as part of both governmental and public discourse.

The changing attitudes to heritage evidenced in McClelland's Belfast are also echoed in Brian Rosa's study, completed at the University of Manchester in 2013, which examines the regeneration of disused railway arches in Manchester.[28] The thesis tackles a number of themes including historical representation in the post-industrial city, re-evaluation of railway infrastructure in terms of decline and dereliction, heritage tourism and ideas of environmental enhancement. The basis of Rosa's study are a collection of planning schemes and regeneration strategies, that he dissects using ethnographic observation and interviews with the key urban actors who helped ensconce particular notions of heritage in plans to redevelop the city. Nowhere is this better illustrated than in a chapter entitled 'Railway viaducts as monuments: heritage, design and revalorisation in Castlefield, Manchester'. In this section Rosa uses the evolving viewpoints concerning heritage in Castlefield as a means to interrogate the wider framework of approaches to heritage in Britain between the 1960s and the early 2010s.

Rosa identifies four distinct phases in the rise and contraction of Castlefield as a heritage site. In the first, between 1967 and 1978, Castlefield was increasingly recognized as a valuable 'Heritage Landscape', as part of urban strategies that promoted the restoration of Victorian buildings for new use or even relocation. Here, the author points to the importance of Castlefield in the 1967 *City Centre Map,* which sought to promote canals as key heritage assets that could be mobilized through

---

[27] McClelland, 'Contesting destruction, constructing heritage',244–5.
[28] B. Rosa, 'Beneath the arches: Re-appropriating the spaces of infrastructure in Manchester', University of Manchester Ph.D. thesis, 2013.

pedestrianization and landscape transformation. Notably, however, the viaducts, which would later form a key part of regenerated Castlefield, failed to capture the imagination of planners at this early stage. Instead, they were considered little more than barriers, still representative of 'the image of grime and obsolescence' associated with the 'dark ages' of industry.[29] The emergence of a key role for historical and archaeological institutions in driving a re-evaluation of heritage value in the urban sphere is evidenced through the enthusiasts of the Manchester Regional Industrial Archaeology Society and local historians.

In the second phase, during the decade following 1978, Rosa emphasizes the heightened importance of civic action in central Manchester, which facilitated the 'emergence of a new tourist landscape'. The Liverpool Road Station Society and the Museum of Science and Industry emerge here as key drivers in establishing a coordinated approach to protect industrial heritage infrastructure in the city.[30] This rising appreciation of particularly industrial heritage saw Castlefield recognized as a 'neglected historic area' by Manchester City Planning Department, which sought to combine the historic with leisure and work as heritage-led regeneration took-off at Castlefield. Continued advocacy by the local authority, further enhanced by the 1988 establishment of the Central Manchester Development Corporation, 'catapulted Castlefield into the spotlight of heritage-based development'.[31] The period 1988 to 1996, nevertheless, saw another shift, this time towards 'commodifying the heritage landscape'. Rosa's work reveals the conflict and cooperation that both encourage and disengage stakeholders when dealing with approaches to urban heritage, particularly concerning the clearance of buildings that do not fit with the dominant heritage narrative. During the late 1980s the viaducts, once seen as merely barriers, were reclassified as important, architecturally valuable features of the historic landscape. Nevertheless, by the 1990s the very historians and archaeologists that had assisted in the drive to retain Castlefield as an exemplar of valuable industrial heritage had grown disillusioned. They lamented the historical inauthenticity of the area and, as revealed through a series of interviews, regarded the redevelopment as a 'missed opportunity to tell the story of the industrial revolution'.[32] The final period between 1996 and the early 2010s reflected the limits of heritage in the face of economic demands. Despite the heritage infrastructure forming the basis of Castlefield's regeneration, the thematic environment did little to emphasize the history of the site, an issue compounded by new

---

[29] Rosa, 'Beneath the arches', 147.
[30] Rosa, 'Beneath the arches', 149.
[31] Rosa, 'Beneath the arches', 152.
[32] Rosa, 'Beneath the arches', 161–3.

buildings that were built which subverted the sight lines and heritage setting surrounding the viaducts.[33] Rosa's work is a fine example of applied urban history and reflects the benefits that his background in planning and human geography can bring in uncovering the meanings and mechanisms associated with the past in the urban present. The case study of Castlefield is a useful reference point in understanding the role and changing values attributed to historic infrastructure, its impact on the regenerated cityscape and the competing individuals, institutions and, later, economic considerations that challenge the value of heritage in the urban sphere.

Just as Rosa's study is revealing of local stakeholders' role in redefining industrial heritage in Manchester, Stephen Murray's 2014 thesis on Bankside Power Station has much to say about the ways different groups of actors produced competing interpretations of the building's history and consequently shaped its regeneration.[34] Although the study is also of broader interest to urban historians seeking to understand the role of planning, pollution and technology in the post-war metropolis, it is Bankside's transformation between the end of its operational life in 1981 and its rebirth as Tate Modern in 2000 that is of interest here. Murray contends that following its closure in 1981 and despite its dereliction, the building's architectural and archaeological value was increasingly recognized.[35] Murray draws upon the publications of SAVE Britain's Heritage and newspaper reports to highlight the qualities attributed to the 'superbly built' and 'very well maintained' structure by campaigning groups. In contrast he also outlines political opposition to proposals for the venue to be turned into a museum. Developers, he shows, saw the power station not as 'having a significant aesthetic, architectural or industrial archaeological value', but instead as an asset to be exploited in the name of redevelopment.[36]

In his study Murray charts the evolving heritage value associated with Bankside dating back to the 1970s. In doing so, he demonstrates how a building once viewed primarily in terms of its economic utility was reframed over several decades as a historic building, emblematic of Britain's industrial past. Murray thus shows how a plethora of local societies, national organisations and academic experts all successfully made the case for retention of the building within discourses of industrial heritage. These included English Heritage through its role as government advisor (although support was not universal internally) and architectural historian Gavin Stamp. Stamp included Bankside in his *Temples of Power*

---

[33] Rosa, 168.
[34] S.A. Murray, 'Bankside Power Station: planning, politics and pollution', University of Leicester Ph.D. thesis, 2014.
[35] Murray, 'Bankside Power Station', 32; 248.
[36] Murray, 'Bankside Power Station', 248–54.

celebration of London's power stations and accused the Conservative government of failing to list Bankside because they believed disposal and redevelopment promised greater financial returns.[37] Charting opposition to the retention of the power station as plans pushed ahead with Tate, Murray underlines the individuals and mechanisms at play in challenging the heritage values attributed to derelict urban infrastructure. In recovering the wider cultural and historical significance of Bankside, Murray also shows how its regeneration and transformation into the Tate has fragmented the physical coherence of the site's heritage setting compared to other international conversion schemes. The study highlights how the power station's former employees have largely been forgotten, whilst there is little visible showcasing of its former function in the current setting of the Tate.[38] In tracking the changes at Bankside since the 1940s to its post-closure transformation, Murray exposes the 'interrelated set of material, social, cultural and economic changes and transformations'[39] at play in renovating and repurposing former industrial spaces. In doing so, the study provides a useful model that can be applied to understanding challenges to and the dilution of urban industrial heritage in modern day regeneration projects.

The process of attaching value to urban heritage is not, of course, limited to concern for bricks and mortar despite the dominance of the built environment in this essay. At this point it is useful to turn briefly to one final thesis: Hannah Connelly's recently completed study of community heritage on Glasgow's allotments, which considers how articulations of heritage can be found in the city's green spaces.[40] Exploring the importance of allotments as a facet of urban life, Connelly draws on archival research and oral history interviews to consider their emergence as places of community and the meanings associated with allotments by plotholders. The study thus uses Glasgow's allotments as a means through which to explore the wider community from the depression to the early 2010s. This includes post-war threats of land reclamation, the allotments' loss of function as a provider of food in the 1960s, subsequent revival and a recent resurgence in popularity that has seen more women and children engage with Scotland's allotment movement. Approaching each period via the structuring device of a case study of a given allotment plotholder's story, Connelly goes some way toward revealing the agency of allotment societies, urban memory, major conflicts, familial connections and community ties in the construction of the allotments as sites of personal and neighbourhood heritage, as

---

[37] Murray, 'Bankside Power Station', 257.
[38] Murray, 'Bankside Power Station', 272–8.
[39] Murray, 'Bankside Power Station', 292
[40] H.V. Connelly, 'Ground-breaking: community heritage on Glasgow's allotments', University of Glasgow Ph.D. thesis, 2017.

well as a heritage that is nevertheless deeply embedded within the city's wider historical narrative. Oral histories reveal the importance of a sense of ownership and influence that plotholders associated with the allotment, singling out the allotment from the park and similar outdoor spaces, whilst pointing to factors that shape more general feelings of attachment and meaning. The study represents a fascinating contribution to the 'green history of Glasgow' that goes beyond the traditional focus on parks to understand the creation of heritage in neglected, everyday environments. Moreover, the thesis highlights the benefits of collaboration with external partners in exploring urban heritage: the thesis involved the Scottish Allotments and Gardens Society and functioned as an opportunity to explore the Society's heritage strategy whilst also contributing to ongoing activities and campaigns.

Although diverse in their approaches and choice of subject matter, the theses studied here point to a number of conclusions concerning heritage as a facet of urban history. The design of town halls in Scotland and Georgiou's examination of Ilford both stress the constant interaction between the built environment and performative aspects of urban heritage. In different ways, both answer Borsay's call to go beyond buildings by positioning the built fabric as just one element in a mutually constitutive set of relationships between competing historical narratives, the actions of inhabitants and the built environment. Piko's work on Milton Keynes illustrates how the creation of new urban spaces can act as a microcosm or perhaps a mirror of national anxieties over the apparent displacement of tradition and heritage at work in planning and architecture. Heritage in Piko's explanation is far from static and her work shows the attention historians must pay to how the values associated with architectural form and planned environments evolve over time. The work of McClelland, Rosa and Murray illustrates the variety of agents and interest groups that have influenced the destruction or survival of both emblematic and mundane features of the built environment. In doing so, their work, in a similar manner to Piko's, reveals evolving attitudes to what might be urban heritage as well as the significant impact of economic concerns in decisions about redevelopment and regeneration. Connelly's work on Glasgow's allotments reminds us that heritage exists in the quotidian actions and historiographically neglected environments like allotments. Her work highlights the vast diversity of urban heritage that, as yet, lies untapped, but also points to the benefits of collaboration with communities in shaping future approaches to articulating and capturing urban history.

The study of heritage exemplified in these final four theses also indicates the huge importance that understandings of the past play in the lives of those who live in towns and cities. The campaign groups, developers, local and national politicians, not to mention individual citizens that have

attempted to map their interpretations of the history of their urban environment onto power stations, warehouses, railway bridges and allotments all reveal the opportunities for urban historians to serve the communities they study. They represent a means to intervene in useful and sensitive ways where their skills might be most appreciated. Collaboration beyond the academy will almost certainly form an important part of research and university strategies in the coming decades, to match the renewed emphasis on engagement beyond the campus. As well as continued work in more established departments engaged in urban heritage and history, new initiatives and collaborations such as the AHRC supported 'The Heritage Consortium' promise to deliver further outputs for the urban historian analysing the place of heritage in creating meanings and shaping uses of the city. The work that might ensue from such projects promises to build upon the understandings of urban heritage and move in directions that the theses reviewed here have begun to explore.[41]

---

[41] For more information on The Heritage Consortium visit http://www.heritageconsortium.ac.uk/ accessed 12 Dec. 2017.