URBAN CONSERVATION AND RECONSTRUCTION IN THE GULF REGION: THE CASE OF DUBAI

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Abstract

Dubai is commonly perceived as the quintessential post-modern city -a globalized metropolis extending for tens of kilometers along the Gulf shores -characterized by its impressive and distinctive skyline crowned by the highest building in the world, Burj Khalifa.

It is among several Gulf cities to experience material effect of petroleum exploration in the 1960s. Dubai underwent a massive infrastructure development in the name of modernization span in a very short time. However, the richness and fame of the modern metropolis are the result of the rapid evolution of the original merchants' settlement that developed on the two banks of Dubai Creek since the second half of the 19th century. The tangible and intangible vestiges of this early phase are still visible and constitute an important heritage that deserves to be preserved and presented to a larger public.

This paper aims to challenge our conventional thinking in the conservation field and debate ways and means of broadening our horizon to bring greater respect for cultural heritage diversity to conservation practice. It will focus on the reconstruction of urban heritage in Dubai as a case study representing heritage practice in the Gulf cities. The Dubai case study can serve to exemplify "social process" by which cultural heritage is produced, used, interpreted and safeguard.

Keywords: Urban conservation, community involvements, reconstruction of World heritage Sites.

History of Dubai

Dubai is located south east of the Arabian Gulf on the Arabian Peninsula and has the largest population with the second-largest land territory of all the emirates, after Abu Dhabi. In the last 20 years, Dubai has extended along the seashore, but the origin of the city is found along the banks of Khor Dubai (Dubai Creek), where the first settlements, Al-Ras, Shindagha and Bur Dubai developed in the 19th century.

Dubai Creek area is an active urban environment that continues to play a significant role in the city's economic and symbolic life: an area where traditional markets and boats still define the city's rhythms, colors and sounds. Wooden boat making, gold, silk and spice trade, covered souks, traditional palaces and wind-catchers do constitute a specific and unique urban environment further enhanced by the presence of the creek, the actual *raison d'être* of the original human settlement in this area.The creek was likely the actual *raison d'être* of Dubai's creation and early development as a trading port; the start point for which could perhaps be taken as 1833, when some 800 members of the Bani Yas tribe, led by Sheikh Maktoum bin Buti Al-Falasi, settled in the Bur Dubai area, at the mouth of the creek.

The warm shallow waters of the Gulf provided ideal conditions for the pearl oyster and for centuries pearling were a main stray of the Gulf economy in the nineteenth century. After 1904, Dubai became the main pearl trading centre for the lower Gulf. In the early 20th century, Dubai was an embryonic city-state with a population of some 10,000 people. The town grew along the creek, and had a small quay for vessels. It consisted of three main quarters:

-*Shindagha*, with some 250 houses, was the closer to the sea and was the base for the Bani Yas, the ruling Arab clan.

- *Bur Dubai,* on the southwest bank of the creek, contained about 200 houses, 50 shops, Al-Faheidi Fort and the principal mosque. The Indian merchant community lived in Dubai and when people from Bastak began migrating, they settled in Bur Dubai too, beyond the Indian community area, along the creek.

- *Deira*, the largest lying on the north side of the creek, had a mixed population of Arabs, Persians, Baluchis and others; it contained about 1,600 houses and the main bazaar, with some 350 shops.

During the 1950s, Dubai prosperity increased with the growth of the gold trade. Dubai was able to profit of the new Indian regulations for the commerce of Gold established in 1948 and quickly became a leading focus of the gold export to India with traditional wooden *dhows* bringing gold to the Indian coasts.

In the second half of the 20th century, the importance of the creek as commercial hub imposed a series of improvements to allow larger vessels to transit, as well as to facilitate the loading and unloading of goods. Sheikh Rashid bin Saeed Al Maktoum was responsible for the transformation of Dubai from a small cluster of settlements near the Dubai Creek to a modern port city and commercial hub. His famous line,

"My grandfather rode a camel, my father rode a camel, I drive a Mercedes, my son drives a Land Rover, his son will drive a Land Rover,………" .

In addition to the first town planning and road network project, the dredging of the creek has been the first essential step in laying the foundations for a modern commercial city. The dredging took place between1958-59. The project permitted to:
   - Remove the sand accumulated at the mouth of the creek that obtruded the canal favoring access for the boats;
   - Deepen the creek bed in order to allow larger boats into the creek;
   - Replace the sandy banks with quays along the two banks for the mooring of the *dhows*.

Following the discovery of petroleum offshore in 1966, the development of the oil industry revolutionized the economy and society of Dubai that granted concessions to international oil companies. Oil revenues enabled the government to undertake major infrastructure and industrial projects that included construction of Port Rashid, the dry docks, an aluminum smelter, and the Jebel Ali port and industrial area. Works on the deepwater harbor started in 1967 and the facility was opened in 1972. By 1969 Dubai was producing half a million tons of petroleum a year; the discovery of oil led to a massive influx of foreign workers, mainly Indians and Pakistanis. Between 1968 and 1975 the city's population grew by over 300%.

Commerce and City

Notwithstanding the incredible modernity of Dubai, the multiplicity of its commercial offer and its gigantic commercial malls, the traditional souks of the nominated property, which developed along the creek in Deira and Bur Dubai, have maintained their economic role and function and have fully preserved their authenticity. Loading and unloading of goods from the wooden boats is still made by hand and small cranes, according to a traditional system, even though

today, beside cotton and other traditional goods, dhows carry also LCD screens, TV and other electronic devices.

The existing urban structure, reflecting the close-knit interaction between political choices, commercial activity, urban fabric and architectural elements, is entirely preserved and constitutes the "heart" of the identity of Dubai Emirate, as it is the actual reason of its extraordinary commercial and financial vitality. The cultural tradition based on international commerce and free trade is reflected in its historic merchant neighbourhoods, the rulers' headquarters, the traditional souks opening on, and connected by, the creek — where wooden boats load and unload the goods sold in the markets as continuously done throughout the last 150 years —, and the very quays, dhows and harbour organization of the waterway.

The traditional residential and commercial quarters of Dubai represent the sole remains of a coherent urban district with wind-towers on the Arabian side of the Gulf. Wind-towers had a remarkable and long-lasting effect on the urban form of Dubai, providing a record of social history of the first half of the twentieth century, when the city rose to become the most important commercial centre of the lower Gulf, and have kept their symbolic relevance for Dubai up to the present. The coexistence of different architectural features, such as courtyard houses and wind towers, contributes to defining an extraordinarily significant historic urban landscape, which represents an innovative adaptation and an original response to the harsh climate of the Gulf area. The adoption and transformation of "imported" cultural and architectural elements by the Arab ruling class — materialized by the widespread use of the wind towers as a distinctive symbolic element for the Ruler's family palaces in Shindagha neighbourhood — and the development of a network of international commercial relations across the Gulf jointly define *Khor Dubai, a Merchants' Traditional Harbour* urban landscape.

At the architectural level, the physical fabric of the city has been actively and continuously protected and traditional building techniques and building materials have been fully respected. The remaining historic buildings and urban sectors have been preserved and carefully restored, like the high and elegant wind-towers of Al-Faheidi historic neighbourhood (Bastakiya) that constitute today the most important architectural element of *Khor Dubai, a Merchants' Traditional Harbour* built heritage.

The social, economic and cultural tradition of free trade, far-sightedly supported by Dubai rulers, has a strong and long-lasting impact on the cultural identity of Dubai's people. While the goods exchanged have continued to evolve, from pearls to gold up to contemporary high-tech products, the extraordinary commercial spirit of the city's mercantile elite, and the social network created by the rulers' decision to establish Dubai as a regional free trade hub, have permitted its unique growth and development.

The "spirit of the place" is still fully present in the urban ensemble formed by the historic fort, specialized souks, elegant mosques and lively residential quarters connected, functionally and symbolically by the continuous cruising of traditional wooden boats (*abras* and *dhows*) carrying people and goods. *Khor Dubai, a Merchants' Traditional Harbour* constitutes therefore an authentic, alive and vibrant environment, where the multiple social, technical, economic, and architectural elements composing Dubai identity can still be found.

Khor Dubai, like most heritage sites in the region, is a complex mix of original structures, restored buildings, and reconstructed houses. This is a heritage site that is perceived as authentic by the communities living in the region, and has become a source of pride and identity, offering residents of Dubai, Emirati and foreigners alike, a glimpse of a recent past that has completely vanished elsewhere. The restored al-Faheidi historic neighbourhood (Bastakiya) and the rebuilt

Shindagha complete themselves and form, together, an ensemble of "authentic" heritage urban areas, precious witnesses of a bygone era.

Restored architectural properties maintain references to their traditional uses and functions and exemplify traditional building techniques and designs, demonstrating a satisfactory degree of authenticity.

When houses have been rebuilt, reconstruction has been done on the basis of both material and intangible evidence (interviews with original residents), and according to internationally recognized technical standards. The reconstruction carried out directly by the Architectural Heritage Department of Dubai, is based upon a serious scientific documentation (archaeological data, systematic studies of architectural and decorative patterns), the integration with preserved original mosques and trees, and the respect for urban fabric and for traditional materials. Dubai Municipality considers that — in the specific context of the Gulf region characterized by an extremely rapid social, urban, and economic change — the meticulous physical reconstruction of Shindagha neighbourhood can serve as a "cultural tool" to reconnect people with their history and tradition and that this reconstructed heritage possesses heritage value and can contribute to the to the overall authenticity of the nominated property.

International Charters and Gulf Approach to Heritage

Nara document was the most significant document that has attempted to extend the concept of authenticity discussed in Venice charter 1964[1] to include wider range of cultural heritage concepts. Many charters such as Dresden Deceleration on Reconstruction and Krakow charter 2000 that came after Nara continue to elaborate and reflect on the concept of authenticity from different angles and contexts (Stovel, 2007). However Nara document has uniquely gained international acceptance and reference to world heritage. After twenty years, a discussion was supported by Japan held in Hemji and Koyoto and concludes in Nara in 2014 to study of the impact of the Nara Document to elicit how the Nara text still possesses immediate relevance in addressing the dramatic changes that the cultural heritage field has undergone since 1994[2].This meeting has also opened the discussion to include more diverse contexts where authenticity is still been debatable among the international community.

The paradigm shift in approach to conservation heritage appeared in different ways (Araoz, 2013). For him, it appears first in appropriation of heritage by communities all over the world. Second was in the expansion in the nature values that can be attributed to heritage. The third and most subtle of changes has been the emergence of intangible concepts as repositories or vessels of the values that render the place as a heritage. The Eurocentric curatorial approach was originally shaped by the assumption that most values and the significance of the place rested on its physical or material attributes which was according to Gustavo fully endorsed by the World Heritage Operational Guidelines which from 1978 and continuously until 2005, dictated that the authenticity and significance of cultural properties based on four physical attributes of design, materials workmanship and setting. For Gutavo, It was Nara conference on authenticity and its resulting documents in 1994 shattered the long held Eurocentric insistence that were universally accepted cultural principles for heritage identification and treatments (Araoz 2011). Nara has opened the

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[1] Venice charter ,

[2] Nara +20

door for holistic protection where the traditional material authenticity of a place must now be accompanied by the visual and functional authenticates.

Historically, the 1981 ICOMOS Florence Charter on Historic Gardens[3] that marked the shift in focus from strict conservation to maintenance that is prerequisite of dynamically evolving site. The charter has drawn the attention to the brave new world of dynamic and evolving heritage sites that were entering. No longer were we dealing with immutable static materials, but with living organism that begin grow and end.

The latest confirmation of the heritage paradigm shift are the UNESCO Recommendations for the Historical Urban landscape and the ICOMOS 2011 Valetta principles for the safeguarding and Management of Historic Cities, Towns and urban Areas, which jointly offer a new concept of the historic city that embraces the four characteristics changes: community participation, acceptance of a broader range of values, recognition that significance resides in both tangible and intangible elements, and that urban heritage is a dynamic resource whose constant change needs management and safeguarding(Petzet 2010).

This shift of urban conservation approach was expressed by Jukka as to be seen in the evolving concept of heritage in place of sanctification of original fabric as inviolable and irreplaceable that physical heritage elements are no longer self evident embodiments of singular meaning or outstanding universal, from the second half of the 20th century, including the notion of cultural expression and intangible cultural heritage. All human creative cultural expressions are associated with the intangible significance that could also be relevant for the identification of the outstanding universal value (Jokilehto, 2013). Jokilehto considered the evolving concept of heritage on cultural expression as a new notion has been introduced in the UNESCO convention on protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expression, 2005, where the notion of "work of art" referring to human activities. For Jukka, culture can be understood as the generator as well as a product of human development within the evolving framework of the economy of a community. In this framework the OUV could be interpreted as an outstanding response to issues of universal nature in relation to human activities where social functional integrity of the property could be identified as one of the different types of themes introduced by ICOMOS and would be a principal reference for the verification of its authenticity. The concept of reconstruction is being used as an opponent of restoration, where restoration is being used as the guardian and reconstruction as the slayer of heritage (Wijesuriya, 2010) . Both restoration and reconstruction relate to the treatment of fabric and are about adding and subtracting materials and indeed using new materials Gamini called for the need of more clarity of definition of both before opposing one against the other.

When discussion of reconstruction was debated in the view of the World Heritage, more focus should is being made on authenticity and integrity as key issues in the world heritage assessment. In an attempt to examine the validity of authenticity in different sites where reconstruction played a significant role in contributing to OUV, the initial response to reconstruction is a rejection (Cotte, 2015); however in some cases reconstruction could be acceptable and strong enough to support the real outstanding universal value (OUV). Reconstruction in some cases bears an important signification to overcome war material and offer a field for recovering the past heritage after the war collective trauma, or could be seen as an innovative process using modern design and steel material like what happened in the 17th century Cathedral of Reims, France. Reconstruction also could be as a way tool for integration of urban

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[3] Florence charter on Historic gardens

landscape of historic city of Dresden and a solution for new urban style based on historical reconstruction of the most important monument and non historical urban reconstruction for of usual city quarters (Jerome 2006). In Warsaw, reconstruction could be an attribute contributing to the OUV of historical centre, where the value of reconstruction extend beyond neutral or only national value to present the symbolic value to overcome special war damage (Klosek-kozlowska, 2003). Reconstruction could be a symbol of reconciliation and international co-operation when mentioning reconstruction of the old bridge of Mostar.

Gulf Approach to Heritage Conservation

Architectural conservation in the Gulf is a relatively new field that has acquired importance only since the mid 1990s. Apart from major archaeological sites, Gulf (and UAE) heritage is mostly relatively recent dating largely from the late 19th, and the first half of the 20th century. However, though chronologically close to the present, this heritage represents cultures and traditions that have been struggling to survive in most of the Gulf urban settings following the discovery of oil and the establishment of the modern Gulf countries.

These two elements, the temporal vicinity on the one side and the vanishing of past traditions on the other side, explain the specific approach to architectural conservation commonly followed in the region, where the boundaries between original and reconstructed are particularly blurred and many historic buildings have in fact been rebuilt after having been razed some 20 years ago. Reconstruction as an approach can provide deep inspirational sense of connection to community and landscape to its past and lived experience. This local specificity makes most of the heritage sites in the region a complex mix of original structures, restored buildings and reconstructed houses that, all together, define urban heritage sectors of cultural significance for society. These buildings that are generally are no more lived in by the original owners and builders are often transformed into other uses that exhibit the heritage and tell the local who are they and the past that they came from.

The challenges to conserve the heritage of Dubai have been great; from the rapid urban development and modernization that has taken place in the city of Dubai which have negatively influenced the physical urban fabric of the historic area. The people of the UAE have experienced dramatic change in the few short years since the state was established, change that has provided them with all the benefits of a modern, developed society, but at the same time, this change have distant them from their local and traditional environment. The discovery of oil in the 1970s have also led many people to leave their old houses in Al Fahidi, Deira and Shindagha to a more modern neighbourhood seeking more comfort. As a result, most of the historic buildings were abandoned and crumbled and were being replaced by low income families or labour.

Dubai is an example of this ambivalent approach conjugating restoration of authentic houses and mosques and carefully reconstruction of historical buildings. Architectural Heritage Department of Dubai Municipality as the main body responsible for management of historic area, has acquired a large experience in the surveying, studying and conservation of the historical buildings of Dubai. Since the first attempts in the 1980s, when the al-Fahidi fort was restored and Sheikh Saeed House in Shindagha was reconstructed by an international firm, a group of committed and skilled architects, planners and workers has formed and has been entrusted with the restoration and maintenance of Dubai built heritage.

The main objectives of AHD are to adopt a general policy which aims to give the cultural heritage a function in the life of the community, to document, restore and rehabilitate the historic fabric and buildings according to its cultural significance, to raise awareness to the importance of

cultural heritage among different sectors of the community, to revive old techniques of construction through offering training courses targets professionals and craftsmen and finally to integrate the protection of that heritage into comprehensive planning programs.

The following text will be presenting heritage conservation processes adopted by the architectural heritage department (AHD) in order to manage the historic area. Respecting the international charters and ethics of conservation, three main processes were mainly identified; maintenance, restoration and *urban conservation and reconstruction.*

Reconstruction of Shindagha

Shindagha is a narrow strip of land bounded on one side by the sea and the other by the creek. The first settlement in Shindagha dates back around 1860s when people started to inhabit the area. In 1896, Sheikh Maktoum Bin Hashir Al-Maktoum, then ruler of Dubai, moved his residence from Abu Dhabi to Shindagha. Consequently, the area gained an additional importance and started to develop immensely, attract other well-known Emiratis and famous traders and allow for a further boost-up. Shindagha became one of the most important areas of Dubai with several mosques, administrative building and residential houses. All built using local materials (coral stone) and featuring a specific architectural style characterized by its nicely decorated panels and wind-towers.

Having no souk of its own, Shindagha was the quietest, mainly residential part of town. Although Dubai was the cosmopolitan home to people of various nationalities, the residents of Shindagha were mostly Arab of tribal origin. It was home of Dubai's ruling family. It is located at the entrance of the creek on a narrow strip of land separating it from the Arabian Gulf. This privileged position permitted to control *dhows* movement and trade coming to Dubai.

The development of the modern city and the creation of the Rashid Port immediately north of Shindagha favored the progressive abandon of the area. The physical structure of the houses began to collapse and the original urban fabric of Shindagha was seriously deteriorated. In the 1980s, the Municipality decided to demolish most of the remaining structures in view of the complete redevelopment of the quarter. The demolitions were launched and took place within a couple of weeks, leaving standing only the mosques and the trees that used to grow in the courtyards of the houses and one watchtower called " Murabaat Shindagha" .

Before demolishing, the Municipality made survey of the area and a map of each house was drafted to determine the amount of the compensation due to the owners. Several videos during the demolition were made by residences and owners of the houses, which later became a very important reference for reconstruction of these demolished houses. However, within few years the development of a new sensitivity towards heritage and national history led the local authorities to completely reconsider the earlier plans that were shelved.

Subsequently, Dubai Municipality exerted an extreme effort to r**econstruct** Shindagha's neighborhood and its historical buildings. The house of Sheikh Saeed Al-Maktoum was the first to be **reconstruct i**n 1986, soon followed by the restoration of the historic mosques: Bin Zayed , Al-Utaibat, Al-Sheyookh, Al-Mulla, Al-Mur Bin Harir and Harib Bin Harib.

The Architectural Heritage Department has been in charge of this major urban renewal plan that includes the restoration of the remaining mosques and the watch tower as well as reconstruction of the houses that were demolished in the 1990s. *The reconstruction projects* carried out in Shindagha are done according to the highest international standards. The Master Plan for the area foresees its complete reconstruction for heritage and cultural use on the basis of the situation recorded in 1991, when detailed information about each house was collected before their demolition.

Reconstruction as a process adopted by DM is following the ISO 9001-2008. The ISO is a very good tool to make sure that reconstruction is implemented according to a planned process. It will also help to identify who is responsible for implementation, what type of expertise needed, who will approve any action and what is the output of each activity. Reconstruction as a process has three phases which are implemented by different departments in AHD. Preparing a historical data and conducting interviews are the responsibility of the research department, while collecting and analyzing architectural data and proposing a adaptive reuse which is the responsibility of heritage design section is implemented by execution section.

The process of reconstruction is divided into four phases as explained in figure 1
1- Identification of the site boundaries
2- Data gathering and documentation
3- Develop policy
4- Management of the place.

Identification of the site which it includes following steps
a. Identification of demarcation points of the land boundaries: This is the first step of documentation. The main purpose is to identify the boundaries of the site based on the map of the shindagha of 1970 and also using photogrammetric technique. A request is send to the Survey Department at Dubai Municipality to conduct jointly the site survey, see figure 2.
b. Identification of the boundaries of the buildings is conducted according to the following steps:
    i.   An NOC certificate issued by RTA to prove that the undertaken project (reconstruction of the house is authorized by government. it is conducted through filling the form of NOC request for information by AHD to get approval to start the project. Information needed from this activity is all the existing infrastructure of the site Etsalat and du, dewa, drainage, irrigation and sewage service. *The process of application ensures that adequate coordination with other concerned parties has taken place to ensure an appropriate response, to a clear need, according to accepted standards. The certificate itself proves that coordination is complete.*
    ii. *Identification of building boundaries. This step is conducted by AHD Execution Department based on the NOC certificate issued by RTA and the old maps of shindagha before demolition .*
    iii. Archeological investigation. This step is very important to mark out the foundations of the walls of the house before demolition. In most cases the foundations are very close to the ground surface and thus it is easy to identify them through excavating only 50 cm below the ground level. The excavation is carried out by an archeologist from AHD and a surveyor from Survey Department at Dubai Municipality. This step is the first step to have a schematic layout of the house that will allow comparison and cross check with other resources which will lead for more accurate measures and drawings of the original structure. The process might take two to three weeks. The outcome of this stage is a plan showing the walls of the houses and building materials.

Data Gathering and documentation:
Documentation is one of the most important phases of reconstruction. If it is conducted thoroughly and comprehensively it can lead to a better credible outcome. The Nara document on authenticity stresses that in order to understand the authentic heritage values of a place; we must employ credible and truthful sources of information. A truthful source is not only a written, but information or sources of information such as an archeological excavation and information it can provide, or a wall paintings that show details of the life and technology of certain period and area.

This step is very important to make sure the house will be built according to its original state. The architect in charge of the project has to search for any information that helps him in preparing all the architectural drawings related to the original structure. Data gathering can be collected from different sources according to the *figure 3* it is classified according to the following :

a. Historical data: which include land document, family document, historical photos and maps, inscription, old literatures and British archives)
b. Social data: include oral history, social and economic survey of the owner and residents of the house, family documents, literatures, diaries, records of neighbors and demographic data.
c. Scientific data: it includes archeological investigation, geophysical and photogrammetric, traditional indigenous knowledge and materials analysis.
d. Architectural data: it includes all architectural information drawn for the compensation report, historic maps, interview with the owners, aerial photos of Dubai from different periods, old photos and videos of the historic area.
e. Context data: it includes historical maps, social economic and environmental information, spatial integrity with surrounding areas and evolution of architectural and urban fabrics.

One of the good resources for getting information is the AHD archive that is being feed with a lot since twenty years. With more than 12000 historic documents, around 3900 old photos and 14700 scan images, the architect can rely on them in his proposal.

The archive includes also historic maps aerial photos as well as panoramic and closer images taken by local and ex-patriot who used to live in Dubai in 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. Some of them are very high resolution where you can extract a lot of detailed information when magnified, such as the boundaries of the house, details of windows and facades, type of gypsum decoration and interior of the rooms. **Maps** of the historic area of Dubai that belong to different periods can help to identify the right location of each house and how it is related to other neighboring houses.

To make sure that the information is correct, the architect in charge is using different tools to achieve more credibility. one of these tools are input and feedback from the residents of shindagha through different phases of reconstruction process starting from gathering information phase to policy development and management of the reconstructed house.

Input of residents (owner, user, neighbor) is happening in different stages in reconstruction

1- Family documents and archives

2- Interview with them

3- Review of the collected data and drawing by the architect of the project

4- Check if reconstructed site according to his own memories

final decision for accurate information is AHD

Each interview is conducted and recorded by historic researcher according to a form filled by him. Although some residents have limited technical drawing skills, they still can draw some sketches of the houses explaining: different plans of the house, the function of each room, the history of the house and how it has changed over time, the building materials and some insight to memory of the neighborhood. The AHD

has already finished interviewing 80 people out of prepared list of owner and residents of Shindagha, see figure 5

Family documents are also another reliable source of information where the architect can get more specific information about the people who used to live in the house, its main components, nature of its surrounding, the social and economic structure and how the house have evolved through time.

Affection plan is also a very good tool. Affection plans are **survey** drawings that have been carried out by Dubai Municipality Before demolition. Each house in Shindagha was documented in order to compensate owners. The survey is very useful as it includes the name of the owner of the house, site plan, and architectural plans of the each house.

Develop policy:
Once all the information is gathered and after being cross checked in different resources. It is put into final drawings with detailed plans. In this stage as mentioned before the plans are shown to the original resident to see if he has any comments and approve it if there no comments from his side. The final drawings are then approved by a technical committee at the AHD. Once approved, the architect has to finalize his design proposal according to the agreed use.

Manage the place
In this step the actual reconstruction of the house is implemented according to the proposed use and plans of the architect involving skilled craftsmen and builders who have long experience in traditional materials and building techniques. when finished reconstruction according to the adaptive reuse proposed by the AHD . for more involvement of the residents, they were given the first priority to run the place , if he shows no interest , the AHD will announce for lease to the public . according to the contract signed by the tents , he will be strict to the rules of AHD and should request its approval for any alteration on the interior if he wish to do .

Conclusion

Because the Gulf urban heritage places have different cultural context to western one, heritage process, do not always "follow" the traditional western and idea of authenticity represented by the international charters. Authenticity for these structures could be assessed as a social process where heritage place has its significance in its social, symbolic, spiritual value as well as in materials and techniques. these buildings and quarters are undoubtedly "heritage" areas and are perceived as such by the communities living in the region, becoming a source of pride and identity.

Dubai typifies the way in which Gulf Cities have developed over the past hundred years. Many have grown rapidly from small merchant communities to thriving commercial centers depending on oil revenue. Rapid growth in wealth and modernization has its consequences on the social and economic structure and its implications in creating fragmented urban environment. Urban conservation as an approach is one of the main tool to sustain national identity in a multicultural society. Reconstruction of heritage places is seen as a mean to reconnect the community to their past by reviving it's meaning, values and memories of the place facilitating in the formation of identity, sense of belonging and pride.

In the field of world heritage Convention, there is however a focus on places of cultural significance. Can that quality, the cultural attributes of a place, be assessed as a genuine or not? The answer can only lie in the definition of its significance. John Domicelj in his article a question of authenticity, 1994, wrote

> *" When a place, its context, its meaning, its use and its fabric are expertly described with affection and precision and when that description is carefully evaluated for historic, aesthetic, social, scientific or other values, some view on authenticity begins to emerge".*

How can a place be deemed to be authentic or not authentic, while it clearly exists, authentically as a place? Even adopting the simplest of definitions, such as 'authentic", the answer remains: it is what it is.

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