Urban Pamphleteer
Clare Melhuish, Ben Campkin and Rebecca Ross

In the tradition of radical pamphleteering, the intention of this series is to confront key themes in contemporary urban debate from diverse perspectives, in a direct and accessible – but not reductive – way. The broader aim is to empower citizens, and inform professionals, researchers, institutions and policy-makers, with a view to positively shaping change.

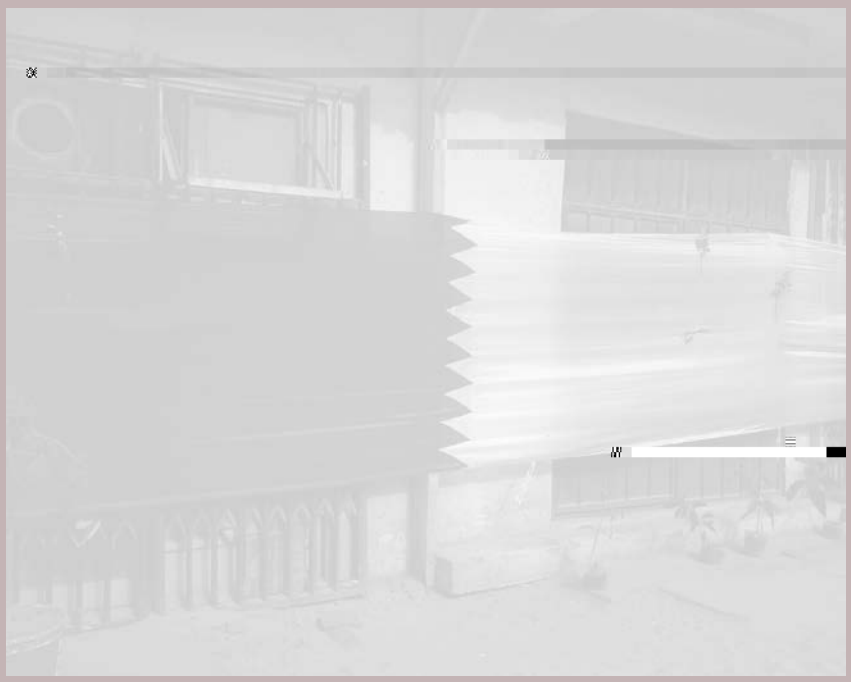
This issue aims to open up a comparative discussion about the role of heritage in urban renewal in Doha – a city in the throes of rapid and substantial transformation as it re-positions itself in a global network of cosmopolitan urban centres. As such, it presents a rich opportunity for examining the ways in which discourses around physical and cultural heritage are shaping approaches to urban planning, environmental and social sustainability, and architectural preservation and renewal around the world. Our contributors represent different voices and interests within this debate, across the fields of professional, academic and artistic practice in Doha and London, as well as everyday lived experience of Doha. They explore the meanings and manifestations of Qatari heritage and identity at the local, urban and international scale; the roles played by different actors and stakeholders in their formation; and the tools – technical,

and retail trades, with buildings characterised by high thick walls, small windows, wooden portals and open air stalls for local vendors. Bedouins used to hold their own markets on Thursdays selling timber and dairy products, and it was also a gathering space for fishermen. The Souq occupies a geographically strategic site at the eastern end of the old centre, facing the Emir's ruling palace on one side and, on the other, the waterfront – once filled with fishing boats and dockyards, now the location of the Museum of Islamic Art.

But from the 1970s onwards, as the government made plans for the modernisation of the city centre, it fell into a state of dereliction. However, it has recently assumed a new image, following reconstruction and renovation based on original materials and skills. While it retains its old function as a marketplace, new art galleries, traditional cafés and restaurants, cultural events and local concerts have also been introduced to attract most of the city's residents and tourists.

Within close proximity to Souq Waqif, the Msheireb development represents iconic urban change.

Office of the Amiri Diwan in the second case; and by a high-profile real-estate company in the third case. These three types of change in Doha's old centre are typologically different, but they all, to varying degrees, positively answer the question, 'Can an urban intervention be simultaneously local and global?' The museum and its park consciously responds to global cultural flows, translating the cultural aspirations of a country into a manifestation that speaks to world architecture while addressing demands placed on the design by the context and the regional culture. Souq Waqif validates the notion of simultaneity of the global and the local through the wide spectrum of activities (e)0.5(d)0.6(e)0.5(s)0.6(i)0.5(g)0.5(6)0.5(t)

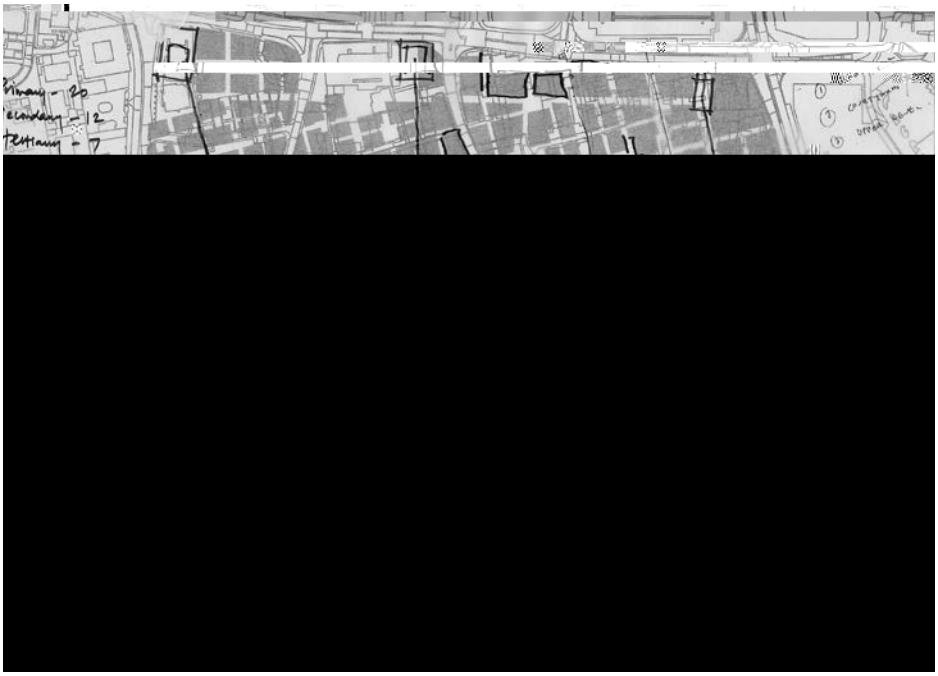


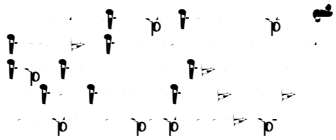
The brief for the Msheireb Masterplan, as defined by Sheikha Mozah, was to recreate, at the very heart of Doha, 'a rising homeland that confidently embraces modernisation and proudly observes traditions'. Arriving for the first time in Doha in April 2006, I stumbled upon Souk Waqif, which was half-built and charming, but I was uncertain if it were a new souk or the restoration of an old one. Set against the young, exuberant and gleaming skyline of West Bay, the gypsum plaster of the souk looked equally fresh, yet the organic layout suggested that it was not an act of modern city planning. Such was my first impression of Doha, a snapshot of a city whose pearl-diving and fishing-village identity was rapidly being replaced by modernisation, where a part of the old heart was desperately trying to hold on to its old self. This first impression was an interesting seed for what was to become the Msheireb Masterplan.

The fertile soil on which this seed fell was the historic aerial photos of Doha from 1947 to 2006. Before the exponential car-based growth of the city, the fereej (a compact family-based neighbourhood), as captured in the 1947 photos, comprised the bulk of settlement in Doha, embracing the then natural shoreline and the wadi for survival, comfort and livelihood in the unforgiving desert climate. Traditional fereej neighbourhoods grew over time as family lineage expanded, based on incremental needs, with little concern about its overall form, external appearance and role in history. Decisions about additions and alterations to the fereej were made by those who lived there.

Historic photos since 1947 showed the rapid erosion of the organic fereej pattern and their replacement by progressive urban planning driven by the new economics of oil and gas. Urban expansion between the 1950s and 1970s brought land reclamation and hasty urbanisation which were fuelled by the new ring-road system. Decisions about city growth and expansion rested with city-engineers, often expatriates, who modelled Doha's expansion on copycat modern cities with no relationship to the old fereej. This shift from a familial/community-based decision-making process to one which is anonymous and based on statistics has resulted in the displacement of social bonds and the emergence of non-place in contemporary Doha.

I traced over the fereej patterns where courtyard houses formed the positive shapes and the sikkats formed the negative, residual ones that the Western tradition called the public realm. The sikkats reminded me of the urban grain of medieval cities, where spatial layering defines the transition from the private domestic





harem through the fereej neighbourhood sikkas, to the shared domains of souks and mosques. As a social observer and an outsider to the city, this social layering appeared to have been erased from Doha's modern fabric, yet phantoms of a bygone age lingered in the remnants of historic houses with H/H numbers painted on their walls by the local authorities. The intricacies of the fereej, the accidental, the delightful, the unconscious were coming through the tracing paper, and the idea of the lattice was formed – a lattice for people and places rather than for cars and non-place. The negative shapes of sikkats and baraha were given a prominent reading in the new masterplan for Msheireb, which is to be superimposed onto a city presently defined by its rings of steel and the egotistic ensemble of skyscrapers. The grid, the paradigm of modernity, is inevitable and necessary. But, in response to the desert sun, this grid was tightened so as to create a shaded and comfortable walking environment, and this grid was consciously orientated towards the prevailing sea breeze, which echoes the conscious orientation of courtyard houses in the old fereej.

The paradox of the Msheireb Masterplan lies in the conscious act of city-planning which drew inspiration from the fereej heritage that was unplanned and unconscious. The Msheireb Masterplan was conceived with self-awareness about its own role in the urban discourse of Doha, reacting to recent city-making efforts in the region where collective heritage and genius loci had become unimportant. It was an attempt to instil the art of place-making in order to renew a piece of city, the planning of which was dominated by the measurable, the quantifiable and the visible.

hardly a heritage building in the traditional sense, Souq Najada possessed some rather decent urban qualities: shaded arcades lined the perimeter and allowed easy circulation even in the hotter months, a generous collection of interconnected open spaces dotted the complex, and in the centre sat an un-

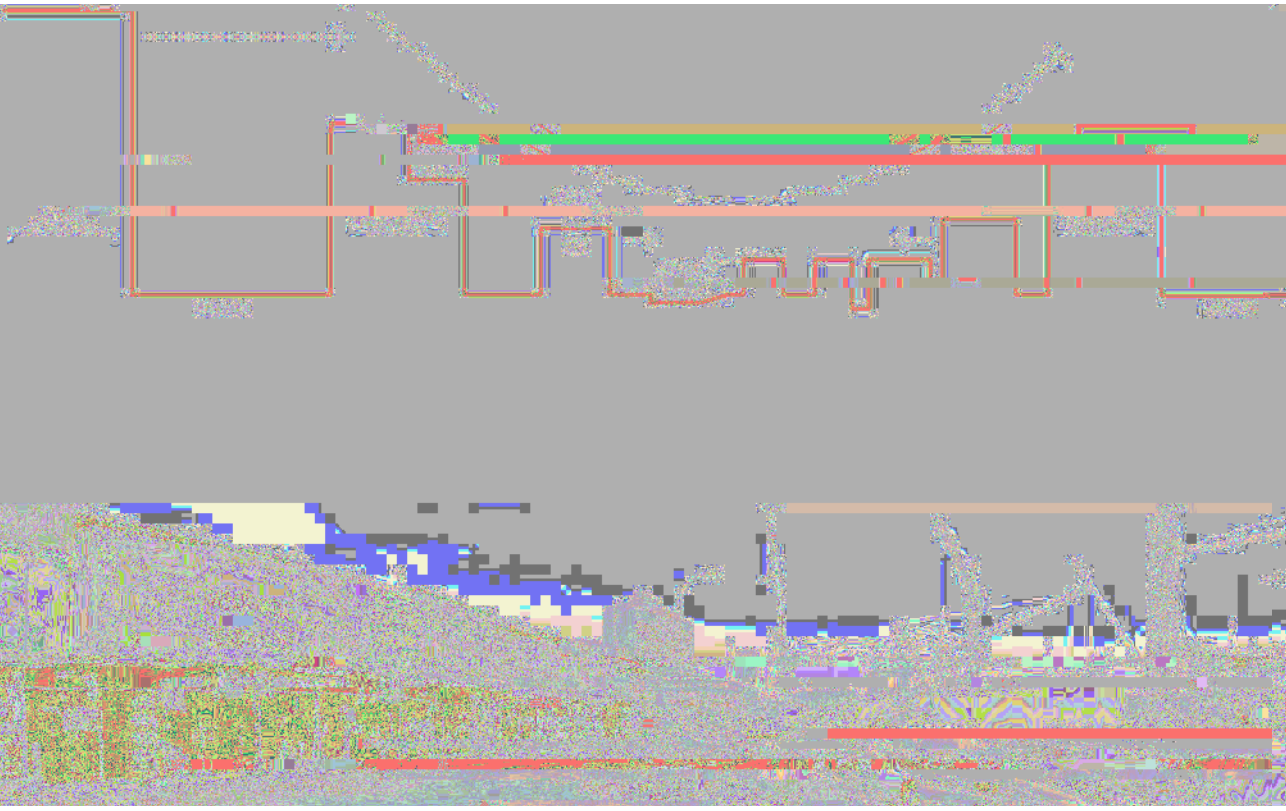
There is a growing recognition that an understanding of the unique urban form and heritage of individual cities translated into contemporary planning and harnessed to modern technologies can set a platform for robust economic growth. Cities that develop their own particular 'vernaculars' are likely to be viewed as more attractive and therefore more successful in securing inward investment, long-term capital land values and footloose talent in a global marketplace.

Doha's built form and architectural heritage reflects the culture and col-

past into an (environmentally and socially) sustainable vernacular for the future.

This was organised by the British Council and QM, and supported by Msheireb Properties and the Royal Institute of British Architects, which ran an open competition for small and newly established UK-based architectural practices to partner with Qatari practitioners for a week-long project in Doha. Five firms were selected from over forty applicants, and the charette took place in November 2013, culminating in an exhibition of the five projects. They all explore ways in which a regeneration of the historic built fabric of the area might also contribute to its economic and social renewal. One entry reappropriates the traditional Islamic typology, proposing to replace the existing street system with a network of enclosed courtyard spaces that finds a public function for abandoned domestic courtyards.

Doha, in common with many other growing wealthy cities, tends to look to foreign models of development to emulate and, hopefully, to improve on by adapting them to the local conditions. In this form, the new financial district of Doha follows the layout and typology of the very successful Manhattan district of New York, albeit at a much reduced scale. But the pattern of development consisting of high-rise glazed towers is not the most appropriate form in a place where there is no shortage of land and the solar radia-



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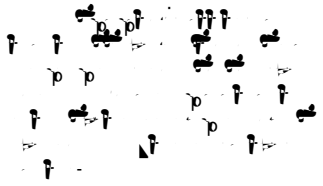
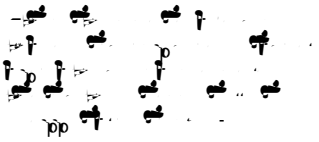


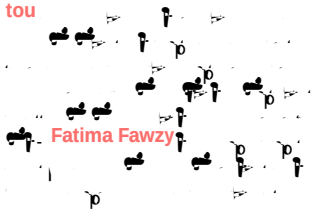
Barcelona. The courtyard form is not only traditional in Islamic culture but is also an efficient form to maximise plot ratio potential without sacrificing light and privacy.

The circulation links existing and new public spaces in an interesting sequence of open and enclosed spaces. In the periphery, a set of portals are created, forming connections to the wider city. These portals provide access to the area from public-transport stations and to subterranean car parking as well as pedestrian access. The heritage buildings are embedded in the structure of the area as part of an attractive trail which will bring tourism to the area. Other uses that are envisaged to maintain the economic vitality of the place, apart from residential provision, are essentially educational, including a madrasa, nursery, adult-learning opportunities, arts and crafts, cultural and recreational activities. Some of these activities are already present in the area. All of these ideas could be developed further into a set of regulations, design guidelines and investment proposals which could transform Old Doha, without losing its identity, and make the place an exemplar of how to redevelop old centres in rapidly growing nations.



Alicja Borkowska

Iris Papada-tou



Fatima Fawzy

The drawings in the preceding pages have been a way for me to investigate and record this neglected and run-down part of Doha, over the three years I've been living and working here. Walking the streets and narrow sikkas, one encounters collapsed walls and crumbling buildings, cars parked against exposed walls that had previously formed interior living spaces, and an ar-

more disadvantaged and least accessible communities of Doha who are most vulnerable to the impacts of rapid urban transformation and displacement. These initiatives point to the role that universities can play in urban-renewal processes as institutional actors and repositories of knowledge that can be shared beyond academia, as well as spatial strategists.

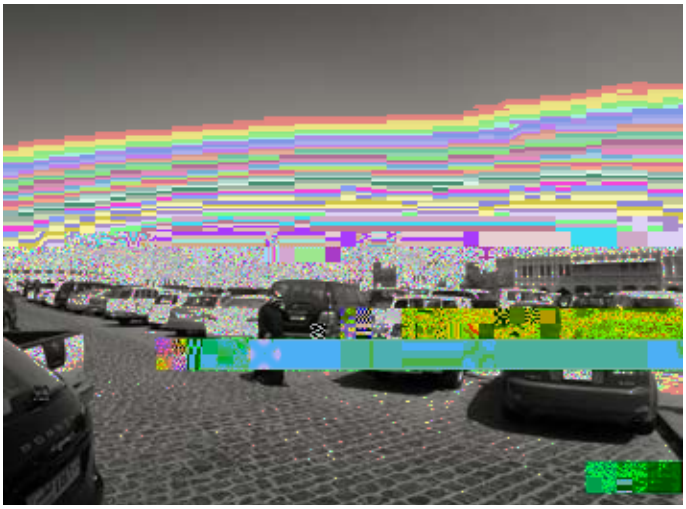
But the social landscape of Doha is complex, in common with many transnational, cosmopolitan cities. The vast majority of residents, the expatriates, do not have citizenship, and the question of the government's welfare

alternative accommodation out at the margins of the city in Barwa Village. Nor are they likely to be involved in any public consultation exercises.

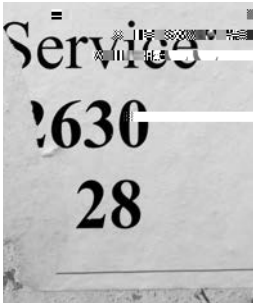
Thanks to the efforts of Fatma al-Sahlawi from QM and Ben Barbour, UK-born curator of the Msheireb Arts Centre (MAC), located in the heart of the neighbourhood, water and power were temporarily restored. But residents know their options are limited. Other workers live far out at Industrial City, a long commute from places of work around the central area and described by one Doha expat as 'a yard'. In May 2014 one resident said they were 'just waiting'; another stated that the area 'needs to be redeveloped', even though

at UCL Qatar have declared an interest in engaging with the resident population and the hope that further awareness could be raised among the government's decision-makers at the Ministry of Municipality and Urban Planning and within the PEO about the value of the area not only as architectural heritage but also as a living social environment.

In May, the MAC and UCL Qatar organised the first of an intended series of community events in the courtyard of the newly opened MAC building – a tea party open to passers-by from the neighbourhood, in order 'to get to know each other', to have fun and to share stories. But as one of the first and younger men to come in through the gate pointed out, 'we won't have any stories if we have to move!' He wanted to know if this was a meeting about the evictions, a question reiterated (in English) by many of the arrivals as they filled the courtyard and helped themselves to tea and biscuits.



Doha is, for many expatriates, a good place to live and work, but few have a say in its future, or in the construction of narratives of heritage and belonging about its past. Notwithstanding the structural contrasts between, say, London and Doha, these comparisons are pertinent and all the more urgent as the inexorable logic of international investment in land at the heart of city centres expresses itself through increasingly intense urban-renewal programmes all over the world. What is the fate of ordinary city-dwellers who inhabit the urban landscape as home and livelihood and who have no means of resisting the clout of global capital? And what frameworks and processes should be put in place to ensure that cities do remain sites of diverse, thriving, practices of dwelling and everyday life?



UCL's ethos of inclusivity wholeheartedly into its outreach programmes by reaching out to those in society who are often sidelined. For this reason, its students and staff have also been

Fatma al Sahlawi

It is business as usual when the urban layout of Doha, frequently epitomised as the fastest developing city in the world, is subjected to unannounced and drastic change. Infinite resources and pressing deadlines to modernise for the purpose of high-profile events (i.e. the 2022 FIFA World Cup) are used to legitimise all changes. When construction along the Corniche and the parallel Majlis Al Taawon Street was completed, roundabouts abounded no more. Instead, high-capacity intersections with synchronised traffic lights ushered in a new era of mobility across the waterfront, connecting more efficiently the southern and traditional part of city with the northern and modern West Bay. But will roundabouts then also be remembered as part of the fast-disappearing heritage of the city, and, if so, in what sense?

'All roundabouts along Doha's Corniche ceased to exist around Eid il-Fitr 2013. ese roundabouts and their art were of uncertain age, lineage and purpose. ey are survived by myriad traffic intersections, which will probably preserve the name of each roundabout that they replace and a growing source of archival images, footage, pings on Google Maps and social-media narratives. No memorial service is planned. ese are remnants of a bygone era, may they rest in peace'.
(Obituary, August 2013)

Roundabouts are a component of a European-imported circulation system commonly found across the Arabian Gulf, which are predominantly seen by users as ineffective and outdated non-spaces of transit, remnants of colonial influence on the landscape of a former British protect t lo ed. lrs are oniflal-2ns a-is a

a globe, then reinstated, before the final elimination of this roundabout in 2013. Animal sculpture occupies an uneasy position in Islamic beliefs, and it is also said that the animals were the subject of worship practices by non-Muslim communities.[4]

There is a growing conversation in Doha about its roundabouts that values their aesthetic and historical appeal, albeit also strongly associated with certain forms of nostalgia. For example, the Sports roundabout, still in existence, may be appreciated particularly by Qatari or Qatar-born viewers for its relevance to the striking efforts that Qatar is making towards hosting elite international sports events.[5] This appreciation, which may have emerged only posthumously, has flowed on occasion into wider debates about heritage value.[6]

The theme of removal and destruction is endemic in Doha, yet these particular disappearing features are not yet recognised by experts as part of the heritage assemblage of Qatar. Their demise is inevitable partly due to the lack of recognition of the heritage value of modern architecture and planning worldwide, a marginalisation related to the inflexible chronological standards that still govern heritage status. Roundabouts nonetheless will survive in public memory, archives and toponyms, even if their heritage value has come too late to the attention of the limited civil society that engages with this changing landscape. This process then is a reminder that the ultimate executioner is the absence of identified stakeholders in these forms of material culture.

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2 *Non-Places: An Introduction to Supermodernity*
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4 *Aisha's Cushion: Religious Art, Perception, and Practice in Islam*
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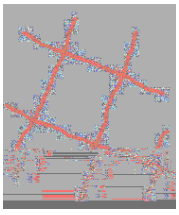
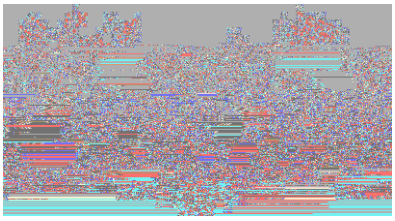
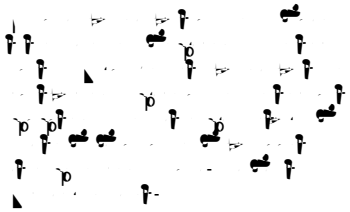




Trinidad Rico

Cultural Heritage in the Arabian Peninsula: Debates, Discourses and Practices

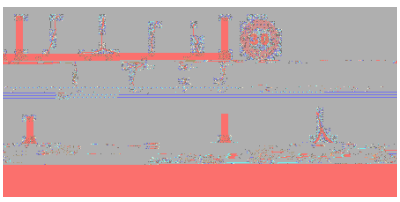


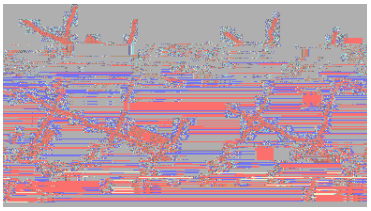
As in Doha, visitors to the new city of Milton Keynes in England often come away with enduring memories of roundabouts, of which around 300 are located on a grid of main city roads, and of confusion and disorientation as they tried to navigate the city.[1]

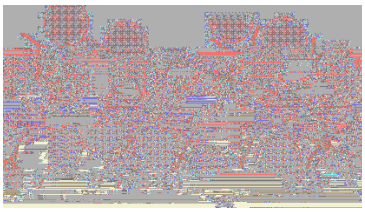
Visitors to Doha are often informed that it was the British who were responsible for introducing its much criticised roundabouts to the city, where the basis for the existing A–D ringroad system was initially established during the 1960s. The radial system was expanded in subsequent years following the successive appointments of Llewelyn Davies Forestier-Walker Bor, Shankland Cox, William Pereiera Associates and Peat Marwick Due (transport planning) to work on masterplans for Doha. Now that the roundabouts are being removed and replaced by intersections, the question of their provenance has been raised in relation to their potential status as 'modernist heritage' in the city.

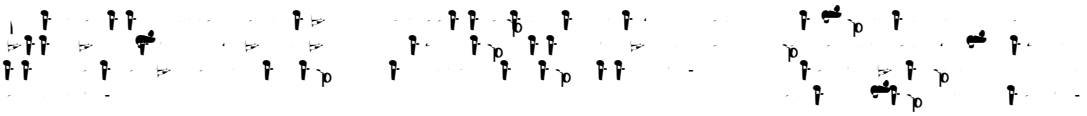
Llewelyn Davies were appointed as consultants in Doha in 1972, when Richard Llewelyn Davies was also Professor of Urban Planning and head of the School of Environmental Studies (now the Bartlett School), UCL. During the late 1960s, the firm was responsible for designing the masterplan for Milton Keynes, implemented in 1970. This masterplan did not include roundabouts but envisaged that the grid would have intersections controlled by traffic lights. Roundabouts were only introduced when development began.

Their implementation had several impacts on the way the city is experienced. First, they led to a significant increase in speed, from 30 miles per hour on the main roads, with numerous side turnings and lay-bys which, at those speeds, could safely be managed, to 70 miles per hour, which meant that very few side turnings could safely occur. The slower-traffic version would have enabled schools, shops and other services to line the roads, with stopping places and supporting bus services, much like a normal city; while the high-speed version required services to be back away from







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