

# MEGA-EVENTS AND HERITAGE:

## THE EXPERIENCE OF FIVE EUROPEAN CITIES

Edited by  
Davide Ponzini  
Franco Bianchini  
Julia Georgi-Nerantzia Tzortzi  
Joanna Sanetra-Szeliga



JPICH  
Heritage in  
Changing  
Environments

MEGA-EVENTS AND HERITAGE:  
THE EXPERIENCE OF FIVE EUROPEAN CITIES  
National case study report publication

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REVIEW

Professor Dr. Andreas Joh. Wiesand  
(European Institute for Comparative Cultural Research)  
Dr. Marco Bianconi  
(Mobility In Chain)

LAYOUT AND COVER DESIGN

Evanthia Dova

FRONT COVER

The Ibrahim Khan, Pafos (Evanthia Dova, 2017)

BACK COVER

Genoa, Palazzo Doria Tursi (Zachary Mark Jones, 2019)  
Milan, Piazza Duomo (ExpoinCittà, 2014)  
Wrocław, 2016 European Capital of Culture (Wrocław Official  
Flickr, 2016)  
Hull, Maritime Museum (Enrico Tommarchi, 2017)  
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INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL CENTRE  
Rynek Główny 25, 31-008 Kraków, Poland  
Phone: + 48 12 42 42 800, 811  
Fax: +48 12 42 17 844  
E-mail: sekretariat@mck.krakow.pl

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# HOMEE

## Heritage Opportunities/threats within Mega-Events in Europe:

Changing environments, new challenges and possible solutions for preservation in mega-events embedded in heritage-rich European cities



## Mega-events and heritage: the experience of five European cities

This publication includes the National Case Studies Reports and it corresponds to one key output of WP1 (activity A1.4 in particular) in the JPICH financed project “HOMEE – Heritage Opportunities/threats within Mega-Events in Europe”.

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Contributors:

**Politecnico di Milano:**

Davide Ponzini, Zachary Mark Jones, Stefano Di Vita

**University of Hull:**

Franco Bianchini, Enrico Tommarchi

**Neapolis University Pafos:**

Julia Georgi-Nerantzia Tzortzi, Evanthia Dova, Angeliki Sivitanidou, Natia Anastasi

**International Cultural Centre:**

Joanna Sanetra-Szeliga, Jacek Purchla, Piotr Knaś, Anna Koziół, Adam Dąbrowski

Contact:

Davide Ponzini  
(Project Leader)  
davide.ponzini@polimi.it

# FOREWORD

## Case Studies of Mega-events in Heritage-rich Cities

In the past, many cities used mega-events as a strategy to boost development. The creation of new facilities and infrastructures for mega-events typically targeted areas of expansion outside the historic city fabric. Today, on the contrary, mega-event organizers are beginning to opt more for the re-use of existing facilities and areas. This paradigm shift represents both a potential opportunity and threat for heritage-rich cities in Europe. The HOMEE research project explores, for the first time, the relationships between the planning and implementation of mega-events and cultural heritage. The project investigates past events and draws on them in the development of new policy tools that deal with these emerging opportunities and threats in planning and implementing mega-events in heritage-rich cities.

In particular, this report of five case studies of mega-events hosted in heritage-rich cities (Genoa 2004 European Capital of Culture, Milan Expo 2015, Wrocław 2016 European Capital of Culture, Hull UK City of Culture 2017, Pafos 2017 European Capital of Culture) is the second major deliverable (A1.4) of the “HOMEE – Heritage Opportunities/threats within Mega-Events in Europe: Changing environments, new challenges and possible solutions for preservation in mega-events embedded in heritage-rich European cities” research project, financed under the European call “JPICH Heritage in Changing Environments.” By leveraging the conceptual framework developed in a dedicated literature review (i.e. the first deliverable of the HOMEE project), it provides new information on recent events and highlights important issues pertaining to cultural heritage and urban transformation. The information and interpretations collected also provide valuable insights for academics, experts and policy makers connected to these events to show the far-reaching impacts and potential for their events in historic contexts, particularly regarding the legacies of these events. The aim of the National Case Studies Report is to present a detailed analysis of each case as well as to highlight

the key themes and overarching issues. Our report provides clear evidence regarding the importance of studying and improving policy making at the crossroads between mega-event planning and management and heritage policy.

The five case studies present a wide variety of situations, spanning from small-sized cities like Pafos, Cyprus, to global capitals such as Milan, Italy. Also, we studied diverse events that provide different instances of planning and policy making, allowing a first and broad-ranged exploration. The characteristics of the five cities and events are detailed systematically, so as to provide a common framework that positions each case. The intention is far from having a straight multiple-case comparison or one-on-one juxtaposition of cases. On the contrary, we delved into each case in order to understand the relationship and links between heritage and mega-events in their own terms, trying to derive more general considerations that, nonetheless, are to be weighted in their own context in order to be meaningful for others.

As we have argued in other publications, this missing link has become more and more important in urban planning and cultural policy practice as mega-events and cultural mega-events in particular are more intensively using, reusing and improving existing facilities and infrastructure within the city fabric and in historic city centers especially. The insights in different case studies and the summary of the emerging threats and opportunities start to cover this blind spot and to highlight the policy aspects to be prioritized. In our cases, the major threats to heritage that have been experienced in non-European settings and in massive developments for sport events can be excluded. For example the clearing of historic-city neighborhoods and radical renewal approaches adopted for the 2008 Beijing Olympics, or the massive urban changes in the city fabric and infrastructure that are ongoing in Doha in sight of the 2022 World Cup are not common in contemporary Europe (not even for the 2012 London Olympics or the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics). The first issue that emerges is that, in European cities that plan for mega-events, context matters: the location, city fabric and presence of heritage sites, the availability of infrastructure and policy

capacity cannot be underestimated. Second, mega-events may be quite risky for heritage and for urban development more generally, if they are not part of a long-term vision and shared spatial planning strategies. The vision can, on the contrary, help in guiding and streamlining the investments and developments for the event in consistent manners and towards goals that are shared among different stakeholders and actors, including heritage-related ones. Third, the governance of such complex policies require cooperation inside and outside the public administration. In this sense, participation and capacity building, before, during and after the event may be crucial and should not be reduced to a generic narrative of inclusiveness. Overpromising and disempowering citizens and local organizations may go against the leading policy makers, negatively affecting political consensus and overall feasibility of certain actions and policies. Finally, the heritage and identity of cities and of different communities that compose them should be considered in their complexity and variety, beyond what can be packaged and supplied to short-term visitors of mega-events. The planning, implementation and legacy of mega-events may involve the discovery and reinterpretation of local heritage on the part of local institutions, grassroots and common people, generating a strong contribution to urban development and to the production of meanings and values across society.

Moreover, the cases confirm that the goals of our research require crossing boundaries between scholarly research and policy making, involving diverse expertise across the cultural and urban policy board. We sincerely hope that the case studies that are presented here will facilitate this connection.

Davide Ponzini

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# Chapter 1

## INTRODUCTION TO THE CASE STUDIES OF MEGA-EVENTS IN HERITAGE-RICH CITIES

by Davide Ponzini

## 1.1 The research context and broad questions

In the past, many cities primarily used mega-events to support capital investments and boost tourism while harnessing their competitiveness on a global scale. Until recently, the emphasis has been placed by and large on the creation of new infrastructural components, such as new stadiums, theatres and other public facilities to host events. In many instances today, on the contrary, mega-event organizers have opted for the re-use of existing facilities, the conversion of inner-city areas and the regeneration of neighborhoods (Bianchini et al., 2013). For heritage-rich European cities, this shift in paradigm represents both an opportunity and a threat. The HOMEE project has investigated five past events and consolidated knowledge for dealing with the emerging opportunities and threats in planning and implementing mega-events in heritage-rich cities. The project addresses complex questions such as: What are the main blind spots in our current understanding of the relationships between cultural heritage and mega-event policies? How do preservation and conservation policies deal with the threats and opportunities generated by mega-events in heritage-rich European cities? Do key stakeholders in charge of mega-events and preservation policies have relevant operational knowledge and planning tools at their disposal? How to improve such tools and who should be involved in these decision-making processes?

Clearly, this publication alone cannot cover all these aspects, nor flesh them out with the needed care. Its scope and specific tasks are part of a larger research endeavor. The first output from the HOMEE research project, the Literature Review of Mega-events Addressing Cultural Heritage Issues (Ponzini et al., 2019), aimed to define the core concepts of the project but it was also instrumental in identifying the gaps between these two fields of literature and the large blind spots in recognizing potential opportunities and threats. This book builds upon this foundation by providing a set of concrete examples from the five case studies. This volume provides

Opposite page: Hall of mirrors in the Royal Palace Museum of Genoa during the 2019 Rolli Days event (source: Zachary Mark Jones, 2019).

key insights and serves as a crucial point of reference for the further stages of the project that will delve further into the operational knowledge and planning tools involved. The case studies presented here will constitute the background for and foster the interaction with other experts and policy makers in order to understand the potential improvements of concrete processes and finally develop a charter that responds to the main issues posed.

Cutting across disciplinary fields became a clear need to address such questions as different specializations have been fruitfully dealing with and studying mega-events and cultural heritage. In order to start answering these broad questions and to provide a better understanding of the relationships between mega-events and cultural heritage preservation policies, we investigated existing literature and debates and derived ideas from various fields, including spatial planning, cultural policy, cultural and social theory, heritage studies, urban geography and urban studies, architecture and urban design, urban and cultural economics and other disciplines dealing with mega-events, heritage or both. These fields also reflect the background and specialization of the members of the four research teams involved in the HOME project.

The earlier publication that derived (Ponzini et al., 2019) from this research constitutes a complex conceptual framework for the investigation of five case studies, presented in this volume. Terms, definitions and conceptualizations cut across and create the background for dialogue with current international debates in multiple fields and both in scholarly and policy making fields. The research questions, their underlying concepts and broader implications are problematized in the literature review, and discussed in its conclusions in further detail. The substantial gap between what we know about preservation and mega-events and what is needed to know about their interconnections in practice can be covered (Jones & Ponzini, 2018), at least as a start, through the evidence of the five case studies presented here. Of course, the way is long and perhaps ever changing, as mega-event planning and heritage policy evolve through time.

According to recent debate in academic literature and policy arenas the definition of a mega-event can vary quite significantly, as summarized in our previous publication (Ponzini et al., 2019). The term mega-events typically implies large scale, massive expense, different geographic locations among the subsequent editions of the event and transnational mobilities of formats, experts, tourists, etc.... The most generally accepted definition was proposed by Roche (2000:1): "... large-scale cultural (including commercial and sporting) events which have a dramatic character, mass popular appeal and international significance." This definition is important as it is quite encompassing and it could easily include re-occurring events in the same location or which are managed through specific mechanisms of transnational governance. It rather focuses on the perceived significance and magnitude, without requiring specific thresholds for size of attendance, budget, etc... (we can mention that several categories have been created to classify events based on their appeal, size, audience and governing bodies, see among others Hall, 1989; Müller, 2015). Different types of events, including many large cultural events, can be classified as mega-events, according to this definition. The range of effects of such events are wide, spanning from physical and urban improvements such as mass infrastructure projects or new facilities to cultural and social changes to image building and governance innovation (Garcia, 2004; Clark, 2008; Gold & Gold, 2008; Richards & Palmer, 2010; Ponzini & Jones, 2015). Mega-events are in most cases expected to be able to modify the understandings of the city as a whole, and this touches heritage directly in most cities of Europe and other continents as well (Council of Europe, 2005 and 2014).

Mega-events have been interpreted as accelerators and amplifiers of urban processes of development, redevelopment or transformation more generally. In particular, the enhancement of infrastructure and the availability of greater funds for historic areas may help conserve and valorize heritage, inject new functions for underused or neglected facilities and areas. Mega-events may use heritage symbols and icons to build a stronger image for the city as well as to

enhance public interest in heritage. Also, new management and governance networks fostered by mega-events could come to touch heritage policy making as well. We also noted the current trend of cities rejecting the 'bigger is better' approach to hosting mega-events, seeking rather to use existing or temporary venues or instead turning away from events entirely (International Olympic Committee, 2014). Cultural mega-events like the European Capital of Culture have long tended towards such an approach (European Commission, 2014), despite the fact that in some instances large-scale projects and new cultural facilities were at center stage (as in the case of the 2013 Marseille-Provence ECoC). This book also takes a broad scope regarding heritage, again building on our past work (Ponzini et al., 2019). We recognize the vast array of heritage from tangible to intangible, cultural and dissonant. While the general approach largely deals with built heritage and considers the urban scale (Bandarin & Van Oers, 2012 and 2015; Bianchini & Borch, 2018), the particular focus in each case depends on how heritage was defined or perceived by local experts, decision makers, event documents and existing planning or preservation policies. In this sense, the cases incorporated several aspects that pertain to the intangible heritage.

Planning mega-events in heritage-rich cities and historic areas imply potential threats, frictions and risks, such as physical alterations to the built environment, reinterpretations of heritage that might be functional to the mega-event but that obliterates the meanings and roles of local communities in it, or that more generally affect negatively how heritage is considered. The necessities of one mega-event may rule out the measures that other policy sectors would prioritize, including heritage preservation. More simply, mega-event planning imposes a short-term agenda for urban decision making; this is in contrast to long-term vision and planning that heritage preservation typically has. Mass tourism is a typical goal for cities hosting a mega-event, yet it may cause damage into sensitive areas because of excessive pressure as well as changes that commodify heritage and 'Disneyfy' the urban realm. One extreme manifestation of this may be seen in the spectacularization, standardization or

instrumentalization of local culture and heritage (Beriatos & Gospodini, 2004). On the opposite end, it is true that heritage can constitute an important opportunity as well as a threat to mega-event planning and implementation. For example, the image and appeal of a city while bidding as the host of a mega event or as a tourist destination for mega-event attendance-cum-local/regional-visit may lever its cultural heritage, and its historic places and iconic buildings in particular. In given countries where heritage regulation has overriding powers the plans and projects for new facilities and infrastructure for a mega-event may be slowed down and event stopped indefinitely by veto points. In other countries heritage-related social groups may be able to mobilize the public opinion or politicians against measures that are perceived as dangerous for heritage preservation.

In particular, the goal of making explicit these and other opportunities and threats derived from planning and implementing mega-events in heritage-rich cities and to find better ways to deal with them in their context guided our work on the five case studies, as part of the broader HOMEE research endeavor. On a different level, we searched for innovative approaches and planning tools that fostered heritage-sensitive actions and projects in the context mega-event planning, implementation and legacy. It is worth mentioning that the work on the five case studies was intertwined with an investigation of the Matera Basilicata 2019 Capital of Culture event as it unfolded. Preliminary deliverables regarding the case studies were discussed with Matera stakeholders during 2019 as well as in other occasions in relation to the preliminary findings regarding the Matera case. For the sake of clarity, despite the creative and cross-fertilizing process of studying across past and ongoing events, this report will not mention the findings of the Matera case, as, at the time of writing, research is still ongoing.

This report of five case studies is intended as an extensive documentation for scholars and policy makers who are interested in the challenges and potentials of connecting heritage policy with mega-events. In particular, the HOMEE research project has been developing strong relationships

with national and local public bodies, international networks of research, organizations directly planning and managing mega-events and heritage preservation as well as experts that have substantial experience in policy making. This is meant to create the foundation for developing guidelines for planning mega-events in heritage rich cities in Europe, that is the final goal of our research. The case studies that are collected in this volume intend to provide valuable insights for the experts and policy makers connected to these events, as well as other that are similar to certain extents, to show the far-reaching impacts and potential of their events in historic contexts and for their legacies.

## **1.2 Case study selection and methodology**

The original selection of the cases was made following quite practical reasons. Each case was selected individually, in part because the teams knew the process and substance well enough to judge its expected relevance in understanding the mega-event/heritage link by deepening its evidence. In some cases, besides this initial mixed scanning, substantial research work was done before the research started. In general, we wanted to have the widest variety possible, reaching situations that were of substantially different magnitude in terms of city size and population, event size and budget, type and relevance of heritage present before the start of the event, kind of planning and managing processes, of geographical quadrants in Europe, etc. We knew that this would have not allowed simple and linear comparisons across the cases nor a one-on-one comparison. Our aim was mostly explorative given that, as our literature review confirmed, this was the first systematic multi-partner research project casting light on the mega-event/heritage link. We found that providing new information on past and recent events that have not yet been studied or published about extensively can be valuable for the purpose of our research project and more generally. In addition, a policy-oriented consideration motivated the selection of this diverse set of cases. As we expect high-level

policy makers to be able to learn from examples and cases that show similarities, in connection to our interpretations and reflections (that are presented in the conclusions). For this reason, the more varied the cases the ampler the potential learning impact at the policy level.

We were, and are, interested in finding new issues that are theoretically stimulating but, most of all, that are practically relevant in a complex policy field, or, better, in complex policy fields in different cities and countries of Europe. Our selection includes events that have a substantial cultural content (rather than sport), such as the European Capital of Culture, the UK City of Culture and the Universal Exposition. This choice allowed us to see more clearly cultural policy in action and more intensively concentrated in existing city areas rather than in self-standing platforms in peri-urban areas (as more typical for sport mega-events). There are, nonetheless, good reasons for allowing cross-referencing between different types of mega-events, largely due to the observable shifts in mega-event planning as discussed above (as argued by Jones, 2020). In addition, we are aware of the limits imposed by the exploration of the selected cases and not others, while we expect further initiatives will spring from the HOMEE project that will touch on other cases. Future efforts can contribute towards a more systematic analysis across similar experiences as well as other kinds of mega-events, including the Olympic Games and Cities/Capitals of Culture of other world regions.

As mentioned, each study of the cases in this volume originally had quite different background work completed by the researchers involved in the HOMEE project. This forced us to jointly define and adopt a common method of analysis and reporting that places the cases in their context and understanding the due proportions among the cases. Once again, the urge to explore a new policy question rather than to generalize through clear-cut comparative methods drove the work. Each case can be seen at a glance in the first page of each of the following chapters. Each city, each event and their main figures are presented together with a short rationale and key takeaways. This presentation is meant for quick

reading and for our practitioner readership in particular. In addition, a more detailed table of facts and figures can be found in each case, to provide a further understanding of the context, magnitude of the event and of its urban effects. The different sources forced us to use slightly differing labels and to consider different ways of measuring similar things. Given the objective of our research we did our best to make them jointly understandable but we decided not to format this information uniformly in order not to lose the richness of the original collection. Similarly, we allowed quite different techniques of field work and data collection, mainly through secondary sources as well as through a set of targeted interviews. Given the distance in time of the case of Genoa 2004 (which was selected exactly for the purpose of having one long-term observation and example of an earlier ECoC approach that differs from the other cases) and the different availability of interviewees, we allowed for different number of interviews. In some cases (most notably Pafos 2017 and Hull 2017) the researchers had the chance to take part in the events and observe the celebration directly, in other cases this was not possible.

In this introduction, an overview of the methodology is offered to allow other scholars, experts and practitioners to understand the logic of this volume and of a core element of the HOME project. The 'cover page' of each case provides a 'snapshot', that allows for a quick contextualization and to understand more broadly the possible comparisons or contrasts between the cases. This first 'cover page' gives the reader the core rationale and the take-away messages, that are fleshed out in the chapter. Another introductory material is a brief and targeted description of the city that hosted the event and of relevant elements in its built and intangible heritage. These two elements are discussed while describing more generally the process that led to the mega-event at stake.

A more detailed set of data is provided in order to deepen the city's and event's facts and figures as well as the basic effects related to them. The city population, local GDP over time, the comparison of local and national GDP per capita are among the elementary descriptions we included. Regarding

the mega-event, its overall number of events, the attendance and demographics, the relevance of heritage constitute an important set of information along with a breakdown of the budget (total event cost, infrastructure cost, culture and entertainment program cost, heritage project budget, etc.). As for the heritage components, we decided to keep the label that local policy makers adopted in promoting interventions and events and that were used in the official program. As a general reference for this overview we used the typical sets of official reports at the EU level as well as two valuable studies carried out by colleagues in the past (Palmer/RAE Associates, 2004; Garcia & Cox, 2013). One issue that emerged during the research was the differences in the data available in each of the cases as well as how data was collected. We attempted to correlate as much as possible the facts and figures between the cases, but variations remain. For example, infrastructure costs associated with the event are often calculated separately from the program budget, yet such projects can make up the most significant portion of the overall expenditure while greatly impacting the city and potentially even heritage. Of the cases, Genoa was the only one to explicitly define a budget for heritage related works, while in the others it was part of either the overall program budget or separate infrastructure works. Such instances represent the 'blind spot' of heritage opportunities and threats in the evaluation of events and of cultural mega-events in particular (Jones, 2020).

In order to enter into the matters of the event, a detailed yet schematic outline of the process is provided. In particular, the timeline locates the key actions in time and highlights the key actors' role, from the bidding phase to the post-event phase. Turning points and milestones include changes in local/national government, the core of the event planning as well as heritage-based projects and plans and other elements. We describe and label the actors according to their institutional level (from supranational to the national, to the local), to specify what the event-managing organization has done, similarly to other heritage-related decision makers and institutions.

The insight into the planning, governance and legacy of the event, with specific reference to the built heritage and to more intangible elements at the neighborhood and city level required an in-depth analysis of the planning documents as well as media and qualitative interviews with decision makers and observers of the event. Placing the mega-event in the long-term evolution and vision for the city's development was crucial to understanding the level of integration of the event in city policy and the overlap with already shared and established goals across different interests and actor coalitions (e.g. redeveloping certain quadrants, improving infrastructure, targeting tourism as a development opportunity, etc.). The integration of the mega-event was assessed also with reference to existing heritage regulation and plans (e.g. UNESCO site management plans). An insight in the policy network, the governance and management structure was touched upon, including instances of capacity building, public participation, etc. (Tommarchi et al., 2018). The implementation and reception of the event are discussed under different perspectives (correspondence with bid book, surveys and assessments, public and expert criticisms, etc.).

These research operations prepared the ground for a thorough interpretation of the legacy, not only to discuss the relevance of heritage in the review of implemented actions and projects, but to understand how the process stimulated a different role for heritage to play in the mega-event as well as in urban development more broadly (in economic, social, and cultural terms). Despite the short and medium term period available for assessment in most cases (with the exception of Genoa 2004), a long-term impact on local culture and heritage could not be detected or even interpreted in all cases. However, we looked for relevant urban changes in terms of entertainment areas, major cultural facilities, cultural programs, city image and collective identity. In most cases, we could identify some degree of legacy planning and a systematic continuation of cultural and urban policies initiated by or in preparation of the mega-event. A particular policy area is that of tourism which is often the most heavily promoted and expected 'legacy' of the event. Changes in governance were also observed in the case studies, as we

know that mobilizing heritage actors and sometimes slower ways of operating may clash with fast-track approaches to mega-events.

These analyses and considerations allowed the teams to provide an evidence-based review of heritage threats and opportunities with reference to the overall process and governance of the mega-event. Towards the end of each case study chapter, a table summarizes the specific heritage opportunities and threats found. Again, this section intends to provide policy makers and others with a simple and direct insight into the issues discussed in greater detail throughout the case and that could relate to other cases and situations. The wide variety of situations was expected to provide quite a different understanding of the definitions of heritage that came into play in the mega-event planning and management, of the related threats and opportunities. The different context showed very different mixes of powers in heritage matters (from the restrictions of the Italian planning system to the liberal interpretation in the UK) as well as of urban and cultural planning tools available and effectively used with reference to the mega-event (e.g. veto power, regulation, incentives, etc.). In all cases we looked for innovations in the interpretation or definitions of heritage related to the event and more generally in cultural policy making. These innovations were crucial in developing critical yet policy-oriented proposition in the following stages of the HOMEER research project.

As it is clear by now, we adopted a largely qualitative approach in order to identify from the documentation, interviews and review of final outputs of the events how heritage came to be understood and involved (or not) in the mega-event planning and implementation processes. Our research teams analyzed a comprehensive series of city and event documents, plans and strategies to understand what correlations existed between the event and larger long-term city strategies as well as what role is intended for heritage within these proposals and their actual implementation. The documentation regarding the mega-event typically included the bid books at different stages of the competition to get

the title, the official event documents (such as calendars, programs, publications, etc.), the final event evaluations and impact reports where available as well as others. The analysis of the city planning context touched on documentation including official city plans (land-use or otherwise), strategic visions and spatial development plans. More specific heritage conservation/restoration plans and programs (including regulation and restrictions regarding the built environment) we considered in connection with UNESCO World Heritage documents (such as the applications, Site Management Plans, reports, etc.), national heritage policies, plans and listing, other policies and initiatives (including funds by EU or public and private entities). A more in-depth understanding of the narrative behind each mega-event and in particular regarding the relationship with heritage and the historic city drew on systematic press reviews that included newspaper articles, official websites and other media where available. On the quantitative side, in the snapshot and city/event initial descriptions as well as elsewhere, we have used different sources, preferring the ones that were more homogeneous and comparable (e.g. Eurostat, OECD, UNWTO etc.).

### **1.3 Structure and findings**

Following this introduction, the five cases are presented using the same structure as defined in the methodology. A final chapter gives an initial interpretation to the emerging issues, with the aim of shaping the first results of our explorations to discuss further with scholars, experts and policy makers, rather than having the final word on such a complex and understudied subject as the mega-event/heritage nexus.

Chapter 2 presents the case of Genoa 2004 European Capital of Culture. Here the mega-event was a turning point in a long-term strategic vision for the development of the city and for the transformation of its large historic city center into an international tourism destination. One can see an important heritage-led redevelopment approach, where the mega-event is integrated with other policies and functions as

an accelerator. The regeneration of large historic quadrants, the new functions given to historic buildings and areas, the reorganization of the museum system and its integrated cultural offerings, the award of the UNESCO World Heritage site in 2006 are important elements for understanding the process and its long-term effects in Genoa and the threats and opportunities that can derive, more generally.

Chapter 3 leads us to a much larger city and event: the Milan Expo 2015. In this case the mega-event generated the opportunity to develop collateral events in the city center and metropolitan core (whereas the Expo site was located in the North-west outskirts). Despite a quite critical planning for the mega-event and its failure in delivering relevant infrastructure, the municipality and the Chamber of Commerce could steer an effective governance innovation in coordinating with heritage institutions and tourism-related stakeholders to spark literally tens of thousands of minor events, in many cases within historic and heritage settings. This was accompanied by an overall success in terms of public attendance and substantial transformations of a few key places outside the Expo sites itself, such as the renewal of the old Darsena (now a key joint for leisure activities in the Navigli area) and the pedestrianization of the central Piazza Castello. The steady increase in leisure tourism in the very city center shows some criticalities in terms of the festivalization of urban space in heritage areas. The self-reinforcing political constituency connected to the Expo mega-event also should be considered as it has already affected the fate of Milan, as the winning host for the 2026 Winter Olympics.

In Chapter 4, the case of Wrocław 2016 European Capital of Culture shows how the mega-event became a moment to foster change in people's approach to the city's complicated heritage, build the city's identity based on its multicultural past and provide recognition and new functions to heritage venues. The mega-event gave the opportunity to actively engage residents in heritage-related projects and initiatives of different size and scope, spanning from built heritage to intangible heritage.

Chapter 5 addresses the case of Hull UK City of Culture 2017. This stigmatized port city intended to use the event to revert its socio-economic decline as well as its image. Cultural facilities and public realm improvements were ways to engage with heritage and involve different social groups. Thanks to this process the perception and actual policy recognition of heritage expanded, inducing cultural interventions and projects in the city center and sparking the project for the Hull: Yorkshire's Maritime City currently under development.

In Chapter 6, the case of Pafos 2017 European Capital of Culture is presented. The unexpected awarding of the title pushed multiple forces to join the effort of not only getting the event ready but also to enter a new long-term development strategy for the city. Culture and heritage appreciation became drivers (together with a well-established tourism industry) for a set of projects and interventions connecting places in the city fabric as well as in more isolated settings. The involvement of different social groups and reinterpretation of built heritage are important innovations brought about by the mega-event and the related planning activities.

Finally, chapter 7 discusses how the evidence we have collected in this volume starts filling the gap of knowledge in literature at the crossroads between mega-events and cultural heritage debates. Most importantly, it starts the discussion about possible policy principles and guidelines (regarding the relationship with context, long-term planning, governance and participation, as well as local identity). The latter will be expanded and articulated further in dialogue with other scholars, experts and policy makers who will join us in the HOME project and in developing a charter and spark interest regarding the relationship between mega-events and heritage.

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