Visiting Contested Cities: Urban Planning, Tourism and the Politics of Heritage. Research Group (Leibniz-Competition/ SAW) Knowledge of the World —Heritage of Mankind: The History of UNESCO World Cultural and Natural Heritage; Leibniz Institute of European History, Mainz, 02.08.2015—03.08.2015.

Reviewed by Elke Ackermann

Visiting Contested Cities: Urban Planning, Tourism and the Politics of Heritage

The workshop âVisiting Contested Cities: Urban Planning, Tourism and the Politics of Heritageâ organized by Andrea Rehling and Benedetta Serapioni assembled international scholars from various backgrounds, such as geography, architecture, archaeology, sociology, urban planning and history. Through ten presentations it analyzed the historical context and developments of politics of heritage and archaeology, urban planning, management of religious heritage as well as the valorization and politicization of the past in contested cities. The workshop focused on heritage questions in the Old City of Jerusalem. For a comparative approach, the Jerusalem case was alternated with the case studies of other historical urban sites. This allowed for a better contextualization of the Jerusalem case, as well as for the discussion of overarching questions addressing the function and interrelation of imagined traditions, spatial policies, material heritage, archaeology and tourism.

Following a short introduction, the first panel of the workshop featured âUrban Planning and Religious Heritageâ. The panel started with BENEDETTA SERAPIONI (Mainz) and her talk on âUniversal Heritage in a Contested City: The Old City of Jerusalem in the UNESCO World Heritage Listâ, in which she depicted the process of the World Heritage nomination of the Old City of Jerusalem. She focused on the role of UNESCO as an international cultural arbitrator within the competing parties and narratives connected to the city. By addressing questions of territoriality, cultural sovereignty and universal symbolism she showed that UNESCOâs World Heritage Program and moral discourse of a world heritage reinforced territorial struggles in Jerusalemâs Old City. She also unveiled the influence of scientific experts in the construction and political negotiation of cultural heritage conservation.

MADELEINE LEONARD (Belfast) focused her presentation on political tourism and heritage conservation in post-conflict Belfast. She explored how âthe tale of two citiesâ served a burgeoning tourism industry in the last decade by exploiting Belfastâs contested past. She also observed the ongoing division of ethno-national space and processes of denial in Belfast, through the lens of tourism and especially guided tours. Leonardâs study of the role of tour guides as memory managers and providers of a âbiased authenticityâ led her to conclude that tourism is a vehicle for the construction and legitimization of remembrance and oblivion.

In her talk WENDY PULLAN (Cambridge) presented the interaction of different drivers in reinventing Jerusalem in the twentieth century. By exploring the landscape of the Holy Basin as a contemporary construct, she showed how archaeology and heritage became central tools in this process. She also argued that urban planning, settlement and tourism are important factors in the creation of and struggle over Jerusalemâs holy places. Pullan discussed expropriation, excavation and spectacle in cases such as the âCity of Davidâ in the neighborhood

of Silwan and the Western Wall Tunnels as embodiments of politics of archaeology and heritage.

TANJA ZIMMERMANN (Leipzig) analyzed how spatial politics in the post-socialist countries of former Yugoslavia can be grasped as the materialization of imagined traditions. The Memorial Church of Saint Sava in Belgrade (Serbia, 1935â1941; 1985â1989), AndriÄ City near ViÅ¡egrad (Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2011â2014) and the encompassing urban project âSkopje 2014â (Macedonia, 2010â2014) served to illustrate, how post-modernism is translated into neo-national paradigms. These three examples, Zimmermann argued, mark the emergence of a retrograde style of architecture and sculptures, which represent imperial glory, enhanced with (invented) traditions of cultural heritage, and therefore formulate skepticism against contemporary forms of democracy.

VIVIENNE MARQUART (Halle) showed how tourism management and urban planning surrounding the Byzantine monuments and Ottoman houses in Istanbulâs four UNESCO World Heritage areas illustrate the political use of Istanbulâs various identities. She depicted restoration projects in Ottoman and Byzantine Heritage as mergers of national, religious and commercial interests. With the example of the endangered AtatÃ¼rk Cultural Center, Marquart highlighted how the conflicts between two traditions, Religion and secular Republicanism, are translated to heritage conservation debates. The discussion around the potential conversion of Hagia Sophia from museum to mosque shows the role that World Heritage tourism can assume in local political decisions.

YFAAT WEISS (Jerusalem) analyzed the evacuation of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem from Mount Scopus in the north of the city, which was an enclave in Jordanian territory between 1948 and 1967. Through her historical study of the discussion over the library books which stayed on Mount Scopus, she demonstrated how the problems of the university were gradually subordinated to Israelâs concern over the status of Jerusalem. Members of the university, fearing loss of cultural property, appealed to UNESCO. However, the government regarded these concerns as a burden in the struggle over territorial sovereignty and did not tolerate international action in this matter. In 1967, the government, so Weiss, saw the immediate return of the university to Mount Scopus as a national undertaking and an occasion to reinforce the link between western Jerusalem and the northern neighborhoods.

The second Panel of the Workshop focused on âThe

Valorization and Politicization of the Pastâ. ANDREA REHLING (Mainz) in her presentation âOld Cities and the World Heritage Programâ analyzed the phenomena under the terms gentrification and urbanization. She argued that the old city centers have been reinvented as core of an idealized middle-class society since the 1950s. Using diverse examples, such as Venice, Cairo, Kathmandu and Warsaw, she demonstrated that UNESCO and then the World Heritage Program made this imagination of society a global standard, which was spread all over the world. The paper also explained how UNESCOâs policy finally induced gentrification and urbanization processes as unintended consequences.

In his talk âUrban heritage tourism: Cautionary tales about a complicated Â»mÃ©nage Ã quatreÂ«â, NOEL SALAZAR (Leuven) concentrated on the impact and management of tourism in urban World Heritage sites since the beginning of the 21st century. Using his own expertise in tourism projects of ICOMOS, UNESCO and UNWTO, he argued for a new approach to heritage tourism. He focused on the interaction of global tourism and the local in World Heritage sites, illustrating for example the conflict that may arise between practical heritage conservation and mass tourism. Salazar presented several sites, like the famous case of Angkor, where contested heritage, urban context and tourism cohabit.

NOAM SHOVAL (Jerusalem) talked about the challenges of tourism and geopolitics in Jerusalem. He first introduced the different faces of Jerusalem as an earthly, heavenly and tourism site. He emphasized the important functions within the city which tourism and pilgrimage have had since ancient times. Shoval then showed how tourism and its economic potential in the city could materialize through the implementation of tracking technologies in urban tourism research. Tracking technology not only gives insight into different tourism types; it also allows to measure and maybe influence the geography of tourism in Jerusalem.

The last presentation of the workshop by MAHMOUD K. HAWARI (London) brought the focus back to Jerusalem and on one particular site, the ancient âCitadel of Jerusalemâ. This citadel has been renamed âTower of Davidâ and hosts the cityâs historical museum since 1989. Hawari started with an analysis of the architecture of the historical building and short history of the archaeological searches. He then confronted the mainly Muslim history of the site with the contents of the museum it hosts. In order to underline the political appropriation of the site by Israel for its own historical discourse, he

analyzed the museum panels and narratives and their interaction with the building itself.

Part of the workshop took place on the grounds of the Old City of Jerusalem. Here TAWFIQ DAâADLI (Jerusalem) explained the role of archaeology and heritage conservation in establishing hierarchies in the exhibition of the past and their influence on the spatial policies of Jerusalem. Through a closer study of the cityâs Mamluk Heritage, he showed how historical and ongoing archaeological and heritage conservation projects in the divided city could support strategies to maintain, dissolve or transform spatial boundaries in urban development.

Through the course of the workshop the site of Jerusalem was examined under various approaches â historical, archaeological, conservationist, museological, geographical and touristic. At the same time, the comparison of Jerusalem with other conflictual historical urban sites and the general overviews on the role of international organizations in historical cities in conflict, allowed for several common threads to arise from the workshop.

First, the role of the international community was a central question in most of the presentations. The site of Jerusalem as well as the other case-studies allowed for interesting discussions on UNESCO as an arbitrator and the role of experts. A second line of thought interrogated politics of heritage and their links to spatial divide in contested cities. The use of borders, circulation and urban planning in the urban context was illustrated in many examples. Also, the two edged part played by tourism in these conflictual and divided urban spaces became clear. Conceived as a way to encourage peace and economic development, tourism can be instrumental in local politics and used for international interests. Finally, a closer look at the links between heritage and politics but also heritage and religion allowed for better understanding of these urban sites in conflict, especially in the case of Jerusalem.

Conference Overview:

Johannes Paulmann (Leibniz Institute of European History, Mainz), Welcome

Andrea Rehling (Leibniz Institute of European History, Mainz), Introduction

Panel 1: Urban Planning and Religious Heritage

Benedetta Serapioni (Leibniz Institute of European History, Mainz), The Old City of Jerusalem on UNESCOâs World Heritage List.

Madeleine Leonard (Queenâs University Belfast), Political Tourism in Post Conflict Belfast: Representing the Past and the Present.

Wendy Pullan (University of Cambridge), Contesting Urban Space: Jerusalemâs Holy Sites in the Service of Nationalism.

Tanja Zimmermann (University of Leipzig), Materializing Imagined Traditions: Spatial Politics in the Post-Socialist Countries of Former Yugoslavia.

Vivienne Marquart (MPI Halle), Byzantine Monuments â Ottoman Houses: The Revival of Istanbulâs Religious Identities in Tourism and Urban Planning.

Yfaat Weiss (Hebrew University Jerusalem), The Enclave: Mount Scopus in Jerusalem, 1948-1967.

Panel 2: The Valorization and Politicization of the Past

Andrea Rehling (Leibniz Institute of European History, Mainz), Old Cities and the World Heritage Program.

Noel Salazar (KU Leuven), Urban Heritage Tourism: Cautionary Tales about a complicated âMÃ©nage Ã Quatreâ.

Noam Shoval (Hebrew University Jerusalem), Tourism and Geopolitics in Jerusalem.

Mahmoud K. Hawari (Khalili Research Centre, Oxford/ British Museum, London), The Citadel of Jerusalem.

Special talk on the grounds of the Old City of Jerusalem:

Tawfiq Daâadli (Martin Buber Society/Hebrew University Jerusalem), The Role of Archaeology in the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls.

If there is additional discussion of this review, you may access it through the network, at:

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Citation: Elke Ackermann. Review of , *Visiting Contested Cities: Urban Planning, Tourism and the Politics of Heritage.*

H-Soz-u-Kult, H-Net Reviews. February, 2016.

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