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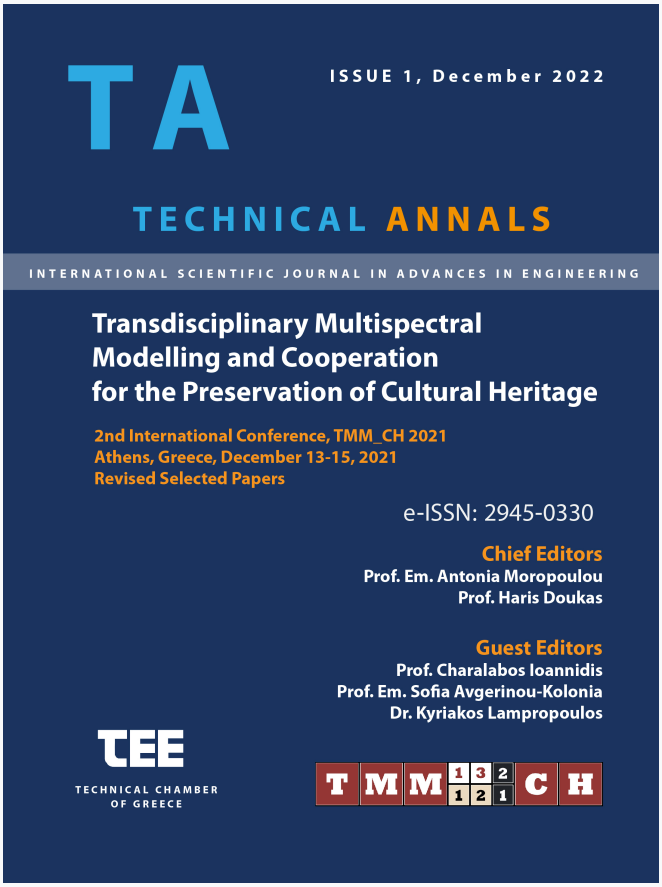

Is "Authentic Tourism" a means of preserving living cultural heritage?

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Is "Authentic Tourism" a means of preserving living cultural heritage?A case study in Old Akko, Israel

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Abstract: The goal of this paper is to question the idea of authenticity in the tourist industry, using the Old City of Akko (north Israel) as a case study. It willquestion the ability of tourism to serve as a tool for preserving living-cultural- heritage. Is there "authenticity" in tourism? Is cultural-based-tourism a means of preserving intangible heritage? Does cultural-based-heritage recreate heritage, invent heritage or is it just a means of creating experiences? Situated on a peninsula in North Israel, the old city of Akko is a vertical of many historical layers, from 5000 years ago till date. Imprints of tangible heritage from all periods and living intangible cultural heritage entwine with each other in the ancient allies of the city. Intensive excavations uncovered massive Middle-aged Crusader remains dated to the 12th and 13th century. They lie beneath the existing Ottoman fortified city, constructed in the 18th and 19th centuries. Akko of today is a vibrant city. Residents reside within these Ottoman buildingsconstructed 300 years ago. Updated research indicates that the cultural heritage of Akko includes many additional values. These include intangible heritage values that are practiced by these residents in the historic allies. This 'Living Heritage' is linked to the current community of the city and represents the 'continuity' of traditions and practices that comprise living dimensions and the continuity of traditions, skills, and craftspeople. Successful scientific research methods, documentation and safeguarding procedures of these intangible values are still developing. This paper will present examples of intangible heritage in the Historical Urban Landscapes of Akko and will question the ability of new touristic initiatives as a means of preserving this heritage and the spirit ofthe city. Some of these examples are led by the locals but most of the new initiatives are belong to entrepreneurs new to the city. They all offer an authentic experience in the city. They suggest a combination of visits to the main tourist attractions developed by the authorities and an opportunity toencounter living-traditional-culture aspects in the city. They include tours with local guides, living-in local houses, participating-in local traditional meals with the residents, meeting and watching various craftsmen or joining traditional community events. For tourists, these are unique opportunities that could be called "authentic experiences". For tourist experts

these experiences are often regarded as means to present rare cultural heritage aspects. For the authorities,these experiences are regarded as new development resources and tools. For the locals these are new economic opportunities. So, is this a win-win-win- win situation? Are these initiatives means to preserve and safeguard the authentic intangible heritage values and the unique spirit of the city?

Keywords: Authentic Tourism, Cultural-heritage-based-tourism, Living Cultural Heritage, Intangible Heritage, Built Heritage.

1. INTRODUCTION

In November 1994, the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) adopted the Nara Document on **Authenticity**. This deceleration designated authenticity as an essential factor in conservation procedures of cultural heritage. It addressed cultural diversity as a means of evaluating authenticity in a more objective way. It suggests that "*All cultures and societies are rooted in the particular forms and means of tangible and intangible expression which constitute their heritage, and these should be respected*" (NARA Declaration, 1994). It continues to say that *"Responsibility for cultural heritage and the management of it belongs, in the first place, to the cultural community that has generated it, and subsequently to that which cares for it"*. Understanding that "authenticity" varies from culture to culture was the end of many philosophical discussions that had underlined the importance of authenticity within the conservation and restoration procedures of cultural heritage. The declaration clarified prolonged misunderstandings that had limitedthe scope of decision-making in the field. It justifies the cultural context as the main key when assessing authenticity in the field of cultural heritage.

While this declaration might have supplied a tool for preservation specialists, a theoretical understanding of authenticity as a tourist experience is still very much debated (Bueno de Andrade Matos, 2018). Given the lack of consensus, this paper questions the idea of authenticity in the tourist industry, using the Old City of Akko (north Israel) as a case study.

The paper investigatesthis Historic Urban Landscape and questions the meaning of an authentic tourist experience in the city. It will show examples of intangible heritage in the Historical Urban Landscapes of Akko now 'on sale' as authentic tourist experiences. It questions the ability of these touristic initiatives to preserve intangible heritage and the spirit of the city. Is there "authenticity" in tourism? Is cultural-based-tourism a means of safeguarding intangible heritage? Does cultural-based-tourism recreate heritage, invent heritage or is it just a means ofcreating experiences? This paper will show that while the developing tourism economy can contribute to preserving intangible heritage values, it can also abuse them and endanger their actual existence forever.

This paper will begin by clarifying some basic terms used in this paper such as cultural heritage, Historical Urban Landscapes and the theoretical connection between built heritage and intangible heritage. It will then discuss cultural-based-tourism and

its contribution to safeguarding intangible heritage. The paper will continue by presenting three touristic case studies in the HistoricUrban Landscape of Old Akko. Through them, the paper shows how tourism can safeguard intangible heritage values. Final conclusions will suggest that sustainable frameworks for preserving intangible heritage values in a Historic Urban Landscape should include unique tourist projects as well as inclusive new tools.

Studies of the relationship between these components require an integration of multiple research methods and sources. Literary and historical sources, protocols and documents found in the offices of the different organizations involved in the conservation and development of the city enable a better understanding of the urban space. A full understanding of the of authenticity and cultural-based-tourism in Akko this study includes field observations, in-depth interviews with a sample of residents, senior officials from different organizations involved in the conservation and development of the city and tourists. A combination of these resources enables a deeper understanding of this relationship.

2. CULTURAL HERITAGE

Cultural heritage developed simultaneously with the development of modernity. Although the concept of heritage evolved from a concern of preserving relics from the past, the evolution of cultural heritage has led to some important changes in its orientation (Ashworth, 2013). In the past, these relics from the past were mostly tangible, built, artistic or symbolic characteristics, which each culture inherited from its past. Built heritage mostly regarded architectural - aesthetic properties (such as archaeological sites), historical urban layouts andgeographic settings of archaeological and historical sites. These various places and structures from the past are called cultural properties. They are unique and irreplaceable. Their characteristics enrich the cultural identity of a society and give it its unique character.

Over the last two decades regeneration processes, which occur in historic urban areas, increasingly integrate heritage as a lever for physical, social and economic development (Amit-Cohen, 2005). They raise the values inherent in the historical built fabric as a tool for accelerating cultural activities and tourist attraction, for creating a unique and rich urban environment and for fostering a sense of pride and of community identification. It is now understood that cultural heritage in urban settings has an additional meaning that include intangible aspects. These could be cumulative reservoirs of human experiences, like beliefs, values, philosophy, customs, arts, history, experiences, languages, social relationships, institutions, material and spiritual products that belong to a group of people and are transmitted from generation to generation. This can all be described as *intangible heritage*. This term is used to describe aesthetic, spiritual, symbolic, or other social values that associate people with a place through ongoing *'living heritage'* such as rituals, music, language, know-how and oral traditions (Deacon 2004). Living heritage is practiced by different groups of people that are defined by race, age, ethnicity, language, religion or any other category. These people that hold traditional knowledge and skills and practice cultural heritage

can be described as *'living treasures'* within Historical Urban Landscapes. They shape their unique identity and sense of continuity and strengthen the place they live in.

In the cultural heritage conservation field, we are consistently faced withchallenges on three fronts (Avrami, Mason & De La Torre, 2000): 1. Physicalconservation procedures: materials and structural systems, deterioration causes, possible interventions, long-term efficacy of treatments, etc. 2.

Managing these procedures: availability and use of resources, funds, training personal, and technology; political and legislative mandates issues; land use issues, etc. 3. Understanding cultural significance and social values: Why is an object or a place meaningful, to whom and how are these places understood orperceived.

The discussion of social values, social diversity for making decisions on what to preserve and how, is compatible with the *Faro Convention*. This Convention focuses on the value of cultural heritage for the civil society and deals with the question of why and to whom cultural heritage belongs (Faro, 2005). It was signed in 2005 by the Council of Europe and is based on the understanding that heritage is part of human rights, and that each community isentitled to express and defend its heritage.

The annual ICOMOS conference held in 2008 in Quebec was devoted to understanding the connection between built heritage and intangible heritage. At the end of this conference the *Quebec Declaration* was signed (ICOMOS, 2008). It referrers to the *'spirit of the place*' and presents a holistic approach according to which cultural heritage includes tangible as well as intangible aspects, all of which are expressions in the urban landscape. This declaration gave equal significance both to tangible and intangible heritage within the process of decision-making for preservation in urban spaces.

UNESCO's definition of a historic urban landscape emphasized this idea (UNESCO, 2011). The declaration suggested that intangible elements such as memories, narratives, rituals, customs, and events, contribute to the creation of a unique *Geni Loci* (spirit of the place). These elements add meaning to a place and therefore need to be included in the discussion about the characteristics, various components, and values of an historical urban landscape.

The 2005 Faro Convention, the Quebec Declaration of 2008, and the UNESCO recommendations of 2011 all underscore the connection between thebuilt heritage and the intangible heritage in a historic urban landscape.

3. HISTORICAL URBAN LANDSCAPES

The ICOMOS Charter for the *Conservation of Historic and Urban Areas* from 1987 indicates in article 1 that *"AlI urban communities, whether they have developed gradually over time or have been created deliberately, are an expression of the diversity of societies throughout history"* (Washington Charter,1987). It continues to suggest that historic urban areas can be large or small, can be cities, towns, historic centers or quarters. According to this charter theseareas have a role as historic documents and in addition they embody the values of traditional urban cultures. The charter continues and presents qualities to be preserved in these areas and sets

methods and instruments for this purpose. Nonetheless, the charter refers to physical historical features only and oblivious to the culture those communities and societies living in these historic areas. It is unconcerned with them as carriers of intangible cultural heritage that is unique to these historic urban areas.

The UNESCO document suggests that Historic Urban Landscapes are complex and delicate places that contain cultural assets from ancient times, which create a special character. It respects inherited values and traditions of different cultural contexts. Article 3 of the introduction indicates that "*Urban heritage, including its tangible and intangible components, constitutes a key resource in enhancing the liveability of urban areas, and fosters economic development and social cohesion in a changing global environment."* (UNESCO, 2011). This wider approach enables to understand the historic urbanlandscape as an urban area of historic layering of cultural and natural values and attributes, extending beyond physical structures and ensembles. It proposes a wider context that includes both physical features of the urban structure (such as topography, built environment, both historic and contemporary, its infrastructures above and below ground, its open spaces and gardens, its land use patterns and spatial organization) as well as social and cultural practices and values, economic processes and the intangible dimensions of heritage. This approach enhances the productive and sustainable use of urban spaces and recognizes the dynamic social and functional character and diversity. It creates a sustainable relationship between the urban and natural environment, the needs of present and future generations and legacies from the past. This approach learns from the traditions and perceptions of local communities and states an absolute connection between them and theirsurroundings of built heritage.

In Israel, it is often found that the term 'historic city' refers to a defined historical district within the territory of a city. It is acceptable to determine that aHistorical Urban Landscape is a product of a unique historical developmentprocess within an individual city. In recent years, these Historical Urban Landscapes have been subjects for various heritage studies as well asdiscussions on policies, the creation of national conservation frameworks and public awareness activities (Peleg, 2017). Each urban historic area in Israel is aproduct of a unique historical urban development. Management of urban historic areas in Israel, is conducted by local authorities, which issue tailored regulations and it is them that have the ability to determine the development goals in an entire city, including those of the historic area. Each city has its own unique principles, approaches, standards and tools for conservation of thehistorical area.

4. CULTURAL-HERITAGE-BASED-TOURISM

As tourism boomed in the last decades, local communities became increasingly eager to find ways to attract tourists and economically benefit from this developing industry. Unique small-scale touristic initiatives focused on identifying and leveraging local cultural heritage assets as tourism drivers. These initiatives are often regarded as authentic- touristic-experiences. They became far more beneficial to local econ-

omies than the rapid expansion of massive enclaves that had previously dominated tourism. (McNulty & Wafer, 1990). Organizations realized that "*tourism needs to be part of a community mobilization strategy that can reinvent the role of heritage so that it serves the needs of everyone*" (McNulty, 2014). This motion is reflected in the explosion of niche market designations that include adventure tourism, culinary tourism,religious tourism, ecotourism, sustainable tourism, and educational tourism. A big and dominant market in the industry is cultural-heritage-tourism.

As the term implies, cultural-heritage-tourism involves visiting places that are significant to the past or to the present cultural identity of a place or a group of people. It provides an in-depth touristic experience of another culture. Based on the mosaic of places, traditions, art forms, celebrations and experiences, cultural-heritage-tourism portrays the unique spirit of a place and reflects its diversity and character. It is rooted in local languages, customs, practices, history and experiences these groups have commonly shared over the years. It enables a local community to utilize their unique intangible heritage as an economic drive for their own development. In other words, it can also be called authentic tourism.

Cultural-heritage-tourists visit historical attractions, monuments, landmarks Museums and art galleries. They take part in festivals, concerts, or performances. They expect to experience culturally significant neighborhoods orcommunities. They hear stories and meet locals. These tourists learn about the beliefs and practices, the struggles and successes that have shaped the sharedidentity of a people. They encounter the Geni-Loci of a Place which is often represented through its intangible heritage values.

Cultural heritage tourists might be thought of as amateur ethnographers. But while they are interested in learning about other cultures, they are first and foremost tourists. They travel to experience other cultures and learn about the past, but they do so as tourists. They have the need for amenities such as restaurants and hotels that the tourist economy depends upon.

In this respect, cultural-heritage-tourism encourages communities to select their intangible heritage values, interpret them and find creative ways to engage tourists with them. They become touristic entrepreneurs in these uniquecultural heritage places. It can be said that these initiatives highlight intangible heritage values and encourage local communities to safeguard them. More than often newcomer residents are intrigued and touched by these values. But some are less sensitive. While their new investments are important to the development of the local economy they can become a threat to these values and to the Geni-loci of a place. Keeping a balance between the intangible heritage held by the locals and the investments of newcomers is delicate and a tricky challenge and is a key to safeguard intangible heritage values.

5. THE HISTORICAL URBAN LANDSCAPE AKKO

The Historical Urban Landscape Akko (also known as Acre) in North Israel can serve as a case study to discuss these issues. Due to its unique culturalheritage values, efforts to base the city's economy on tourism began decades ago. But it was only in 90ties of the twentieth century that the State of Israel designated the city as tourist

designation and prioritized the unique cultural heritage as the base for tourism (Peleg, 2017). The official development plans emphasized the built heritage of the city which yet needed to be excavated and developed. It was only after these developments were completed that newcomers were exposed to the unique intangible heritage in the city. It was only after the investments of these newcomers, did some of the locals begin to understand and realize the importance and uniqueness of their own intangible assets.

Situated on a peninsula, on the northern coast of Israel alongside a natural harbor of the eastern Mediterranean, Akko is adjacent to ancient international crossroad (Waterman, 1969). As a result of this geographic location the city became a trade center in ancient times. The urban space is limited due the fact that it developed on a peninsula. Therefore, the city developed in layers, the Crusader city first, and above it the Ottoman layer. Twice in its history, Akko became an international city - in the thirteenth century,as the Crusader capital city of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem and in the nineteenth century, under El-Jazzar Pasha, the Ottoman ruler. Despite the many years that have passed, authentic archaeological and historical evidencefrom these two periods remain in the city. It is within these remains, that modern life continues to this day. Within these archaeological remains and the historicalspace people live and work today. Within the city resides a multi–cultural population. It is vibrant and has a unique character (Peleg, 2017). The currentpopulation in the Old City of Akko consists mostly of an Arabic Muslim traditional society, which is primarily of a low socioeconomic status. This blend of archaeological historical layers from the past and modern life, exist togetherand nourish each other, contains archaeological remains and a historical spacein which people live and work.

Figure 1 A view of the Old City of Akko,Photo: Hadar Peleg

The aesthetic, historical and scientific values of Akko were designated during preparations of the new Master Plan in 1993 and again during thenomination for World Heritage in 2001 (Killebrew, DiPietro, Peleg, Scham & Taylor 2017). The city's unique values are embodied in her shape, texture and size derive on the peninsula surrounded by the sea. The remains of the crusaders that were discovered in archaeological excavations uncovered thetransition from the Romanesque architectural style to the Gothic architectural style. Narrow alleys, government buildings, public buildings, mosques, markets, bathhouses, workshops and commerce, wealthy and traditional homes from the Ottoman period give the city its eastern atmosphere and character. This city underwent massive conservation and development procedures that turned thecity into an important touristic attraction in North Israel.

Figure 2 The Refectorium in the Crusader Hospitaller Compound Photo: Pixabay

Updated research shows that living cultural heritage values are in fact embedded in intangible heritage still very much alive in the city (Peleg, 2017). It is this heritage that creates local patriot pride, gives life to this Historical Urban Landscapes and a special meaning. The continuity of intangible aspects in the city, maintains the significance of the past, present and future. It is now clear that these intangible and tangible values are inextricably linked.

It is an authentic Mediterranean, oriental Islamic city. Centuries of history are stacked on this peninsula within the Ottoman walls. Pencil minarets and painted church domes strain above ramparts smoothed by sea winds. Its stone bastions and deep moats are the very same that greeted Marco Polo and countless pilgrims, mystics and scholars who passed through the city years and years ago. Walking down the narrow alleys of the old city of Akko is an experience of authentic Middle Eastern mar-

kets, the blue Mediterranean Sea and ethnic foods. Wafts of spices, Arab black coffee and pita bread dart in a zigzag through the old city's alleys, leading disoriented visitors deep through bewitched jumble of streets. Sounds call residents to prayer in mosques whilst merchants call out in the markets at the same time as the ocean breezesplashes up. You can immerse yourself in the colors, sounds and scents of the fishing port's market. You can taste famous fresh hummus with warm homemade pita bread, a popular street lunch that the city is famous for. Street vendors offer a variety of homemade authentic candy or variety of caramelized nut-based sweets. Mental maps, place names, traditional unique crafts, food recipes and local beliefs, local stories and legends all give special meanings to places in the city.

Figure 3 Ottoman Islamic features in Old Akko Photo: Shelley-Anne Peleg

It is estimated that about 1,500,000 – 2,000,000 international and Israeli tourists visit the city of Akko each year[102]. Only about 400,000 tourists buy ticketsto visit the

[102] This data was given to me by one of the leading touristic developers in the city who requested to remain anonymous.

tourist sites in the city. It is therefore clear, that most of the tourists are not satisfied just with a visit to the well-developed touristic sites in the city. Instead, most search for an in-depth understanding of the city, wanting to experience the local lifestyles, customs, and culture. These visitors and tourists seek an authentic-tourist experience. Some live-in local houses that have been transformed into beautiful and attractive rooms, participate-in traditional meals with the locals, meet and watch various crafts-men or join unique traditional community events. They undergo a significant and meaningful interaction with locals. It enables them to visit in the city, as well as expe-rience other aspects of the city.

Figure 4: An Example of an Authentic Bed and Breakfast Tourist experience, Photo: Shelley-Anne Peleg

The new touristic experiences themselves are based on unique intangible values such as traditional customs, food, cotumes and music. Theyare representative of the local Muslim community. Sometimes these experiences are simple, embodied in gritty and slummy areas of the city. Thiscombination enables an encounter with the glit-

tery historical built heritage and the intangible heritage as well. It gives the tourists a genuine and true feeling one that can be called an authentic experience.

6. INTANGIBLE HERITAGE AND GUIDED TOURS

The importance and the connection between tourism and intangible heritage in Akko was first recognized by a local tour guide during the development procedures held in the 90ties of the twentieth century. Abdu Matta, a descendant to an Arab Christian Orthodox family that has resided in the city for 10 generations, was born in Old Akko and grew up in it. Not only does he have historical knowledge of the city, but he also has a deep understanding of the city's unique intangible heritage and a profound acquaintance with the residents. The local folklore is his own background, the language is his mother tongue and the community customs are a true part of his life. At the early stagesof the development procedures, Matta understood that these unique intangible heritage values in the city needed to be safeguarded and even rescued before they disappeared under the developing tourist industry. He was the first independent tourist entrepreneur to lead tours around his hometown revealing and interpreting these values, thus stressing their importance. His tours served an example for external tour guides just discovering the values of the city. His ideas became pillows of growth for his fellow residents in the city.

Matta's efforts were not only restricted to tours. He became part of many of the city's new initiatives in cultural heritage. He was a co-author of a book that collected many of the local folklore stories. He participated in endless educational programs, in which he discussed with the local school children many of the intangible values in the city. He took part in discussions in the city and consulted the authorities on means of safeguarding the unique local intangible heritage. His activities included outdoor afternoon lectures for the locals, storytelling sessions with the local children and local tour guide training programs. He has suggested to create workshops that revive traditional handicrafts and add them into the tourist itinerary. In his opinion this could raise awareness, create new sources of livelihood and ensure that the local heritage is passed to future generations. Time and again, he has urged the official development and non-profit organizations to establish social activities that complement the tourism experience and preserve the Geni-loci of Akko.

Figure 5: Visiting a traditional Bakery Photo: Shelley-Anne Peleg

He views authenticity, solidarity and cultural symbiosis as unique intangible components of the of the city[103]. According to him: *"These components feed each other and are the basis for establishing social codes, fed to human beings from their early stages as embryos, in their homes and in their neighborhoods"* (Matta, 2020). His activities in the city are led by his opinion that: "*authenticity in Akko is strong enough to face virtual materialism that could cheaply run down the unique 'spirit of the place'."* His dramatized tours and activities are *double targeted: "On the one hand my need to earn a living and on the other hand my understanding that it is important to present the unique spirit of Akko in a way that it is faithful to my noble heritage and the collective memory of my own intangible culture."* He believes that "*only those who breathe and live this intangible heritage can express it and "translate" it faithfully and responsibly. This is because it has been that person's legacy for generations. Therefor authentic intangible heritage cannot just be an academic research. It must continue to breath and live as a real mechanism without discussions about its essence."* He has declared over and over that he favors considerate tourism and he sees over-tourism predatory and destructive.

[103] I would like to thank Mr. Abdu Matta for contributing his personal ideas to this discussion on Authentic Tourism as a means of preserving Intangible Heritage. The quotes presented in this paragraph are Mr. Matta's ideas and were presented by him in Hebrew in an ongoing virtual group discussion held during the month of August 2020 with tourist entrepreneurs from the City of Akko. His comments were translated into English by the author of this paper.

7. INTANGIBLE HERITAGE, HOME STAY AND CULINARY

"From the moment a person enters my house he is invited to receive love and give love" says Miriam Aik a religious Muslim woman who turned her house into a home-stay project[104]. Located in the heart of Old Akko, the structure itself is an example of a magnificent traditional Ottoman house. Living with her, guests are introduced to the city and to the local Arab culture. It is unique opportunity to get to know an authentic home, learn about the life of a religious Muslim woman and her rituals, understand traditional Muslim every-day life, customs, and costume and experience local ceremonies and culinary. It adds authentic sociocultural richness to the tourist's experience and portrays the cultural richness of the city Akko.

Figure 6: Miriam Aik in her home with visitors Photo: Shelley-Anne Peleg

[104] I would like to thank Miss Miriam Aik for conducting with me endless discussions, for sharing with meher ideas and for contributing to my thoughts on Akko. The quotes in this paragraph stem from a talk she gave in Hebrew to a group of Jewish visitors that visited her house with the author of this paper during August 2020. These quotes were translated into English by the author of this paper.

Home Stay refers to accommodation in a residence outside a person's own local community (Chakraborty, 2019). It allows tourists to experience a different lifestyle, authentic culture or even a language. Herein the host community offers their furnished accommodation to a tourist package with a personalized, homely hospitality which is authentic to the local habitat. The infrastructure like amenities, living space etc. is shared with the tourist such thatthey can enjoy a homely hospitality. To make it an experience, the offering is usually packaged with meals, utility items and even allowing them to participate in their local festivals. Homestay packages are highly customizable based on the preference of any individuals based on the length of their stay or even extended or long stays unless specified by the host

This form of sustainable tourism in Akko is currently one-of its kind. On the one hand, it shows the active role of a community member in promoting cultural-based-tourism. On the other hand, this kind of tourism is an example of a simple way to safeguard intangible values such as local arts, cuisine, costume, music, rituals, or others.

8. INTANGIBLE HERITAGE AND NEWCOMMER TOURIST ENTERPANAURS

It is often thought that outsiders lack a full understanding of the cultural heritage in Akko. Local residents have expressed their fear that these newcomers could endanger 'their city', change its character and run-down values that are important to the traditional community (Peleg, 2017).

Till date about 10 newcomer tourist entrepreneurs have proven the exact opposite. The case of "Carma-Akko" a self-catering a quaint vacation home situated in the heart of Old Akko, can show the sensitivity these newcomers have towards tangible and intangible values in the city. *"The Old City of Akko is an unpolished diamond. And, as such, it has many facets"* says the owner of the project. In her opinion "authentic tourism" can be misleading or at best given to multiple interpretations. It is a home-cooked banquet shared with locals during the month of Ramadan. It is the clack-clack-clack of the horse-drawn carts conveying visitors through the cobblestone streets accompanied by blaring music. It is in her opinion the mesh of old and new, classy and modest,sophisticated and simple that gives Old Akko its charm and allure.

Figure 7: A local workshop for boatbuilding Photo: Shelley-Anne Peleg

In 2011 Carlos and Mali Cortes - Mali originally from Cleveland, Ohio andCarlos from La Serena, Chile, both Jewish - purchased the building from the Qassem family[105] The house, that features historic elements dating back to the Crusader era, was run down, with outdated and dangerous infrastructures and a roof that was on the verge of collapsing. Carlos and Mali renovated it, with the timely assistance of local artisans well-versed in the complexities of stabilizing, cleaning and replacing the local Akko stone. At the risk of unearthing too much history, lest the discovery of antiquities scrap the entire project. Carma's neighbors lended a helping hand where needed or just a nice cup of local coffeeand light conversation. Finally, when Carma officially opened in September 2017, the owners felt that: "*inside the house you can literally touch history spanning four different periods*". These include the upper part of a 1000-year- old Crusader arch, the rest of which lies deep below ground. Various other archeological elements uncovered during renovations offer an enchanting look into how people lived hundreds of years ago. During the Ottoman Period, the townhouse was in the heart of the small Ottoman Jewish community in the greatMubellata Quarter.

Intangible values were captured as well. The neighbors recount that "*about 100 years ago, the house doubled as the dwelling and 'fast-food joint' ofa man named Abu Ibrahim who sold the best boiled dried fava beans and pita bread in town.*"

Today, the house welcomes visitors from all over the world with all of the modern

[105] I would like to thank Mrs. Mali Cortes for contributing her ideas and thoughts in a virtual discussion onAuthentic Tourism as a means of preserving Intangible Heritage with tourist entrepreneurs from the Cityof Akko. The quotes presented in this section are Mrs. Cortes's ideas and were written by her during the month of August 2020.

amenities including air conditioning, WiFi, a fully equipped kitchen, satellite TV, comfy beds, wine bar, and a rooftop terrace to chill after a long day of discovery, to mention only a few. To each tourist, Carlos and Mali unfold the tale of Carma Akko. By documenting the past of the structure, by retelling stories of its former owners and usages and by enabling visitors experiencewhat it really means to live in the city, they feel that they are sensitive to the unique character of the city and that they are implementing strategies that safeguard intangible values. This is in their opinion the actual meaning of'authentic tourism'.

9. CONCLUSIONS

This paper has shown how sensitive tourist initiatives can become strategies that have many targets. They contribute to the local economy, create local pride, and safeguard the geni-loci as well as the intangible heritage values. It also stresses the importance of all residents, old and newcomers in these procedures. This heritage links new and old residents, Jewish and Arabs to the city and gives a special meaning to their life. All residents now share a unique local identity and a diverse collective memory of a rich and magnificent past. These memories create the intangible heritage of the city. These intangible aspects are nurtured and relate to the built heritage. The interactions between them form the unique cultural heritage of Akko. Recognition of this heritage has had the power the power to unite them. It is this cultural heritage that has developed into a new source of income for the local city residents and integrated them into the new developing tourist industry in their city. Till date, these intangible values are being regarded delicately. They are returning to life and contribute to maintaining the uniqueness of the city. It is therefore quite clear that when discussing Historic Urban Landscapes, we should be referringto cultural heritage in a holistic inclusive way. The case study in Akko also stresses the importance local touristic initiatives, of grassroot procedure and of down-top initiatives for intangible heritage. As no predatory tourist projects have yet harmed the cultural heritage, it remains to follow the touristic developments in the Historic Urban Landscape of Akko. This approach can suggest a new model and a management plan for the conservation of cultural heritage assets in Historic Urban Landscapes. It is based on acknowledging intangible heritage, as a drive for the tourist industry.

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