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ARTICLE

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ABSTRACT

People living under occupation continue their struggle against loss of land by preserving their authentic cultural heritage, narrative, identity, and very existence in various ways. This paper sets out the efforts of Palestinian universities to protect their cultural heritage in the face of continuing Israeli occupation, which demonstrate resilience by building sustainable livelihoods. This includes raising awareness of their cultural heritage, and assisting the economy through the provision of work opportunities that portray a collective policy towards their culture. It sheds light on the case of Al-Quds University that is implementing several conservation projects in different cultural sites rich in the contextual values in the Old City of Jerusalem. The university adopts people-centered solutions, which give the built heritage significant meaning and value. A taxonomy of efforts among the projects is outlined to inform policy discussions related to the role of universities. Through utilizing empirical data that can stimulate discussions on developing a more shared set of efforts, the paper contributes to ongoing debates on the reconstruction of built heritage as a dynamic process and strategy to help people recover from the impacts of conflicts.

Introduction

The destruction of cultural heritage during wars can be used intentionally to destroy people and their identity. Both Robert Bevan (2006), and Helen Walasek (2019) argue that the destruction of the enemy's cultural artifacts is politically motivated in order to reject and erase people's presence and collective memory of a place. As a result, in times of political conflict, people's perception towards their identity and cultural heritage can be changed through embracing new strategies (Bourdieu 1994; Malkki 1995). In other words, people become attached to their built and material heritage because it is inseparably associated with their identity and very existence.

Many charters and efforts have been developed since the early 20th century to offer professional and scientific practices in the conservation of built heritage and accelerate these activities in both theory and practice. As these practices develop, amendments are made based upon empirical evidence. Community practices in built heritage have inspired many scholars to develop critiques towards the universal 'thingnification' of heritage (Byrne 2009, 229), which can undervalue the important but intangible aspects of everyday life (De Cesari 2010). Much of the emerging literature points to the centrality of (re)use that give value and meaning to the setting (Smith 2006). This is particularly important in the case of the Israeli occupation of Palestine.

Since the inception of Israel in 1948, the continuing political conflict resulted in the destruction of Palestinian cultural heritage and landscape. Many cultural sites have been deliberately destroyed and their collective memory erased (see Abu Sitta 2017; Said 1992). This has been intensified during the First (1987) and Second (2000) Intifadas (*uprising*), leading to the damage of significant monuments like the Nativity Church in Bethlehem (2002), the burning of worship sites in the Al-Aqsa Mosque (1969) and the imposing of temporal limitations in places of worship in order to provide exclusive access to Jews, as in the case of the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron (since 1994). The destruction of the natural landscape was also affected, especially with the construction of the Separation Wall (2002) that fragments the natural terraces that are thousands of years old as well as destroying the olive groves that had been passed on through generations.

In the early 1990s, the Palestinians began conserving their built heritage through resilience as an expression of resistance against the occupation. Several groups of architects and professionals took the lead and established Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in almost every city in the West Bank (WB) and East Jerusalem (EJ). Drawing from their local context, several projects were preserved in different cities and towns (Bleibleh and Awad 2020). Subsequently, several Palestinian universities took similar approaches to preserve their built heritage by giving it new uses for educational and cultural purposes. Their aim was to revive and preserve abandoned sites from seizure by Israeli settlers, and to protect and sustain Palestinian cultural identity, thus raising awareness of their cultural heritage, and assisting the economy through the provision of work opportunities and portraying a collective policy towards their culture.

There are 18 universities in Palestine (MOHE n.d.), most of which were established as secondary schools before the 1970s in different cities and gradually flourished into smaller colleges and then into universities between 1992 and 1998 (Sullivan 1994). Yet, their remarkable development endorsed education to all and allowed 'social mobility for rural youths and refugees, as well as for middle and lower-middle-class residents of the cities' (Zelkovitz 2014, 389). Except for a few governmental and private institutions, universities are considered public and autonomous, run by a board of trustees from public figures and all dependent on student's (low) tuition fees and various funds.

Following the establishment of the Palestinian National Authority (PA) in 1994, which continued the Palestine Liberation Organization's goal to strengthen the political, socio-cultural, and national identity and the right of return (Amara 2002), most Palestinian universities sought to enlarge their campuses to surrounding areas. As such they played a role in preserving a handful of historical sites, thus reinforcing both individual and collective Palestinian identity. Through adaptive (re)use, many projects were implemented, whether from the accumulated expertise of local NGOs, employing individual architectural firms or using their own architectural offices and involving academics.

As many international bodies became involved in heritage conservation in Palestine, the provision of funds and assistance have allowed universities to propose (re)using endangered and abandoned sites as legal guardians and protectors through long lease agreements directly from owners or municipalities. The works follow the laws and policies set by the PA Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities and its councils with regard to cultural heritage protection. However, the hanging political situation over Jerusalem, considered under occupation according to international law (Geneva Convention (IV) 1949), the Al Quds University (AQU) in EJ has set further policies to manage and promote cultural and heritage protection not only for educational purposes but also to rehabilitate the livelihood of the affected community.

With a focus on AQU's efforts, this paper aims to inform policy discussions on the role of universities in the protection of cultural heritage in order to contribute to heritage studies which aim to build resilience in areas of conflicts. The second and third sections introduce a general overview on cultural heritage and conflicts, which helps to contextualize the literature of the study. The fourth section shows why and how universities in Palestine contribute in the protection of cultural heritage. The fifth section focuses on AQU's intervention projects in the Old City of Jerusalem. The sixth section explicitly outlines these efforts.

Built heritage in times of conflicts

Cultural heritage is a shared responsibility for all to protect and pass on to future generations in the full richness of their authenticity (ICOMOS 1964). This includes the natural and built environment, tangible and intangible assets such as historic sites, built heritage, and practices. Hence, heritage can be defined as a dynamic cultural process (Harvey 2001; Smith 2006) rather than something statically inherent in things. It is therefore a renewable resource, shaping people and being shaped by them. The Himeji Recommendations state that values associated with cultural heritage are socially centered rather than technically or scientifically based and should be assessed by taking into consideration changes over time, perceptions, and attitudes (ICOMOS 2014). The recommendations emphasize the issue of change and continuity as factors that affect the prioritization of values attributed to cultural heritage by people and societies. Thus, what is suggested is an emphasis on the process rather than products, as this affects decisions on what to change and continue for a sustainable development beyond existing and traditional management strategies. Recent references echoed recommendations to integrate local communities through the participation of all stakeholders including those affected by political conflicts, see Warsaw Recommendation on Recovery and Reconstruction of Cultural Heritage (UNESCO 2018) and World Heritage and Sustainable Development: The Role of Local Communities in the Management of UNESCO Designated Site (UNESCO 2012).

The importance of the social dimension in approaches to heritage management in conflict and post-conflict areas has been widely reported (Giblin 2015; Higueras 2013; Saifi and Yüceer 2013). The literature reflects that the conservation of cultural heritage should be seen as an opportunity to explore an alternative form of knowledge through creative adaptation (Holtorf 2006). Accordingly, approaches to cultural heritage in conflict areas should be seen as a dynamic way to maintain an authentic connection with emerging changes (Aljabri and Abdel Nour 2011) imposed by political forces (Legnér 2018; Hürol, Yüceer, and Başarır 2015). What is crucial to people during conflicts is their collective values, beliefs, and traditions where they see heritage as part of the cultural production of their local and national everyday life. Or efforts in conflicted areas should be less about preserving *still* objects and monuments and more about creating a better future centered around people (Aljawabra 2018). As the international community has been slow to act, local communities have to be more resourceful.

Built heritage under the occupation in Palestine

The struggle between the Palestinians and Israelis is 'a conflict created through the built environment' (Nitzan-Shiftan 2017, ix) and over existence. Israel claim over ownership and history, has been geared towards changing the physical reality, which resulted in the Palestinians' loss of land, livelihood, and heritage. In 1948, around 400 vernacular Palestinian villages were destroyed and its people expelled, thus creating the diaspora of refugees in different counties (Khalidi 1992). In 1967, Israel also occupied WB, the Gaza Strip, the Golan Heights from Syria and EJ including its Old City and holy sites. The Israeli goal of a 'unified Jerusalem' impacted both tangible and intangible cultural heritage. A few days after the war of 1967, the 770 year old neighborhood of the Moroccan Quarter southeast of the Old City, was razed in order to pave access for Jewish worshipers to reach the 'wailing wall,' thus expelling its residents to refugee camps and erasing an important historical site (Abowd 2002).

Other suggested plans included dismantling the old Ottoman city walls by the then Israeli Prime Minister, David Ben-Gurion, after capturing EJ in order not to obstruct the connection between the Jews and 'their holy sites' (Creighton 2007). Also, the excavations of tunnels underneath the Old City, the historic town of Silwan and the Haram-Al-Sharif area by the Israeli Antiquity Department, which in 1996 ignited the 'Tunnels Revolt,' undermined the visible built heritage laid above and caused damage to many historical buildings in the surroundings. The horizontal excavation method concerned experts as well as those living above (Natsheh 2019). According to an interview with shop

owners at Khan az-Zait, people said that they keep hearing drilling underneath them which causes new cracks every day and fear a total collapse of their buildings (personal communication, 13 July 2019).

On an ideological level, the targeting of Palestinian built heritage replaces an existing past with a new one. The existing Palestinian nationalism contrasts with the Zionist position (Jewish nationalism) in the form of the identity. Based on spatial reality, the encounter is between the Palestinian 'oriental' and vernacular built heritage and the modern project of Zionism – an adopted vision and symbol of a 'progressive state' of a secularized Judaism (Nitzan-Shiftan 2017). Nitzan-Shiftan (2017) argues that the encounter between the modern movement (which is aesthetically driven and occurs everywhere) and that of the Zionist vision of modernity (which is politically driven) is based on the same 'violent' view of the 'rupture of historical practices and modes of production' (22). This idea is central to the changes taking place in the center of Jerusalem and justifies many of the Israeli municipal projects that have taken place around the Old City. It is a replication of the existing vernacular in a performative manner (Saifi and Hürol 2018), attained through modernity's means and technologies to create a 'collective past, present and future' (Nitzan-Shiftan 2017, 24). However, it also undermines existing historical Palestinian sites and even burial sites (Başarir, Saifi, and Hoşkara 2016).

With the absence of a Palestinian representative state, the Old City of Jerusalem was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger, following a contested Jordanian nomination in 1982. However, in 2000, through the oppressive raid on the WB during the Second Intifada, the deliberate destruction of cultural property has forced the intervention of the World Heritage Committee to 'disburse funds for the institutional build-up of the [PA] Department of Antiquities and the preparation of a tentative list' (De Cesari 2010, 315). Although such an act empowered the PA's heritage department and its reach to more areas excluding EJ (De Cesari 2010), Palestinian grassroot organizations have already established well-known conservation practices and approaches to urban, historic, cultural, and national identity (De Cesari 2010). Efforts were made to revitalize, conserve, build awareness and protect the built heritage from the occupation based upon creative solutions as a mean of cultural resistance (De Cesari 2010; Bleibleh and Awad 2020). Today, these practices have facilitated drafts of national law on the protection of cultural and natural heritage receiving international awards for best practices (Bleibleh and Awad 2020).

The focus of this research is to present further efforts taken by Palestinian universities in conserving cultural heritage in the face of continuing occupation, thus reflecting resilience to protect their identity by embracing the existing social, cultural, economic values, especially in EJ. This is done through observing five intervention projects of various cultural sites implemented by a Palestinian university. The significance of the research is that the case studies that can stimulate discussions and encourage further initiatives. The research methodology adopted includes:

- The collection of data over a period of 8 years, as a participant observer, which included site visits, workshops/seminars/lectures, steering committee meetings with architects, contractors, and experts as well as inauguration ceremonies.
- The analysis and compilation of archived data including inventory sheets, reports, documents, historical studies, intervention proposals, operation plans, and projects' aims, and outputs.
- Conducting interviews (10 people) including 3 administrative personals at the university, 2 involved architects, 3 university professors involved in the project, and 2 shop owners. Questions were open ended about their involvement, views, and challenges.

From the position of heritage is a cultural practice, the study builds a taxonomy that synthesizes the common efforts among the five understudy projects adopted by AQU to protect national identity. The taxonomy criteria employ a content analysis approach that classifies the efforts from empirical entities in order to make the knowledge embedded in the understudy projects more explicit. The results emphasize that the approach of adaptive (re)use and reconstruction, when based on local values, improves, and revitalizes outcomes.

Universities' role in conserving the cultural heritage

Universities are recognized as platforms for free speech and the flow of knowledge and ideas. They gain reputation and trust over a period of time as students, academics, and staff members are affiliated in different ways. Moreover, universities gain much international recognition through accreditation, collaboration with other international institutions and universities. They receive credentials and recognition from the intergovernmental body of UNESCO, and are therefore responsible under international law. They are places of diverse multi-cultures, politically neutral and inclusive, which grants them certain autonomy. They can be influential in the areas of culture and history, and impact upon young minds (Jokilehto 2006).

Unlike other grassroots organizations and NGOs, universities have the ability to sustain their economic continuity through tuition fees and do not depend solely on funds and donations. This means that when intervention in cultural heritage is to take place, they have more room for negotiations, follow-ups, and have more committed people. As universities are not profit-driven, constrains regarding time are more flexible. With a large and diverse degree of expertise, universities can operate on a multi and inter-disciplinary level leading to a more inclusive approach to problem solving.

In Palestine, universities are relentlessly targeted by the occupation and military regime, both before and after the establishment of the PA. Prior the establishment of the PA, Israel controlled everything related to education including curriculum, local and foreign professors' work permits, academic freedom, student admissions, and the banning of books based on national Palestinian identity and history. The establishment of universities were designated 'illegal' with punishments of up to 10 years imprisonments (Sullivan 1994). Even after the establishment of the PA as the legitimate authority for higher education in Palestine, campuses have been invaded and politically active students and professors imprisoned. Temporary checkpoints on-route to major campuses still continue. Al-Quds University for instance suffered more from being located in Jerusalem, after the erection of the Separation Wall in 2002, its main campus was demarcated outside and separated from its other campuses.

Although universities differ in the (re)uses they assign to acquired built heritage, they mostly aim to revitalize the wider context as well as individual buildings which were abandoned due to the migration from traditional areas of those seeking new modern living standards outside the historical cores. Some of these examples include An-Najah University's Qasr al-Qassem, which houses the Urban and Regional Planning Unit in the town of Beit-Wazan, west of Nablus, since 2003, Bethlehem University's Qasr Salem for Hotel Management Department (under implementation) (see Figure 1) and many more.
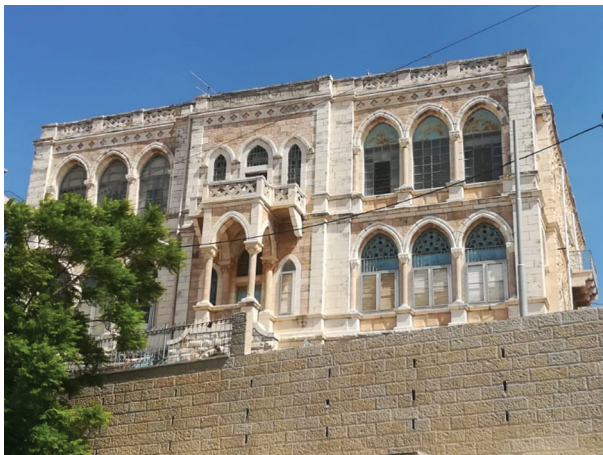

Figure 1. The 19th century urban Mansion (Qasr Salem) - Bethlehem University today (2020).

While many universities in Palestine are involved in the protection of cultural heritage, this paper builds on the case of AQU. As the only university in EJ, AQU has contributed to many conservation projects in the Old City, and has helped attract younger generations (students) and the suffering communities back into the city thereby promoting public awareness with regard to cultural heritage conservation. Not only did AQU offer a future to neglected but significant buildings, but also offered further support to local organizations, like the Islamic Waqf (foundation). With funds received from international donors and in collaboration/partnership with international bodies, AQU have accumulated a 'learning by doing' experience under extremely challenging, limiting, and complicated conditions. Of these challenges is the fact that Jerusalemites have not recognized Israeli rule over them, and have undermined its existence and institutions, and do not participate in political bodies. Yet, Israel on its side excludes community participation and prohibits any decision-making by Palestinians over their own sites as they possess a link with collective identity and the production of cultural meaning. Another challenge is the fact that unlike other Palestinian universities, located within the jurisdiction of PA's laws and regulations under the authority of the Department of Antiquities and Ministry of Tourism, the Israeli Antiquity Department in EJ is considered as a political body of the occupier. It enforces restrictions on Palestinian heritage in favor of an Israeli narrative (Abu El-Haj 2001). Yet, most interventions in Jerusalem are done by individuals and/or NGOs as the PA has no authority over EJ. This makes the intervention of AQU more distinctive as an actor responsible for setting policies and strategies.

The role of AQU in conserving the cultural heritage in EJ

The public university of Al-Quds has several remote campuses with the largest in the town of Abu Dis outside the Separation Wall. While the university has campuses in Ramallah, Hebron, and Gaza, the majority are in EJ and its Old City. Within the university, AQU has set a vision towards EJ: 'that only an educated and enlightened citizenry can safeguard the future of our nation. Indeed, education has been the key to our perseverance as a people struggling for freedom and self-determination. Such vision is set within its inner work policy and mission in different levels:

At an administrative level, the university assigns a vice president for Jerusalem whose aim is to follow up on bureaucratic works, negotiations, administrative and other issues related with the city and is devoted to this work solely. On an educational level, most projects including cultural heritage include student participation within their disciplines for training and practice in order to engage, learn and reflect from it.

At an academic level, professors are motivated to apply for grants and propose ideas related with non-circular activities through a system referred to as the 'ticketing system.' Any staff member can propose a project idea (a ticket) and is voted for by administrative bodies including the president, vice presidents, and deans and other related members. It establishes a network among the academic staff who are incentivized to offer support, further networking, and approval.

At an economic level, funded projects include allocated budgets for staff members outside their regular allowance, which guarantee another sort of extra income and motivates many accademics.

Several conservation projects were implemented by AQU, all adhering to professional practice in restoration, management, and adaptive (re)use. Such initiatives establish a role model for dealing with built heritage, five of which are presented here based on their significance, history, use, size, location, and implementation difficulties. The projects include: The Pool of the Patriarch's Bath, Khan Tankaz, Dar al-Consul Complex, Bab al-Malek Faisal and AQU Public Library.

The pool of the Patriarch's Bath[1]

The Patriarch Pool or Lacux Balneorum-reservoir of the bathhouse, is a large open vacant space in the Old City, with around 3,168 square meters of land. The rectangular pool is originally a reservoir forming part of the water system during the Roman period, which collected rain water from adjacent buildings' roofs and connected it through a water channel to the Ma'man-Allah' pool

outside the walls that functioned until late 19th century (Natsheh 2014). Originally, the pool provided the adjacent Coptic Inn and Hammam with water. The Coptic Convent, together with other surrounding buildings, obscure it from the outside. The entrance has been altered and its original location is unknown, and the one currently used is problematic and only accessible through a narrow indirect access from the convent. Through a lease agreement, AQU was able to obtain the right of use for the public. The abandoned but significant site had suffered from the neglect over time. Being inaccessible due to its location and the fear of having it captured by the Israeli municipality, AQU was able to provide prompt and temporary activities to proclaim its use, engaged Jerusalemite youth to voluntarily clean the built-up litter, and restore the space and the overlooking dilapidated buildings' façades until a more stable solution reached. Since 2011, the university raised funds and repurposed the space for various cultural events like the Music Festival conducted by the Music Department. The university had to find new solutions to solve the imposed restrictions to operate the use of the site. Inventively, it provided a new point of entry by leasing of one of the adjacent shops located on a main street and overlooking the pool to create a proper axis.

The Khan Tankaz complex

A similar approach was implemented in the Khan Tankaz Complex at the Qataneen Market adjacent to the south entrance of the Haram-Al-Sharif. The Mamluki Khan (Inn) originally featured two public bathhouses (hammams), Al-Ain and Al-Shifa, enclosed with a rectangular central courtyard, with upper lodges for pilgrims and visitors (Burgoyne 1989). Historically, both hammams were used by Jerusalemites for bathing and then closed for more than five decades. In 1998, AQU attained permission from the Islamic Waqf to (re)use it for educational purposes. Through the Welfare Association's Old City of Jerusalem Revitalization Program (OCJRP), the site was rehabilitated and the Center for Jerusalem Studies was established, which included a Master program in Jerusalem Studies. The center also organizes tours for locals (including school children) and, tourists around the Old City, guided by historians, archeologists, and experts.

In 2018, AQU restored these traditional hammams. Funded by the European Union, the project was implemented through the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and designed by the local architectural firm – Jerusalem Design Center, following a public participation process. The preparations of the license had to be obtained from several Israeli bodies, following the laws, regulations, building codes, and approvals in order to operate. However, an ambiguous case arose due to lack of standards and codes in the Israeli law suitable for the establishment of a traditional hammam. The architects had to find ways to adapt to regulations in order to achieve implementation. According to project architect Ibrahim Hindi: 'at first the idea was like a riddle, we did not know if we could make a hammam work or not'. He explained that it was a confusing situation as no previous example existed among the Israeli municipality or the Department of Antiquity and Ministry of Health – each imposing its regulations on how to make the hammam work according to today's standards. The Department of Antiquity insisted that it is a historical site under their sole jurisdiction. However, it did not approve the design of hammam Al-Shifa, which according to its original layout, had direct access to the Haram-Al-Sharif which was used as an annex to mosques in accordance with Islamic tradition for ablution before the act of prayer. The Department of Antiquity, for political and security reasons, insisted that the hammam could be established only if it had an autonomous entry and exist. But this meant that it could not operate in a proper way i.e., from hot areas to cold areas (Frigidarium). This, in the end, necessitated the restoration of the Al-Ain hammam only (Figure 2), and the Al-Shifa was reconfigured as a cultural center. Other restrictions included the use of only electricity to ignite the hammam furnaces (Mustawqid) which increases running cost and energy consumption. Traditionally these were ignited by the burning of organic rubbish 'which acted for many centuries, as a neighborhood recycling center for organic waste' (Sibely and Sibely 2015, 526).

Figure 2. The hammam Al-Ain during a public lecture about the operation and restoration of the hammam (March 24th, 2015). Photo Credit: Al-Quds University.

The original design encourages many of the adjacent shops owners, to sell special soap, cloths, clogs, refreshments to create economic empowerment. A number of local and traditional crafts were incorporated into the project such as the making of the small glass clerestory windows to let half-light in through the domes.

The Dar al-Consul complex

Another large project was implemented in partnership with the Franciscan Custodia in the Holy Land, United Nations-Human Settlement Programme (UN-HABITAT) and AQU and funded by the European Union. An underground area below street level of the Khan az-Zait Market (Olive-Oil Caravanserai) was excavated during the rehabilitation of the Dar al-Consul Complex inhabited by many Christian families on the first, second, and third floors. It translates as the *house of Consul*, named after the Prussian Consul who took residence in the building in the mid 19th century (Jubeh 2015). The aim of the project was to 'improve the living conditions of Palestinian families in the Old City of Jerusalem and enhance Palestinian cultural and civic identity' through rehabilitating houses, open spaces, and enhancing infrastructure and services. The ground floor containing shops facing the street will be rehabilitated for cultural, social, and commercial use. The work at ground level continued to be enlarged along the excavation, around 1214 square meters.[2] Historical studies implemented by Palestinian scholars indicate that one of the layers refers to the historical Roman Cardo Maximus constructed in the 2nd century AD, passing underneath the exiting Market and was buried and built above over time (Jubeh 2015). The partners decided that this massive area should serve as a civic and commercial hub for the residents, public, visitors and promote education and entrepreneurship among Palestinian youth. This enhances capacity building during and after the implementation, by involving the community and newly graduated university alumni to develop operation and management skills. Another contemporary re(use) will offer knowledge and career guidance (Figure 3). The graduate students of the Archaeology Unit implemented stratigraphy recording documentation of the interior elevations made for the first time in EJ, and students from the Department of Architecture created design solutions for the courtyards, and front façade. Another group made a model to help the conservation team and designers understand the complexity of the space (Figure 4). Other departments prepared promotional and documentation videos as well as business plans.

AQU public library

A lack of investment in public services by the Israeli municipality led AQU to lease a neglected three floor residential building from its original owners located at Aqabet-Rassas inside the Old City. The aim was to convert it into a public library administered by university staff. The library does not only
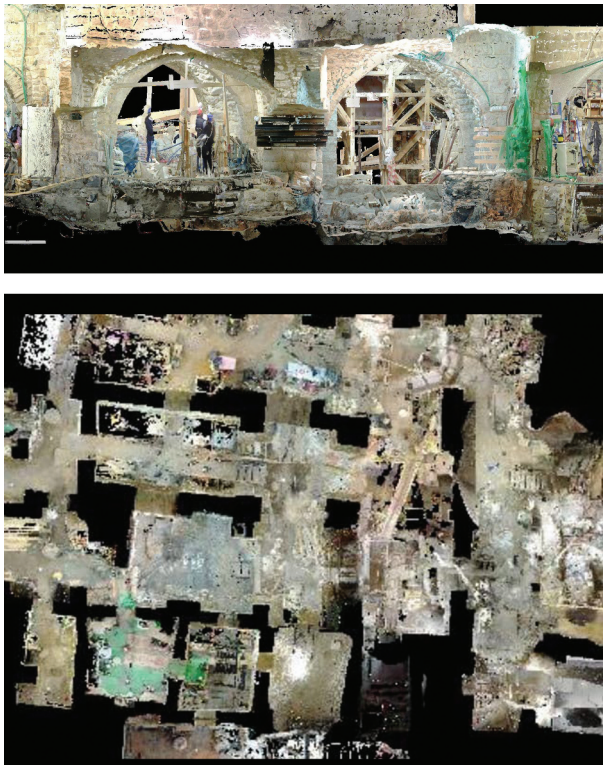
Figure 3. The Dar al-Consul civic and commercial Hub - stratigraphy images (above) interior elevations, (below) plan. Photo Credit: Hani Nur El-Din - AQU.

Figure 4. A model of the existing Dar al-Consul ground and basement floor, built by the students of Architectural Engineering Department at AQU (2019).

succeed in convincing the original owners to allow the university to restore and (re)use the building, but also bring various public cultural programs and events. Inaugurated in 2015 with the support of the Bahrain Royal Charity Organization and implemented by the UNDP, the building is the first public library to be opened since 1967 in the Old City. Several campaigns were employed around EJ, including advertisements on public buses and billboards as well as conducting many workshops in order to draw public awareness and contribute to the conservation of the cultural identity by inspiring knowledge through reading. According to an interview with the Administrative Director

for Jerusalem at AQU, Omar Zaro: 'Thousands of books were purchased, with many related to Jerusalem's history and archeology. Our aim is to reinforce the cultural and national Palestinian identity and to support the cultural sector through spreading knowledge and strengthening the resilience of the local community'. The Vice President for Jerusalem Affairs at Al-Quds University, Dr. Safa Nassereldin has said that the library incorporates 'values that make for engaged citizenship, openness to new ideas, cooperative endeavors, and respect for world cultures' (Zaro 2015).

Bab al-Malek Faisal - center for Jerusalem studies

The public library is not the only example of AQU's approach to persuade owners who left their historical houses to lease them in order to be (re)used and administered by the university. Bab al-Malek Faisal in the Bab-Houtta neighborhood inside the Old City is another example, as the building's location in neighborhoods affected by socio-economic and political problems is important. The neighborhood is also known to house the Dom Community, referred to as *Nawar* in Arabic meaning 'tramps,' who have existed in Jerusalem since the 16th century. The Dom - Indo-Aryans of the Middle East are a small and poor community under threat (Williams 2020). The efforts to locate a business incubator open to young people in the two-floor residential building recognizes the different and diverse communities. The building conservation was implemented and funded by the OCJRP.

Discussion

Andrew Herscher (2008) questions how to do justice to deliberately destroyed cultural heritage that involves violence against architecture and those who inhabited it. He argues that the act of construction produces new meaning and effects that can transform the dynamics of contexts and therefore its ontological status (Herscher 2008). Hence, the act of reconstruction of cultural heritage following political conflicts is not about documenting the destruction and reporting damage but about re-building what is important for people and their societies to achieve resilience and better futures through embracing change. Thus, those involved in the (re)shaping of the way cultural heritage should be considered are actors who produce values rather than create symbols (Pendlebury 2013).

The reconstruction of built heritage can open new ways to examine and understand it as a discourse of practice and knowledge production in times of conflicts. Reconstruction is an attempt to find continuity with the pre-conflict past, which invites us to rethink heritage as a dynamic act – a process – which is (re)produced in time, and not as merely a technical rebuilding of the past. Building resilience can happen when reconstruction is linked to the identification of heritage values, community involvement and needs, a long-term vision, and larger sustainable development goals (Jigyasu 2013). In other words, the reconstruction in vulnerable societies should not solely be a technical exercise of building the old with new materials (Khalaf 2020), but an integral act of all stakeholders, community needs, and livelihood.

Resilience should be seen as the ability of a community under occupation to adapt to the various changes but maintain its essential functions under challenging circumstances in order to ensure continuity for its future generations. Therefore, according to World Reconstruction Conference 3 – Promoting Resilience Through Post-Crisis Recovery, resilient recovery is that which strengthens community's ability to resist and recover from natural or human-made disasters (WRC3 2018). An opportunity to 'build back better' through development measures in order to reduce risks (UNISDR 2017). And that does not only signify the upgrading of infrastructures with new technologies but through creating 'stronger governance systems, improved basic services, diversified livelihoods for people, and better social protection mechanisms for poor and vulnerable families' (WRC3 2018, 174).

Looking at the different projects implemented by AQU, various efforts put through Palestinian cultural heritage towards building resilience can be outlined. These projects build up a taxonomy of practices adopted by AQU, based on thematic analyses to identify the common efforts in cultural heritage. They are interactive and dynamic and improve everyday life by embracing and

accommodating change created by contemporary life in a conflicted setting. These efforts emphasize that heritage management and protection cannot be studied in isolation from the values that matter to people's life and society. They show that the protection of cultural heritage is tied to a certain setting which incorporates many factors through space and time, like the social, economic, environmental, and many others. There follows a taxonomy of efforts and approaches initiated by AQU towards cultural heritage:

Incorporating neglected historical sites with everyday life through new uses

Universities are part of the communities they belong to and their approaches can be easily localized by identifying resources, needs, capacities, and developing a stakeholder-driven policy through a bottom-up approach. The policy of the re(use) of neglected sites through a set of diverse functions and programs allows them to be incorporated into everyday life. It enables abandoned cultural sites to interact with the existing economic and social life as places for work, recreational, education, and other uses as well as offering continuity under challenging conditions.

Partnership and fund raising to sustain future collaboration and more protection

As well-established politically neutral and non-profit institutions, universities present favorable conditions to collaborate in cultural heritage initiatives. Collaboration among different stakeholders and donors guarantee a more comprehensive and effective approach towards cultural heritage. The administration of significant historic sites by state bodies or foundations can sometimes be a burden, and cannot yield to profit-driven organizations and investors. Also, financial support can often be found but these seek the achievement of long-term sustainable goals. Universities are therefore well placed to carry out such projects as they can provide both expertise and best value.

Enhancing community participation and inclusion to create better living conditions

The hardship of life due to conflicts can affect and transform people making them both vulnerable and inactive (Holtzman, Elwan, and Scott 1998) especially when the social life with its capacities and assets are weakened. Resilience can be attained through creating better living conditions and livelihood for people in line with the new century roadmaps. Taking into consideration the need to build a better future, it is important to involve all local stakeholders in the decision-making processes from an early stage. AQU uses different ways to communicate with all stakeholders through billboards advertisements, surveys, workshops, seminars, and focused group meetings as well as social media and websites. As such stakeholders can take responsibility, know their roles and help in prioritizing the needs.

Building awareness through community and stakeholder involvement

Interaction can be attained through communicating values through guided tours and exhibitions at the cultural centers involving younger community members in voluntary work and targeting other channels such as schools. This creates a better sense of belonging among the community and build more social responsibility through emphasizing the importance of traditions and rituals between people and their environment.

Enhancing the economic sector and creating better services

The university's socio-economic policy clearly demonstrates that people and livelihoods are a key concern. The lack of investment and neglect by the occupier creates an unstable economic condition which affects peoples sense of belonging. The conservation of cultural heritage for daily use can

create new and sustainable jobs during the making and operating of these sites. It also supports others living outside the Old City when regenerating it as an incubator for other businesses, social enterprises, investments and can lead to economic transformation and development.

Considering the wider urban fabric to integrate and provide creative solutions

The complexity of historic urban fabric makes it hard to meet modern standards in order to function properly. Thus, seeking physical solutions that take into account other adjacent and potential sites in order to identify potential opportunities and endow better use as in the creation of a new entry and exit for the Patriarch Pool by including an adjacent shop in the solution.

Allowing cultural heritage to be used for public benefit

Heritage is a: 'resource to strengthen the ability of communities and their properties to resist, absorb, and recover from the effects of natural or human-made hazards' (WRC3 2018, 16). The appropriate conservation of historic settings, values, and practices safeguard the living culture of people and their cultural rights to hand on to future generations. This can be attained through the promotion of cultural heritage as a way of bringing communities together. Targeting the public through cultural events and programs, with explicit open access, helps to restore social and physical infrastructures.

Long-lease as a strategy to create better efficiency through time

The impact of conflicts can be severe on the lives and livelihoods of people leading to poverty, insecurity, poor public services, unemployment, and marginalization depriving them of basic human rights. Addressing such vulnerabilities is essential to achieve resilience. Reconstruction of cultural heritage that tends to run for short term does not allow for improvements to take place. The right of use through long-term leases allows time for spaces to embrace and influence change.

Capacity building for empowerment and resilience building

Activities centered around productive community engagement can help reduce the effect of the conflict trauma and retain skilled practitioners, institutes, and communities. AQU invests in activities that promote entrepreneurship, career guidance and provide a business incubator to develop operational skills among the youth through a strong interface between heritage and the environment. This enables individuals to see more effective actions and establish better organizational frameworks. It strengthens people's proficiencies, and helps them overcome exclusion. Other capacity-building strategies include more apprenticeships of local labor and opportunities for improving traditional skills and knowledge in the construction sector related to heritage conservation.

Documenting and supporting multidisciplinary approaches to conservation management

Universities through their wide-ranging research are able to record their work and to employ the latest technical innovation beneficial in accurate data collection. In addition, they involve a number of people like students whose learning benefits from this engagement that increases the number of actors. Working locally ensures more attentive and responsive consideration to communities' needs, easy access to stakeholders enabling them to offer best value conditions and allowing interaction between the community and cultural experts, which can also record and collect people's stories and use every channel of information.

Conclusion

This article discusses the role of universities in protecting the cultural heritage in areas of conflict as a way to build resilience and establish a better future through addressing values related with the built heritage. Through the case study of Al-Quds, the university's policy to protect the cultural heritage in the Old City of Jerusalem aims to protect Palestinian cultural heritage and therefore its narrative, history, and identity. The various efforts that the university make demonstrate that it is an effective actor in heritage preservation and the protection of cultural identity, rather than merely a place where debates and theories are produced. It seeks opportunities to build as a means to connect people with their life and reunite them with their city and history by embracing continuity and change, thus improving everyday life through maintaining a social and cultural cohesion as a remedy to the negative effects of the conflict.

The study also demonstrates the benefits of the adaption of buildings to meet contemporary needs whilst still maintaining Palestinian cultural identity through the advocacy of community participation. In safeguarding monuments and sites, the social fabric cannot be ignored. The role of AQU is not merely to sustain the physical and urban character but also to enhance the values, practices, beliefs, craftsmanship skills, tradition, collective memory associated with the Palestinian culture. These are the means to create a better connection between people and their built environment. The practices conducted by AQU, include a diverse set of programs and activities that utilize cultural values to bring aspirations to the affected community in EJ under long-term commitment.

AQU has shown that the conservation of cultural heritage during conflicts does not resist change by focusing on the past, but embraces change as a positive way to improve and manage people's lives. This is an integral part of place-making for Jerusalemites under occupation and helps them to adapt to new and emerging needs and values at a time when the conservation of cultural heritage is a response to ongoing conflict. The effectiveness of conservation is not based on the work of a single person, but is an interactive synergy of several disciplines that need to be aligned. Resilience can be built through creative and localized responses, and the support and collaboration of all stakeholders both national and international. Resilience can be attained through addressing the underlying problems created by the conflict and engaging with the existing situation in an active manner even before the determination of the conflict. Such strategies can help in creating a better vision for the future.

Notes

1. There are many names given to the pool, adopted to indicate link and ownership, yet, the most common is the Pool of the Patriarch's Bath (Natsheh 2014).
2. The exact area keeps changes with the new excavations. The latest measurement taken in April 2020 according to an interview with Hanin Nammari, a Senior Architect at UN-HABITAT (personal communication, 16 August 2020).

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