

‘So Long, and Thanks for All the Fish?’ⁱ Examining the Built and Cultural Heritage of the Jaffa Port Redevelopment

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Abstract: ‘Heritage’ is a term that is ambiguous in the best of circumstances; however, it becomes even more so in urban environments where conflicts of identity and culture are pivotal, as in Israel’s mixed Israeli-Palestinian cities. In this paper, I examine the recent redevelopment of the Jaffa port, Israel. Jaffa’s ancient port has had a significant role in facilitating industry, commerce and social ties in the area, and it has recently been remodeled by the city as a cultural and entertainment hub. Through interviews with key stakeholders and observations, I examine the role of heritage in the redevelopment using two broad categories: heritage of the built environment and cultural heritage, including the practice of fishing. I argue that while efforts have been made to conserve the waterfront’s heritage, the redevelopment has resulted in an artificial space that does not speak to the local culture of Jaffa as it is interpreted by the port community, including the fishermen. The Jaffa case study suggests that more attention should be paid to the delicate role of urban planners in facilitating change in a politically and culturally contested environment.

Keywords: Heritage, Jaffa Port, Mixed-City, Waterfront Redevelopment, Fishing

Introduction

In the last two decades, the ancient Jaffa port has transformed from a neglected site on the urban coast to a hub of urban development (Ben-Yehoyada forthcoming). Joining a global trend of waterfront redevelopments (Fisher and Benson 2004; Desfor and others 2011; Rubin 2011)—where ‘obsolete’ deindustrialized harbours are repurposed for public use—the Jaffa port has been reimagined by the city as a space of spectacle, ‘culture’ and entertainment. At the same time, viewing the port’s redevelopment as part of a global phenomenon may obscure its unique identity and historical context (see Brownill 2013). Jaffa is a former Palestinian city that was incorporated into the Tel-Aviv municipality in 1949 following the 1948 Israeli-Arab war. As such, any redevelopment in Jaffa, including the port, is charged with the city’s own political, cultural and ethnic tensions.

In this paper, I discuss the role of heritage in the port’s recent transformation (2007-present) in order to ground the global phenomenon of waterfront redevelopment in the local context and to question the politics of heritage in a mixed Jewish-Arab city. Specifically, I focus on two elements of heritage: a) the articulation of heritage in the built environment, and b) the cultural and living aspects of heritage. Special attention as to whose heritage is being presented is also considered—particularly the fishing sector that has long been a part of the city’s economy. Although the redevelopment vision for the port was composed of principles of social inclusion, diversity and minimal interference with the existing place, my research shows that the fulfillment of this vision is at best contested. I argue that while the redevelopment is inspired by the site’s local history, and some symbolic measures have been taken to respect the built and living heritage of the place, in retrospect, most of them have not been grounded in meaningful and abiding policies. Moreover, some aspects of the existing place that do not fit neatly into

‘heritage’, especially with regards to the fishermen’s lives, were simultaneously contained or excluded from the redevelopment project, depending on their overall convergence with the development goals. For instance, the presence of fishermen is celebrated as an authentic feature that adds an exotic flavour to the port, yet the fishermen’s requirements for storage and work spaces are not prioritized.

The paper is composed of five main sections. First, I contextualize the Jaffa case in the international literature on waterfront redevelopments. Next, I introduce the background for the case study, which is the ‘mixed city’ of Jaffa. I briefly discuss what the concept of the mixed city means and highlight recent trends in its urban development. I then turn to a discussion of the port’s redevelopment and analyze the representation of heritage in the built environment and the cultural aspects of heritage at the port. The next section presents the outcomes of the redevelopment under the framework of heritage-making in the mixed city, followed by a concluding discussion.

Waterfront Redevelopments, Heritage and Change

In the last four decades, waterfront redevelopment projects have become a global phenomenon (Fisher and Benson 2004). From the inner harbor in Baltimore to the docklands of London, from the Bund in Shanghai to Toronto, Vancouver and Barcelona, virtually every city with a body of water has undertaken a revitalization project centered on its waterfront. While not all projects are alike, global trends such as de-industrialization have opened up waterfronts for new uses, including tourism, housing and recreation in many post-industrial cities (Smith and Ferrari Soledad Garcia 2012). In the field of urban planning, waterfronts have received significant scholarly attention focusing on aspects such as neo-liberal planning (Rubin 2011);

public space (Sandercock and Dovey 2002; Stevens and Dovey 2004); and urban political ecology (Bunce and Desfor 2007; Hagerman 2007). From a heritage perspective, scholars have examined the transformation of the waterfront from an industrial hub to a tourist attraction, examining both physical and cultural aspects (Worden 1996; Oakley 2005; Chang and Huang 2011; Marshall 2011).

Steinberg (1999) notes that the ‘postmodern urban waterfront’ tends to treat the ocean as a nostalgic source of spectacle and folk culture for capital accumulation purposes, but fails to represent its role in contemporary marine activity including labour, production, or transportation. This trend is particularly evident in the ‘festival marketplace’ type developments, which tend to locate in former warehouses and use fishing nets and anchors as decoration. Indeed, waterfront redevelopment projects across the world have shown that the treatment of heritage may be confined to the reuse of old buildings and/or museums: the maritime heritage is typically highlighted through a conversion of obsolete industrial structures to new spaces of retail and recreation, while keeping their industrial facades. Atkinson, Cooke, and Spooner (2002:28) observe that ‘former mills or warehouses, although stripped of their industrial functions and sanitised as clean, modern spaces, nevertheless serve as symbolic reminders of the original industrial functions of the locality and, consequently, of the distinctive history and identity of their city.’ They continue by arguing that these buildings serve not only to celebrate the maritime past but also ‘to mobilise this history and commodify memories for contemporary economic development’ (ibid.).

However, maritime heritage extends beyond the symbolic role of the built environment and the nostalgic past, especially in places where the waterfront is still an active space of livelihood and community. Thus, the shift from the waterfront as a site of production to a site of

consumption can be a source of contention as well as a ‘misuse’ of heritage values (Porfyriou and Sepe 2017:6). Examining the waterfront from a heritage perspective means that special attention must be paid to the traditional ‘users’ of this space. In Jaffa, as in other port cities, the fishermen constitute such group. As fishermen all over the urban and rural world face economic pressures, Nadel-Klein (2003) shows that their ‘salvation’ ironically may lie in embracing a new identity as symbolic ‘showcases’ of heritage— without catching or selling fish—thus becoming subjects of the ‘tourist gaze’ (Urry 1990 cited in Nadel-Klein 2003). However, such transformation threatens their core identity as ‘primary producers of food’ (Martindale 2014:283) and as such, causes resentment and resistance in some cases (Nadel-Klein 2003). Fishermen, thus, experience environmental, economic and social transformations as their livelihood becomes subject of heritage tourism. These tensions will be explored in the Jaffa context.

Finally, examining waterfronts from a heritage perspective highlights the need to understand both the tangible and intangible aspects of heritage. The waterfront is a physical place, but also a site where cultural practices take place. It is therefore useful to conceptualize heritage as ‘a process in which identity and social and cultural meaning, memories and experiences are mediated, evaluated and worked out’ (Smith 2007: 165). The capacity to control this negotiation becomes critical in cases concerned with the self-determination of identity construction (ibid.), and even more so when the group and/or culture is question is a marginalized one, such as in the case of fishermen. Indeed, intangible aspects of heritage often do not sit comfortably within the Western authorized heritage discourse (ibid.). A more inclusive approach would broaden and challenge traditional definitions of ‘heritage’ and ‘conservation’ out of strictly past-oriented and archival preservation. The Jaffa case will illuminate these tensions.

Jaffa: a Mixed Arab-Israeli City

The Jaffa port redevelopment should be understood in the geo-political context of Jaffa as a mixed city. In Israel, the term ‘mixed city’ describes an urban situation in which Jewish and Arab communities share the same space. The term emerged for the first time in the Peel Commission Report in 1937 in the context of efforts to divide the land of Palestine between Jews and Arabs.ⁱⁱ Whereas the term originally referred to the plight of Jewish neighborhoods that were under Arab authority, since the foundation of Israel in 1948 it describes the reversed situation (Monterescu 2007). In practice, many mixed cities have been profoundly Judaized through an ethno-spatial logic since the foundation of the state of Israel (Yacobi 2002; Yiftachel 2006). Formally, Tel-Aviv-Jaffa is considered to be a mixed city, but only Jaffa is characterized by a mixed population.

The ethnic composition of Jaffa has gone through many changes over time; of the 80,000 Arabs residing in Jaffa during the British Mandate, only five percent remained after the 1948 war (Abu-Schada and Sheveita 2010). Following the war, and especially in the 1960’s-1980’s, the historic neighborhoods of Jaffa suffered large-scale destruction disguised as ‘urban renewal’. The damage to Jaffa’s Arab neighborhood was immense: about 70 percent of the buildings were damaged and very little new building took place. In the mid-1980’s, this policy was replaced by a more rehabilitative approach that aimed to attract private investment to the city (Monterescu and Fabian 2003; Monterescu and Rabinowitz 2007).

Today, mixed cities such as Jaffa experience the legacy of ethnocratic national policies (Yiftachel 2006) in tandem with multiple structural and hybrid trends such as gentrification, civic engagement and capital-led development (Yiftachel and Yacobi 2004; Avni and Yiftachel 2014; Monterescu 2015; Yiftachel 2016). Continuous gentrification and rising property prices

threaten the future presence of Jaffa's long-term residents. Whereas these processes occur in other Israeli cities, in Jaffa and in other mixed cities they carry unique consequences for the Arab minority of Israel and its ability to meet its social, political and cultural needs.

At present, the Arabs of Jaffa represent only about four percent of Tel-Aviv-Jaffa's population (Tel-Aviv Municipality 2016); however, they are about a third of Jaffa's population, of which about three-quarters are Muslim and one quarter Christian (Monterescu 2007). The Arab population is a majority in the old neighborhoods of Jaffa (where the Jaffa port is located), constituting about 60 percent of the population (*ibid.*). In the last forty years, however, the proportion of Jaffa's Arab population in the city has been declining. Still, Jaffa's significant Arab population makes it an important political, cultural and economic center for the Arab population of Israel.

Transformations at the Jaffa Port: From a Fishing Port to an Urban Waterfront

The Jaffa port, one of the most ancient in the world, is nestled at the foot of old Jaffa, on the south-western coastal strip of Tel-Aviv-Jaffa (Figure 1). While small in size and difficult to access from sea due to shallow waters and dangerous boulders, as the gateway to the city and the country, the port played a significant role in providing livelihood and facilitating economic development in Jaffa and the region for hundreds of years.

Figure 1: A) The location of the Jaffa port, Tel-Aviv-Jaffa, Israel. Source: based on Tel-Aviv

Municipality's GIS, adapted by the author. B) An aerial view of the port. Photo credit: Amos Meron, CC BY-SA 3.0.

Despite its significant role, the port closed down for commercial activity in 1965 following the construction of more modern ports on the Israeli coast that were better suited for large-scale industrial activity. Nonetheless, the port continued to function as a fishing port and even enjoyed a period of revival following substantial upgrade of its physical infrastructure in the 1980s (Avramovitz 2015). The governmental support abruptly ceased, however, in 1993 with the decision to implement an ambitious development plan (The Yaa'r Plan) that included a large marina, hotels and housing. While the development plan allocated some space for fishing, it would ultimately result in the privatization of the port and in an upscale waterfront neighborhood. In parallel, the government deliberately neglected its responsibility for the port and left it to decay; businesses and shops closed down and the port was almost deserted. The privatization attempts sparked a public campaign led by Jewish and Arab fishermen, community activists, environmentalists, and heritage experts who were concerned about the future of the port.

This vibrant anti-privatization coalition, guided by the slogan 'a port is not for sale', finally succeeded in 2001, when the mayor of Tel-Aviv accepted ownership over the port. The municipality and Israel Land Authority, the owner of the port at the time, embarked on a real-estate transaction, which transferred the port into the hands of the municipality in 2007. The city then launched a new plan for the port. The plan maintained the area as a fishing port and guaranteed the fishermen usage rights over some spaces and facilities. At the same time, the city decided to redevelop the port as a cultural, recreational, and leisure hub in addition to its existing

maritime functions. The redevelopment vision promised to balance the different uses with sensitivity to the port's unique multi-cultural nature and rich history, building on the outcomes of long-term civic struggle to 'save the port'. The city appointed a new CEO for the port, an urban planner and a project manager, who was to oversee the redevelopment process with his staff. The majority of the renovation took place from 2007-2010. The main flagship of the redevelopment was the renovation of Warehouses 1 and 2, large structures built by the British in the 1930s. These were filled with new businesses: mainly restaurants, galleries, a theatre and a few shops. At the time of writing, Warehouse 3 has not yet been renovated and the city is considering a new plan for this remaining part.

Symbolic Heritage: Representing Heritage in the Built Environment

The redevelopment of the Jaffa Port was led by a vision that wished to honour the port's existing maritime functions while opening up the space for new touristic, cultural and recreational uses.ⁱⁱⁱ One of the main principles that guided the development was 'fixing without breaking', which meant 'to preserve the unique ambience of the port and its mix of uses, and users, while opening it up for new audiences' (Vision statement 2009). Reflecting back on the starting point for the redevelopment, the first CEO emphasized that point:

I always say that when you arrive at a place in the beginning of the project, this is the most beautiful it will ever be: from now on we begin to destroy. Now the question is how much we destroy, and whether we are being mindful about it or we go wild and do something irreversible.

As the port was in 2007—ruined and rusty and not accessible in many places—it was a magical

place—it is impossible to plan anything like that, only time knows how to do it [presentation at a public planning forum, July 2014].¹

In line with this rationale, the redevelopment was initially relatively modest in scale and in the changes it brought to the physical landscape. The landscape architect that was hired for the project conducted thorough research on the port's history and thus, while old infrastructure was replaced and new lights and pavements were introduced, these were in accordance with the port's historic features [interview with the landscape architect, February 2016]. The redevelopment vision emphasized the wish to preserve the port's 'authentic' character. While authenticity is a highly contested and flexible term, in this case it referred to honouring the port's existing maritime functions as well as its symbolic role as an 'ancient', 'romantic' and 'local' place (Vision Statement 2009).

One important exception to this rule, however, was the renovation of Warehouse 1, a remaining British structure from the early 1930s that was designated as the flagship project of the renewed port. The Warehouse was meticulously restored and brought to new life as an indoor culinary and shopping center following a costly renovation. The modern façade of the building, however, which stands in contradiction to the old stone buildings of old Jaffa, attracted fierce criticism from many interviewees, who described the new building as an 'eyesore' or a 'scar'. In retrospect, despite high expectations by the port's management, shortly after its completion, the flagship project turned into a 'white elephant': the food market that was supposed to be a major attraction closed down and at the time of writing a substantial part of the Warehouse is deserted. In contrast, Warehouse 2, which was renovated with a small budget and maintained its rustic maritime look (Figure 2), is considered a modest success. Therefore, the CEO's intuition about

¹ All translations are the author's own.

‘fixing without breaking’ was right, only the actions taken with regards to Warehouse 1 did not match this principle.

Figure 2: The built environment of the port. A) Entering the port from the north. Warehouse 1 is in the far end. B) A view to Warehouse 2 (on the left) from the marina.

Historic Representation

The rich history of the port and its multicultural heritage presented challenges in terms of *historical representation*. In my interview with the previous CEO of the port I inquired how the symbolism of the port and its significance for different groups was addressed. The CEO responded:

It’s something that we realized was very sensitive . . . the history is very complex: you have the Zionist story, where me and my family immigrated through the Jaffa port, like most of us . . . it’s definitely a beautiful Zionist story, the gateway to the country. You also have the Christian story of pilgrims who passed through the port for hundreds or thousands of years. And you have the Muslim story, which is more contemporary and relates to the Nakba² and to the port as the center of their lives and activities. . . Many families in Jaffa made a living from fishing or jobs related to the port in the last 100 and 200 years. And the solution that we came up with was a very good one but it was not implemented [interview, January 2016].

The solution that the CEO refers to was to create three different audio stories—Jewish (Zionist), Christian and Muslim (Palestinian)—told by prominent respective figures, one of whom was a Palestinian poet who fled during the 1948 War. This was a rather innovative concept, given that Palestinian narratives tend to be left out of Israeli history books. The controversial nature of the

² Nakaba is the Palestinian term that literally translates as “disaster” or “catastrophe” and is employed to describe the outcomes of the 1948 War that were devastating for the Palestinians.

idea was probably the reason it never materialized, as the interview with the former CEO indicated.

The new administration did, however, introduce a new trilingual logo and signs. The logo was composed of words only, so not to exclude any religious or cultural groups by using specific symbols (Figure 3). While these steps are important, and should not be taken for granted, the redevelopment vision stopped short of creating more radical means of representation. Today, the historical significance of the port—for all religious and ethnic groups—is barely evident, despite the fact that the Council for Conservation of Heritage Sites in Israel, an NGO, was one of the main stakeholders in the campaign to save the port and despite the documentation of the port's history that was required for the renovation. With the exception of a few historic signs and brief audio explanations available through a mobile phone application, visitors to the port are not offered any information about this historically rich site and its contribution to the development of Israel and Palestine. The requests of community activists to open a maritime museum have been turned down as well.

Figure 3: All signage is in three languages: Hebrew, Arabic and English. The logo is printed on the upper left of the photo.

Some interviewees, for example a representative of the Council for Conservation of Heritage Sites in Israel and residents of the old Jaffa district that neighbours the port, were frustrated that the historical importance of the site and its maritime heritage are barely represented. One long-term resident who had been involved for many years shared her disappointment:

Jaffa port is one of the pearls of the State of Israel, from all aspects. If we look historically, this is the oldest port in the Middle East to the best of my knowledge. Culturally there is a coexistence

of generations, there's a history. All the first immigration waves passed through the Jaffa port.

This is a port: ports, in any normal country, are very important places historically because [they were] the place of entry and exit from the state throughout historical times. And here we have a historic port that is not treated like a historical site, a national monument, a cultural site. . .

[Personal communication, January 2016].

Rosenberg (2016:81) supports this view by arguing that ‘despite the port’s unique historic setting, the sense of locality has become...more symbolic than structural’.

Interestingly, the main threat to the built heritage of the port today is directed towards a building that symbolizes Zionist heritage and has been used by the local Sea Scouts chapter—part of the global Scouts Movement that specializes in maritime education. The building was built in 1931 and served as the Customs building during the Jewish immigration to Palestine in the 1930s. While the Council for Conservation of Heritage Sites in Israel and other supporters view this building as extremely important and advocate its conservation, the mayor of Tel-Aviv is determined to demolish it in the pretext that the building is ‘ugly’ and blocks the view to the sea. At the time of writing, advocates of the building are fighting the decision to demolish the building.

A lost sense of place

Understandably, the redevelopment of the port triggered concerns about losing the port’s unique character, especially among the port’s community that includes business-owners, fishermen, sailors and residents; many of whom took an active part in the aforementioned civic campaign and felt a deep connection to the port even in its neglected and derelict phase. Concerns were also triggered by the recently redeveloped Tel-Aviv Port, which became a major shopping center. In an attempt to alleviate some of these fears, the CEO of the Jaffa Bureau clarified in a discussion at the Israeli Parliament in 2007:

In our opinion, there is a very big difference between the Jaffa port and Tel-Aviv port. . . [The Jaffa port] will not be like Tel-Aviv's, certainly not. It's a port with a completely different character. The Tel-Aviv port is a very touristy port, very commercial. The Jaffa port has a soul, and this soul is the fishermen . . . this is what makes this port very attractive.³

However, despite this reassuring statement, some of the community members' concerns, in fact, materialized. On the one hand, the shopping opportunities at the Jaffa port are very limited, in contrast to Tel-Aviv's port, and there are also notable differences between the Tel-Aviv and Jaffa ports in the character of businesses present. In Jaffa, at least some of the businesses combine social and cultural elements, such as a Jewish-Arab theatre for children and a boutique that trains disadvantaged female youths in the fashion industry. In this sense, the redevelopment remained loyal to the original vision that aimed to achieve a 'diverse, 'modest' and 'inclusive' development. On the other hand, most of the businesses are oriented towards tourists and no substantial gains have been offered to the local community, such as spaces of recreation and congregation. Some interviewees pointed out that the management originally neglected to place benches and shade, which they interpreted as a sign of overlooking the needs of the locals and tailoring space to paying customers only.

Living and Cultural Heritage

Notwithstanding the notion that the representation of heritage in the built environment is significant, the built environment in and of itself is restricted in its ability to secure the existence of cultural practices. As the redevelopment sought to create a cultural and recreational hub at the port, 'culture' was interpreted—not unlike many culture-led redevelopments around the world

³ Source: Minute # 109, Interior and Environment Committee, 06.02.2007.
www.knesset.gov.il/protocols/data/rtf/pnim/2013-10-30.rtf

(Grodach and Loukaitou-Sideris 2007; Markusen and Gadwa 2010; Gunay and Dokmeci 2012)—as ‘arts and culture’, for example, contemporary art, theatre, cinema and music, which would serve as an engine for economic growth. Yet, culture, in the broad sense of the term, also refers to traditions, heritage and practices (Cardinal 2002) and is intrinsically valuable. One can argue that fishing, one of the oldest and most traditional modes of livelihood—and a vulnerable one—is an equally significant manifestation of the local culture of Jaffa and as such should be prioritized. However, my findings reveal that despite continuous statements from the developers about maintaining the port as a fishing port in addition to being a cultural hub, many fishermen—Jewish and Arab alike—were concerned about their future at the port, due to various limitations that they have experienced since the redevelopment started.

A Fishing Port?

The maritime heritage of Jaffa as a fishing center is slowly disappearing. Today, the number of people who make a living from fishing is relatively small: estimates vary between 50-100 professional fishermen, with 20-40 additional occasional fishermen and about 40 others who are employed in professions directly related to fishing (drivers, cleaners, sewers, etc.). Types of fishing boats, ownership structures, fish catch and marketing techniques vary considerably among fishermen. Historical and political circumstances have resulted in deep inequalities between Jewish and Arab fishermen, the latter being the majority.

While the history of the fishing sector is beyond the scope of this research (see: Ben-Yehoyada 2008; Ben-Yehoyada forthcoming, for further reading), it is important to recognize that the state has imposed policies that created a different hierarchy of Jewish and Arab fishermen. After the 1948 war, and until the early 1960s, the government created a hegemony of

Jewish fishermen by restricting Palestinian fishermen's access to fishing equipment and excluding them from the national fishing project (ibid.). The consequences are still visible today; most of the Arab fishermen use more traditional, and less profitable, fishing techniques compared to the Jewish fishermen (ibid.). Therefore, the Arab fishermen are in a more disadvantaged position with less bargaining power to change their current situation, although they are more reliant on fishing.

Despite the hopeful vision of the redevelopment, which guaranteed the fishermen a prominent position in the redeveloped port, the fishermen discovered over time that many promises were unfulfilled. In interviews, they have continuously voiced their concerns about what they perceive to be their gradual displacement from the port. One informant said:

They built Jaffa and renovated the port and did everything on our shoulders, on the attraction called fishermen and Sea Scouts and kayaking and the special people who lived here. This is what the port is built on. This is what drew the people here. This is what is special about it. And once they finished: [they said] you are in the way, remove the nets from here, you are in the way, get the boat out of here... [Interview, February 2016].

In the new life of the port as a leisure and recreation center, the fishermen feel that they have become secondary to the 'real' goal of redevelopment: profit-making. Other fishermen whom I interviewed have also described themselves as mere decoration, contributing to the 'authentic' experience of the port's visitors while their own needs are being neglected.

Yet the outcomes of the port's transformation extend beyond mere feelings of exclusion. For instance, some fishermen were 'temporarily' evacuated from their storage spaces during renovations and promised they would receive alternative storage space, which to this day they never did. Other interviewees have pointed out that they are prohibited from accessing their boats when events are held, due to the volume of visitors at the port. More concerns have been

raised with regards to the distance from the parking lot, which hinders the fishermen's ability to transport products such as fish and gas tanks, and various limitations on where they are permitted to spread their fishing nets or repair their equipment. In a similar vein, interviewees argued that the port's administration has been slow to care for the maritime functions of the port through renovation of docks, sand removal, and general maintenance procedures.

The reasons for the failure of the original vision and the resulting discontent are complex, and there is not enough space here to delineate them in full. However, two important factors contributed to these outcomes. First, the initial CEO who championed the inclusive vision left after five years, before the transformation of the port was completed, which led to a crisis of trust with the fishermen. Second, the port administration has not been willing to fully invest in a process that would recreate trust and bring tangible benefits to the fishermen, many of whom are disenfranchised individuals who struggle to make a living. Thus, for example, a fishermen-led initiative to launch a fish market at the port did not come into fruition since it required a long-term strategic, social and financial support that the administration was not able or willing to provide. While the initial CEO contacted the legal clinic of Tel-Aviv University in order to work with the fishermen on the fish market initiative, that process ended two years later with the CEO's departure, and with no tangible outcomes as of yet [interview with the lawyer who led this effort, January 2016].

The sense of a lost space was conveyed not only by the fishermen. A long-term resident lamented

I see the port as a failure from all aspects: first they excluded the fishermen from their place.

Every port city in the world preserves the nature [of the port], especially in such an old city, you walk around and you see fishermen mend fishing nets, you see a fish market at the center of the

port. You smell the place, you live the place. What they did here is a sterile, clean place. . . I grew up in this port and today I barely go there [Interview, February 2016].

This excerpt reveals the different layers of meaning that the port symbolizes. It is not only a historical site of national significance, as a previous interviewee had commented on, but also a place that has a 'soul', that belongs to the public as well as to the fishermen, and that serves different needs. The port in the past was once perhaps less physically maintained, yet lively and inclusive nonetheless.

In practice, neither the livelihood aspect of the port, nor its cultural role as a place of community-making and even coexistence, have been successfully engaged with. A heritage professional that has been involved with the port's conservation since the late 1990s said:

Today the fishermen's spirits are already broken as a result of all that's been going on there . . . everything is managed by the mayor's officials that do what he says, not by people with a soul. . . and it's a problem because when you deal with heritage sites you need to understand that part of [their] economic mechanism is authenticity, to preserve the spirit of the place . . . the port, with all of its difficulties, is still a charming place that is joyful to visit. But if [one] won't care for the fishermen there, and if you turn it into something pretentious where you can't smell the fish, and you won't see fishermen fix their nets and everything will be very sterile, you will lose the port [interview, February 2016].

The original goal of 'fixing without breaking', it seems, did not prove successful in the end. It seems that much of the failure to retain the 'authentic' character of the port stems from its transition from predominantly a place of work and livelihood to a cultural district. Furthermore, the object of transforming the port to a hub of 'high culture' (Herzfeld 2015) is not identical to the subject of livelihood in the previous phase. As a result, the people who make their livelihood

at the port—fishermen and business owners—cannot claim ownership over the project of cultural heritage.

It is important to note that the redevelopment of the port is not the only reason for the diminishing fishing sector in Jaffa. The fishing industry in the country as a whole suffers from degrading fishery and lack of governmental support (*ibid.*)^{iv}. Nevertheless, the fishermen in Jaffa feel that under these already difficult conditions, the port's administration should do everything in its power to support them. The management is not blind to the fishermen's precarious situation, as interviews with the former and current CEO of the port have confirmed. Yet, despite formal statements about cooperating with the fishermen and being considerate of their needs, strong disagreements still exist between the fishermen and the port's management. Although the fishermen were key to the civic campaign in the 1990s that prevented the privatization of the port, in retrospect, they do not perceive the outcomes as successful. Weakened by continuous struggles to secure their livelihoods and negotiate their space at the port, many fishermen no longer feel optimistic about the port's transformation.

Heritage-Making in the Mixed City

To a certain extent, the port redevelopment is part of a global trend of waterfront transformation and as such, is subject to 'global' forces and influences (Chang, Huang, and Savage 2004). In a similar vein, the heritage of waterfronts is usually discussed with regards to maritime aspects and reclaiming public space (Sandercock and Dovey 2002; Stevens and Dovey 2004; Al Ansari 2009; Chang and Huang 2011) rather than with regards to ethnic identity. The Jaffa case, however, shows that it is impossible to disconnect the port's redevelopment from the

politicized planning history of the city altogether, and specifically, its disputed identity as a ‘mixed city’. The port of Jaffa, then, is a contested space on more than one level.

While the port is not exclusively ‘Arab space’, since Jaffa is a mixed city, its location at the heart of old Arab Jaffa and its critical role in providing livelihood for hundreds of Arab families for centuries means that the ‘Arab identity’ of the port is integral to its development both past and future. Indeed, some of the fishermen are Jewish and they suffer consequences too, but they are a minority within the fishermen of Jaffa and are generally better-off than the Arab fishermen. And yet, the politics of identity have often been neglected by official planning discourse and practice. Initially, the redevelopment vision seemed to stand out as it recognized the historical injustice in Jaffa and stated that it would take action to ‘repair and amend’ it (Vision statement 2009). Almost a decade later, however, the redevelopment has resulted in an artificial space that does not speak to the local heritage and culture of Jaffa.

Traditionally, the Jaffa port has been a special place in terms of Jewish-Arab coexistence. Even during times of political tension, Jews and Arabs have worked jointly in fishing and related activities. While one should be careful not to idealize the Jewish-Arab relationships at the port—there are certainly differences, and even tensions, between some groups—it does seem that the joint labour practices and space-sharing have resulted in tolerance and mutual respect. As some of the interviewees mentioned, the port was somewhat immune to the political tensions that were present outside the port’s gates. One interviewee explained:

I have always said that the real world ceased to exist at the two gates of the port...life there was different. If it's in terms of both Jews and Arabs who fish, on the same boat Jews and Arabs partner. If it's in the shared lives, even in the warehouse at the end ...there were all kinds of warehouses of fishermen and they were all together. If it's fishing nets and boat technicians, Sea

Scouts, everything was authentic, real, not something synthetic and tacky [interview, February 2016].

Another interviewee, a yacht owner who lives in the port similarly observed:

What struck me when I arrived here in 1990 was that I arrived to a place of peace, where Arabs and Jews and Christians and Philipinos and Sudanese all work, make a living, and these are people of a low socio-economic background... So at the port too, there were drug dealers and criminals of all types, and they all agreed to live together and make a living; and you know, there are little mishaps between people but it's never been on a racial or discriminatory background.

The place was a place of peace, that's what charmed me at first [interview, February 2016].

As these words reflect, the port was not a perfect place, and people dealt with various problems, and yet, in terms of coexistence of various cultural groups, it functioned well. While Jaffa as a whole is a shared space for Jews and Arabs, the port created opportunities for intense interactions that were based on daily work practices. In other words, it produced a 'bottom up coexistence', which resulted from sharing a space of work, and not necessarily due to shared ideology or a sense of brotherhood. This coexistence, however, is valuable regardless of whether or not it evolved out of necessity. Notably, the Sea Scouts' local chapter, located at the northern tip of the port, has become a symbol of coexistence as it consists of both Jewish and Arab youths, and is perhaps one of the most successful examples of Jewish-Arab education in the area. With the transition of the port to an increasingly 'artificial' space, the opportunities for this type of interaction are lost.

Finally, questions of Jewish-Arab heritage also relate to the agency of the Arab population of Jaffa to make its own choices and claim its presence in the urban space. For instance, opinions varied on whether the port should host a marketplace or a shopping complex, or whether the design standards should follow traditional or modern influences. Yet this

discourse also obscures the reality that reshaping the port as a ‘cultural district’ is only one possible path among others, and it reinforces the view that a waterfront must serve as a place of entertainment. According to a local Arab politician and former member of city council, the choice between a market and a mall is a false one:

Why should there be a mall or a market at the port? Why is it not possible to support the fishermen? The budgets they allocated [to the redevelopment] are huge. Wouldn't it have been possible to save the fishery in Jaffa and build a fishing port of the highest standard? You could save the fishery in the country. Many millions were poured over there [interview, March 2016].

In other words, an alternative vision could be to utilize public investment towards support of the fishermen and the local community, instead of reconstructing the port as a space of consumption and recreation. The aforementioned interviewee emphasized that the problem is not specifically with the port, but with planning in Tel-Aviv-Jaffa as a whole. The Arab population of Jaffa, according to him, is ‘not even in the [political] game, not even in the margins’, and this reflects on the port. When I asked him about his vision for the port, he emphasized strengthening the maritime functions of the port, including fishing, so that the fishermen would ‘feel that the port is theirs’, and opening a fish market, a museum and a multi-cultural shopping and recreation center. But overall, he stated that what needs to be changed is not one project or another, but the current political structure that does not give a voice to the Arab population of Jaffa.

Discussion

In this paper, I discussed the heritage of the Jaffa port with respect to the built environment and cultural aspects. Given the sensitive context of Jaffa's multicultural character, there has been an attempt to address the complex history that shaped this space. On the one hand,

the redevelopment did not cause substantial physical changes to the maritime heritage of the port, but on the other, it did not carry through with its vision to create more inclusive and participatory outcomes. In practice, the port has transformed to an artificial space that is alienated from the port's long-term community and only somewhat attractive to new users in their stead. The redeveloped port failed to bring the anticipated 'traffic' of visitors and many businesses closed down. Consequently, the city decided to revise its strategy and hired new architecture and planning firms to propose a new development policy.

Despite official statements and legal obligations, the fishing sector at the port is under threat as the fishermen are being effectively displaced. Indeed, the scope of the redevelopment is limited and one cannot necessarily hold the port administration accountable for national policies that extend beyond the administration's responsibilities. Yet, while a sleek new logo and bold ideas about historical narratives and local businesses are well-intended, they are insufficient to fully repair '[the] historical injustice of neglect and abandonment' that has characterized planning in Jaffa since 1948 (Vision Statement 2009). Regardless of the limitation and challenges, some actions taken by the port administration directly contradicted the vision statement and compromised the social outcomes.

The story of the Jaffa port offers insights into the contested meaning of heritage in urban redevelopment and in urban space. First, it reiterates the notion that heritage is a product of political construction and power-relations that reproduces tensions with regards to what—and who—gets to be included, valorized and redeveloped as heritage. The image of the Jaffa port as a fishing port defined its 'authenticity' and distinctiveness. Nonetheless, the narrow interpretation of cultural heritage did not fully contain the fishing lifestyle with all of its characteristics. It excluded those elements that are gritty and harder to accommodate within the overall romantic

image of fishing but are integral to the continued functioning of the port as a port. Admittedly, the production of heritage is always a result of socially-constructed, relational and negotiated process (Lowenthal 1998; Harvey 2001; Martindale 2014) and as such, the Jaffa port is no exception.

However, the Jaffa case is unique in some respect. Atkinson, Cooke, and Spooner (2002:27) show that in the city of Hull, England, ‘the fishing industry has been largely excised from the new civic image’. The Jaffa case, by comparison, is more ambivalent. Fishing has not been ignored, it was even romanticized and celebrated as a selling point: billboards across Tel-Aviv-Jaffa market the port under the slogan ‘Jaffa Port: Fishing, Food and Culture for 4,000 years’. However, it seems that fishing was used selectively as a place-marketing tool rather than fully embraced by the port’s new administration. While some aspects of the fishermen’s lifestyle were cherry-picked to be included in the heritage of the port, a more inclusive approach to heritage would entail solving those tensions that were left unresolved.

Ben-Yehoyada (forthcoming) argues that from the city’s perspective, the fishermen of Jaffa were supposed to embody live ‘Zorbe the Greek’ characters as symbols of a fabricated authenticity, presenting it to visitors in a controlled and insulated way. Yet even if one accepts the original vision, according to which the port’s developers were truly interested in including the fishermen in the redevelopment project, in reality the inclusive vision did not work. Indeed, the port is not completely sanitized: visitors can see the fishing nets and boats, and occasionally witness fishermen at work. However, the feelings of exclusion by the fishermen and local residents, combined with the economic failure of the project, have resulted in a ‘no-win’ situation. While aiming at authenticity, the developers of the port were unsuccessful in their goal

to ‘fix without break’. Ironically, the port in its pre-developed form was more attractive to a wide group of users despite its neglect.

Not only in Jaffa but all around the world, fishermen often constitute a marginalized and stigmatized occupational identity (Nadel-Klein 2003). However, while a ‘fisherman’ is supposedly a profession-based category, in the Jaffa case, as suggested by many of the participants in this case study, it is in most cases affiliated with an Arab ethnic identity. Therefore, that incomplete accommodation to maintain fishing activities effectively excludes an ethnic identity, in addition to an occupational one. The redevelopment of the port thus corresponds with the planning history of Jaffa since 1948 and its difficulty to come to terms with the Arab identity of the city, even though the redevelopment did not target the Arab fishermen specifically. The ethnic identity of the fishermen may be another reason for the only-partial containment of fishing in the heritage ‘canon’ of Jaffa, although, this conjecture, which was suggested by some interviewees, requires further research. As Smith (2007) argues, conflicts over the control of cultural heritage must be understood within the wider framework of political negotiations between the state and other interests—and stakeholders—over the validity of claims to identity. The opportunity to apply a different logic in Jaffa, one that counteracts the hegemony of the state and its ethnocratic legacy (Yiftachel 2006), was sadly missed.

At the same time, it is important to note that the heritagization of fishing in Jaffa and the country as a whole is still a preliminary and anecdotal process, partly because the fishing industry is small and not quite comparable to countries such as Canada and Scotland, where fishing is a significant part of heritage tourism and traditional narrative. The Jaffa case also calls to examine the agency of fishermen to shape the ways in which their heritage is being framed. On the one hand, as Nadel-Klein (2003) reminds us, heritage-making is a negotiation and

fishermen are not passive players in the process, but on the other hand, some fisher communities may possess more power than others. In Jaffa, the fishermen compose a vulnerable group and fishing is culturally, politically and economically important for the continued presence of a cultural and ethnic group. Subsequently, having the fishermen's traditions included physically and symbolically should be prioritized and protected.

Concluding notes

Ultimately, the redeveloped Jaffa port did not escape from the all too common fate of becoming an artificial, spectacle waterfront space. Rosenberg (2016:81) argues that the postmodern waterfront is characterized by a basic paradox: it 'draws upon local history and unique architecture to create place identity, while adhering to a generic globalized pattern common to waterfront redevelopment worldwide'. At the same time, drawing on what Atkinson, Cooke, and Spooner (2002) concluded from their study on the place-marketing of the port city of Hull, England, it would be too simplistic to read the Jaffa case as a 'straightforward struggle between developers' attempts to erase local memory and the resistance of an embattled "local community"'. Rather, the port is embedded with various identities and histories—including ethnic, cultural and occupational ones—and so there is more than one logic that operates in this complex space.

As waterfronts around the world continue to transform and are given new lives as centers of culture and recreation, it is important to consider that even within this so-called 'global phenomenon' not all waterfronts are alike. The port of Jaffa has been replaced by more modern ports but it has continued to serve as a center of fishing, sailing and maritime education. In contrast to many 'post-modern' urban waterfronts (Steinberg 1999) that have already completed

a transformation into spaces of leisure and consumption, the Jaffa port still functions as a space of labour. As such, its heritagization produces inherent tensions. Engaging with places that are still very much alive requires caution and respect for their living heritage. Further emphasis should be placed on the role of urban planners and professionals in the ‘heritagization’ process both in scholarships and practice. Good intentions are noble, but should be followed by concrete actions as well as accountability for the outcomes. Moreover, one should be wary of treating the waterfront as a ‘neutral’ or ‘vacant’ space since waterfronts are products of historic processes (see Ramsey 2011). Unfortunately, it seems that it will not be long before the saying ‘so long, and thanks for all the fish’ (Adams 1984) becomes representative of the Jaffa port.

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ⁱ Adams, Douglas. 1984. *So long, and Thanks for all the Fish*. Pan Books: UK

ⁱⁱ The report brought up the partition of the land as a compromise to the conflict, and highlighted that it was impossible to create clear division in the 'mixed towns': Tiberius, Safed, Haifa and Accra. The report recommended to leaving these cities under the British Mandate in order to protect minorities (Monterescu, 2007; 2015).

ⁱⁱⁱ Since there is no official policy document outlining the redevelopment, I rely on an unpublished power point presentation that outlines the vision, principles and suggested uses, which I refer to as the Vision Statement 2009.

^{iv} The degrading fishery in the Mediterranean along the Israeli shore is attributed to multiple factors, including a) environmental: the environmental implications of the Suez Canal in Egypt, which changed the local ecosystem; invasive species; climate change and rising sea temperatures and b) anthropogenic: lack of regulation; overfishing; and physical infrastructures such as seawalls and marinas (Adelist and Rilov 2014).

