

## **Heritage and Urban Resistance Exploring Identity Politics, Commons and Conflict**

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### **Summary results**

This project explored conceptions of resistance and heritage, and their entanglements in urban change. These explorations were carried out between January 2015 and December 2016 in relation to three specific case studies: the protests instigated by the government's plan to reconstruct the Ottoman Military Barracks in Gezi park, Turkey, into a luxurious shopping mall and residences; the resistance to rehabilitation projects that alienated the highly contested political history of the Al-Qaryon Square in the city of Nablus; and the resistance to the neoliberal economic development that sought to demolish the working-class neighbourhood of Gårda in order to build new parking facilities, ignoring the contemporary socio-cultural geographies of the local community. These cases were not classically compared. Instead, findings from their different socio-political contexts were reflected upon to gain new insights on how heritage and resistance interact with each other, instigate social conflicts, and legitimate or reverse urban change. The analyses of the cases departed from the conception of resistance as a subaltern response to power, a response that emerges due to shifts in power relations, and that can generate new political climates for progressive change, rather than seeking immediate change. Heritage, in a similar fashion, was conceived as socio-cultural processes through which people continuously re/construct their meaningful pasts rather than being categorically labelled as such. This inclusive approach to heritage and resistance provoked new questions about the role that both concepts may play in everyday negotiations of identity, representation, and sense of place, and in the political climate that may give shape to urban change. Dwelling on these conceptual principles, the analyses of the cases were three-fold: map various official heritage development activities that impact on the physical built environments of the cases and the social responses/local resistance to them; explain the ways specific ideas of the past become institutionalised in policy discourses and documents, giving legitimacy to these activities; and explore the constructions of the past that foreground tactics and discourses of local resistances. The analyses showed how heritage-resistance relations revolve around claims, representations, identity politics, rights, justice, and other critical questions often overlooked, due to the limited conception

of, and the sharp divide between, heritage and resistance. This study thus draws attention to the importance of rethinking heritage and resistance beyond any established institutional practices, of situating the two within their wider socio-political contexts, of exploring how history becomes used as forms of resistance to violent and enforced urban change, and of formulating new research questions on the entanglement of heritage-resistance relations in urban security and justice.

## **Background and purpose of the project**

Cities worldwide have always been spaces of difference. Individuals from all walks of life negotiate their everyday life in relation to the conduct of others, and organise in groups and engage in politics manifested in both urban public and cyber spaces. When these negotiations develop into social conflicts, they are often explained in terms of unemployment, a democratic deficit, social marginalisation, gentrification, and cultural difference.

The ‘Heritage and Urban Resistance’ project sought to explore various situational settings of conflict, with a focus on the entanglement of heritage-resistance in everyday life in urban public spaces. We see heritage as spaces of contestations, conflicts and battlefields. This can be explained through the following examples: the recent protests against the re-construction of the Ottoman military barracks in Gezi Park in Turkey, have uncovered various forms of conflicts against oppression and suppression, heritage atrocities of the park’s past and promoted new political dynamics and alliances over public representations in Turkey; the destruction of hundreds of historic villages and urban neighbourhoods in Palestine in 1948 were strategically implemented to ethnically cleanse the land of its ‘non-Jewish’ citizens; and the destruction of working class neighbourhoods in Gothenburg and many other European cities is not only driven by neoliberal economic development, but are also given legitimacy by established discourses of value that project specific versions of the past, often at the expense of others. A number of other examples also show how heritage and resistance are entangled in and triggered by struggles over the critical questions of identity, authority, and dominance.

The ‘Heritage and Urban Resistance’ project aimed to activate an essentially new dialogue on how competing claims on heritage are connected with diverse forms of urban resistances, insurgencies, riots, and protests, and how their connections are entangled in everyday life and urban transformations. The field research was carried out in relation to three specific cases: Gezi Park in Istanbul, where urban riots erupted in June 2013 against the government’s plan to re-construct the Ottoman Military Barracks into a luxurious shopping mall and residences; Al-Qaryon Square in Nablus where revolts against the British Mandate and the Israeli Occupation have turned the square into a ‘public sphere’, embedded in diverse forms of resistances; and the working class neighbourhood of Gård, where local resistances since the 1960s have fluctuated, against the official development plans to demolish southern Gård and instead build parking structures. These cases were investigated using semi-structured interviews, on-site observations, personal and official archives, and social and political medias.

## Theory

This research project holds that heritage is plural and changeable (Ashworth 2011) and its spatiality is also open to multiple claims. In this regard, we see any identification with heritage as a possible unsettlement of the power relations that constitute our ‘valuable heritage’, and as a (discursive) power for the creation of (in)security of the self and in the society at large. How we approach and work with heritage thus generates socio-political conditions, that following Foucault’s governmentality, can promote new subjectivities, enable self-subjectification or objectify others. We have discussed and developed issues of subjectification in relation to the ‘commons’ and the nationalisation of the ethnic in our editorial book (Benesch *et al* 2015). In that book, we also explained how diverse community groups and individuals organise themselves and construct temporal commons. What they ‘expose’, ‘propose’ and ‘politicize’ (Marcuse, 2008) can be rooted in competing histories and political causes. However, they often coalesce within collectively constructed commons and around shared response to social inequalities and injustices. This line of thought has been developed around two streams of ideas. On the one hand, our ideas have revolved around the established discourses of heritage that are continuously co-opted and restored following, amongst others, Harvey’s (2001) ‘heritageization’ and Smith’s (2006) ‘authorized heritage discourse’, and around the different spaces of social responses following Marcuse’s (2008) discussion of the commons and right to the city, and Thrift’s (2007) non-representational theory. On the other hand, our conception of heritage as plural and changeable has inspired our definition of resistance. Dwelling on James Scott’s ‘everyday resistance’, Stellan Vinthagen’s ‘non-violent resistance’, and Bayat’s ‘quite encroachment’, we explored heritage-resistance entanglements in everyday life, and their potential for generating constructive urban change.

## Methods, Questions, Cases and Findings

These theoretical principles have been helpful for critically engaging with the multiple layers of meaning and power relations, that constitute social conflicts and various forms of resistance to neoliberal economic development and other violent urban changes in the three cases presented below. The investigation of the cases explores: how diverse forms of resistance become mobilized by diverse social actors interacting amongst each other and construct a common ‘zone’ of contestations; and how these actors propose and politicise their diverging interests, and involve heritage (consciously and unconsciously) to develop alternative narratives for urban histories, imaginaries and change. A number of methods were employed in response to the different socio-political contexts of each of the cases, detailed as follow:

- Discourse analysis applied on texts, dialogues, actions, and spatial practices to explore how particular discursive constructions of heritage, development, rehabilitation, and security become institutionalized in policy discourses and documents (Gård, and Al-Qaryon).
- Ethnographic methods, including participatory observation, photographic documentation and interviews, were used to analyse the actual lines and sites of activity (Gård, Al-Qaryon, and partly post-Gezi).

### *Case one: Gezi Park in Istanbul*

Gezi Park is one of the few remaining green areas in central Istanbul's European (Continent) side, one of the first public spaces that was designed as a part of the modernization project in the early years of the Republic of Turkey. Beyond this symbolic importance, some other narratives were also added to this historical account of Gezi Park during the resistance and occupation of the park in 2013. In June 2013, a series of protests erupted in Gezi Park, against the government's plan (2011) to reconstruct the Ottoman Military Barracks into a luxurious shopping mall and residences, which was revealed in daily newspapers<sup>1</sup>. Protests began as a peaceful sit-in of around 50 people then quickly grew in scale after police forces brutally intervened. Occupation of the park went on for slightly over two weeks until the occupiers were forcefully moved out in mid June. The protests in Gezi Park were initially triggered by recent urban transformation projects led by neoliberal government policies, where the government acted in a private capacity instead of protecting public good. The government proposed the reconstruction of Topcu Artillery Barracks, a former military barracks which was demolished in the late 1930s and had since given way to Gezi park. There are no remnants of the Topcu Artillery Barracks today and no detailed blueprints, only facade drawings. In late May 2013, the reconstruction on the Gezi Park site was declared as finalized even though it hadn't complied with the heritage board and expert decisions, which recommended that the Park should be conserved – a position which was then supported by court rulings.

This case has multiple aspects in relation to heritage and resistance entanglement. Firstly, government's intervention on the space to reintroduce a building (Ottoman period) with heritage status, in order to alter another historical narrative from the Early Republican Period in Turkey, can be read as revision of authorized heritage discourse and its impacts. Secondly, the 2013 protests in Gezi Park created a different historical narrative around the defence of civil rights and also revealed other marginalized narratives, such as the park's Armenian past and environs (Parla and Ozgul 2016). In order to better understand the Gezi case and the ensuing resistance in the context of commons, conflict and heritage, I conducted semi-structured interviews, gathered visual documentation and archival research in 2015 and in 2016<sup>2</sup>.

The investigations of the case of Gezi Park protests contributed to this project's outcomes in the following ways:

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<sup>1</sup> There is a common and criticized issue of non-transparent process of handling public projects in Turkey. Most of the government investments and large-scale projects in big cities like Istanbul have led to social and spatial transformation at the expense of vulnerable populations, with increasing momentum in the past two decades. Rebuilding old housing to withstand earthquake, a seemingly legitimate reason for Housing Development Administration's (TOKI) projects, had brought the rich more wealth while impoverishing the poor by relocating them far away from their livelihoods and social support networks. Such projects were made with special juridical arrangements that rendered the whole process non-negotiable for other stakeholders and made TOKI, a government agency, the biggest construction 'company' in Turkey.

<sup>2</sup> Part of the fieldwork in Turkey, following up resistance movements that were born out of Gezi Park, were interrupted as a result of the increasingly unstable situation in Turkey in 2016, which required some adjustments. For instance, interviews with individuals replaced originally planned participatory workshops with activists and advocacy group members. Also, the overall number of individual interviews were reduced in response to the ethical considerations of those individuals' well-being and also a decrease in the number of people willing to take part.

- It demonstrated how heritage can be a source of resistance through the manifestation of Authorized Heritage Discourse, in the form of an Ottoman Military Barrack as a part of an urban development plan, where government utilized neo-ottoman architecture for the building to be constructed on top of Gezi Park, which then instigated protests.
- It also demonstrated how heritage – and its manifestations – changed as the protesters reclaimed heritage, by making different strata of the past visible (Nor Zortonk Armenian placards and signage, Devrim –Revolution- Museum, etc.), even briefly, and also by offering a new way of practicing an old tradition with *yeryüzü sofraları* (Uzer 2015);
- In terms of creating new commons in the form of a zone of negotiation and exchange, Gezi Park created a temporary platform where participants with past conflicts, managed to have a conversation and build up a common past through their shared experience of resistance. Some of these alliances manifested themselves in other resistance movements in the following years; some openly referring to Gezi alliances, while some did not, but birthing through ‘right to the city’ types of networks present at the time. This bottom up change and newly made alliances, also brought together some groups like ‘Karsi Forum’, which organized against the UNESCO visit in July 2016 to Istanbul and with contributions from non-profit, activist and advocacy groups for a two-day discussion. They departed from their initial question “what does UNESCO actually protect?” to what can be done for a more just and more inclusive cultural and natural heritage practice. This and similar acts which have been explored during fieldwork, are evaluated as practices of decolonization in heritage and are the main focus of an upcoming publication from this project (Uzer and Hammami, peer reviewed journal article, in submission process).
- Gezi Park protests presented a watershed moment in non-violent resistance in Turkey. There is a clear reference to it within some of the more recent resistance acts, in terms of alliances, visibility and tactics. Yedikule and Piyalepasa bostan protests and advocacy works in Istanbul, which bring natural and cultural heritage with intangible and tangible heritage components (Uzer, book chapter in forthcoming book proposal), and Yesil yol/Green highway protests (Uzer 2017), are some of the ongoing activisms which united after the Gezi protests, and/or became more visible and better networked.

#### *Case two: Al-Qaryon Square in Nablus*

The Al-Qaryon Square is one of the main open public spaces of the Historic City of Nablus (HCN). It is surrounded by stores and houses, and has witnessed the long history of revolts against the British and Israeli colonialism. Over time, the square became a ‘public sphere’ for the mobilization of resistance, commemoration, and the negotiation of local socio-political concerns. The affective environment of the square triggered resistance to several internationally-financed rehabilitation projects, not only against the exclusion of the locals from the implementation processes, but also against the enforced signification system of forgetting that was advocated as a healing model. Among these projects, is a mural made by the artist Fleur-Marie Fuentes, who in 1997 was invited by the French

Cultural Centre in Nablus to use art as a medium for cultural exchange between France and the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT). Fuentes 'felt how people live with shared traumatic memories in the HCN and decided to make a mural, called *Return of Storks*, on the largest façade of the square, symbolizing the return of hope and peace to a depressed city. Her ideas were influenced by the French contemporary art movement that viewed public spaces as an ideal means to reach into everyday life. When Israeli incursions started in the HCN in April 2002, the square was significantly damaged. The painting was not directly damaged, but it was intentionally covered with commemorations and pictures of martyrs.

In order to understand why the painting was covered and what this meant within the context of urban development and heritage management, interviews, on-site observations and reports were used as primary sources of information. The analyses showed how the de-contextualisation of sites not only intensifies conflicts, but also reduces the affective resonances that heritage can offer for the complex processes of 'post-conflict' heritage healing. The square was alienated from its complex temporalities, displacements and memories. And this resulted in violent reversals of the restoration, expressed by the recovering of the painting with martyrs' pictures. To make sense of the wider politics of resistance and rehabilitation in the square, Al-Kabir Mosque, which was being restored at the time of the study, was also investigated. Al-Kabir Mosque was originally built as cathedral in the HCN. The contested religious history of the building challenged the restoration processes that advocated revealing the authentic history of the building. The emergence of Christian architectural elements in the sacred space of the mosque triggered resistance to the scientific basis of the enforced restoration processes. After the restorations were completed, these architectural elements were covered by local resistance groups using wooden decorations.

The two cases demonstrated the importance of exploring the history of a place from below, prior to any intervention taking place. More importantly, they showed how the history of a place can be instrumentalised for resistance. It is certainly a challenging task for heritage experts in Palestine and elsewhere to critically engage with the diverse comprehensions and apprehensions that revolve within heritage as, what we term in this study, 'contact zones'. However, the reported findings from this case propose new methodological arts of the contact zone, to enhance people's ability to collectively engage with the multiple layers that characterise heritage sites. More findings are available in Hammami (2016).

### *Case three<sup>3</sup>: the working-class neighbourhood of Gårda in Gothenburg*

Since the mid-1960s, **Gårda** in Gothenburg has, like other similar neighbourhoods in Sweden, faced demolition threats as cities have sought to modernise. Gothenburg

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<sup>3</sup> Initially Gamlestaden Square in Gothenburg was selected as the third case area where current massive development plans to reconstruct the history of Nya Lödöse (1474-1624), as part of the present Gamlastaden, have generated tensions on 'whose past'. This case was later replaced by the case of Gårda. The initial research stage with interviews and site visits demonstrated certain difficulties with viability of carrying out the fieldwork within the project's timeplan, which was shortened from three years into two years to meet the funding program as designed by the National Heritage Board. In addition, initial investigation of Garda demonstrated that it was a more relevant case to the objectives of this research project.

conceived a vision for its future that did not include neighbourhoods like Gårda, which began in the 1970s to be called ‘dirty’, ‘backwards’, ‘dangerous’, and ‘unhealthy’. Since then, the city began to implement a comprehensive urban renewal scheme by demolishing houses and social commons in Gårda and other working-class neighbourhoods, in order to make way for modern architecture and transportation infrastructure. However, local protests in opposition to these demolitions grew over time and began to receive popular solidarity. The rise of local ‘resistance’ helped promote new political interest in the historic values of Gårda. Although the historic industrial environment along the River Mälndasån, which borders Gårda from the west, became protected as heritage with national values, the other areas within southern Gårda came under new threats of demolition in 2008. Using similar tactics and strategies of dialogues, new resistance groups emerged and claimed their right as locals to remain in their homes and community. In 2014, the city agreed to protect much of southern Gårda, but it remains unclear what will be preserved and for what purpose.

To understand Gårda, and how the past of the area was involved in the resistance, ethnographic and urban research methods supported by multi-sited ethnography (Marcus 1995), were used to gather primary data that links Gårda with its broader socio-political and historical contexts. Semi-structured interviews, visual documentation, on-site observation, online survey and archival research, were the main sources of data. There are scarce materials available for resistance research relating to Gårda or any other areas, and where it is available it is often fragmented. To provide a wider and contextually relevant narrative, we used personal and official archives, including the personal archives of the Former Member, Neptun TA and the Former Director, Gårda TA, and the police archives relating to crime and social disorder in Gårda. We also explored various political media arenas, research papers written by academics and activists, as well as the archive of advocacy NGO, such as ‘Yes in my back yard’ (YIMBY), in order to explore the competing arguments that formed the background politics, and the alternative visions of the future of Gårda. To gain a broader view on public opinions, we looked at various social media pages, including the Facebook Group Bevara Gårda, and a petition against the Gårda demolition plans signed by more than 1,400 people. Historic archives were also helpful to construct the narratives of the case and how, in addition to interviews, four different site visits allowed engagement with the public and participation in social events, for example the annual flea market (Loppis) and Gårda Festival (Gårdafestivalen). An online survey was also sent to the 400 members of the Facebook page Bevara Gårda. The survey explored how people participate in the resistance and their motivations for doing so, how they value Gårda, and their resistance activities in relation to other city areas, and manifested key issues through discourse analysis.

The analyses of the case of Gårda showed how the future of Gårda in the public debates was dictated by two dominant discourses: ‘demolishing’ Gårda (‘Riva Gårda’) due to its unhealthy living environments and low-quality housing conditions; and ‘conserving’ Gårda (‘Bevara Gårda’) due to its historic and cultural values. These counter-arguments are rooted in traditional conservation-modernisation controversies, where one is always projected at the expense of others, in a zero-sum frame of consideration. Other options that fall outside these two discourses are either unrecognised or given little attention, including those expressed by local professional NGOs, and residents with more local

attachments. Focusing on resistance, the analyses uncovered five Re-Gårdar resistance strategies that coalesced over time. They emerge as new strategies for rethinking heritage through resistance. This was demonstrated by the ways heritage activists and advocacy groups used certain nonviolent resistance tactics, such as media visibility and creating intentional political conflicts, and how heritage changed through resistance. Similarly, resistance and collective work created new common platforms and initiatives such as 'Gårdar Loppis' (Flea Market). In this sense, the five Re-Gårdar strategies helped shed light on the productive nature of resistance and its possible impact on the authoritative narratives of heritage, as well as the emerging forms of democratic institutions, including the Dialogue Police, tenants' associations, the Husvärnet ('Building Guards') association, and their vital role in constructing alternative narratives. The findings from this study supported our argument on the potential of 'from-below' strategies to challenge the limits of authorised heritage practices, to rescue resistance from co-option by any institutional setting, and to unsettle the conception of resistance as destructive actions.

## Results and impacts

The findings from the three cases provided the project with broader sites of exploration. As explained below, these sites have helped advance our understanding of the entanglements of heritage and resistance in everyday life and urban change.

- Theorizing relations between heritage and resistance, and their entanglement in everyday life and urban transformations through specific cases (see for example Hammami & Uzer forthcoming; Uzer 2016b; Hammami 2015).
- Exploring resistance as processes, rather than end goals, through which social responses to official urban transformations provide alternative visions and ideas that are more responsive to local communities. This was explored through the specific concepts of resistance: 'success' (Uzer 2017); 'tactics'; 'dynamics'; 'productivity' (Hammami & Laven 2017; Hammami & Uzer, forthcoming); 'regularities/irregularities' (Hammami & Uzer, forthcoming).
- Exploring how resistance and heritage produce each other, and how new heritage emerges as an outcome (editorial book to be published in 2018).
- Formulating new research questions on heritage-resistance relations and their role in the professional management of heritage in urban contexts. Specifically, by looking at the productive nature of heritage and resistance this project suggests new models of working with heritage from below.
- Producing new research project proposals focused on exploring the role that heritage might have in generating or helping to overcome social inequalities, urban insecurities and unjust futures. Two specific projects were granted funding in 2017: Urban Marginalities in the Making of Heritage and Cities funded by RAÄ, Feras Hammami is the project leader; and Reconciliatory Heritage – reconstructing heritage in a time of violent fragmentations, funded by Swedish Research Council (VR), Evren Uzer and Feras Hammami form the research consortium, together with five scholars from different departments at the University of Gothenburg.

The impact of the project can be seen in three forms – publication, exchange of ideas with scholars, and established networks – as detailed below:

## **Publications: academic and popular dissemination of the project**

### *Books and book chapters*

- Editorial book tentatively titled *Heritage and Resistance* (Status: ongoing, to be published in 2018. More information available in the publication list). The book is important in its capacity to make a specific contribution to the debates on heritage and conflicts in cities. It seeks to challenge the maintained sharp divide between heritage and resistance, and how this prevents us from understanding the micro-dynamics of power and authority that cause and inflame conflicts.
- Editorial book titled “*Heritage as Commons – Commons as Heritage*”, with unique chapters contributed by the project’s researchers Feras Hammami and Evren Uzer. The book publishes the results of a seminar series focused on the theme of the book. While the organisation of the seminar series and the book were not directly developed through the project ‘Heritage and Urban Resistance’, the ideas published in the unique chapters present findings from the project.
- Book Chapter titled ‘Rethinking Heritage from Peace: Reflections from the Palestinian-Israeli Context.’ This chapter helped critically engage with the multiple layers of meaning that constitute the conflictual nature of heritage, and how heritage can be used to as a reconstructive tool for learning the Other. Using the Palestinian-Israeli context as the case opened new questions on the political instrumentality of heritage in colonising the self and the other. What’s of particular importance in the chapter is that it was co-authored by Feras Hammami and Daniel Laven (Mid Sweden University), who have personal and professional experiences from the Palestine-Israel areas, separated, however, by the illegal annexation and expansion wall that the Israeli government built around the West Bank. The book chapter was published in an editorial book focused on exploring peace-building efforts, titled *Heritage and Peace Making*, edited by Diana Walters, Daniel Laven, and Peter Davis, and published by Routledge, London.

### *Articles in peer reviewed journals*

- International Journal of Heritage Studies, which publishes research from the growing field of critical heritage studies. Publishing in this journal implies direct contributions to current debates on heritage theory and practice. The articles include: one published in 2016; one was accepted with minor revisions; and one to be submitted in the Fall 2017. Each article presents findings from a specific case and engage heritage and resistance from a specific perspective. The articles attempt to unpack resistance through a heritage perspective, and while doing this explore new conceptions and meanings for heritage, as a concept and field of practice.
- International Open Access Journal plaNext—Next Generation Planning, 2015. This journal publishes research made by doctoral candidates, postdoctoral and other early career academics, and focuses on contemporary questions within planning and other related fields. Publishing the article in this journal and in the special edition of ‘Cities that Talk’ was intended to bring the advances of

heritage, planning and resistance studies into conversation. The article dwells on debates which emerged at the annual conference of the Young Academics Network of the European School of Planning (AESOP). The conference was organised with the title ‘Cities that Talk’ and hosted by the University of Gothenburg. These debates helped shape the main ideas of the project ‘Heritage and Urban Resistance’.

#### *Conference sessions and roundtables*

- These research activities (see the publication list below) helped advance the project’s ideas and contributed towards the construction of new research ideas and projects. The specific impact of these activities is explained in the following points.

#### **Exchange of ideas with scholars and the heritage community**

- Conference sessions and public and internal seminars. Six conference papers were presented at four different international conferences. Additionally, one roundtable and one session were organised at two of these conferences. (See publications section).
- Roundtable at the Association of European Schools of Planning in Prague lead to the organisation of another session at the international conference Research Committee (RC21) in Leeds, UK.
- The organisation of a roundtable session, ‘Multidisciplinary Critical Perspectives on urban Security/Safety’ at the 29<sup>th</sup> annual congress of AESOP, resulted in a conference session at the RC21 Conference in Leeds, UK, September 2017.
- These interactions also resulted in new collaborations and project applications, Evren Uzer and Feras Hammami received Vetenskapsrådet VR funding within a project application led by Michael Landzelius, entitled ‘Reconciliatory Heritage: Reconstructing Heritage in a Time of Violent Fragmentations’, 2017-20.

#### **Established networks go beyond the project’s finalization date**

Throughout the project period we participated and/or co-organized events and activities, wrote research proposals to national and international funding institutions collectively with these groups and individuals from these networks.

- **Nationally:** “Socialt hållbar utveckling S2020” through the City Museum of Gothenburg. Centre for Critical Heritage Studies (CCHS) and Resistance Studies (RESIST) at GU; the Critical Urban Sustainability Hub (CRUSH) at Malmö University; Urban Security Research Centre (URBSEC) (Chalmers & GU).
- **Internationally:** MENA Research Group at the New School for Social Research and Parsons, and at The New School, New York. Specifically, *Internationally*, Dr. Britt Baillie, University of Cambridge, and Stellan Vinthagen, University of Massachusetts in Amherst (UMASS Amherst). **Case-related collaborations** are established with Naseer Arafat, Cultural Heritage Enrichment Center, and Khaldun Beshara, RIWAQ, in Palestine; Aslihan Demirtas and Ali Taptik with Yedikule Bostan Platform (Istanbul), Yigit Ozar director of Chamber of Archeologists in

Istanbul Turkey (Istanbul); Zeynep Gunay with ITU School of Architecture (Istanbul), Turkey.

### **Relevance to National and International Research in the Field**

The relevance of this project can be seen on the level of conception and policy. It investigates the concepts of resistance and heritage and their entanglements in social conflict and urban change. It sets out new debates on the productive nature of both heritage and resistance, and thus how heritage management and urban planning ought to rethink 'efforts from below' as an active partner for the realisation of equality and justice in today's culturally diverse cities.

This project views heritage and resistance as changeable, plural and ongoing processes, transcending everyday negotiations of identity, authority and representation. This conception makes a contribution to the current debates in (critical) heritage studies that engage with resistance through heritage advocacy and activism. Rather than community-led and integrated practices in everyday life, resistance is often conceived through issues of professionalism, collectivism, and other Western-centric conceptions of civil society organisations (Hammami 2016), that are set out to challenge authorised heritage management through the provision of alternative professional solutions (Mozaffari 2015). This project also adds a new perspective to the emerging research on community-led responses to the violent and other forms of enforced urban change, that cause loss of historic and cultural values of places (Herzfeld 2009; de Cesari & Herzfeld 2015) and 'punish' places because they fall outside authorised narratives of value (Wacquant 2007). Moreover, this project contributed to non-violent resistance studies through a specific focus on microforms of everyday and non-professional resistances to, e.g., alienation, displacement, gentrification, assimilation, and exclusion. It dwells on recent resistance studies (see for example the new *Journal of Resistance Studies*) that challenge any strict divide between hidden and visible, individual and collective, everyday and publicly manifested forms of resistance (Vinthagen 2015). For example, Johansson and Vinthagen (2014) see resistance as the 'result of the interplay between social structures and power relations, as well as activists' creative experimentation with tactics and experiences of earlier attempts to practise resistance, together with the situational circumstances in which the resistance is played out' (Vinthagen & Johansson 2014: 5). Their works has been compared with Bayat's (1997: 42) conception of 'encroachment' and 'progressive politics of redress' in order to situate the single practices of resistance within their wider contexts, and to highlight often overlooked relationality and productivity of resistance.

Linking heritage with resistance and situating them within urban context in this project allowed us to better understand their intersections and engage with their benevolent and malevolent faces. Focusing on the relations that underpin their productive practices, this project explored the potential of heritage in building capacities to resist and contest violent and other forms of enforced urban change. Heritage here is engaged in providing urban and heritage policies with new spaces of possibilites for making the future of our multicultural cities more just.

## **Relevance to Cultural Environment, Cultural Heritage and Cultural Environment Work**

This project explored the under-researched relations between heritage and resistance, and their entanglements within urban contexts. As explained in the previous section, both heritage and resistance are theorised as processes rather than ‘ends’ or ‘things to achieve’. The employment of this approach on the cases of this research project demonstrated how resistance acts as an agent for multiple historical narratives to emerge, and how critical engagement with the historical and cultural particularities of a place, can help produce specific capacities to contest and resist violent and other forms of enforced urban change. The significance of this project resides in its capacity to challenge the dominant frameworks of heritage, as concept and field, that reduce the role of heritage to static representation, and its relation to societies to an inherent need of protection. Instead, this project explores the productive nature of both resistance and heritage and how both concepts can be used not only to better understand urban change and social conflicts, but also to help realise socially equal and just cities. In this project, we focused on exploring the ways alternative narratives of heritage and urban change become constructed ‘from below’. This shouldn’t romanticize the contribution of community led efforts to heritage institutions. Instead, this project proposes a combined effort for the redefinition of heritage and its institutions and mechanisms. The focus on narratives from below came in response to the dominant understanding of public inclusion and participation in place – and heritage making as an open invitation to the public to access information on what is officially decided or adds self-perspective on defined heritage. This project dismisses this passive engagement with the public as ineffective. The findings demonstrated the need for an inclusive approach to heritage, and for new institutional arrangements with the capacity to engage alternative narratives of the past and cultural heritage, that emerge through different forms of dissent.

These findings raise new questions to the current political debates on how heritage in Sweden can be more inclusive (See for example, Vision för Kulturmiljöarbetet 2030, RAÄ 2016). This issue becomes particularly evident when discussed within the context of migration and globalisation. Certainly, migration is not new phenomena in Sweden or elsewhere. What make its impacts more evident are today’s debates on making ‘heritage’ in Sweden actively plural. The challenge is to innovatively build an inclusive cultural environment that can help us deal with the multiple, and often conflictual, narratives of the past. Going beyond the usual partners for heritage dialogues, this project avoids, in one respect, closure for these processes and proposes to actively build political climates that qualify people to freely and peacefully negotiate their heritage and commons. The idea is to develop inclusive policies that enable engagement with, rather than recognition of, alternative narratives and plural interpretations of the past towards realising socially just and culturally diverse cities.

## **Dissemination of results - current and future mode**

The project’s results have been disseminated through presentations at a number of conferences, publication in peer reviewed international journals and books, and the organisation of research roundtables, seminars and project meetings. These activities

helped not only disseminate findings but also establish networks through which the project benefited from contributions by other scholars.

#### Conferences paper presentations

- Hammami, Feras & Uzer, Evren (2017). 'Reclaiming shared authority through heritage and resistance.' Presented at the international conference 'Creating the city: Identity, memory and participation,' Malmö, Sweden.
- Hammami, Feras (2016). 'The Politics of Spatialising Shared Pasts in (post-)colonial and diaspora times.' Presented at the IV World Planning Schools Congress, July 2016, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.
- Hammami, Feras & Uzer Evren (2016). 'Heritage Inside Out: Uses of the Past to Reclaim the City.' Presented at the IV World Planning Schools Congress, July 2016, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.
- Evren, Uzer, (2016). 'Heritage and Hospitality: Activists as Uninvited guests to the heritage table.' A conference paper presented at the Association of Critical Heritage Studies Biannual conference, 'What does Heritage Change?', Montreal, Canada, 3-8 June 2016. Presented at the session 'RS061 Activism, Civil Society and Heritage".
- Hammami, Feras (2016). 'Heritage and In/Security in the Commons' at the 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Congress of AESOP 'Definite Space – Fuzzy Responsibility', Prague, 13-16 July 2015.
- Hammami, Feras (2015). 'Heritage Geography and Heritage Activism' at the 7<sup>th</sup> International Conference of Critical Geographers 'Precarious Radicalism on Shifting Grounds: Towards a Politics of Possibility', Ramallah, 26-30 July 2015.

#### Publication in peer reviewed journal articles

- Hammami, F. & Uzer E. (Forthcoming). 'Heritage and Resistance: Irregularities, Temporalities and Cumulative Impact.' *International Journal of Heritage Studies*
- Uzer E. & Hammami, F. (Forthcoming). 'Decolonization in practice: Re-contextualizing heritage through resistance.' *International Journal of Heritage Studies*
- Hammami, F. (2016). 'Issues of Sharing and Mutuality in Heritage—Contesting Diaspora and Homeland Experiences in Palestine.' *International Journal of Heritage Studies*. DOI: 10.1080/13527258.2016.1166447.
- Hammami F & Hou J. (2015). 'On the Entangled Paths of Urban Resistance, City Planning and Heritage Conservation. *International Open Journal plaNext*, volume 1/1, 2015.
- Uzer, E. (April 2015). 'Kenti sahiplenmek ve kültürel miras aktivizmi: Untergunther' (Sense of Belonging and Cultural Heritage Activism: Untergunther), IAN Chronicles, Istanbul Art News, (in Turkish, printed publication).

#### Publication in books and book chapters

Editorial Book *Heritage and Resistance* - tentative title - *Theorising Heritage through Resistance*. (Status: This book is planned to be an edited volume with 10 chapters, 7 of them are confirmed and editors (Uzer and Hammami) organized and executed a working session in July 7-8, 2017 in Gothenburg with the confirmed authors to develop the book proposal further. The book's

- idea is accepted for publication within the book series *Heritage and Conflict*, published by Springer).
- Hammami, F. & Laven D. (2017). 'Rethinking Heritage from Peace: Reflections from the Palestinian-Israeli Context.' In Laven, D., Walters, D., Davis, P. (2016) *Heritage and Peace Making*. London: Routledge.
- Uzer, E. & Matthews, L. (contract signed, to be published in early 2018). *Cultural Heritage on the Move* -tentative title- in Companion to Contemporary Craft Reader, edited by Namita Gupta Wiggers. Wiley Publishing.
- Uzer, E (contract signed with Routledge to be published in early 2018). 'Covert Conservation and Heritage Activism' (tentative title). In *Design and Political Dissent: Spaces, Objects, Materiality*, edited by Georgia Traganou.
- Uzer, E. (2017). 'Spaces of Dissent and Failed Infrastructures', in *GRAFT* e-book edited by Aslihan Demirtas, e-book project funded by Graham Foundation in NYC and SALT Contemporary Art and Design Center in Istanbul.
- Hammami, F., Benesch, H., Uzer, E. Holmberg, I. (2015) ed. *Heritage as Commons – Commons as Heritage*. Gothenburg: Makadam Publishers
- Hammami, F., Benesch, H., Uzer, E. Holmberg, I. (2015). *Keeping things in common*. In Hammami, F., Benesch, H., Uzer, E. Holmberg, I. (2015) ed. *Heritage as Commons – Commons as Heritage*. Gothenburg: Makadam Publishers
- Hammami, F. (2015). 'New commons and new heritage: negotiating presence and security.' In Hammami, F., Benesch, H., Uzer, E. Holmberg, I. (2015) ed. *Heritage as Commons – Commons as Heritage*. Gothenburg: Makadam Publishers.

#### Organisation of conference sessions, roundtables and meetings

- Heritage in the Making Urban Transformations and Resistance I. A secession organised by Hammami, Feras, Uzer Evren and Listerborn, Listerborn at the conference 'Creating the city: Identity, memory and participation', Malmo, Sweden, 2017 Feb.
- Multidisciplinary Critical Perspectives on urban Security/Safety. A roundtable organised by Hammami Feras and Tulumello Simone at the 29th annual congress of AESOP.
- Heritage & Hospitality: Heritage Activism and Negotiating through Design. A roundtable organised by Uzer Evren at Matters of Debate Conference – Mapping Research on the Middle East at TNS, NSSR The New School, 22 April.
- State, state of preservation of cultural heritage in Palestine: paradigm shift. A seminar organised by Hammami Feras and Khaldun Bshara, RIWAQ – Centre for Architectural Conservation, hosted by School of Architecture at Chalmers and the Department of Conservation at the University of Gothenburg, Feb 2016.
- Security and Heritage. A research seminar organised by Hammami Feras and Uzer Evren with academics from several departments at the University of Gothenburg. February 2016.
- Heritage and the Reconstruction of Syria. A seminar series organised by Hammami Feras at the Department of Conservation since March 2016, Department of Conservation, University of Gothenburg, Gothenburg. (One seminar per month).

- Art and Politics, Seminar with academics, activists and experts. Organised and hosted by HDK, with Hammami Feras and Uzer Evren as invited participants. April 2016.
- Unfolding Displacement: Heritage in the Making, Within Displacement Processes. Research Seminar and meeting with Carina Listerborn, Malmö University and Michael Schultz University of Gothenburg, Gothenburg, March 2016.
- Heritage and Identity Politics in Wars and Conflicts. A public debate organised by Hammami Feras with six international scholars, hosted by the World Culture Museum, Gothenburg, April 2016
- Beirut and heritage activism. Seminar organised by Uzer Evren with Mona el Hallak, Parsons The School of Design, The New School, New York.
- Resistance Studies and Research Methodologies. A seminar organised by Uzer Evren with Stellan Vinthagen hosted by Parsons The School of Design, The New School, New York.
- Heritage Activism. A seminar organised as part of the seminar series ‘The past, present and future of Critical Heritage’, hosted by Curating the City Research Cluster of Critical Heritage Studies at the School of Crafts and Design (HDK), (GU, 30 April 2015).
- Yedikule Bostan and the current case of urban protests in relation to heritage. A public seminar organised at Istanbul Technical University, Feb 2015.
- Theorizing heritage activism, a seminar for MA Theories of Urban Practice, Parsons School of Design, 21 September 2016.
- Heritage as Problem. A seminar for MA Integrated Conservation at the Department of Conservation at the University of Gothenburg, December 2016.

### **Established national and international networks**

In addition to the publications, the research activities have been helpful to establish solid research networks as explained in the subsection above. Established networks go beyond the project's finalisation date.