

# Evaluating Adaptive Reuse Alternatives of a Multi-Layered Port City Acre, Israel

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## Abstract

Acre is a port city in the north-western part of Israel, with a history that goes back more than 4000 years. Being inscribed on the World Heritage List, the Old City of Acre preserves the urban and architectural elements of a historic town. Its outstanding value relies on the Crusader remnants preserved under the Ottoman city, showcasing the dynamism and continuous change of Mediterranean port cities. Moreover, the presence of various religions: Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and Bahai, adds to its complexity, expressed as monuments and religious sites that enrich Acre's cultural heritage. The dramatic change in values over the past decades has a direct impact on the built environment and the citizen's lifestyles, in some cases jeopardising the physical elements and drastically influencing people's lives. This paper aims to analyse the changes linked to the sea: livelihoods, tourism, and recreational use; and the change of use of the khan, as both the sea and the khan are constant elements in the city. The analysis of these processes serves as the starting point to identify changes in values which can enhance development or promote gentrification, and in the case of Khan Al-Umdan and its vicinity, we aim to recognise the lights and shadows that followed the adaptive reuse evaluation procedure, and the influence of the multiple narratives in its development. The conclusions will provide a solid base on which to develop a methodology on the one hand, identify changing processes, such as gentrification; and on the other, to evaluate adaptive reuse alternatives of cultural heritage in contested societies and changing values.

## Keywords

Port City, Acre, Akko, Akka, Urban Heritage, Adaptive Reuse

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## Introduction

Acre is a port city in the north-western part of Israel, with a history that goes back more than 4000 years. Being inscribed on the World Heritage List, the Old City of Acre preserves the urban and architectural elements of a historic town. Its outstanding value relies on the Crusader remnants preserved under the Ottoman city (World Heritage Centre, 2013), showcasing the dynamism and continuous change of Mediterranean port cities. Acre has gone through many changes over time, each community and civilisation has left its identity imprinted, materialised in the urban fabric and ambiance of the current city.

Throughout the history of Acre, adaptive reuse was a fundamental and automatic process by which not only buildings, but other tangible and intangible elements like public spaces and sense of place, were transformed into others with a new use preserving the city's and citizens' memory (Wong, 2017). These adaptation processes create collective memory, which, combined with identity, tradition, history, and culture, provide continuity to the urban heritage (Stone, 2020). However, the dominant identities in each period created, erased, or adapted the heritage based on this continuity, which was maintained, or not, depending on their needs, transforming the city up to the present moment.

Nowadays, this port city continues to face numerous challenges that involve the adaptation and transformation of its fabric, while at the same time promoting conflict between the existing stakeholders. The economic demands prioritise tourism as the main activity, while traditional livelihoods diminish and become at risk of disappearing. Modern lifestyles require that infrastructure be updated, along with citizens' homes, leading to a continuous deterioration of the urban heritage through the informal construction and renovation of the buildings. This variety of interests and needs is characterised by confrontation and a lack of consensus, finally reaching a dichotomy of heritage loss on one side, and positive economic transformation (for some) on the other.

It is in this context that heritage becomes relevant for cities, as a way to develop their identity, uniqueness, and attractiveness, as well as fostering potential for investment and economic growth (Ashworth, 1994). Therefore, it becomes urgent to redevelop and regenerate urban centres to prepare them to face the urban challenges of this century (Bandarin et al., 2011; Sassen, 2011). This is undertaken by means of The Historic Urban Landscape approach (UNESCO, 2011a), which addresses "the broader setting" of cities, expanding the limits of traditional heritage beyond the notion of "historic centre" or "ensemble" (Barthel-Bouchier, 2010; UNESCO, 2011), and pushes the urban physical limits to include not only the tangible elements, but also intangible elements (*European Union Research Report No 16 Sustainable Development of Urban Historical Areas through and Active Integration within Towns – SUIT*, 2004; UNESCO, 2011). The framework provided by these documents sets the basis for this article, and proposes attributes that promote harmony and continuity throughout the historic urban area rather than breaks or ruptures (UNESCO World Heritage Centre, 2020).

Taking these global frameworks as a reference, the analysis of the attributes of port cities (such as Khan El-Umdan) firstly aims to provide a chronological overview of the urban heritage in the port city of Acre, and its continuity, adaptation, or erasure over time (past narratives). These identified elements, in principle, were intended to promote harmony (UNESCO World Heritage Centre, 2020), though in reality they were subject to continuous change, showcasing how conflict impacts cultural heritage. Secondly, an analysis of the present perceptions of urban heritage (present narratives) highlights the current societal ruptures, diverse understanding of urban heritage, and change in the values linked to port cities, which, contrary to the historic analysis, includes a wide range of diverse and dissonant points of view. The active consideration of these contemporary voices aims to address current adaptive reuse processes in contested cities like Acre, proposing alternatives that dilute conflict and guarantee the continuity of urban heritage.

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## Methodology

The following paper focuses on the importance and influence of past and current narratives in the evolution of urban heritage in Acre, and how they may influence the current process of adaptive reuse, so that they mitigate societal conflicts. In doing so, three steps are taken: a) a historic analysis of the evolution of port city attributes; b) the analysis of contemporary voices to understand Acre's stakeholders' views on the previously identified port city attributes; and c) the case of a hegemonic building, Khan El-Umdan, is utilised to test how the past and present narrative analysis can be applied in a real case, and provide adaptive reuse alternatives which may (or may not) contribute to the mitigation of conflict.

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## Definition of Narrative

According to Thesaurus Dictionary (*Thesaurus Dictionary*, n.d.), a narrative is “a story that connects and explains a carefully selected set of supposedly true events, experiences, or the like, intended to support a particular viewpoint or thesis.” Similarly, Cambridge Dictionary (*Cambridge Dictionary*, n.d.) defines a narrative as “a particular way of explaining or understanding events.” For the aim of this paper, a narrative is understood as a combination of both definitions: *a story that connects a series of selected events explained in a particular way, with the intention to support a particular viewpoint.*

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## Past Narratives

Therefore, the analysed past narratives refer to the stories extracted from historic documents that tell of a series of events that happened in Acre over time, told by the dominant perspectives of each period. These stories present the city of Acre in different periods, understanding the city as the subject that tells its own story through the evolution of its elements.

The consulted historic documents include archaeological reports, history books, and data from heritage institutions.<sup>12</sup> The bibliography consulted on the history of the Mediterranean and Acre includes the seminal books by Braudel, *A History Lesson and Mediterranean*; David Abulafia's *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*; *On the Ocean: The Mediterranean and the Atlantic from Prehistory to Ad 1500* by Cunliffe; and books on Mediterranean history by Jacoby, Folda, and Sakel.

The distilled narratives encompass the comprehensive regional, local, tangible, and intangible cultural values in addition to the Outstanding Universal Values of World Heritage Cities. The analysis starts with the regional significance of Acre linked to the trade routes since the Bronze Age. Once the attributes of the urban heritage identity found in the port city of Acre are identified, four periods are focussed upon: the Crusader, the Ottoman, the British Rule, and the Modern State of Israel. These are the most relevant in the city's history, and the most influential in current discourses.

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1 The bibliography consulted on the history of the Mediterranean and Acre is the following: (Abulafia, 2011; Aubet & Turton, 2001; Avni, 2011; Bacci & Fribourg Colloquium, 2014; Braudel, 1982, 2002; Cunliffe, 2017; Folda, 2005; Jacoby, 1977, 2015; Norwich, 2006; Sakel et al., 2014)

2 The data on the heritage of Acre is mainly extracted from the World Heritage documentation (World Heritage Centre, 2001, 2013) and the documents by the Israeli Antiquities Authority (IAA): (Boas, 1997; Folda, 2005; Kedar & Stern, 1995; Kool, 1997; Smithline et al., 2013; E. Stern, 1999b, 1999a, 2001, 2014; E. J. Stern, 2013; E. J. Stern et al., 2017)

In addition, four quotes have been included to understand the perspectives of the city of different people at different times: two of them appear in *Itinerarium Peregrinorum Regis Ricardi*, a Latin prose narrative of the Third Crusade, describing the city at different moments; the third one is by an English Augustinian canon in the 13<sup>th</sup> century; and the fourth is by Sir Laurence Oliphant in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. These quotes are likely to be the closest materialisation of the past people's views, which differ from the hegemonic narrative. These are included in the article to provide additional interpretations, as the diversity of voices in the past were not documented.

## New Narratives

The new narratives, by contrast, comprise contemporary stories told by diverse stakeholders in the city. Contrary to the past narratives, we currently have access to all the voices present in the city, which reflect the complex and contested reality in Acre. These are based on elements from the past narratives, and at the same time address the current urban issues from various perspectives, forming a reality of dissonant identities. Not only the local stakeholders are analysed, but the outsider perspective is also included through the analysis of social media posts about Acre, aiming to compare local and tourist views on the city. The resulting conflict of interests influences current urban processes, as urban heritage continuity is jeopardised. Therefore, the understanding of each stakeholder's values, interests, and trade-offs offers a wide range of lenses through which to observe the previously identified port city attributes, and how these points of view are based on some of the past narratives in order to justify and create a new one that complies with the previously mentioned interests. The resulting new narratives are key to addressing current challenges in the city, as well as informing adaptive reuse processes.

## The Case of Khan El-Umdan

The latter is tested in the case of Khan El-Umdan, through an evaluation process based on the past and new narratives. This specific building, a caravanserai constructed during the Ottoman period, on top of a previous similarly used building from the Crusader era, has undergone a series of transformations and changes of use linked to the processes experienced by the city and the interests of governing bodies. The current debate around it, having been closed and abandoned in the last decades, provides the ideal setting to imagine and test the alternative possibilities for the building. This article explores how including past and new narratives in the evaluation of new uses can mitigate existing conflicts of interest and result in consensual choices.

First, the evolution of the caravanserai is studied to understand the key historic phases that influenced the building, as well as the key architectural and urban elements of it. Secondly, addressing the current debate on the use of the Khan, a series of alternative uses is proposed based on the interests of Acre stakeholders' (analysed in the new narratives section). The resulting matrix is then used as the basis on which to create a 'consensual' alternative that would be accepted by all the actors. The exercise serves as an example of how adaptive reuse processes are being managed (Plevoets & Van Cleempoel, 2019), and how the use of narratives in the evaluation of adaptive reuse processes could provide acceptable and reasonable alternatives in environments with dissonant stakeholders.

## Analysis

### Preliminary Considerations

Before delving into the topic, it is important to give some consideration to data availability, and bias. The following historic analysis investigates the narratives of the city of Acre at different periods; it has been extracted from the historic data available. It is important to acknowledge the bias present in the historic narratives (McCullagh, 2000), as the history is usually written by the winning side. This means that we lack an overview of the diversity of narratives in every age, therefore, the narratives presented up to the 20<sup>th</sup> century represent those which were dominant. It is only with the documentation produced in recent decades that wider range of perspectives is included and in which we can find dissonance. The analysis of urban transformations is limited to the available maps. Not every period produced a plan, map, or illustration of the city, and these do not necessarily relate to the actual geographical location. The prehistoric map of Tel Akko was produced by the archaeologists, and it represents the approximate situation of the settlement (Killebrew et al., 2010), and the Crusader map is a schematic drawing of the city, from which diverse illustrations of the city have been derived. On a positive note, the Ottoman plan made by the British in 1840 is remarkably close to reality, providing an accurate representation of the urban fabric. Taking these points into consideration, the most relevant periods, which have the most available data, are analysed (See Figure 1). Moreover, when the contemporary narratives are analysed these four periods are again the most relevant. These include the following four eras: The Crusader, the Ottoman, the British Rule, and the Modern State of Israel (marked in red).



FIGURE 1 Timeline of Acre

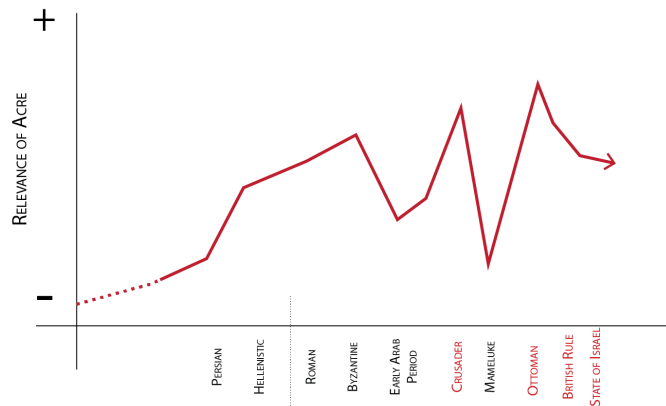


FIGURE 2 Relevance of Acre evolution graph

## Narrative Analysis

### Past Narratives <sup>3,4</sup>

The history of Acre dates back nearly 4500 years. Acre was first mentioned in the Ebla tabloids dated circa 2400 – 2250 BCE, and even if there are no remains from this period, this datum shows the importance of its location, and how this made it favourable for trade in the region. What follows is an overview on the changes in the regional significance of Acre linked to the trade routes, supported by the historic evolution of the city, paying special attention to the value of the city, the significance of the water, and the evolution of urban elements in each period of time.

### Regional Significance

The following diagram (Figure 2) summarises Acre's regional significance fluctuation over time. Its relevance was augmented during the Crusader and Ottoman periods, and diminished with the Mamelukes, and during the British Mandate when Haifa became the reference port in Israel.

Acre maintained its role as a gate between continents as a constant, its link to the sea routes was enhanced during the more western and Christian periods, and the land routes were promoted during the Arab eras, as a way to economically link the far East with the West.

## Historic Overview of Acre

### Tel Akko: shifting the importance from the land to the sea

The oldest remnants of Acre date to the Bronze Age (3000 B.C.), and are related to Tel Akko, an artificial hill formed from the accumulated remains of mudbricks and other remnants of generations that had lived on this site for centuries (Wilkinson, 2003), some kilometres away from the current Old City of Acre (See Figure 3).

Tel Akko was located in the path of the Via Maris, and other ancient trade routes connecting Africa, Asia, and Europe, which dated to the early Bronze Age. The regional geostrategic location of the settlement will be permanent throughout history, while these ancient routes become highly influential in the socio-economic development of Acre (See Figure 4).

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3 To avoid constant repetition of the sources throughout the Past Narratives section, it is noted that the bibliography consulted on the history of the Mediterranean and Acre is as follows: (Abulafia, 2011; Aubet, 1994; Avni, 2011; Bacci & Fribourg Colloquium, 2014; Braudel, 1994; Braudel et al., 1997; Cunliffe, 2017; Folda, 2005; Jacoby, 1977, 2015; Norwich, 2006; Sakel et al., 2014)

4 The data mapped on the heritage of Acre is mainly extracted from the World Heritage documentation (World Heritage Centre, 2001, 2013) and the documents by the Israeli Antiquities Authority (IAA): (Boas, 1997; Folda, 2005; Kedar & Stern, 1995; Kool, 1997; Smithline et al., 2013; E. Stern, 1999b, 1999a, 2001, 2014; E. J. Stern, 2013; E. J. Stern et al., 2017)

Bronze Age: 3000 B.C.

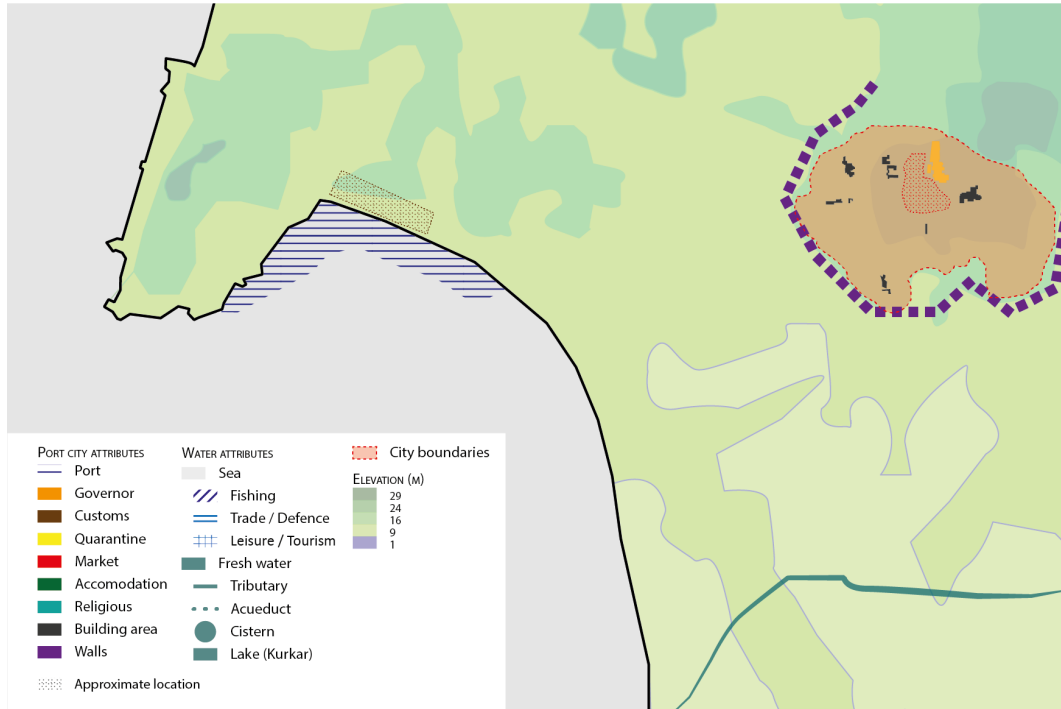


FIGURE 3 Tel Akko - Boundary and port city attributes.

Bronze Age: 3000 B.C.

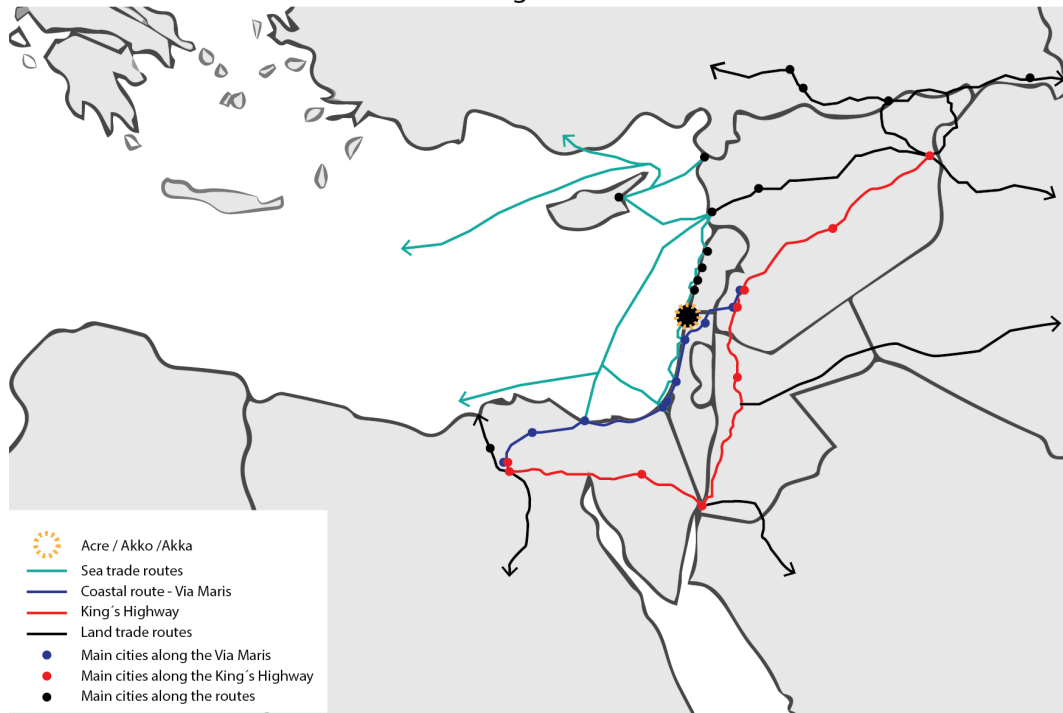


FIGURE 4 Ancient Levant trade routes - The Via Maris (purple), King's Highway (red), and other ancient Levantine trade routes, c. 1300 BCE - [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/King%27s\\_Highway\\_\(ancient\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/King%27s_Highway_(ancient))

The location of the Tel was determined by the existence of a river tributary and fertile land. The proximity to the ocean was also advantageous, so the city only stayed linked to the river until trade and defence gained importance and the sea became the cornerstone for Acre's evolution. The following quote by Richard de Templo during the Third Crusade, not only confirms but strengthens the importance of the city location and its relationship with the water bodies.

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A city called Ptolemais was formerly situated on top of Mount Turon, which lies in the vicinity of the city... The river which flows to the city is called the Belus. It has a narrow bed and is not deep, but Solinus claims no little glory for it, including it among the wonders of the world and stating that it has sands like glass... Mount Carmel rises loftily on the south side of the city.

A writer during the Crusader. From Richard the Lionheart: The Crusader King of England By W. B. Bartlett. (Bartlett, 2019).

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During the Iron period (1200 B.C. – 525 B.C.), trade continues to be the main enterprise. Yet, the more favourable agricultural position of other cities, like Tell Keisan, decreased Acre's significance. This was to be regained with the conquest of the Assyrian Empire, which benefited from the natural barrier of the sea to promote a trade port and became the major Persian harbour (525 B.C. – 332 B.C.). During this period, the location of the city shifts to the more strategic peninsula at the seashore. The Phoenician presence in the Mediterranean enhanced sea trade. The proximity of Acre to the main Phoenician cities of Tyre and Sidon made its port active, promoting it as one of the most important in the region (See Figure 5).

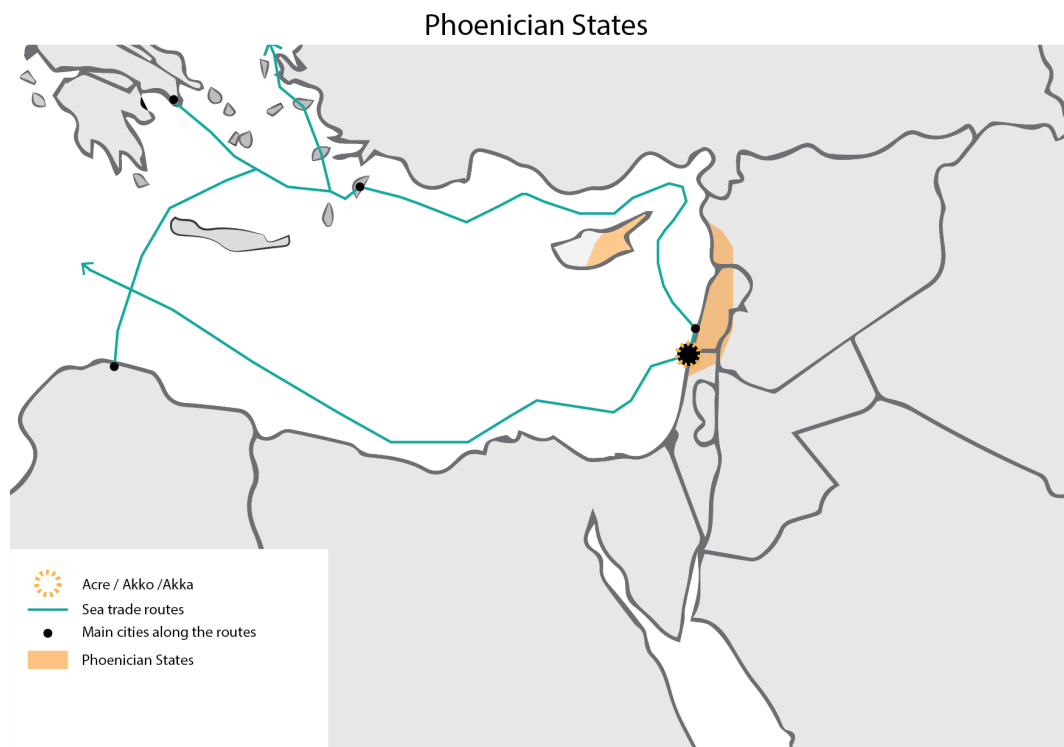


FIGURE 5 Phoenician and Greek trade routes.



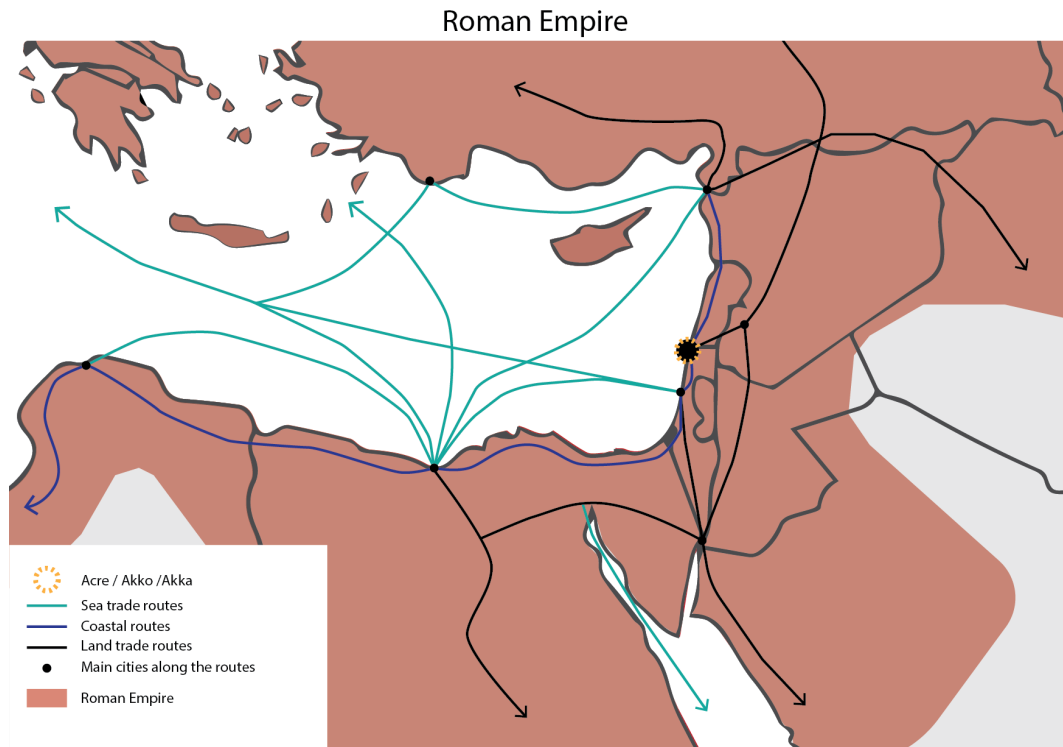


FIGURE 6 Roman Empire trade routes.

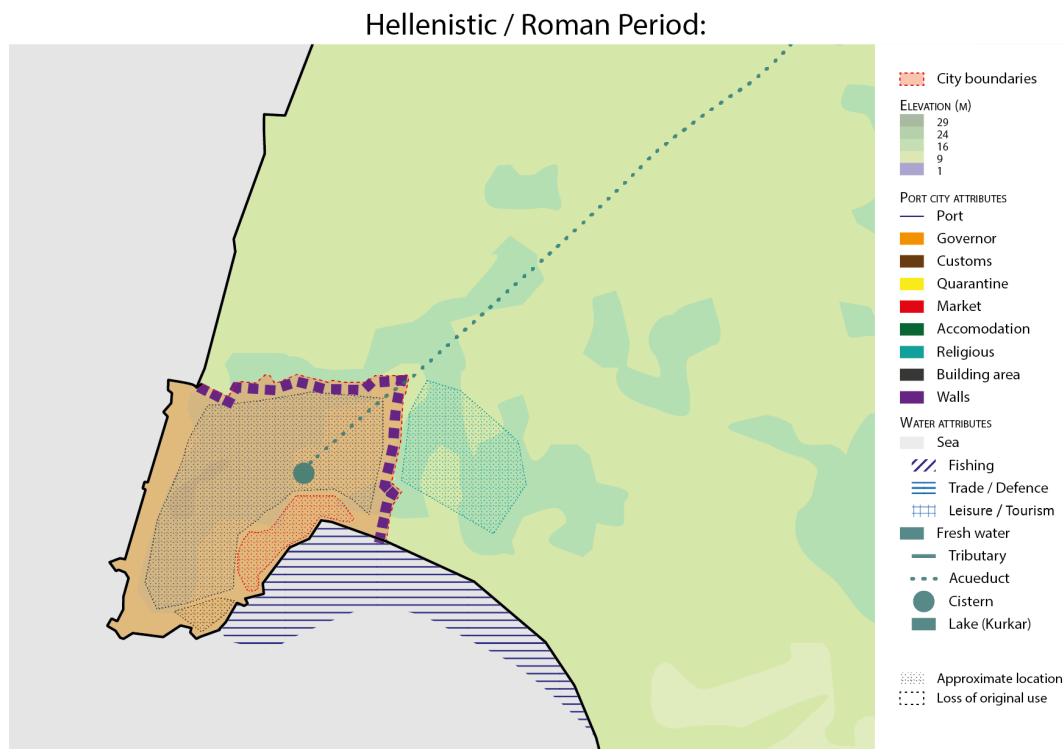


FIGURE 7 Acre: Hellenistic/Roman Period - Boundary and port city attributes.

### Prosperity of Acre as a strategic harbour

During the Hellenistic period, thanks to Alexander of Macedonia (332 – 312 BCE), the city gained popularity as a main port and formed a strategic piece in the Macedonian Empire. They maintained most of the previous Phoenician sea routes, conferring the Mediterranean Sea with its world economic status (See Figure 5).

The Roman Empire also took Acre as a main maritime link after Pompey's conquest of the land of Israel in 55 B.C. Their influence went beyond the sea routes, creating an intricate sea-land route network that guaranteed the Empire's survival for centuries. Acre was again important in the Levant region, and served as a gateway to the sea (Figure 6). The Roman presence enhanced the urban development of Acre by expanding the city to include Roman elements, such as the cemetery on the western side of the city (Figure 7).

The biggest contribution of the Romans to Acre is linked to the significance of the water. Even though the sea remains the main water body, a fresh water system was built consisting of an aqueduct bringing water from the north east, and a cistern in the centre of the old city (in the place where we find the Al-Jazzer Mosque nowadays).

### Foundation of a fortified city

Throughout the following centuries, the fight to win Acre remained a constant. This quote by a writer from the Crusader period predicts this fact in a poetic way, showing how the city was perceived as the centre of the world.

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*Acre will certainly win eternal fame for the whole globe assembled to fight for her.*

A writer during the Crusader. From Richard the Lionheart: The Crusader King of England By W. B. Bartlett. (Bartlett, 2019).

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Its geographic location at the intersection between the three continents, made it a fundamental piece for the Asia – Mediterranean trade. It was in this moment that the ancient trade routes formalised and morphed into the Byzantine routes (See Figure 8).

During these medieval times, a more formalised city was built. First, the fortification of the city was constructed, delimiting the area where the Byzantine Empire (330 A.C. – 638 A.C.) built the foundations of Acre, as a port city strategically located in the Mediterranean. This would become the main port of Palestine during the Early Arab Period (638 – 1099 A.C.).

The value as a trade centre is highlighted through the building of a large mosque, and, with the extension of the city, resulted in an area much bigger than the current Old City area (See Figure 9). The foundations of the city served as a basis for the Crusader urban fabric.

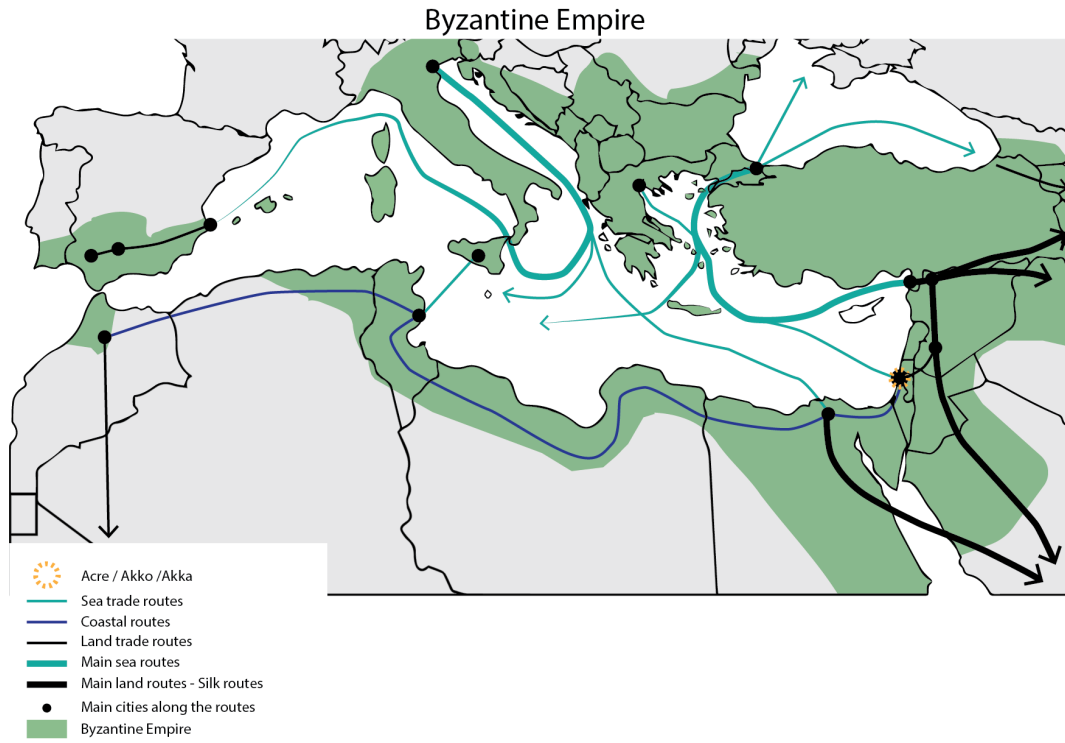


FIGURE 8 Byzantine trade routes A.D. 1028

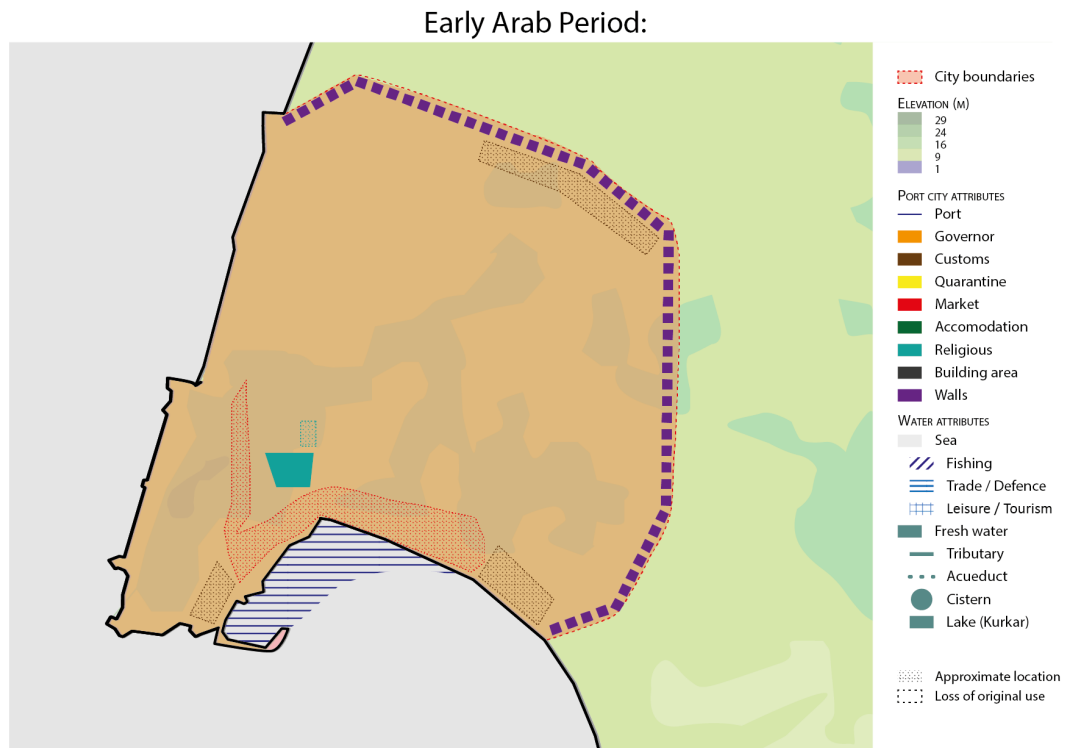


FIGURE 9 Acre: Early Arab Period – Boundary and port city attributes.

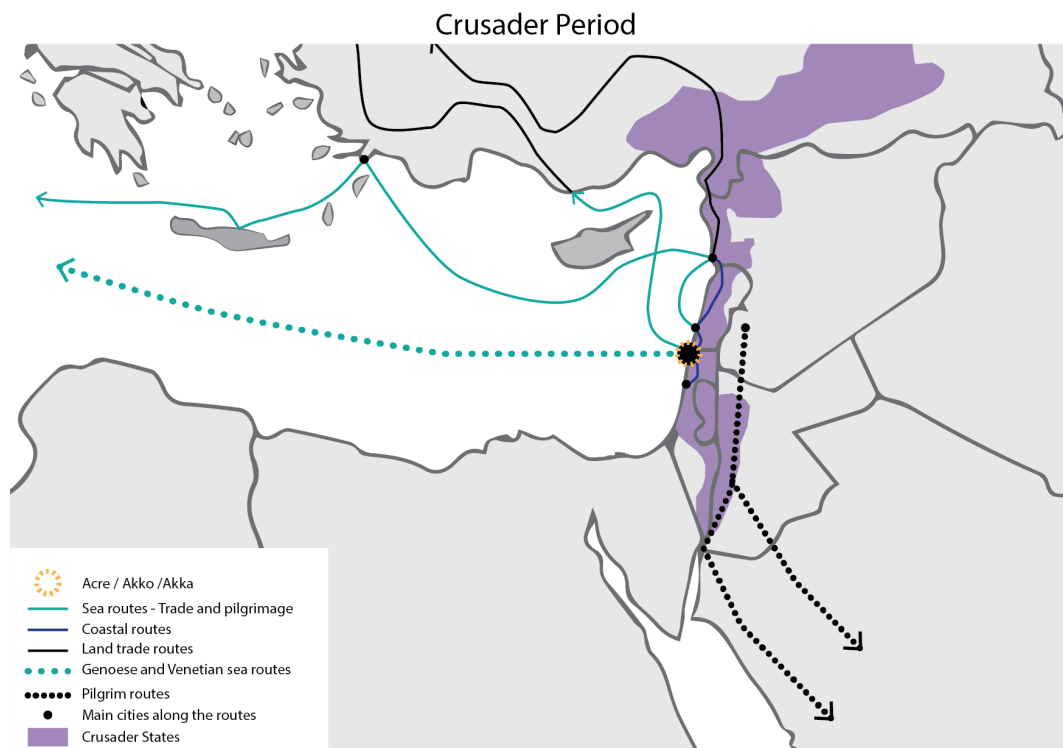


FIGURE 10 Crusader states and routes.

Acre continued to be a main port, becoming the main port of the eastern Mediterranean, and the kingdom of Jerusalem around 1170. Its value not only resided in its strategic location and the trade, but another value is created: the religious. During the Crusader period (1099 A.D. – 1291 A.D.), pilgrimage to the Holy Land is crucial for Christians coming mostly from Europe, as well as for Muslims going to Mecca. The pilgrim routes, linked to the political and religious setting, work mostly separately, differing from previous ways (See Figure 10).

The city is triangular in shape: narrower on the west, more extended on the east. More than a third of its perimeter, on the south and west, is enclosed by the flowing waves. Its harbour is not as good as it should be. It often fails to protect vessel wintering there so that they are smashed to pieces, because the outcrop of rock which runs parallel to the shore is too low to break the force of wave in a storm.

In *Itinerarium Peregrinorum et Gesta Regis Ricardi* (Journey of the crusaders and deeds of King Richard) by Richard de Templo, an English Augustinian canon (also known as Richard of Holy Trinity or Richard of London). (Nicholson, 2010)

Richard de Templo, an English Augustinian canon, in the 13<sup>th</sup> century describes the city as above, highlighting the difficulties in accessing the port and the inefficiency of the seawall. This element would be strengthened during the following decades by the Crusaders, turning it into the main port for pilgrims.

The city of Acre became the main port of pilgrimage to the Holy Land, but it lacked holy elements. This fact encouraged the sacralisation of the city through the construction of churches in every neighbourhood, related to various relics. At the same time, its value as a trade city at the intersection of continents, and land and sea routes, attracted foreign merchants who moved into the city. The combination of these two elements: the sacralisation of the city and the settlement of foreign traders resulted in the urban tissue presented in the following plan (See Figure 11).

## Crusader Period:



FIGURE 11 Acre: Crusader Period – Boundary and port city attributes.

An important feature of the urban layout of Crusader-period Acre was the physical division within the city between the various maritime communes and the military orders. The value as a religious destination for Christian pilgrims is showcased as each quarter revolves around a main or multiple churches (See Figures 12 and 13). Additionally, the value as a trade city is highlighted by the port city attributes (governor, religious buildings, etc.) with special emphasis on the importance of the port and the walls.

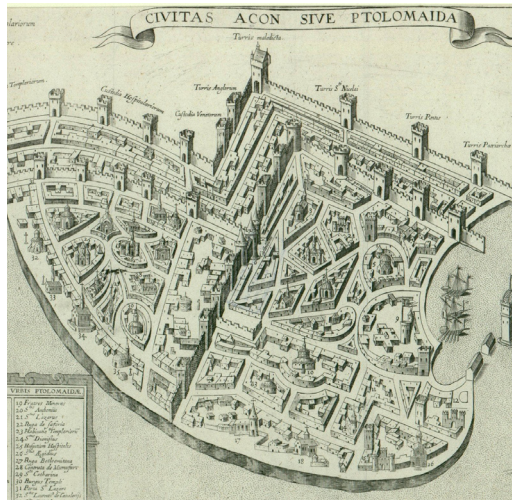


FIGURE 12 Crusader map and aerial view with urban division. The Hebrew University and The Jewish National and University Library.



FIGURE 13 Crusader map and aerial view with urban division. The Hebrew University and The Jewish National and University Library.

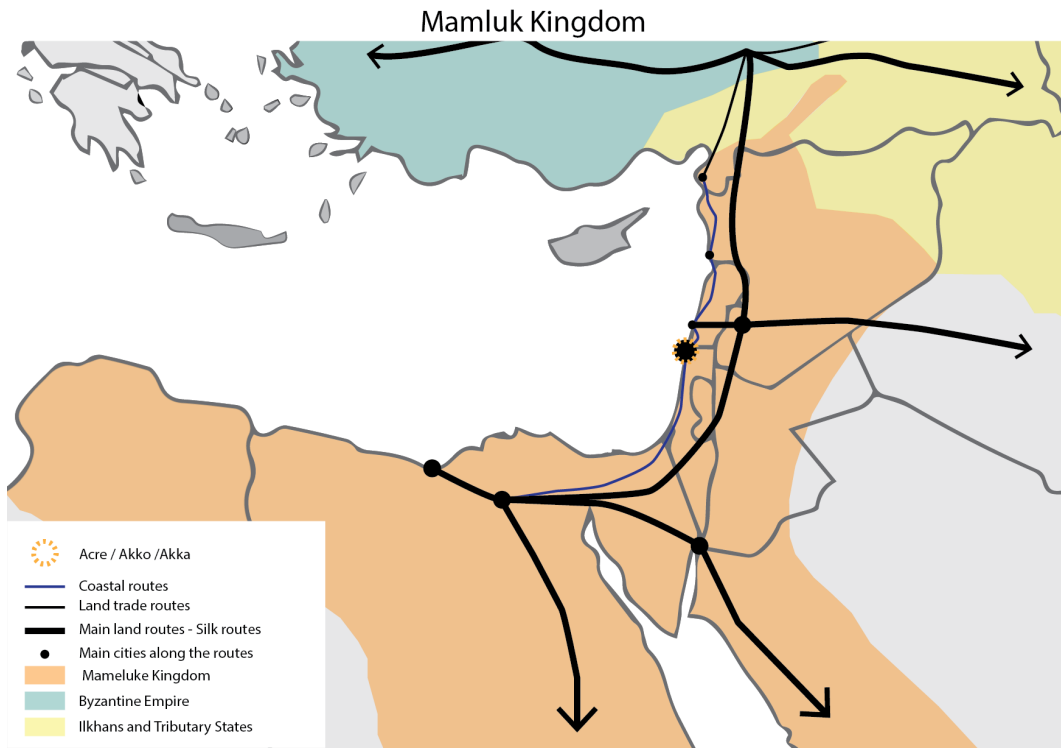


FIGURE 14 Mamluk expansion.

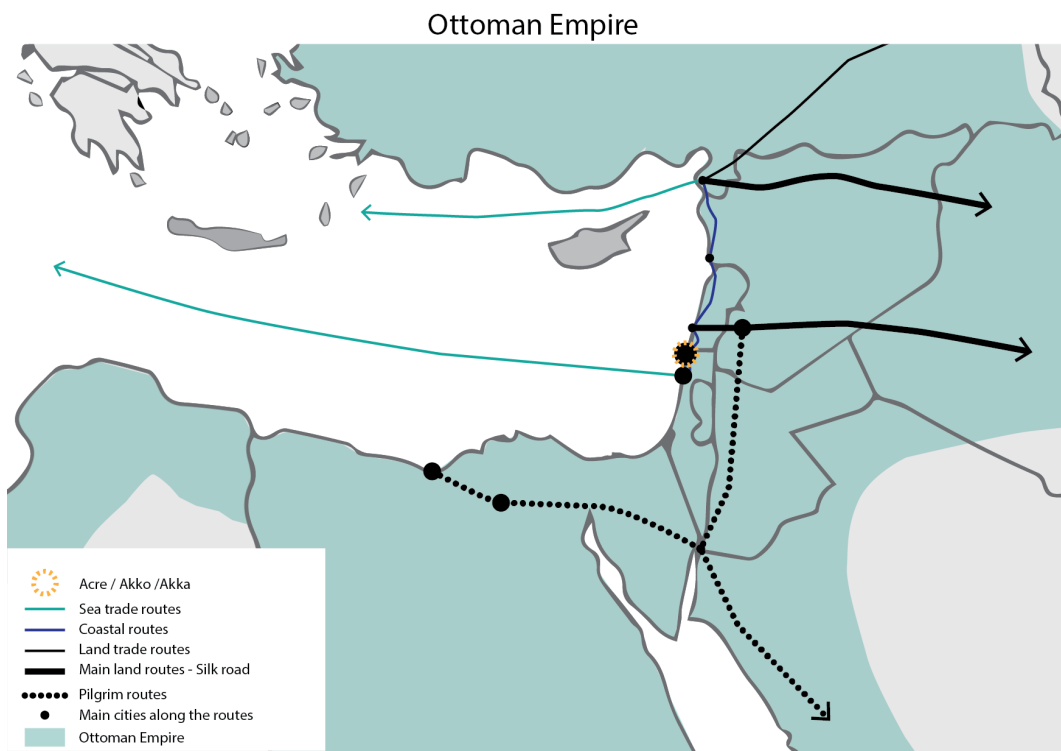


FIGURE 15 Ottoman trade routes and Sinai – Beirut Railway.

## Ottoman Empire:



FIGURE 16 Acre: Ottoman Empire – Boundary and port city attributes

### Decay and Rebirth

These two constant values, the trade hub and its strategic location continued even after the Mameluke capture of the city. The trade towards the Christian West remained limited during the Mamluk period (1291 A.D. – 1517 A.D.), but the connections with the Muslim dynasties continued with the trading activities in the Levantine coast (Figure 14). This event changed the social fabric of the city, as most Italian traders fled to Cyprus, and the city's population was reduced to the remaining Arab and Jewish communities. Amid the decay, the port was still in use and the city welcomed traders and Muslim pilgrims, providing continuity to the urban heritage linked to commerce and Islamic religion. The city was revived during the Ottoman period (1517 A.D. – 1917 A.D.), when it became the capital of the autonomous sheikhdom. The existing trade routes were maintained, as the Ottoman routes strengthened, thanks to the construction of the railway during the late Ottoman years (Figure 15). The line joined Haifa with Damascus, via Acre, shifting Acre's importance to Haifa. During this time, a new city was built over the Crusader ruins. The main rulers of this period, Zahir al-Umar and al-Jazzar, undertook ambitious architectural projects linked to trade, like the adaptation of main buildings into caravanserai (khan), accommodation for travellers (Figure 16). The enthusiasm for the city and its tourism potential is expressed by Sir Laurence Oliphant, and is described in his book *Haifa – Living in Modern Israel* at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, as follows:

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*"Nowhere in the East will you find a more typical market than that of Acre..."*

*Acre is a most interesting place to spend a few days, not to mention its delightful antiquities or its new buildings which are undoubtedly worthy of attention..."*

*Quote by Sir Laurence Oliphant from "In Haifa – Living in Modern Israel" (Dana, 1886)*

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The religious value was created during the Crusader period prevails, and materialised with the construction of mosques. Also, the presence and influence of the Baha'i faith should be noted. The religious leader and founder of this religion, Bahá'u'lláh, lived and died in Acre (1868-1892), leaving prominent sacred places for Bahá'ís, and Bahá'í pilgrimage sites in the city: the mansion, the shrine, and surrounding gardens.

### Expansion of the City and the Development of Tourism

After 500 years under the Ottoman government, the British (1917 A.D. - 1948 A.D.) overtook Acre. At the regional level, during the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the port of Haifa gained importance, shifting Acre's trade activities to the new and bigger port (Figure 18). Acre would remain a fishing and craftsmanship town, its trade value having been lost. The railway continued to increase in importance as more lines were built by Palestine Railways government company.

During this time, the city was reconstructed and expanded (See Figure 17). On the one hand, the British converted the fort into a prison, while on the other, they developed the new city of Acre extra-murus. The design of the new expansion followed an orthogonal grid in contrast with the organic pattern of the Old City (Figure 19).



FIGURE 17 Acre in 1841, as mapped by the British Royal Engineers after the Oriental Crisis of 1840. From Wikipedia Commons



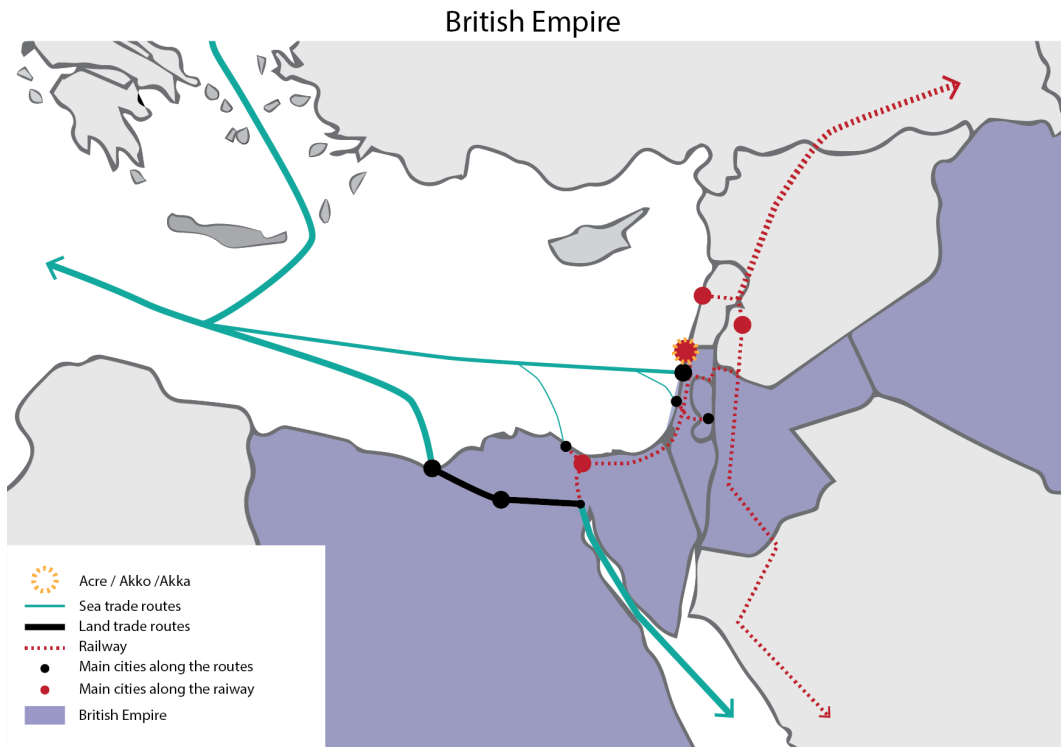


FIGURE 18 British Empire trade routes along the Mediterranean.

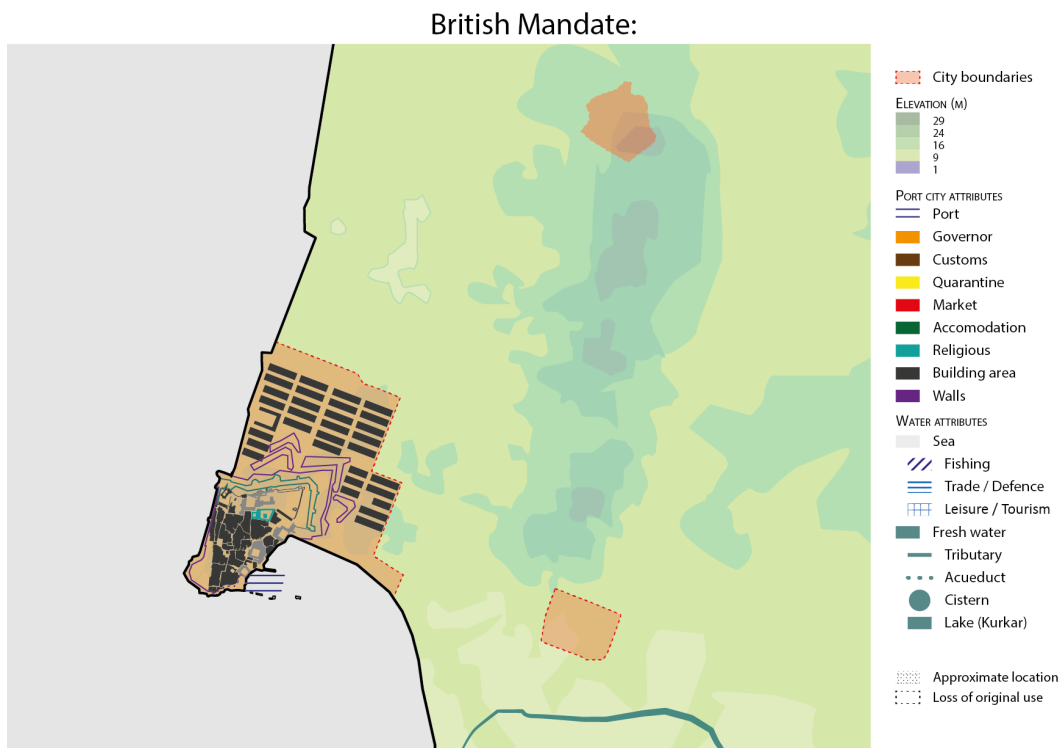


FIGURE 19 Acre: British Mandate - Boundary.

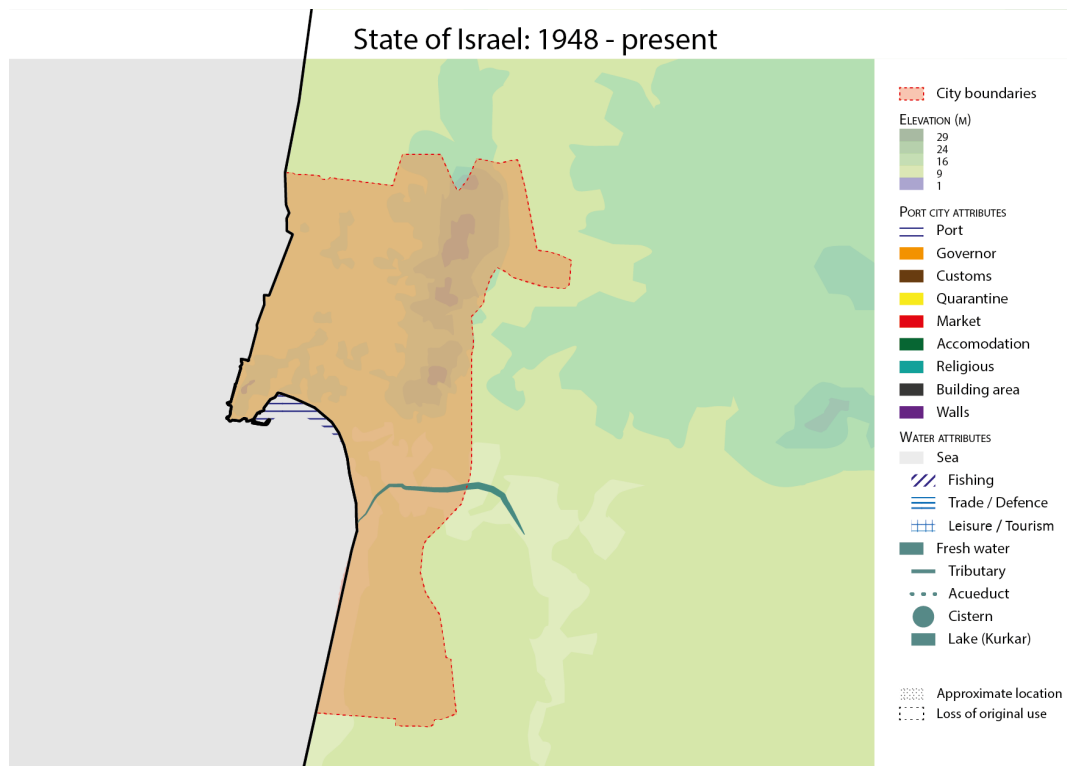


FIGURE 20 State of Israel boundaries.

In 1948, the State of Israel was founded. The regional significance of Acre was maintained as a fishing port and its importance resided in its political value linked to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which drove constant demographic change until the 1990s (Central Bureau of Statistics, Government of Israel, 2018; Della Pergola & Jewish People Policy Institute, 2011). In 2001, the World Heritage nomination repositioned Acre as a touristic destination (World Heritage Centre, 2001).

The migration of Jewish people from all over the world influenced the urban development of Acre, which underwent its largest expansion up to the current boundaries of the city (See Figure 20). This new fabric followed the modern values, the British Mandate adjacent areas maintained their street alignment and plot proportions, as well as materiality and style. The modern infrastructure contrasts with that of the Old City, as it includes the railway, a wider and orthogonal street grid, a planned water and electricity system, and other updated elements.

### Analysis of the Attributes of Urban Heritage Identity in Port Cities

The historic overview showcases how the complexity and multiplicity of historic periods influenced Acre's urban heritage. The values of each period materialise into elements that continue, are adapted, or erased, supporting the narratives of the city in each period. The urban transformations found in Acre are related to its status as a port city. These include the port city attributes which have been mapped (Figures 3 - 20), and their evolution is analysed in this section. In the following tables (Table 1, Table 2, Table 3, and Table 4), these elements are identified and marked in different colours to show how the attributes continue (green), adapt (orange), are preserved (blue), or erased (red). The continuity, the adaptation, or the erasure of the port city attributes is linked to the past narratives. The analysis of the interrelations between the city attributes in a given period, or between the same attribute over time identifies historic trends, can help understand the narratives over time, and could ultimately inform current adaptive reuse processes.

| WIDER CONTEXT  |                                     |   |   |   |   |
|--|-------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| URBAN HERITAGE IDENTITY ATTRIBUTES IN ACRE             | PORT CITY ATTRIBUTES TO BE ANALYSED | TIME                                    |   |   |   |
|  |                                     | CRUSADER                                | OTTOMAN                                 | BRITISH RULE                                      | MODERN State of Israel                        |
| Natural features                                       |                                     |   |   |   |   |
| Interaction with the environment                       |                                     |   |   |   |   |
| Hydrology  | SEA, TRIBUTARY, FRESH-WATER SYSTEMS | SEA: Trade and pilgrim routes. Military | SEA: Trade and military                 | SEA: Fishing                                      | SEA: Leisure                                  |
|  |                                     |   | KURKAR: Freshwater                      | KURKAR: Erased due to being a source of infection | KURKAR: Reactivated as a fresh water source   |
| Views and vistas                                       |                                     |   |   |   |   |
| Orientation (e.g. to seaside, mountains, river fronts) | TEL AKKO AND THE PENINSULA OF ACRE  | Peninsula of Acre, seafront             | Peninsula and part of the bay. Seafront | Peninsula, seafront                               | Extended Acre, peninsula, bay, tel and beyond |
| Skylines   |                                     |   |   |   |   |
| Legend   |                                     |   |   |   |   |
|  | Not found                           | Found / Continue                        | Adapted / Different location            | Preserved / Conserved                             | Erased  |

TABLE 1 Acre's wider context heritage elements and port city attributes over four periods of time.

At the wider level, the sea and the orography of Acre remain constant. The peninsula is maintained as a strategic location, except during the Bronze and Iron Age, when the inland boundaries expanded accordingly. The use of the sea adapted to the needs of every period, this being one of the indicators of the main narratives over time. The fresh-water lake, *kurkar*, was erased during the British Rule due to it being a source of infection. The ecological value of this attribute was reconsidered, as fresh water availability became a priority in the region.

Trends can be distilled from the urban attribute analysis. In most cases:

- The Crusader elements are used as a foundation by the Ottoman, who adapt the use to their priorities.
- The British follow a conservation approach including additional elements for the same use in the city extension, while the Crusader and Ottoman elements are preserved, though detached from their original use (e.g. the city walls are no longer used for defence).
- The State of Israel continues the British approach, extending the city limits, and adapting the elements to the current needs (e.g. the harbour converted into a marina for tourism).

| URBAN ELEMENTS                             |  |   |   |   |   |
|--|--|---|---|---|---|
| URBAN HERITAGE IDENTITY ATTRIBUTES IN ACRE | PORT CITY ATTRIBUTES TO BE ANALYSED          | TIME  |   |   |   |
|  |  | CRUSADER  | OTTOMAN   | BRITISH RULE  | MODERN State of Israel  |
| City walls                                 |  | Stone walls in similar location as Roman                                | Reconstruction and strengthening of previous walls  | Conservation of walls, not used for defence   | Conservation of walls, new uses of the moat                           |
| Markets                                    | ZOUK, MARKETS, COMMERCIAL AREA               | Market area in every quarter  | Area among and between the khans. The white market  | Markets in the Old city   | Markets in the Old City   |
|  |  |   |   | Markets in the new extension  | Markets in the new City   |
| Architectural Identities                   |  |   |   |   |   |
| Historical layers                          | CRUSADER, OTTOMAN, BRITISH EMPIRE, MODERN    | Crusader layer on the Roman base  | New layer on top of the Crusader  | Protection of previous two layers, new city extension                                   | City expansion beyond previous layers.                                |
| Urban water systems and water elements     | FRESH WATER PROVISION, ACCESS TO THE SEA     | Use of Roman cistern and aqueduct                                       | Use of Roman cistern water for the Mosque.  | Use of Roman cistern water for the Mosque.  | Use of Roman cistern water for the Mosque.                            |
|  |  |   | Kurkar used for water provision.  | Cancellation of kurkar due to infection.  |   |
|  |  |   | Fountain network.   | Fountain network.   | Underground urban water system.                                       |
| Local communities and social groups        |  |   |   |   |   |
| Migrant communities                        |  | TRADERS: Genoa, Venice, Pisa, Middle East                               | TRADERS: Ottoman Empire   |   |   |
|  |  | PILGRIMS: Western European  |   |   |   |
|  |  |   |   | Jewish communities from Russia and Eastern Europe                                       | Jewish communities from Eastern Europe, Northern Africa, and Asia     |
|  |  |   |   | British citizens, military, diplomats   | Israeli citizens  |
| Street vendors/ cafes                      |  |   |   |   |   |
| Port/ Harbour                              | PORT ENTRANCE, LIGHTHOUSE, CHANNELS, SEAWALL | Inner and external harbour, island of flies with lighthouse and seawall | Inner and external harbour, island of flies with lighthouse and seawall; upgrade of key buildings (khans) | Seawall deteriorated; inner harbour mainly used; decay of harbour and its key buildings | Harbour used for fishing and tourism; upgrade of the port to a marina |
| Legend                                     | Not found                                    | Found / Continue  | Adapted / Different location  | Preserved / Conserved   | Erased  |

TABLE 2 Acre's urban heritage elements and port city attributes over four periods of time

Adaptive reuse is a constant in the architectural heritage of Acre. An example of this is al-Jazzer Mosque, which was built on top of the Cathedral of the Holy Cross (Radojewski, 2010) reusing stones from the ancient ruins of Cesaerea (Schvoerer et al., 1999).

| ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS                     |                                     |                      |  |   |                                   |
|--|-------------------------------------|----------------------|--|---|-----------------------------------|
| URBAN HERITAGE IDENTITY ATTRIBUTES IN ACRE | PORT CITY ATTRIBUTES TO BE ANALYSED | TIME                 |  |   |                                   |
|  |                                     | CRUSADER             | OTTOMAN  | BRITISH RULE  | MODERN State of Israel            |
| Governor building                          |                                     | Hospitaller's Castle | Reconstruction and strengthening of previous walls |   |                                   |
| Customs building                           |                                     | Castle (khan)        | Khan   |   |                                   |
| Quarantine building                        |                                     | Infirmery            | Khan   |   |                                   |
| Religious buildings                        |                                     | Churches             | Mosques  | Churches, mosques, and new synagogue in the expansion | Synagogues, churches, and mosques |
| Travellers' accommodation                  | CARAVANSERAI                        | Religious hospitals  | Khan Al-Umdan, Khan Al-Shawanti, Khan, Khan        |   | Hostels, hotels                   |
| Ledgend                                    | Not found                           | Found / Continue     | Adapted / Different location                       | Preserved / Conserved                                 | Erased                            |

TABLE 3 Acre's architectural heritage elements and port city attributes over four periods of time

| ELEMENTS OF INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE (UNESCO, 2004) |                                     |                  |                              |                              |                              |
|---|-------------------------------------|------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| URBAN HERITAGE IDENTITY ATTRIBUTES IN ACRE              | PORT CITY ATTRIBUTES TO BE ANALYSED | TIME             |                              |                              |                              |
|   |                                     | CRUSADER         | OTTOMAN                      | BRITISH RULE                 | MODERN State of Israel       |
| Festivals   |                                     |                  |                              |                              |                              |
| Markets   |                                     |                  |                              |                              |                              |
| Social mix  |                                     |                  |                              |                              |                              |
| Cultural diversity                                      | MULTICULTURAL SOCIETIES             | Palestinian      | Palestinian                  | Palestinian                  | Palestinian                  |
|   |                                     | Italian          | Ottoman                      | British                      | Israel                       |
|   |                                     | Middle Eastern   | Middle Eastern               | Middle Eastern               | Middle Eastern               |
|   |                                     | Western European |                              | Russian and Eastern European | Russian and Eastern European |
|   |                                     | Christian        |                              |                              |                              |
|   |                                     | Jewish           | Jewish                       | Jewish                       | Jewish                       |
|   |                                     | Muslim           | Muslim                       | Muslim                       | Muslim                       |
| Spirit of place   |                                     |                  | Baha'i                       | Baha'i                       | Baha'i                       |
| Legend  | Not found                           | Found / Continue | Adapted / Different location | Preserved / Conserved        | Erased                       |

TABLE 4 Acre's intangible cultural heritage elements and port city attributes over four periods of time.

These two points showcase the importance of reuse in the evolution of Acre, at a wide range of levels: from the reuse of materials, the adaptation of buildings, and the reassessment of urban values, like trade. The multiculturalism is linked to the constant migrant communities identified in the urban attributes. This intangible heritage is perceived in the multiplicity and diversity of identities present in the city. The historic buildings and traditional festivals cover a wide range of cultures and religions, while the ambiance in the city keeps changing as we move from one area to another.

## New Narratives

The new narratives created after the foundation of the State of Israel are heavily influenced by the creation of municipal and local authorities dealing with the urban and heritage components in Acre, as well as the regulations linked to them. The development of the planning guidelines, city master plan, and conservation plan promoted the protection of the Old City as well as the adequate development of the new city. The former is showcased by the inclusion of the Old City of Acre on the list of World Heritage Sites by UNESCO in 2001 (World Heritage Centre, 2001). The Outstanding Universal Value is inherent in the Crusader and Ottoman layers, which form the basis for conservation and are a priority for the Israeli Antiquity Authority, while also forming the narrative for tourism promotion.

The World Heritage nomination returned regional importance to Acre, but rather than trading activity, tourism was enhanced. This is the focus of the current stakeholders in Acre, who adapt the existing structures and activities to serve this new and growing economic activity. The transformations derived from tourism range from the conversion of households and heritage buildings into tourist accommodation, warehouses and craft workshops, souvenir shops and restaurants; fishing has been substituted by boat tours, and the historic Ottoman and Crusader buildings are used as museums and tourist attractions.

## The Narratives of Today's Stakeholders

These new narratives are shaped by the modern needs and demands (Butler & Hinch, 2007), with the influence of past narratives. The following tables show the variety of views from different actors in Acre. The first one ( ) focuses on the public, private, and civil society, while Table 6 delves into tourists' perceptions.

In the following table, we can appreciate how the stakeholders, grouped by their role in society (public, private, or civil society) base their interests and values on past narratives, and are mainly concerned with certain issues (divided into economic, cultural, social, religious, or World Heritage nomination status). The aim of this exercise is to acquire a holistic understanding of Acre's actors' perceptions, to extract each one's interests and incentives. The following table shows how these intertwine:

The narratives of the current stakeholders share the following points:

- The Ottoman period is relevant for most of the stakeholders.
- Economic development is a priority, and heritage conservation is also important for some: mainly, the preservation of the Old City and the harbour.
- The Crusader remnants are only valued by the IAA and international tourists.
- The British expansion and the new city are valued for their development potential, but do not generate touristic or cultural interest.
- The port city attributes relevant to the city settlers and tourists are confined to the Old City as a whole, the Ottoman heritage such as Al-Jizzer mosque, and the Hammam, the port, and the market.
- By contrast, investors value the built heritage in the Old City, depending on its potential for touristic accommodation (e.g. transformation of buildings into hotels)

An analysis of Instagram posts was the main source used to develop the following "Table 5." In order to get an understanding of different tourists' perceptions of the city, the posts under three different hashtags were analysed. The Hebrew and Arabic versions of "#Acre" ( #אכּוּר and #أَكْرَة) aim to understand Jewish and Arab perspectives, while #acreisrael intends to grasp the international tourist perceptions.

ELEMENTS OF INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE (UNESCO, 2004)

| STAKEHOLDERS         | TIME NARRATIVES |         |         |                 | CURRENT ISSUES |              |                  |           |                | SOURCES  |
|----------------------|-----------------|---------|---------|-----------------|----------------|--------------|------------------|-----------|----------------|--|
|                      | Crusader        | Ottoman | British | State of Israel | Economic dev.  | Conservation | Social inclusion | Religious | World Heritage |  |
| <b>PUBLIC</b>        |                 |         |         |                 |                |              |                  |           |                |  |
| Municipality         |                 |         |         |                 |                |              |                  |           |                | akko.muni.il/  |
| Dev. Company         |                 |         |         |                 |                |              |                  |           |                | www.akko.org.il/en/Acre-Tourism-Development-Strategy |
| IAA                  |                 |         |         |                 |                |              |                  |           |                | www.iaa-archives.org.il/                             |
| AMIDAR               |                 |         |         |                 |                |              |                  |           |                | www.amidar.co.il/                                    |
| <b>PRIVATE</b>       |                 |         |         |                 |                |              |                  |           |                |  |
| Muslim WAQF          |                 |         |         |                 |                |              |                  |           |                | Interview with WAQF member                           |
| Jews                 |                 |         |         |                 |                |              |                  |           |                | Data provided by the IAA                             |
| Christian            |                 |         |         |                 |                |              |                  |           |                | Data provided by the IAA                             |
| Baha'i               |                 |         |         |                 |                |              |                  |           |                | Data provided by the IAA                             |
| Hotels               |                 |         |         |                 |                |              |                  |           |                | Data provided by the Dev. Co.                        |
| Investors            |                 |         |         |                 |                |              |                  |           |                | Data provided by the Dev. Co.                        |
| <b>CIVIL SOCIETY</b> |                 |         |         |                 |                |              |                  |           |                |  |
| Entrepreneurs        |                 |         |         |                 |                |              |                  |           |                | Entrepreneur Whatsapp group                          |
| Women's group        |                 |         |         |                 |                |              |                  |           |                | Women's group Leaflet                                |
| Old city settlers    |                 |         |         |                 |                |              |                  |           |                | Interview to Johayna Saifi (Saifi & Chávez, 2019)    |
| New city settlers    |                 |         |         |                 |                |              |                  |           |                |  |

Legend

|           |                |                     |                    |
|-----------|----------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Not found | Main narrative | Secondary narrative | Residual narrative |
|-----------|----------------|---------------------|--------------------|

TABLE 5 Narratives by the stakeholders.

NARRATIVES BY TOURISTS

| STAKEHOLDERS           | TIME NARRATIVES |         |         |                 | URBAN HERITAGE / PORT ATTRIBUTES |          |        |      |          | SOURCES                   |
|------------------------|-----------------|---------|---------|-----------------|----------------------------------|----------|--------|------|----------|---------------------------|
|                        | Crusader        | Ottoman | British | State of Israel | Sea / Harbour                    | Old City | Market | Food | Religion |                           |
| Jewish Tourists        |                 |         |         |                 |                                  |          |        |      |          | #אקו on Instagram 'Akko'  |
| Arab Tourists          |                 |         |         |                 |                                  |          |        |      |          | #أككا on Instagram 'Akka' |
| International Tourists |                 |         |         |                 |                                  |          |        |      |          | #acreisrael on Instagram  |

Legend

|           |                |                     |                    |
|-----------|----------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Not found | Main narrative | Secondary narrative | Residual narrative |
|-----------|----------------|---------------------|--------------------|

TABLE 6 Narratives by the stakeholders.

The studied elements are related to the four periods (Crusader, Ottoman, British, and State of Israel), and the port city attributes. After a first scan of the posts (Table 7), these were narrowed down to the harbour and the sea, the Old City, the market, and the food as part of the intangible cultural heritage.

The analysis shows how all tourists focus on the Old City, the food, and the sea; and how little difference is found among the Jewish and Arab hashtags regarding religious elements. The reduced importance given by the Jewish and Arab visitors to the historic layers should be noted, in contrast to the moderate appearance in the international posts. This clashes with the current political narrative in the country, which shows both communities deeply attached to their past history, and the analysis shows how both Jewish and Arab communities (as tourists in Acre) see the city in a similar way and value the same elements.

It should also be highlighted that international tourists share a similar perception to the “local” Jewish and Arab vision, with a small difference notable around religion and/or World Heritage. The Bahai sites are mainly visited by international tourists, probably due to them being pilgrim sites and UNESCO WH sites, while the Arab tourists focus more on Muslim buildings.

|              | Old City | Sea / Port | Food | Ottoman | Crusader | Market | Bahai | Muslim | New City | Jewish | Christian | State of Israel | British | Comparative images |
|--------------|----------|------------|------|---------|----------|--------|-------|--------|----------|--------|-----------|-----------------|---------|--------------------|
| #acreisrael  | 242      | 219        | 64   | 50      | 41       | 35     | 30    | 28     | 5        | 4      | 4         | 2               | 1       | 0                  |
| #אכּו (Akko) | 41       | 59         | 35   | 5       | 1        | 8      | 1     | 4      | 4        | 5      | 0         | 0               | 0       | 0                  |
| #אכּע (Akka) | 41       | 68         | 3    | 0       | 0        | 4      | 1     | 11     | 3        | 0      | 1         | 0               | 0       | 3                  |

TABLE 7 Tourist perceptions on Instagram (24/08/2020).

### The Case of Khan El-Umdan

To showcase how the analysed past and new narratives influence the adaptation of heritage, the case of Khan El-Umdan is portrayed.

First, the historic evolution of the building is studied, to understand the elements which continued, were adapted, or erased, using the same methodology as was used in the understanding of past narratives of the city. Secondly, the use, management and users of the Khan are studied to be compared with the current stakeholders’ interests and values. The latter serves as the baseline to propose alternative uses for the building linked to the diverse actors, their interests, and values. The resulting matrix tables serve as the main tool by which to evaluate the points of consensus and conflict among the stakeholders’ options. Finally, a combination of the uses provides a reasonable adaptive reuse alternative that would be accepted by all the stakeholders, aiming to mitigate the conflict of interests and respond to the actual needs through these new uses.

The adaptive reuse evaluation methodology tested in this case tries to exemplify how the analysis of past and new narratives could provide alternative adaptive reuse options in environments with dissonant stakeholders, and showcases how the current adaptive reuse processes are being managed.



## Evolution of the Khan

Khan al-Umdan was built in 1784 on the site of the Royal Customs house of the Kingdom of Jerusalem, during the Crusader period. Refurbished to accommodate the growing needs brought by the expanding commerce, it is one of al-Jazzar's principal construction projects in the city and the biggest khan in Israel.

The khan is a rectangular two-storey building enclosing a spacious internal courtyard, with a pool in the middle. Flanking the courtyard on the ground floor, an arcade of red and black granite columns, taken from Caesarea, Atlit, and the ruins of Crusader monuments in Acre, give the name to the khan ("Caravanserai of the Pillars"). Behind the arcade are storage spaces covered with barrel vaults. The second-floor arcade is held up by masonry piers and leads into small cross-vaulted guests' rooms. In 1906, a tall clock tower was built adjacent to the main entrance to the khan.

Due to its proximity to the port, Khan al-Umdan has, throughout its history, been an important trading spot. Merchants arriving in Acre used the khan as a warehouse while the second floor functioned as a hostel. The commercial activity in the khan ceased as a result of the vast destruction brought upon the city by the Egyptian conquest of 1832, although the structure itself was not harmed in the attacks. The khan later gained importance for the Baha'i community as it was the site where Baha'ullah used to receive guests, and later the site for a Baha'i school.

In 2001, Khan al-Umdan, together with the rest of Acre's old city, was designated as a World Heritage site. The khan was a major tourist attraction and used as an open-air stage during festivals in the city. However, since 2013 it has been closed to visitors because the authorities plan on converting the Khan into a luxury hotel. This situation has created a debate among the citizens and stakeholders in Acre, who witness how this valuable cultural asset has been withdrawn from the public and is to be used for private economic profit. In addition, other investment projects, such as the Efendi 5-star hotel, also in the Old city of Acre, have set a precedent on how this kind of intervention promotes gentrification (Harari, n.d.; McMaster, 2020; Saifi & Chávez, 2019).

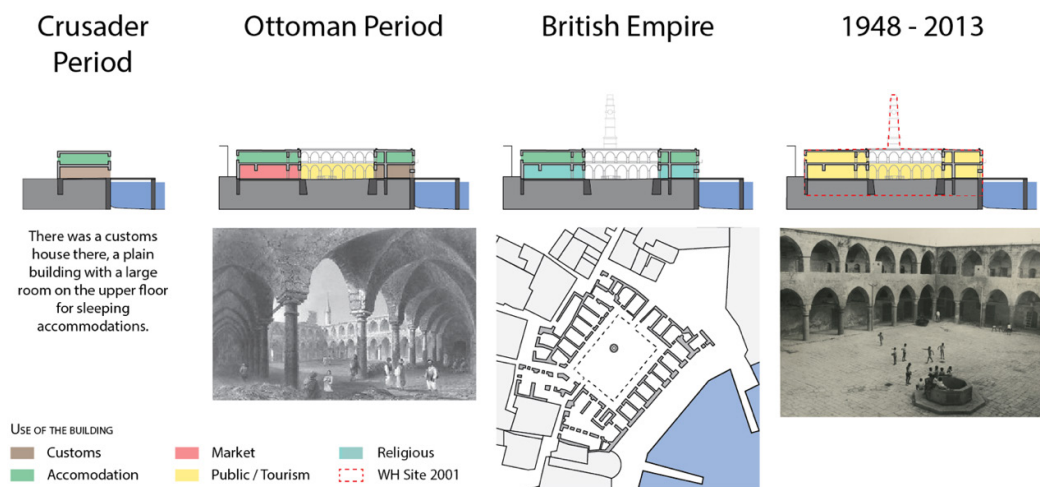


FIGURE 21 Historic evolution of Khan El-Umdan – Change of Use

Note. The image on the left corresponds to a drawing of the Khan in the Ottoman Period by William Henry Bartlett and J. Tingle, 1838; and the one on the right is a picture of the Khan from Beit hatfutsot, 1950.

The evolution of the Khan (Figure 21) can be understood as an epitome of the evolution of Acre, as the use of the building in each period reflects the coetaneous values and needs. The accommodation use tended to dissolve as Haifa port gained importance, and the more local uses shift into tourism-aimed ones as soon as the World Heritage Nomination happens, raising the Old City’s status and its visibility.

The lack of intervention in this hegemonic building in recent decades, therefore, is not surprising. The city of Acre and the caravanserai have evolved in alignment with the times, and the city’s values and future vision are currently under debate. The type of adaptation chosen for this building represents the direction the city is willing to follow. It is in this moment that bringing all the voices into the discussion becomes crucial, so that the most favourable option is implemented, and conflicts of interest are mitigated.

*Alternative Adaptive Reuse Options Based on Past and Present Narratives*

The planned reuse project of the khan is based on the priorities of the development company, the Municipality, and the investors; this means that the economic development-conservation narrative is being prioritised (Harari, 2012; Municipality of Acre, 2014; Saifi & Chávez, 2019). This approach is a source of conflict among Acre’s stakeholders and it could be managed through the proposal of alternative adaptive reuse options that include all the voices. Finding common interests among them, to arrive at “what everybody agrees to” rather than “what everybody wants,” results in an effective approach to tackling dissonance.

Taking the building’s evolution (Figure 21) and Acre’s stakeholder narrative analysis ( , Table 6) into consideration, we find the following points of conflict and points of consensus (See Table 8):

- Social inclusion is not a priority for the developers.
- The World Heritage principles are shared by most stakeholders.
- The pattern of use of the khan was consistent until 2013: give service to the public, Acre citizens, traders, and visitors, regardless of the public or private management of the building;

|                 | USE           | MANAGEMENT |         | USERS    |         |          |
|-----------------|---------------|------------|---------|----------|---------|----------|
|                 |               | Public     | Private | Citizens | Traders | Visitors |
| CRUSADER        | Customs       |            |         |          |         |          |
| OTTOMAN         | Caravanserai  |            |         |          |         |          |
|                 | Warehouse     |            |         |          |         |          |
| BRITISH         | No use        |            |         |          |         |          |
|                 | Baha’i school |            |         |          |         |          |
| STATE OF ISRAEL | Baha’i school |            |         |          |         |          |
| 2001-2013       | Public space  |            |         |          |         |          |
| 2013-2020       | No use        |            |         |          |         |          |

TABLE 8 Use, management, and users of Khan El-Umdan.

In the same way, different alternatives for the building are proposed, including the planned luxury hotel (See Table 9). A comparison between them showcases how the biggest conflict derives from private management and Real State use (marked in red). The rest of the alternatives, aligned to the different stakeholders, address the current issues, and have points in common like the conservation and WH principles.

|                                       | Alternative USE                         | MANAGEMENT |         | USERS    |                            | CURRENT ISSUES |                   |                     |                   |
|---------------------------------------|---|------------|---------|----------|----------------------------|----------------|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
|                                       |   | Public     | Private | Citizens | Visitors                   | Economic dev.  | Conser-<br>vation | Social<br>inclusion | World<br>Heritage |
| PLANNED                               |   |            |         |          |                            |                |                   |                     |                   |
| Dev. Co.<br>Investors<br>Municipality | Luxury Hotel                            |            |         |          | High socio-economic status | Real Estate    |                   |                     |                   |
| PROPOSED                              |   |            |         |          |                            |                |                   |                     |                   |
| IAA                                   | Tourist visit /<br>Museum               |            |         |          | All                        |                |                   |                     |                   |
| Citizenship                           | Public Space                            |            |         | All      | All                        |                |                   |                     |                   |
| Entrepreneurs                         | Handcraft market                        |            |         | Vendors  | All                        |                |                   |                     |                   |
| Women's group                         | Community<br>centre                     |            |         | All      |                            |                |                   |                     |                   |
| Tourists                              | Tourist visit<br>/ Handcrafts<br>market |            |         | Vendors  | All                        |                |                   |                     |                   |

Legend

|  |           |  |  |  |   |  |      |
|--|-----------|--|--|--|---|--|------|
|  | Not found |  | Public Management / Main Issue/ Conflict of interest |  | Info Semi -Public/Private Secondary issue |  | User |
|--|-----------|--|--|--|---|--|------|

TABLE 9 Alternative uses of Khan El-Umdan according to different stakeholders and its combination.

The application of a combination of the alternatives to reach a consensus between the stakeholders would be ideal (See Table 10, Figure 22). To do so, the building could be used and managed differently on each floor as was done during the Ottoman period. This way the upper floor could be reserved for the Luxury Hotel, while the ground floor could be open for the public, including areas for the community, tourists, and a handcraft market. This alternative use aims to combine the past narratives – highlighting the separate uses of the Khan by floor during the Ottoman period – with the current stakeholder narratives.

|              | Alternative USE   | MANAGEMENT |         | USERS    |                            | CURRENT ISSUES |                                  |                     |                   |
|--------------|---|------------|---------|----------|----------------------------|----------------|----------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
|              |   | Public     | Private | Citizens | Visitors                   | Economic dev.  | Conser-<br>vation                | Social<br>inclusion | World<br>Heritage |
| COMBINATION  |   |            |         |          |                            |                |                                  |                     |                   |
| First floor  | Luxury Hotel  |            |         |          | High socio-economic status | Real Estate    |                                  |                     |                   |
| Ground floor | Public Space /<br>Tourist visit /<br>Handcrafts mar-<br>ket / Community<br>centre |            |         |          |                            |                | Tourism /<br>Local com-<br>merce |                     |                   |

TABLE 10 Alternative uses of Khan El-Umdan according to different stakeholders and its combination.

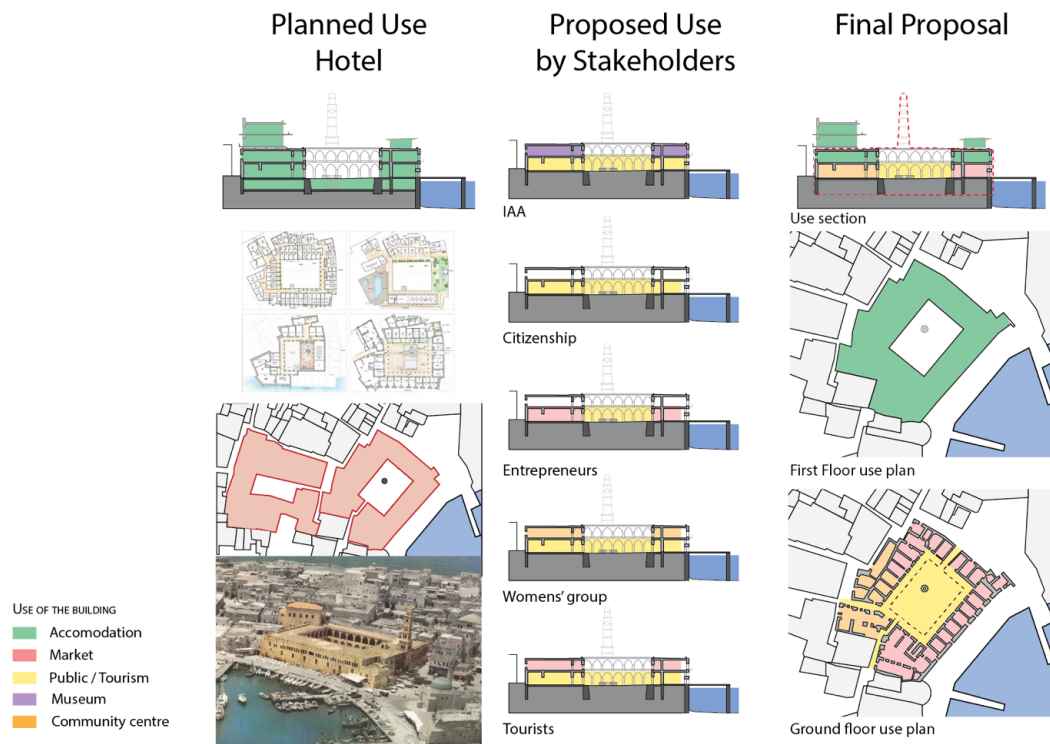


FIGURE 22 Alternative uses of Khan El-Umdan according to different stakeholders and its combination.

Note. The aerial view of the Khan is extracted from Michael Schwartz and Associates website, 2014. [https://msarchts.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Website\\_Khan-1-COVER-707x500.jpg](https://msarchts.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Website_Khan-1-COVER-707x500.jpg).

## Conclusions

The city of Acre has been part of numerous empires and kingdoms. The dominant identities of these prevail throughout history, materialising as the continuous adaptation of the city, based on the needs of each period. Nowadays, various stakeholders have different needs, and create a variety of narratives to address them, leading to a multiplicity and dissonant set of narratives.

The proposed way to address the conflicts of interest relies on two components: On the one hand, the understanding of the narratives of the past, extending the concept of the city beyond the historic ensemble, adding the hinterland, as well as moving between scales from the building to the regional level. On the other, including the dissonant voices in the decision-making process through the analysis of the current stakeholder narrative and combining the points of consensus aims to reach adaptive reuse alternatives that mitigate conflict.

The analysis of the past narratives extracted from the historic overview, and the analysis of the port city attributes are key to understanding trends, the change in values, and the impact of these in the current urban fabric.

At the wider level, the significance of the sea is a constant; it is constantly used, in different ways, but is always the cornerstone of Acre. In the present moment, it is still a key element to take into consideration as citizens' livelihoods revolve around it: fishermen and tourism (boat tours, ferry, panorama...).

The urban attributes also follow a consistent pattern: The Ottoman is built over the Crusader, maintaining, in most cases, the formal aspect of the urban elements, but with changes in use as they respond to societal needs; the British Rule established a conservation approach so the urban elements under the conservation status are maintained unchanged, and the new city develops by adding new urban elements to the fabric.

In this sense, it should be highlighted that the Old City urban elements (under conservation) remain in a limbo status, in which they are not supposed to be modified, but their preservation depends on them being adapted to new uses that guarantee their survival. Adaptive reuse is, therefore, the most straightforward solution to this dilemma, and the experience of the past, mainly with the constant adaptation of architectural elements, confirms how adequate management of these processes can guarantee the sustainability of the urban heritage, aligned with the current values and interests, if managed adequately.

Similarly, the intangible cultural elements found in Acre, mostly related to multiculturalism and migrant communities, work as a double-edged sword, being, at the same time, the city's source of attractiveness as well as conflict. Managing these intangible elements through the inclusion of the civil society in the adaptive reuse processes seems fundamental not only to mitigating conflict, but also to maintaining the multiculturalism alive and present in the city. This is to give continuity to the intangible cultural heritage elements.

The latter is directly related to the new narrative analysis, which provides a wide range of perspectives of the stakeholders present in the city, and the local and international tourists. Creating a matrix of these, their interests, values, and how these are based on the past narratives, should be the starting point in adaptive reuse processes, so that plurality is considered. In the case of Acre, this is particularly important, as we are dealing with a contested society – an extra reason to include the dissonant voices in the process.

Using the example of Khan El-Umdan to showcase the evaluation approach provides a visual way to understand if this methodology is valid. The fact that the case is real and its future use under debate highlights the need to come up with mechanisms to address conflicts of interest in contested societies. In this case, the management of this conflict is addressed by: a) following the past and new narrative analysis, b) resulting in adaptive reuse alternatives linked to diverse stakeholders that are c) combined, aiming for the least conflicted alternative, which is not ideal for any stakeholder, but could be agreed upon by all.

The proposed approach provides alternative adaptive reuse options through the analysis of narratives in current adaptive reuse processes. Following two principles: the extension of the city beyond the traditional limits, this includes historic narratives, quotes, and a multi-scale approach; and the analysis of current stakeholders, their needs, priorities, and past references. The combination of these aims to reach a consensual option among the stakeholders and to guarantee the continuity of the urban heritage in Acre.

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