

Conference Report

OWHC Regional Conference 2018

“Heritage & Tourism: Local Communities and Visitors – Sharing Responsibilities”



Amsterdam/Netherlands, November 27 – 29 2018



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Summary

During the 2017 OWHC World Congress in Gyeongju/Korea, the represented member cities discussed in their respective Regional Meetings and voted for the next general topic for the organization: **“Heritage & Tourism: Local Communities and Visitors – Sharing Responsibilities”** was selected to be the focus for the upcoming working program of the Organization of World Heritage Cities until culminating in the Krakow World Congress in 2019.

The Regional Secretariat for Northwest Europe and North America decided to work on the topic for its Regional Conference 2018 in Amsterdam with the preparation of a special Scientific Day Program. It was the goal to inform thoroughly, to strengthen capacity, to work interactively and focus on the participants in all aspects so that a practical and direct benefit is granted for our member cities of OWHC.

With the support of Professor Kurt Luger from Austria as moderator as well as Professor Greg Richards (Breda University, Tilburg University/Netherlands) as keynote speaker, the challenges for our World Heritage Cities were laid out when it comes to coordinating heritage in a sustainable tourism on site. Special insights were given by six member cities on their experiences and best practices. In a workshop session, the participants intensively discussed possible principles and activities that can be developed for our World Heritage site management when it comes to touristic use.

On the last day of the conference, experts from the hosting World Heritage City Amsterdam offered insights into special areas of preservation, tourism management as well as archaeology and thus gave all conference participants a great chance to gain a deeper insight in the measures of practical heritage management.

All valuable output of the Scientific Day as well as the Amsterdam Day is summed up in the presented conference report. It is supposed to offer information to our member cities, to other OWHC cities, to site managers, to responsible people in tourism, to a wider interested audience.

All colleagues and experts that are referred to with their presentations are willing to answer questions. For contact details, please get in touch with the Regional Secretariat.



Detailed Program

DAY 1 – Tuesday 27 November 2018

Arrival of participants

15:00 Welcome Coffee and registration

Welcome coffee/tea at the City Archives

Meeting Point:

Vijzelstraat 32 – 3rd floor – World Heritage Office Amsterdam

16:00 Explore the City of Amsterdam

Boat Tour through World Heritage Canal District Amsterdam with Pieter Vlaardingerbroek, Office for Monuments and Archaeology

Meeting Point: Herengracht 470

18:00 Welcome Reception & Dinner Event

Welcome by Deputy Mayor Touria Meliani
(responsible for Arts and Culture and Digital City)

Venue:

Cromhouthuis, Herengracht 368



DAY 2 – Wednesday 28 November 2018

Scientific Day “Heritage & Tourism”

Venue: Tolhuistuin, IJpromenade 2

08:30 **Arrival at venue – Coffee and registration**

09:00 **Welcome**

Mascha ten Bruggencate, Chairwoman of the Central Borough of Amsterdam
Matthias Ripp, OWHC Regional Secretariat, Regensburg
Denis Ricard, OWHC General Secretariat, Québec

Introduction to the agenda
Prof. Kurt Luger, Moderator of the day

09:30 **Setting the scene: Heritage & Tourism**

“Heritage & Tourism”: What is it about? What is the goal of it?
Prof. Kurt Luger, Salzburg University

“Heritage & Tourism” Key note speech
Prof. Greg Richards, Tilburg University, Netherlands

Q&A session and reflection by the participants about the comprehension of
“Heritage & Tourism”

10:45 **Coffee Break**

11:00 **Presentations Member Cities: Heritage & Tourism**

Bamberg, Patricia Alberth:
“Celebrating like a pro – World Heritage anniversaries as visitor experiences”

Beemster, Janneke van Dijk:
“Touristic challenges: Visitor infrastructure of a World Heritage Site”

Luxembourg, Guy Breden:
“Travel in Time – rediscover past heritage and make it accessible for visitors and tourists”

Philadelphia, Zabeth Teelucksingh and Paul Steinke:
“How do we expand heritage tourism beyond the center of our city?”

San Antonio, Colleen Swain:

“Leveraging Heritage & Culture for Sustainable Development”

Wismar, Sibylle Donath:

“Traffic and Tourism in Wismar – a challenge?”

13:00 Lunch with group photo

14:00 Workshop session

Introduction to the workshop session - **Prof. Kurt Luger**

Thematic Working groups (*max. 15 people – according to your pre-registration*)

1. General management/tourism management
2. Regional development/destination management
3. Communication and awareness

16:00 Coffee Break

16:15 Reflection session

Wallpaper reflection with found principles

17:00 End of thematic day

Optional tour to “This is Holland” (www.thisisholland.com/en/home/)
for all participants who do not attend the Regional Delegates Meeting

17:15 Regional Meeting for OWHC Member Cities in good standing

Venue: Tolhuistuin, convention room

Status Report, finances, new projects, international projects of the General Secretariat

19:00 Dinner

Venue: Tolhuistuin, IJpromenade 2



DAY 3 – Thursday 29 November 2018

Amsterdam Day - WE AMSTERDAM

Venue: Stadstimmertuin, Stadstimmertuin 2-4

08:45 **Morning coffee get-together**

09:00 **Lectures about Amsterdam World Heritage & Tourism**

Prof. Gabri van Tussenbroek

“The many faces of Heritage: Conservation, tourism and the battle for the city centre.”

Claartje van Ette

“City in balance”

10:30-
10:45 **Coffee Break**

Mariken van den Boogaard

“Citymarketing in Amsterdam”

Peter Kranendonk

“River Amstel, mirror of the city”

12:00 **Excursion to Rokin Station**

13:00 **Farewell Lunch**

Venue:

City Archives, Vijzelstraat 32 – World Heritage Office Amsterdam



Scientific Day “Heritage & Tourism” Wednesday 28th November 2018

Introduction on the topic by Professor Kurt Luger: Heritage as tourism attraction



Cultural heritage and cultural memory are the ‘shining stars’ in the growing field of cultural tourism. By visiting a historical site, tourists enter a space that is subject to another time. It is connected with past events, which can be located, interpreted and remembered through the examination of its symbolic order. It thus reconstructs a social framework that brings together collective memory and history, generational memory and memory in the sense of a configuration for identity formation. In the case of world heritage tourism the product incorporates elements of national or regional character, as world heritage sites are national flag carriers and major tourism attractions of their country, symbols of national identity, universally recognized.

Cultural artefacts of previous times and generations such as buildings, monuments and memorials, events, rites, works of art and ways of life convey cultural memory. They not only keep the cultural memory alive but also update it beyond the present into the future. The touristification of such places of remembrance in the sense of UNESCO World Heritage – a new form of cultural memory (Assmann 2014) – makes these cultural highlights globally accessible; tourism even takes on a mediatory role. What is remembered as world heritage and which cultural phenomena of past epochs end up in cultural memory, therefore, depends on the present forms of society, the media-shaped updates and the marketed tourism products. As a result, it experiences a revaluation, a new anchorage, and if need be, a recontextualization. In this respect, it contains new realities that make it possible for the present to be connected, experienced, thereby making heritage repeatable and thus capable of survival (Luger & Wöhler 2008).



This can be seen in the conflicts of interest in the case of historical old towns. The quasi-sacralization of the historical substance, which is protected as a heritage of mankind, imposes a kind of temporal state of emergency over this treasure. The freezing of the structural ensemble heats up the controversy between preserver and renewer, can lead to tension-laden disputes, whereby also the question of tourism marketing of local history and culture plays a significant role. Historical urban landscapes form an antithesis to the modern city, which adapts and subordinates itself to (vehicular and pedestrian) traffic. Old towns may open up a future-oriented view of sustainable development and coexistence, which in some way opposes the dictates of unleashed mobility, but also economic utilitarian thinking and profit considerations. They form anomalies, which enable contemplation and entertainment to the greatest extent, or become a living space that combines work and leisure within walking distance. Historical preservation of the old town thus also has a *raison d’être* in social thinking, and achieves an importance that extends far beyond the beautiful appearance of an authentic façade design or the touristic-motivated preservation of a historical experience (Luger & Ferch 2014).

Cultural tourism thus becomes a powerful medium, since it is both in demand by postmodern people as well as an attractive instrument of memorial design. Since the adoption of the

World Heritage Convention in 1972, over 1000 examples of humanity's heritage from 161 countries have been included worldwide in the UNESCO World Heritage List. The criteria for inclusion in this list are based on the uniqueness, the (historical) authenticity and the integrity of the individual objects. Whether they represent a masterpiece of human creative power or show a significant point of intersection of human values in relation to the development of architecture or technology, urban design or landscaping over a period or in a cultural field of the Earth, whether they are a unique or at least extraordinary testimony of a cultural tradition or an existing/lost culture, an excellent example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape that represent one or more significant periods of human history – all these indicators are also 'raw materials' for touristic products. Exceptionalism, beauty, exclusivity and uniqueness characterize these human moments of glory and form qualities on which attractive and therefore economically successful tourism depends.

At the same time, however, there is an inherent potential for conflict that also exists. Cultural heritage is a fragile, non-renewable resource. It requires protection in order to preserve its exceptional character for future generations. Both material and intangible treasures are threatened, but it is the material, essentially buildings or cultural landscapes, that are at the forefront of consideration. Most endangered is the cultural heritage in developing societies (Timothy & Nyaupane 2009). The reasons behind the endangerment are manifold and tourism can also cause significant disturbances in the cultural fabric. Uncontrolled tourism development is one source of danger among many others.

The fundamental conflict of objectives lies in the fact that heritage is based on a system whose underlying principle of preserving and transmitting what is to be passed on from generation to generation. World heritage refers to the largest possible reference group – the entire human race – and is oriented towards the common good. Tourism as a system, however, is based on the underlying principle of consumption or usage of landscape and resources and is profit-oriented. It follows a postmodern concept of mobile leisure, individual gratification and experience-oriented monopolization of the world (Luger 2008).

To a large extent, the resolution of this fundamental conflict of goals and principles – as seen in reality – can be achieved through quality-oriented cultural tourism. It takes place when there is, firstly, a profound contextual examination dealing with world heritage that provides a "meaningful experience" (Prentice 2003), and secondly, if a tourism policy that is based on sustainability and the preservation of heritage is implemented in practice.

Profane Pilgrimage

In any case, the challenge for tourism providers lies in the tightrope walk between educational mediation and the satisfaction of entertainment needs, whereby the experience exists in the synthesis of service and communication quality and can be considerably augmented by the new information technologies (Egger 2015).

In world heritage tourism visitors learn, study and consume basic elements of a culture or the icons of national identity. Material cultural heritage is based on a deeper concept whose understanding requires some knowledge. These are extinct worlds that can reveal the history of humanity. World heritage experience therefore makes it possible to experience yourself as being a part of the story, to see oneself as part of a larger whole, due to the fact that visitors come into contact with a timeless order. Wöhler (2008) even speaks of a sacramental experience. Something transcendent is revealed. It is therefore a question of proper respect for certain places, memorials, natural monuments, etc., because in the profane world they

become something sacred through their upvaluation to world heritage. The history of the human spirit and the manifestations of his virtuosity are classified as being of highest cultural value, in a sense sacralized – as a contrast to the almost entirely desacralized cosmos in the western world. This gives it a value that can be valid for all of humanity. Wöhler rightly refers to this as a canonization of spaces. In this way, cultural memory is formed, since out of the diversity of cultural artefacts, certain artefacts are declared as memorable. A place, a region, a site is given a permanent code and in this manner, its time-transcending significance is enshrined.

This experience of that which is deemed important also creates its uniqueness, one becomes aware of this extraordinary and universal value in a sense. Therein also lies its large-scale tourist potential, because there is a great yearning for emotionality and holistic experience or the desire to feel one with or in agreement with the world. World heritage tourists are in a sense on a profane pilgrimage. Experiencing these world heritage-sacralised places with one's own senses is the main reason why tourists travel thousands of miles and climb hundreds of steps. World heritage sites provide a learning platform where the cultural tourist can share the cultural value-system. When the past returns into the present and is re-energized in a new context, filled with new meanings, the communication goals of the world heritage convention may be succeeded.

According to statistics from the UN World Tourism Organisation, culture and nature are seen as promising growth markets since many years. At present, cultural tourism is growing at around 4% a year, and nature-based tourism is expanding in some regions to an even greater extent. Today, every third trip contains a cultural component. For tourism, the treasures of culture and nature form the raw material for high-quality products. Without them, tourism would not have become the world's fastest growing business sector.

This dynamic can have positive and negative effects on WHS. The inherent contradiction within tourism has led the UNESCO World Heritage Centre in Paris to devote greater importance to the issue of heritage management. It is ultimately a question of answering two crucial questions. First – How many tourists can a world heritage site 'carry' without harming the quality of the experience or the site itself? Secondly – How many visitors does it need to create economic benefits for the stakeholders of the world heritage site?

Preservation and sustainable tourism

World heritage as a central component of a tourism concept sets positive accents for both sides. It requires the development of quality standards that are appropriate to the heritage of mankind i.e. there is a great need for a legal framework to avoid destruction or misuse of the heritage. UNESCO requires that the world heritage site management provide management plans and their implementation, as well as clear ideas and strategies for the development of tourism.

Legal regulations for preservation and protection are a precondition for the responsible use of the architectural heritage, but it does not guarantee, however, that all stakeholders will comply with them. Old towns are highly coveted spaces for value investment and speculation in real estate. Numerous world heritage sites show that the legislative protection of the heritage is insufficient. In Italy, the most valuable testimonies of antiquity and the Renaissance are suffering from decay; in France, there are many for sale and in the United Kingdom, they are to be divided into heritage cash cows and charity objects (van Oers, 2015). In some cases neither public administration nor politics have any valid instruments or are able to use their official authority to find a balance between careful development and responsible preservation of the most valuable thing the community has (Mc Kercher/du Cros

2002). In order to deal with this problem effectively, it is necessary to have long-term urban planning that extends beyond the world heritage perimeter and the buffer zone.

Committed to the overarching goal of sustainability, it is therefore necessary to develop indicators for appropriate tourism activities of all participants in world heritage regions. What is valid for tourism in general, applies to the sensitive world heritage and cultural tourism in a very special way, because the long-term preservation of the existing heritage is at the forefront of all considerations. Tourism is on a sustainable way when it is

- possible in the long term, because resources are developed and utilised sparingly
- culturally compatible, because respect for local conventions and rites is expressed, a renunciation of exploitable commercialising and an adaptation to local standards takes place
- socially balanced, because the benefits and disadvantages are spread equally, regional disparities are avoided and locals are involved in negotiations and decisions
- ecologically viable because of the lowest possible pressure on the environment, the prevention of biodiversity damage and the promotion of environmental awareness
- economically sensible and productive, because it is profitable for the local or national economy and contributes significantly to the creation of income for the local population (Luger 2008).

Together with the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, UNWTO has developed its concept of sustainability into a programme. The overall objectives can be divided into the following five areas:

- Integrate sustainable tourism principles into the mechanisms of the World Heritage Convention.
- Strengthen the enabling environment by advocating policies, strategies, frameworks and tools that support sustainable tourism as an important vehicle for protecting and managing cultural and natural heritage of Outstanding Universal Value.
- Promote broad stakeholder engagement in the planning, development and management of sustainable tourism that follows a destination approach to heritage conservation and focuses on empowering local communities.
- Provide world heritage stakeholders with the capacity and the tools to manage tourism efficiently, responsibly and sustainably based on the local context and needs.
- Promote quality tourism products and services that encourage responsible behaviour among all stakeholders and foster understanding and appreciation of the concept of Outstanding Universal Value and protection of world heritage (whc.unesco.org/en/tourism).

Sustainability in this sense might be interpreted as finding a long lasting balance between conservation and the commercial use of heritage by the tourism industry. No two world heritage sites are alike, but all share common challenges such as the need for a reconciliation of opposing views in visitation and conservation. They differ greatly in the degree to which they are threatened and their elasticity with regard to visitor numbers and carrying capacity.

The definition of tangible resource limits (crowding, carrying capacity) is necessary to avoid overuse and destruction. If the host population is benefitting considerably from tourism, its welcoming attitude will show also positive results in visitor satisfaction. Recent developments and the opening of new markets have led to excessive growth of visitors leading to overcrowding in areas where residents suffer from the consequences of temporary and seasonal tourism peaks.

It has enforced permanent changes in their lifestyles, reduced access to amenities and their general well-being. “Balancing the needs of tourists and inhabitants” is a complex issue, highly emotional burdened as it is harming landscape and putting local population and infrastructure under enormous strain. Perhaps this balancing is a symptom of the present era of unprecedented affluence and hyper mobility. While the global travel supply chain may prosper (in the case of international cruise industry that delivers thousands of passengers daily to the ports near the historic cities and heritage sites creating tourist-phobia in some places) the residents have to bear the cost of tourism growth, like real estate speculation and rising costs of housing. AirBnB, for example, has been accused of reducing housing affordability and displacing residents. It must be said that world heritage sites historic old cities small in size suffer most from this phenomenon as cultural tourism is naturally focused on such destinations of desire like Venice, Dubrovnik, Florence, Angkor, Salzburg, Hallstatt etc. to name just a few prominent ones.



Overcrowding is a visual sign of uncontrolled tourism resulting in traffic jams, pedestrian congestion in narrow city lanes and suboptimal experience of the high quality tourism product. A strict visitor management and entrance limitations to the city centres for cars and coaches may mitigate the problem. The almost unlimited individual mobility has pushed tourism industry into a fast growing market. City administrators and destination managers must acknowledge that there are definite limits to growth.

Prioritizing the welfare of local residents above the needs of the global tourism supply chain is vital. Prime consideration must be given to ensuring that the level of visitation fits within a destination’s capacity. The tourism industry bears a major responsibility and has to ensure that product development achieves a balance between the optimal tourist experience and a commensurate local benefit. Tourists must also play their part by making travel choices that are sensitive to the places they visit and those who live in and around them. Therefore, tourism – in line with the Historic Urban Landscape-approach – is part of the wider destination management system, which must also consider transport and mobility, the preservation of spaces, the local economy and housing, among other aspects of daily life. It goes without saying that carefully planned and managed tourism can make a major contribution towards the World Heritage Convention goals, preserving cultural and natural heritage, intercultural respect and appreciation.

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If you wish to see the whole presentation as pdf, please click on the photo:



Keynote Speech by Greg Richards: Heritage and tourism

Creating synergies between local and mobile citizens

With tourism to cities in Europe increasing by 20% a year (ITB), cultural heritage is becoming a focal point for local residents and ‘temporary citizens’, or visitors. However, the increased volume of city use also produces qualitative change in relationships to heritage. Visitation in the form of cultural tourism has long been seen as a ‘good’ form of tourism, because visitors supply income to conserve the heritage they visit, and heritage provides the ‘content’ that attracts visitors. But the addition of visitors to already crowded city centres often produces more negative outcomes. This presentation draws from a number of recent publications on culture, tourism and cities to chart some of the changes taking place in the relationship between heritage and tourism and resident and visitor communities.



Cultural heritage is an issue that affects large numbers of people. As the recent Eurobarometer research on EU citizens reveals, 73% of the population lives near heritage monuments, works of art, heritage sites, traditional events or festivals that are related to Europe’s culture and history. More than half the EU population consider themselves to be ‘involved’ with heritage in some way. This makes local populations extremely important stakeholders in heritage conservation and use. The recent UNWTO report (2018) on *Tourism and Culture Synergies* has therefore underlined the need to involve a wide range of stakeholders, including representatives of culture, tourism, local communities and administrations, in developing positive synergies between heritage and tourism.

The UNWTO also emphasises the shift in the definition of heritage in many countries, expanding from the former concentration on tangible heritage, to include intangible and ‘everyday’ culture. This also reflects an expansion in the nature of cultural tourism demand, from classic heritage sites to popular culture and the everyday life of the places they visit. Cultural tourists, who are also relatively likely to be the relatively highly educated people who are involved with heritage in the places they live, now seek out not just the established sites of high culture, but also elements of culture reproduced through the media, including literature, TV and film.

This expanding range of cultural consumption has particularly placed a greater emphasis on intangible culture, as evidenced by the revised UN World Tourism Organisation definition of cultural tourism in 2018 to include:

These attractions/products relate to a set of distinctive material, intellectual, spiritual and emotional features of a society that encompasses arts and architecture, historical and cultural heritage, culinary heritage, literature, music, creative industries and the living cultures with their lifestyles, value systems, beliefs and traditions.

Governments now recognise the need to engage with a growing stock of heritage resources, which include many elements of daily life. This growing vision of culture and heritage is also evident for the many cultural tourists who now want to ‘Live like a local’, a desire gladly fed by Airbnb, among other collaborative economy platforms. Airbnb not only supplies accommodation via its network of hosts, but also a growing range of local experiences. This type of development is driving the ‘re-invention of the local’ (Russo and Richards, 2016). This has implications for the places visited by tourists, where the ‘local’ becomes the new touchstone of authenticity rather than the museum curator. Local citizens also become increasingly involved not just as the guardians of heritage, but also as interpreter, guide, producer and accommodation provider.

New forms of relational tourism, such as creative tourism, are expanding to provide a meeting place for local communities and tourists. Local communities are therefore becoming involved in the relationship between heritage and tourism, in both an active and a passive role. And just as tourists are positioning themselves as locals, locals are also playing a role as 'tourists in their own city' (Richards, 2017). This is a trend actively encouraged by cities such as Oslo, Melbourne, New Orleans and New York.

A recent report for the United Cities and Local Governments network (Richards and Marques, 2018) highlights the need for cities to re-think their cultural and tourism policies to cope with these new developments in proactive way. Dealing with the growing pressures on city use and heritage should stimulate us to think about the new cultures of mobility being created in cities, and how we can use cultural policy to help address the issues. At the same time as city centres are becoming more crowded, other areas of the city are often crying out for new cultural content and facilities. We should be thinking about more integrated approaches to cultural and heritage policy that can bring tangible, intangible and creative heritage together to serve an even wider population of sedentary and mobile citizens.

In the Netherlands the growing tourist pressure on cities such as Amsterdam has stimulated the development of new policies to spread tourism and develop new hubs of culture and heritage beyond the capital. One example of this is the small city of 's-Hertogenbosch (population 150,000), which developed a programme of events themed on the life and works of medieval painter Hieronymus Bosch, who was born, worked and died in the city. However, for decades the city did little with his legacy. Because the paintings all left long ago, leaving the city with no physical Bosch heritage, and no apparent basis for building a link with him. (Richards and Duif, 2018).

In 2016 the 500th anniversary of Bosch's death provided the catalyst to use this medieval genius as a brand for the city. The lack of Bosch artworks required the city to adopt the same kind of creative spirit that his paintings embody. By developing the international Bosch Research and Conservation Project, 's-Hertogenbosch placed itself at the hub of an international network of cities housing his surviving works, spread across Europe and North America. The buzz created around the homecoming exhibition of Bosch artworks generated headlines around the world and a scramble for tickets that saw the museum remaining open for 124 hours in the final week. A staggering 422,000 visitors came, grabbing 10th place in the Art Newspaper's exhibition rankings, alongside cities like Paris, London and New York. The UK newspaper The Guardian said that the city had 'achieved the impossible' by staging 'one of the most important exhibitions of our century'.

However, the 2016 programme was far more than a blockbuster art exhibition. It also



included powerful elements of social engagement in the city and beyond. It involved networking between cities and museums in ways that multiplied the impacts and resonance of the basic heritage resource. Tourism was the elements that often grabbed the headlines, but the biggest benefit for the city was securing and embedding the intangible heritage of Bosch and bringing the painter to life for the people

living in the city. 's-Hertogenbosch provides a good example of how traditional tangible heritage can be augmented with intangible heritage and contemporary creativity to engage

local people and attract visitors, media attention and economic impact. Building such programmes requires new ways of thinking about heritage and the connections with contemporary society. In particular, it involves a shift away from the idea of marketing heritage to tourists, and towards a wider concept of placemaking that uses physical, intangible and symbolic heritage resources for the benefit of all – permanent and temporary citizens alike.

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Heritage and tourism: creating synergies between local and mobile citizens

Greg Richards



Presentations Member Cities: Heritage & Tourism

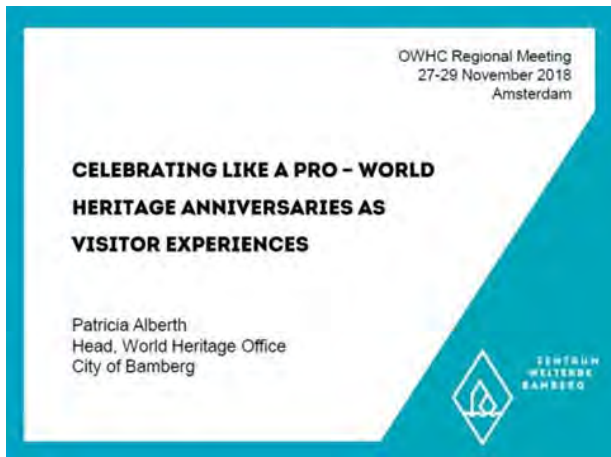
Six member cities of our OWHC Regional Secretariat presented examples of their work with a special focus on the mutual relationship of tourism and heritage management. The following links to the presentations can only offer a short insight into the manifold experiences – for further detailed questions concerning the content please do refer to the Regional Secretariat for direct contact information to the cities presented here.

1. Bamberg:

“Celebrating like a pro – World Heritage anniversaries as visitor experiences”

Patricia Alberth

The 25th Anniversary of Bamberg’s World Heritage title was celebrated with a variety of events. It was also used to address potential tourists and to strengthen partnerships within the local community. Learn about the creative ideas as well as the lessons learnt in Bamberg by clicking on the title photo:



2. Beemster: “Touristic challenges - Visitor infrastructure of a World Heritage Site”

Janneke van Dijk

The small town of Beemster is especially inflicted by traffic problems when it comes to visitors arriving in groups with coach traffic and even with private cars. Parking is a major problem when guests want to reach the visitor centre. The challenge is the cooperation with the locals for acceptance of tourists who want to reach the World Heritage Beemster as the structures are laid out only for the use of a small farming population.

See the presentation of Janneke by clicking on the slide download button:



3. Luxembourg: “Travel in Time – rediscover past heritage and make it accessible for visitors and tourists”

Guy Breden:

A fascinating new project was presented by Luxembourg: the implementation of a new tour for guests and locals through the world heritage sites with use of Augmented Reality and Virtual Reality. A completely new technique was invented to invite guests on a time travel.



4. Philadelphia: “How do we expand heritage tourism beyond the center of our city?”

Zabeth Teelucksingh and Paul Steinke

Philadelphia faces the challenge of how to get tourists on new routes and integrate heritage sites that are located farther outside the city center. In cooperation with the Preservation Alliance, a diversification of hotspots for tourists and the connection with public transport is worked at.



OWHC Regional Conference
Amsterdam, November 27 – 29, 2018

GLOBAL *North World*
PHILADELPHIA

5. San Antonio: “Leveraging Heritage & Culture for Sustainable Development”

Colleen Swain

For the rather new World Heritage City San Antonio, the focus of marketing and public transfer efforts lays on a sustainable development for the city and civil society. The city faces the challenge to combine five missions spread out within the city to one single heritage site.



6. Wismar: “Traffic and Tourism in Wismar – a challenge?”

Sibylle Donath

In Wismar, the city faces the problem of a small old town district where all tourist/World Heritage attractions are situated. Individual traffic causes a major problem when it comes to parking space. A conflict with locals is to be avoided and plans are made to strengthen public transport or bike routes to get new access points to the attractions.



Workshop Sessions

Moderator Professor Kurt Luger

In recent years, world heritage tourism and cultural tourism in general has contributed largely to intercultural understanding and cross-cultural encounters. In many destinations tourism creates a great number of jobs and revenues for the local population. The exponential growth in cultural tourism has caused also some negative impacts on several destinations. In particular, smaller cities and world heritage sites, located in historic centres, suffer from an overload of tourism and traffic.

Overcrowding is a visual sign of uncontrolled tourism resulting in traffic jams, pedestrian congestion in narrow city lanes and suboptimal experience of the high quality tourism product. A strict visitor management and entrance limitations to the city centres for cars and coaches may mitigate the problem. City administrators and destination managers must acknowledge that there are definite limits to growth. Prioritizing the welfare of local residents above the needs of the global tourism supply chain is vital.

Prime consideration must be given to ensuring that the level of visitation fits within a destination's capacity. The tourism industry bears a major responsibility and has to ensure that product development achieves a balance between the optimal tourist experience and a commensurate local benefit. Therefore, tourism – in line with the Historic Urban Landscape-approach – is part of the wider destination management system, which must also consider transport and mobility, the preservation of spaces, the local economy and housing, among other aspects of daily life. It goes without saying that carefully planned and managed tourism can make a major contribution towards the World Heritage Convention goals, preserving cultural and natural heritage, intercultural respect and appreciation.



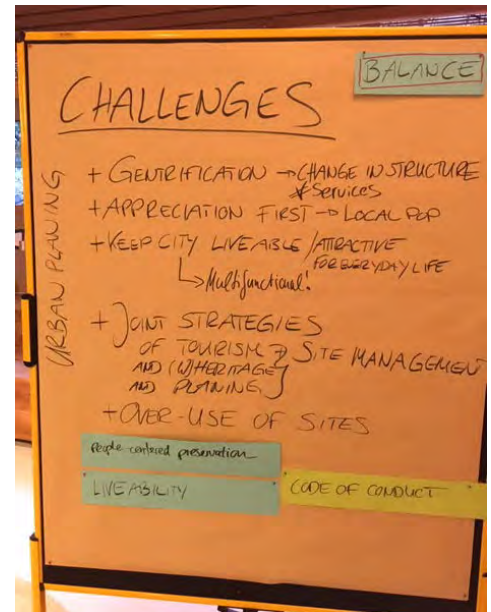
Summary of the three workshop groups:

1. General management – tourism management

Moderation: Monika Göttler

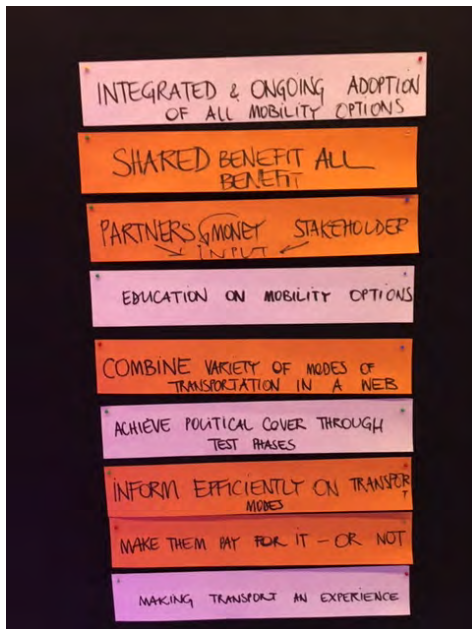
Carefully planned tourism can bring enormous positive effects, uncontrolled tourism development has a negative impact on the visitors experience as well as for the wellbeing of the local residents and the environment. The instructing questions were the following: Which are the most relevant problems concerning heritage tourism? Can a tourism strategy and management plan get control over tourism development? Is there cooperation between heritage management and the tourism sector?

→ As a principle, the group agreed that many problems could be mitigated by comprehensive urban planning. Overarching goal of such planning should be the commitment to a balanced and liveable city. Greatest challenges are gentrification processes triggering structural changes and the overuse of sites. A second principle is the request for joint strategies, including all stakeholders in world heritage and tourism management.



2. Regional development – destination management

Moderation: Shaaf Milani-Nia



The outstanding universal value of a site forms the high quality heritage and is part of the overall tourism product. This includes accessibility and infrastructure availability. In a wider context careful zoning and traffic planning are elements to manage a site in a sustainable way. Aiming at commensurate benefit visitors and local residents are both target groups of management activities. The instructing questions were the following: How is the traffic managed and is heritage tourism benefitting or suffering from the current situation? What is the benefit for the wider region from world heritage title? Are specific regulations for tourists and individual traffic in place?

→ As a principle the integrated and ongoing adoption of all mobility options was considered. To make such a well-matched transportation system running, efficient information and education inputs as well as political cover and decisions are necessary. Also in this context

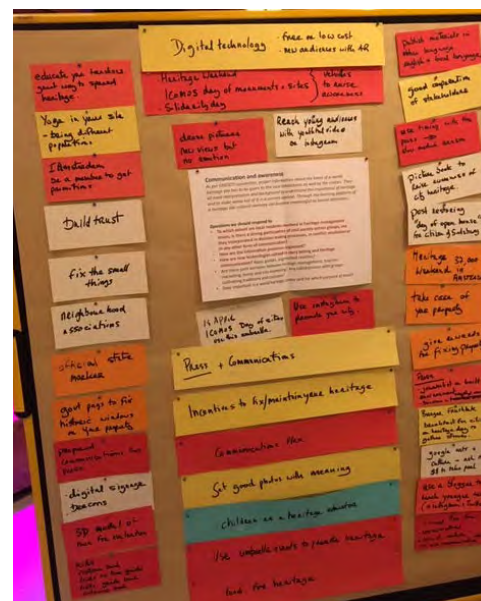
the benefit from such combined modes of transportation will be shared by the local population and visitors from outside.

3. Communication and awareness

Moderation: Zabeth Teelucksingh

As per UNESCO convention, proper information about the value of a world heritage site has to be given to the local inhabitants as well as the visitors. They all need interpretation and background to understand the importance of heritage and to make sense out of it in a current context. Through the learning platform of a heritage site cultural memory can become meaningful as a tourist attraction. The instructing questions were the following: To which extent are local residents involved in heritage management issues, is there a strong participation of civil society action groups? Are they incorporated in decision making processes, in conflict resolution or in any other form of communication? How are the information processes organised? How are new technologies utilised in storytelling and heritage communication?

➔ As a principle, the management plan has to include a suitable communication plan. As a second principle, the communication strategy must fit to the respective target audiences and should build on traditional media as well as new technologies. To reach the younger generation digital technology is the preferred means of communication (good photographs on Instagram etc.). In general, the heritage management should focus not only on visitors but also on local population. Umbrella events like heritage days can raise awareness and involvement as they approach the stakeholder audience intellectually as well as emotionally.



Amsterdam Day: “World Heritage and sustainable tourism in a dilemma?”

Thursday 29th November 2018

The hosting city of Amsterdam arranged for a full morning program with presentations from experts from the city administration. They dealt with archaeological findings, preservation questions, the balance between success and overtourism as well as new ways to extend tourism structures beyond the city center and implementing an integrative approach with local population.

Prof. Gabri van Tussenbroek

“The many faces of Heritage: Conservation, tourism and the battle for the city centre.”



entrepreneurs and visitors. See his presentation by clicking on the photo.

Gabri van Tussenbroek works as a building historian for the Office for Monuments and Archaeology of the City of Amsterdam. He is Professor of Urban Identity and Listed Buildings, in particular those of the City of Amsterdam, at the University of Amsterdam. This Chair is set up in collaboration with the Office for Monuments and Archaeology. His focus is on the question what we should preserve and transform from the historic city, in order to contribute to a balanced growth of the city which is attractive for residents,

Claartje van Ette “City in balance”

Since 2001, Claartje van Ette has been working for the City of Amsterdam, dealing with topics such as improving city’s accessibility and strengthening Amsterdam’s position as an attractive location for international companies. In 2013, she became program manager City marketing & tourism for the Economic Affairs department of the City of Amsterdam. While Amsterdam was keen on attracting more international companies and tourists to the city, it became clear that the growing number of citizens, commuters and visitors had its effect on the city’s liveability and people’s daily life. That is why her interest has shifted to the issue: how can we manage the flip side of success to keep Amsterdam liveable and lovable? It turned out to be one of the most important issues for citizens, the city council and local media. Nowadays the city takes firm measures to create a new balance, in which residents are put central while visitors remain welcome.



Mariken van den Boogaard “Citymarketing in Amsterdam”



Mariken van den Boogaard works in the strategy team of Amsterdam Marketing, where she is responsible for business marketing and talent. At Amsterdam Marketing, she leads the positioning of the Amsterdam Area as an international business region with the objective to attract corporates, startups, social enterprises and talent to the region. Mariken is responsible for the development of the new business

proposition, marketing strategy and campaign for Amsterdam as a business hub. She was also responsible for the international living campaign focused at positioning the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area as a region to live based on the unique characteristics of the different areas within the region. Mariken works closely together with the department of Economic Affairs of the City of Amsterdam, the neighbouring municipalities and international corporates and startups. She has a wealth of experience in bringing public and private partners together.

Peter Kranendonk “River Amstel, mirror of the city”

Peter Kranendonk works as senior archaeologist and project manager Archaeology North-South Line for the office for Monuments and Archaeology of the City of Amsterdam. The line has seven new stations, from which two (Rokin and Vijzelgracht) are situated in the UNESCO World Heritage. Each station features a specially commissioned piece of artwork. At station Rokin the mural of marble and natural stones in the walls alongside the platform, by artists Daniel Dewar and Grégory Gicquel, is based upon 700,000 artefacts discovered during excavations at the metro line, in the former river bed of the river Amstel. About 9,500 archaeological finds are on view in two permanent displays situated between the escalators at the south and north entrances to the platforms. Together with the displays, the website <https://belowthesurface.amsterdam> was launched, providing access to more than 32,000 photographs and drawings of almost 20,000 objects and the dataset (135,000 records) of all (700,000) finds of the archaeological project of the North/South Metro Line. Furthermore, the documentary ‘Amstel. Mirror of the City’ and the publication ‘Stuff – Catalogue Archaeological Finds Amsterdam’s North/South Metro Line’ were released.

