

**Reassessing Conflict in Cities: planning and resilience  
Conflict in Cities - Workshop II  
18-20 September 2006  
CRASSH, University of Cambridge**

## **Abstracts**

*in alphabetical order of speaker*

**Prof James Anderson  
School of Geography, Queen's University Belfast**

### **Resolving national territorial conflict: What Gerry Adams should say to Mahmoud Abbas**

Territoriality is a common-denominator of ethno-national conflicts, combining and compounding the separate problems of nationalism, ethnicity, sovereignty and democracy. The problems, such as the paradox of democracy's *undemocratic* origins, are rooted in modern state territoriality. This provides a basis for comparing divided cities and societies, helping to explain both the intractability of their conflicts and their failures of conflict management. It suggests the need for solutions which cross ethnic and territorial borders, and the possibility of moving beyond conflict management to conflict resolution.

Firstly, the paper draws some general lessons from the failures and successes of the contending nationalisms in the case of Ireland/Northern Ireland. Then on this basis it provides a more radical critique of territoriality and the limitations of territorial 'solutions', such as partition and internal power-sharing, which in turn suggest more radical remedies. It is argued that transformative conflict resolution depends on the development of 'interest groups' or 'political communities' which straddle the borders of states and nations, and that their development requires alternative political mobilisation around *non*-national issues. Making 'ethno-national peace' depends paradoxically on generating more creative conflicts in transnational, regional and urban arenas.

The paper begins to situate this argument in urban space which in many respects is the antithesis of territoriality (as can be seen even in the extreme case of pre-1989 Berlin with its 'wall jumpers'). Hence cities and inter-city networks are potentially very favourable sites for border-crossing conflict resolution, whether the disputed state border literally runs through the city (as in Jerusalem, Nicosia and pre-1989 Berlin), or close to it, or the city's local ethnic borders act as 'proxies' for a state border (as in Belfast and Mostar). The Workshop presentation will skip the Irish case and the discussion of territorial 'solutions', in order to concentrate on the problems of territoriality, the need for border crossings and the city as a site for them - or '**City life versus territoriality**'.

**Prof Alan Cochrane  
Faculty of Social Sciences, Open University**

### **Pulling down the walls of division? Making up the new Berlin**

Over the past fifteen years Berlin has been repositioned as national capital of a unified German state, within stable boundaries. It has moved from being a border town, internally divided along the lines of a bipolar world, towards being a 'workshop' or symbol of national unity, the home of government. This could simply be interpreted as representing a return to 'business as usual' – Berlin was capital and is now capital once more. But drawing such a conclusion would both fail to acknowledge the stubborn legacies of Berlin's history and underestimate the challenges of capital city-building in an age of Europeanisation and globalisation. The city's politicians, architects, planners and developers – as well as its citizens – have been forced to reimagine the place within quite a different set of local, national and global understandings.

Berlin is the (and often literally the building) site on which a new Germany is being constructed. The making up of the new Berlin is dominated by attempts to reinterpret, celebrate and find ways of living with its history: it is a city of memorials and of deliberate absences; of remembering and forgetting, or trying to forget; of reshaping the past as well as trying to build a new future. A series of competing and sometimes complementary 'Berlins' are being constructed as part of the process of its reinsertion into 'normal' capitalist urbanisation, moving beyond division. This paper focuses on some of these and in particular on the relationships and tensions between property-led visions of Berlin at the heart of a wider Europe; visions of Berlin as a revived capital of a united Germany; and visions of Berlin as an 'ordinary place'; dealing with urban decline and dreaming of cosmopolitanism. The stubborn processes of becoming something new (or even somewhere 'ordinary') are tortuous and uncertain.

**Dr Mick Dumper**  
***Department of Politics, University of Exeter***

### **Banquo's Ghost: Conflict and the study of cities in the Middle East and North Africa.**

Academic debate over the study of cities in the MENA region has undergone a number of phases since the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century studies influenced by Max Weber. To a large extent this evolution has reflected the growing influence of the social sciences in the field, with anthropologists, sociologists and human geographers joining if not replacing colonial town planners and historians in the forefront of the debate. This paper delineates the main contours of these phases and suggests that while the study of conflict in MENA cities is often implicit in the examples cited, there is little focus on the specific urban dynamics of conflict as such. Urban conflict in the MENA city, as a distinctly urban phenomenon, is subsumed under a plethora of other related causes and contexts. The Conflict in Cities project on Jerusalem with its site-orientated and multi-disciplinary approaches may prove to be an innovative channel for the construction of analytical framework for the study of conflict in MENA cities.

**Prof Anthony Hepburn**  
***Department of History, University of Sunderland***

### **Ethnicity Conflict in Contested Cities – An Historical Perspective**

Cities have frequently been seen as the cutting edge of human achievement, where traditional barriers are eroded through proximity of living and working. But the rapid urbanisation of the past two centuries has created new problems of adjustment. The British industrial cities of the nineteenth century drew their populations – with the exception of the Irish – mainly from nearby hinterlands, so that while the challenges of acculturation to urban living and the discipline of the factory may have been great, the challenge of acculturation to new neighbours was substantially reduced. But many other cities, in Europe, in north America, and now throughout the world have attracted communities which regard themselves or are regarded by others as distinct in terms of language, religious belief, skin colour or culture. Urban communities have divided themselves, or been divided, along ethnic lines in terms of residential and associational segregation, distinct occupational and industrial profiles, endogamy and, sometimes, mutual hostility to the extent of rioting and other forms of overt conflict. In some cases, depending on local population balances and national circumstances, there is no shared view of even the basic political and cultural sovereignty of the city. The term I use to describe this latter situation is 'contested city'. This is defined as a major urban centre in which two or more ethnically-conscious groups - divided by religion, language and/or culture and perceived history - co-exist in a situation where neither group will recognise the supremacy of the other.

This paper will explore the variety of ways in which such problems have arisen and are coped with by the state(s) concerned, by the international system and by the people of the cities in

question. It also asks how such conflicts have been resolved, managed, or simply changed. Reference will be made to a number of contested cities in modern history, including Gdansk and Trieste, where external intervention has played a crucial role. Brussels and Montreal, on the either hand, grapple - mainly through the agency of state and regional policies - with the complex and sometimes quite technical problems of sustaining two not-very-friendly language groups in cities which need to remain unitary for most purposes. Belfast and Jerusalem, both in different ways unresolved cases, are cities where violence has for a long time been recurrent or chronic even when it has not been savagely acute. I will also refer more briefly to a number of other cases, including the Gujarati city of Ahmedabad, India, now bitterly divided between Hindu and Muslim.

**Prof Samir Khalaf**  
***Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences,***  
***American University Beirut***

### **The “July War” on Lebanon: Glimmers of Hope In Dark Times**

The paper provides a vivid portrait, unavoidably impassioned in tone, of some of the harrowing traumas besieged citizens in Lebanon (particularly in the South and southern suburbs of Beirut) suffered in the latest confrontation between Hizbullah and Israel. An effort is then made to extract a few hopeful prospects which might immune Lebanon from such recurrent cycles of proxy wars and surrogate victimization.

**Dr Madeleine Leonard**  
***School of Sociology and Social Policy, Queen’s University Belfast***

### **The Three Rs: Reiteration, Resistance and Resilience in the Lives of Children Growing up in Divided Cities**

Space has been depicted as central to understanding the nature of contemporary childhood (Matthews, 1992). According to Holloway and Valentine (2000) children’s identities are constituted in and through particular spaces. In exploring the links between spatiality and childhood, their work reveals the myriad of ways in which children’s lives are influenced by their surrounding environment. Drawing on the new sociology of childhood which emphasises children as active actors who are not only shaped by the wider society but in turn shape the wider society, their work highlights how children are active in the construction of their own life worlds. Children give meanings to spaces and places. While they often occupy shared spaces with adults, they modify adult meanings of place through their interaction with their everyday environments. The purpose of this paper is to explore the ways in which children occupy and manage space in one divided community in Northern Ireland. Drawing on stories, maps and focus group discussions with eighty teenagers from an interface area in Belfast, the paper reveals their perceptions and experiences of divided cities as risky landscapes. Within this locality children identified their homes, their schools, the immediate streets and mixed spaces such as the city centre as potentially risky places. Children respond to these risks in various ways at times reiterating traditional sectarian prejudices and at times resisting sectarian labels. In the process, children develop strategies of resilience which at times support and at times undermine the wider ideologies underpinning ethnic conflict in Northern Ireland.

**Dr. Debbie Lisle**  
***School of Politics, International Studies and Philosophy***  
***Queen's University Belfast***

### **Tourism and Commemoration: the Commodification of Violence in Post-Conflict Cities**

This paper examines the debates engulfing divided cities as they try to transform their recent histories of violence into a viable – and profitable – tourist experience. This period of transition poses two significant problems. Firstly, the overarching goals of reconciliation, consensus and peace are continually unsettled throughout the process of commemoration by competing groups wishing to enforce their own narratives of victimization. The paper looks at how recent memorials have tried to resist the discourse of victimization by offering more open-ended and challenging monuments. Secondly, local authorities must balance the tourist's short-term desire to 'touch' the authentic remnants of atrocity with the community's longer-term goals of preservation, commemoration and healing. Using examples from Belfast and Nicosia, this paper asks whether it is possible to cater to large numbers of tourists while simultaneously honouring the dead, preserving significant artefacts and providing a compelling history lesson.

**Prof Ulf Matthiesen**  
***European Ethnology, Humboldt University, Berlin, IRS Erkner***

### **KnowledgeScapes and Urban Development within Crisis- and Conflict-Situations -**

#### **Conceptual Framework, Governance Approach, Empirical Findings**

1. Based on the conceptual framework of KnowledgeScapes (Matthiesen 2005) an elaborated heuristic scheme of interactional dynamics (on the micro level), knowledge forms/cultures and a typology of respective *knowledge conflicts* is introduced – in order to reconstruct the many forms of conflictuous spatializations of knowledge within cities.
2. In a second step this approach gets connected with a governance process model actually being used within the EU-Project G-FORS (Governance for Sustainability).
3. In a third step these conceptual devices are used to analyse material stemming from site-oriented milieu-studies in twin cities along the polish border (Guben/Gubin; Frankfurt-Oder/Slubice) – concentrating on governance paradoxes, knowledge conflicts and new cooperation options within the EU-Enlargement process. A closer look on the former divided metropolis of Berlin, its respective KnowledgeScapes, problems of fit and conflict-mediated options might serve as an interesting contrast with additional material.

**Rami Nasrallah**  
***Director, International Peace and Cooperation Centre, Jerusalem***

### **Taxonomy of a conflict: Urban Planning for shaping a “different” Jerusalem**

The East Jerusalem Palestinian neighborhoods went through an accelerated urbanism under highly conflicted conditions. The absence of adequate planning for East Jerusalem Palestinian neighborhoods, and the “survival” urban methods developed by Palestinians in the last decade, has a significant influence on shaping the Palestinian urban fabric, and will have a tremendous effect on the Israeli thinking on how to deal with the new urban and demographic facts that are created as a result of 18,000 illegal houses built in East Jerusalem since 1996.

My paper will deal with three interrelated issues of Planning in Jerusalem; the high policies and the political agenda designed by the Israeli government for Jerusalem, the statutory planning and its relationship with these policies and how it's “used” in Palestinian

neighborhoods, and the way that Palestinian Jerusalemites adjust themselves with the physical and demographic realities created in the last five years, especially with the construction of the wall and the new “innovation” proposed by Israeli planning and administrative systems to strengthen the Jewish character of Jerusalem and its metropolitan area.

The paper is based on field work and case studies documenting the “up-to-date” urban realities and their implications on Jerusalem. These urban realities will be looked at from a wider perspective concerning the city environs and the macro national level conflict, and how these will affect the relationship between the city and its “hinterland”. The connections of Jerusalem with the West Bank, and the new ties resulting from the physical realities around Jerusalem - i.e. the wall and the dramatic deterioration of Jerusalem functionality as a central city for the Palestinians - will be considered a factor to analyze the urban functional impact on Jerusalem and the “new” type of Jerusalem we will have as a result to these realities. This paper will analyze the new Israeli master plan for Jerusalem, its practical means and implications on the Palestinians and its connection to the three levels of planning and un-planning in Jerusalem.

**Dr Wendy Pullan**  
***Department of Architecture, University of Cambridge***

### **Agon or Conflict?**

It is common to regard contested cities as problems to be solved; normally this involves attempts to remove the conflict. This paper takes as a loose hypothesis that, rather than an aberration, conflict is an integral aspect of the urban condition. While not to diminish the efforts of peace processes and negotiations, nor to condone violence, I suggest that we cannot banish conflict; rather we need to find constructive ways of channelling it and integrating it. It is an idea that originates in the ancient understanding of *agon*, as competition, struggle, or productive conflict.

Contemporary arguments for agonistic plurality reinforce social and political diversity as a much-desired goal, but they are often faulted for failing to address practical implications. I suggest that agon requires a vehicle for praxis, which the agonistic city, as a common ground for diverse and opposed factions, may fill. The city is particularly significant because of its reciprocities of institutional and popular life, which appear to be integral even in conditions of duress. This paper considers the possible role of agon within the urban common ground. Jerusalem is the primary locus for these observations.

**Prof Bruce Stanley**  
***International Relations Department, Huron University, London***

### **Conflict transformation within the world city network: beyond the usual suspects**

If we are to improve our planning and praxis in handling conflict in cities, we must deepen our understanding of how the transformation of conflict actually works itself out within the evolving world city network. Certainly the literature of contemporary conflict resolution and that of the new urbanism have rarely met, although they have much to say to each other, and there are numerous suggestions for planning and praxis that emerge from their joint consideration.

In particular, as we seek to move from the management of conflict towards its transformation, we must empower our preventive interventions, build greater capacity into our violence handling, and strengthen our peacebuilding within post-violence contexts. Such interventions, however, are dramatically shaped by three aspects of the contemporary city: the embedded nature of local actors within global urban networks; the search for citizenship that challenges contemporary proscriptions of political space; and the asymmetries of power that continue to deny options for change. The implications for policy and praxis that emerge from these

considerations push us toward specific interventions such as: enhancing the redundancy of critical paths within local transnational networks; empowering communication and credit flows in times of violence; subverting state regulatory power during the post-violence phase; supporting the informal economy during conflict prevention; and constructing local markets and public spaces during post-conflict peacebuilding.

Illustrations for the argument will intentionally be drawn from a wide range of cases in the Middle East beyond the usual examples of divided cities (Jerusalem, Nicosia) or war-torn urban communities (Beirut, Mogadishu).

**Prof Salim Tamari**  
***Sociology Department, Birzeit University***

### **War and the Transformation of Jerusalem's Urban Fabric**

The successive wars over Jerusalem have produced a radical remaking of the city's urban fabric, its ethnic identity, and its relationship to its hinterland. WWI was crucial in that it brought to an end its communitarian structure and introduced an era of nationalist contestation. Based on my reading of contemporary diaries, in particular family papers and unpublished soldiers' diaries from WWI, I will address three related themes about the city's break with its past and the introduction of new trajectories that defined the city's development during the Mandate period and in the post-1967 period.

The paper addresses three related themes

1. The duality of war's impact (and its carnage) on the city, generated by an atmosphere of despair and nonchalance among the city's population, while producing a sense of impending liberation from the military dictatorship.
2. The transformation of urban life-styles induced by widespread military conscription: a new sense of time (discrete), of intimacy (encounters between men and women), of desire (widespread prostitution); of de-centering the city (Jerusalem no longer the centre of the universe), and of impending doom (locust attack and spread of diseases).
3. Rupture of the established communitarian identity and the opening up of new ethnic and national identities.

The paper will focus on the unanticipated emancipatory consequence of war on normative behaviour, and the new conception of social space.

**Dr Haim Yacobi**  
***Department of Politics, Ben Gurion University***

### **The Israeli City as a Third Place**

*"[P]eople are never passive recipients of external initiatives, but rather always struggle within their own immediate contexts of constraints and opportunities to produce meaningful life with their own particular values and goals" (Beng-Lan, 2002: 202).*

This paper is an attempt to discuss the relevance of postcolonial theory and critic to the understanding of the production of Israeli urban spaces. The paper will question the tendency of the urban research to focus on formal processes that shape the urban from "above". In this way the perception concerning what the term "cityscape" appropriately does or does not describe reproduces a hegemonic narrative and serves its interests. The paper will discuss different sites such as Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Ashdod, Beer Sheva and Lod, claiming that postcolonial theory provides many useful concepts for understanding of the process of spatial production in these places. However, some postcolonial debates must be criticized for their focus on the discursive process that ignores the material dimensions of postcolonial reality. Following this I aim to acknowledge the centrality of practices that are being conducted in the

third space as a Third Place, i.e., a tangible site where postcolonial space is produced. A detailed examination of the Third Place will clarify the construction of a city as a modern practice that produces meaning and creates a place.

**Prof Oren Yiftachel**  
***Department of Geography, Ben Gurion University***

### **Urban Informality and Ethnic Conflict**

The paper explores the role of urban planning in shaping the condition known as 'urban informality' ('illegality'). It adopts a neo-Gramscian approach and focuses on 'ethnocratic' cities, characterized by the control and expansion of a dominant group over contested urban space, and by high levels of uneven ethno-class segregation. The paper suggests that urban informality constitutes a surface expression of the unresolved tensions between three main 'logics' driving the urban order: (a) capital and globalization; (b) governance; and (b) ethno-national control.

In ethnocratic cities, urban informality becomes a widespread, if undeclared, planning strategy. It allows the authorities, on the one hand, to continue the hegemonic representation of planning as an orderly and modernist practice, while on the other hand, to neglect, contain and oppress minorities defined as 'unplannable'. Planning acts in such settings both 'for' and 'against' informality, with a result of condemning large groups to the impoverished urban margins..

The paper illustrates the argument with examples from urban informality from several comparative ethnocratic settings, including Beer-Sheva, Israel; Tallinn, Estonia; and Colombo, Sri Lanka. It shows how the rules governing national planning are 'cracked' on the urban level, where the logics of capital accumulation and urban governance run counter to ethnocratic planning. The resulting growing urban informality provides short term appeasement, but lays the ground for protracted urban conflicts.