

2021

# Online Lecture Series on Understanding World Heritage Interpretation and Presentation

## Presentation: Delivering Multiple Values of World Heritage

2021 Online Lecture Series on World Heritage Interpretation and Presentation



WHIPIC



문화재청  
Cultural Heritage  
Administration

WHIPIC

Preparatory Office for International Centre for  
the Interpretation and Presentation of World Heritage Sites  
under the auspices of UNESCO

Preparatory Office for WHIPIC

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under the auspices of UNESCO

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# 2021

## Online Lecture Series on Understanding World Heritage Interpretation & Presentation

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## 2021 Online Lecture Series on Understanding World Heritage Interpretation & Presentation

### Presentation: Delivering Multiple Values of World Heritage

The need for inclusive and participatory World Heritage Interpretation and Presentation is continuously increasing to lead the world into a more peaceful and sustainable way with World Heritage Sites. Understanding issues that World Heritage Sites are facing and recognizing the role and importance of World Heritage interpretation and presentation are required.

Moreover, in 2021, the world suffered from one of the biggest threats it has faced for decades, the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to the pandemic, people got physically distanced from World Heritage Sites. Even in this situation, there was a constant need for a way of keeping people close to World Heritage by sharing the latest issues and opinions for the world's sustainable future with World Heritage.

Therefore, the preparatory office for the WHIPIC, 'International Centre for the Interpretation and Presentation of World Heritage Sites' had held the 2021 Online Lecture Series. Based on discussions from the 2020 Online Lecture Series, about World Heritage Interpretation, in 2021, World Heritage Presentation was the main topic of the second Online Lecture Series. The insightful and inspiring lectures with World Heritage professionals were held between April 2021 – November 2021.

The 2021 Online Lecture Series offered people a chance to deeply understand the significance of inclusive World Heritage interpretation and presentation by listening to World Heritage professionals' speeches. It also allowed sharing of the latest issues and their opinions on the sites online. More than 10,360 people (Facebook 5,800 & YouTube 4,600 as of December 2021) joined the lecture series. The lectures' recorded videos are uploaded on the WHIPIC's Facebook page and YouTube channel with open access.

To join the 2021 Online Lecture Series once again,

• **YouTube(@unesco whipic)**

[https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLqMXR8XFQv\\_iWgTRnxLP1TW9oL1AnJJ\\_S](https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLqMXR8XFQv_iWgTRnxLP1TW9oL1AnJJ_S)

• **Facebook(@unesco.whipic)**

<https://www.facebook.com/unesco.whipic>



The 2021 WHIPIC Online Lecture Series could be done thanks to our lecturers' generous support and insightful speeches on World Heritage Interpretation and Presentation.

## Understanding World Heritage Interpretation and Presentation

### Presentation: Delivering Multiple Values of World Heritage

April 2021 - November 2021

Lecture	Schedule	Title
1	15th Apr	Introduction to World Heritage Presentation
2	13th May	ICOM, Museums, Heritage Sites, Cultural Landscapes: a strategic relation
3	17th Jun	World Heritage and Tourism: looking for synergies
4	15th Jul	Heritage Interpretation, Digital Media and End-users
5	19th Aug	Speaking with a Changing World: Communicating the Heritage of the World
6	16th Sep	Community Engagement in Interpreting World Heritage Values
7	14th Oct	Heritage and Participatory Media in the Age of Data Technology

18th November **Special Discussion**  
Inclusive and Participatory World Heritage Interpretation & Presentation

- ※ Time Schedule will be informed through YouTube & Facebook of the Preparatory Office
- ※ The Schedule may partially change depending on circumstances

## Lecture 1

# Introduction to World Heritage Presentation



Mario Santana-Quintero  
Carleton University & ICOMOS

Mario Santana-Quintero, is a full professor at the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering (Carleton University) in Ottawa, Canada. He is also the Director of the NSERC Create program Heritage Engineering and faculty member of the Carleton immersive Media Studio Lab (CIMS). Besides his academic work in Canada, he is a guest professor at the Raymond Lemaire International Centre for Conservation (University of Leuven). Along with his academic activities, he serves as Secretary General of the International Council of Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), and he is the past president of the ICOMOS Scientific Committee on Heritage Documentation (CIPA). Furthermore, he has been a Getty Conservation Institute scholar and he has collaborated in several international projects in the field of heritage documentation for The Getty Conservation Institute, UNESCO, Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities, ICCROM, World Monuments Fund, UNDP, Welfare Association, and the Department of Culture and Tourism of Abu Dhabi.

**Lecture 1**

# Introduction to World Heritage Presentation

**Mario Santana-Quintero**  
Carleton University

**Slide 1: thanks for this opportunity and introduction**

- Let me take this opportunity to thank the International Centre for the Interpretation and Presentation of World Heritage Sites under the auspices of UNESCO for this privilege to participate in this distinguished lecture series in its second edition.
- I feel honored to be part of this important group of experts presenting their experience and wisdom in this critical issue of Interpretation and Presentation of World Heritage Sites (or properties).
- Equally, I am proud to follow the leadership of other speakers in the 2020 Online Lecture Series
- I hope you find my contribution both motivational and useful
- In this lecture, I will try to establish the role of presentation for World Heritage Sites, I am assuming the most of our attendees have heard about WH, I will remain general and, as a rooted educator, bring some challenges to you and our host
- I will shortly introduce the Convention, the impact of the pandemic in presenting fundamentals, principles, visitor experience expectations, infrastructure and technology requirements.
- Also, I would like to mention the ethical obligations of this type of work, emerging tools and the next steps.

**Slide 2: The UNESCO World Heritage Convention**

- The World Heritage Convention is the most potent international instrument that integrates nature conservation concepts and cultural properties in a single document.

- The Convention as an international tool for promoting protection, awareness and appreciation of heritage
- The Convention has acted as an international catalyst to protect heritage sites worldwide, particularly under challenging times.
- The role of the operational guidelines that detail procedures of the Convention,

**Slide 3: What are the benefits of UNESCO World Heritage**

According to the UNESCO manual on the preparation of World Heritage Nominations (United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) 2011), a WH property might provide the following benefits:

- Celebration for State Party and for the local community of the property as one of the most important places on Earth;
- a flagship for recognition and better protection for heritage in the life of the community.
- Interest in international cooperation and joint efforts in their conservation.
- Potential funding and support from donors, the World Heritage Fund, and
- techniques and practices for protection, conservation and management that can be applied to national and local heritage properties. But what about presentation, education and promotion of heritage!

**Slide 4: Outstanding Universal Value**

- The notion of WH Sites symbolically belonging to all people (Stubbs 2009, 66)
- The World Heritage Convention was established to recognize 'sites of Outstanding Universal Value' that are part of humankind's heritage as a whole, which deserves protection and transmission to future generations, which are essential for humanity. Presentation plays a vital role in this transmission process and provides awareness and significant opportunities for reconciliation and peace.
- Understanding the OUV and criteria should be the foundation of any presentation strategy.
- OUV of the property is expressed in attributes or features

**Slides 5 through 7: World Heritage properties under siege**

- Slide 5: Common threats are well identified and described, such as abandonment, climate change, development, visitors' pressure, neglect, disasters and conflict

- Slide 6: But the current pandemic and accompanying lockdowns have had an unprecedented impact on the enjoyment and conservation of cultural heritage. In particular how shall we present a WH site that is not physically accessible.
- Slide 7: The pandemic has caused partial and total restricted access to World Heritage Sites due to the danger of propagation of the virus - The livelihood of local communities has been affected by the lack of visitors to World Heritage Sites.

### **Slide 8: The opportunity that technologies have provided to access sites remotely**

- Government, academia, industry and public organizations have recognized the importance of digital technologies in mitigating and adapting to the realities of the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, artificial intelligence and supercomputers have been deployed to understand the virus's spread, develop treatments, deploy vaccines in record time, and design strategies to return to normal conditions.
- strengthened networks, online platforms, connectivity and telecommunications have allowed many people to remain at home. This digital revolution has allowed a substantial number of heritage organizations to quickly move their existing digital assets to social media and digital platforms, in particular for heritage:
  - Remote access to sites
  - Virtual visits
  - Guided tours using the internet
  - Breaking time zones: Connecting and networking

### **Slide 9: reopening World heritage Sites**

- But how can digital technologies improve risk reduction while access is limited and, eventually, ensure safe re-entry to these important places, this major question still remain unanswered, especially in the breach of a third wave of COVID-19 with new variants producing more challenges and a lack of balance in vaccine distribution around the world.

### **Slide 10: The role of ICOMOS as an Advisory Committee in presenting WHS**

- ICOMOS is a professional network of over ten thousand members and is an official advisory body to the World Heritage committee
- Drafting of doctrines as a framework for practice and theory

- Online activities during COVID, ICOMOS CIPA Emerging professionals have organized webinars on “Accessing Heritage Places from Home” for site managers
- As Secretary General I invite you to become a member of ICOMOS and I am at your disposal for more information

### **Slide 11: The ICOMOS Charter for the Interpretation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage Sites**

- The role of presentation is well defined in existing literature and doctrines, in particular of the
- The ICOMOS Charter for the Interpretation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage Sites (2008) (Ename Charter), which objectives are:
  - Facilitate understanding and appreciation
  - Communicate the meaning
  - Safeguard the tangible and intangible values
  - Respect the authenticity
  - Contribute to the sustainable conservation
  - Encourage inclusiveness
  - Develop technical and professional guidelines

### **Slide 12: Ename Charter Principles**

1. Access and Understanding
2. Information Sources
3. Attention to Setting and Context
4. Preservation of Authenticity
5. Planning for Sustainability
6. Concern for Inclusiveness
7. Importance of Research, Training, and Evaluation

### **Slide 13: A World Heritage Site: presentation strategy**

- World heritage is “inherently a spatial phenomenon, characterized by location, distribution and scale 256 (Graham, Ashworth, and Tunbridge 2000, 256)
- We have settings, components, attributes (and features), boundary, and buffer zones in many settings,



such as serial and transboundary sites. For example, the corridors of the Silk Road, in particular the Routes Network of Chang'an-Tianshan which covers components across three countries in Asia (UNESCO 2014)

- During the nomination process, a comparative analysis is prepared and a justification of inscription and criteria description, which can assist in designing the presentation.
- Attributes and features can have intangible elements
- Also, do not forget – a presentation can also raise awareness on attributes that are threatened
- Silberman indicates that presentation is one way, from the site to the visitor, however this is no longer through in a digitally connected world.
- The establishment of The International Centre for the Interpretation and Presentation of World Heritage Sites fulfills a gap in capacity building, research and mobilization of best practices in presentation

#### **Slide 14: Visitor experience dimension**

- The traditional visit to a World Heritage Site with a trained tour guide and panels are not the only way to present a site anymore
- Humanity is more connected than before, and the flow of information happens at the speed of light. Planning a trip and getting relevant information about its sites and practicalities can happen with a simple google search.
- However, with progress come challenges. It is essential to understand that the quality of the information can be compromised.
- Rather than interpret the site, the digital information might negatively impact its importance and affect the local community whose livelihoods depend on the values that attract tourists to the site.
- The visitor experience expectations should be conducted by an interdisciplinary group of heritage professionals who will respect the significance and integrity of World Heritage Sites while also acknowledging the privacy of communities. It is essential to ensure transparency in how digital content is collected and presented online and how these virtualized representations will create a tangible sense of community and pride.

Enhancing visitor's experience using digital technology provide excellent opportunities for World Heritage. But not the only ones. Local communities' benefit from sharing their knowledge as guides

#### **Slide 15: Presentation Infrastructure**

- According to the Ename Charter: Interpretive infrastructure refers to physical installations, facilities, and areas at or connected with a cultural heritage site that may be specifically utilized for interpretation and presentation, including those supporting interpretation via new and existing technologies (International Council of Monuments and Sites Scientific Committee on Interpretation and Presentation (ICIP) and 2008)

#### **Slide 16: the role of technologies**

- The adoption of digital methodologies offers an opportunity to develop principles, guidelines, and protocols for interpretation and presentation that could help site managers hire appropriate services and improve their overall application to enhance the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the site.
- The development of digital technologies in this sector promises to amplify the capacity to present World Heritage.
- When considering the best approach to adopting digital technologies, several factors should be considered to determine the workflow best suited to ensure the site's core mission. For example:
  - the collective view of the stakeholders (local communities, custodians, experts, etc.);
  - the typology, extent and nature of the World Heritage Site.
  - The amount of digital material available.
  - can these technologies give access to visitors who have been excluded in the past due to inadequate means to travel or access these sites;
  - the need to offer universal access to the sites and create a natural feeling of a place.
  - The types of digital infrastructure available within or external to the site managers; and
  - skilled labour availability.
  - The organization's capacity and the funding available to adopt digital strategies.

#### **Slide 17: Digital media**

- Digital media (or assets) refers to audio or visual information, like photos, video, audio files, or other created content, that is edited, stored, or accessed in digital form. When digital media are hosted on a platform, they become digital assets, which come in many different file formats, such as JPGs for images, MP4s for movies, etc.

**Slide 18: Digital tools**

- Digital tools are used to acquire and produce, as well as to view these media. Examples of acquisition tools include digital cameras (single or 360 degrees), drones that are equipped with vision systems, 3D scanners, and surveying instruments, all of which produce data that can be used in processes such as photogrammetry and 3D modelling.
- For 3D visualization, there is currently a growing range of available virtual reality (VR) viewers and headsets, such as Google Cardboard, Oculus Go, and Oculus Quest. Another visualizing approach is Mixed Reality (MR), an experience that can be offered by devices like the Microsoft HoloLens (Microsoft, 2020) and Magic Leap lenses (Magic leap, 2020). These can be used to create an onsite experience for people who are remotely connected.
- For example, using the Magic Leap lenses, a university professor could show students how a 3D scanner is used to record a heritage place's historic surface or explain weathering in a deteriorated construction assembly. Three-dimensional reconstruction can also be visualized using augmented Reality (AR), creating a digital experience that can be layered over Reality for the user.

**Slide 19: Digital tools: recording**

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**Slide 20: Digital tools: visualization**

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**Slide 21: Digital workflows for presentation**

- Digital workflows are the methods or approaches utilized by heritage recording specialists to carry out digital heritage recording of a heritage place, in this case, aimed at presentation.
- When digital media are utilized to produce a digital record for a conservation dossier or storytelling, the site's narrative must be hosted on a digital platform.

**Slide 22: Interfaces and Platforms**

- An interface can be physical, a linear sequence of documents, drawings and other graphics presenting the site.
- A digital platform is an electronic stage used to visualize, manage and communicate digital media, often publicly. Most popular platforms use photos, audio clips, and videos to communicate information. Panoramic photos, 360-degree images and videos, and 3D models are also becoming more popular.

**Slide 23: Virtual Tour Platform**

- Virtual tour platforms for accessing actual physical state (e.g. Matterport) are now being used to showcase historical buildings. A virtual tour is essentially several 360-degree photos or panoramas organized sequentially so that the user feels they are flowing through space. Within a tour, interactive hotspots can be added to show additional information about an object. Matterport is just one example of a company that offers this service.

**Slide 24: Augmented Reality or mixed reality platforms**

- Augmented Reality or mixed reality application is an immersive digital platform where digital information is layered on Reality. An example of this type of platform is the Time Looper application, whose developers offered a service called Time Looper Foundations at no cost to cultural institutions during the pandemic.

**Slide 25: Note on virtual reconstruction of World Heritage Sites**

- In terms of using technology to reconstruct a destroyed site for recovery digitally, it is crucial to consider the International Principles of Virtual Archaeology (Seville Principles). Adopted by ICOMOS in 2017, they provide a framework for the digital reconstruction of heritage sites.
- The eight principles describe the need for inter-disciplinarily, purpose, complementarity, authenticity, historic rigour, efficiency, scientific transparency, training and evaluation (International Forum of Virtual Archaeology, 2017).

**Slide 26: Sustainability of virtual visits**

- Views of Venice during the lockdown provided evidence that the pandemic has positively impacted the city: the canal waters are clear, and there are less pollution and uncontrolled tourism. This suggests the importance of undertaking further study to revise the carrying capacity estimates for the heritage site. It might be essential to develop strategies that take into account the site's physical integrity and attempt to mitigate pollution and climate change.
- It is easier than ever to communicate using social media and other services without the need to travel. This can positively affect climate change and its impacts by substantially reducing physical meetings and associated travel and replacing them with video calls.

**Slide 27: Ethics and professional obligations in Presentation of World Heritage Sites**

- Five basic ethical categories, based on the ICOMOS Ethical Principles (International Council of Monuments and Sites, 2017) and the Canadian Association of Heritage Professionals (CAHP) Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics (Canadian Association of Heritage Professionals, 2019)

**Slide 28: Ethical Conduct and best practice**

- It is related to ethical conduct - the heritage information-technology team's commitment to showing respect, integrity, impartiality, and accountability while conducting their activities and maintaining open, upright and tolerant attitudes. It also addresses issues related to conflicts of interest.
- related to best practice - professional advice and services that heritage information-technology specialists render to potential clients or community stakeholders and accessibility, retrieval and posterity of records produced by specialists for the enjoyment of future generations

**Slide 29: Ethical obligations towards Cultural heritage, public and communities**

- related to cultural heritage - profound respect for the values and integrity of cultural heritage
- related to the public and communities - respects the privacy rights of communities and their right to control how knowledge about their heritage is shared

**Slide 30: Qualifications**

- Related to qualifications – the presentation team should be defined according to the needs of the site.
- Appropriate skills, such as certification or university training, knowledge of technology, and expertise in the heritage field, should be required, particularly preparedness and recovery experience.

**Slide 31: Emerging tools**

- digital data should support the well-being of stakeholders and the World Heritage Property
- Shortly, it will be possible to utilize machine learning applications to assess the impact of visitors? and analyze sites using smartphones and social media.
- Brilliant and novel recording tools with portable devices and dissemination technologies have increased exponentially.
- Mixed Reality and Digital Twins are also essential to be considered in strategies, in particular, to host different narratives about the sites?.
- The Our World Heritage theme on Transformational Impacts of Information Technology offers an excellent opportunity to network and prepare new policies for presentation and cataloguing existing approaches, apps, open data and training material; I invite you to join us.

**Slide 32: Notes on Emerging tools**

- MIT's Unmasking Tourism in Venice research by Ignaccolo and his team on How tourism dynamics unfold within the built environment is an example of using data for understanding the impact of tourism and could be very important for presentation strategies
- Australia's Mogumber VR project focuses on the development of a virtual reality environment for reconciliation. This project collaborates with the Australian Aboriginal Communities and Curtin University to assist in the healing process for survivors and families traumatized by experiences in the Mogumber Native Mission (1951-74) using virtual reality.

- The IDiscover initiative has been developing an “inclusive platform for cultural mapping, community engagement and place branding that’s simple and affordable” (IDiscovery Academy, 2021).

**Slide 33: Next steps**

- Can we create a framework for the presentation of World Heritage Sites based on the charters?
- Can we define the skills required by a multidisciplinary team of experts to prepare an inclusive presentation of WHS connecting with the citizens?
- Can we develop technologies for WHS presentations that are purposed built?
- How the International Centre for the Interpretation and Presentation of World Heritage Sites will assist in this and how these lectures can contribute
- Finally, I would like to thank Christina Cameron for her advice and recommendations for this lecture.

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LECTURE 1 – 15 APRIL 2021




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<b>April</b> Introduction to World Heritage Presentation	<b>May</b> ICOM, Museums, Heritage Sites, Cultural Landscapes : a strategic relation	<b>June</b> World Heritage and Tourism : Looking for synergies	<b>July</b> Digital Technology for Participatory World Heritage Presentation
<b>August</b> Visitor-centered World Heritage Presentation	<b>September</b> Community Engagement in Interpreting World Heritage Values	<b>October</b> Heritage and Participatory Media in the Age of Date Technology	<b>November</b> Inclusive and Participatory World Heritage Interpretation & Presentation

PRESENTATION the **way** in which something is offered, shown, explained, etc. **to others**

LECTURE 1 – 15 APRIL 2021

## The UNESCO World Heritage Convention



- The World Heritage Convention is the most potent international instrument
- Integrates nature conservation concepts and cultural properties
- An international tool for promoting protection, awareness and appreciation of heritage
- International catalyst to protect heritage sites worldwide, particularly under challenging times.
- It has Operational guidelines that detail procedures of the Convention: identification, protection, conservation, **presentation and transmission to future generations of cultural and natural heritage of Outstanding Universal Value.**

Paphos, Cyprus



## World Heritage under siege


abandonment, climate change, development, visitors' pressure, neglect, disasters and conflict



LECTURE 1 - 15 APRIL 2021


## UNESCO World Heritage's benefits

- **Celebration for State Party and for the local community** of the property as one of the most important places on Earth;
- **Flagship for recognition and better protection for heritage in the life of the community.**
- Interest in international cooperation and joint efforts in their conservation.
- Potential funding and support from donors, the World Heritage Fund, and
- techniques and practices for protection, conservation and management that can be applied to national and local heritage properties. **But what about presentation, education and promotion of heritage**



Ciudad Universitaria de Caracas, Venezuela

(UNESCO 2011)

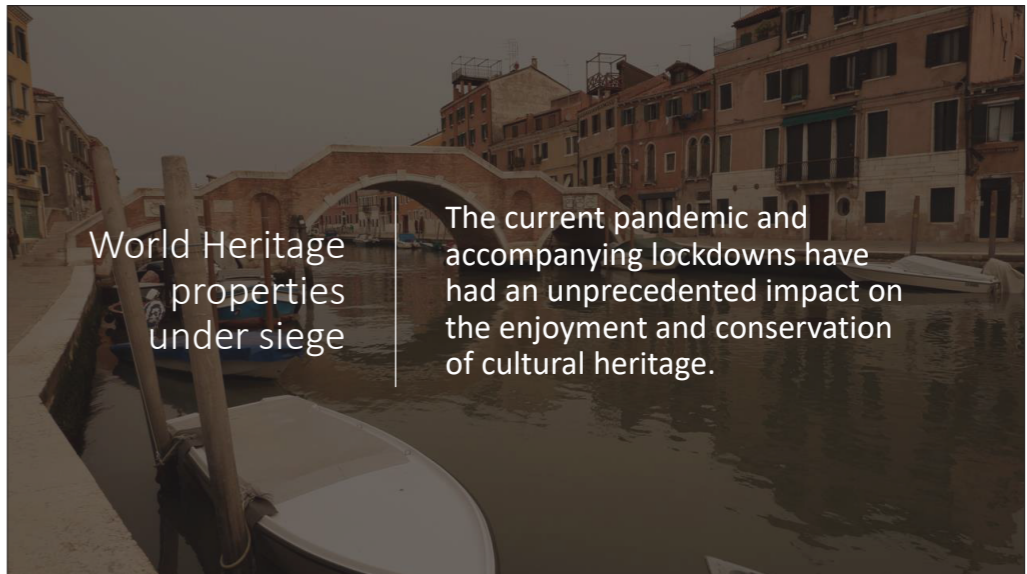


## Outstanding Universal Value

- The notion of WH Sites symbolically belonging to all people (Stubbs 2009, 66)
- The World Heritage Convention was established to recognize 'sites of Outstanding Universal Value' that are part of humankind's heritage as a whole, which deserves protection and transmission to future generations, which are essential for humanity. Presentation plays a vital role in this transmission process and provides awareness and significant opportunities for reconciliation and peace .
- Understanding the OUV and criteria should be the foundation of any presentation strategy
- OUV of the property is expressed in attributes or features

Rideau Canal, Canada

LECTURE 1 - 15 APRIL 2021



## World Heritage properties under siege

The current pandemic and accompanying lockdowns have had an unprecedented impact on the enjoyment and conservation of cultural heritage.

## World Heritage properties under siege

90% of world heritage sites partially or completely closed



Public access to World Heritage sites - 1st April 2020

Public access to World Heritage sites - 6th July 2020

Legend: Partly open (light blue), World Heritage sites closed (red), World Heritage sites open (dark blue)

The livelihood of local communities affected by the lack of visitors

<https://en.calameo.com/read/0033299728da57f479a93>



### The opportunity that technologies have provided to access sites remotely

- Government, academia, industry and public organizations have recognized the importance of digital technologies in mitigating and adapting to the realities of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Artificial intelligence and supercomputers have been deployed to understand the virus's spread, develop treatments, deploy vaccines in record time, and design strategies to return to normal conditions.
- Strengthened networks, online platforms, connectivity and telecommunications
- Heritage organizations to quickly move their existing digital assets to social media and digital platforms, in particular for heritage:
  - Remote access to sites
  - Virtual visits
  - Guided tours using the internet
  - Breaking time zones: Connecting and networking

Paphos, Cyprus



### The ICOMOS Charter for the Interpretation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage Sites

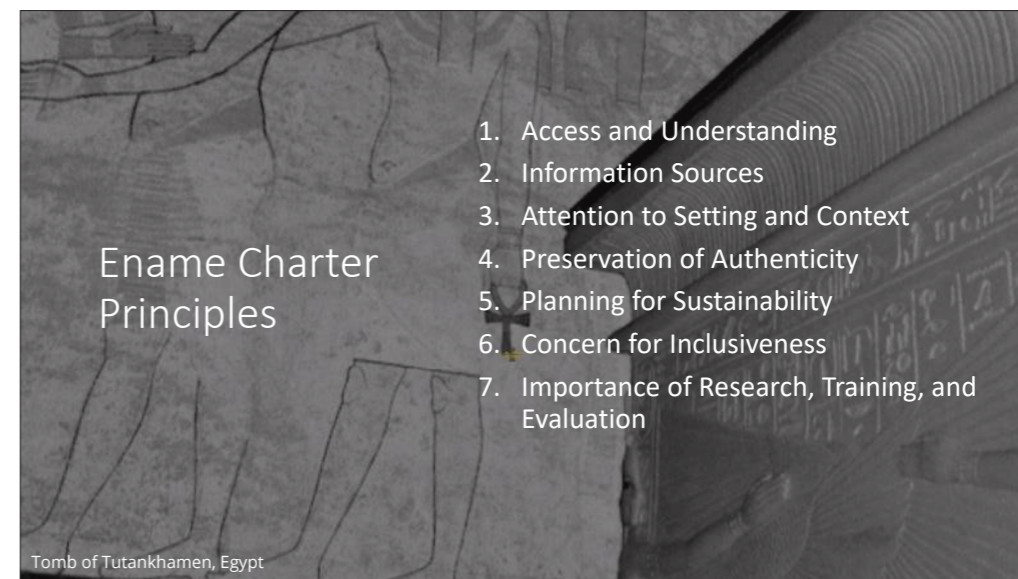
- The ICOMOS Charter for the Interpretation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage Sites (2008) (Ename Charter):
  - Facilitate understanding and appreciation
  - Communicate the meaning
  - Safeguard the tangible and intangible values
  - Respect the authenticity
  - Contribute to the sustainable conservation
  - Encourage inclusiveness
  - Develop technical and professional guidelines

Archaeological Sites of the Island of Meroe, Sudan

### Reopening World heritage Sites



- How can digital technologies improve risk reduction while access is limited and, eventually, ensure safe re-entry to these important places



### Ename Charter Principles

1. Access and Understanding
2. Information Sources
3. Attention to Setting and Context
4. Preservation of Authenticity
5. Planning for Sustainability
6. Concern for Inclusiveness
7. Importance of Research, Training, and Evaluation

Tomb of Tutankhamen, Egypt



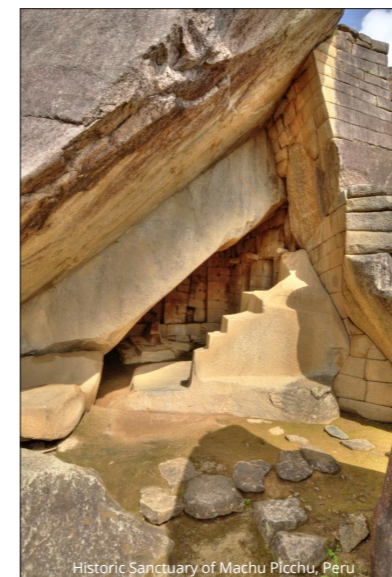
## ICOMOS

### Advisory Committee

- 10,000+ A professional network
- ICOMOS and the World Heritage Convention
- Drafting of doctrines as a framework for practice and theory
- Online activities during COVID, ICOMOS CIPA Emerging professionals have organized webinars on "Accessing Heritage Places from Home" for site managers

[www.icomos.org](http://www.icomos.org)

Bagan, Myanmar



### A World Heritage Site: presentation strategy

- Inherently a spatial phenomenon, characterized by location, distribution and scale (Graham, Ashworth, and Tunbridge 2000, 256)
- Settings, components, attributes (and features), boundary, and buffer zones in many settings, such as serial and transboundary sites.
- From the nomination process:
  - Comparative analysis
  - Justification of inscription
  - Criteria description
- Attributes and features can have intangible elements
- A presentation can also raise awareness on attributes that are threatened
- Silberman – one way communication
- The establishment of The International Centre for the Interpretation and Presentation of World Heritage Sites fulfills a gap in capacity building, research and mobilization of best practices in presentation

Historic Sanctuary of Machu Picchu, Peru



Historic Sanctuary of Machu Picchu, Peru

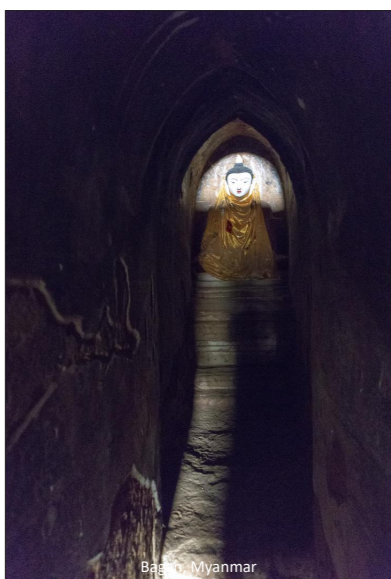
## Visitor experience dimension

- The traditional visit to a World Heritage Site with a trained tour guide and panels
- Humanity is more connected than before, and the flow of information happens at the speed of light. Planning a trip and getting relevant information about its sites and practicalities can happen with a simple google search.
- It is essential to understand that the quality of the information can be compromised.
- Rather than interpret the site, the digital information might negatively impact its importance and affect the local community whose livelihoods depend on the values that attract tourists to the site.
- The visitor experience expectations should be conducted by an interdisciplinary group of heritage professionals who will respect the significance and integrity of World Heritage Sites while also acknowledging the privacy of communities. It is essential to ensure transparency in how digital content is collected and presented online and how these virtualized representations will create a tangible sense of community and pride.
- Enhancing visitor's experience using digital technology provide excellent opportunities for World Heritage. But not the only ones. Local communities benefit from sharing their knowledge as guides

## Presentation Infrastructure

- Interpretive infrastructure refers to physical installations
- Facilitates
- Areas at or connected with a cultural heritage site that may be specifically utilized for interpretation and presentation, including those **supporting interpretation via new and existing technologies**

(International Council of Monuments and Sites Scientific Committee on Interpretation and Presentation (ICIP) and 2008)



Bagan, Myanmar

## The role of technologies

- Adoption of digital methodologies offers
  - Develop principles
  - Guidelines, and
  - Protocols for interpretation and presentation
- Digital technologies might amplify the capacity to present World Heritage.
- Adopting digital technologies, to be consider:
  - the collective view of the stakeholders
  - the typology, extent and nature of the World Heritage Site.
  - The amount of digital material available.
  - Give access to visitors who have been excluded in the past due to inadequate means to travel or access these sites;
  - Offer universal access to the sites and create a natural feeling of a place.
  - The types of digital infrastructure available locally
  - Skilled labour availability. The organization's capacity and the funding available to adopt digital strategies.



Rideau canal, Canada

## Digital media

LOW INTERACTIVITY HIGH INTERACTIVITY

- |  |                      |   |  |   |
|--|----------------------|---|--|---|
| PDFs<br>AutoCAD<br>drawings<br>Audio clips<br>Photos | Animations<br>Videos | Panoramic<br>photos<br>Virtual tours<br>Google maps | Virtual tours<br>with hotspots<br>Passive virtual<br>reality | Active virtual reality<br>Augmented reality |
|--|----------------------|---|--|---|



© Michelle Duong

## Digital tools

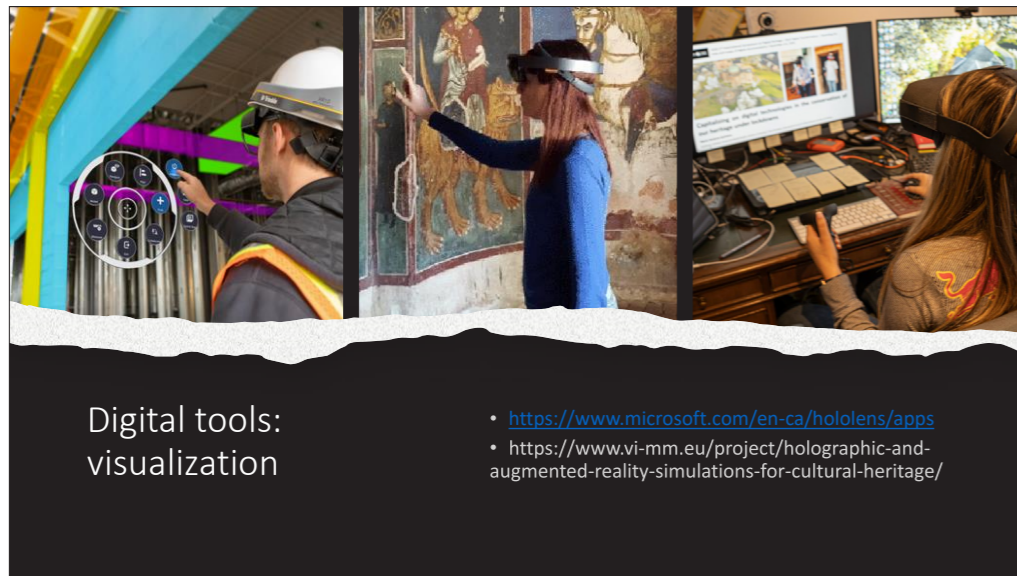
- Digital tools are used to acquire and produce
  - digital cameras (single or 360 degrees)
  - drones that are equipped with vision systems
  - 3D scanners, and surveying instruments
- For 3D visualization - virtual reality (VR) viewers and headsets:
  - Google Cardboard
  - Oculus Go
  - Oculus Quest.
  - Mixed Reality (MR), an experience that can be offered by devices like the Microsoft HoloLens



Church of Kuño Tambo, Peru



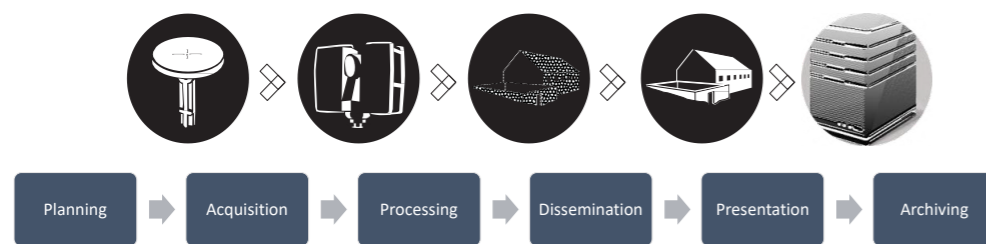
## Digital tools: recording



### Digital tools: visualization

- <https://www.microsoft.com/en-ca/hololens/apps>
- <https://www.vi-mm.eu/project/holographic-and-augmented-reality-simulations-for-cultural-heritage/>

### Digital workflows for presentation



- When digital media are utilized to produce a digital record for a conservation dossier or storytelling, the site's narrative must be hosted on a digital platform.

### Interfaces and Platforms



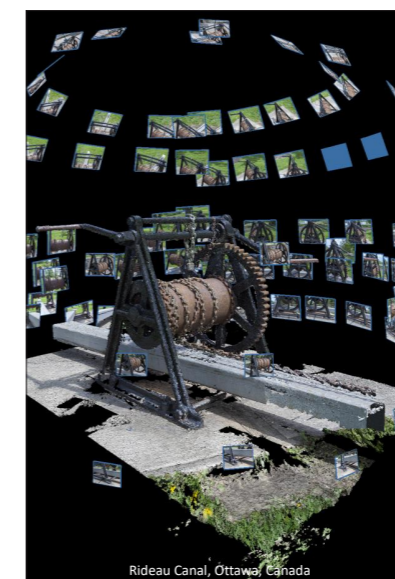
### Virtual Tour Platform

- Accessing actual physical state are now being used to showcase historical buildings.
- A virtual tour is essentially several 360-degree photos or panoramas organized sequentially so that the user feels they are flowing through space.
- Within a tour, interactive hotspots can be added to show additional information about an object.



### Augmented Reality or mixed reality platforms

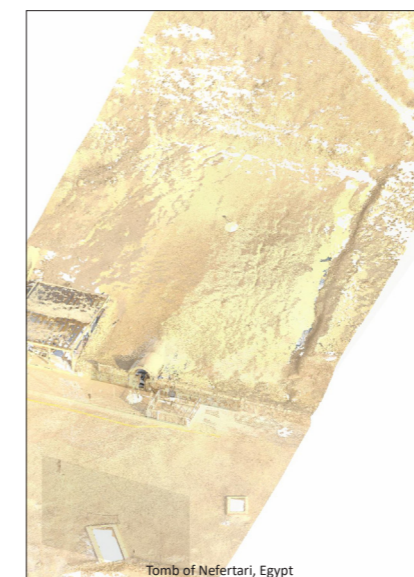
- Augmented Reality or mixed reality application is an immersive digital platform where digital information is layered on Reality.
- An example of this type of platform is the Time Looper application, whose developers offered a service called Time Looper Foundations at no cost to cultural institutions during the pandemic.



Rideau Canal, Ottawa, Canada

### Note on virtual reconstruction of World Heritage Sites

- In terms of using technology to reconstruct a destroyed site for recovery digitally, it is crucial to consider the International Principles of Virtual Archaeology (Seville Principles). Adopted by ICOMOS in 2017, they provide a framework for the digital reconstruction of heritage sites.
- The eight principles describe the need for inter-disciplinarity, purpose, complementarity, authenticity, historic rigour, efficiency, scientific transparency, training and evaluation (International Forum of Virtual Archaeology, 2017).



Tomb of Nefertari, Egypt





### Sustainability of virtual visits

- Views of Venice during the lockdown provided evidence that the pandemic has positively impacted the city: the canal waters are clear, and there are less pollution and uncontrolled tourism. This suggests the importance of undertaking further study to revise the carrying capacity estimates for the heritage site. It might be essential to develop strategies that take into account the site's physical integrity and attempt to mitigate pollution and climate change.
- It is easier than ever to communicate using social media and other services without the need to travel. This can positively affect climate change and its impacts by substantially reducing physical meetings and associated travel and replacing them with video calls.

Jerusalem



### Ethics and professional obligations in Presentation of World Heritage Sites

- Five basic ethical categories, based on the ICOMOS Ethical Principles (International Council of Monuments and Sites, 2017) and the Canadian Association of Heritage Professionals (CAHP) Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics (Canadian Association of Heritage Professionals, 2019)

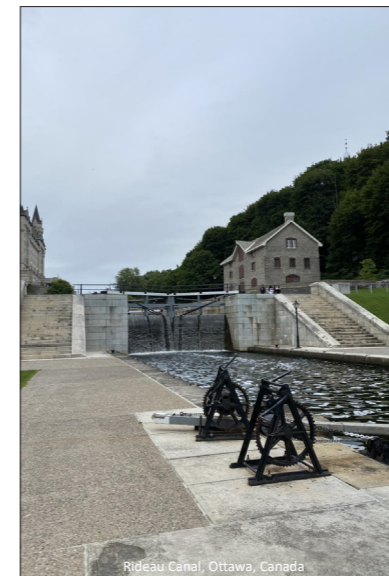
Pompeii, Italy



### Ethical Conduct and best practice

- It is related to **ethical conduct** - the heritage information-technology team's commitment to showing respect, integrity, impartiality, and accountability while conducting their activities and maintaining open, upright and tolerant attitudes. It also addresses issues related to conflicts of interest.
- related to **best practice** - professional advice and services that heritage information-technology specialists render to potential clients or community stakeholders and accessibility, retrieval and posterity of records produced by specialists for the enjoyment of future generations

Bandiamir, Afghanistan



### Ethical obligations towards Cultural heritage, public and communities

- **Cultural heritage** - profound respect for the values and integrity of cultural heritage
- **Respect to public and communities** - privacy rights of communities and their right to control how knowledge about their heritage is shared

Rideau Canal, Ottawa, Canada



### Qualifications

- **Requirement of skills and qualifications** – the presentation team should be defined according to the needs of the site.
- **Certification** or university training, knowledge of technology, and expertise in the heritage field, should be required, particularly in presentation experience.

Burial chamber, Tomb of Tutankhamen, Egypt



### Emerging tools

- Digital data should support the well-being of stakeholders and the World Heritage Property
- Shortly, it will be possible to utilize machine learning applications to assess the impact of visitors? and analyze sites using smartphones and social media.
- Brilliant and novel recording tools with portable devices and dissemination technologies have increased exponentially.
- Mixed Reality and Digital Twins are also essential to be considered in strategies, in particular, to host different narratives about the sites?
- The Our World Heritage theme on Transformational Impacts of Information Technology offers an excellent opportunity to network and prepare new policies for presentation and cataloguing existing approaches, apps, open data and training material
- Our World Heritage: <http://ourworldheritage.org>

Sultanate of Oman

## Notes on emerging tools

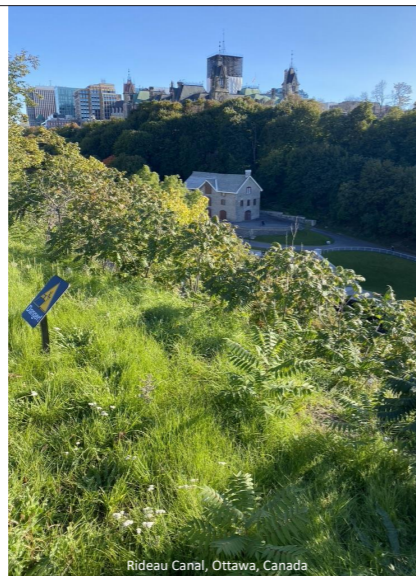
- MIT's Unmasking Tourism in Venice: How tourism dynamics unfold within the built environment: <http://www.overtourismvenice.mit.edu/#tourism-index>
- Australia's Mogumber VR project focuses on the development of a virtual reality environment for reconciliation <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1177180120948277>
- The IDiscover initiative <https://i-discoveracademy.com/about/> for participatory presentation of WH sites



## Next steps

- Can we create a **framework for the presentation of World Heritage Sites** ?
- Can we define the **skills required by a multidisciplinary team of experts to prepare an inclusive presentation of WHS connecting with the citizens?**
- Can we **develop technologies** for WHS presentations that are purposed built?
- **How the International Centre for the Interpretation and Presentation of World Heritage Sites will assist in this and how these webinars can contribute**

Thanks Christina Cameron for her advice and recommendations for this lecture.



Rideau Canal, Ottawa, Canada



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## Lecture 2

# ICOM, Museums, Heritage Sites, Cultural Landscapes : a strategic relation



Alberto Garlandini  
ICOM (International Council of Museums)

Alberto Garlandini is a museologist and expert in the management of cultural heritage. He is President of ICOM and has held several functions within ICOM since 2005, including Chair of ICOM Italy and Chair of the Organising Committee of ICOM Milan 2016. He is President of the Scientific Committee of Trento's Museo delle Scienze, member of the Scientific Committee of Brescia Musei Foundation, President of the Abbonamento Musei Association of Aosta Valley, Lombardy, Piedmont, and was on the Board of Directors of the National Museum of Palazzo Ducale in Mantua (2015-2021). He was a speaker at the UNESCO High Level Forum on Museums, Shenzhen, China and at the High-Level Panel on the 50th anniversary of the UNESCO 1970 Convention.

He has been appointed by the Italian Ministry of Cultural Heritage and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in national commissions such as the Commission for the Reform of State Museums and the National Museum System, in the Commission for the definition of national standards for the museums' management and in the Commission for the Promotion of Italian Culture Abroad.

He delivers lectures at universities and international conferences and has been widely published in Italian, English, French and Spanish.

## Lecture 2

# ICOM, Museums, Heritage Sites, Cultural Landscapes: a strategic relation

Alberto Garlandini  
ICOM (International Council of Museums)

*This paper is a transcript of the online lecture that Alberto Garlandini gave to WHIPIC on May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021*

What is my lecture about? Firstly, I will deal with ICOM's mission, global network and action. Secondly, I will focus on the social and territorial role of museums in the contemporary age and in the global change. Thirdly, I will address ICOM's and museums' commitment in the fight against the illicit trafficking of culture property. Lastly, I will highlight the role of museums and heritage for local development and for the attainment of United Nations' global goals for sustainable development.

## ***1. The International Council of Museums: its mission and action***

ICOM was founded on 16 November 1946 in Paris, during the first UNESCO conference. Chauncey Jerome Hamlin, the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo Museum of Science (United States) and George Salles, Director of the Musées de France, convened the Constitutive Assembly of ICOM at the Musée du Louvre in Paris. This event gathered eminent museum directors from fifteen countries and the support of many others from all over the world. Facing the disaster and ruins of World War II, ICOM's founding fathers thought that culture, museums and heritage were indispensable to build a peaceful, educated and prosperous world.

It is not well known that ICOM had a predecessor. In 1926 the International Office of Museums OIM was established: it was an internal structure of the League of Nations, the predecessor of the United Nations. OIM was very active for more than 10 years and in 1936 organized a conference on museums

in Paris that had a remarkable role in the history of Museology and Museography. Unfortunately, moving towards World War II, the League of Nations, and consequently OIM, entered in a dramatic crisis. OIM was officially closed in 1946.

In the first 20 years ICOM was an association of museum directors. However, even if ICOM members were limited, ICOM conferences dealt with important issues and were milestones in the history of museology and of global museum community. In the Seventies ICOM changed its Statutes and Internal Rules and became an open organization of both museums and museum professionals. ICOM has individual members (the professionals) and institutional members (the museums). The Statutes state what a museum is<sup>1</sup> and who museum professionals are<sup>2</sup>. Since the Seventies ICOM increased exponentially its role and members. Now ICOM is a global association made up of 49,000 professionals and museums from more than 140 countries. Our association comprises 174 National and International Committees, Regional Alliances, and Affiliated Organizations. The National Committees represent ICOM and its members' interests at national level and contribute to the realization of ICOM's programs. The International Committees are professional bodies dealing with different issues related to museums' life and activities. We have 32 International committees. Some of them are committed to the specializations of museums: fine arts, ethnography, history, archeology and so on. Some International Museums deal with transversal issues such as education, museology, conservation, exhibition exchange. The 7 Regional Alliances, such as ICOM Arab, ICOM ASPAC (Asia-Pacific countries), ICOM LAC (Latin America and Caribbean countries), ICOM Europe are composed by the National Committees of the Region. They foster cooperation and dialogue, mutual assistance and knowledge and experience exchange. The 22 Affiliated Organizations, such as FIHRM the Federation of International Human Rights Museums, Hands On! the International Association of Children in Museums, MINOM the International Movement for a New Museology, are autonomous organizations. They are governed by their own constitution and rules that shall not conflict with ICOM's objectives and Code of Ethics.

What is the mission of ICOM? I report what is stated in ICOM's Statutes. ICOM is a nonprofit association subject to French Law and a non-governmental organization that maintains formal relations with UNESCO and has a consultative status with United Nations Economic and Social Council. ICOM is committed to the research, conservation, continuation and communication to society of the world's natural and cultural heritage, present and future, tangible and intangible.

1. The definition of museum in the present Statutes is: "A museum is a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment." (Art. 3 Section 1)

2. The definition of museum professionals in the present Statutes is: "Museum professionals include all staff of the museums and institutions qualifying as museums in accordance with the definition stated within the scope of Article 3, Section 1 and 2 and persons who, in a professional capacity, have as their main activity to provide services, knowledge and expertise for museums and the museum community." (Art. 3 Section 3)

How does ICOM implement its mission? In pre-COVID times, each year ICOM organized more than 300 conferences all over the world. The number of conferences and meetings organized by ICOM has now increased thanks to the online and hybrid conferences that are normal in times of pandemic sanitary restrictions.

The most important global meeting organized by ICOM is the ICOM Triennial General Conference. It convenes thousands of museum and heritage professionals from all over the world. The last General Conference was held in Kyoto, Japan in 2019 and was attended by 4,700 professionals. In 2016 the General Conference was held in Milan, Italy. In 2013, it was organized in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and in 2010 it was in Shanghai, China. The 2022 General Conference will be in Prague, Czechia.

The most known ICOM event is the International Museum Day. It was established in 1977 to increase public awareness of the role of museums. Each year, a specific, relevant theme is decided by ICOM and discussed in the museums all over the world. In the week of the 18th of May, museums plan creative events, activities and debates related to the International Museum Day theme. In 2020 and 2021 the event was online and had million users on social media. The 2021 theme was “The Future of Museum: Recover and Reimagine”.

## 2. ICOM's Code of Ethics for Museums

ICOM is a leading force in ethical matters and the Code of Ethics for Museums<sup>3</sup> is ICOM's cornerstone and a major contribution to the management of museums and the work of museum professionals. The ICOM Code is translated in 39 languages and sets out general principles accepted by the international museum community, as well as minimum standards of conduct and performance to which museum staff throughout the world aspire. It consists of eight principles supported by guidelines for desirable professional practice. It deals with protection and promotion of cultural heritage, management and display of collections, public role of museums, access to culture, collaboration with the community of origin of collections, professional conduct and so on.

The ICOM Code is constantly updated and revised on the basis of societies and museums' changes. The present edition of the Code of Ethics for Museums was approved by acclamation by the 21st General Assembly of ICOM in Seoul (Republic of Korea) on 8 October 2004 and was the result of a six-year revision of the previous version. The first ICOM general document on ethics for museums, titled *Ethics of Acquisition*, was issued in 1970. Later, a full Code of Professional Ethics was adopted unanimously by the 15th General Assembly of ICOM in Buenos Aires (Argentina) on 4<sup>th</sup> November 1986. That document was amended by the 20th General Assembly in Barcelona (Spain) on 6<sup>th</sup> July

3. The Code of Ethics for Museums is published in ICOM's website: <http://icom.museum/the-vision/code-of-ethics/> [Accessed on 5 December 2021]

2001 and renamed *ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums*. The respect of the ICOM Code is a binding commitment for ICOM members. A member's infringement of its principles will terminate his/her membership status.

On the basis of its prescriptive force, it may have different impacts on the management of museums and cultural heritage, on national and international policies, as well as on jurisdiction.

In most countries the respect of the ICOM Code has no legislative value or prescriptive force. However, the ICOM Code is considered a global soft law. With the term soft law, I refer to a provision which does not have any legally binding force but sets standards of conduct universally accepted. As a soft law, the ICOM Code has a great moral value recognized not only by ICOM members and the museum professional community but also by many other public and private bodies. Although it has a not-binding force, its reference role in the daily management of museums and heritage, as well as in jurisdiction is significant. The ICOM Code can also become a legal requirement. In many countries, such as Italy, the respect of the ICOM Code is stated by law and it has acquired a binding, prescriptive force.

## 3. The UNESCO 2015 Recommendation on museums

A remarkable case of direct reference to the ICOM Code in an international instrument is the UNESCO *Recommendation concerning the Protection and Promotion of Museums and Collections, their Diversity and their Role in Society*, adopted at the 38th session of the UNESCO General Conference in November 2015. Its draft was the remarkable result of the close cooperation between ICOM and UNESCO.

UNESCO Recommendations are non-binding instruments, so Member States are required to take legislative or other measures to implement Recommendations' principles and norms. The 2015 Recommendation defines the policies for museums and heritage that the Member States are invited to promote. It raises awareness of the importance of museums in today's societies and highlights their new social role as well as their primary functions: preservation, research, communication and education.

The UNESCO Recommendation on museums includes the definition of museum given by the ICOM Code of Ethics and deems the ICOM Code to be the most widely shared reference text regarding good practices for the functioning, protection and promotion of museums and heritage. The Recommendation encourages Member States to promote its adoption and dissemination and to use it to inform the development of standards, museum policies and national legislation.

The UNESCO Members States' implementation of the 2015 Recommendation will enhance the role and legal impact of the ICOM Code.

#### **4. Museums and heritage sites**

ICOM has both individual and institutional members. All those who in a professional manner practice tasks within the scope of a museum qualify for ICOM membership. The tasks do not require a specific managerial or academic level. However, in the case of volunteers, time use and professionalism must correspond to a museum employee's<sup>4</sup>.

The definition of museum is included in ICOM Code of Ethics and Statutes (see note 1). ICOM Statutes and Rules state that aside from institutions designated as museums, also nature reserves, natural, archaeological and ethnographic monuments and sites, historical monuments and sites requiring the execution of museum-related activities can qualify as museums<sup>5</sup>. Many heritage sites all over the world are considered museums and are ICOM institutional members. Many professionals working in heritage sites are ICOM individual members.

There are many museums inside or next to heritage sites. These museums usually conserve and exhibit collections related to the sites' history. They communicate, promote and interpret the heritage sites and give informative access to sites' visitors. In Italy there are 55 world heritage sites and almost all of them are strictly correlate with the activities of museums. This is one of the many reasons why Italy is known as "a great open-air museum". From one hand, you cannot understand Italy and Italian heritage sites and historical centers without the support of Italian museums. On the other hand, you cannot understand museums without their relations with historical sites and cities.

On the basis of the last UNESCO research there are 104,000 museums all over the world. Each of them is unique. Diversity is the key word in the international museum community. The interaction between museums and sites is part of this diversity.

#### **5. Museums are part of global change: the number of museums has boomed**

Museums are changing as the world is changing. Museums are part of global change. ICOM is reflecting on the impact on museums of the challenges that our changing societies are facing: inequality and racism, migration and inclusion, diversity and decolonization, urban regeneration, digital revolution, climate change, and now pandemics.

4. See ICOM Internal Rules art. 2.2 Individual Members in ICOM Web Site [https://icom.museum/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/2017\\_ICOM\\_InternalRules\\_EN.pdf](https://icom.museum/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/2017_ICOM_InternalRules_EN.pdf) [Accessed on 5 December 2021]

5. See ICOM Internal Rules art. 2.1.1 Institutional Members Definition and art. 2.1.2 Institutions qualifying as museums in ICOM Web Site [https://icom.museum/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/2017\\_ICOM\\_InternalRules\\_EN.pdf](https://icom.museum/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/2017_ICOM_InternalRules_EN.pdf) [Accessed on 5 December 2021]

How are museums changing? First of all, I would like to focus on the more visible change. The number of museums has boomed in a few years. First, museums boomed in Western countries, where around three quarters of museums were established after World War II. In Italy, 84% of the 5,000 museums were founded after 1960. In the 21<sup>st</sup> Century the birth of new museums in western countries has slowed down and now the number of museums is almost stable.

A significant growth of new museums is now clearly manifest in the urbanizing and developing countries. China is a remarkable example. In China, over the last 10 years, the number of registered museums has grown from 2,970 museums to almost 5,000 museums with an increase of hundreds of museums per year. We are talking about great museums like the new City Museum of Luoyang, one of the Four Great Ancient Capitals of China, that I visited recently. This trend of growth is visible in many other developing countries.

#### **6. Museums are part of global change: the social and extended role of museums**

Revisiting UNESCO's 1960 *Recommendation on museums' accessibility*, in 1972 UNESCO and ICOM<sup>6</sup> organized the Santiago de Chile Round Table<sup>7</sup>. The Round Table brought attention to the social role of museums and the need for a 'democratisation of culture'. Its final Declaration proposed the idea of a new holistic museum integrated with a multidisciplinary approach: a new 'society-serving museum' able to show visitors 'their place in the world and make them aware of their problems, as individuals and as members of society'. The Santiago Round Table defined the museum under a new light: an institution in close cooperation with local communities, committed to improve their development and quality of life. Since then, Eco museums and museums all over the world have promoted material culture and anthropological disciplines. They have highlighted the crucial role of participation of communities to museum life, provided new interpretations of heritage and promoted its role at the service of local development.

Communities and authorities are asking museums to increase their social role. All over the world museums are striving for a larger role in society. They take on new social responsibilities and aim for greater impact, participation and outreach to their publics, while retaining their traditional missions, values and functions.

6. On ICOM's role in organizing the Santiago de Chile's Round Table see Hugues De Varine, *Mon passage à l'ICOM. 1962-1974. Une contribution à l'histoire du Conseil International des Musées*, 2017

7. See José Do Nascimento Junior, Alan Trampe, Paula Assuncao Dos Santos (edited by), *Mesa Redonda Sobre la Importancia y el Desarrollo de los Museo en el Mundo Contemporáneo Santiago de Chile 1972 Publicacion de los Documentos Originales*, Vol I and Vol. II, Instituto Brasileiro de Museus IBRAM – Programa Ibermuseos, Brasilia, 2012

The core functions of museums are conservation, exhibition, education, communication and promotion of collections. However, today's museums have new responsibilities for the cultural and natural, tangible and intangible heritage surrounding them, for the communities they represent, and for the territory from which their collections originate. The museums "in the service of society and its development" have become communication hubs: they promote participation, inclusion and mediation, engage in intercultural dialogue, address new audiences and use new languages and media. In 2019, ICOM held its 25<sup>th</sup> Triennial General Conference in Kyoto, Japan. The 4,500 professionals that attended the Conference discussed "Museum as Cultural Hubs. The future of Tradition".

In 2016, the 24<sup>th</sup> ICOM General Conference was organized in Milan, Italy and the participants discussed the relations between museums and cultural landscapes. Museums deal with the collections, but also with the tangible and intangible heritage conserved outside their walls, as well as with the landscape that surrounds them. At the end of Milan's ICOM Conference a resolution on the responsibility of museums towards landscape was approved: "Museums should extend their mission from a legal and operational point of view and manage buildings and sites of cultural landscape as extended museums, offering protection and accessibility to such heritage in close relationship with communities". Museologists are aware that museum collections cannot be interpreted without considering the cultural landscapes and heritage sites they are part of. Landscape and heritage sites cannot be valued without the help of museum collections. Museums, heritage sites, and landscapes are made up of relations between places and spaces, between objects and people. They are culturally and physically interconnected and interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approaches are more and more needed.

### **7. Museums in the contemporary age, museums and indigenous heritage**

Museums live in the contemporary age and deal with the crucial issues, problems, questions and dramas of our age. Museums are places for critical thought, for pluralistic views. Museums have strong ethical values: respect of diversity and democracy, promotion of participation and inclusion, free exchange of ideas, fight against any kind of discrimination.

The relation between museums and indigenous heritage has become a crucial issue. The ICOM Code of Ethics states that: "Museums work in close collaboration with the communities from which their collections originate. Museum collections reflect the cultural and natural heritage of the communities from which they have been derived. As such, they have a character beyond that of ordinary property, which may include strong affinities with national, regional, local, ethnic, religious or political identity. It is important therefore that museum policy is responsive to this situation."<sup>8</sup>

8. See the ICOM Code of Ethics for museums in ICOM Website: <https://icom.museum/en/resources/standards-guidelines/code-of-ethics/> [Accessed on 5 December 2021]

In a multivalent world, the ownership of museum collections is challenged. Museums shall share the collections with the communities of origin. Restitution to the legitimate owners is necessary in at least three cases. First, when a collection or some items have been illegally acquired or stolen. Second, when the cultural property consists of human remains. Third, when the materials are part of a national treasure and/or they are sacred to the source community's culture. The voluntary return and repatriation to source communities of colonial collections is now an urgent issue.

### **8. The restitution of stolen items**

When a work of art or cultural heritage item is illegally acquired, it shall be restituted as soon as possible. That is an acknowledge and undisputed principle in the museum community.

The ICOM Code of Ethics states that "When a country or people of origin seeks the restitution of an object or specimen that can be demonstrated to have been exported or otherwise transferred in violation of the principles of international and national conventions, and shown to be part of that country's or people's cultural or natural heritage, the museum concerned should, if legally free to do so, take prompt and responsible steps to co-operate in its return." (Code of Ethics, Principle 6, point 6.3 Restitution of Cultural Property).

In 2019, before the COVID-19 pandemic started, I went to Nepal for conferences and meetings with the ICOM Nepalese National Committee, heritage professionals, governmental officers and experts. During my stay I visited Patan Museum, a Royal palace next to Kathmandu. Walking in the rooms and spaces of the museum, I stopped to watch carefully a wonderful Uma-Mahesvara stone relief. I read the information panel and I learned that the stone relief was stolen in 1982 from a shrine in Dhulikhel, Nepal and sold in 1985 by a German art dealer to the Museum für Indische Kunst in Berlin. In 1989, Professor Singh Bangdel of the Royal Nepal Academy published a remarkable book, "Stolen Images of Nepal." The book comprised a photo of this stolen stone relief. In 2000 Professor Bangdel could identify the item in a museum catalogue of the Museum für Indische Kunst.

Thanks to photos in the publication and police information, Berlin Museum and authorities realized that the art dealer had sold a stolen item. Consequently, the stolen relief was returned to Nepal and is now displayed in the Patan Museum. This restitution represents an excellent example of what museums all over the world are doing to fighting illicit traffic of cultural property.

### **9. The restitution of human remains**

The ICOM code of ethics deals with the conservation and display of human remains in several chapters. The Code states that collections of human remains and material of sacred significance are culturally

sensitive material. They should be acquired, conserved, researched and exhibited only if they can be housed securely and cared for respectfully. This must be accomplished in a manner consistent with professional standards and the interests and beliefs of members of the community, ethnic or religious groups from which the objects originated.

Human remains are more and more restored to the communities of origin. I can quote here the case of a set of nine 200-year-old human skulls that were taken to Scotland at the Edinburgh University from Sri Lanka one century ago. After a friendly discussion, a few years ago a leader of a Sri Lank Vedda tribe went to Edinburgh University Museum and restored the human remains to their origin people. This is excellent example of ethical approach.

### **10. Decolonizing the museums**

The discussion about the relations between museums and indigenous heritage is strictly connected with the strategic goal of decolonizing museums. The ICOM Code of Ethics, state that "Museums should promote the sharing of knowledge, documentation, and collections with museums and cultural organizations in the countries and communities of origin. Museums should be prepared to initiate dialogue for the return of cultural property to a country or people of origin." (Code of Ethics, Principle 6).

The theme has been recently brought to the political attention by the *Sarr-Savoy Report on the Restitution of African Cultural Heritage, Toward a New Relational Ethics* (Paris, 2018) and by the initiatives and decisions of other governments.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic I was invited to Canada and Ontario for conferences and meetings of the museum community. I had the honor to visit many Canadian museums that collaborate systematically with the communities of origin of their collections. They returned significant collections to the Indian Six Nations of the Great River as well as to Indian communities living in the United States.

During my visit in Canada I met indigenous communities' leaders and colleagues. I would like to quote here the enlightened words that I heard from one of these friends: "The repatriation of sacred heritage plundered by colonial powers is a part of the healing and the reconciliation process." I also quote the words shown on the walls of an Ontario's museum, at the entrance of a wonderful exhibition on indigenous heritage: "This is only one small step of the long road to reconciliation".

### **11. ICOM and museums against the illicit trafficking of cultural property**

In the last two years of pandemic the looting of archaeological materials and the illicit excavation in archeological sites have increased, in the Middle East and in other parts of the world. Illicit trafficking

of cultural heritage is one of the major international crimes, together with the traffic of drugs and human beings.

The museums' commitment against the illicit trafficking is a major issue in ICOM Code of Ethics for museums. The Code deals with the illicit trafficking in several principles and guidelines. Principle 2 states that no item should be acquired without a valid title of lawful ownership. Due diligence should establish the full history of any item since its discovery or production. Principle 2 also affirms that museum collections should be documented according to professional standards. Such documentation should include a full identification, provenance and description of each item. Principles 3 and 5 deal with field collecting and research. Museums undertaking field collecting should develop policies consistent with academic standards. The identification of items that have been illegally or illicitly acquired, transferred, imported or exported should not be made public until the authorities have been notified. Principle 6 states that museums should abstain from purchasing or acquiring cultural items from an occupied territory. Principle 7 affirms that museums should operate in a legal manner, should conform to international, regional, national and local legislation and should respect treaty obligations. Principle 8 asserts that museums should operate in a professional manner and museum professionals should not support the illicit traffic or market in natural or cultural property directly or indirectly. It also states that professionals should not participate directly or indirectly in dealing (buying or selling for profit) in the natural or cultural heritage.

The national governments and the international intergovernmental organizations such as United Nations, UNESCO, G7 and G20 are more and more committed to fight the crimes against cultural and natural heritage.

Based on a proposal by France and Italy, in 2017 the United Nations Security Council adopted the first-ever resolution on cultural heritage protection. The historic Resolution condemns the destruction of cultural heritage, as well as illegal excavation, looting and smuggling of cultural property. It also states that those actions are war crimes and that perpetrators of such attacks must be brought to justice. The Al-Mahdi prosecution by the International Criminal Court was the first to focus solely on cultural destruction as war crime. Al-Mahdi was sentenced to nine years' imprisonment for intentionally destroying cultural, religious and historic monuments, the mausoleums in Timbuktu.

The Resolution calls upon its Member States to prevent and fight trafficking of cultural property illegally appropriated and exported in the context of armed conflicts, notably by terrorist groups. It also encourages the Member States to establish specialized units and dedicated law enforcement personnel. In order to prevent the trade with stolen or illegally obtained cultural property, the Resolution asks its Member States to improve their cultural heritage inventory lists, using digitalized information whenever possible. It also asks museums, relevant business associations and antiquity market participants to respect the standards of provenance documentation and due diligence. Finally, the Resolution requests of its Member States to create educational programs on the protection of cultural heritage and affirms that



the mandate of United Nations peacekeeping operations may encompass assisting relevant authorities in the protection of cultural heritage from destruction, illicit excavation, looting and smuggling.

ICOM actively participated in the 2017 Meeting of the G7 Ministers of Culture in Florence and of the G20 Meeting of the Ministers of Culture held in Rome in 2021 to make sure that decision-makers across the world recognise and integrate museums into their policies addressing heritage, sustainability and climate crisis. The final declarations of these important governmental meetings approved measures to strengthen the fighting against illicit traffic and safeguarding of cultural heritage. They also recognized ICOM as an important international actor and highlighted the role of museums in heritage protection, sustainable development and education.

### 12. ICOM instruments against the illicit traffic of cultural property: the Red Lists

ICOM Red Lists of Cultural Objects at Risk<sup>9</sup> were designed by ICOM in 2000 to highlight the categories of archaeological objects and works of art in the most vulnerable areas of the world that are subject to smuggling and illegal trade. The Red Lists are not lists of actual stolen objects. The cultural goods depicted in the Red Lists are inventoried objects of museum collections and they serve to illustrate the categories of cultural goods most vulnerable to illicit traffic. To be inserted in a Red List the cultural property must meet three criteria: 1. must come from regions that are victim of theft and looting; 2. must be protected by legislation; 3. must be in demand on the art and antiquities market.

The Red Lists are transmitted to police and custom officers, museums, auction houses and art dealers. With the Red Lists ICOM not only supports the fight against illicit trade, but also makes an urgent appeal to auction houses, art and antiquities dealers and collectors to undertake a comprehensive due diligence on provenance before any acquisition of cultural property.

Since 2000 ICOM has published 18 Red Lists concerning cultural property from 46 countries and regions: the most recent are the Red Lists about Mali, Libya, Iraq, Syria, Yemen and Southeast Europe. The Red Lists are translated in many languages, i.e., English, French, Spanish, Arabic, Chinese.

The Red Lists are recognized as an efficient tool to help police and customs officers from around the globe identify objects that are illegally crossing borders and are on sale online, through auction houses or antiquities dealers. The ICOM Red Lists have proven successful in the past as well as recently. Thousands of objects have been identified, seized and returned thanks to the Red Lists. The Red List for Afghanistan permitted to United Kingdom's custom officers to identify and seize 1,500 illegally imported cultural properties, and return them to the Kabul Museum, Afghanistan. I am

9. Further information on the Red Lists is available at: <https://icom.museum/en/activities/heritage-protection/red-lists/> [Accessed on 5 December 2021]

pleased to highlight their use by the Italian Carabinieri for the seizure of a sculpture depicting a "Mother Goddess" which was returned to Iraq in July 2021.

Further evidence of the Red Lists' effectiveness is their inclusion in the *Act to Amend the Law on Cultural Property* approved by the German Bundestag on 24<sup>th</sup> June 2016. The new German law includes measures about the protection of national cultural heritage and introduces import restrictions on cultural property protected by other States' national laws. In order to fight against illicit trafficking in cultural goods it introduces due diligence provisions for dealing with cultural goods, especially for the art market, and gives reference to the use of ICOM Red Lists.

### 13. ICOM instruments against the illicit traffic of cultural property: the International Observatory on Illicit Traffic<sup>10</sup>

The Observatory was created in 2013 by ICOM, with the initial financial support of the European Commission. It works as a permanent international cooperative online platform and network between law enforcement agencies, administrations, research institutions, experts. Its website includes a global database of 5,000 resources, a glossary, good practices and case studies. It publishes contributions from all over the world and produces online eBooks such as *Countering Illicit Traffic in Cultural Goods*.

### 14. ICOM instruments against the illicit traffic of cultural property: the Object Identification ID<sup>11</sup>

The Object Identification ID is an international standard for describing cultural objects and gives the essential information in order to facilitate their identification in case of theft. It is compatible with the INTERPOL data base of stolen objects. It was launched in 1997, conceived by the Getty Information Institute and developed through the collaboration of the world museum community, police and custom agencies, the art and antiques traders, appraisers and the insurance industry. ICOM holds the license rights to promote the use of this standard among museum professionals and it is responsible for promoting and managing its website and its use in the museum and heritage community, in collaboration with UNESCO. The checklist of the Object Identification comprises twelve categories of information: photograph, typology, materials, techniques, measurements, inscriptions, markings, title, subject, date or period, maker, short description.

10. Further information on the Observatory is available at: <https://www.obs-traffic.museum/> [Accessed on 5 December 2021]

11. Further information on the Object Identification is available at <https://icom.museum/en/activities/standards-guidelines/objectid/> [Accessed on 5 December 2021]

### **15. A successful partnership: ICOM -OECD Guide for local governments, communities and museums on maximizing the impact of culture on local development**

How can museums increase the social and economic impact of cultural heritage? How can museums and heritage support local development?

In 2018 ICOM and OECD, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, co-developed a Guide to help museums, communities and local governments to increase the social and economic impact of cultural heritage<sup>12</sup>. In 2018 more than 20 museums and cities and several ICOM committees tested the Guide. The launch version of the Guide was presented on 6 December 2018 in Venice, at OECD International Conference on Culture and Local Development. The final version was presented at ICOM's General Conference on 4th September 2019 in Kyoto, Japan.

The introduction to the Guide states that “today museums are increasingly recognising their role as agents of social and economic change. They generate knowledge for and about society, are a place for social interaction and dialogue, and a source of creativity and innovation for the local economy. Conservation and display of heritage are still their core functions, but for local governments museums become not only one of the many actors of local development, but a driver of change”.

The Guide provides strategies, actions and a self-assessment framework:

- for museums to strengthen the linkages with local economy and social fabric
- for local governments to enhance the social and economic value of museums and heritage as part of sustainable local development.

In order to support museums to operate while considering the impact of their activities, the Guide is structured around five themes:

1. Leverage the power of museums for local economic development
2. Build on the role of museums for urban regeneration and community development
3. Catalyze culturally aware and creative societies
4. Promote museums as spaces for inclusion, health and well-being
5. Mainstream the role of museums in local development

For each theme a series of policy and action options are discussed and addresses to both museums and local government.

12. *ICOM -OECD Culture and local development: maximizing the impact. Guide for local governments, communities and museums*, OECD – ICOM, 2018; the publication can be downloaded at: <https://icom.museum/wp-content/uploads/on Sustainable development goals for cultura 2018/12/OECD-ICOM-GUIDE-MUSEUMS-AND-CITIES.pdf> [accessed on 5 December 2021]

### **16. Museums and United Nations' Sustainable Development Agenda**

What is the contribution of museums to attain the United Nations' 2013 global goals for sustainable development?

In September 2015 the United Nations adopted the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The SDGs officially came into force on 1 January 2016. In 2016 the Paris Agreement on climate change entered into force, addressing the need to limit the rise of global temperatures. The SDGs mobilize the efforts of all countries to end any form of poverty, fight inequalities and tackle climate change, while ensuring that no one is left behind. The SDGs call for action by all countries to promote prosperity while protecting the planet. Putting an end to poverty and deprivations requires strategies to improve health and education, reduce inequality, spur economic growth, all while tackling climate change and safeguarding biosphere integrity.

Cultural actions are part of global action. The UNESCO Declaration on sustainable development goals for culture states that “Culture is who we are and what shapes our identity. Culture contributes to poverty reduction and paves the way for a human-centered, inclusive and equitable development. No development can be sustainable without it” (UNESCO, 2018). Culture plays a pivotal role for the success of Agenda 2030: cultural rights, heritage, diversity and creativity are core components of human and sustainable development.

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals are essential for a post-pandemic recovery that aims for greener and more inclusive economies and for more resilient societies.

The contribution of museums is crucial, regardless of their typology, collections, dimension and location. Museums are one of the most trusted institutions. They are in a unique position to promote inclusion and diversity, support environmental policies and post-pandemic strategies, disseminate scientific information and foster sustainable practices in the local communities.

In 2016 ICOM's General Assembly in Kyoto passed the resolution "On Sustainability and the Implementation of Agenda 2030". Achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and fighting for climate justice have become the fundamental reference point for ICOM's work over the next decade and beyond. ICOM supports all the initiatives promoting awareness about climate justice as well as responsibility and civic participation.

I would like to finish my lecture quoting a motto, "Think global, act local". It was proposed in 1971 by David Brower, the founder of Friends of the Earth. It's important that the great challenges of our time are discussed in international summit and conferences. However, if we want to create a prosperous, cultivated, sustainable and peaceful world, we have to act locally, in our daily life. That is the real challenge for each museum, for each institution and for each person.

# ICOM, Museums, Heritage Sites, Cultural Landscapes: a strategic relation



**ICOM** international council of museums

**Alberto Garlandini**  
President of ICOM

## ICOM international council of museums **What is my lecture about?**

- ICOM's mission, global network and museum definition
- The social and territorial role of museums: museums in the contemporary age and in the global change
- ICOM and museums against the illicit trafficking of cultural property
- Museums and heritage for local development
- Museums and heritage for the United Nations' global goals for sustainable development

## ICOM international council of museums **ICOM's mission**

- OIM - International Office of Museums (1926-1946)
- Facing the disasters and ruins of World War Two, in November 1946 few enlightened museum directors from fifteen nations founded ICOM during the first UNESCO Conference
- ICOM is an ONG made up of 49,000 professionals and museums from 138 countries



## ICOM international council of museums **ICOM's mission (Statutes, Article 2)**

- "ICOM is the international organisation of museums and museum professionals which is committed to the research, conservation, continuation and communication to society of the world's natural and cultural heritage, present and future, tangible and intangible."



## ICOM international council of museums **ICOM's network and global activity**

- ICOM comprises 174 National and International Committees, Regional Alliances, Affiliated Organizations
- ICOM sets professional, ethical and social standards, develops capacity building and training programs, fights the illicit trafficking of cultural property, protects heritage in danger



## ICOM international council of museums **ICOM's scientific conferences and seminars**

- More than 300 different conferences and events each year
- ICOM Triennial General Conferences
- 2019 ICOM Kyoto: *Museums as Cultural Hubs: the Future of Tradition*





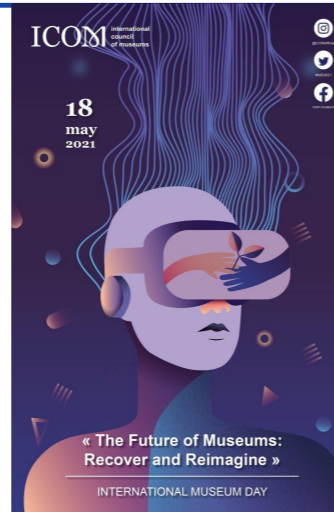
ICOM International Council of Museums **ICOM's Code of Ethics for Museums**

- It sets out principles accepted by the international museum and heritage community, as well as minimum standards of conduct and performance to which professionals should conform
- It consists of eight principles arranged in guidelines for a desirable professional practice and for the management of heritage
- It was adopted in 1986, updated in 2007 and it is translated in 38 languages



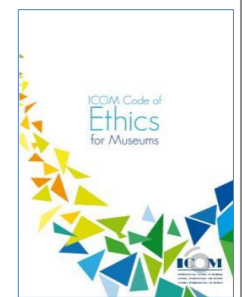
ICOM International Council of Museums **ICOM International Museum Day**

- ICOM established the International Museum Day in 1977 to increase public awareness of the role of museums. In the week of 18 May, museums plan creative events and activities related to the IMD theme.
- In 2020 the online IMD reached more than 83,000,000 users on social media.
- 2021 theme is "The Future of Museums: Recover and Reimagine"



ICOM International Council of Museums **The prescriptive force of ICOM Code of Ethics**

- The respect of the ICOM Code is a binding commitment for ICOM members.
- The Code is a 'soft law', a provision which does not have any legal force, but sets standards of conduct recognized not only by ICOM members but also by public and private bodies
- The implementation of UNESCO Recommendation will enhance the legal impact of the Code: in many countries, such as Italy, the Code has a legal prescriptive force



ICOM International Council of Museums **ICOM's international standards**

**UNESCO's 2015 Recommendation on the Protection and Promotion of Museums and Collections, their diversity and their role in society.**

- It was drafted with ICOM and considers ICOM's Code of Ethics for Museums and professional standards as shared international references
- It asks Member States to integrate the recommendation in their legislation and policies



ICOM International Council of Museums **ICOM's Museum definition - 2007**

"A museum is a **non-profit, permanent institution** in the **service of society and its development, open to the public**, which **acquires, conserves, researches, communicates** and **exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage** of humanity and its environment for purposes of **education, study** and **enjoyment**"  
(ICOM Statutes and Code of Ethics, approved by Vienna's General Assembly, 2007).

**ICOM** International Council of Museums **Institutions qualified as museums (ICOM Rules)**

- Aside from institutions designated as museums, the following institutions qualify as museums:
- **Natural, archaeological and ethnographic monuments and sites, historical monuments and sites** .... ;
- **Nature reserves**; ....
- Cultural centres and other institutions that facilitate the preservation, perpetuation and management of tangible and intangible heritage



**ICOM** International Council of Museums **Museums and Heritage Sites**

- Museums are part of the sites, give informative access to them and support their visit
- Museums conserve and exhibit historical materials from heritage sites
- Museums enhance and interpret the heritage sites
- The 55 Italian World Heritage Sites: Italy is a great open air museum



**ICOM** International Council of Museums **ICOM and museums are part of global change**

ICOM is reflecting on the impact on museums of the challenges that our changing societies are facing: inequality and racism, migration and inclusion, diversity and decolonization, urban regeneration, digital revolution, climate change, pandemics .....

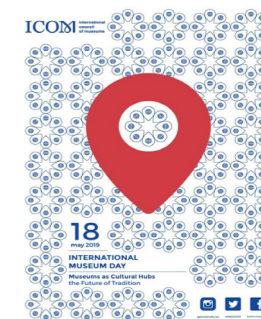
**ICOM** International Council of Museums **The number of museums has boomed**

- At first in western countries, where around three quarters of museums were established after WW2: in Italy 84% of the 4,976 museums were founded after 1960
- Now in urbanising and developing countries: in China, in ten years the registered museums increased from 2,970 to almost 5,000, with an increase of hundreds of museums per year



**ICOM** International Council of Museums **The social role of museums**

- Museums are places of conservation, exhibition and education, as much as hubs of participation, intercultural dialogue and social inclusion
- Museums' core functions, acquisition, preservation, research, communication, education, have expanded and museums have become social and economic assets




**ICOM** International Council of Museums **The extended role of museums**

- Museums deal with collections, but also with the tangible and intangible heritage conserved outside their walls, as well as with the landscapes that surround them
- ICOM Milano 2016: Museums and cultural landscapes



**ICOM** international council of museums **The extended museum**

- From Resolution No. 1 *The Responsibility of Museums Towards Landscape* (ICOM's 31<sup>st</sup> General Assembly, Milan, 2016):
- "Museums should extend their mission from a legal and operational point of view and manage buildings and sites of cultural landscape as 'extended museums', offering protection and accessibility to such heritage in close relationship with communities"





**ICOM** international council of museums **Museums and Cultural Landscapes**

- Museum collections cannot be interpreted without considering their cultural landscapes
- Landscapes cannot be valued without the help of museum collections
- Museums and landscapes are made up of relations between places and spaces, objects and people and should undergo interdisciplinary studies



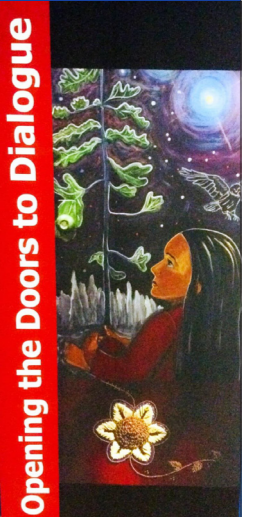
**ICOM** international council of museums **Museums in the contemporary age**

- Museums deal with the crucial issues of our times
- Museums are places for critical thought and pluralistic views
- Museums have ethical values: diversity, democracy, participation, free exchange of ideas, fight against any discrimination of race, sex, culture, religion.

**ICOM** international council of museums **Museums and the indigenous heritage**

- Museums work in close collaboration with the communities from which their collections originate (ICOM Code of Ethics, Principle 6)
- Ownership of museums' collection is disputed when the material : 1. was illegally acquired or stolen; 2. consists of human remains; 3. is a national treasure/sacred to the source community's culture
- In a multivalent world, the authority of museums is challenged, the ownership of their content has to be shared: "universal museums" and the voluntary return and repatriation to source communities



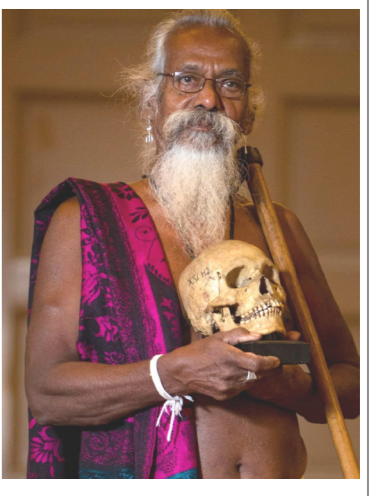
**ICOM** international council of museums **The restitution of stolen items**

- This stone relief Uma-Mahesvara was stolen in 1982 from a shrine in Dhulikhel, Nepal and was sold in 1985 by a German art dealer to the Museum fur Indische Kunst in Berlin
- In 1989 Prof. Singh Bangdel, Royal Nepal Academy, published "Stolen Images of Nepal" and in 2000 he identified this sculpture in a Museum's catalogue .
- The stolen item was returned to Nepal and is now displayed in Patan Museum



**ICOM** international council of museums **The restitution of human remains**

- Human remains are sensitive materials that should be conserved and exhibited (if necessary) with respect and sensitivity and taking into account the beliefs of communities of origin (ICOM Code, Principle 4)
- Human remains are more and more restituted to the communities of origin
- Edinburgh University has just returned a set of nine 200-year-old human skulls to Sri Lanka's Vedda tribes people; they were taken more than a century ago



**ICOM International Council of Museums The indigenous heritage: decolonizing the museums**

- Museums should promote the sharing of knowledge, documentation and collections with museums and cultural organizations in the countries and communities of origin. Museum should be prepared to initiate dialogue for the return of cultural property to a country or people of origin (ICOM Code of Ethics Principle 6)
- The Sarr-Savoy Report on the Restitution of African Cultural Heritage, Toward a New Relational Ethics (Paris, 2018)
- “The repatriation of sacred heritage plundered by colonial powers is a part of the healing and reconciliation process”

*“This is only one small step on the long road to reconciliation”*

**ICOM International Council of Museums**



**ICOM and museums against the illicit trafficking of cultural property**

**ICOM International Council of Museums UN 2017 Resolution on heritage protection**

- In 2017 the UN Security Council condemned destruction of cultural heritage, illegal excavation, looting and smuggling of cultural property as crimes against human rights
- It affirms that those actions are war crimes and that perpetrators of such attacks must be brought to justice
- For the first time the Resolution affirms that the mandate of UN peacekeeping operations may encompass the protection of heritage



**ICOM International Council of Museums The Al-Mahdi prosecution by Le Hague Court**

- The International Criminal Court in Le Hague sentenced Al-Mahdi to nine years’ imprisonment for intentionally destroying cultural, religious and historic monuments, i.e. the mausoleums in Timbuktu
- Al-Mahdi’s prosecution was the first to focus solely on cultural destruction as war crime.



**ICOM International Council of Museums ICOM Code of Ethics against the illicit traffic**

- No specimen should be acquired by museums unless a valid title is held. Evidence of lawful ownership in a country is not necessarily a valid title and a due diligence should establish the full history of each item
- Museums must ensure that any item offered for purchase, gift, loan, bequest, exchange has not been illegally obtained or exported from its country of origin or any intermediate country (Principle 2)
- Museum collections should be documented



**ICOM International Council of Museums The ICOM Red Lists of Cultural Objects at Risk**

- The Red Lists are NOT lists of stolen objects, but record of endangered categories of cultural property that:
  1. come from regions that are victim of theft and looting;
  2. are protected by legislation;
  3. are in demand on the art and antiquities market
- The Red Lists are transmitted to police and custom officers, museums, auction houses and art dealers



**ICOM International Council of Museums The ICOM Red Lists of Cultural Objects at Risk**

- The 17 Red Lists concern objects of over 36 countries.
- The last Red Lists are about Mali, Lybia, Irak, Syria and Yemen
- A new Red List about South East Europe will be published in 2021.
- The Red Lists are translated in many languages, i.e. English, French, Spanish, Arabic, Chinese



The objects presented in the Emergency Red List of Libyan Cultural Objects at Risk cover the following periods: Prehistory and Ancient History (from Prehistory, Protohistory, Greek, Punic and Roman periods to the Arab Conquest) > 5th millennium BC – AD 642 Islamic Era and Middle Ages (from the Arab Conquest to the beginning of the Ottoman Empire) > AD 642 – 1521

**3rd millennium BC – AD 642**

**Sculptures and reliefs**  
 Rock art: Fragments, engraved and/or painted. Humans, animals, geometric and/or floral motifs. [1]  
 Reliefs, plaques, steles and intays  
 Bone and ivory: Carved and sculpted. May have figurative, floral and/or geometric motifs. [2]

1. Engraved and painted rock art fragment illustrating two oases and an anthropomorphic (Demot) representation, Jebel Ben Ghazwan, 5th–4th millennium BC, c.100 x 65 cm. © Museum of Jeroen / Jean-Luc Le Quellec.  
 2. Bone plaque with Ensis-archididymos, Lepcis Magna, Roman period (first half of the 3rd c. AD), 11,7 x 4,9 cm. © Universitat Roma de l'Arqueologia Museu de l'Egipte / Fabrice Basset

**Stone (limestone, marble, sandstone), stucco and bronze: Greek, Punic, Latin and Arabic inscriptions. Floral motifs (silphium mostly), Graeco-Roman deities standing and/or sitting, women fighting and/or daily life scenes. Gorgon's or Medusa's head. Funerary steles with Christian crosses. Average size: 40 x 40–120 cm. [3–4–5–6–7–8]**

3. Limestone funerary stele with Latin inscription, the Nemes, Roman period (first half of the 3rd c. AD), 70 x 47,5 x 5 cm. © Universitat Roma de l'Arqueologia Museu de l'Egipte / Fabrice Basset  
 4. Limestone funerary stele with Arabic inscription, Erythrae - Al Bahariya, 6th-7th c. AD, 61 x 92 x 17 cm. © French Archaeological Mission / Vincent Michel  
 5. Marble inscribed relief with the nymph Cyrene, Roman period (1st-2nd c. AD), 100 x 45 x 5 cm. © British Museum, London  
 6. Limestone funerary relief with portrait bust, Giza/Saqqara necropolis, Late Roman period (4th-5th c. AD), 73 x 47 x 24,5 cm. © Universitat Roma de l'Arqueologia Museu de l'Egipte / Fabrice Basset  
 7. Round marble relief with Melchior head, Lepcis Magna, Severan age (early 3rd c. AD), 31,80 cm. © Universitat Roma de l'Arqueologia Museu de l'Egipte / Fabrice Basset  
 8. Sandstone funerary stele with inscribed cross, Aphrodisias, Byzantine period (7th-8th c. AD), 81 x 51 x 7,5 cm. © French Archaeological Mission / Vincent Michel

**Sculptures**  
**Ceramic and metal (iron, bronze, silver, gold): Humans, animals, gods. Ceramics may be brightly coloured. Height: 10–25 cm. [9]**

9. Terracotta figure of a goddess, Cyrene, Greek period (ca. 400 BC), 8,2 x 5 cm. © British Museum, London

**Stone (limestone, marble): Statues (kore, kouros) of young Cyreneans nude or wearing a loincloth, a skirt or a dress, standing or walking, arms by the side or with one arm extended; hair may be braided. Male busts; waist-length female busts may be faceless (aniconic) and/or veiled (head or face). Statues, figurines and funerary busts. Portraits, animals, deities with their attributes and/or floral motifs, nude or wearing draped and/or pleated garments. May have glass paste eyes and bronze eyelashes. Height: 20–200 cm. [10–11–12–13–14–15–16]**

**ICOM International Council of Museums The ICOM Red Lists of Cultural Objects at Risk**

- The Red Lists were inscribed in the German Law on Cultural Heritage; the Law imposes a due diligence for listed objects
- Thousands of objects were identified, seized and returned thanks to the Red Lists
- The Red List for Afghanistan permitted to UK custom officers to seize and return to Kabul Museum 1,500 imported objects



**ICOM International Council of Museums Museums are part of the social ecosystem**

**A museum is an institution in the service of society and its sustainable development**

- How can museums and sites increase the social and economic impact of cultural heritage?
- How can museums and heritage sites support local development?
- What is the contribution of museums and heritage sites to attain the United Nations' global goals for sustainable development?

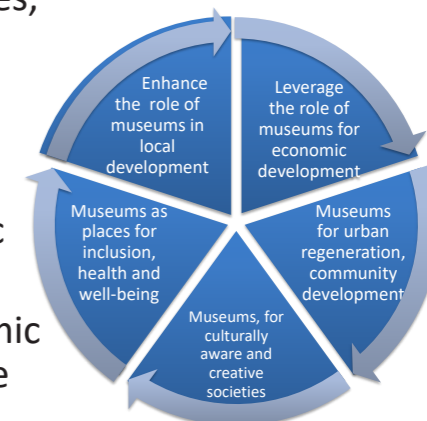
**ICOM International Council of Museums A successful partnership: the ICOM – OECD Guide**

• In 2018 ICOM and OECD - Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development co-developed a Guide to help local governments, communities and museums to increase the social and economic impact of museums and heritage.



**ICOM International Council of Museums The five themes of ICOM – OECD Guide**

- The Guide provides strategies, actions and a self-assessment framework:
  - for museums and sites to strengthen the linkages with local economy and social fabric
  - for local governments to enhance the social and economic value of museums and heritage as part of sustainable local development



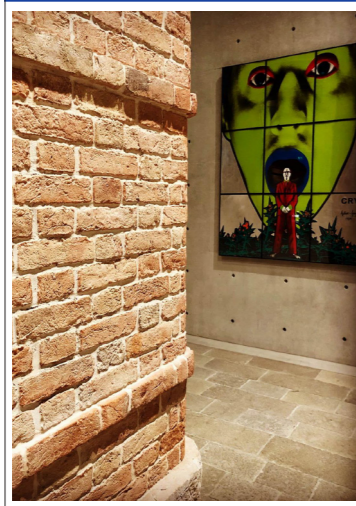


**ICOM** international council of museums **The ICOM – OECD Guide**



- In 2018 the Guide was tested by more than 20 museums and sites and by various ICOM committees. It was presented at the OECD Conference on Culture and Local Development in December 2018 in Venice.
- In 2019 the Guide was launched at ICOM General Conference on 4th September 2019 in Kyoto, Japan.

**1 Leverage the role of museums for local economic development**



- Potential impacts of museums:
- Job creation and revenue generation related to visitors economy and through increased territorial attractiveness for tourists, talents and businesses.
  - Dissemination of new technologies, creation of goods and services, support for creativity through partnerships with local economic actors

**2 Museums for urban regeneration and community development**



- Potential museums' outcomes:
- International branding, increased territorial attractiveness.
  - Economic diversification, new jobs and revenues through development of cultural, creative quarters and rehabilitation of difficult areas.
  - Better quality of life
  - Higher level of social capital.

LECTURE 2 – 13 MAY 2021

**ICOM** international council of museums **UN Agenda for Sustainable Development**



- The 2030 Agenda was adopted in 2015 by all UN Member States
- At Agenda's heart are 17 Sustainable Development Goals that call for global actions and partnerships
- Putting an end to poverty and deprivations requires strategies to improve health and education, reduce inequality, spur economic growth, all while tackling climate change and safeguarding biosphere integrity



**ICOM** international council of museums **The role of culture in attaining UN Sustainable Goals**

- Culture is pivotal for the Agenda 2030's success: cultural rights, heritage, diversity and creativity are crucial components of sustainable development
- *Culture is who we are and what shapes our identity. Culture contributes to poverty reduction and paves the way for a human-centered, inclusive and equitable development. No development can be sustainable without it (UNESCO, 2018)*



LECTURE 2 – 13 MAY 2021

**ICOM** international council of museums **Culture for sustainable urban development**


**The recommendations of UN/UNESCO's 2016 Report:**

- People-centred cities are culture-centred spaces
- Quality urban environments are shaped by culture
- Sustainable cities need integrated policy-making based on culture




**ICOM** international council of museums **The role of museums in attaining UN Sustainable Goals**

- ICOM established a Working group on Sustainability and has joined the Global Coalition "United for Biodiversity"
- *Today, more than ever, museums face unique challenges related to social, economic, and ecological issues. While serving as witnesses of the past and guardians of humanity's treasures for future generations, museums play a key role in development through education and democratization*



**ICOM** international council of museums **Local and global**

- Through interaction between the actions proposed by ICOM – OECD's Guide and the reference to UN's sustainable goals



- museums and sites can finalize their local projects and activities according to the global values and goals

## Lecture 3

# World Heritage and Tourism: looking for synergies



Maria Gravari-Barbas  
Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne University

*Maria Gravari-Barbas* has a degree in Architecture and Urban Design (University of Athens, 1985) and a PhD in Geography and Planning (Paris IV – Sorbonne, 1991). She was Fellow at the Urban Program of Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, USA (1990). She is the Director of the EIREST, a multidisciplinary research team dedicated to tourism studies, with main focus on cultural heritage, development, and urban-tourism evolutions. Since 2009 she is the director of the UNESCO Chair of Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne University and the coordinator of the UNITWIN network ‘Tourism, Culture, Development’. From 2008 to 2017 she was the director of the Institute for Research and High Studies on Tourism (Institut de Recherches et d’Etudes Supérieures du Tourisme, IREST) of Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne University. Her published works include: *A research Agenda for Heritage Tourism*, Elgar (2020), *Le patrimoine mondial, Mise en tourisme, mise en images*, L’Harmattan (2020), *Lieux ordinaires, avant et après le tourisme*, PUCA (2018), *Tourism and Gentrification in Contemporary Metropolises. International Perspectives*, Routledge (2017), *World Heritage Sites and Tourism. Global and Local Relations*, Routledge (2017).

## Lecture 3

# World Heritage and Tourism: looking for synergies

**Maria Gravari-Barbas**  
Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne University

I would like to thank, first of all, the organizers for this invitation. I'm really happy to be with you today to speak about World Heritage and Tourism: Looking for synergies. The World Heritage Convention is undoubtedly one of the most successful policy instruments of UNESCO, adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO in 1972. In 2021, it is ratified by 193 countries; 1121 properties are inscribed on the list in 2021, located in 167 state parties, and 1772 sites are inscribed on the tentative lists in 179 state parties. Paradoxically enough, the increasing number of nominated properties does not, I would say, calm down the desire to be on the list for a variety of reasons not always rationally explained. More and more state parties and local decision makers submit every year to the World Heritage Committee the candidacy of a natural, cultural, or mixed property. And we are not discouraged by the considerable cost and the length of the nomination process.

How can we explain this success? The enthusiasm for the World Heritage list reveals as much the pride of the recognition, as also the hopes of the benefits, that such labeling may allow. Increased media coverage, thanks to the place branding in a way effect of the UNESCO logo, prestige conferred both by the UNESCO and by the other prestigious and emblematic sides of World Heritage such as Venice, Machu Picchu, the national park of the Iguazú or the Great Wall in China, but also hope of economic and social development, mainly thanks to the expected development of international tourism. Tourism is indeed one of the most expected impacts of the inscription. This can sometimes result to an excessive exploitation of a site, such as over-tourism, folklorization, museumification, or extensive construction of tourism venues. At the same time, all submissions to the list must also set out commitments to preserve the Outstanding Universal Value, which is the very justification of the World Heritage. By preparing laws, regulations, perimeters and management tools, state parties and local authorities make efforts to anticipate the effects of increased tourism and also of real estate pressures. So, balance is needed in each

World Heritage site between development that various actors, public and private stakeholders, local communities, etc., are expecting or wishing for, and the sustainable preservation of site characteristics that are based on the Outstanding Universal Value. World Heritage is a sport of a dialogical type of thinking as defined by French philosopher, Edgar Mora. Dialogical relationship exists between preservation and development. Both are necessary and it is not possible, it is not desirable to choose one of them. So, this dialogical relationship between heritage and development makes, of course, site management more complex.

My presentation today will focus on the challenges of reconciling heritage and sustainable tourism. More specifically, I will question the role that tourism can play as a factor for local development and also on the necessary conditions that are needed for this. I will focus mainly on the importance of participation of local communities.

Let me pass it to the first part of my presentation and try to explain these multiple and these plural challenges that face World Heritage today. Though it is still often accused that World Heritage today still bears the mark of its European origins, the World Heritage list is evolving towards diversification and pluralization of its categories. The Nara Document in 1994, the strategy for a credible list in 1994, and also the work carried out by centers of category 2, such as yours, have all aimed to integrate emerging and plural heritages. Attention is given to both colonial heritages to communities and to their relationship with tangible and more and more with intangible heritage. The very controls of the World Heritage list have evolved along with the meaning of the listed heritage, shifting from uniqueness to representativeness, to quote here authors such as Pocock or Cristina Cameron. So, World Heritage sites are opening up to a plurality witnessing of human diversity. In fact, the first inscribed properties represented the most emblematic sites, such as the ones you can see here in this slide, Venice, Florence, or Machu Picchu; the best of the best, as remarked Cristina Cameron. Emblematic sites, meaning the absence of whose could ruin the very credibility of the list in the beginning. The properties which are inscribed later raise different questions or convey a plurality of ways of understanding and of defining heritage. So, there are very important semantic differences between the messages that convey, for example, sites such as Le Havre, which is a French reconstructed city inscribed in 2005 or the industrial cultural landscapes, such as the Bassin Minier in France or the Blaenavon industrial landscape in the UK. The ways they expressed the Outstanding Universal Value—this common substance—in a way that ensures the unity of the list beyond its diversity is becoming more and more pluralized.

However, the evolutions of the list are not only semantic. They also have an impact, implicit or explicit, on the objectives assigned to the listing itself, giving a more central place to sustainable development issues. International organizations are converging on the role of heritage as an instrument, as a tool for local development. UNESCO endorsed this position between 2010, when the action plan adopted in Paraty in Brazil and 2012, when the meeting was held in Ouro Preto in February 2012 by establishing explicit links between World Heritage policy and sustainable development. Sustainable development gains a more central position in World Heritage policies. This, in fact, tends to change the understanding of tourism in World Heritage sites.

Tourism, in fact, historically, has been perceived as a disruptive element, or as a phenomenon that needs to be controlled. Let me remind you here that tourism is not very present. In fact, in the first texts setting up with the World Heritage policy, it only appears as one of the threats for World Heritage properties. In the 1972 convention, the term tourism appears only once in article 11.4, which defines the properties that may appear on the list of World Heritage in danger. And I quote here, “only properties forming part of the cultural and natural heritage which are threatened by serious and specific dangers such as the threat of disappearance due to accelerated deterioration, major public or private works of projects, rapid urban and tourist development, destruction due to changes in the use or ownership of the land, etc., etc., may be included in this list, profound alterations due to unknown causes, abandonment for whatever reason armed conflict breaking out or threatening to break out, calamities and cataclysms, major fires, earthquakes, landslides, volcanic eruptions, changes in water levels, floods, tidal waves, etc., etc.” You see here how tourism is presented. This approach of tourism as one of the major catastrophes that may threaten World Heritage is, in fact, regularly reiterated. For example, in a manual published by UNESCO in 2010, ‘Managing a Disaster Risk for World Heritage’ which in fact recalls those, I quote, “gradual and cumulative processes that can impact on heritage properties such as erosion, mass tourism, growth or the speed of invasive species.” So again, tourism is associated with other major threats.

So, to make it short, in the 1972 Convention, tourism is considered a possible cause of disasters. And more generally, in many academic or institutional studies, tourism is discussed in terms of pressure or in terms of over-fragmentation, over-visitation, and mass tourism. So, how can we analyze today the association between these three terms; World Heritage, tourism and development? In fact, a new paradigm is gradually emerging and this is what I would like to discuss today, a new paradigm which aims to identify sustainable tourism as a tool, as an instrument for the development of World Heritage sites, as a means of ensuring their conservation. Tourism now enters in this dialogical relationship that I mentioned before between development and conservation.

In 2012, the World Heritage Committee passed a resolution in favor of a new tourism program adopted in 2012 with a first action plan for 2013-2015. And I quote here again, the World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism Program represents a new approach, a new approach based on stakeholder dialogue and cooperation where planning for tourism and heritage management is integrated at the destination level, natural and cultural assets are valued and protected, and appropriate tourism is developed, we will discuss what this appropriate tourism is. And so, my question is this: What are the challenges and what are also the applications of this new paradigm of sustainable tourism? The development of this new paradigm modifies the terms of the evaluation of the effects of the inscription. It is not only about evaluating the impacts, positive or negative, of tourism on heritage, but also about evaluating its impacts on local development by analyzing its beneficiaries and also the local and social decompositions that local development through tourism can bring. The question of the stakeholders and of the beneficiaries of the development induced by tourism becomes more and more central in World Heritage sites. And one of the main questions is, again, who are the beneficiaries of the development induced by the UNESCO inscription? And more specifically, who, in fact, has the benefit of the tourism development of World Heritage sites?

The focus is put more and more on local communities and this will be the special dimension of development. This concern is, of course, a more political question, a more political dimension when we question more specifically the beneficiaries and the implications of the local communities. Who participates in the choices made in terms of identification, preservation, and enhancement of World Heritage properties? What place should non-experts' local inhabitants or communities have, for example, in the identification of strategies and the definition of policies and projects? How can they be recognized as having the capacity to act as “actants”, in fact, to quote Harrison here?

UNESCO took into consideration these questions through the broad concept of communities. On the proposal of New Zealand, the World Heritage Committee in Christchurch in 2007 added a fifth strategic objective ‘community’ to the four objectives defined by the 2002 Budapest Declaration; credibility, conservation, capacity building, and communication. This new strategic objective aims at the participation of communities in both the identification and also the management of World Heritage. This fifth strategic objective also invites to recognize the capacity of these local communities to act and the relevance of their contributions to the definition of the modalities, of conservation, of enhancement, and of development of local heritage. So, communities are no longer only objects but also subjects of development and of sustainable tourism policies aiming to the management of UNESCO World Heritage sites. The appropriation of sustainable tourism by the local inhabitants, by the communities, refers also to the dynamics of empowerment, allowing the local communities to construct a representation of themselves while asserting themselves as actors of development.

Let me just give you one example here. I could take many others but I really would like to take here the example of the archaeological park of St. Augustin in Colombia, listed on the World Heritage list in 1995. The Yanakuna community also affirmed its position within the indigenous movement. And, in fact, the community reacted to the developing restrictions made in the name of the conservation of the park. The community adopted a very strategic way to work with development within the archaeological park and also to assert the place of the community within the park. The Yanakuna community claims the right to development particularly through the development of, for example, local transport infrastructures, and also the construction of a site to sell indigenous crafts to visitors. These initiatives, local transportation, this place to sell local crafts, were initially, in fact, refused for conservation reasons. So now, the local community was opposed to this strict conservation and really brought proposals that could allow them to benefit from the inscription on the list. This example illustrates also that non-consensual dimension of active participation adopted by the community may sometimes be also in opposition to public institutions.

Obviously, it is important here to take some distances from a kind of romantic and a kind of refined vision that sometimes researchers have about communities. There isn't only one community in a World Heritage site, sometimes communities are plural. They are marked by fracture lines and they not only exist in a fixed way, but they are also constructed in the very action of recognizing and, in fact, enhancing heritage. So, community integration in tourism and sustainable development policies

for World Heritage seems here to introduce a double challenge. To allow first for an open conception of communities, integrating plural and different individuals with possibly divergent practices and conceptions of heritage and heritage-related issues and also to consider communities and their members as subjects and not just recipients of the policies carried out. So, to imagine the modalities of community participation in sustainable tourism, let me speak very briefly about the communities on World Heritage sites.

Well, I spoke already about the relationship between World Heritage sites and I really would like to stress here on the obviously different relationships between World Heritage sites open to tourism or offering tourists products and the communities living within the World Heritage sites or nearby. These relationships, as I mentioned before, are different, multiple, and diverse. In recent years, the local agencies, for example, for site planning development and management, as well as academia, have raised serious questions about these interrelationships which seem sometimes problematic. The main question here is again how to maintain the socio-cultural sustainability of the host communities while sharing the World Heritage sites cultural assets with tourists. To understand the complexity of this question, it is important to take into consideration the fact that, first, the socio-cultural mosaic of each community that may host tourists is different and multiple. And second, the fact that each community may have its own socio-cultural carrying capacity, or rather its own limits of acceptable change and also, its own attitude concerning World Heritage sites and World Heritage sites development.

Consequently, the reaction of different local communities to the inscription of a site and its operation as a tourist attraction is very different from one side to another. This can lead to potential tensions between the need for standardized planning development and management of World Heritage sites on the one hand, and the need to adapt tourists to the specific local constraints to the specific local expectations of all groups of the host community on the other hand. This is another question that I would like to introduce: What are the sustainable solutions, the sustainable guidelines to balance on the one hand, the will to use tourism as a vehicle for tourism development and, on the other hand, to respect and to respond to the needs of the host communities means for example, the protection of their private life, the protection of their quality of life, and so the protection of their cultural values? These are very important questions, of course, and solutions should be tailored to the specific requirements and constraints of all communities inhabiting within or nearby the World Heritage sites.

Let's now discuss this balance between tourists and local communities. The sustainability of tourism theoretically implies that all tourist attractions are environmentally, socio-culturally, and also economically balanced. However, moving from theory to practice sometimes is extremely difficult. It's a real challenge. In fact, the weakest of the three aspects of sustainability, economy, environment, and social, is usually the social part. Social sustainability is usually the most complex to guarantee. This is mainly due to the difficulty of measuring the expected and real effects of tourism on the host community. We don't always have effective measurement tools, and in the absence of effective measurement instruments, a wide range of management policies have been adopted. Some of these

practices ignore the requirements of forced communities. Others allow limited community involvement inside planning and development and only on rare occasions is local planning and tourism development truly, truly community centered. When it comes to cultural tourist development, particularly in World Heritage sites, the social and cultural stress on host communities resulting from the lack of community involvement in planning and development processes can become more evident than in some other eventual heritage sites. In such circumstances, local people may express negative attitudes towards tourism by claiming that they are exposed to hurt, which is what we often call the zoo syndrome. The zoo syndrome means the fact that they are being watched. They are being photographed by tourists always without their explicit permission. They can also be subject to what they call a staged authenticity. A staged authenticity means creating themselves a kind of tourism stage for the pleasure of tourists. For these reasons, sometimes local communities feel as if they are disconnected from their own heritage. And as I said before, this may concern any heritage or any major heritage site.

But these trends are exacerbated in World Heritage sites for a number of reasons. Often, host communities live really within the boundaries of World Heritage sites and an example for this, in the case of images I showed before, is the archaeological park in Angkor which is a huge World Heritage site in which there are people living within. It's just an example. This is also the case in many natural parks in different areas in the world where we have people there and conservation objectively contradictory to local development or local wishes of communities. Also, sometimes World Heritage sites may represent a different heritage, a bit tangible or intangible from that of the current inhabitants of the site and it sometimes happens to be that the local community does not have any more an organic relationship or connection with the World Heritage site. Also, the World Heritage sites attract people from all over the world. They attract people from a very wide range of cultural backgrounds and there is sometimes a more important risk of, I would say, deviant behaviors. This can sometimes take a particularly problematic dimension, this movement called naked monuments, which consists of what you can imagine, which can be extremely problematic in some sites and in specific sites that have a spiritual or religious dimension.

The inscription of a World Heritage site is also based on the definition of Outstanding Universal Value. But sometimes, this can be interpreted by host communities as a kind of confiscation of their own understanding and interpretation of cultural heritage. Also the marketing of World Heritage sites which, in some heritage sites, is quite aggressive, and which is disseminated in media and mainly for marketing purposes, may offend the local population and may force them to act passively or actively against tourism and against the tourists. This sometimes results to tourist-phobia, to tourist-phobic phenomenon. And I will just give here just as an illustration the case of Barcelona where we do have this very explicit tourist-phobic phenomenon.

Let me now speak about the relationship of World Heritage and sustainable tourism development. Well, as I mentioned already, host communities and World Heritage tourist sites often share the same space. And as said before, this sometimes can create a potential conflict between these stakeholders,

between heritage stakeholders and local communities. However, I must remind you again that, though it seems obvious, tourism development in World Heritage sites should maximize the benefits to the communities while minimizing the negative socio-cultural, environmental, economic impacts and also the impacts of their quality of life. So the question introduced here in this part of my presentation is: What kind of objectives should be set for the community in order to satisfy both the objectives of successful tourist development and also the total respect of the community's interest?

I will organize this into four units. I will speak first about the requirements at the environmental level. This means, first of all, to minimize the negative environmental impacts generated by cultural tourism in World Heritage sites. Again, this is easy to say and complicated to achieve. An important point that I should stress here is that it's important to enable communities to define their own limits of acceptable environmental change. Of course, tourism brings changes, but each community should fix its own acceptable limits of environmental change. Then, it is also important to involve local people in planning and managing the environmental impacts. Anticipate the impacts and bring local communities to also participate in the alleviation of these impacts. It is also important to demonstrate to the local communities the development of cultural tourism in their living space, that it won't have negative environmental impacts and can eventually be used as a tool to restore environmental damage already done before the inscription on the World Heritage list. This is something that seems, to me, very important to consider; that the process of the inscription on the World Heritage list can also be used as a process that will bring positive changes. It is also important to develop proactive policies to ensure that the proportion of the profits that come from tourism in World Heritage sites are invested to the environmental management and to the maintenance of World Heritage properties. These benefits will also contribute to the restoration of eventual environmental damage. This is for the first point concerning the environmental level.

Let me speak now about economic impacts. Here again, it is important to integrate communities into the local tourism economy through training, through financial incentives, through business incubators, and other tools we know exist. So, we must use them in a very extensive way. It is also important to create a DMO, a destination management organization or to affiliate this site with an existing DMO. These contribute to the genomics of scale. So not only in the perimeter of the World Heritage site, but also connecting to a more important environment in which the World Heritage site is located. In most cases, a World Heritage site is not the destination. In most cases, the destination is huge and in this huge destination, you also have the World Heritage site. It is very, very important to work on the connection with a huge destination and this is why it is important to connect with the DMO. It is also important to distribute tourism business opportunities specially and functionally to allow as many businesses as possible to benefit economically from the listing on the World Heritage list. And it is also important to monitor all these because sometimes, things start five, six years after the listing or after this new dynamic that comes on a site, and thanks to the inscription things sometimes do not work very well. So, monitoring is extremely important and it is specifically important concerning small businesses. In most heritage sites in general, World Heritage sites also, when we speak about tourism, we speak about

very small-scale businesses. These small scale businesses sometimes are particularly fragile. This is why monitoring is very, very important.

The social level, which as I said before, is the most complicated. It is important to ensure, at the level of planning and feasibility studies, that the Outstanding Universal Value of World Heritage sites is understood and shared locally and, above all, that this Outstanding Universal Value does not contradict local values and that, in the opposite, reinforces local values. And this is something that isn't anecdotal, this happens often. This happens often when the Outstanding Universal Value is not always locally understood. It's not always locally shared. Also, it is important to use the means of conservation and preservation of heritage properties as a level for cultural revival. And this itself is one of the possible effects of the World Heritage listing, which we can see as a process that can bring more and more positive values in the years before the preparation, but also after the inscription. So, it's important to think about how we can keep people in place, how we can provide work opportunities for the youngsters. And it is also important to use the inscription in order to encourage what they could name as local patriotism. Local patriotism means the feeling of belonging, the fact that people who live in a World Heritage site are proud of being part of these sites. And it is important to enable these local communities to represent the World Heritage site at all levels of planning, development, and operation.

My fourth point will be on the quality of life. This image here was taken in Budapest and the contrast between this sign here, which explains that this area is inscribed on the World Heritage list, and the homeless behind is quite explicit. So, in terms of quality of life, a lot of positive things can be achieved, thanks to the inscription on the list. It is important to use the presence of tourists to create recreational activities to create leisure and other services which require minimum investment threshold, precisely provided by the tourist public. So, the tourist public, in some cases, can pay for the locals and this is something that, in several sites, is achieved and can be quite easily achieved. It is also important to ensure access for local people to recreational heritage and tourist facilities sometimes developed as part of the World Heritage development. It is also important to ensure the local people's access to local transportation systems and also other services also offered as part of the tourism development. It is very important to minimize all the negative aspects of tourism, such as overcrowding, noise, pollution, etc., etc. Pollution is something very important because sometimes, if it is not well designed, tourism can also be a very polluting factor. So, please keep in mind these four families of requirements; environmental, economical, social, and quality of life.

And let's see now how we can bring local communities to participate more in local tourism development. As I said before, the degree of community involvement in the evolution and functioning of a World Heritage site is often neglected in the planning process. As a result, these questions of community participation are dealt with posteriori or after the inscription. This obviously is much more complicated and much more difficult than if dealt before, as part of the process. This changed a lot in the last years, of course, but this is quite problematic in World Heritage sites that were inscribed some years ago. In practice, there are at least three possible levels of local community involvement: (1) Ignore - just

ignoring local communities, leaving the community out of the process and completely ignoring their attitude and their expectations towards tourism development; (2) Second level, Inform - so planners or decision makers inform the community about the process but expect the community to not participate in the planning development or in the management of the site and, in fact, to not define their own interests in the process; (3) And third level, Involve - involve by listening to the different voices and interests of the communities and see the communities as part of the overall process.

In terms of the level of centrality of community involvement in the process, there are three possible levels. At a lower level, communities only play a very minor role in planning development and management of World Heritage sites. The second level refers to the communities that play the role of, more or less, equal stakeholders than other stakeholders, local authorities, public, private stakeholders, etc. And on the third level, communities are clearly represented, their level of engagement is really high, and their interest and expectations are placed at the very center of the process. It is very important to know that the levels of community involvement and the centrality in the process can also be dynamic and change over time, as the World Heritage site moves from the planning stage to the development stage and finally reaches its operating stage. So, this dynamic approach, we also have to keep in mind.

Obviously, in the two examples in the two categories before, it is absolutely important to involve local communities in the highest level. How can we do this? I can suggest here a seven-step process in order to bring the communities to be really part of the development. The first step is to assess the community's willingness to present its culture and local traditions as part of the tourism product. So, a feasibility study should be done in the beginning of the process and should cover all parts of the host community. In the second stage, potential conflicts over shared spaces and land use should also map all of the potential conflicts. This is a very crucial step, and this should be considered before the planning phase in order to ensure that there are no frictions due to conflicting land use, for example, or due to tourism sensitivities that may later trigger conflicts over the tourist and cultural use of the space. In the third step, it is important to do the mapping of all relevant stakeholders to really understand and characterize the interrelationships between these different stakeholders. This step will also help to define to what extent the local communities can be involved in the three levels of product development of the World Heritage site. The fourth step is the assessment of community expectations. This step can determine the extent of community interest, economic, cultural and environmental, etc. in the development process. In the fifth step, it is important to assess the community's willingness to be involved. It is important to see the local communities really wanting to be part of the process and, if they don't, to invite them as much as possible. In the sixth step, it is important to establish the development policy by adopting and integrating all the communities' interests into a World Heritage plan based on all the assessments of these steps I presented just before. And finally, in the seventh and last step, it is based on the sixth step meaning the establishment of development policy, and it corresponds to the drafting of a detailed plan outlining all practical aspects of the development, planning, and operational management of the World Heritage site. The outcome of this step should be incorporated into the management plan submitted to UNESCO as part of the nomination to see. And, of course, I remind

again that all steps are iterative and it is absolutely important to monitor the development of the different steps and should, in fact, include occasional surveys of community representatives through the process of the implementation. And, in fact, the aim of the monitoring, of this service is to determine whether the interests, the needs, the limitations, the 'acceptable change' as defined by the local communities, are really respected. So, this is more or less, globally, what I would like to say today.

Let me pass to my conclusion. As you may know, we are now preparing the 50th anniversary of the World Heritage community after 1972. Almost 10 years ago, the theme of the 40th anniversary of the World Heritage Convention in 2012 was World Heritage and Sustainable Development: The role of local communities. The book, "Benefits Beyond Borders" edited by Amar Galla was produced for the occasion of the 40th anniversary. No contribution of the several contributions in the book mentioned tourism. But tourism, when we read the book, is in fact, a totally transversal element in more or less all local cases examined in this book. And this fits well with the new paradigm of UNESCO concerning tourism, which I presented in the beginning of my lecture. Because the focus shifts from tourism volumes or tourism behavior to local practices and local policies, these practices and policies are becoming really important. Conventions in Christchurch in 2007 reiterate the distinction between the near and far and redefines the meaning of communities. Communities can have a direct link with associated interests to individual sites and often this link goes back a long way. These communities share a close proximity to the sites to the World Heritage sites. This means that we can feel as a part of a community even if we don't live in Venice. We can feel to be a part of the community of an important World Heritage site, which eventually responds to our sensitivity and responds to the love that we can have for the site even if we don't live in the site. So, communities can be redefined today, and tourism is also, today, the tool, the means to which a new relationship can be built with World Heritage sites. And people are coming from everywhere. So, what I would really like to introduce here is the fact that, of course, I mainly spoke about local communities, but I would like to mainly stress the importance of taking into consideration the local communities. I would like to integrate, to bring this as an element of community building. Thanks to World Heritage sites, all of us can be a part of an imagined community of World Heritage sites everywhere in the world.

For my last slide, I would like to take an example of this major site here, which illustrates perfectly the relationship between UNESCO's World Heritage policies and local communities, but also international communities, as I mentioned before. Well, this example is Air's Rock or Uluru-Kata Tjuta in Australia. This property was inscribed under the name of Air's Rock on the UNESCO list in 1987 only as a natural site at that time. However, this is a very important site and a very spiritual one for the aborigines. So, the aborigines mobilized against this symbolic dispossession of their site. They succeeded in having its cultural dimension also affirmed, and Air's Rock was renamed as Uluru-Kata Tjuta. It was also recognized not only as a natural site, but also as a cultural site. Its Outstanding Universal Value which was initially only defined as natural, without any consultation with the local community, is now inscribed with both natural and cultural aspects. They are two different aspects, but juxtaposition are perspectives that constitute the Outstanding Universal Value. And it's very important



to see how this example illustrates the pluralization of World Heritage sites and the fact that this Outstanding Universal Value can also be pluriversal. And I think this is a very good example to say what is possible and what is not possible to do in terms of tourism in a World Heritage site. As a natural site, this splendid place here was open for climbing. This is not possible anymore. The acceptance of the local values and of the community's values transform not only the meaning of the site, but also what is possible to do touristically.

This is my end point here and I really would like to thank you very much for your attention and to invite you to ask any question you would like to discuss with me.

Thank you so much.

## World Heritage and Tourism. Looking for Synergies

International Centre for the Interpretation and Presentation of World Heritage Sites under the auspices of UNESCO  
(WHIPIC)

Maria Gravari-Barbas

UNESCO Chair and UNESCO UNITWIN network

« Culture, Tourism, Development »



## La convention du Patrimoine Mondial de l'UNESCO

- Adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO in 1972,
- Ratified in 2020 by 193 countries.
- 1121 properties in 167 state parties.
- 1772 sites are inscribed on the tentative lists in 179 state parties



### 1. World Heritage, facing multiple and plural challenges

- Nara Document (1994)
- Strategy for a credible list (1994)
- The action of Centers C2

Emerging and plural heritages

Attention is given to post-colonial heritages, to communities and their relationship with tangible and, increasingly, intangible heritage.



From uniqueness to representativeness



VENICE



FLORENCE



MACHU PICCHU



From uniqueness to representativeness



BASSIN MINIER (France)



LE HAVRE (France)



BLEASNAVON INDUSTRIAL LANDSCAPE (UK)



2. World Heritage Sites and Tourism

*"Only properties forming part of the cultural and natural heritage which are threatened by serious and specific dangers, such as the threat of disappearance due to accelerated deterioration, major public or private works projects, rapid urban and **tourist development**, destruction due to changes in the use or ownership of the land, etc., may be included in this list, profound alterations due to unknown causes, abandonment for whatever reason, armed conflict breaking out or threatening to break out, calamities and cataclysms, major fires, earthquakes, landslides, volcanic eruptions, changes in water levels, floods, tidal waves"...*

From the 1972 World Heritage Convention



How can we analyze today the association between these three terms: World Heritage, tourism and development?

A new paradigm is gradually emerging, aiming to identify (sustainable) tourism not any more as a threat but as an instrument for the development of World Heritage sites, and as a means ensuring their conservation.



In 2012, the World Heritage Committee passed a resolution in favour of a new tourism programme, adopted in 2012, with an action plan for 2013-2015.



*"The World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism Programme represents a new approach based on stakeholder dialogue and cooperation where planning for tourism and heritage management is integrated at the destination level, natural and cultural assets are valued and protected, and appropriate tourism is developed"* (UNESCO)



**A new paradigm: development through tourism ?**

- Who participates in the choices made in terms of identification, preservation and enhancement of World Heritage properties?
- What place should have non-experts in the identification of strategies and the definition of policies and projects?
- How can they be recognized as having the capacity to act, as 'actants' (Harrison, 2013)?



Addition of a 5<sup>th</sup> « C » for « **Communities** »  
 To the other 4 strategic objectives defined by the 2002 Budapest Declaration

- Credibility,**
- Conservation,**
- Capacity building**
- Communication**



**Archeological Parc of San Agustin, Colombia**  
 (inscribed on the WH list in 1995)



**3. Communities at WH sites**



Leather Work by Children, temple d'Angkor, Cambodia © M. Gravari-Barbas

How to maintain the socio-cultural sustainability of the host communities while sharing the WH site's cultural assets with tourists?



Dili Market, Timor Leste  
 ©M.Gravari-Barbas

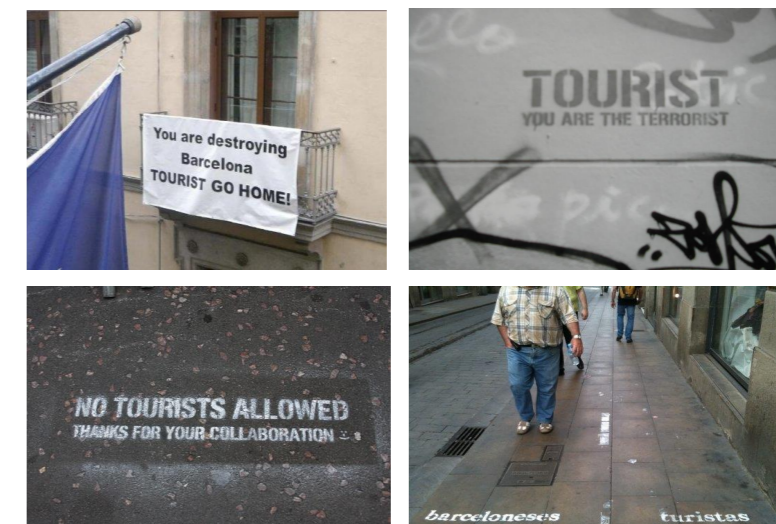


Take into consideration the fact that :

- (a) the socio-cultural mosaic of each community that may host tourists at a World Heritage site is different, and therefore
- (b) Each community may have its own socio-cultural "carrying capacity" (or its "limits of acceptable change") and its own attitude towards tourism in WH sites.

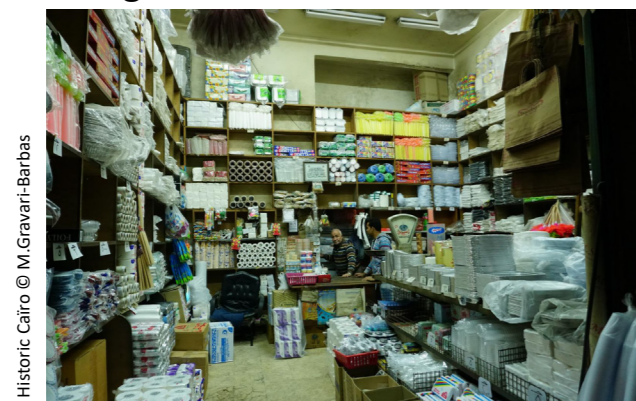
**Local Communities in WH sites**

- Often the host communities live within the boundaries of WH (this is the case of cultural sites such as Angkor, of natural parcs, or of areas inscribed as 'cultural landscapes').
- WH sites may represent a different heritage (tangible and/or intangible) from that of the current inhabitants of that site.
- As WH sites attract tourists from a wide range of cultural backgrounds and from all parts of the world, there is a greater risk of deviant cultural behaviour.
- The inscription of a World Heritage site is based on the definition of outstanding universal value (OUV). In practice, this policy can be interpreted by host communities as confiscating their own cultural identity.
- The marketing of WH sites, created and disseminated in the media for marketing purposes, may offend the local population and force them to act passively or actively against tourism and tourists wishing to visit the site.



Barcelona

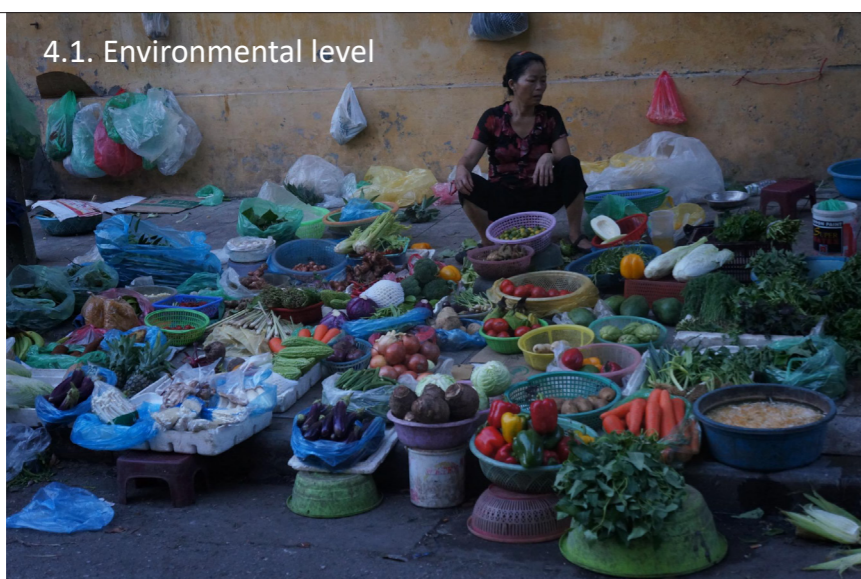
### 4. World heritage and sustainable tourism development



Historic Cairo © M. Gravari-Barbas



#### 4.1. Environmental level



#### 4.2. Economic level



4.3. Social level



4.4. Quality of life level

Level of involvement and role of the local community within the WH sites.



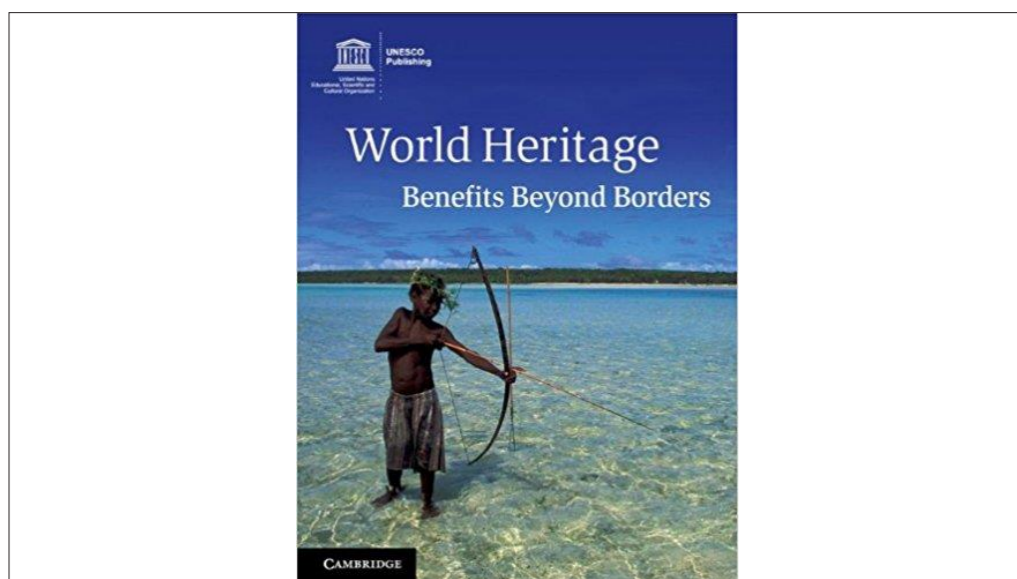
- Ignore
- Inform
- Involve

**A step-by-step approach to increase community involvement in the tourism management and development process of a WH site**

1. Assess the community's willingness to present its culture and heritage in a "tourism product" approach.
2. Map potential conflicts over shared spaces
3. Map of all relevant stakeholders
4. Assess community expectations
5. Assess the community's willingness to be involved
6. Establish a development policy
7. draft a detailed plan that outlines all practical aspects of the development of the planning and operational management of the WH site



LECTURE 3 – 17 JUNE 2021



**The associative cultural landscape.**  
 The inscription of such landscapes on the World Heritage List is justifiable *“by virtue of the powerful religious, artistic or cultural associations of the natural element rather than material cultural evidence, which may be insignificant or even absent”*



**National Parc of Uluru-Kata Tjuta, Australia**  
 Initially listed as natural heritage, it was renominated under cultural criteria.  
 As integral part of the traditional beliefs of one of the oldest human societies in the World (the aboriginals Anangu)



LECTURE 3 – 17 JUNE 2021

Thank you!

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## Lecture 4

# Heritage Interpretation, Digital Media and End-users



Hafizur Rahaman  
Curtin University

Dr Hafizur Rahaman is a technology-focused consultant, researcher and educator with twelve years of professional experience in digital/virtual heritage, interaction design, heritage interpretation and advanced visualization. He is one of the founding members of ICOMOS Bangladesh and has provided leadership and direction to the local and international development authorities, museums and heritage institutes. He collaborated with the 'UNESCO Chair for Cultural Heritage and Visualization' in developing an integrated framework for the long-term preservation and scholarly use of cultural heritage 3D assets. His PhD 'A Framework for Digital Heritage Interpretation' from the National University of Singapore drew explicit attention from the interdisciplinary academic domain and received four international awards. Currently, he is working with the CyArk as a project consultant for digital documentation of UNESCO world heritage sites in Bangladesh. He has published 35 research papers and won 18 research projects.

## Lecture 4

# Heritage Interpretation, Digital Media and End-users

**Hafizur Rahaman**  
Curtin University

Let me thank you, the International Centre for the Interpretation and Presentation of World Heritage Sites and giving me this magnificent and honorable opportunity to present today. Particularly, I would like to thank Soobeen Cho and Anna Mucci and the rest of the teams who are working behind the scenes and making these things happen. I feel honored to be part of this important group of experts presenting their experiences and works in the critical issues of Interpretation and Presentation of World Heritage Sites and Properties.

Equally, I am proud to follow the leadership and wisdom of these speakers, of this 2021 Online Lecture Series. I hope you will enjoy this presentation. For my presentation, I may take a little bit of expected time, but, hopefully you will enjoy it and then I will try to remain very general because I want to reach most of the general audience after this.

Today, the title is “Heritage Interpretation, Digital Media and End-Users.” Although this is a genetic title, I will focus mostly on the three parts. Basically, I will try to focus on ‘Digital heritage Interpretation.’ This is my field of interest, and I talk about the PhD research I did on Digital Heritage Interpretation. I would like to highlight some ‘Highlights and Challenges’ for which I worked for the last three and a half years, and some “Promises and Prototypes” that we have been developing and working for the betterment of the interpretation strategies to promote tourism.

Let’s talk about ‘Digital Heritage Interpretation.’ Maybe you know about ‘digital heritage.’ If you search in Google, you will get thousands of entries of digital heritage. There are websites, companies, books and different ways to define digital heritage. But we can say this is a public word or buzzword.

Let’s focus on what is digital heritage through the definition of UNESCO. According to UNESCO, any unique resources consisting of cultural values of human knowledge and expression created or converted into digital form. It can be born digital, digital surrogate or digital twins. You go to a certain height or space, you take photographs and upload the digital photographs, it becomes part of the digital heritage because it is linked to cultural value of some certain places. So, it can be 2D and 3D.

Let’s talk about what is interpretation or ‘heritage interpretation.’ According to the Oxford language dictionary, it says that “interpretation is the particular way in which it is understood or explained.” When we go to the heritage site, either we see the interpretation board, we try to understand by ourselves. This is some sort of self-interpretation, self-understanding rather than a reflexive phenomenon. In the other way, it is another option like the definition explained. When you go somewhere, we have a guide or tour guide, or interpreter that helps us to understand the site through the presentation and communication through their stories, it is more like an act of the interpreter. It is telling the story. This, in general, heritage interpretation means the storylines that are adopted to help visitors to engage with and understand the place or object that they are looking at.

What happens when we use digital media or digital tools? For example, when we use the mobile app, or a 360-degree panorama in a large screen or a hip-mounted display, the digital media, the digital content becomes an interpreter. In this situation, the installation becomes the interpreter and the visitors and end-users just have to be on the other side. End-users, we watch, we try to interpret the content. Therefore, the act of this media or the tools can be referred to as an ‘act of interpretation.’ There comes the point of how to plan, how to design the digital contents, how we should design the interactions so that the end-users get the best way of understanding the past, how we communicate with the end-users. That is the focus of my research.

There are different projects going on, there are different labs working on digital heritage and virtual heritage. Conferences are happening, reconstructions and different results of digital media to make better ways of scholarships but there are still some gaps. For example, in most cases, we see that this is the “descriptive” rather than the “interpretive”. This is a one-way transfer broadcast rather than an exchange, assuming everyone understands the same things in a similar fashion but it is not true. It is the same legacy that happens for the physical heritage because understanding depends on individuals especially literacy, subjectivity, cultural positioning and that is how subjective interpretation happens so digital heritage is not outside of that. When you present something, this understanding cannot be the same to all audiences.

Second, we see that there are fascinations among us with the new technology largely motivated toward achieving visual fidelity and photorealistic representation. Sometimes we are so fascinated with the technology, we might not know about what is the intangible value behind this? How do we present those intangible values to convert it to digital media? And missing the potential of collective cultural memories and there is always an epic view of heritage sites and there is insider understanding

and outsiders. There might be a universal value of outsiders from the perspective but, there might be something interesting. And interesting stories and myths of the culture that represents some sort of cultural values of their sight.

There is also a lack of literacy, these trends are changing. There are new theories and understandings coming but still there is a lack of literacy focus on the theory and methods of digital heritage and interpretation. While we see charters available for interpretation and presentation, specifically, for interpretation presentation for cultural heritage sites, do we have something similar for digital heritage? I do not think so, from my current knowledge. Motivated by digital popularity and driven by the risk of losing the valuable data units for 2003 has adopted charters for preservations of the heritage. But the indication of how we can preserve the heritage research and how the training can happen, rarely, consider the interpretations of presentation of heritage. There are London Charters and principles of Seville, but the former focuses primarily on the computer visualization methods and their implications only. The latter is actually the detailed workout of how to improve the conditions and effectiveness of the longer charters. There are some recommendations and ethics principles as well, we do not see definite or detailed guidelines for how we, when we want to make digital installations or even an app or website, what are the considerations we should do and take and how we develop these kinds of things from a developer's perspective.

Let's talk about "Heritage Interpretations." Because in heritage management, this is a well-researched domain, well-practiced domain. They have definitions. Freeman Tilden considered as "the Father of Heritage Interpretations" and his seminal book "Interpreting Our Heritage," he mentions interpretation is an educational activity which aims to reveal meanings and relationships through the issue of original objects by firsthand experience and by illustrative media rather than simply to communicate factual information. He talked about giving a holistic understanding of the past to the audience through interpretations. If you see there are different methods and theories about heritage interpretation, basically, they are focused on the two categories.

One is "information flow" and the other is "information presentation." Fitch's model of interpretation says that every information should be followed from the first level that are heritage professionals to the next level that is popular interpretations. Popular interpretation actually, general people do not have access to get the information from the faster experience kind of things, it is all the information filtered to the next level. And Uzzell's model says about how to present. It is "Re-creation" and "Re-construction." Re-creation is partly present which is basically for the amusement park kind of scenarios and re-construction is presenting the past in a holistic way but it is really difficult. And if we see that Tildens has six principles mentioned how to put a presentation of interpretation of heritage sites. In a physical heritage site, we need to talk about the related personal experience revelations, teachable, publications, present the whole and a separate program needed for everyone because everyone does not see the same thing in the same way.

But there are other scholars who actually elaborated Tilden's principles and they also offer five more principles if we sync their principles. They talk about the encouragement to discover consumer leads synthetic to the local people's freedom of control and different kinds of themes or thematic presentations. And if we see, there are actually four objectives that we need to consider for interpretive activities, even if it is accessible for digital heritage interpretation.

First of all, we need to satisfy the end-users. Second, we need to provoke them, some sort of getting themselves to increase awareness to protect the actual or the original cultural heritage sites or the cultural activities. Third, to learning. Convey some symbolic meaning or cultural meaning to the end-users so that is some sort of learning activity that should be included in the interpretive process. Finally, this is a multiple perspective of the past. We never know what happened in the past. We cannot guarantee that we are 100% correct as to what happened. Interpretive perspective should present the past from multiple perspectives and thus, it provides the opportunity to have a broader and alternative understanding of the past.

The point of dialogue interactions has often been started by different authors and scholars these days. It is dialogue interaction as means to develop a collective knowledge base. We can use the dialogic interactions in digital media and digital heritage. We can engage export to export, export to public, and public to public interactions and dialogues. We can have, actually, collective knowledge, collective narratives, and that can help to get a better understanding of different perspectives of the same heritage sites. Here comes the "Conceptual Model". We need effective presentations, some sort of cultural learning and an embodiment because we need to import our important interaction which needs to happen when we interact with digital media. All these three things need to be in an environment where dialogue and interaction can happen. I come through this framework where we see the ultimate objectives. We need to satisfy, provoke learning and multiple perspectives of the past. Those are dependent variables and we have independent variables, we need a presentation. Embodiment, culture learning and dialogic interactions. And I from the SCI, in Human Behavioral studies and computer games, we can develop like 15 guidelines here. How to reach these aspects, how to reach presentations, how to reach embodied interaction, culture learning and dialogic interactions. If we can achieve those four aspects eventually it will impact theoretically on the participant and it will result in their cognitive state and at the end of the day, they will get better interpretations.

I tested the model in a world heritage site in Bangladesh. This is "Sompur Mahavihara", a Buddhist monastery. It was established or developed some 3<sup>rd</sup> Century AD. This is the world heritage site recognized by UNESCO at 1985. It is probably the second largest Buddhist monastery after Nalanda in India. There are cells around the periphery, this is for the students coming from different parts of the world and this is the center of the temple-slash-study cells. Converting those 15 considerations, I developed an online platform that accommodates both professional views and public contributions. There are different features inside that can upload photos, 3D models, blogs and they have forums to discuss each other. They can communicate with the video chat and they can contribute in the video. They can



have the virtual tools linked with external sites, they can upload public files, latest news and feedback. Obviously, it should be connected with these social media like Facebook and there are two different treatments. I have developed for two different groups validated by a pilot study with an expert and the questionnaire survey for two different groups to test how they learn from enjoying this platform.

There is professional content developed by the professionals and the public content comes when it has been between the two experiments. It was open for the public to contribute and the second group actually gets both professional content and public content. And interact with this online website for one week, both of them. At the end of the day we try to measure their understanding through these questionnaires and it has both qualitative and quantitative surveys. All the survey data is available through this obligation. Definitely the second group gets a better understanding, better interpretation of the heritage site. And I do not want this to last because we have limited time. You can always access this application and see the data sets. What I learned from this experiment, I want to share that to make the end-user satisfied with virtual visit 3D images, digital media or interactive things may not be the only choice. Even a 2D environment can be fun, engaging if an offered interpreting method is applied. And second dialogic interaction in the interpretive process can work as a facilitator where the validation and screening of information are done through participatory basis. This is a very important thing and contribution apparently may seem irrelevant or unnecessary for the general people. However, each piece of information may work as gems and can help to build the biggest scenarios to ensure adequate participation from the non-organic group. A group with a preselected participant is required to boost up. It requires encouragement because people feel shy to contribute, too shy to get involved. But once they get involved, things start happening. They start controlling, commenting, making new friends, giving more information and new things are happening. They tell their story to the others and others join. Juxtaposing from public and professional content side by side.

This research shows that interpretation can be an open-ended process and there is more than one way of interpreting the past. That is very true. Incorporating multiple voices side by side and allowing dialogue among the end-users. It opened up the possibilities of enhanced interpretations and legitimacy in understanding the past. We should think about not finding the truth but the truthfulness and getting people involved is the key success of an interpretive process.

We come to the next point to talk about the highlights, the challenges. But I talk about my 3 and a half years of work with industry research and one of the points is that we feel it is difficult to deal with 3D models in virtual and this loss of 3D models in virtual heritage. I worked for three and a half years with Professor Erik Champion, UNESCO Chair of Cultural Heritage and Visualisation in developing an integrated framework for research, training, documentation and dissemination of digital virtual heritage and 3D asserts. 3D asserts are the key of this project. But what we found, we are losing 3D asserts in many ways.

I will talk about this, but before going to the next slide, I better discuss some general terms that I believe will be of help to our general audience today. When we talk about virtual reality and augmented reality is also people perceive this thing in a different way. But Milgram and Kishino first proposed the reality virtuality continuum. What we see in our real-world real environment that is completely unmodeled is the real world, real environment and virtual environment on the other side. What is designed, developed completely through the computer, and this is a completely modelled world. For example, we use 'Assassin's Creed' or 'Tomb Raider,' the games. This is completely, we never get through it. It is a completely full degree of freedom. It is a virtual world in between anything that is a mixed reality. Mixed reality, part of the real world and part of the virtual world is how we blend distance. It can be termed in different ways. For example, in a virtual world we can see part of our real world. For example, we see our hand, we move one object from one place to another. According to Milgram and Kishino is augmented virtuality and when you are using our, a mobile device or other sort of controls that can project a 3D model in the real world, and we can according to the definition, it is augmented reality. For enjoying or viewing any kind of virtual reality, augmented reality, we need a device. For virtuality especially we need a mounted display. For phone-based, there are three types basically like a phone-based virtuality. We use the phone, we use it in a case, and we use it on our head and ears. It comes sometimes with a controller. This is the easiest way to access convenient and economic access to virtual reality.

The second one is like we can have a seated or standing virtuality. It sometimes comes with cable, sometimes not, and sometimes it tracks the eyeball and gets the more interesting interactive way of presenting virtual reality work. There are other ways like walkable virtual reality that comes with see-through, so we can have a mixed-reality environment, see-through environment through this head by hand gear. We can see, we can move around our spaces and we can interact with both the real world and virtual world at the same time. But before that would not have been possible with other glasses that obscure your real world from the surroundings.

Coming back to the point, in our project the basic measure issues we deal with are the missing 3D models. I know the audience because it is not possible to ask you questions, "Do you have a 3D model?" I can get the answers, but I know you have 3D models but it may be stored in your personal hard drive or in some archival class or somewhere. But I do not have access. Anyone does not have access to it, then it is for what? It is not when we have a 3D model, we have research in the 3D model. Develop the 3D models and at the end of the day, it is not accessible. That is the tragedy that we are losing to contribute to the digital humanities. Not only on a personal level, we see it happening in the digital challenges are also of accessing a preservation of heritage games 3D assets and environment. Million-dollar project has been spent to make a virtual forbidden city of Rome reborn with new technologies with the new showcasing the new scholarship. But within time they are lost. They have become a very famous example of lost, hidden or obsolete digital heritage. It has been mentioned that only a webpage lasts 400 days. Professor Erik was writing a book in 2011 about playing with the past. Half of his example was held back within three years while rewriting the book, it is very concerning. We also try

to understand what happened with scholastic publications. Our digital heritage models are seldom seen outside the conference presentations are one of museum exhibitions or digital reproductions used for film and television. Why are they gone? We attempt to record accessible 3D models and their 3D assets from the proceedings of the last three consecutive publications of major digital heritage events and conferences which are 2019 and earlier. We actually, from 14 proceedings 1,483 papers we sorted and we only found 9 that really contain the explicit links to the 3D models. What are the causes?

First of all, we could not find a very fool proof way to preserve 3D assets. There are public institutions or 3D repositories. They really help you to download 3D models of what they have but not upload difficult to find models as they are not typically connected with external sites and portals. There are more than 50 private commercial depositories, most of them are for trading and not intended for preservations. We often have data provenance in metadata. There is a lack of data work as metadata but offers consistent file formats and protocols. 3D models are easier to find and get and download if you want to buy. However, there is no way that we can use those platforms for preservations.

Secondly, there is an insufficient shared understanding of how to best develop intricate and demonstrate research values of 3D heritage models. Once your status is not simply the recreation or reconstruction of the past, significance cannot be replaced by the photo-realism of all these things. Associated values must be conveyed for different understanding of the interpretation that we believe and for different understanding of the cultural values behind. Hence, we also need not only the metadata part but also the beta data.

Finally, digital heritage scholarly articles are typically published and distributed in the PDF format while they are relatively secure, but we have seen that this has a little interactivity, integration and immersivity. Some of the publishers allow to upload three contents. They have their own viewers, sometimes they use sketch apps for viewing, but these models are typically not dynamically linked with any kind of scholarly information such as meta data or beta data. Our next step, we move to this project to engage and educate general people to make 3D models or assets. So, with people who have less access to the budget and less access to resources, we usually use free office software for photogrammetry or image-based modelling. We compressively started performance comparison of these free tools and we developed workflow on how to make the 3D models from images and not only the 3D models, but how we can share the 3D models online, we can print the 3D models online, and a dedicated workflow for making the 3D models to the AR via kind of installation and development.

So, we developed online teaching learning materials, which is freely accessible and one hour's courses to learn the basics of a photogrammetry image modelling is free and open to software using various free tools. It also contains YouTube videos for making 3D models, not only making 3D models, what are the repositories and 3D model viewers available in the markets from the institutions and commercial repositories and what is the feature list. Anyone can develop the 3D models and they want to showcase and to upload, they can find this data set useful and you can access this survey of 3D digital

heritage repositories platforms accessible to virtual archaeology review. We have conducted several workshops, public workshops to access people and to make people know more about 3D models and development of AR via a kind of heritage. And Professor Erik dedicatedly worked several workshops for game making and game development and invested people in culture heritage games. It says that some of the examples of some of our works we made were just for publication and general distribution.

We talked about the problems and issues, now I'll talk about some kind of promises and some of the experiments that have been done through myself or with my students. We think that there are three new promising trends.

First of all, this virtual reality or mixed reality is moving towards the consumer-component based systems. There are more tools and technologies that are coming which have become cheaper and more accessible to the general people. A smartphone is a stereoscopic viewer and a sensor and a PC is evolving every day. For example, Samsung VR and new sensors, new kinds of apps are coming to make it more accessible to the AR/VR kind of experience. Consumer technology framework is coming and is helping to improve access. People do not like to download large apps but this kind of technology web-based like AR/VR things like tools or WebXR or OpenXR do not need users to download anything but they can use the browser to access the AR experience mixed reality experience.

Dr. Stuart is showing how a GPS based old factory smells reality, it blows scents to you as you work over a field. There are apps like Dead Mans' Eyes, ARtefactKit use of Augmented Reality with archaeological practice. This system is built with a smartphone and Arduino microcontroller and unique applications that while you are on site, you can see the real things and you can watch augmented objects as well as sound and smells of the path directly into the presence, so give you a better understanding or more immersion to do that field. A new H&Bs are coming with new sensors and this olfactory. iPad and iPhone recently added their LIDAR sensor so it can help you to develop the 3D scan fast, not only scanning, digital making, digital content, but it also helps the depth sensor better full-span, better interactions of augmented reality objects in and around the audience. It is helping and it will probably help in a better way in the coming days.

Recently a prominent app has been introduced in South Korea. SK Telecom, Google and the Cultural Heritage Administration developed this app. It is 5G technology with Google cloud service and an enhanced cultural location. Anyone can visit Changdeok Palace, can use this app and on arrival, the visitors can be guided around the Palace and around the site through a virtual avatar or creature named Haechi. And walking around the different locations, they will explore different factors and they can meet the kings and the queens and most importantly, they can actually take selfies with them. This technology is evolving and this is an initial example of this 5G technology with AR code, unity game engine, Google's Cloud and location-based anchors. This will mimic and follow suit with the other places as well, I believe that will happen very shortly.

This is very high-end technology that has been used, on the other side there is a very simple GPS technology that has been used by Dr. Bernadette Drabsch in Newcastle University of New South Wales, Australia. She, with her student, developed a very simple app and the GPS app for the visitors to enhance the tourists of their certain locations of New Castle. Whenever you visit some places, it pops up with some sort of information and when you click it, there might be a text, a video, audio and it can be embedded in the locations and you do not need a high-end 5G network. Even if you are offline, if your phone has a GPS tracker, it can track those locations and those points. The most interesting thing is that she is trying to get the community input and the community stories embedded through this app. It will evolve and grow every day when the community gets more involved, they put their story and their image, different kinds of information inside that. Hopefully this is an interesting example that will be popular soon.

We know the recent pandemic as President Alberto also mentioned that we are suffering for the museums. 90% of the world's museums were closed during the pandemic and it is believed that one of eight may never be open. Professor Erik Champion and I, with two other assistants, developed a VR Museum template for any museum authorities so that they can use the template and put the 3D models and make some interactions inside it. We use or develop for Oculus Quest and there is some interaction, some games inside. So, there's some interactivity so the audience can learn with that included the map changed. They can go from one room to another and virtually visit the locations of the artifacts where it is.

In a virtual world, because we do not need to be confined by boundaries, if you are not mimicking a real-world Museum, it is easy or interesting to develop a museum that is open-ended. So, one of my students made an interesting project, 'A Run a Script'. Whenever you run a script to set, it generates a new space, new place, new extension of the museum and automatically places the new 3D models in the museum with backed images on backed lighting.

During the pandemic, there are three groups that actually suffered. First of all, the tour guide, the museums and the visitors; they cannot visit the site, the tour guide became jobless and the museum shut down. To make these three groups help each other, I was trying to develop 360 panoramic live virtual tools. I developed a workflow with a simple 360 camera with a mobile phone. We see the tour guide telling the story of the lost generations in a Cartoon Gallery. On the other side, a few kilometers away, some school kids in seventh grade are watching this live virtual 360 with the head-mounted gears and they can at the same time seamlessly contact the tour guide about any questions and query. It is interesting to see the engagement of the audience. This is the classroom setting and a few of them are wearing the head-mounted gears and others are watching on a larger screen. They can directly communicate with each other in the virtual environment and this is the screenshot of what they see through the goggles. They can also see who is present in the virtual environment as well. They can also talk to each other, check each other and make a collaborative visit in real time with the guide and also the visitors. Consumer graded 360 cameras become cheaper. If you do not make a live virtual

tool, it is also possible to make 360 panoramic virtual to connect each bubble together and make some interactivity inside. A series of bubbles can give an impression of virtual visit and tour in a track. We can also embed text, emails, videos and 3D models inside these bubbles. It is fun and it is free to use and embed this with Google Street View.

One of my students took 360-degree things to the next level. She went to the Aviation Museum and took 360 photos and then she made a game with these 360 photos that can be accessed through any Android and iOS device. With the 360-degree panorama, she used interactive elements. For the kids, while moving from one panorama to another, one space to another space, they can see some highlighted arrow planes, engines and many artifacts. They make some answers so that they get badges and go to the next level. It is fun for the kids with a simple 360 panorama with Unity game engine.

One of my other PhD students has been developing a collaborative mixed reality project using two Microsoft HoloLens. This is the walkable mixed reality map with interactive objects and 3D models that appears only when the participants are near to each other, they talk to each other and do something like games. This ship moves from one point to another from Europe to Australia like Batavia and the geosystem format is handling the time related data. Alternative historical interpretation can be viewed and interacted with, and the results shared when they communicate with each other. So, how collaboration works in a game environment to move one character.?

Here, there are two people with a simple sensor with the head-mounted gears the time to move one character in a game. When they communicate to each other through this movement, we try to understand how the collaboration impacts the learning in a game environment. There are many ways to use augmented reality technologies for telling history. It can be used especially for the kids when we can capture the real color and put it in the 3D models and animation and it can be involved and their engagement can be enhanced. Museums are using it, but we can use not only the text, audio and video in many ways to tell the story with simple tricks.

Augmented reality can also help to get some kind of tele-portal or virtual visit on heritage sites. It is fun to mix up some kinds of things. Like in the diagram, if we can place a virtual door and we are in the living room, the other side can be open to any kind of virtual world. We need a 360 panorama or 360 video or 3D environment on the other side. In this way, we can actually place a door in our living room and we can pass through the door with the phone and we can see the other side. For example, here is the Hobbit village and when you are inside the Hobbit village, you can see the other side of the door is a living room. One of my students made it to an interesting project. He went to different parts of the Park and took 360 photos of the street arts and these photos he makes two scenarios. One is a room that he embedded all the street arts on each wall and placed a door or gateway in the campus. Anyone with this app can go through this door and see all this wall paint in a virtual world. He also made 360-degree bubbles with this app, you can place these 360 bubbles in the backyard. You can move with this phone camera from one point to another and see the paintings in a 360-degree panorama.

Recreating a historical event in a mixed environment is fun. This can help to tell history and give real feelings of being in a certain historic event. This epic speech of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, in Bangladesh on the 7th March, 1971, has been included in the Memory of the World International Register, a list of world important documentary heritage maintained by UNESCO. I was working on this and I developed a workflow to recreating his speech in a mixed reality environment and it can be visualized in a Microsoft HoloLens. When we have a 3D model's animation, you can put it in the real world and see how it looks in a mixed reality environment. You can see the animated video, it looks like he is giving the lectures in front of you. You can move around, you can see the speech in the real world. The character is giving the experience with spatial surround sound.

About the potential of AI and data mining archives, this is a fabulous state that used the technology of deep learning and historical reconstruction. Venice in the project is now on the second phase. They are developing a Venice mirror world as a 4D model with this data learning technology and intensive 4D models of historical reconstructions in the decades. This AI or new technology is coming and we will see, it will happen to virtual reconstruction interpretation in later dates.

Although, that example was a big budget project with a lot of people or researchers involved in that project. But still there are free pretend models that are available for use. For example, Google has released their TensorFlow pre-trained models for the mobile nets. We can still retrain the model and use it in Google Unity to develop some sort of app that can identify objects and make some interactivity according to what you want. For example, I use this Google TensorFlow model to talk about augmented heritage. I train that model to identify 10 local flowers and tell their local names in a local language and the local voice has been recorded with local people. Then whenever this app sees this object, it can tell what it is in a local language. Google has recently developed the Woolaroo app with this enormous technology. You can snap a photo of an object and Woolaroo uses this machine learning to translate it into the ten endangered languages and they open it for the public. So, people can go inside and rename and edit in their own language.

I can keep talking, but there are many new technologies coming, new things are happening but what I want to say is that technology is always for physical preservation, physical conservation of the heritage which should not supersede these objectives. I like this statement from Janna Thompson. She said, "Computer simulations, however good, contain only what photography, laser technology and pre-existing expertise put into them. But obviously, real experiences connect us to the deeds of the past people and place us in contexts where the history was made." What about the technology, VR, AR, MR? As she says that "VR will never be a substitute for encounters with the real things." We need to consider this and whatever we do for the interpretation and presentation of the heritage sites with the means of digital media, we actually need to do the original things. We need to preserve or conserve the original what is there.

Thank you for listening to these presentations. But do not forget whatever we do, whatever we make with the 3D contents or any installations, app, website or any kind of virtual world, if it is for the audience, we need to satisfy them. We need to somehow provoke them for the conservation or preservation of the original sites or cultural heritages. There should be some cultural leanings and we will try to definitely give them multiple perspectives of the past because our personal perspectives are limited, our personal understandings are always limited. Thank you everyone for listening today.

# WELCOME



Thanks to  
International Centre for the Interpretation and Presentation of WH

## Heritage Interpretation, Digital Media and End-Users

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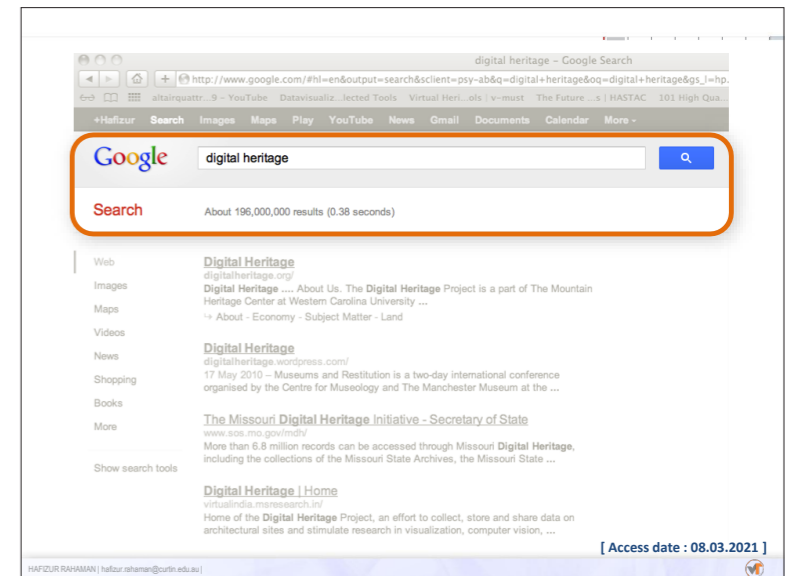
### Presentation Outline

#### Presentation Outline

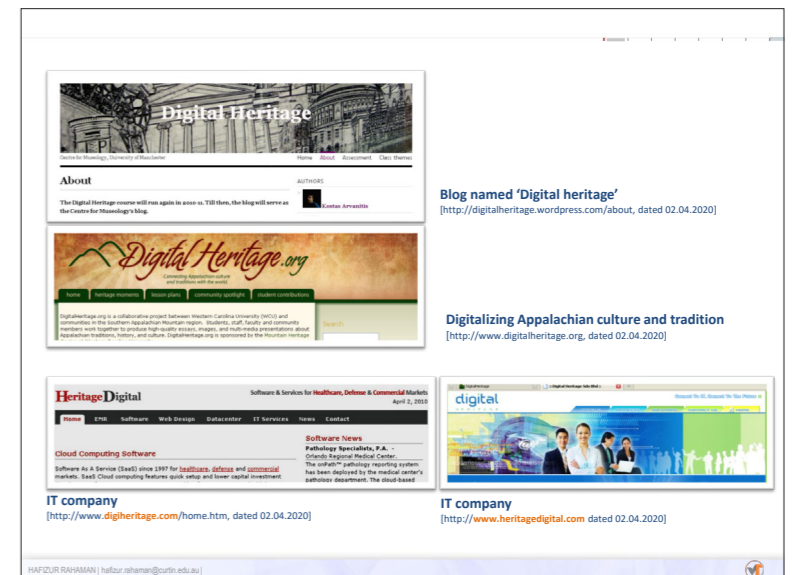
- Section 01 Digital Heritage Interpretation
- Section 02 Highlights and Challenges
- Section 03 Promises and Prototypes

# 01

## Digital Heritage Interpretation



[ Access date : 08.03.2021 ]



IT company [http://www.heritagedigital.com dated 02.04.2020]

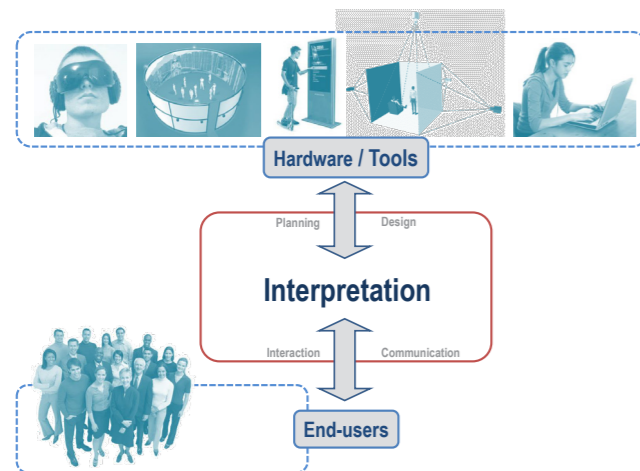
## Digital Heritage

- Any unique resources consisting cultural value of human knowledge and expression; created or converted into digital form (UNESCO 2003).
- Born digital or Digital surrogate (i.e. made from analogue resources) (Parry, 2007).
- 2D format (such as, text, image and video) or 3D format (such as, VRML model, navigational 3D environment).

## Heritage Interpretation



Storylines that are adopted to help visitors to engage with and understand the place or objects that they are looking at.



gap in **practice** of digital heritage

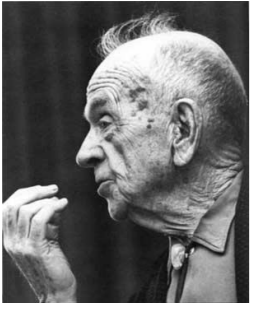
- Descriptive rather than interpretive : a one-way broadcast rather than an exchange, assuming everyone understand in a similar fashion.
- Fascinated with new technology and largely motivated towards achieving visual fidelity with photorealistic representation.
- Missing the potentials of collective cultural memory

Knowledge gap in **literature** of digital heritage

- Lack of literature focusing on the theory and methodology of digital heritage interpretation
- Charters or guidelines for interpretation or presentation of digital heritage
- Lack of study on end-users' perception of digital heritage

Interpretation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage (2007)  
 Preservation of the Digital Heritage (2003)  
 The London Charter (2009)  
 Principles of Seville (2011)

### Heritage Interpretation



**Freeman Tilden (1883 – 1980)**

*"Interpretation is an educational activity which aims to reveal meanings and relationships through the use of original objects, by firsthand experience, and by illustrative media, rather than simply to communicate factual information."*

**Interpreting Our Heritage 1957**

Source: [http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/e/4/Freeman\\_Tilden.jpg](http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/e/4/Freeman_Tilden.jpg), accessed 20.07.2012

### Heritage Interpretation

**HERITAGE INFORMATION**

CULTURE, ART, MUSIC, LITERATURE, LANDSCAPE, FOLK TALES, RELIGION, LOCAL BELIEFS, TRAVELLERS LOG

**1ST LEVEL**

HERITAGE PROFESSIONALS

**2ND LEVEL**

GENERAL PEOPLE OR ENDUSER

PHYSICAL SITE / ARTEFACTS → PROFESSIONAL-INTERPRETATION → POPULAR-INTERPRETATION

Primary interpretation & Secondary interpretation (Thompson, 1981)

Expert construction & Public construction (Tim Copeland, 2006)

(Mindfulness model, Moscardo 1996)

[based on Information Flow]

**HERITAGE PRESENTATION**

**RE-CREATION**: PRESENTING 'SLICE OF THE PAST'. ROMANTIC PACKAGING OF HERITAGE BASED ON MYTHS AND FANTASY. SANITIZED AND GUILT IS REMOVED.

**RE-CONSTRUCTION**: PRESENTING HISTORY AS A WHOLE. SCENARIO. VARIETY OF EXPERIENCE AND EVIDENCES. HONORING DIVERSITY, RATHER PRETENDING TO OUBIOUS CERTAINTES.

[based on Information Presentation]

Findings of this study were presented and published in CAADRIA 2010, SMARTdoc 2010.

### Interpretation

<p><b>Tim Copeland (2006)</b></p> <p>1. Interpretation should be a quality experience. Visitors should be encouraged to discover the significance of the site in a unique place. Interpretation should be a unique experience.</p>	<p><b>Gianna Moscardo (1996)</b></p> <p>1. Visitor should be given a variety of interpretive experiences.</p>	<p><b>Beck and Cable (1998)</b></p> <p>1. Interpretation should be a quality experience. Visitors should be encouraged to discover the significance of the site in a unique place. Interpretation should be a unique experience.</p>	<p><b>Harrison (1994)</b></p> <p>1. Interpretation should be a quality experience. Visitors should be encouraged to discover the significance of the site in a unique place. Interpretation should be a unique experience.</p>	<p><b>Uzzell (1994)</b></p> <p>1. Interpretation should be a quality experience. Visitors should be encouraged to discover the significance of the site in a unique place. Interpretation should be a unique experience.</p>	<p><b>Tilden (1977)</b></p> <p>1. Interpretation should be a quality experience. Visitors should be encouraged to discover the significance of the site in a unique place. Interpretation should be a unique experience.</p>
<p><b>Uzzell (1994)</b></p> <p>2. Interpretation should be a quality experience. Visitors should be encouraged to discover the significance of the site in a unique place. Interpretation should be a unique experience.</p>	<p><b>Beck and Cable (1998)</b></p> <p>2. Interpretation should be a quality experience. Visitors should be encouraged to discover the significance of the site in a unique place. Interpretation should be a unique experience.</p>	<p><b>Gianna Moscardo (1996)</b></p> <p>2. Interpretation should be a quality experience. Visitors should be encouraged to discover the significance of the site in a unique place. Interpretation should be a unique experience.</p>	<p><b>Tim Copeland (2006)</b></p> <p>2. Interpretation should be a quality experience. Visitors should be encouraged to discover the significance of the site in a unique place. Interpretation should be a unique experience.</p>	<p><b>Uzzell (1994)</b></p> <p>2. Interpretation should be a quality experience. Visitors should be encouraged to discover the significance of the site in a unique place. Interpretation should be a unique experience.</p>	<p><b>Harrison (1994)</b></p> <p>2. Interpretation should be a quality experience. Visitors should be encouraged to discover the significance of the site in a unique place. Interpretation should be a unique experience.</p>

Rahaman, H., & Tan, S. K. (2017). Digital Heritage Interpretation: Learning From the Realm of Real-World. *Journal of Interpretation Research*, 22(2), 53-64.

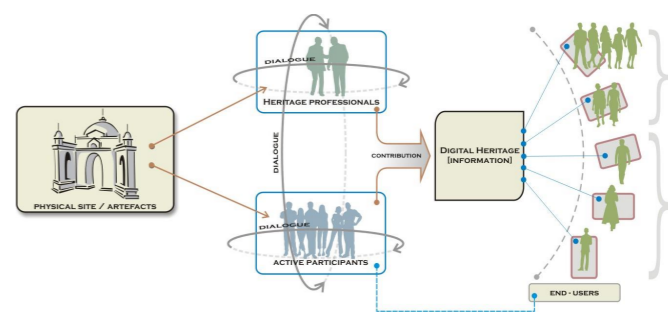
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### Setting the Objectives for digital heritage interpretation

- 01 Satisfaction**  
[enhance enjoyment of the place and visit]
- 02 Provocation/Empathy**  
[increase awareness on protecting cultural heritage]
- 03 Learning**  
[convey symbolic and cultural meaning to the end-users]
- 04 Multiple perspective of the past**  
[present the past from possible multiple perspectives, thus providing the opportunities to have a broader understanding of the past]

### Dialogic interaction



Dialogic interaction as a means to develop a collective knowledge base

**Dialogue + Interaction**

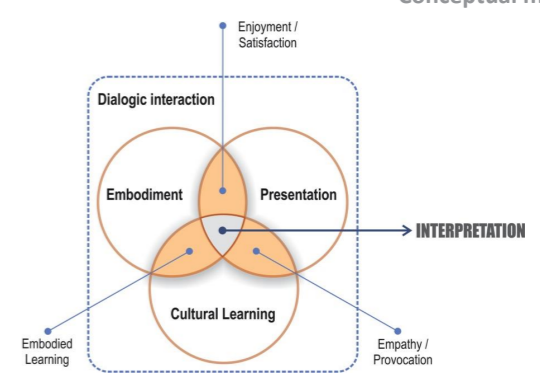
Expert – Expert  
Expert – Public  
Public – Public

Exploration  
Manipulation  
Contribution

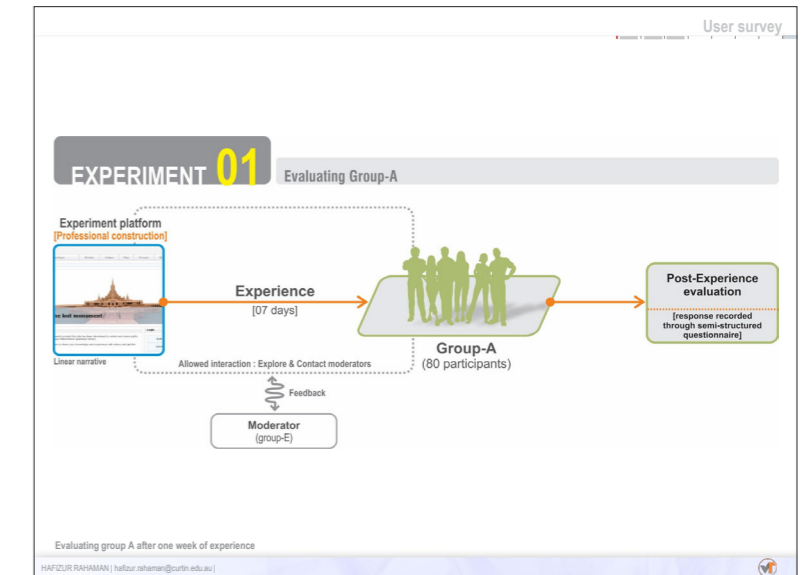
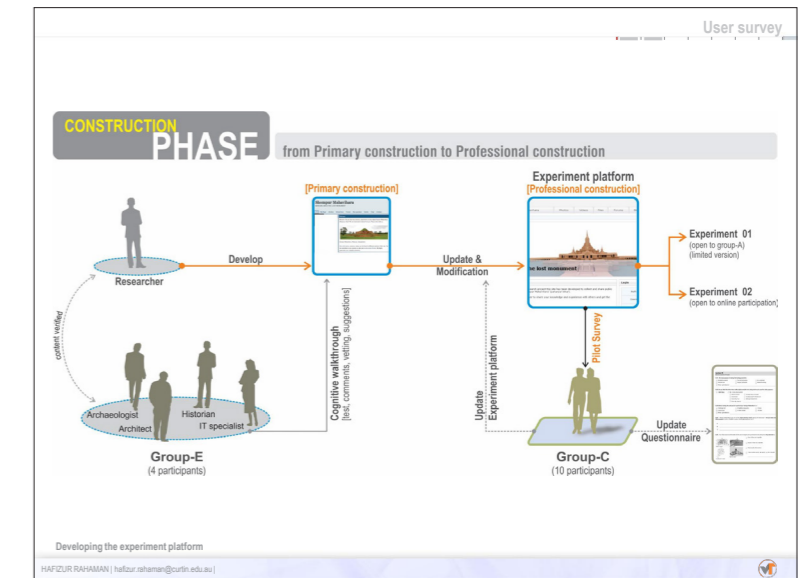
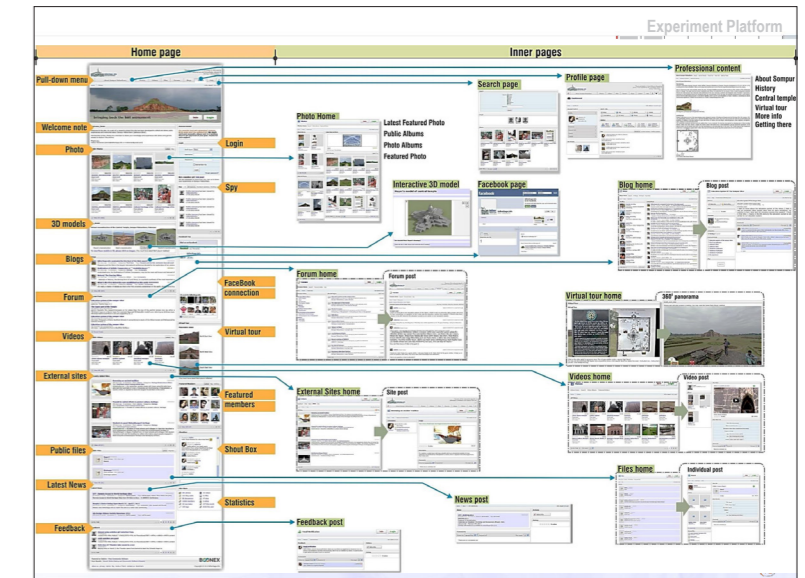
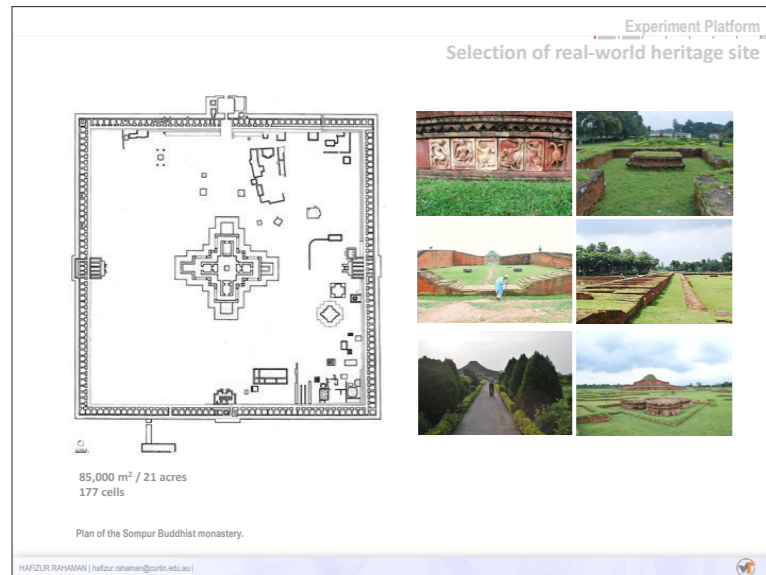
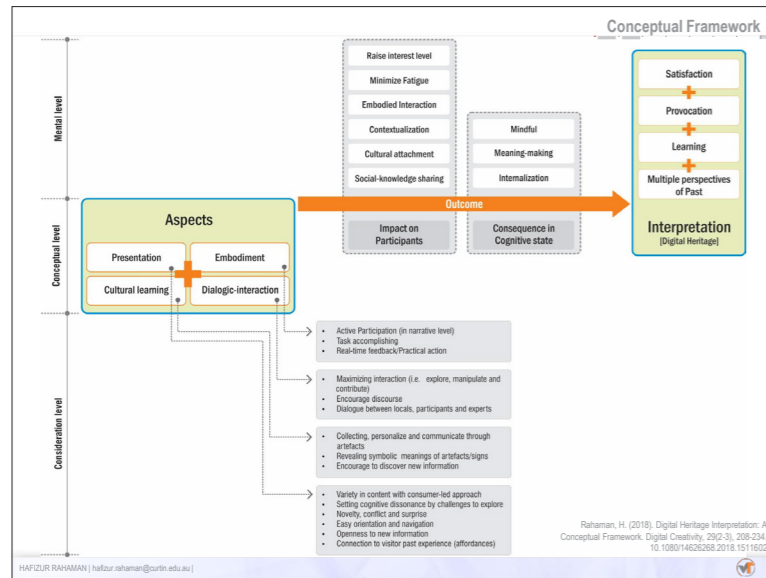
**Enhance :**

Collaboration,  
Shared-experience,  
Co-presence

### Conceptual model



Findings of this study were presented and published in CAADRIA 2010, SMARTdoc 2010, International Journal of Architectural Computing & Digital Creativity.





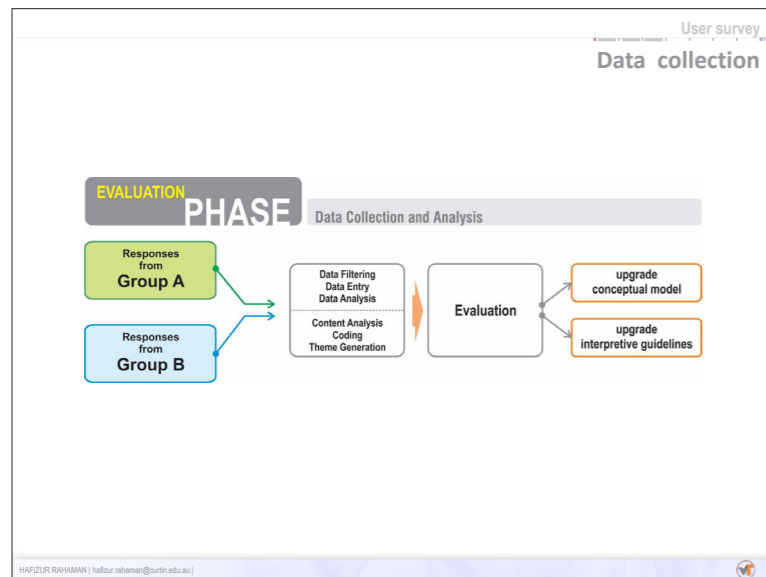
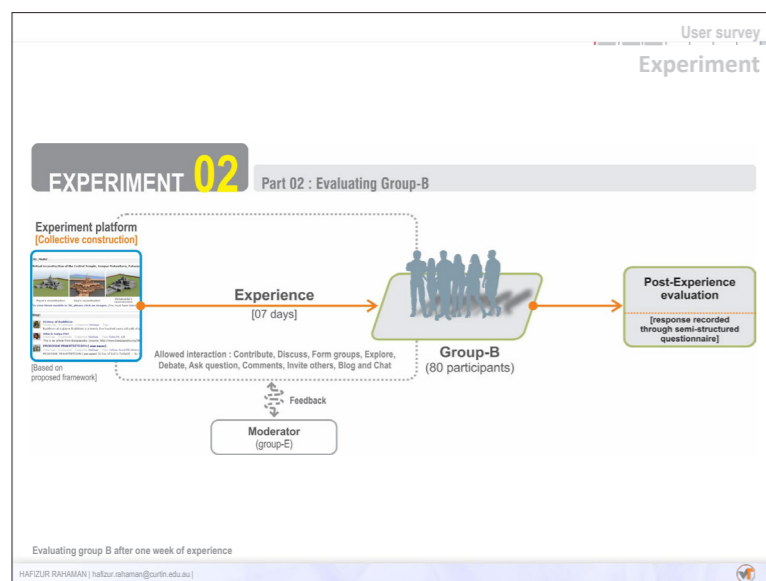
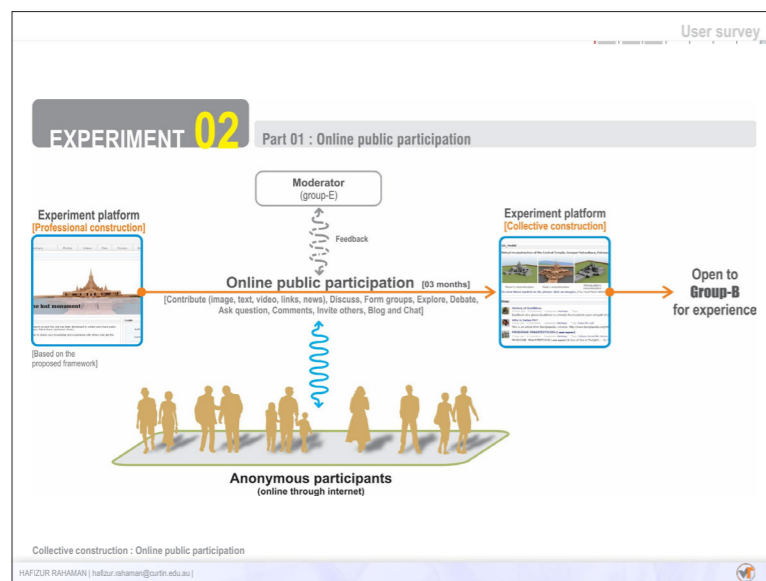


Table 6.6 : Self-attitudinal changes

Table 6.3 : Expectation fulfillment

Rahaman, H. (2020). Digital heritage interpretation: A conceptual framework, a CMS engine and a prototype. *International Journal of Digital Culture and Electronic Tourism*, 3(2). <https://doi.org/10.1504/IJDCET.2020.112530>

Rahaman, H. (2018). Digital Heritage Interpretation: A Conceptual Framework. *Digital Creativity*, 29(2-3), 208-234. 10.1080/14626268.2018.1511602

Table 6.5 : Pleasures and overall experience

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### Reflection

- Planning of interpretation need to be prioritized and designed first, before media or tool selection is made.
- Dialogic interaction, in the interpretive process can work as facilitators, where the validation and screening of information are done through participatory basis.
- A contribution apparently may seem irrelevant and unnecessary. However, each piece of information may work as gems and can help to build a bigger scenario.

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### Reflection

- To ensure adequate participation from non-organic group / group with pre-selected participants high encouragement is required by moderators.
- Juxtaposing public and professional contents side by side this research shows that – interpretation can be an open-ended process and there are more than one-way of interpreting the past.
- Incorporating multiple voices side by side and allowing dialogue among the end-users; it opens up the possibility of enhanced interpretation and legitimacy in understanding the past.

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02

## Highlights and Challenges

Tragic irony of 3D models in virtual heritage

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Present Works

## Virtual Heritage Scholarly Ecosystem

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Milgram Takemura Utsumi & Kishino (1994)

**Reality - Virtuality Continuum**  
Mixed Reality (RM)

Source: <https://alisonjamesart.com/2017/03/12/what-is-a-virtuality/>

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### Phone-based VR

**Group C**

- Use phone's display
- Phone is her/his Personal Unit
- No wires

**BOBO VR**

AUS 15-00

Smart Phone

**SAMSUNG GEAR VR**

AUS 75-00

Smart Phone

**GOOGLE CARDBOARD**

AUS 20-00

Smart Phone

**Note:**  
Under adult guidance. Consult device manual.

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### Seated/standing VR

**Group B**

- Eye
- Position detection (eye/face)
- Hand-held controllers
- Vertical Measurement Unit (VMA)

**FOVE VR**

AUS 750-000

PC (VR ready)

**OCULUS RIFT**

AUS 520-530

PC (VR ready)

**PLAY STATION VR**

AUS 420-450

Play Station Device

**HTC VIVE**

AUS 760-800

PC (VR ready)

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### Walkable VR

**Group A**

- Secure
- Speech
- Eye
- Vertical Measurement Unit (VMA)
- No wires

**META 2**

AUS 2000-2500

PC (VR ready)

**HOLOLENS**

AUS 4300-4500

No extra device

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Tragic irony

Challenges of access to and preservation of heritage games, 3D assets and environments

<http://stephenkutrak.blogspot.com/2008/10/virtual-forbidden-city.html>

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/vr-experience-restores-7000-roman-buildings-monuments-their-former-gory-180970902/>

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Tragic irony

To uncover **why**

We attempted to record accessible 3D models (and related 3D assets) from the proceedings of the **last three consecutive** publications of major digital heritage events and conferences.

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Tragic irony

From **14** proceedings & **1483** papers, only **9** were found to contain explicit links to 3D models

Accessible Content	VSMM	CAA	CIPA	EuroMed	Digital Heritage	Total
<b>3D content</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>9</b>
Videos	1	2	1	2	6	12
Other (VR models, photos, images of 3D models etc.)	1	4	6	5	17	33
Assets/extras on non-accessible websites	3	0	5	3	8	19

Rahaman, H., & Champion, E. (2019, 15-18 April). The scholarly rewards and tragic irony of 3D models in virtual heritage discourse. In 24th Annual Conference of the Association for Computer-Aided Architectural Design Research in Asia (CAADRIA 2019), (pp. 695-704) Wellington, New Zealand.

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Critical issues

Firstly, there is no clear, foolproof way to preserve 3D assets.

Public/institutional repositories

Source: <https://www.europeana.eu/en>, <https://nasa3d.arc.nasa.gov/models>, <https://www.cvark.org>, <https://3d.si.edu>

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Critical issues

Private/ commercial repositories

Source: Sketchfab.com, unity3d.com, myminifactory.com, blendswap.com, 3dwarehouse.sketchup.com

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**Critical issues**

**Secondly, there is insufficient shared understanding on how to best develop, integrate and demonstrate the research values of 3D heritage models.**



Reconstruction of 'Hagia Sophia' by Juan J. Gonzalez  
 (source : <http://forums.cgociety.org/showthread.php?11590&h=98700>, Access date: 15.11.2018)  
 (source : <http://features.cgociety.org/gallery/images/11590/Balazs.jpg>, Access date: 15.11.2018)

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**Critical issues**

**Thirdly, digital scholarly articles are typically published and distributed in PDF format. While they are relatively secure, but have limited interactivity, integration and immersivity.**



Digital Applications in Archaeology and Cultural Heritage  
 Editor-in-Chief: Sofia Pescari  
 View Editorial Board

ISSN: 2032-0948

Submit Your Paper  
 Supports Open Access  
 View Articles  
 Guide for Authors  
 Abstracting/ Indexing  
 Track Your Paper  
 Order Journal  
 Sample Issue

Source: <https://www.journals.elsevier.com/digital-applications-in-archaeology-and-cultural-heritage>

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**Initiatives**

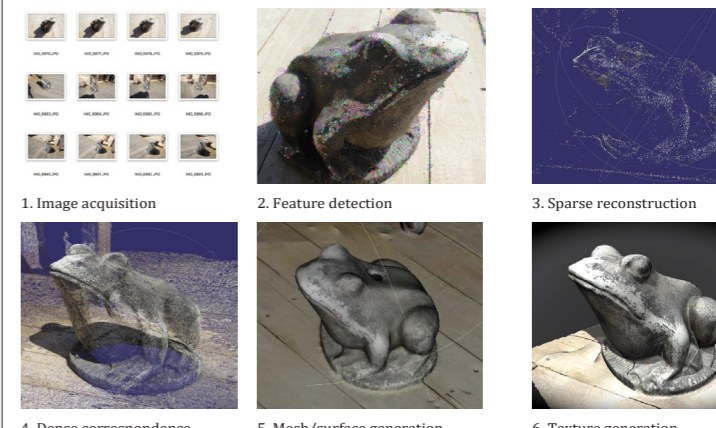
**Performance comparison**

Software/Tasks	PhotoScan	Visual SFM	PPT GUI	COLMAP	Regard3D
Data set of 50 photographs					
CloudCompare result					
Processing time	Match/Align photo: 316.619s Dense cloud: 4406.43s Build Mesh (High): 563.921s Texture : 103.254s Total time: 89.84min.	Loading image data: 12s Image pairwise matching: 38s. 3D Reconstruction: 26s. Dense reconstruction: 474s. Total time: 9.7min. (No texture)	Matching : 220.929s Processing time: 0.269m PMVS2: 176s Total time: 6.62min. (No texture)	Feature extract: 29.44.098 Feature matching: 4.35.740 Sparse reconstruction: 2.127m Dense reconstruction: 2.29.059 Surface generation: 1.28.947 Total time: 100.28m (No texture)	Image matching: 29.44.098 Triangulation: 4.35.740 CMVS/PMVS -- 2.29.059 Surface generation: 1.28.947 Total time: 38.30min.

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**Initiatives**

**Workflow**

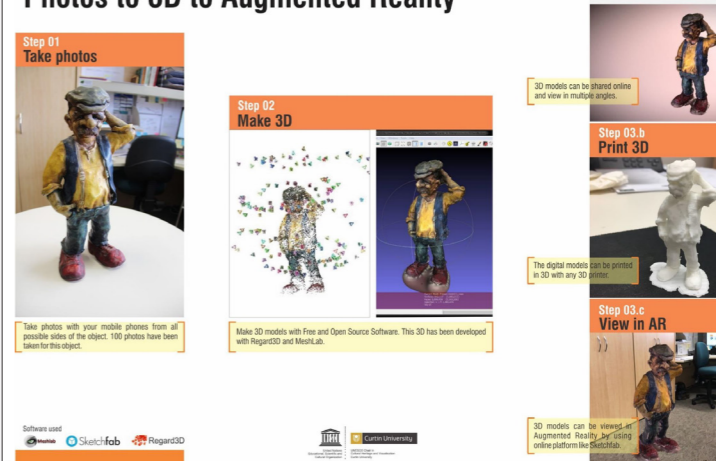


1. Image acquisition
2. Feature detection
3. Sparse reconstruction
4. Dense correspondence
5. Mesh/surface generation
6. Texture generation

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**Initiatives**

**Photos to 3D to Augmented Reality**



- Step 01: Take photos
- Step 02: Make 3D
- Step 03 a: Share Online
- Step 03 b: Print 3D
- Step 03 c: View in AR

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**Initiatives**

**Features list of 3D model repositories**

Table 3. Non-commercial institutional repositories-3D model viewer features offered (selection).

	Sketchfab	MyMiniFactory	Thingiverse	3D Warehouse	Turbosquid	ShareCG	3D Export	Free3D	Unity Asset Store	PLY	pt3d.in
<b>General features</b>	Various subscriptions, discounted	Free	Free	Free	Free and paid	Free	Free and paid	Free and paid	Free and paid	Free	Free and paid
<b>Supported formats</b>	50 file formats	54 file formats	37 file formats	OBJ	10 file formats	47 file formats	10 file formats	14 file formats	FBX or OBJ	OBJ, OBJ, OBJ, GLTF, GLB	OBJ, OBJ, GLTF, GLB
<b>Accessibility</b>	Creative Commons Attribution	Model Licenses	Model Licenses	General Model License	Model Licenses	Creative Commons BY-NC-ND License	Basic and Extended License	Model Licenses	Model Licenses	Published under a CC-BY license	Limited, non-exclusive license to access and use
<b>Max file size/download limit</b>	None-GBs	Pro: 20GB, Premium: 50GBs, Business: unlimited	Unlimited uploads	Free: 100MB, Premium: 500MB (max) upload and 200MB download	50MB (max) upload	No limit	100MB	500 MB	Not known	4GB (max) upload, Unlimited download	100MB-4GB for Basic, 6GB for PLUS
<b>Model display</b>	2D, 3D, VR	3D	3D	3D, 3D, VR	3D, 3D	3D, 3D	3D	3D	3D	3D, 3D	3D, 3D
<b>Indexed model</b>	3 million models published (30 Jan 2020)	NEEF 21000 models, objects (30 Jan 2020)	1000000 3D models (29000 downloaded)	Not known	620048 models (30 Jan 2020)	8560 models (30 Jan 2020)	162006 models (30 Jan 2020)	222000 models (30 Jan 2020)	Not known	Not known	Not known

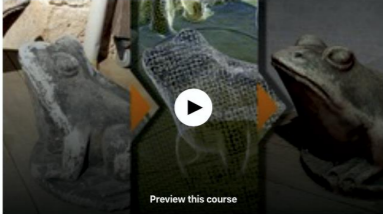
Virtual Archaeology Review, 11(23): 1-15, 2020

Champion, E., & Rahaman, H. (2020). Survey of 3D Digital Heritage Repositories and Platforms. *Virtual Archaeology Review*, 11(23). <https://doi.org/10.4995/var.2020.13226>

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Initiatives

IT & Software > Other IT & Software > Photogrammetry



**Photo to 3D to AR : Free and Easy**  
Making 3D digital models from photos

Free tutorial 4.5 ★★★★★ (171 ratings) 6,666 students  
13 7min of on-demand video

Created by Hafizur Rahaman  
English English (Auto)

Free

Enroll now

Preview this course

What you'll learn Course content Reviews Instructors

- How to photograph objects systematically
- Create detailed and accurate models of real world objects by using free photogrammetry tool <https://www.udemy.com/photo-to-3d-to-ar-free-and-easy>
- Save time and effort by this new way of creating 3D-models
- Generate high resolution textures for your model
- Share and sell your 3D model on any online store or repository
- View 3D model in Augmented Reality (AR) / Virtual Reality (VR)

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Initiatives



**Create a 3D Model from Photos with Free and Open Source Software (FOS)**  
Supported by research in education


Hafizur Rahaman  
UNESCO Professional Chair in Cultural Heritage & Visualisation  
School of Architecture, Design & Planning  
Curtin University (Perth, Australia)

<https://www.udemy.com/photo-to-3d-to-ar-free-and-easy>



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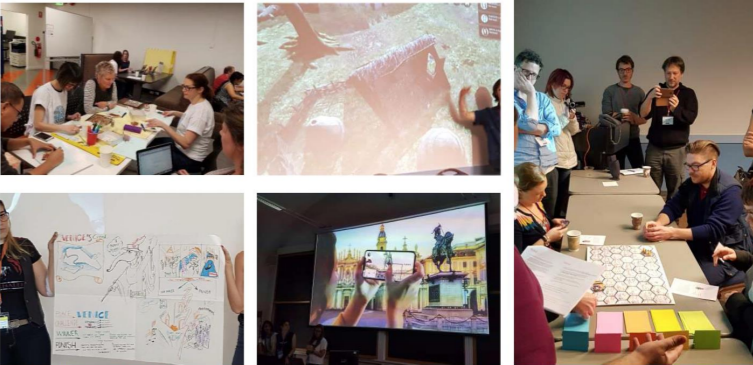
Initiatives



Photograph by Erik Champion & Rama Das

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Initiatives



Digital Cities, Digital Humanities Summer School: Game Prototypes, Politecnico, Italy 2018; 2019.

Image courtesy: Prof. Erik Champion

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Initiatives



UNESCO Professional Chair in Cultural Heritage & Visualisation

2016-2019

UNESCO Professional Chair in Cultural Heritage & Visualisation

2016-2019

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2016-2019

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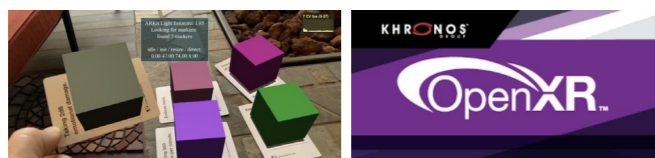
03

Promises and Prototypes

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### 3 Promising Trends

1. VR/MR is moving towards a consumer-component based system.
2. Smartphone is a stereoscopic viewer & a sensor & a PC
3. Consumer technology frameworks will help improve access.



WebXR or OpenXR in browser

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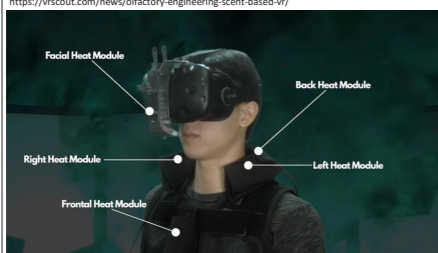
<http://www.dead-mens-eyes.org/> see [The ARtefactKit - Stu Eve](#)

Image courtesy: Prof. Erik Champion

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<https://vrscout.com/news/olfactory-engineering-scent-based-vr/>



<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/11/new-game-takes-virtual-reality-beyond-sight-and-sound/>

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### iPad Pro & LIDAR sensor



Source: <https://www.cnet.com/news/the-ipad-pro-can-scan-your-house-and-future-iphones-might-too/> Date: 21.09.2020

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<https://cdmcmachine.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/augmented-reality-pokemon.jpg>

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### Enhancing a Palace using 5G and AR

Like Ritchie Aug 7, 2020 5 min read

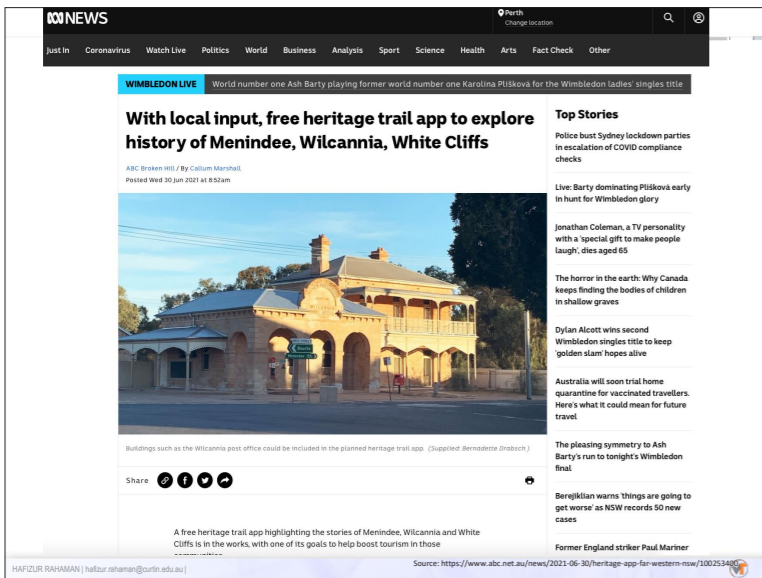
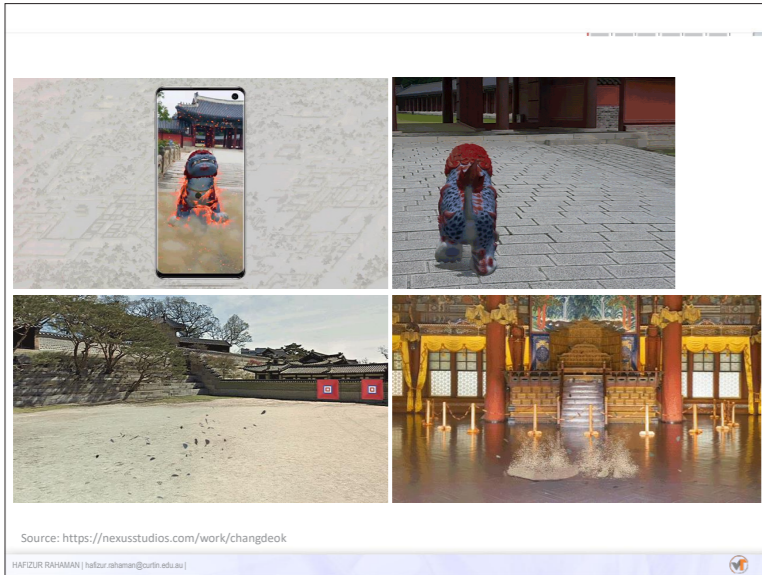
Through a collaboration with SK Telecom, Google, and the Cultural Heritage Administration, we have transformed the UNESCO world heritage site, Changdeok Palace (South Korea), into a 5G enabled, AR-enhanced cultural location.

*I'd like to consider Changdeok Palace our second 'Enhanced Location' after the AT&T Stadium in Dallas. This time instead of sports we were able to demonstrate the potential impact of the ARCloud concept on products designed for the museum and cultural industries.*

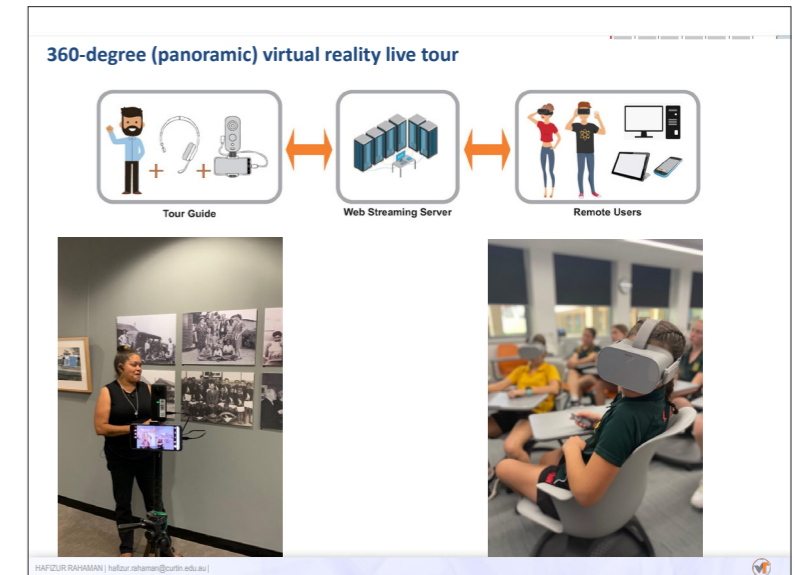
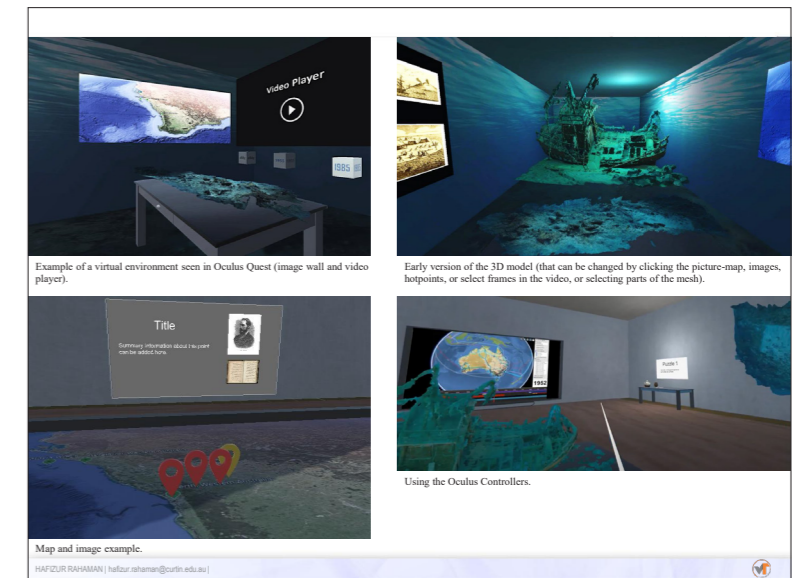
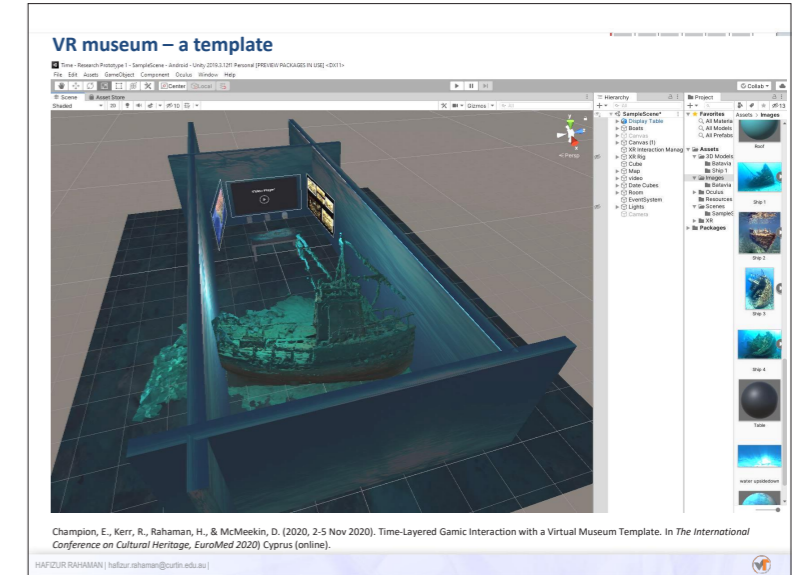
Changdeok Palace is the first 5G AR-enhanced Tour Experience.

<https://medium.com/@AkeVrchie/enhancing-a-palace-using-5g-and-ar-3a6b994183df>

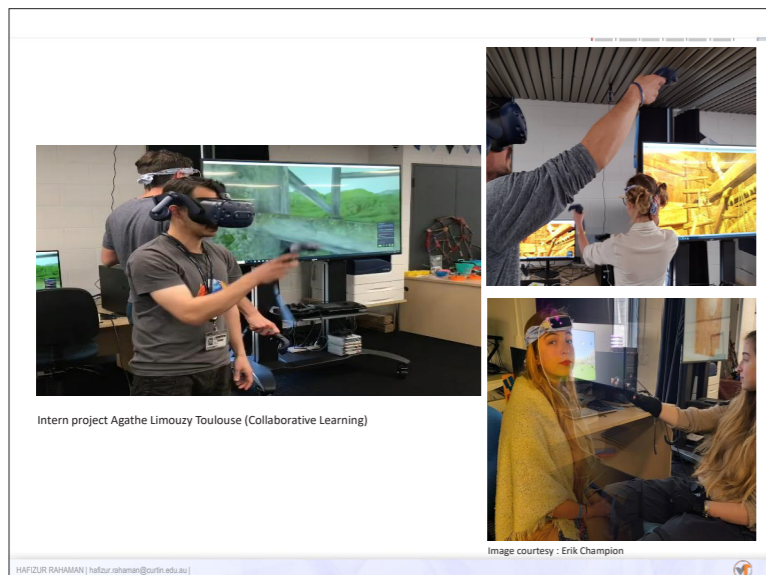
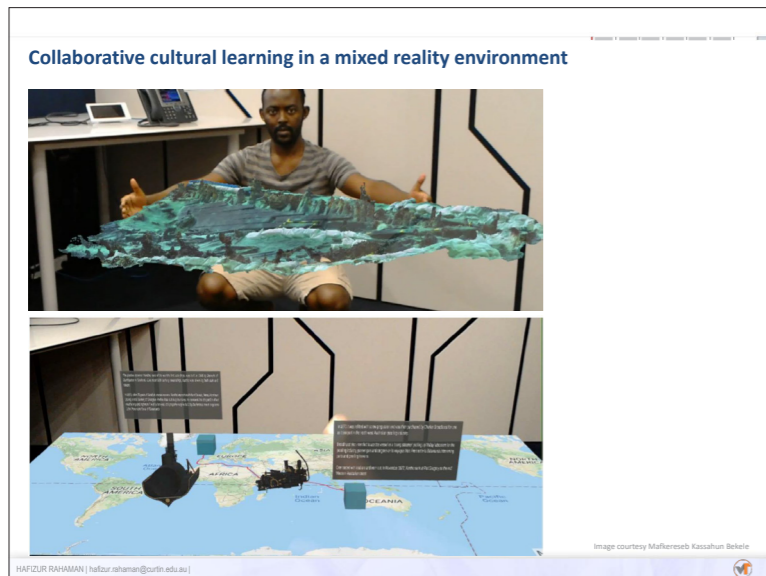
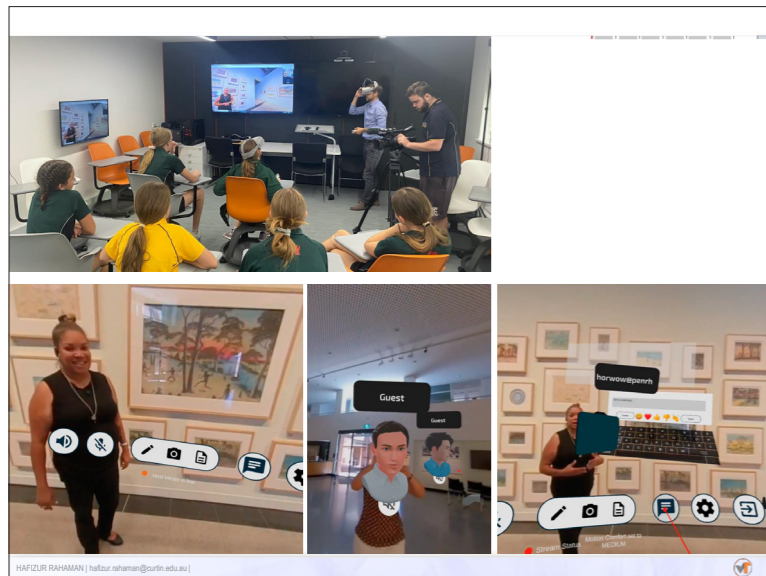
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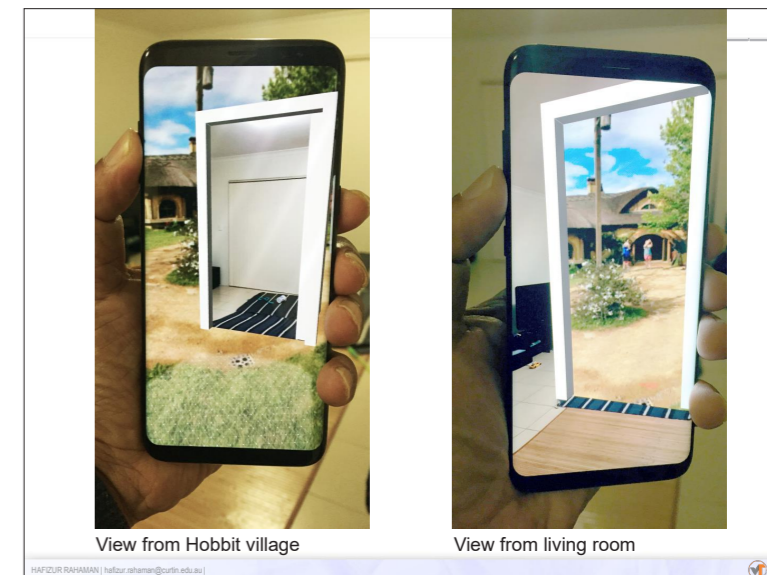
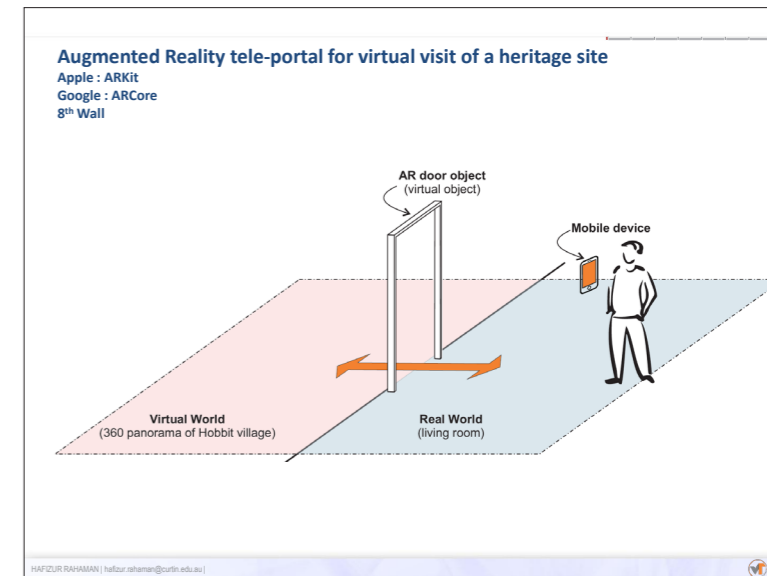
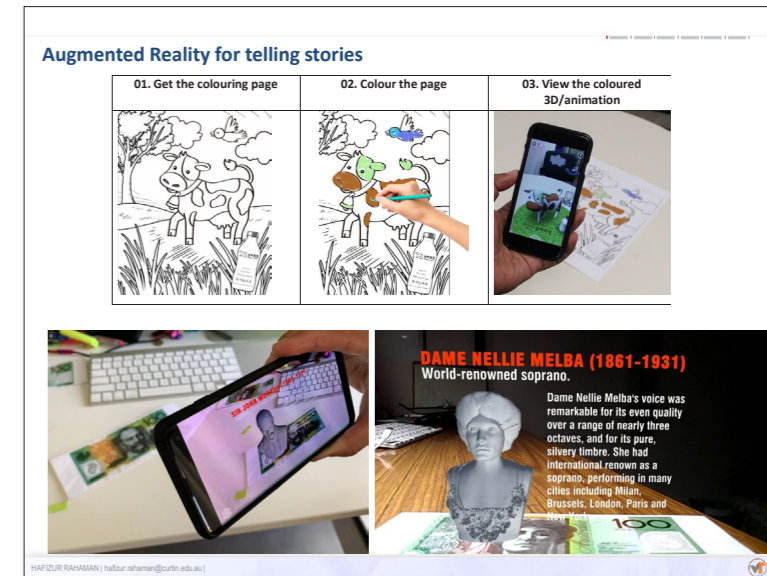
LECTURE 4 - 15 JULY 2021



LECTURE 4 - 15 JULY 2021

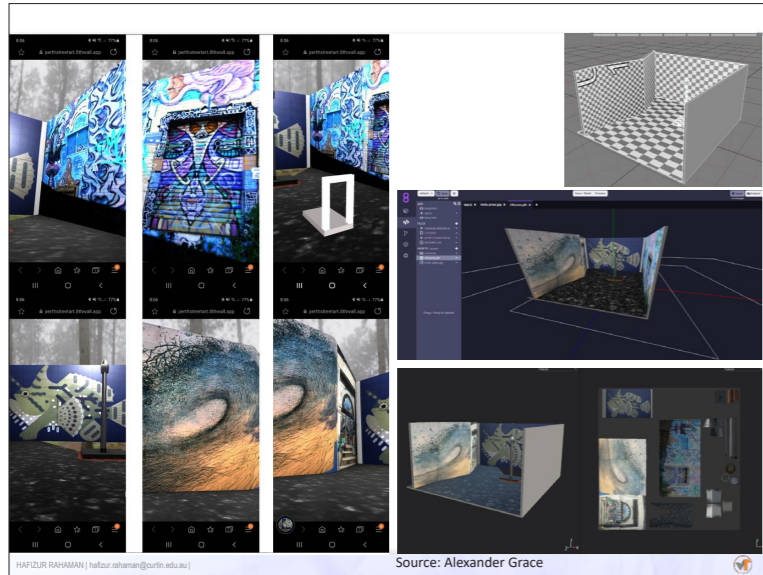


LECTURE 4 - 15 JULY 2021



LECTURE 4 - 15 JULY 2021

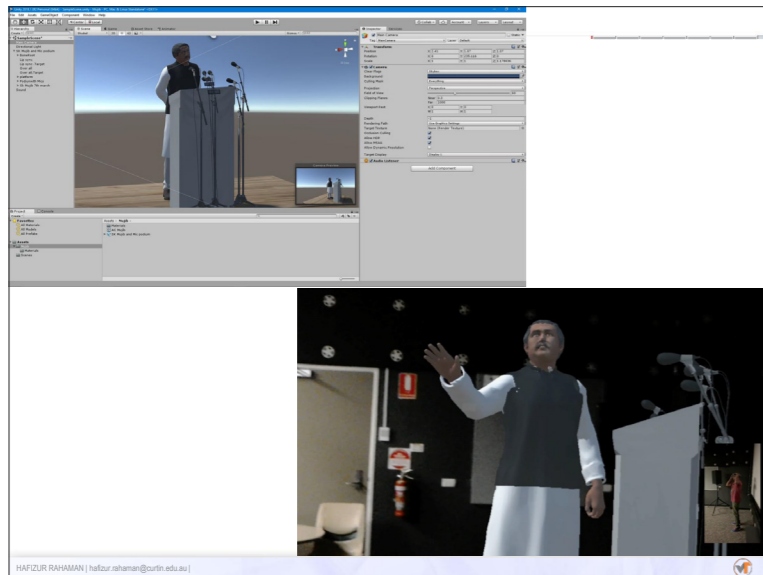




Source: Alexander Grace



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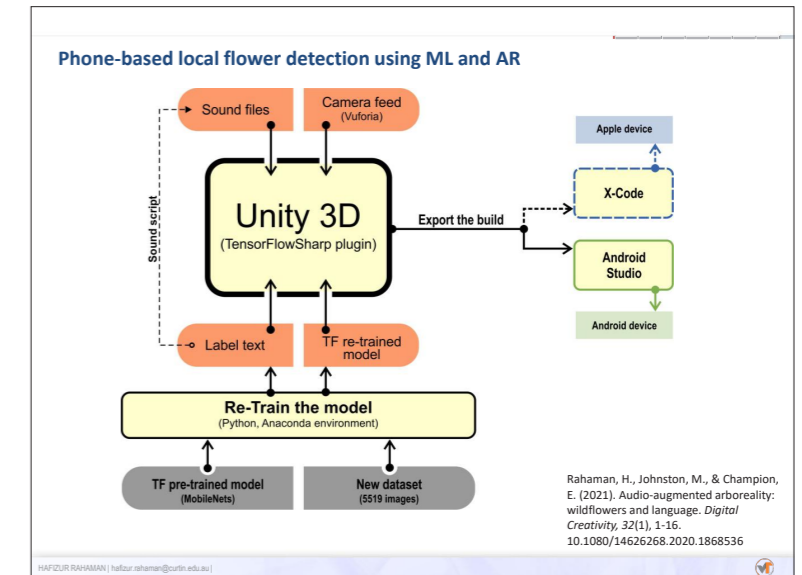
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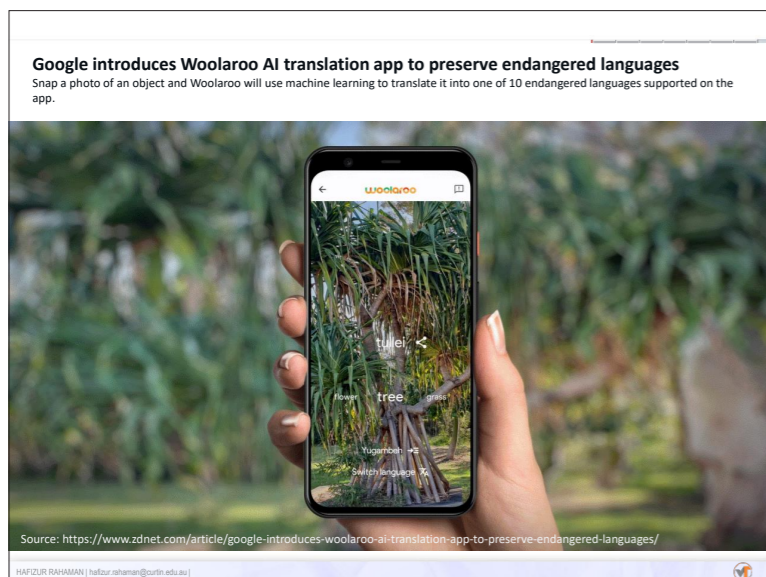
A virtual time machine for Venice

Source: <https://youtu.be/iuQQGyPRWfs>

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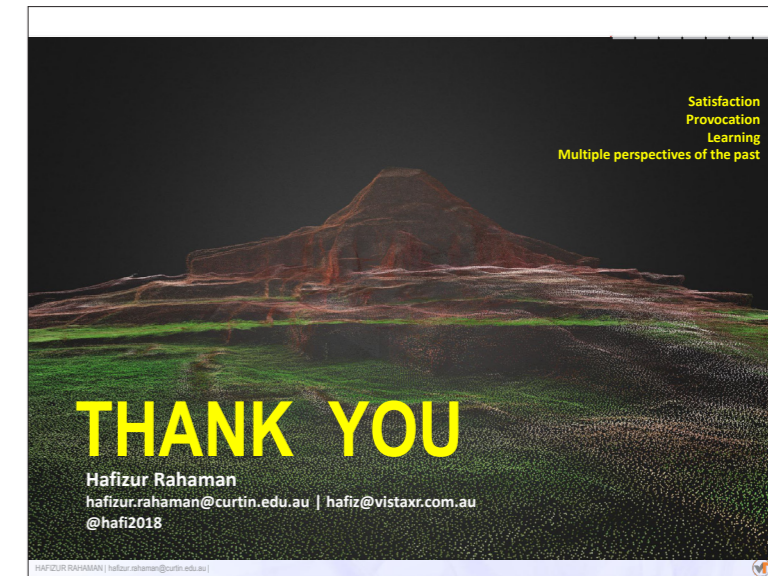
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“... .. Computer simulations, however good, contain only what photography, laser technology and pre-existing expertise put into them... Real experiences connect us to the deeds of past people and place us in contexts where history was made... **VR will never be a substitute for encounters with the real thing.**”

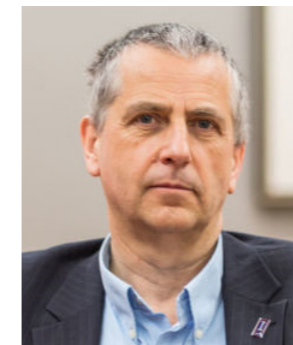
**Janna Thompson**, Professor of Philosophy, La Trobe University  
<https://theconversation.com/why-virtual-reality-cannot-match-the-real-thing-92035>

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## Lecture 5

# Speaking with a Changing World: communicating the heritage of the world



Mike Robinson  
Nottingham Trent University

Mike is Professor Emeritus in Cultural Heritage at the University of Birmingham and former Director of the Ironbridge International Institute for Cultural Heritage, involving the Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site. He is Adjunct Professor at Nottingham Trent University and Visiting Professor at National Taiwan University. He was previously Founder and Director of the Centre for Tourism and Cultural Change. For 30 years Mike's work has focused upon the relations between heritage, tourism, culture and how these realms intersect. Recent research focuses on World Heritage and Sustainable Development, Communicating World Heritage as well as Heritage, Enterprise and Regeneration. He has advised the UNESCO World Heritage Programme in Sustainable Tourism and was principal consultant to the UNESCO World Heritage European Journeys Project. He was a government appointed member of the UK's Expert Panel to determine the UK's Tentative List for World Heritage and has worked with UNESCO offices in China, South-East Asia, Central Asia, the Middle East and has worked on heritage and tourism related projects in over 40 countries with UNESCO, European Commission, Council of Europe and various State Agencies and NGOs.

## Lecture 5

# Speaking with a Changing World: communicating the heritage of the world

**Mike Robinson**  
Nottingham Trent University

Heritage, in all of its forms – tangible and intangible – has meaning for the communities, societies and cultures that produce it and provide it with value. The issue is how to convey this value to wider audiences. This is the essence of interpretation and it is one of the most pressing issues in the management of heritage. Interpretation is not only about the provision of historical ‘facts’ but about the communication of meaning. Though the focus of this short piece is World Heritage, the principles of interpretation and the issues it raises relate to all types of heritage including museum objects and intangible cultural heritage.

A useful metaphor to assist in understanding the idea of interpretation is that of the book. Books are valued on multiple levels; as containers of information and knowledge, as sources of inspiration, entertainment and even as agents of change. Despite the advent of digital media, the book retains its place in societies working with narratives to shape meaning in our lives.

World Heritage Sites have additional meaning by virtue of the processes of assessment they undergo and the symbolic value that is layered upon them. It is not unusual when visiting World Heritage to ask oneself: “What is ‘worldly’ about this site? What am I learning from this specially designated site? And, what good does this site do?” The latter moral question is increasingly important within the wider context of global issues such as climate change, poverty and health concerns.

The designation of World Heritage under the 1972 Convention is an eternal covenant between a State Party, its heritage and the rest of the world. The management of World Heritage needs to be geared towards the needs of both present and future generations and its interpretation similarly has to

reflect this ongoing timescale. The context of World Heritage has changed considerably since the listing of the first sites back in 1978. The huge increase in international tourism now requires many World Heritage Sites to deal with either over-tourism and the issues of visitor management or the need to attract tourists to support local development. While the Covid-19 pandemic has temporarily re-shaped international tourism, it merely has served to illustrate the inter-dependency between heritage sites and tourist activity. There is also recognition that the management of World Heritage should involve the local community as set out in the World Heritage Strategic Objectives following the decision of the World Heritage Committee in 2007. While this varies considerably in practice around the globe the goal remains to better engage communities as guardians of their own heritage. Significantly, since 2015 and the embedding of the Sustainable Development Goals, there has been a shift from the singular purpose of World Heritage protection to the mobilisation of World Heritage towards making a contribution to sustainable development and as an agent of cultural well-being and inter-cultural dialogue. And critically, with the expansion of the World Heritage List and more generally the continued production of all forms of heritage – from museums to intangible cultural heritage – there are severe pressures upon the resources required for the protection, conservation and management of World Heritage Sites. Funding for heritage, particularly in the developing world, is increasingly difficult to access. Again, the Covid pandemic has re-shaped resource priorities in most countries with heritage struggling to find funding and resources in the form of expertise and training. The issue is further compounded by the decline in tourism activity.

As if these problems and challenges were not enough, I would suggest that there are more existential issues that relate to the relationship that exists – or rather does not – between World Heritage and wider civil society. Despite the continued production of World Heritage there remains a significant communication gap between publics and the concept of World Heritage. Particularly for younger generations, a key question remains as to what World Heritage actually means.

It would be sensible to start with the text of the 1972 World Heritage Convention and what that tells us about the communication of World Heritage? What does it tell us about what we should do to interpret World Heritage? And actually, it tells us very little. The text of the Convention is written for a well-educated audience, whom it is assumed, understands and appreciates its very rationale. In terms of interpretation – how we convey the meaning of World Heritage Sites – the nearest we can probably find to this in the Convention text itself is Article 27, which is about education and information, programmes directed to try to encourage people to strengthen appreciation and respect for their heritage and, by definition, to contribute to the protection-- ongoing protection and conservation of the property. The responsibility lies with the State Parties – who shall undertake to keep the public broadly informed of the dangers threatening heritage. However, this says nothing about how you interpret a World Heritage Site.

If we look to the World Heritage Operational Guidelines, which despite considerable expansion over the years reflecting issues in the assessment and management of World Heritage, have little to say about the issue of interpretation. There are some short sections pointing to modes and techniques of

interpretation but they don't really tell us about why we should be interpreting World Heritage and what the key messages should be.

Clearly, the defining quality of World Heritage is its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV). But OUV is a difficult concept for most people to think about. It would appear reasonable that when we come to a World Heritage Site, and within the interpretation of that site, that there should be some mention or some attempt to translate this concept to the general public. This would give the reason why this is a World Heritage site? The significance and the meaning of World Heritage Sites are seldom articulated in the interpretation. Indeed, this is largely missing from the interpretation of many heritage sites, but one would expect 'world' heritage to feature some explanation of its 'specialness'.

Interpretation boards, commonly used at heritage sites, comprise a blend of text and images – photographs and diagrams. At some sites to allow for wider access these may be reproduced in different languages. They are frequently densely constructed focused upon the history of the site and/or its technical construction, but very rarely do such texts tell us why this is a World Heritage Site – what is the defining quality that makes this different and of 'universal' significance? This is a really big issue.

While not exclusive to the interpretation of World Heritage, there is a common interpretive focus that has a strong emphasis on providing historical narratives with varying degrees of technical language – some translated better than others for the non-technician. The vast majority of visitors, including local communities, to heritage sites are not technicians. They are not trained archaeologists, art historians or trained architects, but they are confronted with technical matters. There is also a tendency for interpretation to national (even nationalist) narratives and we are told of how significant a site is for the particular locale, a particular region or country. This maybe fine for national heritage attracting ostensibly national visitors (sharing language and culture), but World Heritage is meant to transcend nationalism and point to global significance and to speak of the universal condition of humanity. Of course, this extends beyond the two dimensions of interpretation boards into the narratives of tour guides and the delivery of digital information. But in all cases the question that should be being asked is what are we learning from this? Specifically, what can we learn about World Heritage and what it really stands for?

How can we move away from the frequently dense, overly descriptive, historic, technical content focused interpretation that, while interesting for some, misses the meaning – the heritage value – of the site? Academically constructed interpretation has the unfortunate tendency to objectify heritage and place objects of heritage value outside of daily lives of many visitors and local communities. If we return to the metaphor of a book – the books, we enjoy are those in which we can connect with personally. A well-constructed book, with a good plot and empathetic characters has the power to convey big themes – global messages. Within the context of the Sustainable Development Goals, World Heritage Sites also have the potential for conveying global messages through the narratives of their interpretation. UNESCO's World Heritage system provides little guidance as how we can better use sites to communicate the very goals upon which UNESCO has set itself – an understanding of common

humanity, global interconnectivity and inter-cultural dialogue. While there may be an 'upstreaming' process to smooth the production of new World Heritage, there is a need for a 'down-streaming' process that focuses on its communication and how best it is interpreted. At present, it is frequently the case that in terms of interpreting heritage, we assume that a few signs about the history of the site, or the provision of new digital app is enough. As Irish writer and critic, George Bernard Shaw once remarked: "The biggest single problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place." Telling people that something is World Heritage assumes they know what World Heritage is. They assume that they know its value. It assumes they understand the concept of OUV, the rationale behind the 1972 Convention. It is important to talk about the threat to World Heritage and if the need for its protection, but where are we informed about the opportunities that World Heritage presents to communities, and the rest of the world? That surely should be part of interpretation as well?

As mentioned, the world is a very different place to how it was when the Convention was first conceived in the beginning of the 1970s. Audiences for heritage have changed and are now multi-ethnic, multilingual and multicultural. In an era of mass international mobility, of which tourism has become vital for the GDP of many nations, we need to look beyond domestic tourism audiences and international tourist audiences. The audiences for World Heritage have become much more complex and communicating with them is more than translating existing educational text into other languages.

The biggest challenge is generational change. How younger generations understand heritage and its relevance to them and the present state of the planet is critical. Heritage sites have a different meaning to recent generations. Yes, in part, they use different media but they have different cultural reference points. To provide a short anecdotal example: Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site, an important industrial heritage site featuring the world's first iron bridge and the world's first coke-fired blast furnace for the mass production of iron, prides itself as the birthplace of the industrial revolution. It is a site that for my generation and older it is easy to identify with, as I grew up in a time and place of heavy industry and the sights and sounds of engineering. In taking some visitors from industrial North East China around the site and as part of the excellent 'live' interpretation, provided, there was a winding engine in steam to show how it worked. The air was heavy with the burning of coal which of course was producing the steam. For me, growing up in mining area and used to the burning of coal, the smell produced a wave of warm nostalgia. For my Chinese guests, they too found the smell familiar and evocative. But what was interesting was the reaction of the young lady interpreter who asked me what the strange smell was. I pointed to a pile of coal and told her it was that which was being burned to work the engine. She then asked me what it was as she hadn't seen coal before. At first I was very surprised but on reflection she was of a generation that did not grow up with the culture of coal. There was no reason why should have seen it, as for her heating the home is just produced by the flick of switch. Indeed, she was of a generation who have been active in promoting a de-carbonised world. What this occasion highlighted for me is the increasing distance between new audiences and heritage and the fact that interpretation can often rely on providing a much wider cultural context. We can never assume that audiences possess the prior knowledge that is vital to explaining meaning.

Tourists are incredibly useful for asking really good, simple questions that challenge the way we seek to explain heritage. In the case of World Heritage they ask questions such as: What does World Heritage mean? What is Outstanding Universal Value? Why is World Heritage different to other heritage? What / Who is UNESCO? Why are some people interested in this Site and others not? How can we use this Site for wider benefit? Why is this Site relevant to me? These are important analytical questions that stretch way beyond the motivations behind Article 27 of the World Heritage Convention. They are just as important or even more important than any historical narrative of the site.

For tourists there is the added dimension that any engagement with heritage and World Heritage is very rapid. While it may have taken centuries to create a World Heritage Site or cultural landscape, as visitors we actually spend a tiny percentage of time in that space. As academics and researchers with deep interests in art history or archaeology we may seek to spend as much time as possible at one heritage location but as a tourist we have very little time in which to convey the most important messages of the site. On observing tourists at heritage sites, it is important to ask ourselves the questions; ‘how does the audience make sense of the site and what it represents? What will they take from their experience of, their interactions with the site?’ This is a step into the great unknown and it is at this point that we make lots of assumptions about the relationship between subject and object.

When we see somebody in an art gallery, looking at a painting. What is happening? What are those people are absorbing? What is the relationship? We may think we know but its highly likely we do not. Not everyone engages deeply in the heritage they visit, not everyone is there to learn from it, but this does not demean any experience they may have. For many it is a photo opportunity. For World Heritage, engagement with visitors would seem an opportunity not to convey facts but to convey meaning. From cognitive psychology and surely at the base of the education process we should be asking the questions. What do we remember? What do we understand? And what do we learn? These are three slightly different questions but all interrelated and I would suggest are useful points to reflect upon at all stages of the interpretive process.

We have agency as to how we interpret World Heritage Sites. We can choose the narrative for a site. Again, to give the concrete example Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site, since its designation in 1986, the extensive and rather complex landscape has largely been interpreted in a technical way of how its component sites worked; a historical way regarding how the site shaped industrial development of the eighteenth and nineteenth century and; and a regional / national way in terms of highlighting the historical significance of the of geographies of industrial production. One of the key monuments of the site is a blast furnace that began using coke for fuel in 1709. For those who know it is an important technical structure. For those that don’t it is just an old brick construction. Present interpretation panels are in several languages and the overall synthesis of the significance of this furnace is:

*“The world’s first coke-fired furnace for the production of iron – 1709. Operated by Abraham Darby at Coalbrookdale, Shropshire England. The production of iron using coke rather than coal allowed the commercial production of iron.”*

This underpins claims of the site to be the birthplace of mass iron production and thus the birthplace of the industrial revolution. The apparently simple text contains many assumptions for visitors – that people should know what coke is, who Abraham Darby was, where Coalbrookdale is etc. There is further explanation by way of panels and diagrams that explain how a blast furnace works and how coke was produced. But it still does not explain the relevance of the site as ‘world’ heritage, nor its contemporary significance. There is an additional narrative that could assist in making the site relevant to the younger generations, and to audiences across the world. For this site can be said to be the birthplace of global warming, in that mass burning of fossil fuels in the eighteenth century started a trend that has since proved to have global impact. This narrative allows for drawing attention to climate change and global environmental concern and taps into a very pressing and contemporary agenda. The site could be used as a space to raise awareness, draw attention to profiling new pollution control technologies and thus contribute directly to one of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Interpretation is frequently a prisoner of language. If a site in Korea is only interpreted in the Korean language, then as an anglophone tourist I cannot access any narrative. All sites have these issues in the context of international tourism. However, translation extends well beyond language. If I visit a temple in Korea or anywhere in Asia, I need some cultural translation. If I am not a scholar of religious architecture, I need some orientation regarding the meaning of the structures I have to navigate. I need my basic questions of form and function addressed. How are these temples used today? These questions are ahead of any history. In the same way, as someone who is familiar with Christian church architecture, I would need to explain the basic concepts of worship and its connection with the narrative and symbolism of the building to anyone from outside of Christian culture. This is contextual translation and increasingly needs to default to positions of cross-cultural interpretation so that meanings can genuinely be shared.

Many heritage/world heritage sites are rooted in conflict and difficult histories. Conflict is very much part of narrative and something that can be explored through an understanding of a site and how it has survived. Translating conflict is part of the interpretation process and World Heritage Sites have the potential to create narratives that can assist in understanding continuities and what unites cultures and the notion of common humanity rather than emphasising difference. Given that the very *raison d’être* of UNESCO is the creation of peace then it is reasonable to assume that sites should highlight this through their interpretation and the production of opportunities for genuine intercultural dialogue and intergenerational dialogue. How many World Heritage sites really move away from their locational context and from their national context? I would suggest very few.

Heritage sites and material culture in general, are important in the translation process. Being able to touch and feel and sense places of *universal* significance should be special but we need to be supported by meaningful narratives. This should force us to reflect on ourselves and how others see us. Do we see what others see? And do others see what we see? We need to reflect on the site, its meanings and on ourselves. Where do we position ourselves in relation to the site and vice versa? And how do we

generate connections? In particular, emotional connections and notions of genuine empathy that cuts across difference but can speak to a globally connected world.

World Heritage Sites are important bridges connecting cultures and generations. This is universalism in action. Sites can connect generations, provide context, demonstrate how places and peoples and pasts were and remain connected. The past needs to be relevant to the present and the future and not exist as monuments isolated in history. These are not easy things to achieve but in a world of problems and so many distractions, heritage of 'world' status should be taking the lead. In interpretation strategies we should be employing narratives that recognise cultural diversity and the changes that affect humanity. We should be thinking about narratives that reach beyond the immediate, to challenge and embrace change so that World Heritage does not remain in a rarified bubble.

I return to the notion of narrative and how the interpretation of World Heritage can learn from the narrative process and the art of literary creation. Now while the question of what makes 'great' literature is inevitably contested, fluid and permeated by discussions of subjectivity, taste and culture, there is nevertheless a common sense consensus within most cultures and languages that certain books and authors have claims to be 'great' or 'special' in some way. Even outside of any truly objective notion of 'greatness' most of us can point to works of fiction that we consider great – maybe as defined merely through our enjoyment or as a result of a screen adaptation. Most of the great works of fiction have been translated into other languages as recognition of their universal appeal and this translation allows us access to different worlds, allows access to different cultures, different backgrounds and different stories.

Examining the sort of criteria that we could attribute to greatness we could come up with a list as follows:

- It says something **important** about the world / the human condition – frequently referred to as speaking some universal truth that is recognisable across cultures.
- It is memorable – its messages last a long time – we don't forget the great books we have read and particularly those from our childhood.
- It is **shared** from one generation to another – great literature has a timeless quality about it, so despite the changes in language and the world we can still appreciate the works of authors from centuries back.
- It stirs the **emotions** and 'touches' us – we cry and laugh and share the feelings that are expressed.
- It **inspires** people – to create, to change – in some cases reading a novel changes peoples lives or their outlook on life and motivate them to action.
- It leaves readers feeling better for having read it – an enjoyable experience – we leave a good book feeling good.
- It is re-read – because it makes us feel good or makes us think we can return to it and read it again.

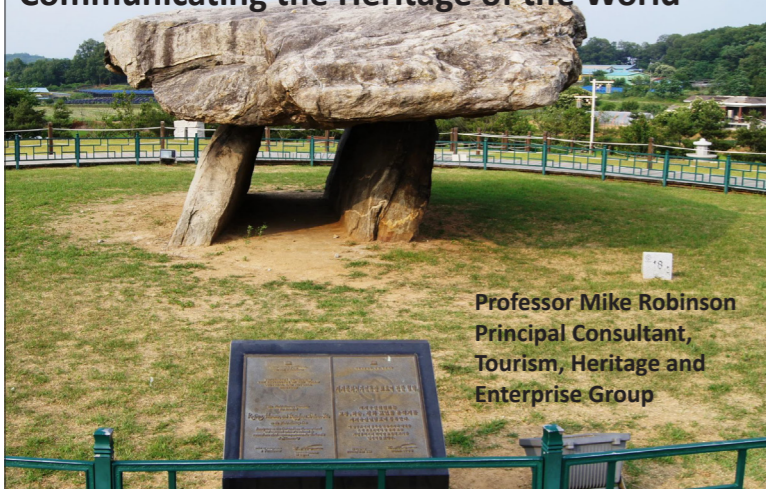
- It remains **relevant** – no matter at what time of life we read a great novel its messages continue to speak to us.
- It **translates** into different cultures – this demonstrates the universal messages contained.

If we can equate the idea of great or important literature to 'great' or 'important' heritage – what we effectively encapsulate within the term 'world' heritage – then we may also come up with some form checklist that should guide the interpretation process. World Heritage Sites should be the leading beacons of heritage interpretation. In effect:

- World Heritage should say something **important** about the world / the human condition – frequently referred to as speaking some should universal truth that is recognisable across cultures.
- Visits to World Heritage Sites need to be memorable – a strong and distinctive narrative that explains our significance of the Site will assist in this.
- World Heritage is **shared** from one generation to another but to what extent does the site interpretation speak to the younger generations?
- World Heritage should stir the **emotions** and 'touch' us – this is more than historical or technical narrative but something that allows us to contemplate the meaning of the site and its symbolic value to communities.
- A visit to a World Heritage should be **inspiring** – urging us not only to protect the site but to change the world for the better.
- Visiting World Heritage Sites should be an enjoyable experience enhanced by interpretation. Education is important but the experience of World Heritage should also be fun, particularly for the young generation.
- World Heritage is visited more than once – World Heritage should have multiple messages to share and visitors should want to return as the messages change over time.
- World Heritage should be **relevant** – to everyone, that is the true nature of universal value and good interpretation will emphasise this.
- Again, World Heritage and its messages should **translate** into different cultures – not only in linguistic terms but in cultural terms as well to share the universal messages of the heritage.

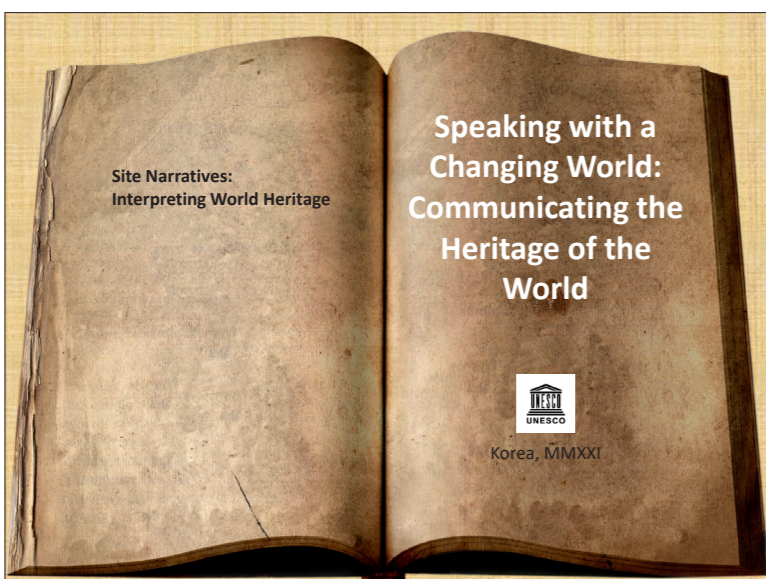
There is a great need for creative and meaningful interpretation at World Heritage Sites and much work to do. Good interpretation is necessary for several purposes as it should aid conservation, help develop sustainable tourism and allow the site and its communities to address the Sustainable Development Goals. Every World Heritage Site is a gateway to a thousand stories but first we need to work out which ones are the relevant ones and appropriate to the very concept of OUV and the principles of UNESCO.

## Speaking with a Changing World: Communicating the Heritage of the World



Professor Mike Robinson  
Principal Consultant,  
Tourism, Heritage and  
Enterprise Group

LECTURE 5 – 19 AUGUST 2021



### Contents

- Re-thinking the Purpose of World Heritage Sites .....
- Challenges of Changing Audiences .....
- The Great Unknown .....
- Narrative Choices .....
- Translation Issues .....
- The Metaphor of Great Literature / Great Heritage .....

## Changing Contexts / Increased Pressures of World Heritage Management

- Increasing need to engage with local communities
- Increasing need to attract / manage / mobilise tourists/tourism
- A shift from the singular purpose of protection to making a contribution to sustainable development and cultural well-being / inter-cultural dialogue
- Pressing agendas - lack of resources, lack of civic engagement, lack of meaning?

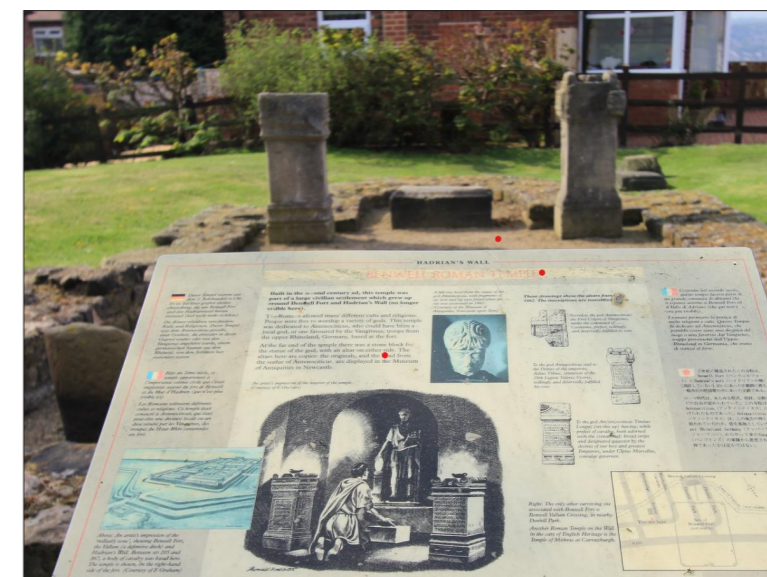
## WH Convention

### VI. Educational Programmes

#### Article 27

- The States Parties to this Convention shall endeavour by all appropriate means, and in particular by educational and information programmes, to strengthen appreciation and respect by their peoples of the cultural and natural heritage defined in [Articles 1](#) and [2](#) of the Convention.
- They shall undertake to keep the public broadly informed of the dangers threatening this heritage and of the activities carried on in pursuance of this Convention

LECTURE 5 – 19 AUGUST 2021





## Outstanding Universal Value

Interpretative focus with strong emphasis on:

- Historical narratives
- Technical narratives
- National / nationalist narratives

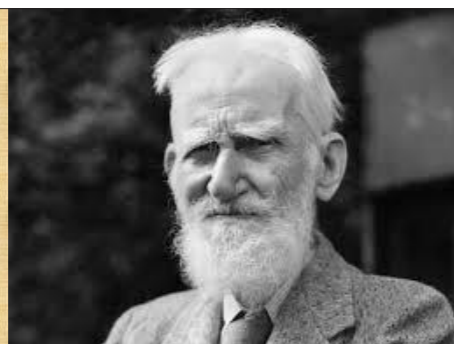
*What speaks to the **Universal** condition of humanity?  
What do we learn?*



## Issues

- Interpretation 'dense', content focused, overly descriptive
- Academic authorship (objective, detached, outside)
- Context and 'plot' largely absent
- Opportunities for global messages overlooked
- Lack of guidance

"The biggest single problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place."



*Telling people that something is World Heritage **assumes** they know its value, the need for protection and that they understand the very concept of World Heritage and how it operates. People may be informed about the threats to World Heritage but seldom about the opportunities it presents.*



## Changing Heritage Audiences

Multi – Ethnic  
Multi – Lingual  
Multi – Cultural

Domestic Audiences  
International Tourist Audiences

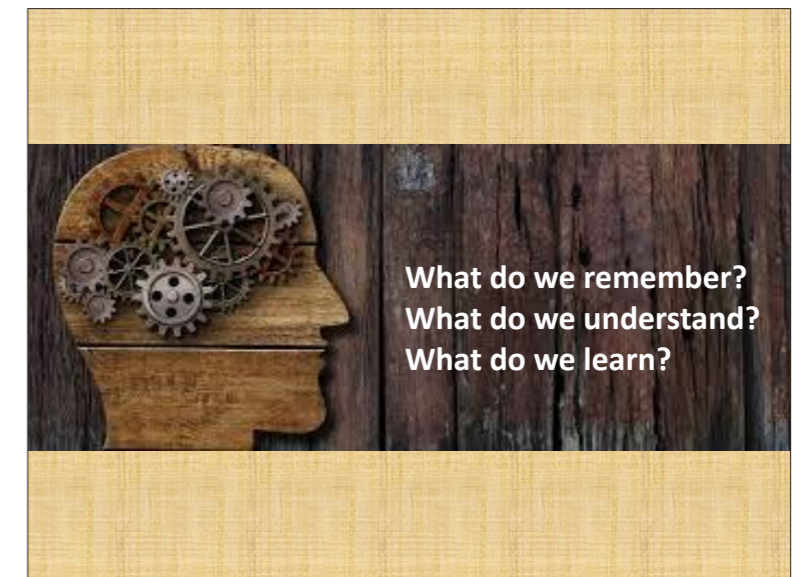


## Beyond Article 27

- What does World Heritage mean?
- What is Outstanding Universal Value?
- Why is World Heritage different to other heritage?
- What / Who is UNESCO?
- Why is this Site relevant to me?*
- Why are some people interested in this Site and others not?
- How can we use this Site for wider benefit?



Assumptions: .....





### Narrative Choice

*The world's first coke-fired furnace for the production of iron – 1709. Operated by Abraham Darby at Coalbrookdale, Shropshire England. The production of iron using coke rather than coal allowed the commercial production of iron.*

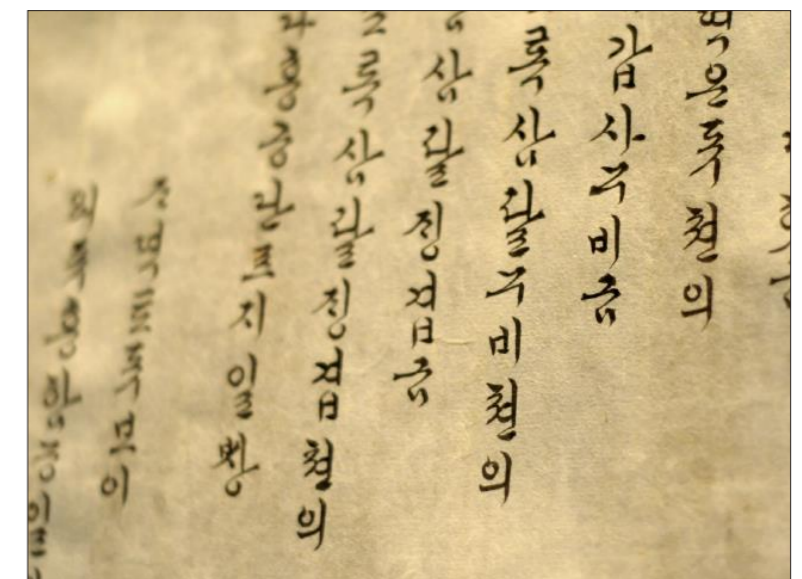
Birthplace of mass iron production  
Birthplace of the industrial revolution

### Birthplace of Global Warming



### Narrative Choice

- Raising awareness of climate change
- Indicating the need for environmental concern
- Focal point for discussing new pollution control technologies
- Focus for discussing international trade



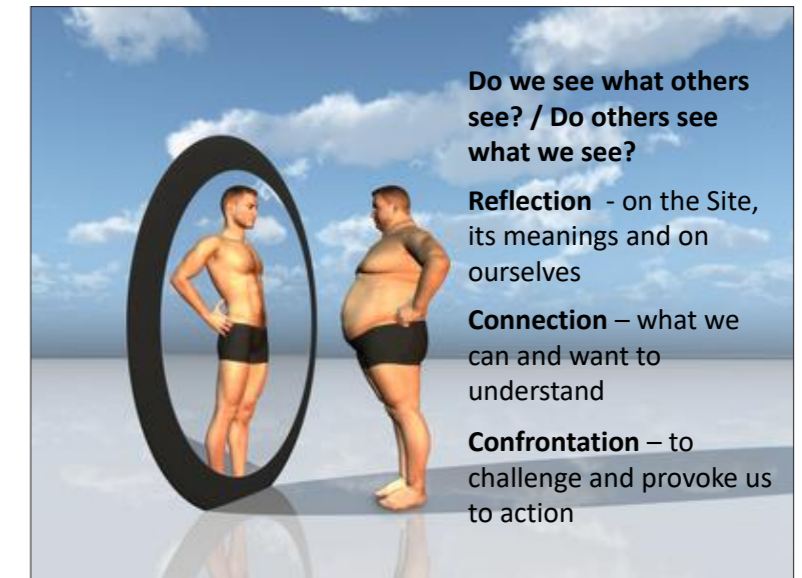
No Translation Necessary!

$$2 + 2 =$$



### Translation

- Beyond words but rather their meanings and cultural contexts
- Making meanings come alive so that others can connect
- Negotiation and conflict part of translation
- Production of opportunities for genuine inter-cultural / inter-generational dialogue
- Heritage sites / material culture as a catalyst in the translation process



### Some Thoughts

- Narratives that are aware of diversity / 'superdiversity', of cultural / generational change, the mobile world and of translation issues
- Narratives that reach beyond the immediate to challenge and embrace change and can link to the present and the future
- Recognition that encounters with heritage may have little to do with the significance that 'we' place on that heritage
- Use of (meta) narratives that transcend cultural boundaries and build true trans-national connections



### What Makes Great Literature?

- It says something **important** about the world / the human condition
- It is memorable – its messages last a long time
- It is **shared** from one generation to another
- It stirs the **emotions** and ‘touches’ us
- It **inspires** people – to create, to change
- It leaves readers feeling better for having read it – an enjoyable experience
- It is re-read
- It remains **relevant**
- It **translates** into different cultures

### What Makes World Heritage?

- It says something **important** about the world / the human condition
- It is memorable – its messages last a long time
- It is **shared** from one generation to another
- It stirs the **emotions** and ‘touches’ us
- It **inspires** people – to create, to change
- It leaves readers feeling better for having read it
- It is re-read (re-visited)
- It remains **relevant**
- It **translates** into different cultures



## Lecture 6

# Community Engagement in Interpreting World Heritage Values



Sarah Court  
Coordinator of the ICOMOS ICIP Italia

Sarah Court is an archaeologist and heritage practitioner who is primarily concerned with the relationships between heritage and society, participatory approaches and interpretation. Her professional practice is mainly based at heritage places in Italy and beyond, and has been strongly influenced by over a decade of involvement with the Herculaneum Conservation Project (Italy). At Herculaneum she coordinated initiatives that promoted participatory approaches to cultural heritage in order to improve management strategies and obtain heritage benefits for the local community.

In addition to providing support to heritage authorities responsible for World Heritage properties, in particular with regard to Heritage Impact Assessments and management planning, she is increasingly involved in international capacity building and guidance for the sector. Her consultancy work for ICCROM began with the programme on the People-Centred Approaches to Conservation and she is now the lead author of impact assessment guidance within the framework of the World Heritage Leadership programme.

Her work on interpretation is rooted in an MSc in 'Interpretation: management and practice'. She is currently involved in a project by the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe to provide capacity building in interpretation for World Heritage site management teams. In addition, she is the coordinator of ICIP (Committee for the Interpretation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage) for ICOMOS Italia.

## Lecture 6

# Community Engagement in Interpreting World Heritage Values

**Sarah Court**  
Coordinator of the ICOMOS ICIIP Italia

Community involvement in the interpretation of World Heritage is an overlooked area of heritage practice but it is not a task that should be left until all other management activities have first taken place. This presentation aims to demonstrate that when heritage practitioners work with communities – or indeed when communities lead in the care and use of heritage – there can be benefits for everyone: for communities, for heritage practitioners and for the heritage. Practicing interpretation in this way can contribute to wide-ranging heritage, conservation and social goals.

## Communities in the management of World Heritage

The subject of involving communities in heritage is regularly discussed in events and publications. This is not an issue that is confined to interpretation alone and it is useful to place interpretation practice within the larger context of World Heritage management.

It is generally acknowledged that what is now considered to be cultural heritage is, in fact, usually the product of communities. Rarely is heritage produced by an individual alone – usually cultural heritage is created by a group of people coming together and it is created for the benefit of people. It is a disservice to society when it is decided to break the direct connection between culture and community, particularly in light of the increasing awareness of how fundamental culture is to the human species.

It is also important to recognize the importance of natural heritage to humans as well. Despite

living in the 21<sup>st</sup> century with its advanced technology, people are entirely dependent on natural resources for survival and wellbeing. It is dangerous when heritage practices do not recognize the connections between natural heritage and communities.

Additionally, it is noted that when talking about communities and their connection to heritage, there is rarely a distinction between culture and nature but nature and culture are often considered part of a continuous spectrum. This perspective is one of many that the heritage sector would do well to remember.

However, a naïve view of the human impact on heritage needs to be avoided. It is important to acknowledge that heritage does face increasing pressures in the modern world – and most of these are caused by people. The reaction to this over the 20<sup>th</sup> century was an increased professionalisation of heritage care in many countries. The heritage sector, certainly in the Western world, began to fence off heritage places, defending them and keeping people out: in some cases, even removing the people who lived there. As a result, heritage has often been isolated from the surrounding place and society in an attempt to save it.

These approaches were described by Dr Gamini Wijesuriya in his presentation in the first WHIPIC lecture series: he explained how the focus of the heritage sector has too often been on the physical fabric alone. However, there has been a shift towards recognizing greater diversity in the typologies of heritage and the complexity of the heritage place. Keeping communities away has not proved a successful strategy for safeguarding heritage and the model of isolated heritage has not always achieved its protection. Instead, many heritage ‘islands’ have instead attracted greater pressures and even more people. In recent times, the heritage sector has moved to an understanding that heritage could never be an island – our heritage places are intimately connected to their wider setting – and that includes the people who live in and around them. Dr Wijesuriya then showed how there has also been a shift from caring only about heritage, to caring about both heritage and people: working together for the wellbeing of our connected world as a whole.

This has affected the way heritage practitioners work. Originally conventional heritage management systems relied on the knowledge and professional judgement of a series of ‘experts.’ Over time, as more values-based approaches have been adopted – including the World Heritage system – there has been a recognition that the heritage specialist is not the only person who might hold heritage values. Others, including communities, have complementary perspectives about heritage and can enrich understanding of it. However, in many conventional management systems the heritage specialist still holds a position of power and they may or may not involve others. For this reason, there have been calls for more people-centred approaches to heritage management. This does not mean replacing heritage practitioners with communities but allowing for multiple contributions to heritage. The viewpoints are diverse and the contributions are many and in this way the results for the heritage and for those involved are richer.

### Communities in interpretation

This broader heritage discussion has many parallels to the practice of presentation and interpretation, which are part of the core business of World Heritage properties. There are still some cases where interpretation is produced by an individual specialist – even the most well-meaning site manager or museum director can often be found sharing their knowledge through panel of text or a new leaflet. However, more often interpretation planning is promoted which is more inclusive and with diverse perspectives about the heritage. What still remains a challenge are those people-centred approaches where heritage practitioners bring their knowledge to interpretation, without necessarily controlling it, and genuinely working with communities. There is still often distrust at letting the community take the lead in such projects and the question needs to be asked about how communities can be meaningfully be involved in heritage interpretation.

Perhaps, even before we look at who is carrying out interpretation, another question needs to be answered first: who are is interpretation being created for? In many places and for too long, World Heritage has been promoted to international tourists. There are many examples which now show that when tourism is not managed carefully it can damage both local communities and heritage places. Yet all too often interpretation has been tied to those tourism goals.

One study looked at the comparative experience of various countries around the world and the results suggest that countries scoring well in tourism and heritage, appreciated by international visitors, do not also seem to contribute to the wellbeing of their citizens. The US's National Association for Interpretation recently developed a new definition of interpretation where the aim is to create 'meaningful experiences connecting people to the world around them.' In this case, should interpretation focus only on tourists or can local communities be prioritised so that they too have meaningful experiences?

This presentation is not the place to explore this issue in detail, however, it is appropriate to recognize that some places are already providing meaningful interpretation for their communities – and doing it well. One excellent example is the Museum of Siam in Bangkok. The key target audience in this case are Thai citizens, in particular, the young generation. The interpretation explores Thailand's history and heritage and prompts young Thais to think about their country's culture today and in the future. Yet the beauty of this example is that it works not just for Thai citizens, but it offers incredible insights into the country for visitors too – in this context visitors are offered a nuanced overview to the country and insights into the culture in a way that is rarely offered to tourists.

However, while it is important to ensure that interpretation speaks to communities, this is only one end of a spectrum of engagement and this presentation will now look at approaches that are more proactive and even community-led.

### Case study: Herculaneum (Ercolano)

One example is from my own professional experience at the archaeological site of Herculaneum in southern Italy. It is the sister site to Pompeii and they were both buried during the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in AD 79. Today they are inscribed on the World Heritage List because the excavated towns offer unique insights into ancient life in the Roman world. A visit to Herculaneum today allows exploration of the ancient streets and houses, shops, bath buildings and other public spaces of the Roman town. Inside the ancient buildings are a range of decorations and original items found within them. One particular feature of Herculaneum is that organic materials have survived, so there are items such as a wooden bed, a loaf of bread, a winch with a rope, even human remains survive.

Since 2001 there has been a large conservation project underway at the site and in addition to major conservation works there have also been a range of activities with many different stakeholders, including the local community. In the early years of this work, there was a recognition that while the community lived incredibly close to the heritage, they were in fact cut off from it. There were both physical barriers around the site but also socio-economic factors that meant that many couldn't afford the ticket price to enter. In this context, early efforts focused on ways to bring community groups in to experience the site.

One target was the Via Mare neighbourhood immediately next to the site, where residents could see into the site from the windows of their homes but never entered. Special visits were organized for those residents in particular. However, it soon became clear that the community didn't need to remain a passive audience for interpretation but that they were in fact a huge resource. For example, partnering with local schools was a huge success: on one occasion an international course organized with ICCROM was welcomed to Herculaneum by local children. Not only did they provide interpretation of their local heritage but they also worked with each international participant to understand and interpret the heritage place they came from. An exhibition was held in an area next to the site where no ticket was required and it attracted a significant number of local people to visit who had never before come into the site.

Other visits of important guests were also given over to the schools: a delegation from the European Commission were guided around by a group of children who had been involved in heritage activities at the site. It was much more successful than anything the site team could have done alone – after sharing their new knowledge, the children themselves spontaneously demanded more support for the conservation of their heritage.

However, it was also discovered during this process that more steps could be taken: there was much to be learned from the local community. An oral history project was a key moment in recognizing how much knowledge the community held. For example, former workers at the site remembered the large archaeological excavations that had taken place. These had always involved local workers and they had developed their own techniques for facing the unique archaeological situation at Herculaneum, with fathers passing down skills to their sons. This included excavation, conservation techniques and



even the earliest interpretation at Herculaneum: displays of finds within the site. These former workers were able to pass on their knowledge to the latest generation of archaeologists and conservators working at Herculaneum. In addition, those local residents in the Via Mare neighbourhood were able to provide their knowledge of living in connection to the site. They had multi-generational knowledge of what it meant to live with Herculaneum and could share accounts of taking shelter in the Roman theatre during the bombing of the Second World War – or of hiding from foreign soldiers in the site. They also shared their knowledge of the heritage outside the site boundaries: the history of the ‘modern’ town, which is actually has many historic elements. They also shared the diverse values they hold, for example, unlike the academic interest in the buried Roman town, for the local community the archaeological site is a stark warning of the volcanic risk they live with.

### **Case study: Rione Sanità (Naples)**

My experiences at Herculaneum led me to undertake some research in this area with the aim of understanding more about how interpretation and communities can contribute to the bigger picture of heritage management. In addition to Herculaneum I looked at the Rione Sanità neighbourhood in the nearby city of Naples, and posed two research questions:

- Can participatory interpretation contribute to the management and conservation of cultural heritage?
- Can participatory interpretation bring reciprocal benefits for communities and for heritage?

Naples is also a World Heritage property, recognized for its layers of history reaching back millennia. The Rione Sanità is in many ways a typical Naples neighbourhood with dense urbanism and a large population. It is home to some significant examples of architectural heritage but also other more intangible associations, for example it is the birthplace of one of Italy’s most famous actors, Totò. Importantly, in an area which suffers from serious socio-economic challenges, the greatest resource of the neighbourhood are arguably its young people.

While there have been a series of cultural activities set up in Rione Sanità, from a youth orchestra to a local theatre to art installations, the focus here will be on the heritage projects, in particular, related to the catacombs that lie under the neighbourhood. For a long time, these very significant heritage places were neglected and largely unknown to the outside world. However, a group of young people gained permission to open up the catacombs and start managing them. They trained themselves and today it is that local association of young people who offer the interpretation – from guided tours to special events. They also tie into other local efforts, for example, there is another association which provides young people with craft skills which are not only used for interpretive details within the heritage place but also provide items for visitors. There is also a group organized to train young people as electricians and other technical skills, who have applied that to the catacombs again with great success in terms of visitation. There are now a range of ways to visit Rione Sanità with interpretation of the both the history and the present culture.

In addition, efforts extended to another local heritage place, the Fontanelle Cemetery. This cemetery had been closed for a very long time and although the community used to carry out some very specific spiritual practices there, adopting skulls and caring for them, this had all been stopped by the authorities. However, due to the success of the community management of the catacombs, they were able to convince those authorities that they could be trusted with their own heritage and today the cemetery is now a place where the community can reconnect again with their traditions – and where visitors can be guided by a local person who gives their unique perspective. There is data to show that the community efforts at Rione Sanità have been a huge success in terms of providing meaningful visits for increasing numbers of people to a previously no-go neighbourhood. They have created local jobs and they have re-opened significant areas of closed heritage.

My research aimed to understand how their approach to interpretation had contributed to those results. Following analysis of their work, I concluded was that there were a large range of heritage values connected to the heritage place but that ‘official’ interpretation did not recognize all these values. Instead, the community-led interpretation – both at Herculaneum and in Naples – told a much richer story. The interpretation drew on that greater knowledge thanks to the community and this was one significant source of success.

Returning to the research questions: *Can participatory interpretation contribute to the management and conservation of cultural heritage?* The answer is ‘yes’ because by engaging with a wider range of stakeholders as part of the interpretive planning process, more values and even forgotten attributes of heritage are identified. That alone is the basis for better management.

*Can participatory interpretation bring reciprocal benefits for communities and heritage?* Yes! My research listed many benefits for the community, visitors, heritage practitioners, and significantly there are a large number of benefits for the heritage itself, in terms of its conservation, protection and role in society today. I therefore concluded that community-led interpretation has the potential not only to improve the visitor experience – but if it is embraced, it could contribute to bigger agendas, such as genuine sustainable development and better heritage management.

### **Conclusions**

There seem to be clear benefits to community involvement in heritage interpretation. However, if those benefits are to be gained, the heritage sector need to stop thinking of communities – and indeed of interpretation – as something that might eventually be done if there is time and energy and resources left after everything else has been done. Instead, if communities and interpretation are recognized as a core part of heritage management and conservation, they can contribute to those actions and help ensure that our heritage is well cared for long into the future.

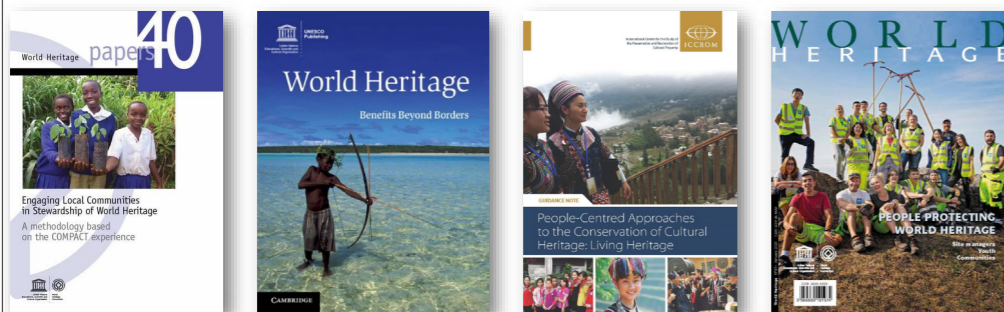
# COMMUNITY

involvement in interpreting World Heritage Values

SARAH COURT

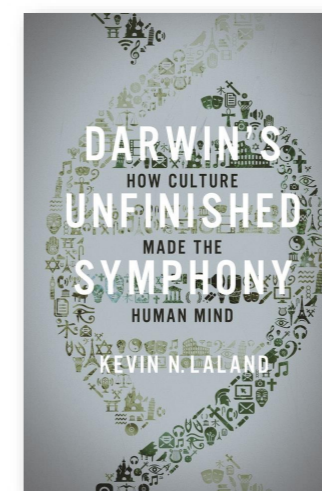


## World Heritage and communities

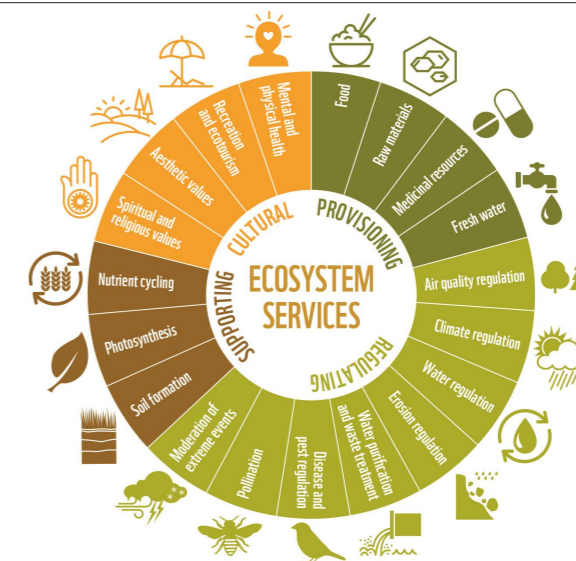


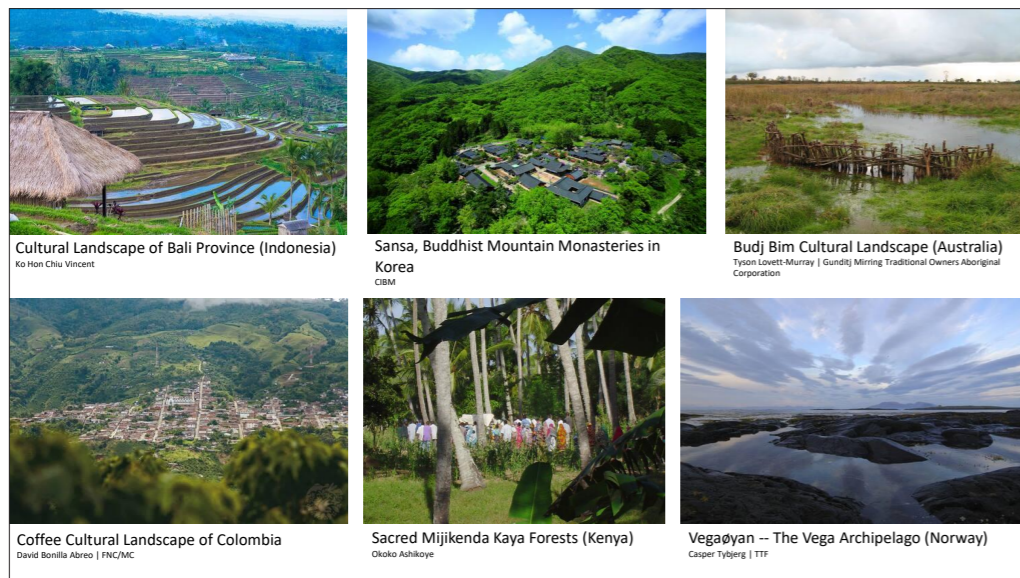
Cultural heritage has been created *by* people and it has been created *for* people.

Our world is a better place for the richness that cultural heritage brings.



“Human minds are not just built *for* culture; they are built *by* culture... culture transformed the evolutionary process”





Cultural Landscape of Bali Province (Indonesia)  
Ko Hon Chiu Vincent

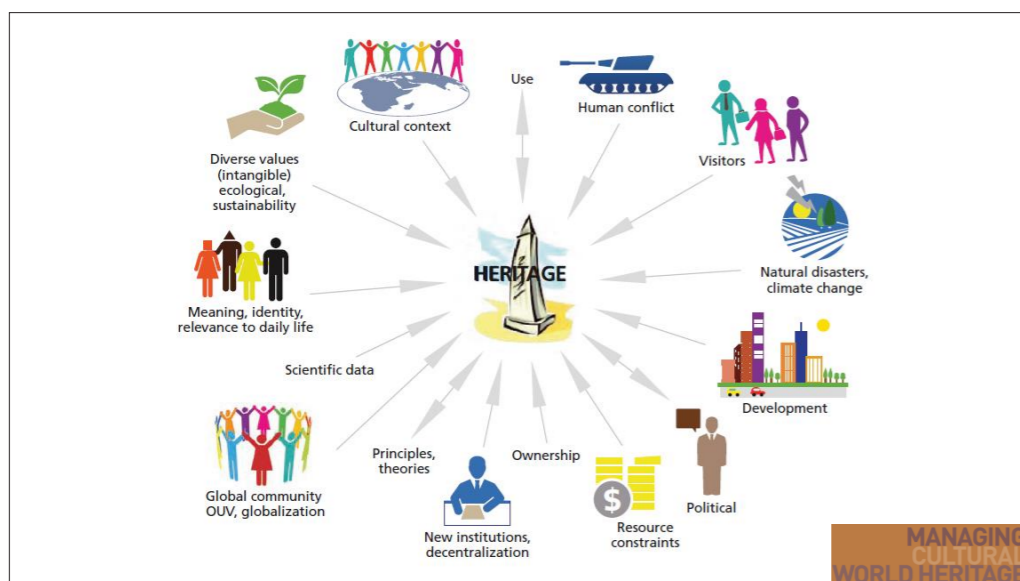
Sansa, Buddhist Mountain Monasteries in Korea  
CIM

Budj Bim Cultural Landscape (Australia)  
Tyson Lovett-Murray | Gunditj Mirring Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation

Coffee Cultural Landscape of Colombia  
David Bonilla Abreo | FNC/MC

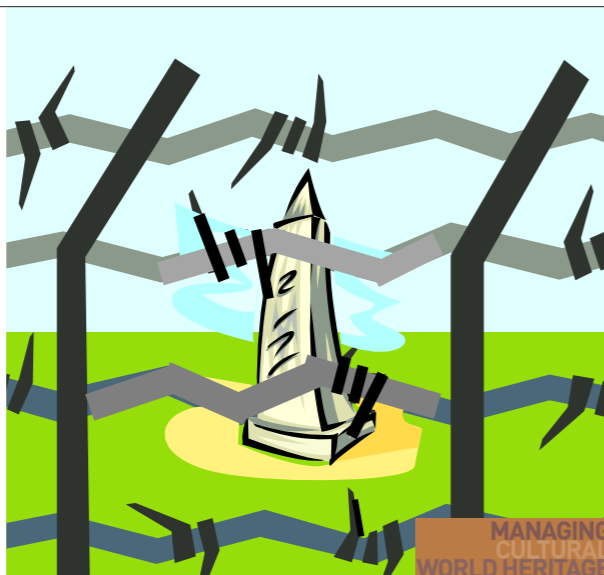
Sacred Mijikenda Kaya Forests (Kenya)  
Okoko Ashikoye

Vegaøyan -- The Vega Archipelago (Norway)  
Casper Tybjerg | TTF



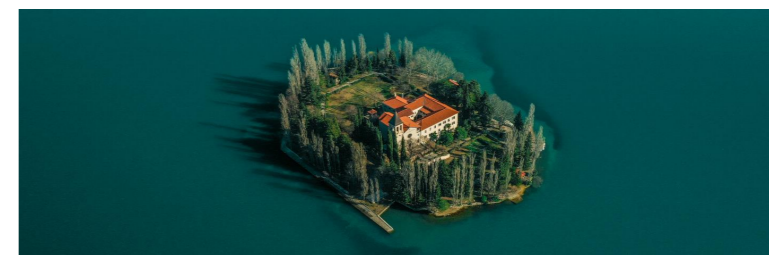
MANAGING CULTURAL WORLD HERITAGE

Protecting heritage from people?

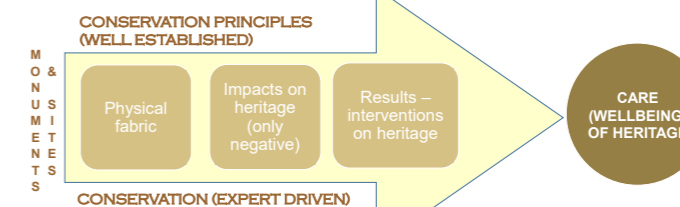


MANAGING CULTURAL WORLD HERITAGE

“Questions to be answered include whether World Heritage sites are merely **islands** of protection and attributes of nostalgia in wider seas of environmental and cultural degradation?”

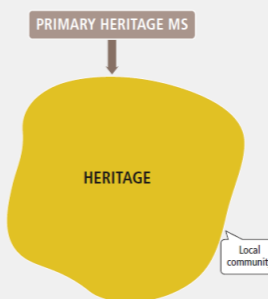


LOGAN & LARSEN 2018

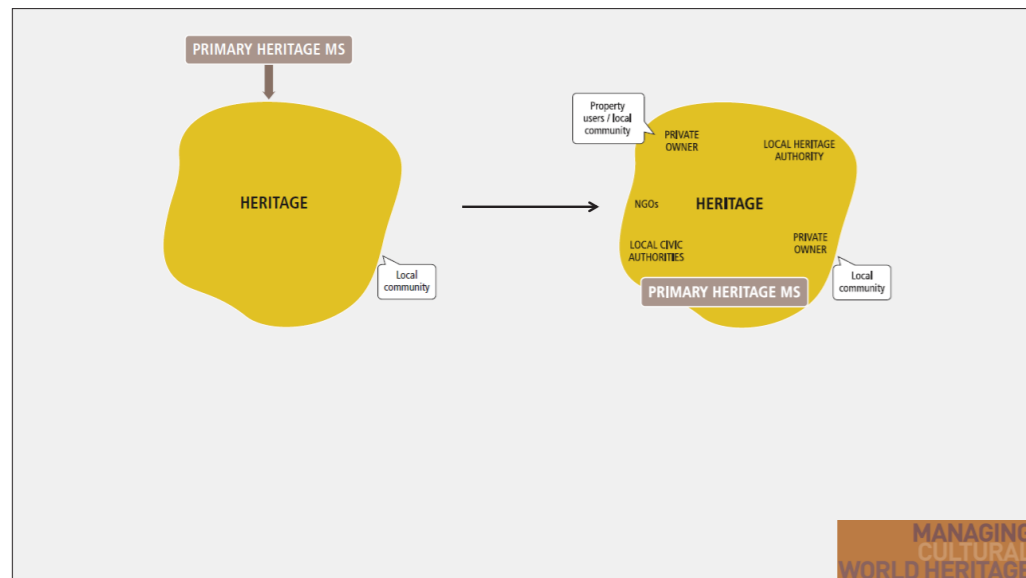


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Source: Gaminij Wijesuriya | ICCROM



MANAGING CULTURAL WORLD HERITAGE

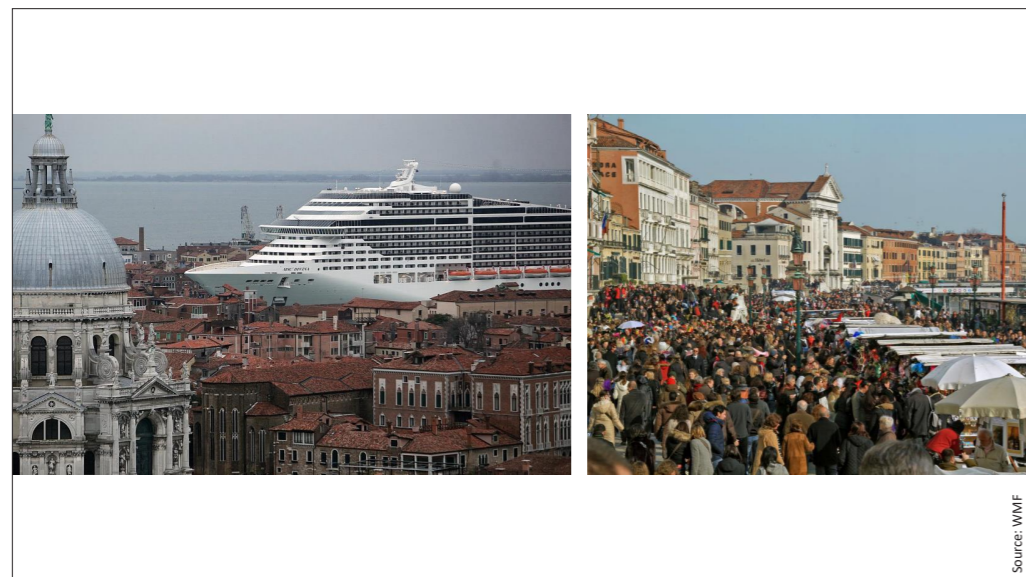


MANAGING CULTURAL WORLD HERITAGE



“one might conclude... that the evidence currently points more in the direction of heritage properties becoming **islands** of intensive growth, tourism and elite consumption, rather than alternative spaces of de-growth, social empowerment and inclusion.”

LOGAN & LARSEN 2018



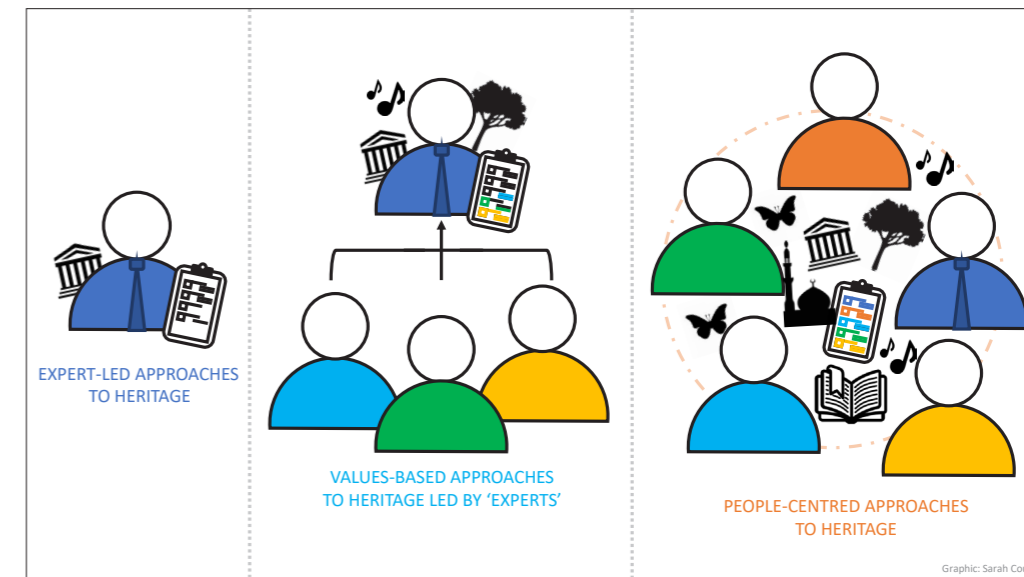
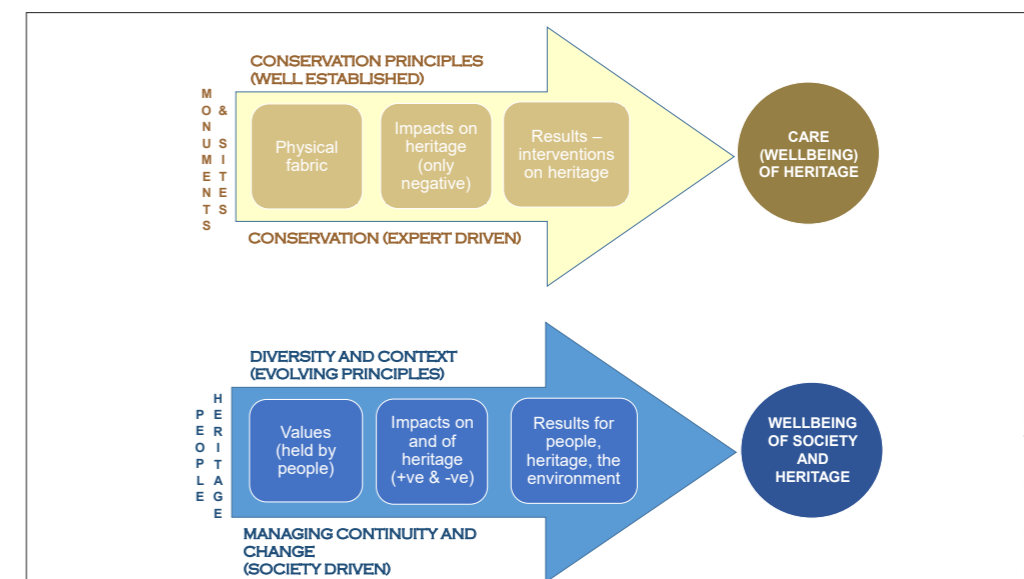
Source: WMF

LECTURE 6 – 16 SEPTEMBER 2021

### Heritage was never an island: it is an ecosystem

“To save heritage we must concern ourselves with issues ‘beyond’ heritage. Only then are we assured the best chance that our heritage will survive”

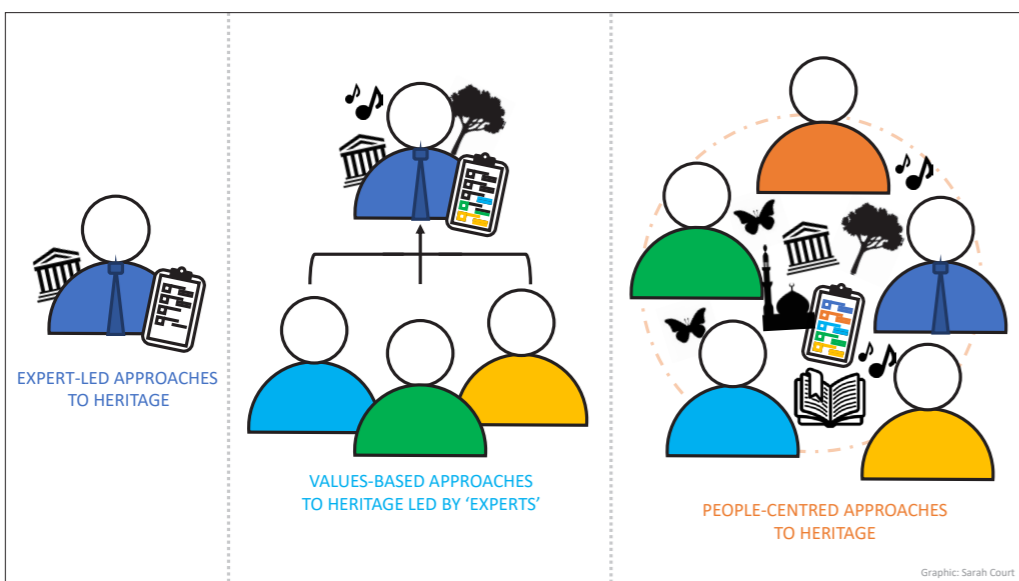
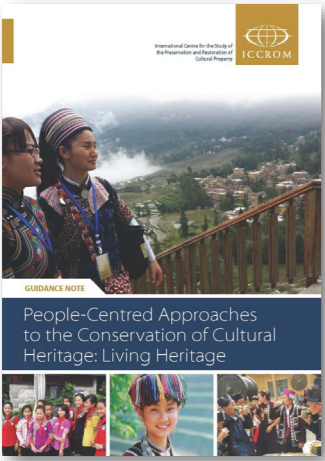
BOCCARDI & SCOTT 2018



LECTURE 6 – 16 SEPTEMBER 2021


# Interpretation and communities

for whom and by whom?

**“Engaging communities is about strengthening their ability to participate meaningfully in the process of making conservation and management decisions for themselves and their heritage”**

LECTURE 6 – 16 SEPTEMBER 2021



## World Heritage POLICY COMPENDIUM

5 - Policies Regarding COMMUNICATION

Case Law

**Synthesis based on relevant Committee decisions**

The World Heritage Committee recommends to develop a comprehensive site presentation and **interpretation** programme for visitors (based on Case law on decisions on the State of Conservation).

**Who are our visitors?  
Who is the interpretation for?**


**STATUS ?**      **EXPERIENCE**

Rank	Country	Value System	Quality of Life	Good for Business	Tourism	Heritage & Culture	Made In
1	JAPAN	SWEDEN	SWITZERLAND	JAPAN	ITALY	ITALY	JAPAN
2	SWITZERLAND	CANADA	SWEDEN	UNITED STATES	JAPAN	GREECE	GERMANY
3	GERMANY	SWITZERLAND	NORWAY	GERMANY	UNITED STATES	JAPAN	SWITZERLAND
4	SWEDEN	NORWAY	DENMARK	SINGAPORE	CANADA	FRANCE	UNITED STATES
5	CANADA	NEW ZEALAND	GERMANY	SWITZERLAND	AUSTRALIA	PERU	SWEDEN
6	NORWAY	DENMARK	CANADA	UNITED ARAB EMIRATES	FRANCE	EGYPT	FRANCE
7	UNITED STATES	ICELAND	JAPAN	CANADA	NEW ZEALAND	AUSTRIA	DENMARK
8	AUSTRALIA	FINLAND	AUSTRALIA	SWEDEN	SWITZERLAND	GERMANY	SOUTH KOREA
9	DENMARK	AUSTRALIA	AUSTRIA	NORWAY	GERMANY	INDIA	CANADA
10	AUSTRIA	NETHERLANDS	FINLAND	UNITED KINGDOM	AUSTRIA	SPAIN	NORWAY

Country Brand Index (2014-2015)

# Interpretation

is a purposeful approach to communication that facilitates meaningful, relevant, and inclusive experiences that deepen understanding, broaden perspectives, and inspire engagement with the world around us.



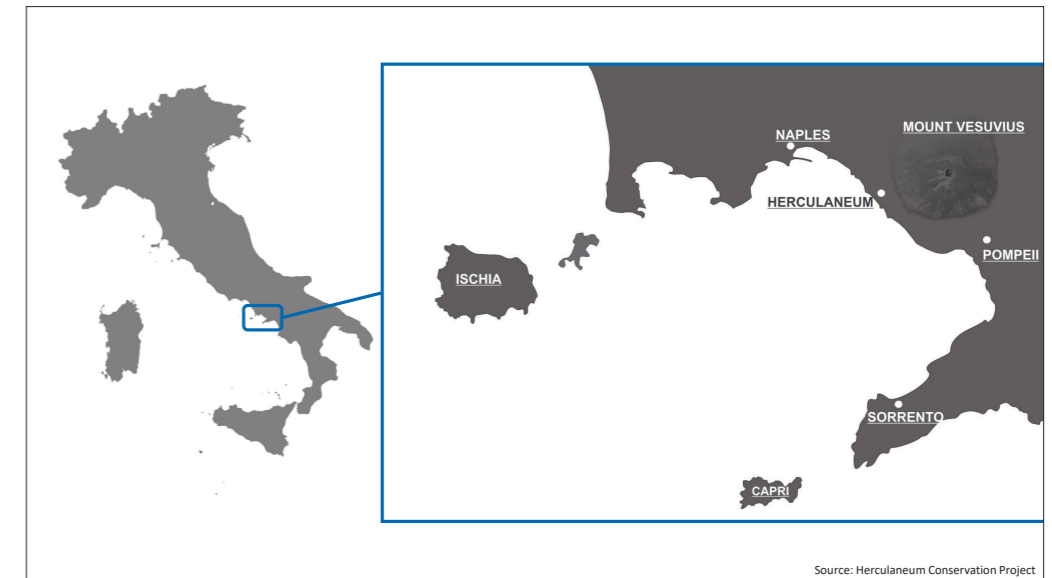
LECTURE 6 – 16 SEPTEMBER 2021



## Case study: Herculaneum

(Archaeological Areas of Pompei, Herculaneum and Torre Annunziata)

*! Please note that ancient human remains will be shown*



“The impressive remains of the towns of Pompeii and Herculaneum and their associated villas, destroyed and yet preserved by Mount Vesuvius, provide a complete and vivid picture of society and daily life at a specific moment in the past that is unparalleled elsewhere.”

... but there's actually much more!





Images: Herculaneum Conservation Project



Images: Herculaneum Conservation Project



**THE PACKARD HUMANITIES INSTITUTE**  
 Herculaneum Conservation Project  
 Parco Archeologico di Ercolano

Images: Herculaneum Conservation Project



Images: Herculaneum Conservation Project | Herculaneum Centre



interpreting Herculaneum for the community

Images: Firefly | Herculaneum Conservation Project



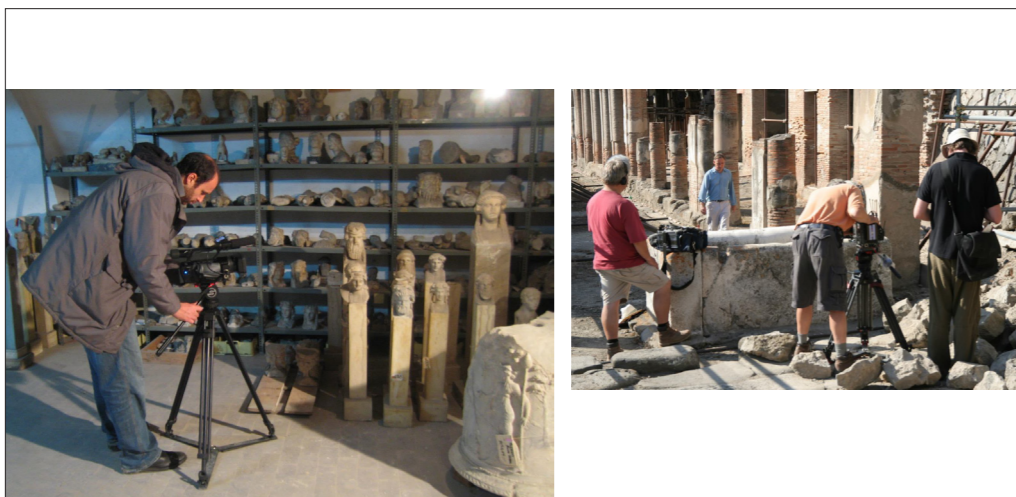
Images: Herculaneum Conservation Project | Herculaneum Centre



Images: Herculaneum Conservation Project



Images: Herculaneum Conservation Project | Herculaneum Centre



Images: Herculaneum Conservation Project | Herculaneum Centre



community interpreting Herculaneum for visitors

Images: Firefly | Herculaneum Conservation Project



Images: Herculaneum Conservation Project | Herculaneum Centre



Image: Herculaneum Conservation Project | Herculaneum Centre





community interpreting Herculaneum for heritage practitioners

Images: Firefly | Herculaneum Conservation Project



Images: Herculaneum Conservation Project | Herculaneum Centre



Image: Parco Archeologico di Ercolano | Herculaneum Conservation Project

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Image: Parco Archeologico di Ercolano | Herculaneum Conservation Project



Image: Parco Archeologico di Ercolano | Herculaneum Conservation Project



Images: Herculaneum Conservation Project | Herculaneum Centre

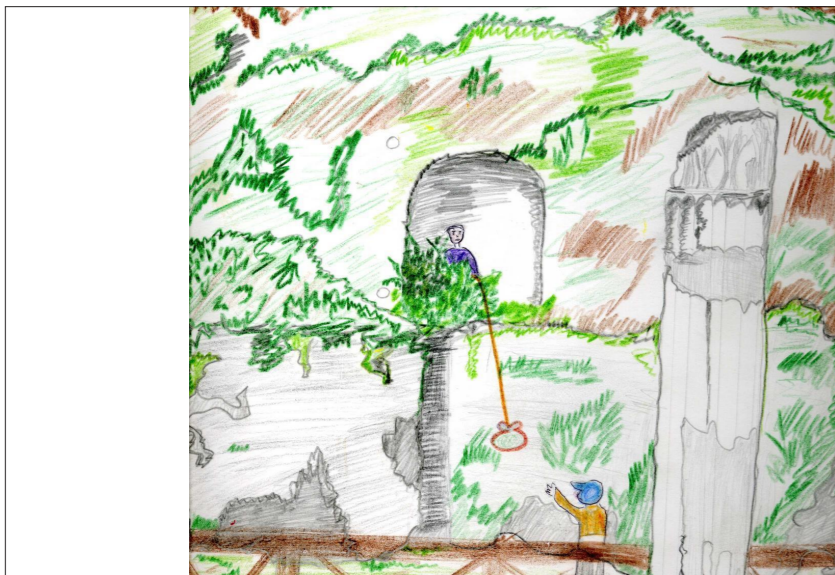
LECTURE 6 - 16 SEPTEMBER 2021



Images: Herculaneum Conservation Project | Herculaneum Centre



Image: Parco Archeologico di Ercolano | Herculaneum Conservation Project



Images: Herculaneum Conservation Project | Herculaneum Centre



Images: Herculaneum Conservation Project



Images: Herculaneum Conservation Project

Research questions:

Can participatory interpretation contribute to the management and conservation of cultural heritage?

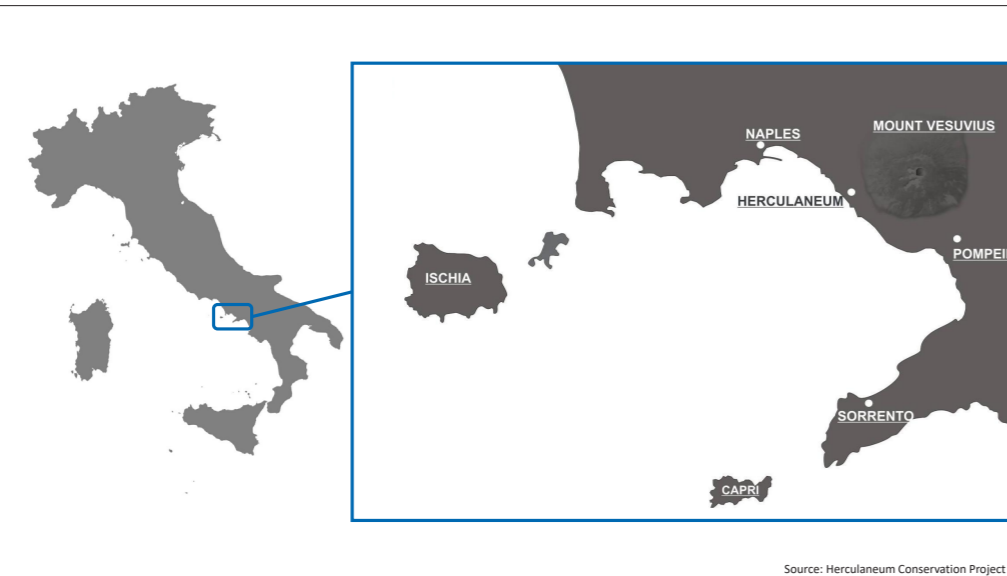
Can participatory interpretation bring reciprocal benefits for communities and for heritage?





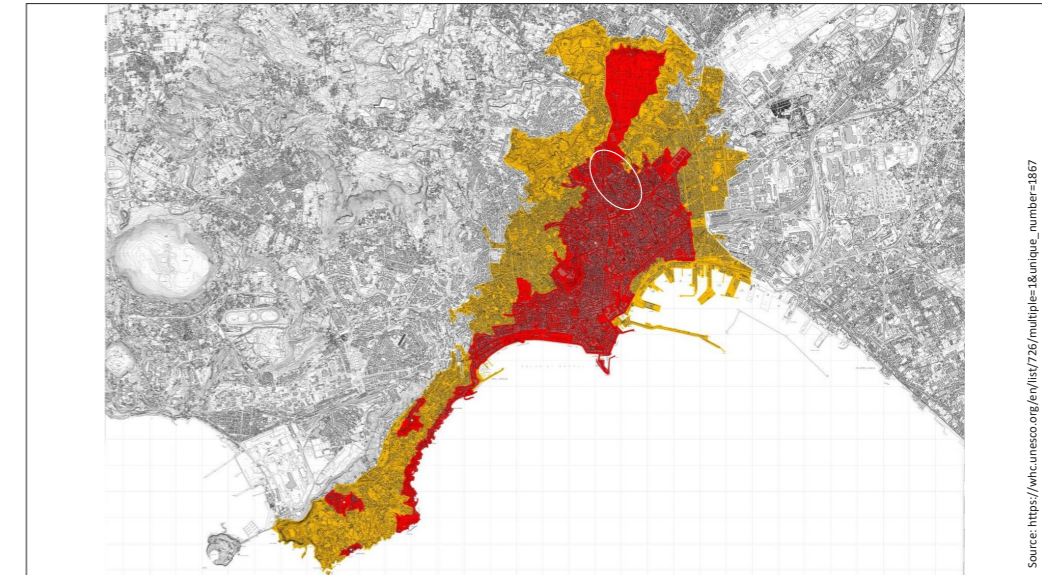
### Case study: Rione Sanità (Historic Centre of Naples)

! Please note that ancient human remains will be shown



Source: Herculaneum Conservation Project

“It is one of the most ancient cities in Europe, whose current urban fabric preserves a selection of outstanding elements of its long and eventful history, as expressed in its street pattern, its wealth of historic buildings and parks, the continuation of many of its urban and social functions, its wonderful setting on the Bay of Naples and the continuity of its historical stratification.”



Source: [https://whc.unesco.org/en/whs/726/multiple-1&unique\\_number=1867](https://whc.unesco.org/en/whs/726/multiple-1&unique_number=1867)



Image: Sarah Court



Image: Sarah Court



Image: Sarah Court



Image: Sarah Court

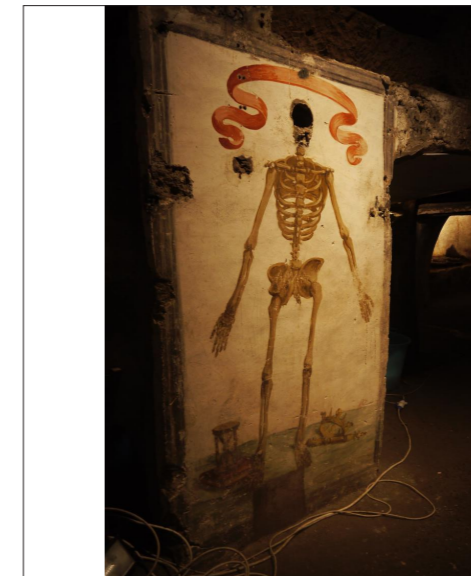


Image: Cooperativa La Paranza | Eduardo Costabile

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Image: Cooperativa La Paranza

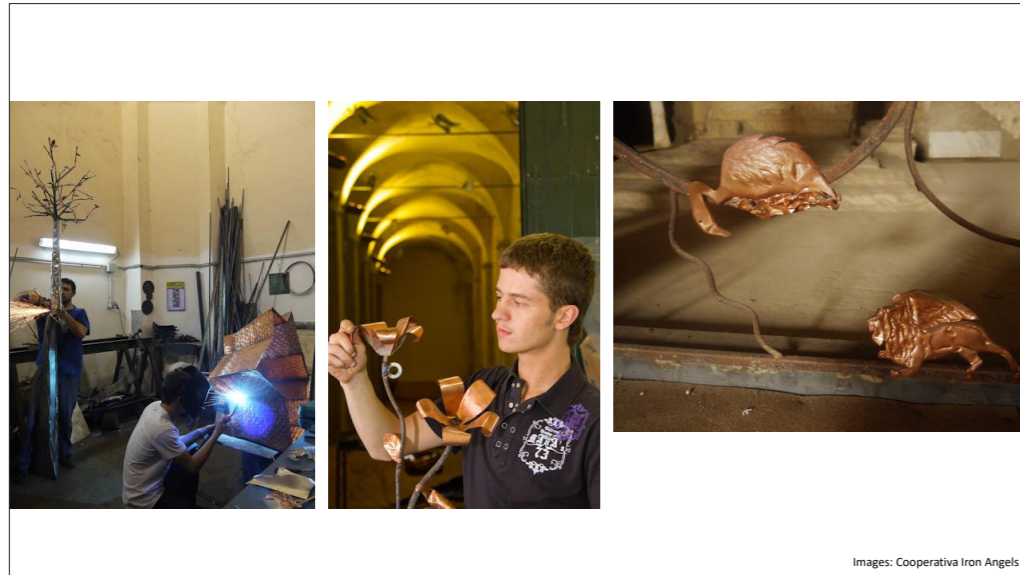


Images: Sarah Court

LECTURE 6 - 16 SEPTEMBER 2021



Images: Sarah Court



Images: Cooperativa Iron Angels



Image: Sarah Court

**Visit the Catacombs of San Gennaro**  
The ancient tombs of the early Christians and bishops of the City of Naples.

Explore San Gennaro

**Visit the Catacombs of San Gaudioso**  
Mysterious burials and macabre rituals in the catacombs that inspired Totò.

Explore San Gaudioso

**Discover the Holy Mile**  
From Capodimonte to the Sanità district in the footsteps of San Gennaro.

Walk the Holy Mile

Source: www.catacombedinapoli.it



HERITAGE VALUES	HERITAGE AUTHORITY WEBSITE	TOWN COUNCIL WEBSITE	NAPLES GUIDE BOOK	SANTA MARIA BOOKLET	TOURING CLUB GUIDE BOOK
Associative values					
Historic and archaeological values					
Architectural and urban values					
Aesthetic values					
Social and human values					
Technological and socio-economic values					
Landscape and geological values					
Contemporary values					
Religious and sacred values					

Red = no or minimal references to these values  
Amber = some references to these values  
Green = emphasis given to these values

Figure 9: Overview of the values expressed by the interpretation material produced by experts on Sanità (analysis was based on the detailed list of values found in Appendix 2)

Source: Sarah Court

HERITAGE VALUES	VISITS WITH THE HERCULANEUM CENTRE	VISIT WITH LA PARANZA COOPERATIVE
Associative values		
Historic and archaeological values		
Architectural and urban values		
Aesthetic values		
Social and human values		
Technological and socio-economic values		
Landscape and geological values		
Contemporary values		
Religious and sacred values		
Other intangible values		

Red = no or minimal references to these values  
Amber = some references to these values  
Green = emphasis given to these values

Figure 11: Overview of the values expressed by the interpretation produced by experts on Ercolano (analysis was based on the detailed list of values found in Appendix 1)

Source: Sarah Court

### Can participatory interpretation contribute to the management and conservation of cultural heritage?

“The process of consulting a wider range of stakeholders in the interpretive planning stage resulted in an informal heritage audit of values and attributes – something that is the basis for good management practice and not just of use to interpretation.”



### Can participatory interpretation bring reciprocal benefits for communities and for heritage?

“Yes!”



#### Benefits for visitors (1/2):

- Visits communicated a broader range of values, potentially catering to the interests of diverse visitors;
- A greater variety of visits to different heritage attributes was possible;
- Visits included places that were off the beaten track and not included in standard tour packages;
- Visitors had contact with local residents/practitioners, experiencing hospitality and a welcome to the neighbourhood;
- Visits included heritage places that were not always accessible under other conditions or that had re-opened;
- Opening hours were more reliable and/or visits could be arranged at times to suit visitors;
- Visits were potentially available in a range of languages or could be tailored to individual/group requirements;
- Reliable recommendations were available for visitors who wanted to visit the area further, to eat and shop locally or to stay overnight;
- Local service providers were improving standards to offer better quality accommodation/meals/products to visitors;



#### Benefits for visitors (2/2):

- Interpreters were part of a wider local network, meaning that they had up-to-date insights and recent results on a range of initiatives related to the heritage;
- Heritage places had improved conservation conditions and infrastructure;
- Explanations were given of local efforts towards sustainable development and the role of heritage and tourism in that context, allowing visitors to feel that they were making a positive contribution.



#### Benefits for local community members (1/2):

- Participatory interpretation went beyond the traditional concept of ‘monuments’ to a redefinition of local heritage that included intangible heritage and places associated with the daily life of residents, increasing a sense of connection by community members with their heritage;
- Identifying local attributes as ‘heritage’ and attracting visitors gave a sense of dignity and importance to local heritage and became a source of pride;
- Where local residents were unfamiliar with a heritage attribute, visitors sparked their curiosity to understand more, thereby reconnecting community members with disconnected heritage;
- Some inaccessible heritage was re-opened with opportunities for local residents to visit;
- Residents had increased opportunities to gain financially from tourism e.g. direct job opportunities related to interpretation and heritage management; more clients for existing local businesses; opportunities to open new services/businesses due to increased visitor numbers; etc.;
- Guidebooks and word-of-mouth recommendations increased for local businesses and improved local reputation;



#### Benefits for local community members (2/2):

- By increasing the amount of heritage on offer to visitors, visitors were encouraged to stay overnight in the local area, thereby significantly increasing their contribution to the local economy;
- Local schools were able to provide more experiences for their pupils, even on a modest budget;
- Local heritage contributed to broader social issues, such as education, social inclusion, legality, immigration, etc. and provided a mechanism for debating contemporary issues;
- Increased heritage activity became part of a wider framework for social and urban regeneration;
- Results of heritage projects and increased visitor interest act as leverage for gaining funding for other cultural and social projects and for attracting other organisations to contribute to improving the local area.



**Benefits for heritage practitioners:**

- Other stakeholders provided interpreters with new insights, memories and information on heritage to include in their delivery;
- Participants and partners have brought new perspectives and inspired new forms of interpretation (e.g. the multisensory trail created at Herculaneum with the Unione Italiana dei Ciechi e degli Ipovedenti, an association for the blind and partially-sighted);
- Increased income from ticket sales for visits and other programmes;
- Increased visitor numbers and increased repeat visiting contributed to an improved sustainable tourism model;
- Increased number of supporters and financial support, such as donations and crowd-funding for conservation and other similar projects;
- Interpretation potential was leverage for gaining and then providing access to closed heritage;
- Impetus for training heritage practitioners and other related service providers with practical skills;
- Successful interpretation projects have acted as leverage for gaining potential funding from elsewhere.



**Benefits for heritage:**

- Creation of (even an informal) interpretation audit meant that heritage values/attributes were formally recognized, the first step towards protection;
- More human and financial resources obtained for tackling conservation issues;
- Investments made in visitor infrastructure over time as improvements were made to interpretive programmes;
- Heritage authorities assisted in providing access and enhancement initiatives when they are short-staffed, underfunded and without a clear mandate on these fronts;
- Increased public awareness on the importance of protecting sites and moral support for ensuring government commitment to heritage;
- Impetus for resolving issues related to access to heritage attributes;
- Demonstrable interest in the heritage as leverage to request additional financial resources or apply for external funding;
- Broader range of practitioners from across the heritage sector – and beyond – contributing specialist input to the heritage;
- Collateral initiatives provided by new teams of heritage practitioners, local organizations and groups, raising awareness of heritage;
- Heritage given an active role in contemporary society, contributing to sustainable development issues and in return gaining support for its own more sustainable management.



“In conclusion, this research suggests that participatory interpretation not only improves the visitor experience but can potentially also contribute to more ambitious agendas, such as increased local development and improved heritage management.”



“... Without the understanding and support of the public at large, without the respect and daily care of the local communities, which are the true custodians of World Heritage, no amount of funds or army of experts will suffice in protecting the sites.”

文化  
KOICHIRO MATSUURA,  
Former DG UNESCO



Not just a cherry on the cake...

**communities – and interpretation – need to be a core ingredient of heritage management**

Image source: <https://suaconinfacil.com/bolo-de-chocolate-e-cereja/>

Thank you for listening

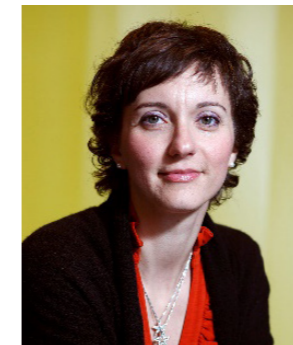
Questions?

sc@insteadheritage.com



## Lecture 7

# Heritage and Participatory Media in the Age of Data Technology



Elisa Giaccardi  
Delft University of Technology

Elisa Giaccardi is a professor in Interaction Design at Delft University of Technology, the Netherlands. She is the editor of *Heritage and Social Media* (Routledge 2012), in which she uses heritage as a lens to understand the impact of social media on the emergence and grounding of participatory values and practices. Her research in social media, the Internet of Things and Artificial Intelligence, reflects a persistent concern with "designing" as a shared process of cultivation and management of opportunity spaces.

She is the director of the MSc Design for Interaction at the Faculty of Industrial Design Engineering. She is also a founding member of AiTech, the Delft University of Technology campus-wide initiative for responsible design and engineering of AI systems, and a coordinator of the European innovative training network DCODE on designing for/with AI.



## Lecture 6

# Heritage and Participatory Media in the Age of Data Technology

**Elisa Giaccardi**  
Delft University of Technology

It's a real pleasure and an honor to speak today at the WHIPIC Online Lecture Series, and to venture into the uncharted territories of data technology and participatory heritage practices, to illuminate the shifts, frictions and opportunities that I believe it is important to engage for inclusive and sustainable futures. But before getting into all this, I would like you to know a bit more about where I come from, scholarly and personally.

I'm a design researcher, and over the last two decades my work has focused on the challenges that a digital transformation of society poses to the field of design. From early digital networks to social media, from the Internet of Things to Artificial Intelligence, my research interests reflect a persistent concern with design as a shared process of cultivation and management of opportunity spaces, and with the transformative role technology can play. My research in heritage practice began in the early 2000 with the design of a social media platform for capturing and sharing sonic experiences of natural heritage in collaboration with the City of Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks in Colorado, USA.

This interest in unofficial heritage practices as an expression of what at the time scholars referred to as participatory culture grows and materializes in 2012 in the edited volume on *Heritage and Social Media* published by Routledge.

2017 sort of completes the cycle with the publication of an open access chapter on *Heritage and the Internet of Things*, written together with Liedeke Plate, in which we reflect through examples on the implications for heritage practice of the emerging capacity of the Internet not just to allow users to

generate content, but to connect objects in the physical world to online databases and enable them to collect and exchange data.

Since moving to TU Delft, I have returned to broader matters of interaction design and data technology. I'm currently leading the European DCODE Network, a research and training program aimed to rethink design and develop fundamentally new design competences to guide society's digital transformation towards inclusive and sustainable futures.

It's also important for you to know that I share an understanding of culture grounded in the everyday. As discussed in the work of heritage scholars such as Susie West, Laurajane Smith and Neil Silberman, I see heritage is more about the cultural work of ordinary people than official heritage lists. And similarly, to scholars such as Thomas, Lowenthal, and Byrne, I uphold to the idea that we socially construct heritage in the context of our own lives and imaginations to interact meaningfully with our past and shape our vision of the future. This understanding of culture as rooted in the everyday emphasizes that heritage meanings and values are the results of repeated and ongoing interactions in the lived world of ordinary people.

And now that you know a bit more about my research interests, and where I come from, let me give you an overview...

The lecture is structured in three parts and makes use of examples to render the arguments more tangible. I will start with talking about participatory uses of data technology in human practices of remembering. Then, I will problematize how practices of remembering between humans and algorithms are currently performed. I will conclude by illuminating a possible roadmap for imagining inclusive and sustainable heritage futures.

The underlying arguments that I intend to make with each of these parts is, first, that heritage practice is inherently post-human. Two, that for AI to be culturally aware is not enough, and, three, that designers should sit at the table of Cultural AI and future initiatives in the field of heritage and data technology to provide an understanding of how we might be crafting inclusive and sustainable human-algorithm relations.

Let's start with reviewing the use of data technology in human practices of remembering.

There are three main shifts in how heritage is understood and practiced through digital means, and they all happened in the last decade, very close to each other. I'd like to associate these shifts to subsequent waves of data technology in society: social media, the Internet of Things, and Artificial Intelligence. These shifts are qualitatively different from a participatory heritage perspective but technologically, infrastructurally cumulative. The examples I'm going to provide range from cases of grassroots heritage to new exhibition formats and public interventions in the city, and represent a phase of experimentation which I hope will help illustrate the change in modalities and aspirations brought

about by data technology to participatory heritage imagination and practices.

The first shift is produced by the advent of social media and the ability for users to generate and exchange digital content across digital networks, or what we refer to as user-generated content. This has contributed to challenge ideas of authority in heritage interpretation and opening matters of heritage to decentralized publics across the globe. One early example of this change in values is the commemoration of the Bhopal disaster. The case concerns online practices of remembering together the deadly gas leak that took place in a Union Carbide plant in the city of Bhopal. As described by Sophia Liu in my book *Heritage and Social Media* (Liu 2012), the annual commemoration of the Bhopal disaster constitutes a process of socially distributed curation of personal accounts, past and present images and documented political actions, through which counter-narratives are created that contribute to the historical memory of the event, bringing together Bhopalis and people worldwide.

Another early example is the exhibition project *Digital Natives* in which youngsters born with digital technologies were asked to represent themselves and the things they value for future generations by means of social media content such as music playlists. The installation itself uses and mimics the language of social media to create hybrid and living connections between the exhibition subject and audiences' everyday lives. For example, the interactive installation in this picture enabled visitors to gain first-hand experience with the remix and mash-up cultures that are hallmarks of the new digital generations. Each cube represented one individual's musical taste. By placing more musical cubes on the table and applying effects to them dynamically, the visitor could combine and alter loops and create complex mash-ups. Framed within the language and experience of social media, each experience is created in unique moments of dialogue and interaction inside the actual exhibition space.

The second shift was brought about by the Internet of Things just a few years later. As beautifully phrased by Chris Speed in "An internet of things that do not exist" (Speed 2011), unlike the adage "a rolling stone gathers no moss," objects now gather moss. As they move from one place to the next, they gather locative data, data about where they have been; as people interact with them, they gather social data; and even as they sit idly on a shelf, they may be gathering data about the objects that are around them. The Internet of Things has contributed to bring user-generated content, and other digitally mediated forms of participatory heritage interpretation, back to the situated and embodied contexts where things actually come to matter. One early example is *Tales of Things*, in which people can attach to their mundane possessions memories of use to share with others in the form of a textual narrative, a photographic image or a video. Developed in collaboration with the Oxfam charity shop in the student quarter of Manchester, the project uses the properties of connected objects to offer alternative pasts.

Another early example is the *Moving People* guerrilla street art project by Dutch art collective Power of Art. In the fall of 2015, the art collective placed 10,010 miniatures of refugees in various public spaces in Amsterdam and The Hague. The miniatures were modeled onto the 3D scan of real refugees, with a web address printed on each of them to retrieve associated content. The project aimed

to encourage empathy and strengthen social cohesion. To this end, the miniatures in the street allowed those who stumble upon one of them to suddenly encounter the personal memories and stories of the refugee associated with the replica.

The most recent shift is being produced by the permeating use of machine learning and artificial intelligence in all spheres of everyday life. The use of algorithms in social media platforms and across Internet of Things infrastructures has given agency to things, allowing them to accrue memories of their own and share them autonomously. This will contribute to further promoting unofficial histories and to shaping futures that are probabilistic in nature. Before diving into how this works today, I want to give you here a couple of early speculative examples, as imaginative counterparts to existing commercial applications. The first example is *Photobox* (2014), a domestic technology that was conceptualized way before many of our current smartphone apps to print four or five randomly selected photos from the owner's Flickr collection. The photos were printed at random intervals each month inside of a wooden chest. The difference between *Photobox* and Facebook, for example, is that *Photobox* is meant to be slow. Its reasoning is meant to contest accelerated rates of photo accumulation to facilitate reflection and help find meaning.

Another example is *Me.mento* (2015). *Me.mento* was conceptualized to rummage in its owners' photo stream and print out pictures that are discarded or somehow forgotten. These may be pictures that turned out blurred or are otherwise 'imperfect' from a compositional standpoint, like the close-up selfies secretly taken with the smartphone by your toddler in a moment of distraction – pictures that would otherwise be discarded as not 'worth' of publication. Here again, the difference between *Memento* and, for example, Google Photos is that *Me.mento* is meant to open our probabilistic future to a plurality of possible interpretations and meanings. Its reasoning in choosing imperfect photos is meant to contest algorithmic and profit-driven forms of legitimization of what constitutes an acceptable history.

Before we move to discussing the frictions and perils that hide into the promise of Artificial Intelligence, I want to conclude this overview by arguing that there's a clear need for expanding our understanding and crafting of participation in heritage interpretation to nonhuman actors. The things that we produce online or encounter in real life are now powered by data technology and because of this power, they take part in how we read the past and write the future in ways that our previous "aide memoire" did not. If we do not acknowledge their autonomous behavior and conceptualize heritage participation in posthuman terms, we risk missing out on the opportunity to broaden our understanding of the past and open to more inclusive and sustainable, multiple futures. But we also risk leaving posthuman practices of remembering together, and the collective making of history (if not of reality), to corporations and wayward ideologies.

Let's now problematize notions of agency in practices of remembering between humans and nonhumans. If we take our move from the idea that heritage is a posthuman practice centered around participation, around entangled practices of remembering between humans and nonhumans, what are the

critical questions that we should ask? How do we begin to understand and perform next to algorithms not as autonomous technical forces completely independent, as argued by Seaver (2021), but rather as heterogeneous sociotechnical systems of which we are a part?

I have distilled three questions I deem critical. The first question we should ask is: to what purpose does the thing, the algorithm that powers it, remember? I will use the concept of “avidity” (Seaver 2021) to explore the logics through which algorithmic systems know and intervene upon their users to make recommendations and shape memories. The second question we should ask is: for whom does the algorithm recollect? Here I will refer to the concept of infrastructural politics (Blake & Gilmore 2021) to point to the increasing delegation of meaning, control and profit to algorithmic systems. And finally, the third question to ask is: How does the algorithm relate? Here I will touch upon issues of negotiations of power and how these are (or not) facilitated by design.

I will use algorithmic memories as an example and refer to FB features such as On This Day, Friendversary, Recaps of Memories, Year in Review and similar features by Google and Apple, to illustrate these abstract concepts and hopefully make them tangible.

Facebook, Google, Apple and several others offer past-oriented services of algorithmic memory. These services review, interpret and present the past that is archived in your social media posts and interactions on behalf of the user. As explained in Lee (2019), “the archived past comes to users and evokes memory practices without having to make an effort to review one’s post archived in social media or mobile devices” (p. 38). And though this curatorial support may sound nice, we need to ask: to what purpose do these algorithms remember? The purpose is to stimulate your avidity and increase your engagement, that is, the time spent on social media or on your mobile, that is, your exposure to profiling and advertising. And what is our avidity about when we look back at our past? To see when we were happy, to nostalgically remember happy moments, to think that our life is a happy life. As a result, our collective sense of the past is becoming standardized. Photos of a frontal face, with opened eyes and smiling is always algorithmically chosen over other experiences and processed as a memory for our future retrievals.

But does the algorithm today recollect for me? Does the algorithm care about our understanding of the past or the future we’ll be shaping based on those interpretations? As part of sociotechnical infrastructures, algorithms are agents of power. And when there is power, there is politics. There is an engine at work to establish preferred paths and points of connection. In addition to assessing facial expressions, Facebook August 2015 patent also proposes to collect and analyze users’ actions such as liking and reacting to posts, making and unmaking friends, posting photos and leaving comments. As Lee (2019) argues, today’s algorithmic memory practices “make human emotions and memories part of the observable actions, which can be mathematically modeled, measured and analyzed” to automate and monetize nostalgia.

Now the question is: can these algorithmic logics be put to the service of other politics? Can they be part of other infrastructures? And the question to me is not so much whether we can ethically align algorithms by defining metrics for predetermining what and how we could remember and go back to official heritage registers for the everyday. For me, the question is rather how do we negotiate our differences, how do we create new paths and points of connection? As argued by Lee (2019), “the past recalled by Facebook to us is not necessarily authentic but ideologically utopian”. Our relationship to this past, and the algorithms that create it, is not negotiable. For example, for the Facebook’s Year in Review, Facebook categorizes users’ posts based on “positive” words to create a taxonomy of memory themes and inform their ranking algorithms on what memories to select and recirculate. The only power users are given are options to customize how these reels will appear in Facebook.

As we move into using algorithms and artificial intelligence for better understanding museum audiences and better interpreting our past, we will need to be critical. Posthuman practices of participatory heritage will require new design competences to anthropologically and culturally reconcile human values and algorithmic logics. But though we need to be vigilant, there’s no determinism. Like other aspects of culture, algorithms are unstable, and as argued by Seaver (2021), culturally enacted by the practices people use to engage with them.

Let’s consider now the design of more-than-human practices of remembering. At this point, I’d like to start using the participatory term “more-than-human” rather than “posthuman” and reflect with you on how to design for this unstable, probabilistic co-performance between humans and nonhumans in participatory practices of remembering. Here I’d like to shift the attention from criticalities to creativities, to the imagination that I at least as a designer feel responsible for offering, as a space for cultivating new opportunities. So, this last part of my talk is not about what we should be cautious about, what we should be standing against, but rather what we might be standing for. What trajectories do we need to pursue to move beyond the limitations of traditional understandings of heritage practice in the application of AI to the cultural and heritage sector? How can we uphold ideas of participation as we move forward in using these more sophisticated technologies?

In this last part of my talk, I will use again three projects, important and relevant ones, and use them to explore a possible design space for more-than-human practices of heritage interpretation around those projects, touching on issues of political participation, ethical imagination and infrastructural openness. Topics that of course would require another lecture alone, but that again I will try to make tangible by using existing examples as a springboard for reflection.

The Social Bias Observatory SABIO is a project aimed to trace colonial terminology in museum collections through AI-powered, automated analysis of collection descriptions. The goal is to detect the cultural bias in these collections and supplement existing collection data with this information, without replacing them or supplementing them.

The design space here for a more-than-human practice of participatory heritage (what we should be doing next) would entail moving beyond debiasing the past by means of automated annotation, placing instead the human in the loop of AI interpretation by contrasting human and nonhuman perspectives, and bringing them to the table in relation to each other, in the political work of heritage interpretation.

Time Machine is a mass scale research project promoted and funded by the European Commission, involving over 200 organizations from 33 European countries. In this project, the AI will be trained to collect and analyze data from a wide variety of temporal and geographical areas. It will identify and aggregate documents, artifacts, monuments, and other fragmented historical datasets according to their similarities. The goal is to provide access to a more comprehensive narrative of the European past and foster collaboration around the pan-European challenges of today.

The design space here for a more-than-human practice of participatory heritage (what we should be doing next) would entail an ethical imagination that moves beyond the deterritorialization and reterritorialization of history – a practice that brings together and contrast human and nonhuman perspectives alike, with the goal of fostering diversity of interpretations as well as reconciliations and developing shared understandings of the emerging narrative produced by AI. In other words, a practice that entailed in Claire Colebrook's words (2020) the crafting of "relations that cut into the territory and take us elsewhere", rather than "the project of saving humanity from all that threatens their emergent complexity".

AI:CULT is a project in collaboration with the National Library of the Netherlands and Sound and Vision, focused on automated analysis and enrichment of object descriptions in museum collections using AI, from medieval manuscripts to radio, television, YouTube videos, podcasts and games. Because of the inherent richness, subjectivity and polyvocal nature of cultural heritage, data limits and often even rules out the responsible use of AI. So, the goal of the project is to explore ways in which heritage institutes can use AI in ways that align with their role in society as a trusted source of information by developing novel bias detection and filtering methods.

The design space here for a more-than-human practice of participatory heritage (what we should be doing next) would entail connecting the infrastructural work of heritage interpretation in stewarding inclusive and sustainable futures to people's everyday lives, that is to say, giving users an active role in creating stories and narratives from raw collection data in the context of their lives and communities.

To conclude, while extraordinary work is underway to make good use of AI in cultural heritage, we are just at the beginning of understanding how more-than-human practices of participatory heritage can be shaped between humans and algorithms to the benefit of mankind. Challenging territorialization of what is 'possible' and 'worthwhile' to remember, exploring the kind of 'unspoken' and the aspects of liminality that can be brought into heritage interpretation by AI, enabling objects that are part of our

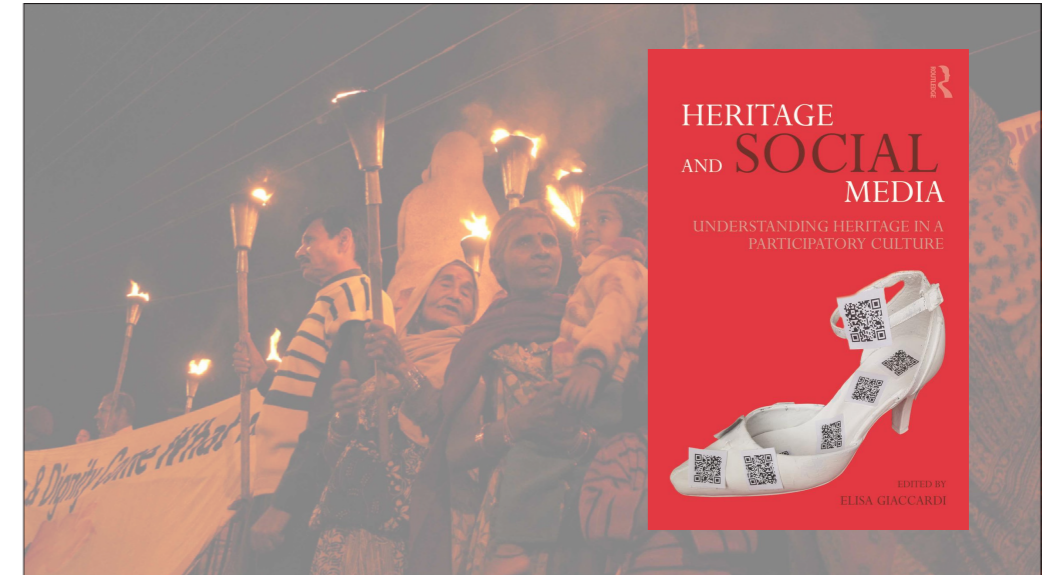
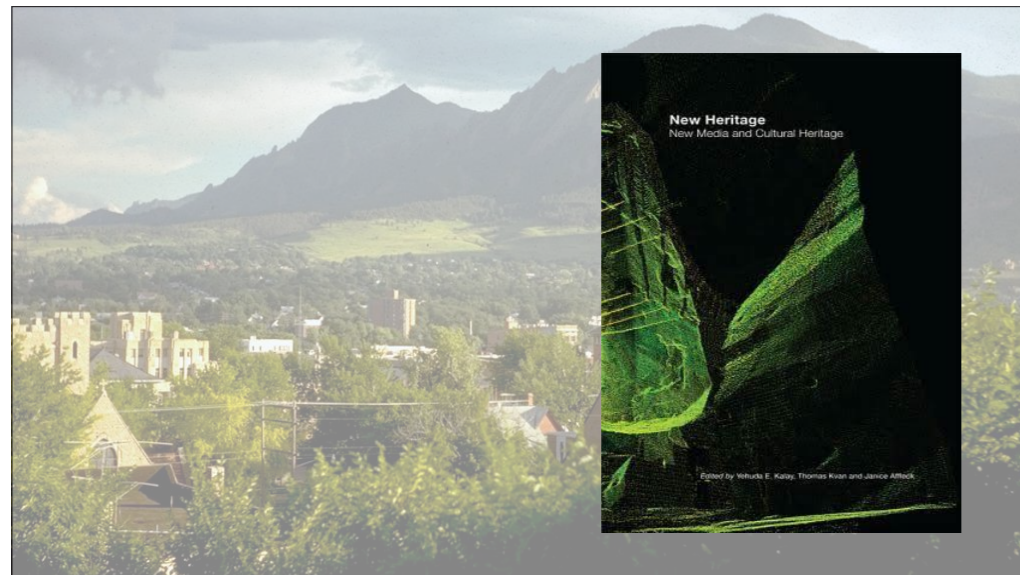
lives to begin to speak in ways outside a human habitus, prefigure new spaces of conversations and new scales for heritage practice, which set no boundaries or limits to what heritage can be and how is to be intended in the broader cultural, political and social context. All this requires rethinking our interactions, how these are designed and crafted, with and through AI. Design has an important role to play in this development and in future initiatives of Cultural AI and further applications of AI to the cultural sector.

I'd like to thank you all for listening and look forward to your comments and questions.

# Heritage and Participatory Media in the Age of Data Technology

Elisa Giaccardi, Delft University of Technology  
Professor in Post-Industrial Design  
@elsagiaccardi

A bit about me



## 4 How Memory Comes to Matter From Social Media to the Internet of Things

Elisa Giaccardi and Liedeke Plate

**Introduction**  
"The Internet of Things (IoT) ... will change everything—including ourselves" (Evans, 2011, p. 2). This opens a recent white paper on the emerging capacity of the Internet to connect objects in the physical world to online databases and enable them to collect and exchange data. This chapter reflects on these developments from a heritage perspective and critically discusses how the Internet of Things has begun to change the complex set of memory practices through which we give meaning to the past in the present and thus shape our image of the future. It contributes a critical account of processing heritage work from social media to the Internet of Things, with the goal of helping scholars and practitioners frame and design future technologies of memory. To this end, the chapter first considers the ways in which social media enable ordinary people to participate in the construction of cultural memory through shared online activities of collection, preservation, and interpretation. As discussed in *Heritage and Social Media* (Giaccardi, 2012), social media encourage a shift in heritage work from the mere safeguarding of material artifacts to the grassroots, human practices through which heritage objects are interpreted and valued—from online practices of remembering together on Facebook to the remix and mash-up of user-generated online content within and beyond the museum exhibit. In this chapter, we expand on this consideration and argue that a participatory approach to memory practice empowers people to an active, creative relationship with heritage objects: "doing" or "saying" around the object begins to become more important for human practices of remembering than the object in its straight materiality." With social media, memory is not just communicated to a "passive" receiver of information, but is actively constructed and performed through participatory practices of remembering. For digital heritage, traditionally concerned with the digital preservation of material artifacts, this is an important step (Russo, 2012). But it is only the first one.

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Heritage meanings and values are the results of repeated and ongoing interactions in the lived world of **ordinary people**.

### Overview

### The lecture in a nutshell

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
Reviewing data technology in human practices of remembering	Problematizing agency in practices of remembering between humans and algorithms	Making heritage futures otherwise

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<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
Reviewing data technology in human practices of remembering	Problematizing agency in practices of remembering between humans and algorithms	Making heritage futures otherwise

Heritage practice is inherently posthuman.

Culturally aware AI is not enough.

Designers should sit at the table of Cultural AI.

(1) Reviewing **data technology** in human practices of remembering

### Participatory shifts

- Social media
- Internet of Things (IoT)
- Artificial Intelligence (AI)

## Social media: From authority to public discourse

### The commemoration of the Bhopal disaster

Source: Liu, S. (2012) "Socially-Distributed Curation of the Bhopal Disaster: A Case of Grassroots Heritage in the Crisis Context," in E. Giaccardi (Ed.) *Heritage and Social Media: Understanding Heritage in a Participatory Practice*. Routledge.



## Social media: From authority to public discourse

### The Digital Natives exhibition

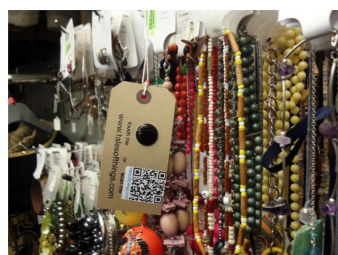
Source: Iversen, O. and Smith, R.C. (2012) "Connecting to Everyday Practices: Experiences from the Digital Natives Exhibition," in E. Giaccardi (Ed.) *Heritage and Social Media: Understanding Heritage in a Participatory Practice*. Routledge.



## Internet of Things: From institutional sites to everyday places

### Tale of Things

Source: Iversen, O. and Smith, R.C. (2012) "Connecting to Everyday Practices: Experiences from the Digital Natives Exhibition," in E. Giaccardi (Ed.) *Heritage and Social Media: Understanding Heritage in a Participatory Practice*. Routledge.



## Internet of Things: From institutional sites to everyday places

### Moving People

Source: Giaccardi, E. and Plate, L. (2012) "How Memory Comes to Matter: From Social Media to the Internet of Things," in L. Munteán, L. Plate and A. Smelik (Eds) *Materializing Memory in Art and Popular Culture*. Routledge.



## Artificial Intelligence: From legitimized histories to probabilistic futures

### Photobox

Source: Giaccardi, E. and Plate, L. (2012) "How Memory Comes to Matter: From Social Media to the Internet of Things," in L. Munteán, L. Plate and A. Smelik (Eds) *Materializing Memory in Art and Popular Culture*. Routledge.



## Artificial Intelligence: From legitimized histories to probabilistic futures

### Me.mento

Source: Giaccardi, E. and Plate, L. (2012) "How Memory Comes to Matter: From Social Media to the Internet of Things," in L. Munteán, L. Plate and A. Smelik (Eds) *Materializing Memory in Art and Popular Culture*. Routledge.





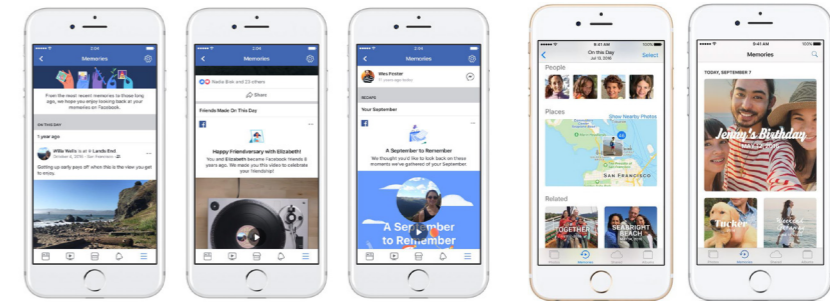
Algorithms are actively changing our ability to read the past and write the future. They **participate** in practices of remembering in ways that our previous aide-mémoires did not.

(2) Problematizing **agency** in practices of remembering between humans and nonhumans

### Posthuman criticalities

- Avidity and engagement
- Infrastructural politics
- Negotiations of power

### Algorithmic memories as an example



Facebook memory features  
Source: <https://bit.ly/3E7Eo1a>

Google memory features  
Source: <https://bit.ly/3FeG5G5>

### Avidity: To what purpose does the algorithm remember?

Sources: Lee, H. (2019) Automation of Nostalgia: The Cultures of Algorithmic Memory Practices, PhD dissertation, North Carolina State University; Seaver, N. (2021) Seeing Like An Infrastructure: Avidity and Difference in Algorithmic Recommendation, Cultural Studies, 35:4-5.

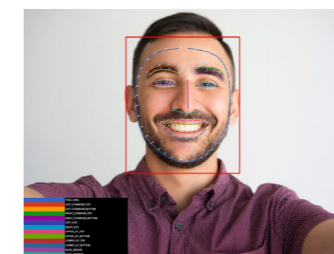


Figure 3.9: Additional Landmarks Analysis of Human Face ("Face Detection Concepts Overview," 2019)

Image and caption from Lee (2019)

### Infrastructural politics: For whom does the algorithm recollect?

Sources: Lee, H. (2019) Automation of Nostalgia: The Cultures of Algorithmic Memory Practices, PhD dissertation, North Carolina State University; Blake, H. and Gilmore, J.N. (2021) Infrastructural Politics Amidst the Coils of Control, Cultural Studies, 35:4-5.

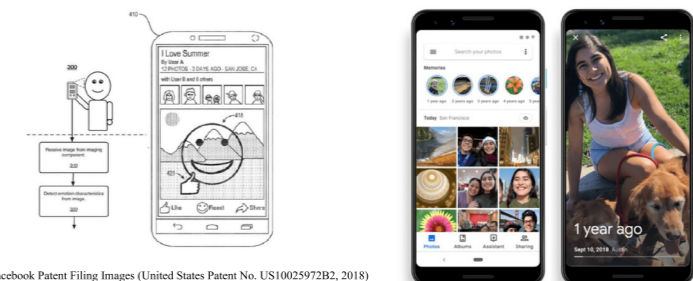


Figure 3.11: Facebook Patent Filing Images (United States Patent No. US10025972B2, 2018)

Image and caption from Lee (2019)



## Negotiations of power: How does the algorithm relate?

Sources: Lee, H. (2019) Automation of Nostalgia: The Cultures of Algorithmic Memory Practices, PhD dissertation, North Carolina State University.



Figure 2.4: Facebook Taxonomy of Memory Themes (Konrad, 2017)

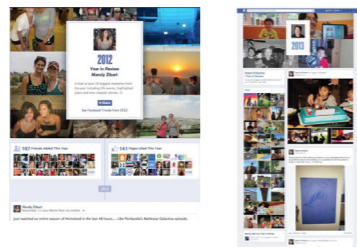


Figure 2.3: Facebook Year in Review Design 2012 (left) and 2013 (right) ("2013 Year in Review | Facebook Newsroom," 2013; "Facebook Year in Review 2012 | Facebook Newsroom," 2012)

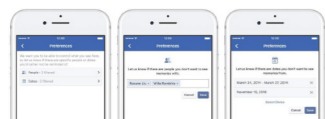


Figure 2.5: Memory preferences (Konrad, 2017)

Images and captions from Lee (2019)



Posthuman practices of participatory heritage will require new competences to anthropologically and culturally reconcile human values and algorithmic logics in ways that **benefit mankind**.

(3) Designing for **more-than-human** practices of remembering

## Design spaces

- Political participation
- Ethical imagination
- Infrastructural openness

## Mapping the Netherlands' colonial past

SABIO – Social Bias Observatory



Provenance research: what is the National Museum of World Cultures doing with the Benin collection?

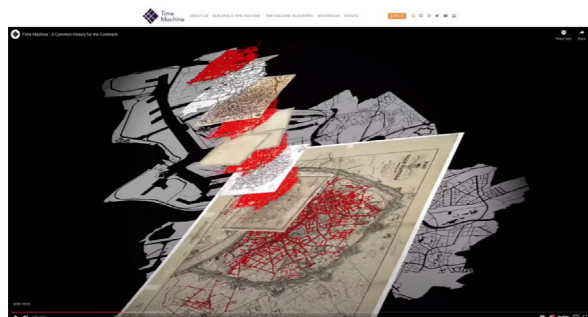
Source: Museum voor Wereldculturen <https://www.wereldmuseum.nl/>

## Beyond debiasing the past: Political participation

Cultural AI	Posthuman heritage
Automated detection of cultural biases	Place the human in the loop
Supplement existing metadata	Contrast human and nonhuman perspectives

## Creating a common history of the continent

Time Machine Project (Europe)



Source: Time Machine Project  
<https://www.timemachine.eu/>

## Beyond deterritorializing history: Ethical imagination

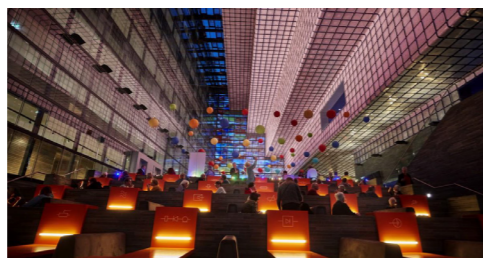
Cultural AI	Posthuman heritage
Analyze and reconstruct data	Craft new relations with data
Aggregate fragmented data into a narrative	Foster shared understandings of AI narratives

## Reinstate heritage institutions as trusted source of information

AI:CULT – Culturally Aware AI



KB | National Library of the Netherlands  
 Source: <https://bit.ly/3j7JDfj>



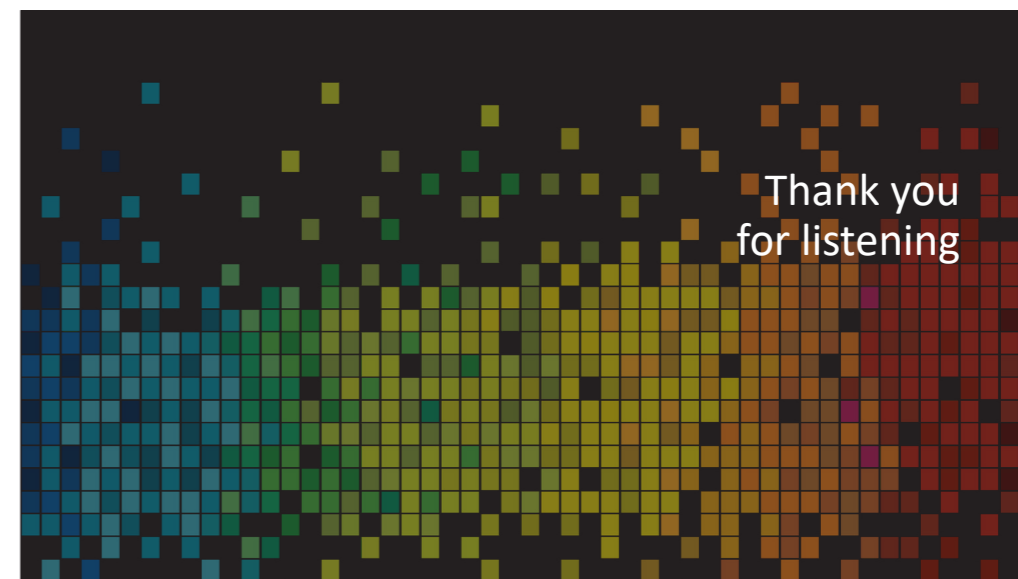
Sound and Vision  
 Source: <https://bit.ly/325m8TT>

## Beyond certifying the future: Infrastructural openness

Cultural AI	Posthuman heritage
Develop novel bias detection and filtering methods	Connect raw collection data to everyday contexts
Automated analysis and enrichment of object descriptions	Give people an active role in creating data stories and narratives



Making heritage futures otherwise requires rethinking our interactions with and through AI. **Design** has an important role to play in this development.



Thank you for listening

Special Session

# Inclusive and Participatory World Heritage Interpretation and Presentation

2021 Online Lecture Series  
Understanding World Heritage Interpretation and Presentation

Special Session

## Inclusive & Participatory World Heritage Interpretation and Presentation

with Professor Neil Silberman  
Professor Mario Santana-Quintero

18 November 2021  
1 pm GMT 10 pm KST

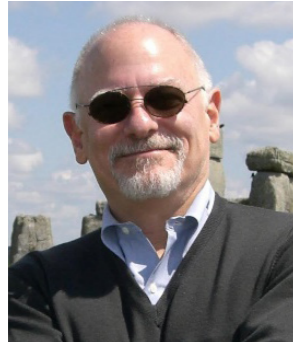
The final session of the 2020 & 2021 WHIPIC Online Lecture Series on Understanding World Heritage Interpretation and Presentation

Live-streaming on YouTube & Facebook  
International Centre for the Interpretation and Presentation of WH



Cultural Heritage Administration

**WHIPIC**  
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Neil Silberman  
Massachusetts University Amherst

Neil Silberman is an author and heritage scholar with a special interest in the politics and impact of heritage on contemporary society. He served for a decade as the founding president of the ICOMOS International Scientific Committee on Interpretation and Presentation (ICIP). In that position he served as chief editor of the 2008 ICOMOS Charter for the Interpretation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage Sites. From 2004 to 2007, he served as director of the Ename Center for Public Archaeology and Heritage Presentation in Belgium. In 2008, he joined the faculty of the Department of Anthropology of the University of Massachusetts Amherst and became one of the founders of its Center for Heritage and Society. He also served as co-editor of its journal *Heritage & Society* (2008-2014) and is currently a member of the editorial boards of the *International Journal of Cultural Property* and the *Journal of Eastern Mediterranean Archaeology and Heritage Studies*. He is now a managing partner of Coherit Associates, an international heritage consultancy, and is co-editor of *The Oxford Handbook of Public Heritage Method and Practice* (2018). From 2012-2020, his firm, Coherit Associates, has implemented a 14-nation Caribbean heritage development project for the Organization of American States (OAS).



Mario Santana-Quintero  
Carleton University & ICOMOS

Mario Santana-Quintero, is a full professor at the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering (Carleton University) in Ottawa, Canada. He is also the Director of the NSERC Create program Heritage Engineering and faculty member of the Carleton immersive Media Studio Lab (CIMS). Besides his academic work in Canada, he is a guest professor at the Raymond Lemaire International Centre for Conservation (University of Leuven). Along with his academic activities, he serves as Secretary General of the International Council of Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), and he is the past president of the ICOMOS Scientific Committee on Heritage Documentation (CIPA). Furthermore, he has been a Getty Conservation Institute scholar and he has collaborated in several international projects in the field of heritage documentation for The Getty Conservation Institute, UNESCO, Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities, ICCROM, World Monuments Fund, UNDP, Welfare Association, and the Department of Culture and Tourism of Abu Dhabi.

### Special Session

# Inclusive and Participatory World Heritage Interpretation & Presentation

Neil Silberman & Mario Santana-Quintero

## 2020 WHIPIC Online Lecture Series & World Heritage Interpretation

Neil Silberman

I'm going to briefly summarize the whole idea and the individual presentations in 2020, which as we all know around the world, was a time of really enormous change not only in the normal technological and political way, but also the effects of the pandemic which have really changed the way that people visit and interpret the cultural heritage sites. I think that the lectures really all validated the idea of the International Centre for Interpretation and Presentation, where it's come, where it's going. I just want to spend a few minutes talking about these individual presentations.

I was asked back in 2020 to introduce the subject, and what's clear to everyone dealing with interpretation is that it's not really a single thing in every different site all over the world. There are many different modes of interpretation, and unfortunately when we're dealing with World Heritage, the actual Convention, the World Heritage Convention and the Operational Guidelines aren't very specific about what is meant. They use the word presentation and we will hopefully be able to discuss the distinction between presentation and interpretation.

But the important thing is that in the whole heritage field people have come to recognize that heritage is not just a collection of material things, or even in intangible heritage, a collection of intangible elements, but it's really about relationships between people. And that is really where, as so being mentioned in the introduction, the whole direction of interpretation has been going from what's

called top-down, where a presentation is designed by experts or site managers and people are the audience, to a much more active involvement of local communities.

And I want to just briefly stress the fact the top-down and bottom-up are not just opposites. On the left, we see top-down with a message or an interpretation coming from one particular spot and generally diffusing among the public. But when we're talking about bottom-up and participatory involvement interpretation, it's not sending only a message upwards. It is creating a network, and this idea of participation and engagement is creating a kind of community rather than an audience, and that is where many of our lecturers were convinced that interpretation is going.

Now after the introduction, the first lecturer was Professor William Logan from Australia and there's hardly a better person to talk about the actual interaction between the creative work of interpretation and participation of the public and the frameworks of the World Heritage Convention itself. And basically, after his work primarily in East Asia and South Asia, his whole idea was that the structure of the World Heritage Convention being based in nation states really leaves out communities, local regions, and a lot of levels of community that have heritage to be interpreted. And what his point in this lecture was that it is the responsibility of everyone who appreciates heritage who works with it to constantly put persuasion on to the state parties of the World Heritage Convention to open up their interpretive programs to more than just patriotic messages. He also mentioned that, basically, this is really a political issue that is like every other diplomatic issue, it has to constantly be worked toward.

The second lecture I'm going to summarize was from Shu-Mei Huang of the National Taiwan University, and she had a very interesting idea about interpretation as a tool for cultural reconciliation, really on the model of the truth and reconciliation commission of South Africa, but also there is a transitional justice commission that has been established in Taiwan to, not only come to terms with some of the less pleasant, some of the more negative uses of the world and how they are memorialized and you see here the picture of one of the most famous of all, the Genbaku Dome in Hiroshima. And she really stressed that the idea of coming to terms with the past, officially recognizing things that we need to remember to avoid them coming together is a kind of performative interpretation in which groups recognize and announce their recognition of things that have violated human rights, have violated the mission of the United Nations as a whole.

Next was Yujie Zhu of Australian National University, who really took the opportunity as we're getting close the 50th anniversary of the World Heritage Convention to look back and to look ahead with some provocative questions about how we can better interpret World Heritage for the 21st century. And he stressed that interpretation is a form of political recognition but the question is who should grant it, who is it for, is it beyond commemoration? And he created something really interesting in this lecture that is a heritage parallel of a famous model in sociology, the Arnstein Ladder of Citizen Engagement. And he transformed it to the ladder of heritage interpretation, where, in fact at the bottom rung, the most popular, if you will, of entertainment consumption, it rises in seriousness and importance to fact sharing, understanding, and recognition. Above that, imagination and reflection, and finally, just to something

that really resonates to this issue of conciliation. And over the last 50 years, he recognized-- Professor Zhu recognized that we are slowly mounting that ladder in many cases and some of the most important World Heritage cases, from mere entertainment to really something that adds to the social importance.

Next came the lecture of Peter Bille Larsen, the Universities of Geneva and Zurich and he really stressed a different kind of scale. All of these suggestions were really helpful in assisting us in providing more detail about what are the possibilities of World Heritage as an interpretive tool beyond the very basic definitions in the Convention itself. And he basically created a scale from relating to minority inclusive World Heritage, whose definition is very difficult but it is people whose histories have generally been ignored or rendered invisible in official interpretation, from on the left targeted destruction and opposition, to all the way to the right on rights being reconciled and recognized. So, it goes really from the negative to the more positive, which is an important point with interpretation. Interpretation can also have its negative sides, especially if it is used aggressively by governments and conflict and so forth.

And Professor Larsen just really stressed that we need to acknowledge minorities as distinct rights holders that have their own particular perspectives on heritage, and it's basically underlining that heritage practices, including interpretation, can sometimes be negative and sometimes be positive and this is really the parameters, rather than technique, that we have to understand that is the role of interpretation in wider society.

And the final lecture was from Dr. Gamini Wijesuriya of ICCROM, a well-known leader in the field of interpretation and conservation. And he was one of the founders of the ICCROM, people-centered approach. which really basically tries to encourage people to understand, and when I say people, both professionals and visitors or associated communities, that there is a function of heritage in the larger society to meet some of the challenges that we're all facing in this dramatically changing world that we live in. And basically, his definition of comprehensive World Heritage interpretation was a restatement and an adaptation of interpretive skills to the four pillars of sustainability that are acknowledged by the United Nations and incorporated in the SDGs, the sustainable development goals, and they are environmental, economic, cultural, and social equality and so forth. And he has done tremendous work throughout the world and certainly through the educational materials of ICCROM to stress that interpretation, when it is seen as part of the discord, the conversation of citizens and modern societies, it is conservation and likewise conservation, the choice, the methods of how heritage is conserved and how intangible heritage is safeguarded an act of conservation itself.

So, I just want to conclude this very brief survey by saying that the first season of the lecture series was really-- I learned a lot. I hope that people really got a good sense of where we've come and where we're going, and it really validated the need for an international Category-II UNESCO Centre that is devoted to this idea of communication, because communication is the heart of relationships, and interpretation and, in fact, heritage itself is that art and science of communicating between people about what the past means to us today. So, thank you very much and that is my presentation.

# 2020 Online Lecture Series on Understanding World Heritage Interpretation and Presentation



Preparatory Office for International Centre for the Interpretation and Presentation of World Heritage Sites



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## UNESCO World Heritage Listing & World Heritage Interpretation

William Logan  
Deakin University



## World Heritage Interpretation for Cultural Reconciliation

Shu-Mei Huang  
National Taiwan University



## 1972 World Heritage Convention & World Heritage Interpretation

Yujie Zhu  
Australian National University



**Minority-Inclusive World Heritage Interpretation**  
 Peter Bille Larsen  
 University of Geneva & University of Zürich

Targeted destruction/opposition    Commodified other    Invisibility    Mosaic recognition    Rights-based recognition

**Comprehensive World Heritage Interpretation**  
 Gamini Wijesuriya  
 Special Advisor to the Director General of ICCROM  
 Special Advisor to the Director of WHITR-AP



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 bit.ly/3pONy9V

## 2021 WHIPIC Online Lecture Series & World Heritage Presentation

### Mario Santana-Quintero

In the review for 2021, we had a very interesting group of experts. So, we have Alberto Garlandini from the International Council of Museums and he's president, actually, and then followed by Maria Gravari-Barbas, Hafizur Rahaman, Mike Robinson, Sarah Court and ending with Elisa Giaccardi. As you can see, we have a multi-disciplinary group of experts and also dispersed in many regions of the world.

So, in this lecture 2021, there were many images. Me, as an architect, that really shocked and really were interesting to me, and I have just put a couple of them here. The ICOM's "The Future of Museums Recover and Reimagine", given the impact of COVID; the images about "No Tourists Allowed, thanks for your collaboration"; "Generation Change," we talked a lot about this; then, the use of technology for the use of interpretation and presentation; and, certainly again the impact of tourism that we haven't seen throughout COVID, but could come back really shortly.

So, in the first presentation, I try to convey or present a kind of framework to the presentation of World Heritage Sites. Then also to define the skills required from a team of experts to prepare an inclusive presentation connecting with the community, the citizens. And this came actually from one word that Neil said, citizens rather than community. And can we develop technologies--that's kind of my strength--in World Heritage presentations that are purpose-built? And we will be talking about this in the session of questions. And how the International Centre for the Interpretation and Presentation of World Heritage Sites can assist in this, and how these webinars can contribute and actually, they have contributed a lot. In particular, I had the opportunity in the last weekends to review the presentations again, and I still found so many interesting topics that my colleagues were able to convey.

So, Alberto, President of ICOM, talked about the role of museums in a contemporary and new world. He talked about combating illicit trafficking by acknowledging and identifying heritage objects. He talked about the ICOM's code of ethics for museums, a framework that I think will be very relevant as we move forward in developing, maybe a code of ethics on how we develop interpretation and presentation practices. He talked about how museums have ethical values, diversity, democracy, participation, free exchange of ideas, fight against discrimination of race, sex, culture, and religion. And here, we see also that aspect of inclusion that I think should also be part of what we discuss today.

Then Alberto was followed by Maria Gravari-Barbas, who is the UNESCO chair in the UNESCO UNITWIN Network on Culture, Tourism, and Development, and she's based in the University Paris 1 Pantheon-Sorbonne. And I quite enjoyed Maria's lecture, it was very new to me. She said about the increasing number of World Heritage nomination that is not decreasing, the credibility of the World Heritage List from uniqueness to representativeness. She talked about including communities in the forces of credibility, conservation, capacity development, and communication. She talks about the

actors of development, the need of plural communities and fracture lines, constructed in the very action of recognizing heritage. She talks about subjects and not recipients, and I think Neil also mentioned this in his review previous to me, the socio-cultural sustainability of the host community while sharing the World Heritage site cultural assets with tourism, also socio-cultural carrying capacity and its own attitude towards tourism. I think that socio-cultural carrying capacity because in carrying capacity, we always deal with physical: how many tourists can we contain there so the place is not affected--the physical integrity of the place is not affected. So, I think that Maria's idea about socio-cultural carrying capacity was very new to me and very interesting. Marketing might offend the community, limit community involvement; no organic connection to the World Heritage Sites; naked monuments. I like this because I have seen it throughout my life. A lot of naked monuments that you visit but they don't actually convey anything else, other than stones and masonry work. Confiscation of their heritage and cultural identity of the community; the tourist phobia that has been increasing happening in historic settings. Environmental level - acceptable change, ignore - inform - involve, apply a comprehensive methodology to involve the community.

Then our colleague from Curtin University, Hafizur Rahaman talked about the lack of guidelines for the use of technologies for interpretation, for cultural heritage sites. He talked about Virtual Reality and Mixed Reality moving towards a consumer-component based system. He talked about how the smartphone is a stereoscopic viewer and a sensor and a PC; consumer technology frameworks will help improve access. He provided several examples of apps and technology that were developed by his students and colleagues. He talked about Artificial Intelligence and data mining archives; Augmented Reality to identify plants, I found this very interesting. We could have Augmented Reality applications and then we could recognize elements in the site and we could get information about them. And I like that he said technology will not substitute the real thing. I think that, Hafizur and myself, we have the same opinion: technology is there to enhance the message, not to replace it.

Then, Mike Robinson, who is a principal consultant, emeritus professor on tourism, heritage, and expertise group, talked about what does heritage mean to current generations, why do we detach ourselves from heritage, and I like this aspect, the detachment that we, as experts, make when we're making an assessment of a site. Not good - absence of context in many presentation activities, and generation shift and disconnect from the current significance of the site. For instance, he talked about the Iron Bridge. When he was born, the Iron Bridge had a completely different significance to generations that were born in the 90s. So, how can we convey that importance of the particular site, as the industrial site, to the current generations? How can we make them part of the stock of information? And that respect, he said, "what about climate change?", adding information about the issues of climate, adaptation, etc., to these sites from the industrial era. Then he talked about the interpretative process, what do you remember, what do we understand, what do we learn. He talked about narrative choice - transmit environmental concern, as I was just saying; World Heritage connects cultures and generations to provide context, connections, perspectives and relevance. He talked about this topic of superdiversity, I really liked that topic. What makes World Heritage - let's inspire people, he said, that World Heritage is



not the static list, we need to inspire people by utilizing World Heritage. And he said that World Heritage stirs the emotions and touches us, and I completely convey with him because I feel excited when I go to a World Heritage Site. It remains relevant, and he says, interpretation and presentation should be translated into different cultures but not basically translating from English to Korean or Korean to French. He talks about translating into that value set of that particular culture, and I really liked that; although I have to admit, I'm not an expert.

Then we have Sarah Court, and Sarah Court is a heritage consultant, and she talked about how interpretation is just one activity in the whole conservation of World Heritage; nevertheless, a very important activity. Cultural heritage is produced by the community, a group of people, therefore we need to be involved in the interpretation. And this seems a very simple statement, but very powerful because, if the community is not involved in producing the message, so why are we producing the message, after all? She says people evolved with culture, which I also agree with. She gave an example of Ercolano that I had an opportunity to visit when I was teaching with ICCROM a long time ago, and she said that in that particular case, the community wasn't even aware of the values of the heritage place in which they were living. And throughout this project, she evidenced how they engaged with the community to create good opportunities to preserve the site. And she also mentioned, which had struck me, that some communities do not want to be actively involved and what we are doing in that case.

And finally, we have Elisa Giaccardi, from TU Delft in the Netherlands, and she talked about technology again and participatory media. This lecture, I have to say was very interesting. She talked about how algorithms are actively changing our ability to read the past and write the future. For instance, Facebook, Instagram, these applications give us hints about what we need to see or buy. So, she's saying that this is directing our future, and it's reading the past in a very different way. For instance, she says they participate in practices of remembering in ways we did not do before. She talked about social media from authority to public discourse, she talked about the beginning of understanding the use of Artificial Intelligence in the issues of cultural heritage. She mentioned that we need to rethink our interactions with technology and we face algorithms and we need to find ways in the research area to educate the technology to be able to make it more helpful. And also, something that has struck me about her lecture, she talked about delegating to technology our tasks. So, more and more, we are delegating many of our tasks, that we do like using a calculator to calculate some math, we are delegating that completely to technology, or using sophisticated applications to collect data about sites or using Augmented Reality to create ideas. So, how can we make that delegation a little less dependent and more proactive?

So, to conclude, I want to reiterate "presentation" is the way in which something is offered, shown, explained, etc. to others. And then, in terms of technology, that is kind of my part, I would say that there is an opportunity. There are different ways to present information and interact with communities, so this is an opportunity, but equally, a challenge. I have been involved in many projects and I have evidenced of a kind of soft, digital appropriation, or colonialism, kidnapping of information and then transmitted. So, me, as a western person working in Canada, I might be going to World

Heritage Sites, and I will make my own interpretation and presentation using technology, but without considering the aspects of the people living there and so on. Somehow, I appropriate that knowledge and I'm able to convey that knowledge using very sophisticated views, or maybe solely conveying a view from a person like me. So, I feel that these are both-- so technology and presentation and interpretation offer both opportunities and challenges. I look at the interpretation as the way of, for instance, taking some data and making an understanding. Then the presentation is the way that we show that interpretation that we have produced. But I will leave that to the question. I know that we're going to have three questions that actually Neil and me have to battle to answer and I'm sure that we're also going to have a lot of comments from the audience. So Soobeen, back to you. Thank you so much for this opportunity to share my review.



2021 Online Lecture Series on Understanding World Heritage Interpretation and Presentation  
The International Centre for the Interpretation and Presentation of World Heritage Sites  
under the auspices of UNESCO – November 18, 2021

# Topics and issues of 2021

Mario Santana Quintero  
Carleton University / ICOMOS

Seokguram Grotto and Bulguksa Temple, Republic of Korea

2021 Over 420 minutes (12,600 seconds) of information about community, interpretation, presentation, technologies

- Can we create a **framework for the presentation of World Heritage Sites** ?
- Can we define the **skills required by a multidisciplinary team of experts to prepare an inclusive presentation of WHS connecting with the citizens?**
- Can we **develop technologies** for WHS presentations that are purposed built?
- **How the International Centre for the Interpretation and Presentation of World Heritage Sites will assist in this and how these webinars can contribute**

- Role of museum in contemporary and new world
- Combating Illicit trafficking
- SDG and its link to museums
- ICOM Code of ethics for museums – framework
- Museums have ethical values: diversity, democracy , participation, free exchange of ideas, fight against any discrimina-tion of race, sex, culture, religion

- Increasing number of WH nominations has not decrease
- Credibility of the WH list - From Uniqueness to representativeness
- 5Cs - Communities add this C to credibility, conservation, capacity building, and communication
- Actors of developments
- Plural communities and fracture lines
- Constructed in the very action of recognizing heritage
- Subjects and not recipients
- Socio cultural sustainability of the host community while haring the WH site cultural assets with tourism
- Own socio-cultural carrying capacity and its own attitude towards tourism in WH site
- Marketing might offend the community
- Limited community involvement
- No organic connection to the WH Site – naked monuments
- Confiscation of their heritage and cultural identity
- Tourist phobia
- Environmental level – acceptable change
- Ignore – inform – involve
- Apply a comprehensive methodology to involve the community

SPECIAL SESSION – 18 NOVEMBER 2021

SPECIAL SESSION – 18 NOVEMBER 2021

2021 Online Lecture Series  
 Understanding World Heritage  
 Interpretation and Presentation

Lecture 4

## Heritage Interpretation, Digital Media and End-Users

Hafizur Rahaman

15 July 2021  
8 am CET & 3 pm KST

- Lack of guidelines for the use of technologies for interpretation for cultural heritage sites
- VR/MR is moving towards a consumer-component based systems
- Smartphone is a stereoscopic viewer and a sensor and a PC
- Consumer technology frameworks will help improve access
- Providing examples of apps and technology – works by students
- AI and data mining archives
- AR to identify plants
- Technology will not substitute the real thing

2021 Online Lecture Series  
 Understanding World Heritage  
 Interpretation and Presentation

Lecture 5

## Speaking with a Changing World

: Communicating the  
Heritage of the World

Mike Robinson

19 August 2021  
10 am CET & 5 pm KST

- What does heritage mean to current generations?
- Why do we detach ourselves to the heritage
- Not good - Absence of context
- Generation shift and disconnect to the current significance of the site – cool
- Interpretative process
  - What do you remember
  - What do we understand
  - What do we learn
- Narrative choice – transmit environmental concern
- WH connect cultures and generations – to provide context, connections, perspectives and relevance
- Superdiversity
- What makes world heritage – lets Inspire people
- Stirs the emotions and touches us
- It remains relevant
- Translates into different cultures

2021 Online Lecture Series  
 Understanding World Heritage  
 Interpretation and Presentation

Lecture 6

## Community Engagement in Interpreting World Heritage Values

Sarah Court

16 September 2021  
10 am CET & 5 pm KST

- Interpretation is just one activity in conservation of world heritage
- Cultural heritage is produced by the community – a group of people therefore need to be involved in the interpretation
- People evolved with culture
- Ercolano – involving the community that is not aware of the value of the heritage place
- Some communities do not want to be actively involved

2021 Online Lecture Series  
 Understanding World Heritage  
 Interpretation and Presentation

Lecture 7

## Heritage and Participatory Media in the Age of Data Technology

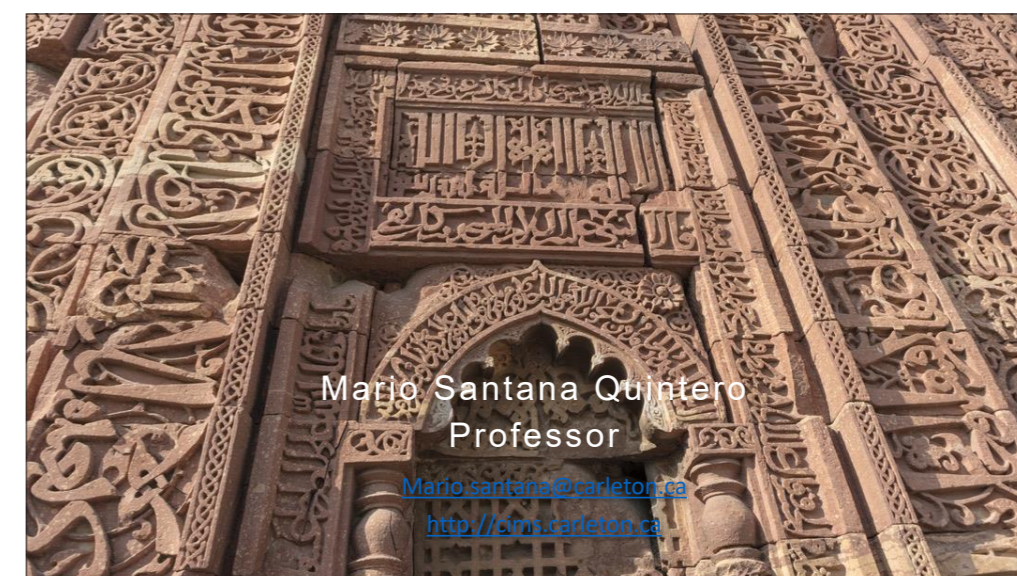
Elisa Giaccardi

14 October 2021  
10 am CET & 5 pm KST

- Algorithms are actively changing our ability to read the past and write the future, They participate in practices of remembering in ways we don't did before
- Social media: from authority to public discourse
- Beginning of understanding the use of AI
- Rethinking our interactions
- We need to educate the technology
- Delegate to technology our tasks

PRESENTATION the way in which something is offered, shown, explained, etc. to others

Oxford Advanced American Dictionary



## **Discussion and Q&A Session**

**Q. The first question is that regarding the definition of Heritage Interpretation and Presentation.**

**Well, the definition of those two concepts differ by countries and it seems a bit overlapped. So, how do you think those two concepts are connected, and what is the main distinction between these?**

### **Neil Silberman**

This was a subject that when the ICOMOS committee was drafting and distributing for commenting the Interpretation and Presentation charter. This is a very important question that we considered because often, presentation and interpretation are viewed as synonyms, they mean the same thing.

We tried to make a clear distinction between them and people are working with that still even now. And the idea was that presentation is really *the presentation*: The formation of site panels, interpretive kiosks, programs that the managers or the experts associated with the site design to present the site to the public. Now, this is always an important thing because obviously, the skills of graphic designers, of academic historians, and other heritage professionals are really important to make a site look on a world standard. However, in a way, interpretation we see as an act of reflection on the past, and this can be done by anyone. In fact, it is done by everyone who visits the site. Not only those who have designed the presentation, but even the visitors who come and have to interpret for themselves what is the significance of the site. Yes, dates and famous events, and famous personalities and architectural styles are important, but there's always something underlying the importance of World Heritage and, for that matter, all significant heritage. And so, we call that "interpretation," the act of reflecting on the past. And in our age of ever greater participation, by communities, by individuals, by citizens in the public discussion of things like climate change, equality, racism, colonialism, and so forth. It's a discussion. Interpretation is a collective discussion about the significance of the heritage site. So, that's how I would separate the two, presentation is this one-way means of communication, through a variety of technologies, whereas interpretation are the mental processes by which a site becomes important, significant, and meaningful to everybody involved with it.

### **Mario Santana-Quintero**

Thank you, and I completely agree with Neil. I think that, as I was saying in my review, is that interpretation is kind of collecting all this data, right? You are collecting a lot of raw data, you are interacting, etc., and then you produce an understanding based on those facts and that data that you have, and then the presentation is that: how do you present that different level of detail? Let's say, of the site, and so on. Now I also see that there is a change, there is a gradual, different understandings of sites. I have worked in many World Heritage Sites and I have seen that the tourism has different takes on how the site is important to them, and also the community. And I think that those views sometimes are

not really reflected in the way and probably the interpretation and the presentation should be a process, a reiterated process like when you do a comprehensive conservation management plan that needs to be reviewed, and needs to be readdressed after several years to react to the situation because many years ago, we were not talking about inclusion at all. In sites, for instance, I had an opportunity to work in Petra. So, people in Petra, the communities were evacuated the case and then decide was presented for the tourist enjoyment. We won't do that today. We're discussing a completely different way. And I remember the first time I went to Petra, there was a presentation of the Nabateans' culture. So, people were dressed like Nabateans, and they were showing some of the sites and so on. Funny, it's not going to be the case now. How we present because the local, the Bedouins community that lived there made that place what it is today. So, I think that this is a process I need to be revisited, we cannot establish that interpretation and presentation is going to stay there forever, so I think that's one aspect. And then, being a technologist, I think that in the beginning, we thought presentation is only one-way. So, this is the way we're going to do it, but what about different scenarios, you know, they take of a site, of the First Nation sites in Canada, like the schools that had been discovered? Or, for instance, a pattern in buildings of Ottawa, which were also very important symbol of our national identity. For indigenous communities, it's not. It's oppression, colonialism, etc. So, how can we decolonize those buildings using actual presentation strategies? So, I think that it opens a big window of opportunities and I think that we're in the bridge of using technology in a more sensible way. If you guys agree. I don't know, Neil.

### **Neil Silberman**

Well, no. I think you're absolutely right. I think that major breakthrough and understanding that there is no single unchanging, uniform vision of the past, that in our society, with the rise of identity politics, the rise of sensitivity of local groups and so forth, it's always changing. And I look at interpretation as this ongoing public discussion about the significance of the past. When we look, for instance, at depictions of ancient Egypt, from the 19th century or the 1920s, or the 1950s, or the 1990s, or today, they're not only different because there's more information, but because the issues of importance to us today are also constantly changing as Mario mentioned, people didn't talk about inclusion. They talked about assimilation, that everyone in a particular country should learn the official story in school, and that was what was taught without any special recognition of the differences.

Same thing with sustainability. Who would have thought that environmental sustainability, social sustainability, and even sustainable economic development would be part of the conservation discussion? It was always to stop time. And I think that the big breakthrough in the whole conservation field, is no longer to say, "Okay, we're going to find the science and we're going to stop time, stop decay, stop any unorthodox understandings that are gone away." And so, World Heritage is even more important today as one of the remaining ways a global conversation can take place. And the idea is to constantly be seeking a consensus that everyone can accept but it won't be the final one. It is part of our modern relationship to the past.

**Mario Santana-Quintero**

Yes, and I just wanted to say something also about interpretation and approaches and so on. I remember many years ago I was working in Philadelphia and I went to the Eastern State Penitentiary, which is a place of harsh history. And the way that this site was promoted, it was kind of funny, throughout the city you would see, "You don't need to keep to commit a crime to come to jail. Just visit the Penitentiary and learn about it." And then the narrative of the Penitentiary became about the history of the people that were there, but also about the design and how this progressed throughout the world and it was adopted by many countries or this imprisonment and this way of approaching, the way of rehabilitating people and so on.

And I thought that was a really interesting approach on how to create something that is very, very black, and very difficult to explain, in a very easy way and very participatory way of learning. So, I think that there are many examples out there in which we can see really excellent interpretation and presentation approaches. And I think that probably one aspect for the UNESCO category-II Centre will be also to identify those examples that can be utilized and maybe those kinds of templates that maybe people could adopt in the future.

**Neil Silberman**

Yeah, I think that along with that case— I mean, the Eastern State Penitentiary is really a fascinating site. And it has spurred a whole movement in interpretation which is the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience, where we're basically— it's not any longer just commemorative of the positive events that took place in history, but also sort of deepening our understanding of some of the social processes that took place in the past and reflecting on how they can be changed. And this is a really important breakthrough in which I believe interpretation is central. It used to be considered by heritage professionals that cultural heritage was always good, and even the hashtag #Unite4Heritage that became popularized during the destruction of Palmyra and other issues didn't sufficiently recognize that heritage, as I said in my own summary, it's not a collection of significant things. It is the relationship of the present to the past. And like any kind of public discussion, there can be very negative interpretations. Interpretation isn't a single thing, and that's why I was so really impressed by some of the lectures in the 2020 series and the 2021 series that really talked about this idea of interpretation needing to be not prescribed in a certain technology, but dealing with some ethical parameters. We can see all over the world in the conflicts about taking down statues, which are what Alois Riegl called intentional monuments, but the bitter disputes over statues, there are some, let's say, "Well, we don't wanna erase our history." And in the southern United States, the idea of the confederacy and the slaveholding system is seen as a part of the history. Now, there are many people now taking part in the interpretive discussion that are saying "No, that's not right." We've got to either take away the commemoration of things that we would not do today, or widen the interpretation. And this is a really important thing, and that's why I was really interested in some of the lectures that talk about this spectrum because it's not, as Mario said,

about giving facts and figures about naked monuments. There is always a social context and in every social context, there are people that say pretty horrible, violent aggressive things. And this becomes especially important when we deal with the problem of conflict of interpretations that I hope we will have a chance to talk about.

**Public Participant's Question**

**"So, the planning component might fall in both interpretation and presentation processes?"**

**Neil Silberman**

As I mentioned a while ago, there are certain skills in interpretation that people need some professional background, in terms of graphic design, the technology behind it and so forth, that the general public is not going to have. There are obviously people that are expert in infographics, and various digital apps, and so forth. They are always going to be part of the presentation process. However, the public from a very early stage, needs to give its responses. What we need to get away from is the old system, where exhibit firms, cultural heritage site designers, who have really no connection to a community, are hired by a national government or an antiquities authority to come in and they maybe interview a few people and so forth and come up with a theme. That's how it always was done to design the interpretation. But today, bearing in mind that we want people engaged, it's very important to create an activity that involves people in identifying what part of the site speaks to you, what memories do you have, to really fill out that presentational part on a conceptual level.

And I think that it's really important, in the ICOMOS charter, we talk about involving people at the very early stage in planning. And not sort of considering public engagement that the presentation is all finished, you've got PowerPoints, you've got boards, and then a public meeting is called to see how people react to that. That's a less effective way in my own experience than in collaborating with associated communities, local communities, and even visitors through all kinds of online surveys, crowdsourcing, and so forth, to make a richer presentation whose techniques may be left to professionals, but whose concepts come from the stakeholders, all the stakeholders in the site.

**Mario Santana-Quintero**

Yeah, and also, something that I want to mention about that planning and also related to the interpretation and the presentational sites is a common belief I think of many people that World Heritage Sites need to be widely open to the public to understand and to see. And I think that if we look for instance, I have been collaborating with the Colombian Institute of Anthropology. A particular site there, there are certain areas that should not be accessible to the public because there are communities that had no contact with contemporary society. So, we have to prevent people going there, to those areas. They

need to be protected. So, there again, interpretation and presentation are not only one, it's not black and white. It's a very interesting area, and that goes more into the environmental sites. Although I am not an environmental specialist, but we know that some ecosystems should not be tampered with, so we should not be visiting them. So how can we transmit that to people that are interested in that site that those areas are off limits? And then, of course, we have the belief of indigenous communities of some areas that they don't want to share their particular interpretation and presentation of the site.

So, I think that we're coming into a lot of grounds. I think that we live in very interesting times and I really appreciate that Neil mentioned the issue of the discussion of the statues because I know that even our opinions in ICOMOS has been really diverse. I remember some of my colleagues said no, we cannot demolish the statues. They are the pieces of the history, we need to keep them. And then I said that the discussion in North America has been very strong, because we know that many communities have been excluded from the discussion and those statues are very painful for them. So, we need to listen to how those aspects are painful, and in some cases, we have to probably remove those elements. And we have to be conscious that we're removing them because we're living in new terms in life, and we want to make a society which is more inclusive and which is more fair. And I think those are important aspects also of presentation and interpretation. Anyway, that question about planning, I think that Neil really answered very well.

**Q. In case of sites that are contested in ongoing military, political, or ethnic conflicts, then would a shared interpretation model be helpful or even possible?**

**Neil Silberman**

This is a really difficult one, because, there is-- we discussed this, Mario and Soobeen and I discussed it just a while ago, and that is, there are limits to what heritage can do. In areas of open military conflict, inter-ethnic violence, it's very, very difficult to get even dialogue going when people see the reality, the significance of a particular site as being symbolic of their own ideology. It's very, very difficult. I think that even Professor Logan mentioned in 2020 that there are some places, for instance, he mentioned the example of Rwanda and memorials to the Hutu Genocide, where, to really force people together may, in fact, make the conflict worse. I'm not sure that in any case of open conflict, there is going to be some heritage tribunal that will determine that everyone observes a certain understanding. That's just not realistic. But the idea of encouraging dialogue is the important thing. Not always easy, and sometimes, heritage professionals from other parts of the world go to conflict zones, and have this vision that they're going to settle the centuries-long dispute between various groups. It's unrealistic.

So, I think that this is really a case where the World Heritage Committee has got to make it clear what the importance of the interpretation is, and this is part of the job of the new category-II

Interpretation and Presentation Centre, in which we're not so much trying to get everybody to believe to the certain thing, but there are ethical and practical parameters on what interpretation can do. Obviously. We do not want to encourage in the most technically advanced, the most beautiful presentation, racism. You know, there are plenty of people around the world that have and could make beautiful sites that show that all the problems in the world would do to a certain group within the country, or that the country was always pure until the recent immigrants came. We need to create rules for discussion in the same way that there are some principles and debate in the United Nations about how nations and communities deal with each other. So, it's a really important challenge, but we have to be realistic about how interpretation can increase the well-being of a community, increase social cohesion, lessen conflicts. These are all very grand promises that we can't always deal with. In the United States, we have this problem of the paradox of free speech. And the paradox is that even the most distasteful, disagreeable opinions are protected in the public discourse, and they have to be countered by other arguments. And this is really where I see the role of interpretation of cultural heritage sites, as a chance for people all over the world to discuss what does the past really mean to us today? And were mistakes made in the past, or blindnesses in the past, that we need to correct? But, as far as creating world peace within the next year or so, I don't think that interpretation has got the power to do that.

**Mario Santana-Quintero**

Yes, and thank you, Neil, for contributing to this question. I think that is really relevant as we see so many conflicts ongoing, even in your own country, about what happened in January in the past election, and even what is happening today in many other countries. And I completely support Neil's idea that culture by itself would not prevent, or would not be a peace resolution that will bring people together and be peaceful. I think, that an ongoing military action or political or ethnic conflicts are something that is ongoing, are something that is evolving, are something that is happening, and probably is very-- let's say we have to wait and we have to see how things evolve. That doesn't mean that we do not need to engage. We have, in ICOMOS actually, engaged with many problems and many conflicts in a soft way. So, we have met with our national committees. We have provided capacity in identifying the physical damages that are caused by a conflict, how to document those issues. And then in the future, that will be judged by people who are in the judicial field and who have the capacity to understand what actually happened. And, I think that the World Heritage Convention by itself is not strong enough to convey all these. We have other instruments like the Hague Convention and the other ones, that deal with conflict and deal with the resolution of the conflicts and then make commitments between the different parties and the stakeholders on that particular difficult situation. So, I don't think that, at this stage, it may be premature that the interpretation and presentation can be helpful. I would not rule it out, of course, but I don't think that that is something that we can do now.

Because we live in a very connected world now, we have social media, people can express freely their ideas using the internet, using the apps, etc., they can post their views, sometimes very respectful

of others. So, I also agree with Neil, that we have to have kind of rules of engagement, and I have been reading lately, how social media companies are judging the content that people post. And then again, there's another issue that is kind of critical, so who are these people to judge what I say is right or wrong? I think it's a difficult discourse. I also agree with Neil, that probably for WHIPIC it will be a great topic to talk about, not very easy to do but engaging, and I'm sure that we can get a lot of people discussing. I have been working in many conflict areas and I have to say it's been really challenging and sometimes, what you need to do is to listen rather than react, right?

### Neil Silberman

I think that's so, so true and I can remember, Mario, you were telling me about your experiences in Afghanistan. Afghanistan is a really, very difficult issue now. When the Bamiyan Buddhas were blown up, it became basically a debate within heritage professionals within ICOMOS and other professional organizations on whether those-- the huge, the monumental statues of the Buddhas in the Bamiyan valley should be physically reconstructed, whether they should be virtually reconstructed with Augmented Reality, whatever. This was an inside debate among heritage professions. Now, with the situation, with the Taliban back in control, we face the problem of, on the one hand, some sort of ethical relationship to cultural heritage, and the other, the idea of the ability or the right of every society to make its own rules. Now, the Taliban, if they send representatives to the World Heritage Committee meetings and so forth, can argue that the Bamiyan Buddhas were very dark heritage. This was an age of idolatry, and it is our tradition to eliminate that idolatry, in the same way that other people in North America or other places in the world want to eliminate the manifestations or the monuments of colonialism and racism. The idea of how we approach tolerance and mutual respect, without just letting everybody do what they want and ignoring everyone else is, I agree with Mario, wholeheartedly, this is a very important theme for the International Centre to take up.

### Mario Santana-Quintero

Yeah, and I think Neil, now you brought up Afghanistan, I remember working there a long time ago, and in 2003, when we were doing some of the recording work, initial recording work, many people said we need to reconstruct the site. And the question was always where and how do we reconstruct it? Are we reconstructing it to the period before the bombing, when they were constructed? And how much of the remains will be able to be reutilized to rebuild it? And then, when you go to the site, and you see that children have no schools, women cannot give birth because there were no hospitals, then you think, doesn't really make any sense reconstructing the Buddhas if people in the community of Bamiyan, they don't have the basic needs covered, right? So, I think that that's another aspect that, as heritage experts, we need to realize and I think it was realized. Many of my colleagues worked in Bamiyan substantially and they came to the terms with the situation and adapted the project to be more socially oriented and work on the collection of the remains and then see the future now.

Of course, we're all disappointed that this has happened, that Afghanistan seems to have gone back to that process in the past, but I think equally important and I wouldn't be 100% positive, but I think that we have an international framework. And I think that many countries want to find being recognized by the international community, maybe including the Taliban to some extent, so I think that we need to utilize those instruments, to be able that maybe people don't do what they want to do, like what Neil has said. And, these are the questions, so if we don't have a World Heritage Convention that is credible enough to persuade people not to do what they want, what is it that we're doing? And I think that's another important aspect of the World Heritage Interpretation and Presentation Centre is to have that dialogue. How do, you know, the Convention should also be an example of those aspects that you cannot do whatever you want? You have to follow these principles and these guidelines.

### Neil Silberman

Yeah, and I would add to this even a more specific interpretive or conservationist aspect. Even in the discussions about reconstruction of the Bamiyan Buddhas, just take one of many examples, we can talk about Ayodhya, we can talk about Jerusalem and so forth. Is it right to, in a sense, erase history by reconstructing the Buddhas and visually denying that the explosion ever took place? There are equal arguments that it should be, that the nation-- the destruction of the Bamiyan Buddhas is equally a part of history that we have to be aware of. And these are the kinds of discussions that need to go on, not only among heritage professionals, but among stakeholders of various kinds. And they're all very difficult questions but, as Mario and I have both said, the idea is to create the rules of engagement and to let the engagement go on because, more or less, as we look at heritage, it is the sort of the meta-understanding of history going through time. And if they, the Bamiyan Buddhas, were to be reconstructed, and there were proper scientific and scholarly judgment, in 50 years, people will say "Back in the 2020s, they were trying to deny what happened." And this is the part of the history that is a great discussion on what is the responsibility to keep everything. It's the old debate between Viollet-le-Duc and John Ruskin: Whether you go back to a golden age that is unchanging, or whether, as Ruskin suggested, that in the layers that have accumulated on a site lies its total significance. But, again, these are all discussions that I hope that we can all be involved in the activities of this Centre.

**Public Participant's Question**

**"Colonialism in interpretation is interesting. Not sure I understand the point but if a site is World Heritage, does colonialism apply if an outsider makes his or her own interpretation of a site? Every site has different meanings for different audiences, whether locals or colonizers. So, the idea of colonizing interpretation should be about adding values not erasing colonizer meanings."**

**Mario Santana-Quintero**

Well, that's a tough question. But I think that we have to go to the beginning of the World Heritage Convention, so we have the concept of outstanding universal value, like that something is unique, and belong to all of us, and this is supported by these criteria. So, we have 10 criteria from which five and a half, let's say, are cultural. And so, the World Heritage Convention is very established under that framework of the criteria, and how the criteria are to be found in the physical integrity of the site. And we talked about the authenticity and how the attributes that bring that criteria to life, etc. So, I think that in that particular aspect, when we deal with interpretation and presentation, is, if we have a cultural landscape that has been modified by the people and we have different settlers that were there. Some people that were the indigenous of that area, but then there were people that moved, invaded, etc., and all these happened. I think that, as Neil was saying, we have all these layers of history that we shouldn't be erasing, and we shouldn't be making one on top of the other. So, I think that's the kind of discourse when we talk about de-colonialism of heritages, the fact of not hiding what happened, and then let the person that accesses the presentation to make their own judgments of how they feel about. But, if we say-- I was sitting in the past in the World Heritage panel, and there was a discussion of one particular site in South America that the state party had pushed forward as the first contact of Europeans with indigenous people. And that-- it was very challenging, because, as we now see it, it's not this very soft touch of shaking hands, and exchanging; it's this idea of invading on, concept of imposing ways of living, etc. So, I think what we have to see it completely different nowadays. We cannot continue, and there are many sites that, we call it in ICOMOS, are "shared heritage." I like that word, but to what extent sometimes is actually shared? That's also a question. But I think Neil also has wide experience in the Caribbean, etc., so he can totally talk a bit about it.

**Neil Silberman**

Yeah, I think you put up another important point relating to this, that the objective of interpretation and presentation is to add new perspectives. What we don't want to get into is a polemical use of interpretation to one side or to blame a particular side. It's got to expand. There are certain things in terms of sites of conscience that virtually everybody will agree on, that genocide probably isn't good, and economic inequality, things like the Eastern State Penitentiary, the prisons, and all that. But, we're not gonna get anywhere in the interpretation discussion if it becomes antagonistic, that post-colonialism is not just blaming the colonialists for everything. As Mario mentioned, I worked a lot in

the Caribbean. And in the Caribbean, it's more of a question of enhancing the invisibilities of indigenous cultures, of Afro-Caribbean peoples, of Indo-Caribbean peoples and so forth. It's all about widening the understanding of everyone by adding information not condemning a certain party. This whole problem, here in the United States, Columbus Day, which was, growing up here, the commemoration of Christopher Columbus discovering the New World, and it became a real symbol of pride for Italian immigrants that came to the United States. Christopher Columbus was the hero of Italian-Americans. Now, of course, there's a great deal of opposition to celebrating a Columbus Day. It's been renamed in Indigenous People's Day, taking down statues and so forth. This kind of all-or-nothing interpretation is only going to make the conflicts worse, and it's something that we definitely have to think about, and it's part of the responsibility of sensitivity of interpreters. I'm always a little bit skeptical of the idea that we can come to that perfect, golden interpretation that everyone will agree with. It's more the process than the product, I have always maintained.

**Mario Santana-Quintero**

Yes, and one aspect that I wanted to include in that answer is that, for instance, I've been reading and engaging with some of my colleagues at the Conservation Institute, they have been working with the inventory of L.A. for many years with the city of L.A. And one aspect that they are launching now is a project in which they want to identify heritage in communities in L.A. that were excluded from the inventory, because the inventory was purely all these wonderful, modern architects, etc., the first Mexican establishments there in Los Angeles, the sites, but not Afro-American heritage, it was not depicted to the latest detail in the inventory. And this process has been done by also consulting with specialists on Afro-American views, because we cannot take ownership of the views of different communities. So, I think that also in the interpretative and presentation work, particularly in inventories, I think maybe engaging with this kind of expertise of this community experts will be really useful to make it more inclusive, the way that we see heritage.

**Neil Silberman**

Well, in the work that I was involved in in the Caribbean, for us, significance was the issue. Not so much in World Heritage and outstanding universal value and so forth, but the same principle applies. What is significant to people, even on a family level, even the idea of memories of childhood visits to a site, in the 1960s or 1970s are part of the heritage of the site. And it's really important, as Mario notes, that we have many, many different values, and if someone says that a place or a monument is significant, it binds a community together at whatever level, we should believe them. That's got to be taken into account and not just the criteria of architectural style, architectural uniqueness and so forth. It's really what moves people.



**Public Participant's Question**

"I believe interpretation can have impact on imagination of recipients in many ways. Then, how the subtle act of being interpreted can be observed or monitored? Isn't it necessary to see that the interpretation is on the right path for the recipient?"

**Mario Santana-Quintero**

I can take a shot at that, Neil. This is completely different. I co-supervise students that work in-- they prepare these mental maps of people utilizing energy in historic buildings, and they see how people engage with the sensors, and the thermostat, how they use it. And they do this by collecting a number of questions, and they use it in such a way to see if the person actually knows how to utilize thermostat or not. And I think that probably, this is an area that, I don't know if Neil or me can really answer, but I think that making this kind of mental maps of how the message of the interpretation has been conducted, maybe using some psychologies and so on, working with us in this type of aspects will give us better facts on how people perceive the interpretation and how they evaluate. Because I have participated in many like visits to historic sites, and then, at the end you have a survey about did I learn something, what was appealing to me. The questions are very general, but a little bit less meaningful about the message. So, I don't know, maybe Neil has also more experiences in that aspect, but I think that's another cognitive science that maybe we need to explore.

**Neil Silberman**

I completely agree. We need to get more multidisciplinary. There is the field of environmental psychology that John Urry did a lot of work. Sociologist and anthropologist named Setha Low has done a lot of work. And there are techniques for observing and recording and documenting how people relate to particular sites. But I think that, in addition, there is another very straightforward way to document what people think. And that is the whole field of what's called in anthropology, participatory action research. Whether it is something like photovoice, where people are given cameras and prompts to go out, not so much to document, but to express their opinions on what's most important in this site, what would you like tourists to see, what tourists should not see. And all the applications of crowdsourcing, and what's called User Generated Content, actually produces this. In some of our work that we've done in, that I've done in the Middle East, we've done in the Caribbean, and in other places in the United States, it's really offering people with new technologies like social media, like crowdsourcing applications, the ability to actually produce interpretation, and that can be quantified in many different ways. How many posts there are, where, what are the themes that people are interested in, so forth, how many people participate in a photovoice project. I think that the whole field of participatory action research, in which the stakeholders are co-investigators, is going to give you that empirical data on how participation can extend the numbers, the themes, the images that are presented, related to a site.

**Q. In the opening lecture of the 2020 Online Lecture Series, Neil mentioned about the need to reflect the ongoing paradigm shifts on heritage interpretation. In this year's first lecture, Mario said that heritage presentation is no longer a one-way communication. So, as you two mentioned, heritage interpretation and presentation are constantly being developed along with the time and social changes. Then, what do you think should be additionally considered and accepted in the future for a more inclusive and sustainable heritage interpretation and presentation?**

**Neil Silberman**

The more voices, the better. We cannot plan for the future. As Professor Bill Logan said in 2020, we can't even predict what people's reactions are going to be to cultural heritage sites. We have to hear it from them. And we have to move from a purely didactic approach to heritage presentation and interpretation of an official vision to more dialogue-oriented, or multilogue-oriented discussion. It's really like a discussion of human rights and other political issues today. We just have to ensure that enough people are allowed access to this and this is made possible by a variety of new technological means. Not only social media, but as I said, crowdsourcing and so forth. And this is especially important for as long as the uncertain conditions of the pandemic continue. The main channel that people are going to learn about heritage sites, and think about them, and express their artistic representations, their personal memories and so forth is going to be remote. It's going to be digital. And it's a wonderful thing that we have the technology to allow someone with an internet connection or smart phone to join the discussion.

**Mario Santana-Quintero**

Yes, I agree with Neil. I think that technologies are offering new bridges to connect. So, these bridges really need to connect more carefully, how we present the sites and how people access the sites. And one thing about technology is that we're not only providing accessibility to people that in the past, lived remotely and have never seen those sites, but also people that cannot physically access, because they have constraints that can't see and experience the sites. So actually, technology can be very helpful in that particular respect. And then, we can also find very eloquent proposals. I was reading this Washington Post article in which some tourist guides in Denmark were giving access to people to their islands by using GoPro cameras which were connected to Zoom, and then they could give a tool and interact with the people that wanted to visit the island, because nobody could go there. So that was a very interesting low-cost approach to be able to convey the message.

But I want to say something that struck me from Mike Robinson and I want to reiterate this topic about translating interpretation and presentation approaches into different cultures. Because, that's another aspect the way that we not only provide the translation as I said before, but also provide multiple ways of presenting the site to multiple cultures. Because probably, somebody from Asia visiting the site in the UK, as Mike would say, will have a different take on the things like the Iron Bridge, which

is very important for the people in the UK, means actually for the people in the rest of the world. So, I feel that's also quite interesting and then one disconnects that I have found a lot in ICOMOS and in other organizations is the fact that we mostly talk in English. And I think that that's also one aspect that is interesting. We are all talking about connections and ways to interact, I think that for Neil and me, and many of our other colleagues, it's easier because we are speaking in English, so we can convey, we can exchange, but then what happens when we have different people speaking different languages and we have to use translation? It's not an easy way. So, then again, technologies might offer some opportunities there, because you now have this app where you can talk and it can be translated, and you can communicate to others, but then again, how can we work with more-- be more inclusive with people that have different views in different languages?

And then, finally, I have to say that throughout this year, I don't know how many courses I have given, I have been teaching people in Palestine, people in Chile, people in Guatemala, or Mexico, that I've never reached in the past, and I think that also the use of technology for capacity building in particular interpretation and presentation should also be utilized a lot. We do it in the documentation field, we have developed several courses, but I think that maybe that's something that we should explore that maybe also WHIPIC can take the lead. How can we develop a number of courses, that can be delivered to those areas where people cannot probably come to Korea or elsewhere, to take a course?

### Neil Silberman

And this, especially the technological aspect, is just beginning. We can't know what the technology will be able to help us do in 10 years or whatever. I can remember a statement, a very interesting statement by a colleague of both Mario and me, his name was Professor David Arnold, who was the principal investigator of a big cultural heritage European commission project in the early part of the 21st century, and he said, "Technology is going to develop new ways of saying things that we can't imagine now." And he used the example of cinema, of movies. At the beginning, when the technology of motion pictures was developed, they did what they knew. They basically photographed a stage play in the silent movies. But in time, new language developed. Of close-ups, of pans, of all the things that we now read in films as the language of cinema. Similarly, we are just experimenting with new ways that aren't just a remote version of a tour through a heritage site. There are many things that are coming along that will create a new digital language for interpretation through sound, through art, through many things that we can't even predict.

And the key to all of this is not now deciding what the role or ethics of technology in interpretation is, but experiment, trial and error, talk to people and it will gradually develop into a very different field than it is right now. The technology and how people use it imaginatively, especially if more people are involved in that process. Someone who was born 15 years ago, who's grown up with this whole ecosystem of smartphones, digital applications, video games, are going to be talking

in different way about heritage. But, that's the part of the excitement of doing interpretation and presentation in 21st century. And I'm sure that the International Centre will play an important role in it.

### Mario Santana-Quintero

I think, and we talked about this in one of our early talks when we were preparing for this, that the Ename Charter is being very instrumental. I want to do a little bit self-advertisement of ICOMOS, because I think that conveying this number of experts to create a charter which gives principles and guidelines on how to do a particular topic in heritage conservation is really important. And probably, the charter is good for renewal, for revision, and so on; so, that might be something that could also be interesting. And I think approaching other committees that work with technology and now, of course, in the heritage sector, we have many actors of course, not only ICOMOS but many other organizations that are doing very knowledgeable work. So, probably will be interesting for WHIPIC, that will be a great initiative try to see what we can come up with some kind of revision and new documents.

# The International Centre for the Interpretation and Presentation of World Heritage Sites (WHIPIC)

under the auspices of UNESCO

The new Category 2 Centre, the International Centre for the Interpretation and Presentation of World Heritage Sites (WHIPIC), was approved to be established at the 40th session of the UNESCO General Conference in 2019. The Centre aims to contribute to cultural reconciliation, peacebuilding, and sustainable development by increasing public understanding of the values and significance of World Heritage Sites. The Centre's main functions will be research, education, training, information, and networking in the World Heritage interpretation and presentation field. The Centre will play a pivotal role in the area, actively contributing to implementing the 1972 World Heritage Convention and safeguarding peace through World Heritage Sites.

For the official establishment of the Centre, the preparatory office for the Centre was launched in May 2020. Preparing for the Centre's establishment, which will be in early 2022, the preparatory office is actively working to lay the foundation for the Centre's establishment and vitalize the World Heritage Interpretation and Presentation field.

In 2022, after its official establishment, the WHIPIC will hold a lot more insightful and inspiring projects and events in World Heritage Interpretation and Presentation. Following the 2021 Online Lecture Series, they are preparing for further educational programmes. Furthermore, the WHIPIC is planning to publish an editorial book with experts in the field for deeper understanding and research.

Please check the WHIPIC's webpage and social media channels for further information and the latest news.

- **Webpage** [unesco-whipic.org](https://unesco-whipic.org)
- **Facebook** [@unesco.whipic](https://www.facebook.com/unesco.whipic)
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