Governing Heritage and Creativity:

Frictions, Avenues, and Questions

Edited by
Florence Graezer Bideau
Peter Bille Larsen

LetteraVentidue

01 Heritage Insights

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Editors
Peter Bille Larsen, University of Geneva
and Florence Graezer Bideau, EPFL

Proofreading and Copy Editing
Jenny Bentley

Graphic Design, Cover and Inside
Thilini Perera and Twisha Mehta

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Religious shrine, Saidapet slum, Chennai, 2017. © Florence Graezer Bideau

Introduction

Pluralizing Creativities in Heritage Governance

Peter Bille Larsen, University of Geneva
Florence Graezer Bideau, EPFL

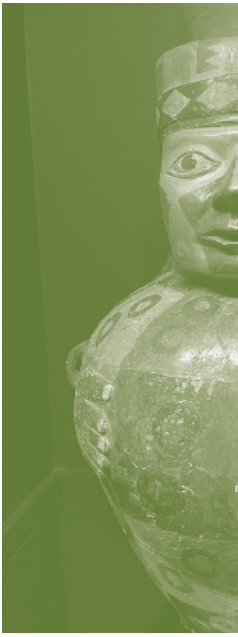
Heritage governance involves both explicit reference to creativity in certain forms as well as implicit, and less obvious, creative practices. Historically, a common trope suggests that once heritage is created, further creativity is in a certain sense excluded, stabilized, or "fixed" by designations and related management arrangements. From this perspective, heritage discourse challenges novelty and change as matters of possible transgression and destruction. Yet, from another perspective, heritage management necessarily entails addressing continuous creativity and change in multiple ways. Today, for example, the production, transformation, and commercialization of heritage and creative contents as goods or services are omnipresent. Contemporary cultural policy narratives stress the mutual benefits of reuse, adaptation, and retrofitting practice for new public and private purposes in a creative heritage economy.

More recently, creativity, or rather certain forms of it, has become a buzzword in global heritage discourse and cultural policy standards. However,

mainstream representations easily obscure the presence of other, we might say, less obvious or mundane practices of transformation and even destruction (Larsen and Graezer Bideau forthcoming).

A step back reflecting upon definitions is therefore warranted. For some creativity denotes a specific group of skills, competencies, or even individual talent. For others it involves practices tied to modernity, freedom, and economic progress. Our approach to creativity, in contrast, is *anthropological* considering it as a fundamentally social and cultural fact, rather than individual process (Hastrup 2005). In this sense, creativity covers a wide range of change and transformative processes from "destructive" creativity, over reconstruction to the reinvention of heritage *per se.*

Heritage guidance and norms rarely address the full range of diverse practices. An international workshop at the Swiss Institute in Rome with researchers and heritage practitioners co-organized with International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM) and Swiss Federal Office of Culture was instrumental in highlighting the complexity involved.



The knowledge it generated forms the basis of the present publication. The aim is to pluralize how creativity is addressed in governance by looking at a myriad of vernacular and *re*-creative practices. These are often accompanied by new questions and decision-making which rarely appear in official descriptions, norms, and even regulatory practice. Debates are far too often reduced to a dichotomy about whether to accept "creative" change framed around discursive boundaries of authenticity. This book proposes to move from a binary reading of choosing between authenticity and change towards considering the creativity and governance nexus as covering a multi-dimensional set of phenomena. This, we propose, is relevant for all types

Ancient ceramics, Pachacoma Site Museum, Peru. © Peter Bille Larsen

"The aim is to pluralize how creativity is addressed in governance by looking at a myriad of vernacular and re-creative practices. These are often accompanied by new questions and decision-making which rarely appear in official descriptions, norms, and even regulatory practice."

of heritage whether tangible and intangible or natural and cultural distinctions.

Governance, we argue, adds attention to how decisions are made about issues, values, and relationships between stakeholders. This goes beyond management structures and mechanisms raising questions from who is involved in decision-making to the potential futures of heritage practices. Indeed, new planned and unplanned creative practices are generally an essential, yet somewhat invisible, part of sustaining living heritage. What then are the governance dilemmas and questions associated with the heritage and creativity nexus?

Interrogating such practices is at once about everyday management

Artisan,Gaziantep,Turkey, 2019.
© Peter Bille Larsen

challenges of dealing with creativity and change as it raises national and global principles and local practices. We need, the many cases show us, to question who is involved in defining creativity, which values are involved in shaping creative processes, and how conflicting and uneven perspectives on creative practice are addressed in regulatory frameworks.

Beneath this neoliberal win-win tale of promoting creativity, innovation, and (heritage) entrepreneurship lies a complex set of issues. Certain creative practices are showcased and promoted, while others remain invisible and untold. Storytelling or practices of re-narrating heritage, incorporating distinct forms and practices of presentation and interpretation, can be summed up as narrative creativity. Whose narratives count, we must ask, as real, authentic, or important? New technologies, for example, are increasingly mobilized to document, share, reconstruct, and re-represent heritage. These include low and high-tech stories mobilizing Artificial Intelligence, social media, and video games. This experimentation with new narrative forms, aesthetic values, and recycled contents is visible in the displays of digital museums, virtual online spaces, and other platforms. These new forms project questions of ownership, rights, and benefits into the heart of contemporary regulatory debates.

This book seeks to identify relevant governance frictions, avenues, and questions across a selected number of critical themes and short case-study analysis. In order to unpack this complexity and enable more explicit attention to specific governance dilemmas, mechanisms, and issues, we propose a two-fold reading combining grounded insights with a typology of different forms of creativity. Authors include researchers, practitioners, and policy makers with longstanding experience with both national and international level heritage governance processes.

"There is not one kind of heritage aesthetics, anthropology insists, but multiple. Indeed, in our chapter on Asia, we develop this approach further by proposing an alternative gaze sensitive to the multiple Asian meanings of aesthetics, new areas of convergence, as well as frictions prompting the relevance of revisiting the aesthetic dimension as process in motion and articulations."

Mao statues in Huaxi, China, 2015.
© Florence Graezer Bideau

Aesthetic creativity

From the Greek word *aisthesis,* translated as sensation or perception, the common use of aesthetics draws attention to aesthetic governance of "attachment of value to the sensory experience of objects" (Sharman 1997, 178). What then are the main forms of aesthetic creativity found in the heritage area and how do they interrelate? Anthropology has long challenged the Kantian or Western elite notion of aesthetics based on valorizing beauty over material considerations. There is not one kind of heritage aesthetics, anthropology insists, but multiple. Indeed, in our chapter on Asia, we develop this approach further by proposing an alternative gaze sensitive to the multiple Asian meanings of aesthetics, new areas of convergence, as well as frictions prompting the relevance of revisiting the aesthetic dimension as process in motion and articulations. Another good example is that of historical urban landscapes with crafts and contemporary artistic centres, new architectural designs, and aesthetic reimagination (e.g., 798 in Beijing and creative clusters). Social orders are central to such local cultural norms and values as demonstrated by Bourdieu in his seminal work *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (1984).

Of particular interest are governance choices around authorship, hierarchies, and legitimacy of different aesthetic norms and values, institutionally supported forms and contents as well as subcultural, even subversive, aesthetic practices. Clearly, in today's world certain heritage aesthetics are deemed acceptable while others may be stigmatized. As Ascaniis and Cantoni argue in this volume with the case of the Convent of St. John at Müstair, clear principles of heritage interpretation are central in leveraging the power of storytelling in the presentation of heritage.

Political & policy creativity

The political uses, interests, and nation-building engagements with heritage are multiple and take place at many different scales (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983; Smith 2006). From instrumentalized heritage destruction, over the construction of national memories to the mobilization of heritage by social movements, all entail considerable political creativity. What kinds of friction, power dynamics, or tensions can be identified between local, national, and global heritage politics and policies? Such dynamics raise distinct governance challenges spanning from questions of "neutral" heritage values, the governmentalization of culture to how to reconcile wider UNESCO values with the political uses of heritage. Recent emblematic examples include heritage sites targeted by ISIS and Daech in the Middle East raising questions about the boundaries and forms of "acceptable" political creativity, spanning both homogenizing or diversification processes. The chapter by Vira Orlovska and Olesya Milovanova plunges the reader into the war in Ukraine. Beneath the effects of destruction and civilian victims, their contribution illustrates the multiple creativities involved, spanning from Russian

heritage propaganda in occupied territories towards the recreation of heritage collections and "displaced" vistas elsewhere. Similarly, Nicole Franceschini's chapter sheds light on the contested heritage politics of addressing difficult pasts in the Sud Tirol. In the context of monuments of oppression as part of imposing a national Italian identity in the city of Bolzano/Bozen, she demonstrates the creative uses of art in facilitating a new politics of meaning and identity.

Sustainability & development creativity

Creativity around key sustainability challenges is increasingly taken up – or at least considered in some – heritage initiatives. These range from addressing climate change impacts and future scenarios to immediate questions of specific socioeconomic, environmental, and material change (Labady 2022). Some initiatives are directly aimed at offering integrated sustainability solutions such as the Baukultur movement. Oliver Martin in this volume describes the potential of such a new framework as encapsulated in the Davos Declaration and the activities of the European Alliance that deals with the importance of a holistic perspective and the role of innovation in heritage conservation.

A central feature of sustainability thinking is the importance of a multi-scalar systems approach, where different dimensions are looked at in an interconnected manner. At both global and local levels, new planning methods and initiatives are seeking to rapidly adapt heritage management to deepening sustainability challenges often characterized by silo-tendencies and divided governance and management institutions (Larsen and Logan 2018). Indeed, this book opens up for a critical discussion on the role of heritage in relation to the specific conditions, stumbling blocks, and opportunities for integrated planning approaches to sustainability.

Lucio Barbera and Anna Del Monaco in this volume emphasize the crucial role of the architect's education in harnessing sustainable approaches to urban and environment planning. Their chapter also emphasizes the necessity of taking the cultural context into account in such creative design processes.

Economic & private sector creativity

The creative economy is today a major economic sector. Berlin recently announced intentions to invest a billion euro in arts and cultural sector. The convergence between heritage management and the so-called creative economy brings together both local and national authorities as well as private entrepreneurs generating new forms of heritage commodification, creative uses of building structures, and heritage repurposed for other economic uses. This repackaging of places, ideas, objects, and events for new services and commodities is particularly evident in tourism and the cultural sector. While often framed as win-win uses and mutually beneficial change, critical authors challenge dynamics of privatization, the concentration of ownership and power with the private sector trumping local heritage stewardship (Graham et al. 2000). Numerous cases come to mind such as gentrification and AirBnBtization of heritage centres in Europe. Our book reveals the tensions at multiple levels, often challenging heritage authorities and society at large to strike a balance and trade-offs and find ways of regulating and managing different kinds of uses and values. Luca Zan emphasizes the ambiguities and contradictions of the emblematic case of Venice. He contrasts the role of the Venice Biennale, private sector, and event making with questions of access and meaning around the industrial heritage of the Arsenale. Jenny Bentley and Twisha

Everyday life in Lamu World Heritage site, 2023. © Peter Bille Larsen

Mehta, in contrast, seek to mobilize heritage stewards and youth in shaping alternative grassroots-driven economic practices. The point here is that an inclusive gaze on heritage economies prompt far more governance attention towards different forms of resistance, grassroots thinking, and locally driven economic alternatives. We need to pay more attention to the stakeholder involvement in – and resistance to – economic creativity, to what shapes services, and to the shifts entailed in terms of ownership, rights, and benefits.

Material & infrastructure creativity

"Matters" of heritage creativity have important material, even infrastructural, dimensions ranging from small-scale vernacular innovations and transformations to mega-infrastructural change. The governance dilemmas of material change are often evoked in the contexts of reconstruction of heritage ranging from questions about the how, what, and where of material transformation to questions of who is involved in decision-making, how decisions are made, and what materials and repurposing is designed. Such governance questions, and the creativity involved in solving them, are often part and parcel of the invisible work undertaken by heritage managers. Valérie Magar, this volume, demonstrates the role of traditional knowledge and indigenous participation alongside innovation in such choices in Mexico experiencing holistic approach in management. At one end of the spectrum we have the constant creativity of architects, designers, artisans, and workers in remaking heritage buildings, visitor centres, and places. Local innovations and collaborative practices are often critical for heritage such as adapted conservation techniques, climate change-resilient building materials. Reconstruction of heritage following natural disasters such as the earthquake in Kathmandu, Nepal (Tiwari et al. 2017), or the destruction of Old Sanaa by heavy rains in Yemen involve creative mediations around traditional knowledge, new technologies, and changing environments. The growing impacts of climate change on World Heritage sites is a case in point, where considerable creativity is warranted. "Cultural heritage generates creativity, which in turn contributes to safeguarding cultural heritage", Georges Khawam and Rohit Jigyasu underline in their chapter about reconstruction in Mosul, Iraq.

Built heritage and everyday life,
Cajamarca Peru, 2022. © Peter Bille Larsen

At the other end of the spectrum is the wider range of entrepreneurs, investors, and local development projects transforming the physical dimension of heritage into what could be phrased as “spectacular heritage”. Notably Asia has numerous heritage sites being transformed into sites of spectacle and entertainment as Larsen and Graezer Bideau argue. While this, from one perspective, may appear as the complete remodeling of heritage, it does raise questions about the acceptability and thus the normativity of material dimensions. Regulatory frameworks

governing material and infrastructural transformation range from subsidy schemes, to forms of agency to restrictions and new policy agendas such as the Baukultur commitments described by Oliver Martin.

Spatial creativity

Creativity is rarely limited to heritage planning in isolation, but often involves wider dynamics of spatial and territorial transformations. This covers a wide range of transformations linking sites, spaces, and regions. Consider, for example, processes of urban renewal in conjunction with private investments in historical urban landscapes (Bandarin and Van Oers 2012) or that of natural heritage planning as part of wider ecosystem management approaches (Nikolova et al. 2021). Spatial design may be driven by state policies encouraging urban or regional planning, but is often also shaped by private sector pressures from real estate speculation to extractive industries. These dynamics may lead to subtle transformations of living heritage spaces, power dynamics, and sustainability conditions. Eugene Jo, this volume, explores the complexity of decision-making in the context of heritage and urbanization in Seoul. In particular, she underlines the choices and potential of strengthening impact assessments around how much, when, and whose creativity can be considered in heritage management processes. Indeed, further governance attention to spatial dynamics is critical to address dynamics of urban development, fencing off nature areas and territorial reclassification alongside population displacement, gentrification, and real estate speculation. Also, it is noteworthy how spatial creativity is equally a field of contestation and resistance. Do spatial heritage dynamics enhance, drive, or challenge processes of social exclusion, inclusion, and displacement?

Archaelogy and infrastructure, Peru.
© Peter Bille Larsen

Concluding remarks: creativity and heritage governance

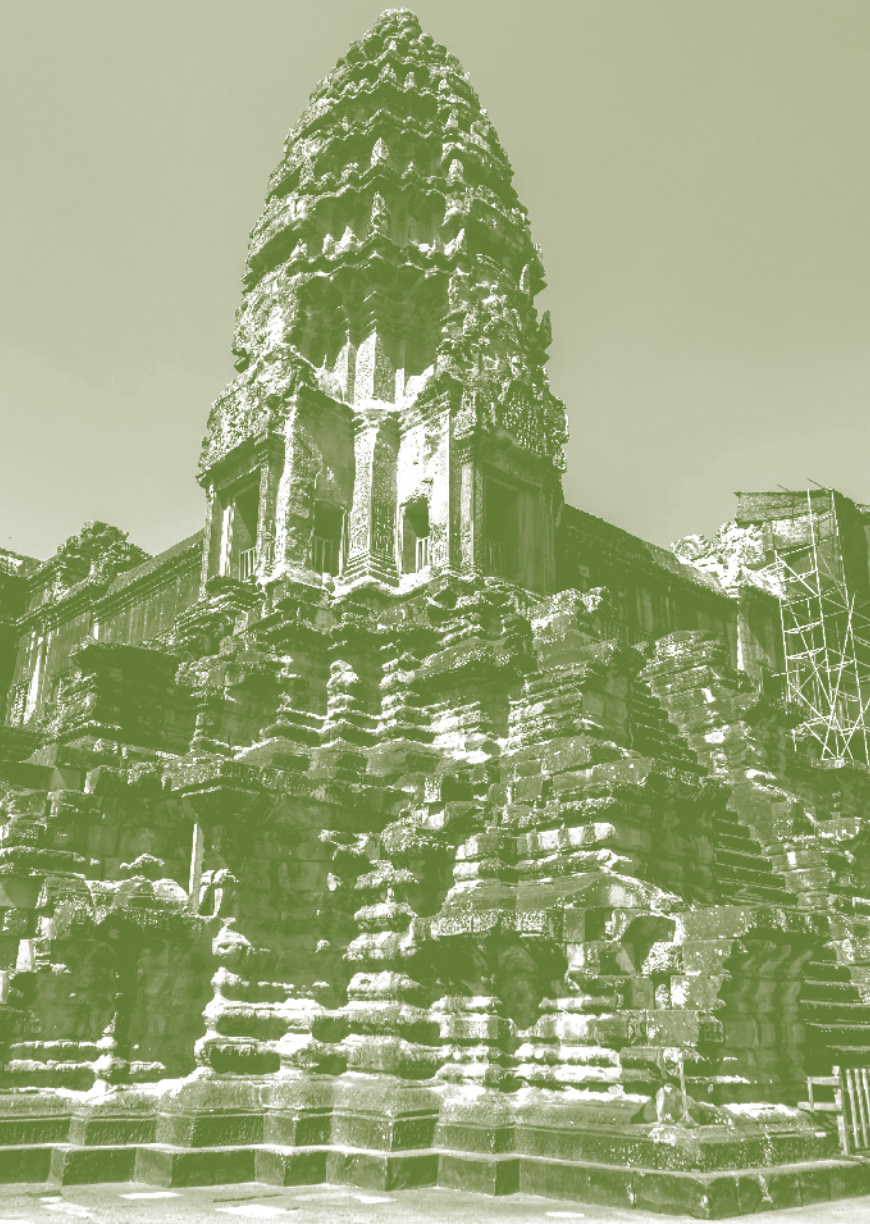
Clear attention to dilemmas and frictions around creativity and heritage governance is today warranted in heritage politics. The question is whether existing approaches and tools from regulation to impact assessments are adequate responses. If instruments from a theoretical perspective may appear as comprehensive in terms of social, economic, and environmental implications, much practice is driven by a more narrow scope shaped by silo-tendencies and longstanding

disciplinary divides. Whether concerned with solar panels in historical centres, heritage entrepreneurialism in tourism, or new aesthetics, the role of creativity needs governance attention at multiple scales. It is also true that the kinds of creativity involved in climate change adaptation, grassroots organization, or business development are often of a different nature.

As the different chapters demonstrate, these are not minor issues, but central to heritage transformation in contemporary society well-beyond a binary choice between authenticity and change. Without being exhaustive, this book underlines the importance of engaging with diverse creative dynamics in heritage governance – from aesthetics to policy and sustainability choices in future governance reform. Indeed, for each field of creative change, this book demonstrates how asking specific questions to their nature can allow for more explicit attention to a wide range of substantive creativity dilemmas that are often overlooked. The book, in this sense, offers important insights for policy-makers and individual practitioners at local, national, and international levels. ✳

Soda branding, Tel Aviv, 2023.
© Florence Graezer Bideau

Aesthetics



Angkor Wat. © Hiurich Granja on Unsplash

The Governance of Creative Heritage and Neo-Aesthetics: between Entertainment and Politics in Asia

Florence Graezer Bideau, EPFL
Peter Bille Larsen, University of Geneva

This chapter addresses what we consider as the neo-aesthetics as a distinct field of heritage practices with new forms of public display, economies of scale, and politics. Such phenomena have been particularly evident in our field engagements across Asia.

We see neo-aesthetics as part of a broader field concerned with the changing forms and practices of aesthetics in – rather than of – heritage. Instead of equating aesthetics with creativity per se, we opt for a more constructivist perspective and have selected recent practices at various scales illustrating how they are embedded in social, economic, and political processes.

Heritage studies have increasingly underlined the importance of recognizing other forms and notions of aesthetics beyond a Eurocentric perspective and its classical forms. Without seeking to essentialize Asia as a region, it is safe to acknowledge the

existence of a myriad of specific dynamics where heritage is reinvented, reworked, and transformed from subtle variations and conservatism to extreme experimentation in the fields of entertainment and politics. Making sense of such diverse prompts our academic gaze has to move beyond the histories of art, folklore, and architecture.

From one perspective, Asian approaches have historically contributed towards a global rethink of heritage. Consider the role of East Asian practices in shaping the idea of Intangible Cultural Heritage, change, and concepts of authenticity.[1] Yet, other practices common in Asia – notably in the aesthetic field have received less attention. Aesthetic vocabularies and materialities enshrining beauty, good taste, and design are, we suggest, particularly central to heritage making of recent decades in Asia.

Where austerity politics have reduced budgets for heritage in European countries such as Greece and Italy, heritage politics across Asia in turn often benefit from massive investments from both public and private sources for sites, touristic infrastructures, and changing governance practices (Leigh 2012, 308). A creative dimension is a common ingredient.

First, the emergence of creative clusters in historical urban landscapes such as Beijing illustrates the booming novelty and shared reimagining of crafts, contemporary artistic centers and new architectural designs. Second, new designs nonetheless trace paths to the past. The aesthetic style and architecture of revamping Old Beijing, for example, draws on selected aesthetic norms of the golden age of the Chinese civilization expansion (Qianlong period between 1735 and 1795), but also make use of new modernistic orders. Third, such neo-aesthetics thereby prompt particular governance challenges such as the massive demolition of traditional buildings and relocation of inner-city inhabitants (Graezer Bideau 2018).

The 798 art zone in the former military factories complex in Beijing, 2019. © Florence Graezer Bideau

Revamped Gulou Lane, Beiijng, 2018. © Florence Graezer Bideau

Zen garden of the Ryoanji Temple in Kyoto.

Neo-aesthetics of heritage and entertainment

Emblematic World Heritage sites from Southeast to East Asia from Kyoto in Japan to Angkor Wat in Cambodia to and Ha Long bay in Vietnam offer powerful examples to explore the ramifications of neo-aesthetics. These may intensify, replicate, and in a certain sense purify traditional forms and patterns. Consider the 1600 temples, shrines, and seventeen World Heritage sites often listed to profile Kyoto as a "dense" tourist destination. Zen aesthetics of transience and peacefulness are carefully curated forms of urban landscape creativity in the name of tradition that stand out as positive and attractive features of a multi-million-dollar tourism and heritage scape. Such aesthetics, however, often move beyond simply reproducing traditional practices and values. Across Asia, neo-aesthetic heritage practices blend the old with the new in sanitized imagery in a sensorial, impressionistic, and experiential aesthetics. These may easily overshadow local practices of change and expression with new forms grounded in global genres of beauty and pleasure. Just as the Japanese culture of cuteness, Kawaii, is omnipresent in the public landscape, heritage aestheticization with positive connotations is found everywhere in Asia from billboards to flight magazines.

The Vietnam Airlines flight magazine – an example among many on the Asian travel route – is not only entitled "Heritage[2]," but it also systematically curates an "appetizing" representational mix of culinary dishes, colorful dresses, and welcoming heritage landscapes. Such visual remakes by the flight and tourism industry catering to new visitors are no coincidence. This becomes particularly apparent once we look at processes of neo-aesthetics as the production of decontextualized heritage

"Aesthetic vocabularies and materialities enshrining beauty, good taste, design – are, we suggest, particularly central to heritage making of recent decades in Asia."

commodities transferable from one context to another. In this sense, neo-aesthetics are no longer tied to one location.

The Chinese reproduction of Angkor Wat in Nanning, recycled and rebuilt from Cambodia to Guangxi Province, illustrates the transferability through which an emblematic World Heritage of one country was replicated elsewhere as an entertainment site as part of a China-ASEAN exchange. In similar terms, multiple sites across Asia are Disneyfied, recontextualized, or elsewise peppered with new aesthetics in a drive towards mass tourism circuits, display, and entertainment consumption. This is far from a superficial process.

Whereas the limestone karst isles spread out across the Ha Long Bay in Vietnam continue to convey an emblematic imagery of timeless Vietnam and harmony, the coastline and demographic make-up have over the last decades been massively transformed in the production of an entertainment landscape and machinery. On the one hand, the local fishing population that used to inhabit and use the Bay seascape have been sedentarized and excluded from the heritage scenery. On the other hand, a new privatized tourism and entertainment industry has become the dominant force shaping the distinct heritage economy (Larsen et al. 2019).

The aesthetic turn involves a subtle move from ideologies of materialism, technology, and developmentalism as normative framework towards aesthetics as value and a source of pride. Paradoxically, such neo-aesthetics involve deepening reified and often stereotypical images of Asia, ethnic identities, and cultural practices. Whereas this may appear fairly innocent as part of the competitive tourism gaze, it nonetheless raises the issues of new forms of orientalism (Saïd 1978).

Politicized aesthetics

The aesthetic turn is arguably intimately connected to the political context of nation state building, cultural diplomacy, and regional politics in Asia. Heritage is frequently mobilized as a vehicle for reinventing tradition and the past in contemporary relations. From this perspective, heritage aesthetics convey clear political signals from internal politics to international relations. The emblematic case of World Heritage inscription of Preah Vihear in Cambodia in 2008 leading to international conflict with Thailand revealed the underlying tensions. From a slightly different perspective, when Angkor Wat was reproduced as an entertainment complex in Guangxi, it created strong reactions from Cambodians fearing

Fantawild Disney Castle Tianjin, China, 2018. © Jeff Donley courtesy Flickr

"The aesthetic turn involves a subtle move from ideologies of materialism, technology and developmentalism as normative framework towards aesthetics as value and a source of pride."

cultural appropriation. Geopolitics are never far away in the interpretation of heritage.

The valorization of heritage aesthetics is now a prominent feature of Asian politics not least driven by the aspiration to demarcate nation state roots, identity processes, and boundaries at several scales. An example of such heritage politics diplomacy (Winter 2016) is that of how the "One Belt, One Road" initiative is not only one of infrastructure but has been accompanied by highlighting common heritage and linking transnational legacies as a kind of soft power. In Vietnam, the inscription of the Imperial Citadel of Thang Long in Hanoi in 2010 was not only a matter of its Outstanding Universal Values. It coincided with the 1000-year anniversary of the capital, juxtaposing global recognition of heritage with that of national Viet independence traced back to the Ly Dynasty.[3]

Such political use of heritage is inevitably selective. "Red tourism" in China is a good example. Upon the death of Mao Zedong, red nostalgia tourism grew massively alongside the promotion of significant historical revolutionary sites promoted by the Party, such as Shaoshan, Mao's birthplace (Wall and Zhao 2017). This communist heritage features an open-air memorial museum, a huge legacy show, and the production of souvenirs from statues to revolutionary uniforms. Such official aesthetics grounded in propaganda, diplomacy, and authorized cultural politics can be contrasted with heritage claims as alternative identity politics. Upon the World Heritage listing of the Meiji industrial revolution sites in Japan, Korea and China challenged the promoted value narratives for the unrecognized legacies of exclusion and forced labour (Larsen and Buckley 2018). In India, the preservation of historical buildings has been closely tied to nation building raising multiple questions in a country shaped by cultural diversity, caste inequalities, and colonial legacies (Sengupta 2018). Indeed, across Asia, religious, ethnic, and gender minorities may opt for emancipatory heritage

Ha Long city, Vietnam.
© Peter Bille Larsen

politics within the cracks of official narratives. Among the Bissu in Indonesia, for example, transgender Asians claim legitimacy and challenge transphobia through connections with ancestral rituals and forms of gender plurality and identity (Graham Davies 2018).

Concluding remarks: governance of aesthetic creativity

Asia as a giant heritage laboratory reveals multiple forms of aestheticization, beautification, and idealization joining longstanding traditions with tourism

commodification and national narratives in a constantly evolving experiential heritage realm. Indeed, the neo-aesthetics observed span both practices of entertainment and politics revealing highly creative and flexible forms of cultural entrepreneurialism and entrenched politics that shape aesthetic expressions. This raises several governance challenges. On the one hand, heritage commodity aesthetics and entrepreneurialism prompt questions about the value, control, and benefits in an ever-growing economy of new products, experiences, and exchange. Such questions, frictions, and tensions are particularly clear in the transformations of the tourism economy and heritage stewardship.

On the other hand, the central role of politics in shaping aesthetics raises questions about governing diversity, identity differences, and in/exclusive politics. Heritage aesthetics are, in this sense, vehicles of personhood as well as collective subjectivities tying into imaginaries of the nation, citizenship, and social conflict. We call for further attention to the forms, authorship, and practices of creativity emerging from both within as well as outside authorized heritage discourse and regulatory frameworks. Considering the thriving economies and contentious identity politics involved, this is not a luxury. In fact, heritage governance is part and parcel of how pasts, present, and futures are reimagined and materialized. ✳

Archaeological reconstruction of the eight major construction phases of the Convent of Müstair over the course of 1200 years. Each phase is represented with a different color. Drawing: Büro Sennhauser, Bad Zurzach

Governing Narrative and Representational Creativity to Communicate Heritage Sites

The Case of the Benedictine Convent of St.john in Müstair, Switzerland

Silvia De Ascaniis and Lorenzo Cantoni
Università della Svizzera italiana – USI, Lugano, Switzerland

The process of inscription of natural and cultural sites in the UNESCO World Heritage (WH) list is mainly based on the recognition of their Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), that is those cultural and/or natural characteristics defined so exceptional as to transcend national boundaries and to be of common importance for present and future generations of all humanity. The OUV is often the main argument used to represent the significance of the site. Two more aspects, though, should be considered when communicating a site: on the one side, the needs and characteristics of the intended audience; on the other side, those elements of the site in addition to its OUV, that make it the testimony of a time, a culture, and a place. Here is where narrative and representational creativity comes into play. This type of creativity is referred to as the ability to communicate the significance of a site in a way that is valuable to the audience, both because it is tailored to it and because it reveals different facets of the site. As with any other form of creativity, though, it needs to be governed that is to follow some principles to

Figure 1: The Convent of St. John in Müstair. © Foundation Pro Kloster St. Johann at Müstair, photograph by Mayk Wendt

avoid confusion and communication failures.

In this chapter, a case is presented of a project of science communication realized for the Benedictine Convent of St. John in Müstair that was inscribed in the UNESCO WH list in 1987. The introduced intervention helps to discuss some principles useful to govern representational and narrative creativity.

A heritage site between culture, art, and science

Müstair is the easternmost village in Switzerland, south of the Alps. The valley where it is located– Val Müstair – opens towards South Tyrol (Italy). Legend has it that Charlemagne was travelling over the Umbrail Pass when he was caught in a snowstorm. Surviving the storm unharmed, in gratitude, he founded the Convent of St. John, around 775 AD (Figure 1).

The village and the valley take their name from the Convent. Müstair is the Romansh equivalent of "minster" in English, and both words correspond to the Latin *monasterium* or monastery. Since its foundation, the convent has always been inhabited. Today, a community of nuns continues to live in accordance with the monastic rule of St. Benedict, following the motto *ora et labora et lege* (tr. pray and work and study). The place attracts tourists, especially in summer, who appreciate both the artistic and cultural richness of the building as well as the surrounding natural landscape. The convent is, indeed, much more than a monumental property; it is a living cultural treasure. It has been inscribed on the UNESCO WH list according to the main criterion that "the conventual ensemble is one of the most coherent architectural works of the Carolingian period and High Middle Ages, with the most extensive cycle of known paintings for the first half of the ninth century" (UNESCO 2022). The property comprises the Carolingian conventual church, the Saint Cross church, the residential tower of the Abbess from Planta, and the ancient residence of the bishop, including two rectangular courtyards. The site reflects both the history of its construction and the political and socioeconomic relations in this region and throughout Europe over more than 1200 years. The oldest part of the monumental complex was followed by at least eight major

construction phases and each age has left its traces in the materials, demonstrating the continued importance of the site. Systematic restoration and conservation interventions guarantee the preservation of the site.

Governance issues at the Convent of St. John

Several governance challenges were raised over time because of the increasing recognition of the Convent's cultural and social relevance, that brought about also an increase in responsibilities for its maintenance and accessibility.

The considerable historical and cultural importance of the Carolingian and Romanesque wall paintings in the Convent church was brought to light thanks to research works carried out in the mid-1920s. In 1969, the Foundation Pro Kloster St. Johann in Müstair was set up with the main goal of securing public or private funds or donations for the professional restoration and purposeful renovation of the Convent complex. Today, a significant proportion of funding comes from private sources and from activities done within the Convent community of nuns, like a postcard campaign and selling of handmade products in the Convent shop. The Foundation is very careful to ensure that life in the Convent is respected, which is indeed the main challenge in terms of governance because the Convent routine sometimes conflicts with the needs and behaviour of other people entering the Convent for different reasons, like visitors, scientists, and art conservators. The Foundation also works in close collaboration with national and local tourism institutions, both for promoting the site and for managing visitors.

Since the Convent constitutes an incredible treasure for scholars in different fields as well as for artists, coordination work is needed to ensure that all these

categories of people have access to the site for research reasons. To do this, the Foundation works in close collaboration with the church authorities, such as the diocesan office in Chur, universities, and other research institutions, as well as with federal, cantonal, regional, and local authorities. After the Convent was nominated as WH Site, and the Val Müstair was recognized by UNESCO as a biosphere reserve (in 2010), other stakeholders joined the governance landscape, such as other UNESCO sites – especially in Switzerland – and UNESCO-related bodies at the national and international levels.

The Convent of St. John and the communication of science

The extensive remains of the Carolingian monastery within the Convent complex, together with the Middle Age and Baroque interiors, foster continuous archaeological excavations and studies in different fields – e.g., history, geology, material and construction science – nurturing exchanges among scientists. The results of such studies, however, are mostly only accessible to scholars of the disciplines involved, as knowledge of the language and methods of those disciplines is required to understand them. This is a pity if one considers the legacy of the Convent and the opportunity it gives to enter a time and a culture, that have shaped the present. In this respect, *the communication of science* represents a key activity to open a gateway for lay people to understand the results of scientific studies, so to allow them to access and enjoy new knowledge, and to appreciate more the place they live or are visiting.

Therefore, between 2022 and 2023, an intervention regarding the communication of science was realized, with the goal of

conveying the results of a scientific study conducted between 2017 and 2020 by a multidisciplinary team of experts. They had studied a selection of the 5,000 mortar pieces (Figure 2) collected over more than fifty years of archaeological excavations at the Convent of St. John. Their main aim was to retrace its construction phases as well as to understand the evolution of building technologies and methods over time.

The reconstruction of past events and practices done on the basis of archaeological and historical documents is provisional and is influenced by several variables; it is the result of inductive reasoning rather than an Aristotelian deduction. In this process, different interpretative frameworks could be considered. The reconstruction of the past is fraught with difficulties, and it is more aptly described as a "construction" than as a "re-construction". The information gathered during the study on the mortar pieces coming from Müstair, along with the research method adopted, is a perfect case study to open a dialogue between the public and researchers on several important and interconnected issues. In particular: i) the archaeological debate and the different possible interpretations of material culture; ii) the medieval construction site, considering the technical skills and the enormous resources needed to create richly decorated buildings; iii) the contribution of natural and material sciences to complement the cultural context of the antiquity. The transmission of these messages can stimulate non-experts to acquire a different point of view than the traditional art-historical reading of the past, igniting their curiosity and fostering a new more comprehensive reading of current reality.

Providing access to the results of the above-mentioned study gave the opportunity both to visitors of the Convent and to other public and private stakeholders to develop a new, creative, and unexpected representation of the Convent and its history, and to

understand its value and uniqueness beyond the OUV.[1] The creative strategy chosen to take on this challenge, was to realize an itinerant interactive exhibition that told the life of a mortar piece, starting from its geological formation to its use as building material. The exhibition, displayed in the museum of the Convent of St. John, opened to the public on June 10, 2023. Then, from May to November

Figure 2: Examples of mortar samples from the archaeological excavations at Müstair. © the authors

2024, the Castelgrande in Bellinzona, also a World Heritage Site, will host the exhibition. The two UNESCO sites share several similarities in terms of the raw materials they were built with, and they bear witness to a common past and cultural identity.

Different presentation methods have been employed to connect with the audience, following principles of *heritage interpretation* and leveraging on the power of *storytelling*. Heritage interpretation is the art of representing heritage in a creative yet structured way so that it is easily understood and appreciated by the audience. The founding father of the discipline, Freeman Tilden, conceptualized heritage interpretation as both an art and a science (Tilden 1977). It is an art because an engaging and truthful interpretation has to reveal the "soul" of the site, to show its beauty, and convey a sense of the time and culture that created it. It is a science because interpretation must follow some communication principles to be affective and to guide people to understand the value of a site.

Storytelling is an integral part of heritage interpretation. Stories, in fact, have several characteristics that make them a successful communication tool. They give a frame to events, establish causal links between them, appeal to the imagination, and create emotional connections (Joubert et al. 2019). Stories reflect the way our mind processes information, which is not just storing facts, figures, and experiences, but rather creating relationships with other pieces of information and familiar narratives in its memory. Narratives might help people to make sense of distant science topics, to understand processes, and recall information (Dahlstrom 2014).

In the next section, the conceptualization and realization of the exhibition are described, showing how the principles of heritage interpretation and the techniques provided by storytelling helped to govern narrative and representational creativity.

Some principles to govern narrative and representational creativity

First, interpretation has *to relate* what is being displayed or described to something within the personality or experience of the visitors, since it is hard for people to understand something that is outside of their experience or not relevant to them. Hence, there is the need to build bridges between what people/visitors already know and new information. Therefore, a clear structure is required to make the content easier to understand and remember. The exhibition about the Convent of Müstair addresses two main publics: a) secondary- and high-school students; b) cultural and heritage tourists. It relates to the experience of students as a complement to a variety of disciplines that they learn in secondary, high, and vocational schools. As for the teaching of history, it gives new insights into the Middle Ages, challenging the idea of a "dark" period; as for the teaching of geography, it points out territorial similarities and helps to understand the movements of people across Switzerland and Europe over time; as for the STEM (i.e. Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) education curriculum, it allows appreciating the properties of natural materials and of how technology can create new objects by combing them; it helps to discover ancient construction methods that shed light on modern building techniques (Figure 3); as for human sciences, it raises awareness on the significance of heritage for cultural identity and human development. The exhibition, then, fully integrates with the experience of tourists visiting the Convent, the village, and the valley of Müstair, since it helps them to appreciate the site, which is a treasure of art and architecture, discover the relations it has with other

Figure 3: Panels representing Medieval builders and buildings, from original images in Medieval treatises. © the authors

Swiss heritage sites, learn about the work of archaeologists and geologists (Figure 4), and even experience science themselves.

The second principle of an effective heritage interpretation is *revelation*. It means giving new insights into what makes a place special, jolting people into a new understanding of what they see and giving them a deeper sense of the place. Such new understanding might be simple ideas or insights that visitors will remember as part of their heritage experience. According to Freeman Tilden, interpretation is about revealing beauty and wonder, starting from the information. In the exhibition, a deeper sense of the Convent of St. John is suggested by revealing the life of mortar pieces that constitute its limbs. The visitor is guided to discover the journey of a "humble"

Figure 4: Tools used by archaeologists to excavate and document remnants. © the authors

mortar piece (Figure 5) that starts in the world of geology with a marriage between lime and sand (Figure 6), then enters that of technology, passing through the teeth of a mixer, to end up in the world of art, shaped into magnificent buildings thanks to the creative genius of Medieval architects, artists, and artisans. The story is told using theatrical techniques such as lighting and voice-over and is divided into acts (concretely, each act is represented in a room of the museum), each one leaving the spectator with a feeling of anticipation for the next one. The choice of the places where the exhibition is (and will be) displayed contributes to creating the *sense of place* and to adding a tangible understanding of the intertwined levels of contents being communicated – i.e., the construction story of the Convent, its relationship with the territory

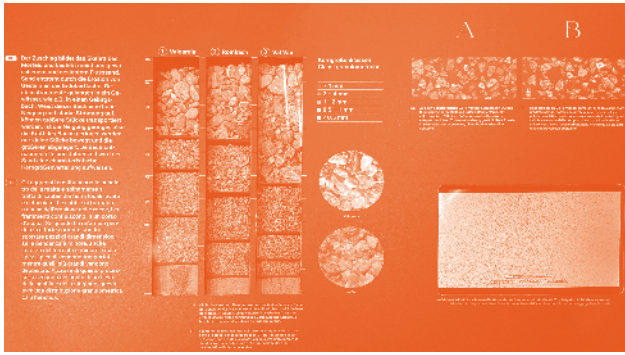
Figure 5: A “humble” mortar piece (on a podium) is the main actor in the story told in the exhibition. © the authors

Figure 6: Different types of sand used to create mortar to build the Convent of St. John. © the authors

and its culture, as well as the scientific method of investigation. After the exhibition is over, the materials prepared for practical workshops will be left to the host museum to integrate them in existing educational projects. In addition, digital content developed for the interactive exhibition will be collected in a dedicated website, so to ensure access and sustainability over time.

Finally, heritage interpretation should *provoke* new ideas and open up further discussions, while information, as such, just gives facts. This fosters the visitors’ creativity,

as they can leverage the suggested ideas to develop their own. The exhibition about the Convent of Müstair aims to provoke its public by leveraging *transmedia storytelling*, which is an emerging storytelling technique that uses multiple media simultaneously – i.e., digital media, legacy media, and audience participation – to better tell a single, complex story and engage visitors with it (Moloney and Unger 2014). Different media are combined in a narrative that generates feelings and challenges visitors to find their answers to scientific dilemmas. The investigation



processes that scientists went through when analysing the mortar pieces, are illustrated by videos of scientists telling about their work and the method they followed to obtain certain interpretations of their findings (Figure 7), in combination with activities where visitors themselves need to decide for one or another hypothesis. For instance, to decide where the components of a piece of mortar come from and with which technique they were mixed together, one needs to know both the characteristics of lime and sand and the functioning of the ancient mortar mixer. To represent such an issue, visitors first listen to scientists telling the stories of lime and sand, they then see a virtual reconstruction of a mortar mixer and are finally asked to analyse a piece of mortar in a microscope, to recognize its different elements, and to decide about their provenance (Figure 8).

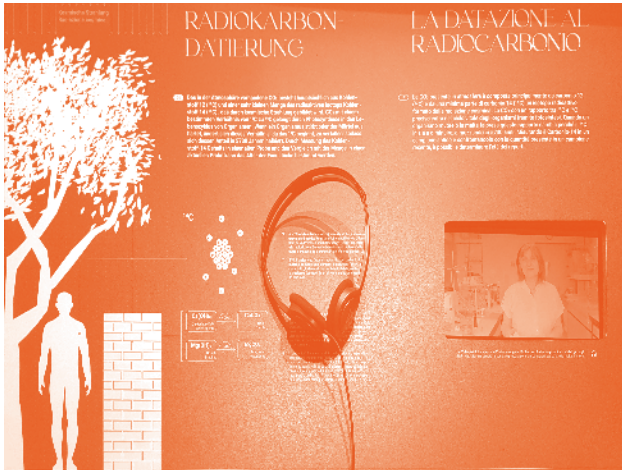


Figure 7: A scientist explains the technique of radiocarbon dating. © the authors

The Convent's construction phases are represented by a model placed on a big table: starting from the original Carolingian building, visitors can identify the parts of the Convent corresponding to each construction phase (Figure 9). To give the idea that reconstructing this complex story is not easy and that researchers try to fill in the gaps by making hypotheses, visitors are asked to complete a puzzle with missing pieces. Digital media also help to give an idea of those "missing pieces" that cannot be found anymore, like the medieval mortar mixer. Archaeological remains of five mortar mixers have been found in the Müstair area; this finding testifies to a significant mechanization of mortar production in the Carolingian and Ottonian periods, but since they are remnants, no one can precisely say how they looked like and worked. A 3D reconstruction based on one of the main scientists' hypotheses shows a mortar mixer in motion, also allowing visitors to directly take some actions. Finally, the sense of place is communicated by showcasing tangible objects, such as ancient documents and construction tools, images depicting religious communities living in the convent and local people working in the village.

Conclusion

Narrative and representational creativity related to heritage refers to the ability to communicate its unique characteristics and significance, so to make it more accessible to and valued by visitors and other stakeholders. It is a communication activity that, like any other form of creativity, needs to be governed to be effective. In this chapter, we argued that the discipline of heritage interpretation and the techniques of storytelling can provide some principles to govern narrative and representational creativity. To make our argument, we presented the case of the cultural heritage site of the Convent of St. John at Müstair, elaborating on how such principles guided an intervention of communication on the site. Representational and narrative creativity was especially challenged by the story one wanted to tell about the Convent, which is not only about its outstanding universal value. It is a story of science, capable of giving a voice to the walls, taking the listener back in time and accompanying him through the mountains and rivers of the Müstair valley. This story was told through an exhibition that was displayed inside the Convent and showed how a well-governed narrative and representational creativity are of fundamental importance to mould new interpretations of heritage, putting it in connection with different publics and transforming a visit into an enriching experience.

Knowledge derived from scientific investigations on heritage sites needs, on the one hand, representational and narrative creativity to be communicated, so that non-experts have access to it and can benefit from its findings. It is, on the other hand, itself a driver of representational creativity, since it opens new understandings of the site, suggesting new narratives as well as new interpretive perspectives. In the case at hand, knowledge of the construction history and evolution of the Convent reveals

"To give the idea that reconstructing this complex story is not easy and that researchers try to fill in the gaps by making hypotheses, visitors are asked to complete a puzzle with missing pieces."

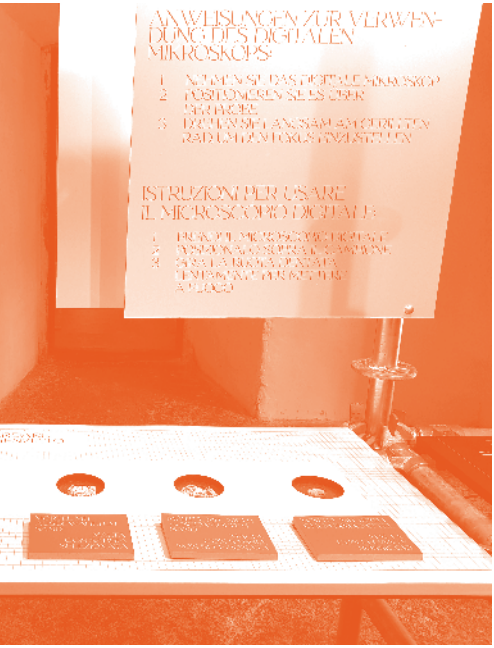


Figure 8: Different mortar fragments made available to be analysed with a microscope. © the authors

the technical competencies and artistic skills of the human communities that built it, the use they made of it, and the value and significance they ascribed to it.

In the field of heritage, science communication is inherently bound to preservation and sustainability, since to create and preserve cultural and natural heritage, technical knowledge and specific competencies are needed, which are not within the reach of all people but should be acknowledged to be valued (NIKE 2021).

Digital media play a key role in each phase of this endeavour, offering new communication affordances and amplifying messages of cultural sustainability, and promoting awareness of the timeless scientific and cultural value of our common heritage (De Ascaniis and Cantoni 2022). ✳

Political & Policy Creativity

Inscription on the frontispiece of the Victory Monument in Bolzano/ Bozen. © Nicole Franceschini

Rethinking Monuments of Oppression: the Role of Art in the Process of Historicization of Monuments

The Case of the Victory Monument in Bolzano/Bozen

Nicole Franceschini, Independent Researcher

The first half of the 20th century was a time of profound changes in Europe and all around the world. With the unfolding of two world wars and the rise of far-right nationalist dictatorships – National Socialism in Germany and fascism in Italy – the city of Bolzano/Bozen in the small alpine region of what today is Trentino-Alto Adige/Südtirol figured prominently in Mussolini's fascist and nationalist propaganda in Italy. This short chapter reflects on the forced "Italianization" process during the fascist occupation of South Tyrol and the role art can play in communicating complex pasts and narratives of oppression.

The city of Bolzano/Bozen is today the chief municipality of the Italian Autonomous Province of Bolzano/Bozen with multiple identities mostly represented by the presence of German-, Italian- and Ladin-speaking communities. The city's history and heritage is deeply connected with the Tyrolean and later Austrian-Hungarian Empire.

In November 1918, after the signing of the Armistice of *Villa Giusti,*[1] the Austrian-Hungary Empire was officially dismantled.

In 1920, the provinces of Trento and Bolzano/Bozen became part of Italy. To affirm the new Italian identity of South Tyrol, the Italian Prime Minister Benito Mussolini enacted a forced italianization programme that included "italianizing" German names and last names; the renaming of streets and public spaces, the closure of Tyrolean associations and institutions as well as the relocation of immigrants from other Italian region with the aim to outnumber the local German-speaking community within the region. In an effort to erase its Austrian past, the fascist regime also modified the coat of arms of the city of Bolzano/Bozen, because its colours directly indicated the city's connection with Austria.

In this effort, heritage and monuments were instrumentalized and art became the means to establish a new history and empower the domination of the new Italian identity in the region. This process included the removal of existing monuments connected to the Habsburg monarchy and the implementation of a series of architectural and urban projects, with the intention to memorialize Italy's victory in World War I and the rise of fascism and thereby to forcefully cut ties with the city's Germanic past.

Over the past decades, the current Autonomous Province of Bolzano/Bozen with its heritage, cultural, and political institutions has debated how to deal with this complex past. The large monuments created during this fascist "italianization" drive had fundamentally changed its cityscape. Through the "historicization" of these monuments, the Province and the Municipality of Bolzano/Bozen have begun a process of weakening their symbolism and meanings with a view to limit the divisive power held by these monuments (di Michele 2020). This chapter highlights these developments with regard to the Victory Monument, one of the most significant representations of the memorialization process employed by the Fascist Regime in Italy.

An overview of the history of the Victory Monument

The Victory Monument in Bolzano/Bozen was built between 1926 and 1929 by the architect Marcello Piacentini, one of the Regime's most successful architects. The Victory Monument replaced the incomplete monument dedicated to the Kaiserjäger[2], the Tyrolean rifle infantry regiment, commissioned by the administration of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire after the Battle of Caporetto to commemorate the rifle regiments that lost their lives in World War I. Originally, the plan was for the fascist monument to memorialize Cesare Battisti, an irredentist from the nearby town of Trento who was executed by the Empire in 1916. However, the wife of Battisti strongly opposed his image being used for fascist propaganda. Thus, Mussolini decided to dedicate the monuments to the Italian soldiers who died during WWI. symbolically referred to these as "martyrs". Its official inauguration in 1928 on the anniversary of Battisti's execution saw King Victor Emmanuel II and other high-ranking representatives of the fascist government in attendance, highlighting the importance given to this monument. Subsequently, the monument became a stronghold of Mussolini's fascist propaganda campaign in South Tyrol with the aim to establish the forced dominance of Italian history and culture over the regions' Austrian-Hungarian past and its strong connections to the German-speaking world.

The architectural language of the Victory Monument is strongly based on architectural elements of ancient Rome with the addition of symbols of the Fascist regime. The external architectural features of the monument remember both Roman temples and victory arches with columns resembling the form of a *fasces lictoriæ* (in Italian *"fascio littorio"*), a bundle of wood with an axe. This emblem with

View of the eastern side of the Victory Monument from *Freiheitsstraße* (*Corso della Libertà* in Italian, *Freedom Street* in English). © Nicole Franceschini

Etruscan origin was the source of the National Fascist Party's name (in Italian *"Partito Nazionale Fascista"*, the term Fascism directly references the *"fascio"*) and the symbol of the regime. Furthermore, the monument was built on a raised platform made of five marble steps, thereby elevated and visible from all around the city of Bolzano/Bozen, and a crypt located in the lower part of the monument. The architectural style of the monument enhanced its role in representing fascism with references to ancient Roman architectural elements and imperialist symbolism, strongly recalling the martial tradition of the Roman empire as well as Roman temples.

Pietro Fedele – at that time Minister of Public Education – requested an epigraphic inscription in Latin to be engraved at the top of the monument's façade. It reads "HIC PATRIAE FINES SISTE SIGNA/HINC CETEROS EXCOLVIMVS LINGVA LEGIBVS ARTIBVS" ("Here are the borders of the Fatherland. Raise the banners. From here we educated the others in the language, the law, and the arts"), buttressing the Italianization process as an effort of civilizing local communities and the prevailing of Italian culture. The use of Latin has been instrumental in delivering fascist messages. The language was associated with ancient Roman history that the fascist regime revised and abused to legitimize its existence. Roman symbolism, elements, and heritage became influential in establishing a system of propaganda based on the reinterpretation of a glorious and shared Roman past.

After the monument was damaged in WWII and the fascist government fell, it was restored by the First Italian Republic. he Italian Republic perpetrated the use of oppressive symbolism and processes in South Tyrol to underline the dominant Italian narrative and the belonging of the region to Italy. A second major restoration campaign was later carried out by the Superintendence for Cultural Heritage of Verona in the early 2000s.

Since the 1960s, the monument has been at the centre of discussions between politicians, heritage practitioners, academics, and the wider society. The monument has regularly been targeted by political extremist groups both on the side of Italian far-right parties and the South Tyrolean terrorist group *Befreiungsausschuss Südtirol* (in English, the South Tyrolean Liberation Committee), who attempted to bomb the monument in two separate occasions, in 1961 and 1978. In response to the discontents of the post-war period, in 1977, the members of several political parties[3] proposed a law for the removal of fascist buildings and constructions from the city of Bolzano, but the proposal was not taken up.

"The protests highlighted once more the vital role the Victory Monument played in the society of Bolzano/Bozen and its imagined pasts and futures."

Exhibition space inside the base of the Victory Monument near the crypt.
© Nicole Franceschini

Historicizing a monument

As the conversation around the monument and the presence of fascist symbols continued and in the early 2000s, the Province of Bolzano/Bozen began the process of finding a solution for the Victory Monument. Aim was to ensure that its role in the city is contextualized rather than instrumentalized. A first step taken was to rename the square from "Victory square" (Siegesplatz) to "Peace square" (Friedensplatz). However, the name was

Detail of the mural painting in the crypt of the Victory Monument.
© Nicole Franceschini

reverted back a year later due to complaints from Italian-speaking residents that led to a referendum during which the majority of over sixty percent of the registered votes were in favour of keeping its original name. Between 2001 and 2005 commemorative plates were placed to begin a process of contextualizing the monument, which led to a series of demonstrations from Italian far-right parties and groups as well as South Tyrolean parties. The protests highlighted

once more the role the Victory Monument as a landmark of identity for the local Italian-speaking population and the role it continued to play in the still divided society of Bolzano/Bozen and its imagined pasts and futures.

In 2011, the Historic Archive of the City of Bolzano/Bozen began advocating for a process of "historicization" to depower the monument. Crucially, this approach looked at ways of using the monument as a more neutral place for exchange and mutual understanding as well as for remembering complex pasts and particularly the times of fascist and the Nazi[4] dictatorship in the city. Their proposal was initially met with much disappointment from some cultural heritage specialists and institutions but it was later accepted by the Ministry of Culture. In cooperation with a group of Italian- and German-speaking historians a Monument Commission was established with the aim of finding ways to communicate the violence of monuments of oppression with specific reference to the Victory Monument.

As a result, in 2014, the Historic Archive opened the permanent exhibition "BZ '18–'45. One monument, one city, two dictatorships".[5] The concept of the exhibition divided the space into three narrative strands (gruppe gut gestaltung 2014) showcasing the history of the Victory Monument and the city of Bolzano/Bolzen from the end of WWI to modern day. Lastly, four corner rooms with an audio-visual installation focused on explaining the project behind the "historicization" process posing the question "What is a monument?" to investigate the role of monuments in space and time.

The corner rooms are instrumental in the process of "historicization" of the space by focusing on four key themes.

> The first corner room begins with the monument to the Kaiserjäger (Austrian mountain troops) and presents and queries comparisons

> of contemporary avant-garde ideas of memorial architecture. Individual aspects of the Monument to Victory are analyzed in the second corner room, where the ABC of the monument is declined. The third corner room concentrates on the life and work of Marcello Piacentini, the architect and a personal friend of the Duce. The fourth room addresses the present of the Monument to Victory and prompts visitors to participate in the debate surrounding the monument itself. (gruppe gut gestaltung 2014, 10)

On the other hand, key ceremonial spaces such as the atrium and the crypt have been the focus of minimal intervention with light and sound installations with words typical of dictators projected in the atrium on the music along with sound of Nazi and fascist slogans and chants in the atrium, as well as projections of statements in favour of democracy by Hannah Arendt, Bertolt Brecht, and Thomas Paine.

Lastly, for the outer perimeter a installation showcases an LED ring around one of the frontal columns with scrolling text installed with the aim of breaking the monumentality of the space and its conceptualization of power.

The exhibition uses different media forms and the setting of the monument to communicate the history of the Victory Monument and reflect on Bolzano/Bozen, as a city caught between a war on narratives and ideologies that brought profound changes in its cityscape. The exhibition offers a space for reflections and a chance to understand each other's experiences. Moreover, it provides an opportunity for mutual understanding between German- and Italian-speaking communities.

"The permanent exhibition offers a space for collective memorialization, discussion, and reconciliation recognizing the different communities that make up Bolzano/Bozen today and using art as a driver for breaking the monumentality of places and their narratives."

Concluding remarks

The complex history and the present life of the Victory Monument are vital to the discussions around the role of politically charged monuments in Italy today. Similar to Confederate monuments in the United States, fascist monuments and heritage in Bolzano were key instruments in establishing and legitimizing processes of political oppression. While the process of "historicization" of the Victory Monument is a unique example in the European context, it's principles are similar to those applied in the decolonization of heritage, where greater attention is paid to the experiences of those that have been oppressed and symbols of power are deconstructed to critically reflect on the role of oppressors. The permanent exhibition offers a space for collective memorialization, discussion, and reconciliation recognizing the different communities that make up Bolzano/Bozen today and using art as a driver for breaking the monumentality of places and their narratives.

Today, monuments and heritage places with contested narratives also offer a space for discussion and confrontation, a space to creatively unpack complex pasts and understand heritage-empowered processes of domination over the "other", whereby difference is often generated based on cultural and ethnic criteria. The ways forward are many and diverse. In some cases these monuments are seen as perpetrating harmful messages and empowering systems of discrimination. In other contexts by historicizing the monuments, the wider heritage and culture community – including architects, archaeologists, historians, and artist – unpack the meaning of these places of dominance by recording historic data and evidence of prior propaganda functions and informing communities and public about the past and current roles of such monuments in nation building, and thereby create shared spaces of exchange, reconciliation, and re-building. ✳

Graduate students visit the Victory Monument as part of the study project “War and Memorialisation” organised by the Chair of Architectural Conservation of BTU Cottbus-Senftenberg. © Nicole Franceschini

Figure 1: Museum in Starobilsk under occupation. Announcement of an exhibition "The Motherland is calling" dedicated to the glorification of the Soviet past, Fall 2022. © Author of the photograph currently remains under occupation. Personal credentials are not disclosed for safety reasons

Museums in War: Luhansk Regional History Museum in Ukraine

Vira Orlovska, University of Geneva, Switzerland
Olesia Milovanova, Luhansk Regional History Museum, Ukraine

Our thoughts are very much with the museum communities of Ukraine and across the world working hard to preserve culture and heritage in the face of war.

What happens with local museums in times of war? These institutions that narrate history, nurture local identities, and act as place-making agents find themselves especially vulnerable. In such times, culture and heritage protection appears low on the most urgent national priorities list. Instead, it gives way to issues related to national security, military capacities, public health and safety, and critical infrastructure. However, in the experience of the Luhansk Regional History Museum in Ukraine, war brings not only destruction and loss but, oddly, also forms a bustling space for distinct forms of innovation and heritage creativity. This chapter explores museum governance creativity through the poignant prism of hostilities, exile, and occupation.

Luhansk Regional History Museum is a local state museum dedicated to the identity of the Luhansk region. This most

"The political nature of creativity becomes evident in their narrating of a governmentally approved approach to history through which they nurture the identities predetermined by the occupation authorities."

eastern borderline territory of Ukraine has always been the first to meet the dawn. Concurrently, it has also always been the first to encounter the ramifications of the region's fundamental historical, political, social, and cultural changes. Among these were the transformations of imperial influences, policies, and ambitions of the neighbouring Russian state in its different configurations ranging from the Russian Empire to the Soviet Union and today's Russian Federation. A manifestation of this occurred in the spring of 2014 when Russian troops, violating the borders of independent Ukraine, entered the city of Luhansk and annexed parts of Ukrainian territories. Russian tanks moved through the central streets of Luhansk, seizing administrative buildings and educational and cultural institutions.

Whereas some might perceive local museums as dusty places where forgotten objects go to perish, the recent history of the Museum testifies to the opposite. The Luhansk Regional History Museum was founded in 1920, during the period referred to as the Ukrainian War of Independence that lasted from 1917 to 1921. However, in 1922, the Luhansk region of Ukraine was absorbed by the Soviet Union (USSR) with its ambition to construct an overarching Pan-Soviet cultural identity. This determined practices in the regional museums, where political agendas, censorship, and ideological narratives shaped exhibitions. Such approaches to museology were commonplace in socialist states, including the USSR, German Democratic Republic (GDR), and Czechoslovakia. Thus, A. M. Razgon, the former Vice President of the ICOM[1] International Committee for museology (ICOFOM, 1977-1983) who authored fundamental museology textbooks in the USSR (Leshchenko 2019), argued that impartiality in museum practices was bourgeois fiction and should be eliminated, while museums as key ideological instruments must be controlled by the state

(Razgon 1977). As cultural sectors in the re-established independent states after the fall of the USSR experienced underfunding and a lack of targeted governmental initiatives, the imprint of socialist museum practices persisted longer than the formal existence of the regime itself. Soviet-style museum exhibitions in Ukraine's eastern regions remained essentially unchanged until 2014 (Verbyc'ka et al. 2021).

Dissociation: What happens to a museum under occupation?

After the Russian Federation annexed part of the Luhansk region in 2014, the occupation authorities seized all facilities and property of the Luhansk Regional History Museum, including its collection of over 180,000 original objects of archaeology, ethnography, collections of numismatics, photographs, documents, and works of art. While the then-museum director continued working with the occupation authorities, thus supporting the Russian forces' illegal annexation of the region, the museum workers who refused to collaborate with this regime, left their posts.

Since the annexation of Luhansk in 2014, the occupied museum, now referred to as the State Cultural Institution of the Luhansk People's Republic "Luhansk Museum of Local History," again transformed under heavy political censorship by the occupation regime. The occupied museum collections were used to retell the region's history, shifting the spotlight to pro-Russian narratives and Soviet nostalgia with solid support from the new administration (Figure 1). In 2022, the current director of the occupied museum, during an official visit to Moscow, congratulated Russian officials on "new regions [that] appeared in the Russian Federation" and

"returned to the bosom of Mother Russia". He noted that "a part of the population of these regions, unfortunately, for a long time – about, maybe, even 30 years[2] – was deprived of an opportunity to learn their own history" (Russian Historical Society 2022).In November 2022, the occupied museum presented an exhibition, "USSR: Milestones of History", marking the 100th anniversary of the formation of the Soviet Union and the region's achievements. The more recent exhibition[3] (February 2023) commemorating the 80th anniversary of the liberation of Voroshilovgrad[4] from the German Nazi invaders suggests even more parallels with the socialist museology practices outlined above. It includes multimedia lessons on military-patriotic themes in the museum or city schools titled "No Oblivion to a Glorious Deed" and commemorates the "Great Patriotic War" praising the heroism of the great Soviet people who liberated the world from Nazism.

Targeted appropriation of occupied territories and their cultural capital requires significant resourcefulness of its own – from employing governance approaches that ensure and sustain this appropriation to developing a long-term strategy of strengthening the influence of the occupier. In March 2022, for example, a department of the Russian Historical Society opened in the occupied Luhansk Museum. This public organization originated in imperial Russia and was revived in 2012 by President Vladimir Putin. Its tasks include selecting the history textbooks of different publishers and constructing a uniform teaching curriculum of the history of Russia in all state schools (Suslov 2018). The same concerns all educational and cultural institutions of Luhansk. Thus, the occupied museums offer strictly limited space for creativity and critical narration of history as they return to functioning under heavy political censorship. The political nature of creativity becomes evident in their narrating of a governmentally

approved approach to history through which they nurture the identities predetermined by the occupation authorities.

What happens to a museum in exile? Creative governance as key to survival

Conventional museums rest on three pillars: the museum collection, building, and team. In 2015, only one of these pillars carried the Luhansk Regional History Museum in exile. In 2015, following the decision from the exiled Luhansk regional administration controlled by the government of Ukraine, the Museum was relocated to Starobilsk – a city in the Luhansk region about 100 km away from Luhansk. As all its assets, including the complete collection of over 180,000 objects, were left behind under occupation, this relocation concerned the formal institution and its team solely, marking a turning point in the history of what had then become a museum in exile, and its exceptional transformations that necessitated creative governance responses.

Rethinking narratives: representing Luhansk regional heritage and documenting the traumatic experiences of recent history

When the Luhansk Regional History Museum, which previously held an abundant collection and a team of 116 people working in a city with a population of about 417,990, was relocated to Starobilsk, this meant adapting to a town with about 16,500

residents, a smaller team of 38 people, and the task of forming a new collection that as of 2022 included over 500 objects. The responsible authorities appointed a new museum director, Olesia Milovanova (co-author of this paper). The Museum resumed its activities as the central institution of the Luhansk region and a coordination centre for eighteen smaller regional museums.

At this point, apart from the immediate operational tasks, such as completing and reinforcing a new museum team in exile, renewing the work of regional museums damaged in hostilities, and cataloguing the surviving museum collections, the Luhansk Regional History Museum reassessed its programs and updated strategic goals. The Museum team developed and distributed methodical materials to its branch museums in the unoccupied Luhansk region, successfully launching the process of rethinking and redesigning the outdated exhibitions and triggering a qualitative change in the regional museums. The exhibition narratives were updated, all labelling and descriptions were translated into Ukrainian, and the museums increased their online and media presence, enhancing interaction with the audience. In a professional exchange with the museum community in other parts of Ukraine and worldwide, all museums coordinated by the Luhansk Regional History Museum introduced changes to their narratives of World War II, abandoning the Soviet terminology and interpretation of events.

Supporting the replenishment of the Luhansk Regional History Museum's collection of modern war, in early February 2022, the Ukrainian military delivered two painted busts of Lenin to Starobilsk, which they collected in the war-torn town of Lysychansk (Figure 2). The busts had been torn down by the local population. One of the busts bore the hand-written inscription "executioner of Ukrainians". The team of the Luhansk Museum intended to

use these exhibits in their narrative about the Soviet terror, the Holodomor,[5] and the destruction of Ukrainian cultural heritage. Interestingly, during the summer of 2022, following the full-scale invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation and the occupation of Starobilsk, the pro-Russian authorities in Starobilsk renovated the busts, re-installing them in the central town square.

Figure 2: The Ukrainian military delivering to Starobilsk busts of Lenin demolished by the local population in the war-torn town of Lysychansk. © Olesia Milovanova

Withstanding “wishful thinking” for needs-based planning and decision-making

In the conditions of progressing war, repeated exile, and scarce resources, much decision-making in practice remained with the museum leadership.[6] Many challenges required immediate decisions without waiting for confirmation from above. Thus, upon assessing the possible risks of surrendering the Museum collections in Starobilsk to the occupying forces,[7] all exhibition-related documents that contained information about the participants of military operations in Luhansk and Donetsk regions since 2014 were immediately moved to a remote place and the information on their exact location was restricted.

After the occupation of Starobilsk in 2022, the Museum relocated once more – this time, to Lviv, a city in the west of Ukraine, with approximately 717,300 residents. Very few museum objects were rescued, and the team was reduced to seven people, obviously affecting the scope and the nature of the Museum's activities. Several factors determined the Museum's "new reality": the scattering of the Museum's team and audience around the country, the transformed scope of work that now included an even greater body of recent traumatic history experiences, lost access to collections, premises, and essential technical and material assets.

After the relocation to Lviv, the Museum, more than ever, transformed from a place of looking and learning into a mobile institution that brings people together through public events, workshops, and lectures. In its new role, it provides a space for regeneration, interaction, participation, and engagement with recent traumatic events, coming to terms with the past, and

learning to cope with the present. For the internally displaced audience, the Museum has become an anchor in the storm, offering means of retaining local identities even for those torn out from their local context.

Nurturing partnerships and rethinking responsibility

In a matter of hours after the full-scale invasion of Ukraine, the country's museum community transformed itself into an emergency working group. The Luhansk Regional History Museum contacted its branch institutions surveying for immediate impact and needs. Further steps included reaching out to the network of partners across Ukraine and internationally. Through this exchange, the Lviv Museum of Totalitarian Regimes committed itself to host their Luhansk colleagues, support the evacuation of museum workers and their families who chose to relocate to safer places, and to extend help to those who decided not to move. This work marked a further shift from the accountability to someone (e.g., the authorities) to the sense of responsibility for someone or something (e.g., the museum treasures, the team, the audience) – another intrinsic governance response of the Museum that started developing in 2014 and extended significantly in 2022.

Working according to conventional role descriptions was replaced by the need for new approaches and tasks, making the museum teams more reactive, creative, and flexible. The Museum transformed to accommodate people and built its programmes around employees, redefining comfort zones to operate effectively amidst uncertainties.

As the war with the Russian Federation progressed, the Museum's partnerships

acquired new meanings. For instance, in 2019, together with colleagues from the Lviv Museum of Totalitarian Regimes, the Luhansk Museum team conducted research expeditions to the Luhansk region, developing an experimental exhibition, "War in progress", that collected oral histories of internally displaced persons, war prisoners, militia, and other artifacts of the Russian-Ukrainian since 2014. The museum teams developed models to work with a traumatic experience, preserving and processing memories of the difficult past. In 2022, after the full-scale invasion of Ukraine, this partnership evolved, as the Lviv Museum of Totalitarian Regimes hosted the Luhansk Museum in exile. Today, the institutions are building a new joint collection entitled the "Collection of Victory", strategically gathering artifacts in the context of war.

Conclusion: fate of a Museum – creativity in a changing heritage world

Responses to the various transformations experienced by the Luhansk Regional History Museum demonstrate the Museum's agility, resilience, and profound value as a space of vigour and endurance. The central characters are the museum workers, whose commitment and dedication have made it possible to upkeep the pulse of the Museum through all the risks and uncertainties. Creative governance responses prove essential among the plethora of decisions and strategies supporting the Museum's vitality in exile. They include governance flexibility and readiness to make emergency decisions and take responsibility, preparedness to constantly reassess the strategy and response mechanisms, prioritizing partnerships, and creativity in operating with limited severely limited resources.

Figure 3: The making of the new collection in Lviv. © Nataliia Khasanshin

The impact of the war is uneven, and its consequences for some communities, regions, and types of organizations are far more significant than for others. Luhansk Regional History Museum experienced these influences in different circumstances – geographically and institutionally.

The Ukrainian experience reveals different fates of museums in times of war. In one, a museum is destroyed and burned to the ground, its collection is looted, and the

exhibits are taken away as trophies. Such was the case with the Mariupol gallery named after Kuindzhi or the Kherson Art Museum in 2022, to name a few. In another, the occupation forces seize the museum premises, turning its collections and exhibitions into a propaganda tool. Some museums continue operating in exile, preparing to return to their regions after de-occupation, much like the Luhansk Regional History Museum. Meanwhile, museums in the safer areas of Ukraine act as a refuge for those affected by the war in the ways described above.

What might a future of peace look like?

The Luhansk Regional History Museum in exile may need to stay in Lviv until the Luhansk region is ready to receive its displaced residents. While the Luhansk region will remain on the border between Ukraine and the Russian Federation, it must then also recover from the adverse and traumatizing experience of a lengthy occupation and reinvent its regional identity. With a view to the post-war recovery and reconciliation in the border regions, the Museum team believes that knowledge and understanding are the best mechanisms. They see their role in offering critical and alternative perspectives to ideological narratives – through intellectual interaction with the collection and presenting evidence of past events for learning, reflection, and healing. The Museum strives to reveal and explore multiple perspectives on history that fills the wounded streets and buildings of Luhansk, the emergency suitcases of its residents, and dark corners in their abandoned homes. It aims to help people celebrate what makes them strong and unique, provide a sense of community, and maintain collective heritage as an essential resource for post-war recovery. ✳

Sustainability & Development Creativity

View of the Temple of the Feathered Serpent. © Public domain

Six Areas of Conservation and Innovation: Lessons from Mexico

Valerie Magar, ICCROM

How does heritage conservation and innovation relate to each other and what are some lessons learned from the Mexican context? Heritage conservation, it could be argued, is *all* about dealing with complexity in a continuous manner, which often requires iterations of multiple processes. Over numerous decades, the notion of heritage has expanded, and now more than ever, heritage places face new or increasing threats. In the international context, there is overall agreement of the fundamental importance of having a holistic approach[1] if conservation decisions are to have long-lasting and beneficial effects. In this process, continuity and innovation must go hand-in-hand to ensure the sustainability of conservation professional's actions,[2] as well as the sustainability of heritage. Innovation, in particular, tackles numerous themes or areas, of which six seem particularly relevant for this volume.

The first area is the identification of heritage in its specific context and setting, defined as what we consider important from our past, connecting to "tradition, heritage and shared histories" (Taçon 2021, 363).

Over the last few years, new ways of identifying what is important for different actors have been developed. What is important, why it is important and for whom it is important serves as the baseline for decision-making in contemporary conservation and management processes. This process of identification, for example, now includes indigenous groups' voices in different regions of the world that were previously neglected. New forms and mechanisms for collaborative and participatory approaches initiated a break with rigid forms of communication and management of heritage and allowed for different perspectives to be expressed and made to count. This has led to a more inclusive and participatory process in decision-making, ensuring the conservation and management of heritage in a manner that acknowledges and respects traditional knowledge and practices. A telling example is provided by the case of a church in a marginalized community in Mexico, Santa María Acapulco, in the state of San Luis Potosí. Following a devastating fire in 2007, the conservation professionals worked closely with the local community to jointly define how to deal with the ruined church. Different approaches were agreed upon for the various restoration procedures. The initial cleaning of debris caused by the fire was undertaken exclusively by community members, due to the presence of human bones, whose sacred character could have been lost if non-community members had touched them. The mural paintings decorating the walls of the church were consolidated, also with the participation of community members, who received training for this purpose. Following lengthy discussions, which required translation in to the local *Pame* language,[3] the altarpieces were re-created, based on existing documentation. The roof was also replicated, retrieving traditional thatching techniques in the process. After nine years of work, the result allowed the

community to overcome the sense of atonement and to recover a fundamental space for social gathering (Schneider 2021).

Documentation and diagnosis form the second and perhaps the most visible area, in which new technologies have been used over several years. More recently, there has been a substantial exploration of how Artificial Intelligence and satellite imagery can be used for new purposes in the conservation and management of heritage. These technological innovations are being explored and are rapidly evolving, particularly for locations that are hard to reach, notably after conflict or disaster. An example is the use of a combination of Artificial Intelligence and images recovered from drones to monitor cracks in heritage structures in earthquake-affected areas to assess damages (Singh 2020). Other creative forms have included using more readily available tools, such as smartphones, for crowd sourcing information in the aftermath of disasters (for the case of Nepal see Rai 2015). Smartphones also make community documenting of different narratives related to specific heritage sites possible, for example through videos.

A third important area of innovation and creativity is that of conservation methods and techniques. These include both learning (and re-introducing) traditional knowledge systems and investigating the use of new materials (used sometimes for other purposes) or developing new materials. One example is the recovery of traditional knowledge on the use of natural gums from different tree species in the Yucatan peninsula. When combined with lime-based mortars, natural gums can modify their properties. Some combinations increase the hardness and resistance of the mortars, others improve their plasticity (Jáidar Benavides 2006). This traditional knowledge has allowed for the development of specific conservation measures in Mexico, particularly for archaeological sites in the Maya region notably in connection with sacrificial layers. These are, for example,

used to protect original lime-based floors where they are heavily exposed to sun and rain or where the physical impact of visitors could be damaging. Sacrificial layers are also used to protect fragile decorated stone or stucco reliefs, by applying a thin coat of plaster on the surface to protect it from the direct exposure to the environment. Other lime-based mortars are also used to insulate upper parts of archaeological buildings. They are combined with other traditional techniques, for example, the use of layers of soap and alum applied above the new render. Such insulations protect the inside walls and decorative elements.[4]

For some years now, conservation experts have experimented with the use of plants and plant extracts to control biological growth on heritage sites, such as the application of essential oils on outdoor surfaces. These natural materials have been successfully used on the outdoor stone sculptures at the Vatican, reducing the need for repeated cleaning (Devreux et al. 2015). Other plant extracts control the fauna, without harming it. For example, cedar oil keeps bats away from historic buildings and has been successfully tested in historic cloisters in central Mexico (Rivera Pérez y Torres Soria 2014, 45).

Natural material and traditional techniques can provide highly sustainable maintenance approaches as they have a relatively low cost and are compatible with the original materials.

Ensuring community benefits and having the means to convey the impact of those benefits to decision-makers is another area of creativity and innovation. Conservation professionals have long debated how to creatively measure positive effects of well-cared heritage on society, economy, and the environment. Tools such as the human well-being approach, mentioned by Fujiwara et al. (2014, 9), or the triple-bottom line tool adapted by different government agencies for heritage conservation purposes foreground conservation and social benefits alongside the financial costs.

Figure 1: View of Temple 1 in Tulum, Mexico, where sacrificial layers have been regularly applied to protect mural paintings and other decorative elements. © Valerie Magar

In a world exposed to increasing polarization and conflicts, finding ways to showcase heritage and "building societies that are comfortable with the complexity of the past" (Taçon 2021, 364) is increasingly important.

Hodder explains this as:

> "The things and monuments protrude into social life—in

> that sense archaeologists also produce social relations in the world around them. When they make places and histories, they produce artefacts and monuments that people have to deal with and cope with. The resulting interactions can be both positive and negative. They can lead to healing or pain. They can be productive or destructive."
> (Hodder 2010, 864)

The idea is to keep thinking of heritage as a possible means to promote understanding and peace, rather than intolerance.

Interpretation is another major area of creativity and innovation. New tools, particularly digital ones, allow for fresh interpretations and convey meanings for past and present communities. Interpretation is also a means to increase community participation at certain sites. In areas exposed to violence, Interpretation-based projects can positively involve youth with heritage. An interesting example comes from the archaeological site of Xochicalco in central Mexico (Gándara 2022), where a project actively engages young people at the site, creatively shows the value and history of the place, and unveils possibilities for those young persons' future. Xochicalco history is used to show the possibilities for positive change and cooperation. One particular element of the site is the Temple of the Feathered Serpent, whose walls depict a gathering that took place in Xochicalco. According to the interpretation of the reliefs on this temple, it depicts persons from different cultural groups, who gathered to make a calendar correction. One of the carved reliefs on the temple depicts a hand, that is pulling a rope wrapped around a calendar sign. Xochicalco was known to have a good astronomic observatory. The

interpretation of the site can therefore become a reference to show that placing knowledge for a common good yielded a positive result for all the cultural groups that gathered there (rather than focusing on competition or war among those groups). There is an ongoing project in Xochicalco to develop this new interpretation, with signage at the site and a virtual visit, which can show how research, knowledge, and cooperation can lead to positive results, whereas violence and repression lead to more violence. Every local young person that gets attracted to heritage, rather than violent gangs, is a victory.

Figure 2: View of the Temple of the Feathered Serpent. © Public domain

"Natural material and traditional techniques can provide highly sustainable maintenance approaches as they have a relatively low cost and are compatible with the original materials."

Figure 3: Detail with calendar correction, in the centre of the panel. © Public domain

In conclusion

Widening what is considered heritage has increased the responsibility of conservation professionals and made their work significantly more complex. However, it has also opened doors for heritage to play a much more significant role in society. The brief list of examples illustrates the wide range of areas in which innovations can make heritage conservation more relevant both socially and culturally. These approaches range from new applications of technologies and materials to creative engagement with social and political relations. By keeping our minds open to new possibilities from a multitude of sectors, opens up for other ways of care for heritage, in a sustainable and ethical manner that empowers more actors to take ownership in the process. The conservation profession continues to evolve, and it is possible to manage change, while keeping a coherent ethical system. ✳

Figure 1a: Piazza dell'Esedra.
© Google Maps

Heritage, Creativity, and the Education of "Integral" Architects in the Metropolis

Lucio Valerio Barbera and Anna Irene Del Monaco,
UNESCO Chair in Sustainable Urban Quality,
Sapienza Università di Roma

How to face and resolve the apparent contradiction between creativity and heritage in the contemporary metropolis? How to be open to different design, aesthetic, and research approaches of all kinds considering multiple methodologies, procedures, and techniques sometimes radically *different* from each other? Engaging with architectural pedagogy and practice is essential to this endeavour.

We here explore insights from different historical periods as well as the UNESCO Chair of Sustainable Urban Quality at La Sapienza,[1] an international partnership of university institutions based in Rome with extensive engagements with architects across the world on theoretical and empirical levels. In particular, we highlight the importance of enhancing education approaches to architecture. A first step in the education arena involves debating international heritage terminology and categories such as *preservation* or *conservation* used by practitioners to better

understand the global issues embedded in local context. A second step includes recognizing and building on the diversity of education and training approaches found among heritage practitioners in general, and architects in particular.

Critical keywords such as *preservation*, *heritage*, and *adaptive reuse* are constantly gaining new importance and involve new meanings. New approaches include the shift from top-down design to the coordination with traditional creativity and sustainable technologies. Such innovations are not random, but fundamentally shaped by the economic, demographic, and political dynamics as well as heritage paradigms and training. Consider, also, how heritage is shaped by wider societal and commercial processes – even the role of mass consumption. Taking care of the city in its social and historical complexity thus remains a field of friction and even conflict, including those between architects of opposing vocations. On the one hand, those who with love and wisdom defend, care for, and preserve heritage. On the other hand, there are those who, in the name of creative freedom and artistic personality, aim to project new forms into the city based on the assumption that it legitimately represents the spirit of a new time, epoch, or Zeitgeist.

It is our belief that the current city, in every country of the world, covers a complex reality, in which different modernities and different traditions live together. Cities and metropolises in the emerging countries, for that matter, are just as complex and stratified, including the coexistence of different cultures. Architectural creativity therefore, does not only invoke the artistic freedom to perform a style, but rather "creativity covers a wide range of change and transformative processes from 'destructive' creativity, over reconstruction to the reinvention of heritage per se." (Larsen and Graezer Bideau, introduction to this volume). Change, indeed, is arguably

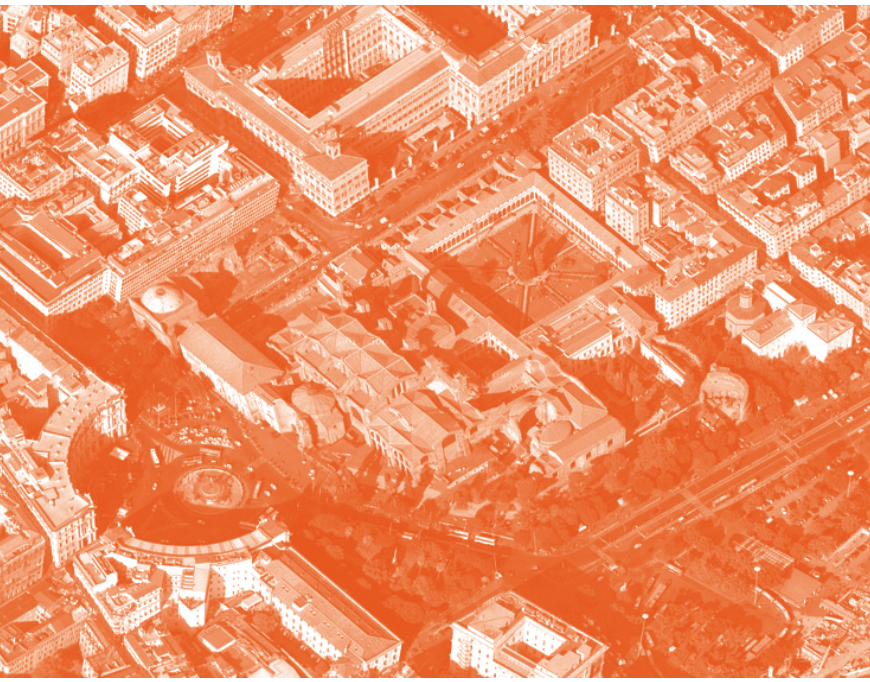


Figure 1b: Piazza dell'Esedra.
© Google Maps

always intrinsically related to the interplay between different national dynamics, trends, ideas, and practices over time. "Italian" conservation concepts and methodologies, for example, are not static, but constantly involving new frameworks of interpretation and operation. We here briefly explore some of these issues through selected examples.

From complexity to education

In contemporary Italy, there is a growing awareness that the governance of what to preserve or transform in heritage is always the outcome of a laborious and slow collective consciousness-raising exercise

bringing forward specific ideas of history and modernity. This entails choices about what part of the past one intends to project into the future and in what form. One of the main challenges is thus to educate and train architects not as "creative" individuals alone, but as careful interpreters of the place, from a cultural, social, and material point of view. Indeed, architects need skills to play a role as interpreters of the *many* places, the *many* cultures, and the *different* social and economic segments

Figure 1c: Naiadi Fountain, Rome.
© Piazza della Repubblica

that live and overlap with each other in the modern city. Interestingly, there is in fact a long tradition in Italy of promoting integrated approaches to architecture.

Already during the first and frantic growth of Rome, designers built on and respected certain traditions. The Piazza dell'Esedra (Figure 1 a, b, c), named today Piazza della Republica, was designed by Gaetano Koch, the son of a family of painters of Austrian origin, who moved to Rome in the 19th century. He graduated as a civil

engineer in 1872 just when the building fever was breaking out in Rome. His work involved researching and selecting different historical styles, into a kind of design model, as evidenced by the case of the Esquiline hill.

At the other extreme was Koch's modern transformation of large palatial buildings, both private and public. One could mention the palace of the prince of Piombino – also called Palazzo Koch (Figure 2). The greatest merit of Koch's work is recognized in his way of starting from Renaissance type buildings as the basis for creating new entities. In one of the few texts written by Koch, a pamphlet describing the Bank of Italy palace (Figure 3), he affirmed that in the capital the style must be Roman. He, therefore, rejected any eclecticism or imitations of architecture based on other Italian cities.

His contributions to urban design, such as Piazza Vittorio and the Piazza dell'Esedra, would eventually give shape to an entire new district built around the Via Nazionale (Franco et al. 1974). Such designs offer examples of integral architecture.

Modern Rome was conceived and built by a group of architects and engineers who in 1919 established and modelled the first architecture faculty (school) in Italy. Gustavo Giovannoni played a key role in the founding of the Rome School of Architecture together with Marcello Piacentini. Based on their professional experience, they introduced the idea of the "integral architect", defined as a professional figure who integrates the skills of the engineer with those of the historian recognizing historical design and art of composition (Semes 2018). According to Giovanonni, integral architecture involved integrating knowledge ranging from protection to urban planning, from the environment to restoration, from building design to history, from teaching to technology (Bonaccorso and Moschini 2019).

In 1934, the school officially became the Faculty of Architecture of La Sapienza.

The figure of the "superior architect" emerged as the author of urban Master Plans (Garbatella, Città Giardino Aniene, Prati delle Vittorie, and Piazza Mazzini) for a new part of the city, supposed to direct architectural development of each of the buildings programmed in its Master design. Multiple sites across Rome like the Palazzo Savelli, the Baths of Diocletian, the Traian Markets, or the Quartiere Rinascimento were projects by Gustavo Giovannoni remodelling Rome through the partial demolition and reconstruction. These, in other words, are testimonies of the creative transformation of the city space that took place in the footsteps of the ancient design.

The architects of modern Rome

The new architectural ideals underlined the ability to skillfully organize not only the overall design of a given building, but also the ways in which to implement it. This creative process was made in collaboration with other architects, chosen for their technical skills, but also for their engagement to express their own sensibilities and bring such design and language into life.

The UNESCO Chair in Sustainable quality at La Sapienza follows in the footsteps of these "integral" architects by strengthening the links between heritage and creativity. The approach underlines the importance of education paradigms training architects as careful interpreters of diverse places, cultures taking into account the *many* and *different* social and economic layers of heritage in the metropolis.

The educational and vocational project of the "integral architect" aimed to study every architectural, scientific, and technological expression of the present and the past – both its traditional and innovative forms.

It sought to educate designers able to

"Taking care of the city in its social and historical complexity thus remains a field of friction and even conflict including those between architects of opposing vocations."

engage in a dialogue with every historical and environmental layer of the city and the territory. New projects would need to build on modern knowledge and sensitivities, while respecting the place and its cultural layers. A particular methodological category "Ambientism", as it was coined, sought to harmonize design with the environment for which it is produced, without ever being an imitation of it.

The training model established in the 1920s in Rome developed and evolved until the mid-1960s. After the long phase of postmodernism, the problems of the city and the territories have not changed, on the contrary they have amplified in intensity and diffusion.

Some historians argue that the Italian education approach of integrating historical-critical studies, technical-scientific studies, and composition-design is still the most effective and credible (Carpo 2018).

The training proposed by our UNESCO Chair such as short term workshops, university courses, and design studios in the context of current urban development trends and challenges still builds on the model of the "integral architect" or "complete architect". A century after the creation of the faculty of Italian architecture, the ability to integrate multi-disciplinary and scalar approaches remains one of the most important skills for new generations of architects. This includes the critical application of new standards and digital technologies not least in contemporary Africa facing rapidly evolving territorial development and planning needs.

Concluding remarks

The pedagogy of architecture has never merely been about reflection, training, and rehearsal but also one of action, reaction, and interaction (Colomina et al. 2019). The School of Architecture

in Rome, where the UNESCO Chair is based, founded just over 100 years ago was, indeed, based on the conception of the architect as an “integral architect”.

Lessons from research across different continents have confirmed the relevance of educating “integral architects” or “complete architects” rather than “creative individuals”. Today, one of the main aims of the UNESCO Chair is to educate and train architects not as artists free from any other responsibility than the affirming a particular “style”, but also as coordinators of traditional creativity, to improve its efficiency with measured and appropriate additions of sustainable technologies.

In the contemporary world, this can allow for the continued importance and thriving of traditional creativity for the construction of cities and care of the environment. Heritage, in this sense, is not a matter of an untouchable sanctuary to be safeguarded, but rather a living force for the interpretation and the implementation of urban design and architectural planning.

Experiences of the Chair have clearly demonstrated the central value of allowing everyone to take part in building their own living environment and their homes: to transform simple natural materials through tools for functional, but also symbolic modification of their own space, once again individual, the house, and collective, the village, and today the city.

We need to continually update ourselves, as architects and teachers, engaging with the knowledge of other cultures, planetary boundaries in developing other ways of conceiving heritage, creativity, and the new city. *

Figure 3: Bank of Italy, Via Nazionale. CC by 3.0 | Mister No

Figure 2: Palazzo del principe di Piombino, American Embassy in Rome, Via Veneto. © Public Domain, from Wikipedia


Khangchendzonga
National Park
Sakyong-Pentong
Shabrung
Sakkyong
Tingvong Monastry
Lingdem
Upper Dzongu
Forest Block

Economic & Private Sector Creativity

The Corderie view at the Biennale Architecture, 2017–18. © Claudio Menichelli

The Venice Biennale at the Venice Arsenal: a Potential Conflict Between Creativity and Historical Preservation?

Luca Zan, University of Bologna[1]

In situation where contemporary art exhibitions are using historical spaces, the rhetoric of creativity (and creative "industries") faces a very intriguing conundrum. This chapter discusses the contention between different understandings and values given to meaning and processes of creativity and public accessibility. It follows the issues and contentions that arise around the use of part of the historical site of the Venice Arsenal for some of the Venice Biennale exhibitions. Core challenges are the physical closure of historical spaces to the public, and the neglect of meaning inherent in the long and diverse existence of the Arsenal.

The Arsenal is the 900-years-old shipyard of Venice. For centuries, it was the base of the sea power of the Venice Republic, and later one of the bases of the Italian Royal Navy. The site's importance and its military and industrial uses declined rapidly in the 20th century, and particular after WWII. In recent decades, there has been a public discussion on how to recover the Arsenal as an industrial heritage site, how

to use it, and how to open it to citizens. As I show here, it is the latter point that causes controversies. On the other hand, the Venice Biennale is equally an old cultural institution, started in 1895, and still one of the most important contemporary art exhibitions worldwide. Over time, it became active also in the field of architecture, cinema, music, etc. Every other year the international Biennale Art and the Biennale Architecture alternately take place. Historically, the location was at the Gardens in the Castello area, where international pavilions were built. However, from the 1990s onwards the Biennale also uses a significant area inside the Arsenal as a venue.

This dual use of (a part of) the Arsenal is conflicting on several levels. The development of the Arsenal as an industrial heritage site aims at making the industrial landscape accessible to citizens, while the area's use as an avenue for contemporary exhibitions blocks the physical, visual, and informational access to the said industrial heritage meanings, while opening other spaces of contemporary creativity and arts.

Creativity in contemporary arts and industrial heritage

Unravelling the controversy along the juxtaposition between "art" and "history" would be too trivial. Even in the case of visual arts, the two elements are present, with various degrees in different contexts, in diverse ways involving both a discourse on the production of new forms of art and a discourse on the history and conservation of historical artworks. While these are in essence two quite autonomous agendas, on the one hand regarding live creativity and on the other hand regarding "historization", protection, conservation, in short "museification" of "heritazation"

of previously built objects or expression of past creativity, it is nonetheless very rare to have organizations totally devoted to only one of these aspects. One such examples is the Burning Man Festival, a "crazy" initiative, wherein every artwork is built during the festival, and everything is destroyed – burned – during the festival, leaving no historical object behind.

The tension between live arts and historization lays open a tendency toward a move from artists to professionals inside a process of institutionalization. You need active artist for a contemporary exhibition, but you also need art historians to run a respectable, well established, and relatively "old" contemporary art institution such as the Venice Biennale. And indeed, there is also an important archive and research centre associated with the Biennale, the Historical Archive of Contemporary Arts (ASAC, https://www.labiennale.org/en/asac).

The situation of (industrial) heritage in a sense can be seen as moving in the opposite direction. What is now perceived as empty or dead remains (breaks, walls, buildings) can be understood as the result of the creativity of ancestors (Figure 1). From this point of view, the Venice Arsenal is a particularly rich kind of remains: the continued transformation of the site over 900 years can be reconstructed by an architecture historian as the creative shaping of spaces, forms, and solutions, showcasing the historical evolution of architectural creativity. But it is more than that, the conceptualization as industrial heritage emphasizes the underlying (and almost hidden) history of creativity in a completely different sense – that of the Schumpeterian notion of "creative destruction". Even if, in the end, the technological and economic transformation of competition caused the site to end its functionality as a live, running business (otherwise we would not be talking about industrial heritage but a running economic organization), the Venice

Figure 1: The Venice Arsenal.
© Claudio Menichelli

Arsenal existed for almost 850 years as a production entity, continuously innovating its intrinsic production and entrepreneurial and organizational solutions (at least enough to survive for that time period). This is what a management or organizational historian defines as the "intangible meanings" of the industrial heritage site (Zan 2022).

In short, to understand, to preserve, and present such a composite result of creativity that we label as (industrial) heritage, you will need professionals of different background (architects, management and economic historians, but perhaps also historians of maritime craftmanship and so on): creativity, craftmanship, and professionalism are tied together beyond the current obsession of creativity rhetoric. (The case of classical music is even more intriguing, where the break between live creativity of the composer and skills in execution can be found.)

The Arsenal/Biennale conflict: more than a mere conceptual issue

If that provides a general introduction, the specific case of the Venice Biennale at the Venice Arsenal presents additional elements of contradiction. No doubts, the Biennale achieves outstanding results in the arts and architecture field and, since more than a century, remains one of the most relevant institutions worldwide in contemporary arts. Also, more narrowly in relation with the focus of this chapter, the Biennale has been a crucial player in the recovery of the site. In fact, after WWII the Arsenal gradually lost the remaining production activities and with the abandonment of large parts of the area, rapid deterioration set in. This sparked a debate on how this site could possibly be reused. In 1980, a pioneering exhibition by the Biennale took place inside the historical Corderie buildings (Savorra 2017). Since the 1990s, the Biennale has used the south-eastern part of the Arsenal as one of the two main venues of the event.

In the meanwhile, the debate on the reuses of the Venice Arsenal continued. These included the idea of a museum that then, however, disappeared with the presentation of a Master Plan in 2014 (Città di Venezia 2014) that divided the whole area of the Arsenal along a variety of functions (Figure 2). The plan was to develop the northern side as an innovation area, the northeast as space for manufacturing and boating, plus other areas for collective services and cultural activities. However, the project was never executed due to a political crisis and a change in the administration. Concurrently, smart and strong actors ("stakeholders" as we call them) were taking advantage of the lack of policy by the City Council. While the Master Plan referred to a specific area devoted to "Culture", including

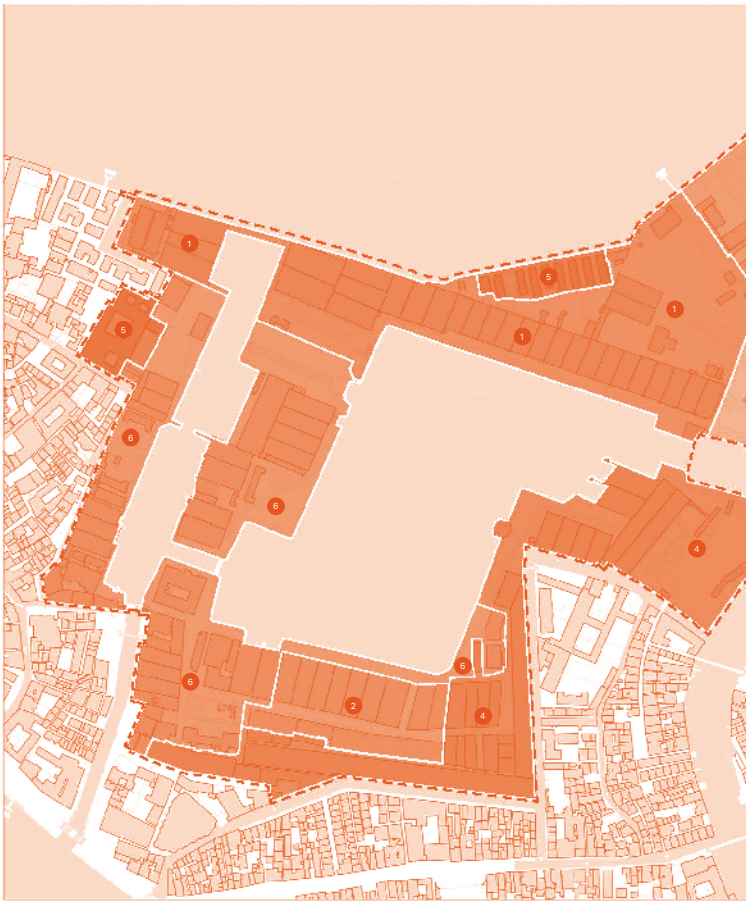
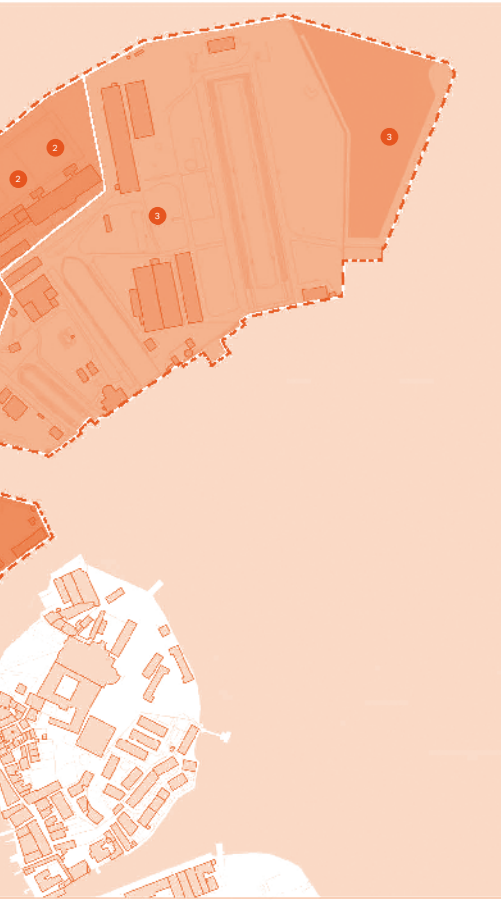


Figure 2: The 2014 Master Plan for the Venice Arsenal, 2014.
© Città di Venezia



Legenda

1 INNOVATION
Main functions
research laboratories; offices; educational, cultural and recreational equipment; craft workshops
Additional functions
shops and restaurants

2 COLLECTIVE SERVICES
Main functions
collective housing; hospitality; cultural, educational and recreational equipment; shops; craft and research laboratories
Additional functions
bar and restaurants; offices

3 MANUFACTURING AND BOATING
Main functions
manufacturing; services for nautical activities
Additional functions
cultural and recreational equipment

4 OUTLET
Main functions
cultural and recreational equipment
Additional functions
shops; bar and restaurants

5 HOUSING
Main functions
housing; cultural and educational equipment
Additional functions
shops and restaurants

6 THE NAVY

Arsenal area

Scale 1:4000

recreational activities and institutions (see zone 4 in Figure 2), the Biennale interpreted the said zone as its own area of activity. Moreover, three main institutions could be seen as appropriating the whole Arsenal in a kind of monopolistic way – the Consorzio Venezia Nuovo (CVN), working on the Mose barrier for the lagoon, the Navy, and the Biennale – plus a small area in the north part where Centro Nazionale Ricerche (CNR) and the engineering company Thetis rented office spaces.

Now there is a basic feature in the municipal concession procedure inside the Arsenal that make things so controversial: while the notion of zone/area in the Master Plan could have a conceptual meaning as a way of structuring spaces along similar activities, in its implementation the zones designated the areas that were given in the concession (or understood as such) to private institutions. For what matters here, it was not simply a set of buildings in the south-east part that were rented out to the Biennale, but the entire area, including streets, access, and views.

More specifically, there are three elements of contradiction between the use of the site for contemporary exhibitions (without questioning their value) and the right to heritage by the citizen:

- There is no free access to the entire area, not only to individual buildings where the exhibition is hosted. Additionally, citizens have to pay (25 € in 2022) to see and enjoy their property during the Biennale exhibition, usually six months a year.

- Even then, however, the industrial landscape is rarely accessible. The internal setting of the buildings is used in a very instrumental way, without considering the need of preserving the industrial landscape. For instance, the specificity of the architectural structure of the Corderie – this unusual

318-meter-long building – cannot be seen because the exhibition structure is decontextualized from the specific historical meanings of the building. Therefore, it is usually fragmented, with physical barrier that hide the intrinsic structure (Figure 3). Only in the 2017–18 edition of the Architecture Biennale the explicit choice was made to leave the whole view accessible (Figure 4).

- After the exhibition is over, the buildings as well as the adjoining area remain inaccessible to the public. Two months before and two months after are requested for setting up and dismantling the exhibition.

Figure 3: The 2019 Biennale Art inside the Corderie. © Luca Zan

In summary, while “valorizing” current arts and architecture exhibition inside this wonderful context, the Biennale can use the entire zone as they want for the whole year, as it is quasi under their “jurisdiction”. For an institution that constantly promotes an art discourse evolving around the values of inclusion and democracy, this sounds quite ironic: rather than including the citizens, this administrative solution prevents them from using a part of their city, as they are not allowed to walk and generally enjoy the zone designated for the Biennale. Moreover, the citizens miss the opportunity to enjoy the industrial heritage landscape of (this part of) the site, to appreciate “their own” heritage, according to the idea of the Faro Convention (Council of Europe 2005).

Figure 4: The Corderie view at the Biennale Architecture, 2017-18. © Claudio Menichelli

Figure 5: Grassroot protest at the Arsenal, 2022. © Concilio

A call for pluralism in uses and open access

In such a context, heritage is forbidden from the physical point of view by closing it off to the public. More so, the access to the detailed meanings of the site in its unique long transformation (900 years) is neglected, both in its tangible and intangible components, fostering another form of forgetting and depravation.

Without questioning at any extent the value of the Biennale in its long history, the question is how to allow a plurality of uses of the Arsenal, and particularly its cultural meanings: as a venue for the Biennale as well as a historically rich industrial landscape.

Forms of resistance are taking place in the city, though the power (and communicational) asymmetry between vested interests of main “stakeholders”

"Heritage, in this sense, is not a matter of an untouchable sanctuary to be safeguarded, but rather a living force for the interpretation and the implementation of urban design and architectural planning."

and the individual citizens or grassroot associations is not easy to deal with (Mancuso et al. 2022). For instance, in February 2022, the Forum Futuro Arsenale organized a sit-in (Figure 5) to protest against the splitting up of the area close to the Corderie (the so called "area sine die") in the Agreement between the Navy, the Ministry of Culture, and the Municipality (Forum Futuro Arsenale 2022).

What is being questioned in this sense is the nature of the concession that the Municipality gives to the Biennale: that is, in its spatial dimensions, a large portion of the Arsenal including more than the individual buildings required for the exhibition, but also paths and passages; as well as in its temporal dimensions, as a concession for the whole year, double the time period of the actual exhibition that would last merely six months.

What is needed is a metaphorical (just intangible!) tearing down of the walls – to think as if the walls were not there anymore. Citizen would have no barrier to access, simply enjoying the right to pass and walk though the whole area, using the internal paths and routes. And they could find – as in the ideas of the Master Plan – areas with buildings offering a variety of activities and of course the set of buildings used by the Biennale, with an access ticket to buildings during the period of the exhibition. Buildings which would be in any case open when the exhibition is over (including more reasonable periods for setting up and dismantling). From that point of view, the establishment of a Museum of the Arsenal, as originally suggested, could provide an important improvement in the valorization and appreciation of the tangible and intangible meanings of this unique historical site (including its contribution to the history of management: Zan 2022). Moreover, it would provide an additional opportunity to give the citizens access to the site (even if not necessarily to each individual buildings).✳

Ecotourism training inclusive of Indigenous knowledge and local governance building, 2021.
© Echostream

From Top-Down to Collective and Intergenerational Creation

Exploring Ecotourism for Heritage Conservation in Sikkim Through a Grassroots Initiative

Jenny Bentley, ethnographic research head, Echostream
Twisha Mehta, Independent Researcher

This chapter discusses a case study on creative, intergenerational, and Indigenous youth-based heritage mobilization in an ecotourism project. This project is located in Dzongu, a reserve for an Indigenous people of the Indian Himalayan state of Sikkim – a region sensitive to climate change and important for global water sustainability. In the past decades, knowledge and practices of Indigenous peoples – their biocultural heritage – have come into focus in climate change and resilience action. However, policies and strategies to preserve such heritage often remain top-down driven. Centred around preservation or commodification, such approaches are deeply rooted in the nature-culture divide and colonial classification of static culture and quests for authenticity. Creativity, in turn, involves bringing in Indigenous world-making and embedded stakeholder processes that have so far crucially been lacking.

Figure 1: Dzongu (Sikkim, India).
Google maps 2022, photograph 2009.
© Jenny Bentley


Hema
Lachen
Latong
Yuigang
Tingbong
Salim Pakel
Lingthem
Sentam
Manul
Lingdong
Mangan
मंगन
Barfok
Ringhim
Nampatam
Hee-Gyathang
Gnon-Samdong
Teesta River
L. Mangshila
Namok
N

Left out of the conservation narrative: an experience of top-down heritage governance

The Indian state of Sikkim, on the China-Nepal-India border, is promoted as a culturally rich, biodiverse, and organic ecotourist destination with stunning views of the Khangchendzonga range. The Khangchendzonga National Park (KNP), located in the northwest of the state, was included in the UNESCO World Heritage list as India's first mixed site in 2016. Such "mixed sites" are an attempt to overcome the nature-culture divide and approach landscape elements through cultural value (see Larsen and Wijesuriya 2015). The Khangchendzonga heritage site centres around the third highest mountain in the world and spans four altitudinal regions, priding itself in rare biodiversity.

The KNP borders on Dzongu, a 78 square kilometre area reserved for members of the Lepcha community. The Lepcha, who call themselves Mútunchi Róngkup Rumkup, are an Indigenous people of the state of Sikkim and its adjoining Darjeeling and Kalimpong Hills in India, as well as parts of eastern Nepal and western Bhutan. Traditionally, their religion, knowledge system, and practices are closely interconnected with this eastern Himalayan landscape.

Residents in Dzongu initially welcomed the UNESCO World Heritage application as there was hope it would help to safeguard Lepcha intangible knowledge along with the environment it is embedded in. However, Lepcha community members have strongly criticized World Heritage design and implementation, in particular, the exclusion of their understanding of the space, as well as their non-inclusion in the state-driven decision-making processes. There was a sense, among some, that in

the dossier Lepcha cultural commons were merely used to give eligibility to the application. Two points were particularly contentious: the boundaries of protected areas and the omission of rivers from the definition of what a sacred cultural site could be (Lepcha et al. 2018).

The nomination – originally only filed as a natural heritage site – may be considered a missed opportunity to take the Lepcha perspective on biocultural heritage commons seriously and move away from top-down and colonial approaches to managing and categorizing culture as distinct from environment. Initiated by British colonial divide and rule practices in India, heritage has been commodified and musealized. Such approaches have dominated state activities within the larger Indian strategy of "Unity in Diversity", be it in the promotion of ecotourism or the recasting and performing of "distinctive culture" to ensure protective status in the Indian reservation system.[1]

Rethinking heritage and governance: co-creating through ecotourism training

What opportunities exist to transform such dynamics?

Considering that in Sikkim tourism is a main source of income, many young aspire occupation in this sector. The Dzongu Ecotourism Training Project,[2] discussed here, sought to foster a community-driven and intergenerational approach of reclaiming of biocultural heritage and creativity within the tourism industry. The aim was to co-develop experiences for tourists based on and respectful of Indigenous biocultural knowledge and personal histories – and ultimately increase the quality of and the income from tourism. A core method was

to apply creativity that – as has been outlined in the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity – draws on memory and heritage while inherently opening avenues to imagine new possible ways of being, interacting, and living. Creativity as a process activates and adapts cultural heritage and thereby enables innovation and entrepreneurial activities as acknowledged by UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Together with selected youth participants and community knowledge keepers in the Indigenous reserve, the project team co-created a training manual in the form a Do-it-yourself-toolkit in a series of conversations, focus group discussion, and workshops. As a multi-dialogical process, the final product included the needs voiced as well as anthropological research methods and design processes (Figure 2). It comprised of worksheets to collect and processes local knowledge for tourism purposes. At the same time, the toolkit included mechanisms to generate a consensus and formulate grassroot governance structures for tourism and biocultural heritage interactions, such as best practices for environmental engagement, waste management, or building by-laws.

Purposeful re-activation and expansion of knowledge transmission networks

The Dzongu youth involved in the project had all finished mandatory schooling, many had undergraduate or graduate degrees, usually in social science or arts,

Figure 2: Workshop on youth requirements, 2021. © Twisha Mehta

more rarely in the technical field. While some had gone to school close to home, most had left the village at one time or the other for their education, experiencing a detachment from the agricultural lifestyle of their parents. While part of their village communities, they had missed out on learning place-based ancestral knowledge and practices. Consequently, they perceived their knowledge as fragmented or superficial – enforcing a sense of cultural loss as well as the sense of insecurity.

Hence, engaging creativity as an approach to ecotourism rekindled the aspiration and necessity to pass down traditional knowledge. Therefore, the Dzongu Ecotourism Training Project brought the young participants together with knowledge keepers to foster intergenerational knowledge transmission and re-build networks of learning and exchange. The knowledge keepers were usually – but not always – elders, had existences

"The knowledge keepers were usually – but not always – elders, had existences rooted in the village community, and a deep interest in heritage and ecological practices."

rooted in the village community, and a deep interest in heritage and ecological practices. Important resource people were religious specialists, as well as community members with specific skills, such as weaving, performative arts and traditional horticulture. Beyond the exchange within the project, the toolkit included provisions to list names and contacts of knowledge keepers along specific topics. The idea is that – when designing tourist experiences or during other occasions – youth would be able to access a repository of people they could call upon and learn from.

At the same time, youth require other specialized knowledge and competencies to communicate within the tourist industry. In interaction with core team members, the participants practised new skills, such as branding and online communication strategies, required to promote their businesses as well as publicly frame their own definitions of heritage and place-based knowledge (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Branding of homestays for a local festival, He Gyathang, 2023. © Echostream

Such projects that bring together heritage conservation and economic benefits – along creative means – thus require a cyclic implementation process of collective creation, feedback, and re-creation involving variously skilled stakeholders and moments of learning and unlearning. Such a process must be flexible in its time frame as well as its set goals. More often than not this surpasses the scope and possibilities of most NGO or government funded heritage preservation projects that are tied to timelines and stringent outcome orientation.

Beyond commodification: Indigenous world-making and redefinition of commons

How is place-based knowledge and Lepcha world-making practices taken seriously?

Lepcha ontology understands nature and human societal practices as intrinsically enmeshed – a self-understanding underlined in the Lepcha term "Mútunchi" that can either be translated as "mother nature" or as "human". This translation only partially grasps the actual essence of the Indigenous concept of human interdependence with the environment. The environment is not merely inhabited by humans, animals, or plants, but equally also by more-than-human beings, such as deities or spirits. These beings do not only have agency, but also ownership and rights over places and resources. Consequently, movement in or other forms of engagement with the larger environment included traditional sharing practices, such as for ritual offerings for hunting or other forms of reciprocity. Such traditional sharing practices are often neglected or even looked down upon as not modern, leaving youth with a challenged relationship to ancestral understanding of place and relationships.

An example (shown in Figure 4)

Figure 4: Bum Kor, Lingthem, 2010.

"There are no ready-made answers to these questions. An approach that takes Indigenous processes of world-making and co-creation seriously can open avenues to push boundaries of conventional conceptualization of heritage and environmental conservation and give space for innovative and provocative practices."

while is the ritual walking of the village boundaries carrying the Buddhist sacred texts, called *Bum kor*. Offerings are given to the guardian boundary deities, who are asked to protect the village from any calamity in return. This scenic walk would be an ideal trek for tourists. Yet, what happens when or if walking the ritual route becomes a routine tourist activity? Will the guardians be offered to and receive an apology for being disturbed? Who decides on or performs such interactions?

The Dzongu Ecotourism Training Project made it a point to initiate discussion on how to include this Indigenous Lepcha ontology into a project design. This requires expanding the definition of commons, usually understood as land or resources belonging to the entire community, to involve such beings as stakeholders, by for example acknowledging their existence, establishing interactions of respect, or building feedback loops to preserve specific practices or environments. Importantly, tourism includes processes of financialization and calls for a rethinking of which interactions and experiences are or are not to be monetized – a process that expands the boundaries set by Western rationalism and neoliberal parameters.

The project sought to offer a safe space to discuss questions such as, how can a community refine tourism with respect for Indigenous forms of reciprocity or ritualized interactions with more-than-human beings inhabiting specific village spaces? What and which interactions are to become monetized and what and which ones are not? How can income be shared with more-than-human-beings? Which avenues of redistribution should be set in place to ensure biocultural heritage conservation?

Unlearning: difficulties in local "empowerment"

An engagement with Indigenous ontologies and open-ended collective creation on grassroot-level requires that all involved parties to set aside conventional understandings of "expertise" and governance. In its approach, the project encouraged the smallest units of local governance to work on their own guidelines together with the ultimate aim of presenting and advocating these to the larger community and passing them within available democratic provisions. This was especially challenging in the Sikkimese context where people are used to government schemes and handouts and have developed a strong state dependency. As an example, the toolkit does not include any tailor-made guidelines on how best to "do quality tourism" nor does it list which heritage should be integrated in the tourist experiences. This breaks with the standard practice of trainings that disseminate external norms and expectations. In this, the conceptualization of the training stood in stark contrast to what the participants had so far experienced and expected. Uncountable state-driven capacity-building workshops and skill training exercises either teach new skills detached from place-based knowledge or impart how to "enhance" their current practices. In contrast, the new approach sought to subvert the colonially shaped education based on internalizing and reproducing external knowledge and national curriculum without much critical thought or creative applications. Consequently, the project ignited rethinking ways of how guidelines could be community-generated and even means of resistance and (environmental) activism (see Larsen 2013). Creativity is a societal process, negotiating symbolic and real claims to ownership over ways of processing ancestral knowledge.

Such an approach to governing heritage from below can be "messy" and embedded in local power struggles over legitimacy and knowledge as well as in histories of disagreement and political divisions, as is the case in Dzongu, but it does offer new perspectives.

Translation processes: pushing the boundaries of creative thinking

Community-led creative tourism are means to support youth in living a "good life" (Butler 2012), defined along their own terms, and create their own "ways of being" (Escobar 2018). This involves networks and incentives that revitalize the intergenerational transmission of Indigenous knowledge and ensure the conservation of cultural, religious, and environmental commons. The grassroot initiative Dzongu Ecotourism Training Project sows seeds for mutual conversations on how youth could go about collectively creating their own visions of what tourism could be and how their ancestral place-based knowledge and practices can constructively become a part of this future-orientated enterprise. The collective creation process raised crucial questions of governance and of an ontological nature. There are no ready-made answers to these questions. An approach that takes Indigenous processes of world-making and co-creation seriously can open avenues to push boundaries of conventional conceptualization of heritage and environmental conservation and give space for innovative and provocative practices. Project designs need to be open to experimentation within a collective space to co-develop alternative ways to sustainably interact with places, their environment, and heritage. ✳

Material & Infrastructure Creativity

Switzerland, Aarau, Market hall. Contemporay intervention in a historic site. © FOC-Rolf Siegenthaler

Governing Creativity as a Quality Approach: a *Baukultur* Policy Perspective from Switzerland

Oliver Martin, Head of Section Baukultur, Swiss Federal Office of Culture

In the international political context, the fields of cultural heritage conservation, architecture, urban development, spatial planning, as well as landscape design and other related disciplines refer to each other whilst still maintaining their independence and, at times, competing with each other. Fostering the cultural value of the quality of the built environment as a whole, understanding cultural and natural heritage conservation and contemporary creation as a common strategy towards a high-quality environment, is hardly ever defined as a political goal. The Davos Declaration is an attempt at addressing this gap, by offering the all-encompassing concept of *Baukultur*.

In January 2018, the European Ministers of Culture adopted the Davos Declaration "Towards a high-quality *Baukultur* for Europe".[1] It recalls that building is a cultural act and creates a space for culture – and promotes the concept of *Baukultur* as an innovative approach to improving the quality of the built environment at policy and strategic level.

Since the turn of the millennium, the term "Baukultur" has been used in the German-speaking world. As there is no term with an exact equivalence to this concept in English, the Davos Declaration introduced the German term *Baukultur* in English. It was chosen in contradistinction to closely related terms such as architectural quality, so as not to limit the concept to architecture alone, but to include all related spatial practices.

All activities with an impact on the built environment are expressions of *Baukultur*, from detailed craftsmanship to the planning and execution of large infrastructure projects and the shaping of landscape. As an aspect

Figure 1: Switzerland, Aarau, Market hall. Contemporay intervention in a historic site. © FOC-Rolf Siegenthaler

of cultural identity and diversity, *Baukultur* calls for contemporary creation as well as the preservation of existing buildings, including, but not limited to, monuments of cultural heritage. Our living environment is to be understood as a single entity (Figure 1). *Baukultur* not only refers to the formation (*Gestalt*) of the living environment, but also to the processes involved in its creation (*Gestaltung*). In our everyday lives, this concept becomes clear to all of us: We move mostly in a built space. How our home is built, what materials were used, what level of craftsmanship is reflected in the details of construction – how we

experience the immediate surroundings of our habitat, whether the open spaces are attractive, on what scale the planning of traffic and footpaths was thought through, how the built interacts with nature – how the settlement and cultural landscape was structured, with what care the building area is differentiated from the non-building area, how the public space is designed – all this is an expression of our *Baukultur*, and all these aspects influence our quality of life.

Yet, the term *Baukultur* alone does not make any qualitative value judgements about the living environment. Even non-places created without any ambition are an expression of the current *Baukultur* of our society. Only a high standard of *Baukultur* can create a quality living space. It results in well-developed and lively villages and towns which are able to meet the changing demands of society, while at the same time retaining their historical characteristics. It is by far more than just architectural quality. A high-quality *Baukultur*, therefore, implies that buildings, infrastructure, public spaces, and landscapes are approached in a considered and quality-oriented way.

The Davos *Baukultur* Quality System

But what makes a high-quality *Baukultur*? How can this comprehensive "high-quality" be generally defined and translated into action?

In an attempt to determine high-quality *Baukultur* the Davos Declaration laid down values and quality requirements. The individual experience of the quality of a place varies depending on the living situation, on prosperity or poverty, age, and lifestyle. Quality is a dynamic concept and depending on the time chosen, an assessment made on the quality of a place may be different. Consequently, the specific situation must be considered. Yet common denominators and values of high quality

can be defined and objectively assessed.

Following the Davos Declaration, the Davos *Baukultur* Quality System was developed therefore. It proposes eight quality criteria, with related principles of high-quality *Baukultur*, to assess the *Baukultur* quality of specific places: A place is determined by *Governance*, based on participatory democracy, with good processes and management. *Functionality* addresses the level of satisfaction of human needs and purposes. Respect for the natural *Environment* with mitigation of and adaption to climate change contributes to the sustainability of a place. *Economy* with long life cycles and long-term viability of places is an important component of Baukultur quality. *Diversity* ensures vibrancy and social inclusion. The particular spatial *Context* of a place with its physical and temporal characteristics, such as the shape and design of buildings, neighbourhoods, villages and landscapes, as well as respect for built heritage has a great impact on the quality of a place. A specific *Sense of place* is created through social fabric, history, memories, colours, and odours of a place producing its identity and the attachment of people to it. Finally, places of high quality are authentic and respond to the human need for *Beauty*. These quality criteria are all equally important. They may be weighted differently, taking into account the specificity of each place. Nevertheless, high-quality *Baukultur*, a choral expression of multidimensional aspects, requires consideration and quality statements for every single criterion. They address the different aspects of places and establish a comprehensive definition and assessment system. The various aspects of *Baukultur* can be clearly assigned to the eight criteria. Nevertheless, the individual criteria are interrelated and there are thematic overlaps in their content.

The Davos *Baukultur* Quality System is the first framework for defining and assessing the *Baukultur* quality of places, placing

Figure 2: Switzerland, Les Marécottes, unfortunate solar panel installation. © Oliver Martin

social, cultural, and emotional criteria on an equal footing to more common technical, environmental, and economic criteria.

High-quality *Baukultur* for sustainability

The necessary evolution of construction and planning towards global sustainability is also changing our *Baukultur*, which currently seems to be at a crossroads and whose global quality must be strongly asserted. Climate change and biodiversity loss, the two major global environmental challenges, are closely linked to urban processes. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) report states that in 2020, the construction sector was responsible for almost 40 percent of final global energy and energy-related CO_2 emissions, far from the target

set by the 2015 Paris Agreement to keep global average warming well below 2 degrees. Urban expansion is invading local habitats, while urban land connections are simultaneously degrading distant ecosystems. Another issue is that of resource scarcity and the need for sustainable resource management, which touches on aspects such as shortage of land and soil, minerals, water, and other materials. The increasing urban sprawl and the trivialization of the built environment also call for a rethink.

In many climate policies today, however, cultural aspects are completely absent and the focus is once again on primarily technical and economic issues. This is worrying: we cannot overcome the climate crisis by creating a cultural crisis, sacrificing the value of our landscapes and sites (Figure 2). Nor is it necessary: there is no need to choose between climate mitigation, adaptation, and the beauty of towns and villages. The urgent and necessary changes in spatial planning and building, as well as the transition to the net-zero target can even be achieved more quickly and effectively by a comprehensive sustainable approach, which also takes cultural and social aspects into account: A high-quality *Baukultur*, which is equally committed to the climate objectives and has integrated them into its concept of quality. Energy measures on existing buildings – insofar as they are effective or relevant – can be carried out in a quality driven way, without hindering, complicating, or increasing the cost of energy renovation. As an example, one can look at the current challenges regarding the installation of solar panels. Conflicts of interest arise today, especially within built ensembles worthy of protection, because on the one hand the production of renewable energy must be promoted, and on the other hand the integral preservation of

cultural built heritage represents an equally important public interest. The solution is a solar planning approach that covers a larger area, sometimes an entire village. By making the construction of solar panels a planning task for a community, energy effectiveness, economic efficiency, and construction quality can be harmonized. Coupled with intelligent tools, such as collective systems and self-consumption networks, the conflicts of interest can be eliminated. Widespread use of the circular economy, the strengthening of green and blue infrastructures, and the ultimate integration of sobriety alongside efficiency and consistency are, among others, all objectives of a high-quality *Baukultur*. In order to achieve them, we need better methodological competence of the actors, sometimes also better processes and incentives and, above all, a broad awareness of comprehensive quality.

High-quality *Baukultur* governance

These comprehensive quality goals and their equal attention require new or at least adapted governance models. The benefits of high-quality *Baukultur* are supposed to serve the common good and become a success factor when the individual stakeholder groups work together, share responsibility, and can align their respective interests.

High-quality *Baukultur* is thus no longer the sole concern of the bodies responsible for culture or heritage. Improvements can only be achieved through genuine multisectoral and interdisciplinary cooperation, i.e., through greatly improved coordination between the objectives of the respective sectoral policies.

An example for such an integrated approach is the Swiss interdepartmental strategy for high-quality *Baukultur* (Bundesamt für Kultur 2020). The public sector has great influence on the built environment through formal and informal

"However, effort and creativity for a new governance of a high-quality *Baukultur* is worthwhile: It leads to a high-quality living environment, is comprehensively sustainable, and contributes to the well-being of people."

Figure 3: Davos Baukultur Quality System: eight quality criteria. © FOC

tools. Moreover, it has a strong impact on quality when requiring compliance with design parameters and giving official support to *Baukultur* quality criteria. The strategy brings together the Swiss governments' *Baukultur* activities and coordinates them in a comprehensive policy, with the aim to overcome the common silo thinking [Figure 3]. The Federal Office of Culture (FOC) was in charge of developing the *Baukultur*-Strategy in cooperation with 15 federal agencies from 2016 to 2020. The strategy addresses current social and spatial challenges such as climate change, the energy transition, settlement development, and demographic change. It formulates a vision of a high-quality *Baukultur* for Switzerland with seven strategic goals and 41 concrete measures. In this way, the Swiss government strengthens its position as a role model and promotes high-quality *Baukultur* in its tasks as builder, owner, operator, regulator, and financier.

However, not only the coordination within government services is fundamental. Key

stakeholders also include the private sector and civil society. The private sector consisting of financial investors, real estate developers, planners and builders, has a central influence on *Baukultur*. The sector is becoming increasingly aware that it has a major responsibility for sustainable and better building and that an imperative change is required to guarantee successful business in the future. Civil society, professional organizations, and interest groups are equally engaged in producing *Baukultur* in their respective professional domains. To foster the cooperation between private and government actors, the Davos *Baukultur* Alliance[2] was launched in January 2023 by the 2nd conference of ministers on high-quality *Baukultur*. The new alliance – hosted by the World Economic Forum – unites public and private sector stakeholder around the shared principles of the Davos Declaration and the Davos Quality System to improve quality and culture of our living environments. Finally, an informed and sensitized public participating actively in the dialogue on *Baukultur* in its living environment is to be considered in this process, and thus participatory governance models to be promoted.

Yet, true multistakeholder and interdisciplinary cooperation is and remains an ambitious demand. Currently, conflicts arising from divergent political goals are merely managed rather than used to develop possible synergies. Politics increasingly demand simple, straightforward, and quick solutions, while – in contrast – prudently addressing the multi-faceted challenges and mastering them to the built environment, is inherently complex and, when coupled with participatory and democratic processes, inevitably requires special effort and time. However, effort and creativity for a new governance of a high-quality *Baukultur* is worthwhile: It leads to a high-quality living environment, is comprehensively sustainable, and contributes to the well-being of people. ✳

Semi-skilled blacksmiths being introduced to traditional blacksmithing. 2 November 2022. © ICCROM

The Role of Creativity in Heritage Recovery: Lessons From the ICCROM Capacity Building Initiative in Mosul, Iraq

Georges Khawam, Former Project Coordinator, ICCROM
Rohit Jigyasu, Project Manager, ICCROM

Cities today are acknowledged as complex cultural resources of interwoven built fabric, open spaces, and people, which are under unprecedented pressure caused by urbanization, disasters, climate change, and armed conflicts. In post-conflict situations, access to cultural heritage allows affected communities to reconnect with their individual and collective identities, thus strengthening social cohesion, while additionally providing resources for resilient, inclusive, and sustainable socioeconomic recovery.

Cultural heritage is about people and, therefore, a key for recovery strategies in heritage sites is to prioritize social aspects and ensure that repairing the historic physical structures is part of an integral recovery plan that improves resilience of both places and people. The involvement of all the sections of local communities regardless of their social, religious, or ethnic status is critical to reduce risk and strengthen resilience, and to reinforce their connection with their respective cultural heritage assets. “Too often, local people are portrayed simply as

victims and passive recipients of international assistance or a liability to be neutralised rather than an asset to be utilised. In reality, local creativity, pragmatism and resilience are crucial in recovery." (Barakat 2021, 11)

The CURE framework developed by the World Bank and UNESCO places culture and people at the centre of recovery. Such a response integrates cultural heritage and creativity into all urban recovery phases, strategies, and interventions (UNESCO and World Bank 2018). Thereby, it considers the needs, priorities, and identities of all social groups and provides opportunities for social inclusion and economic development (Garcia 2021).

Heritage, creativity, and recovery

A notoriously difficult concept to define due to its elusive nature, creativity is recognized by UNESCO as a multifaceted resource that can contribute to finding imaginative and appropriate responses to development challenges. Creativity serves as a basis for sustainable development, as recognized by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and as source of economic empowerment. It contributes to inclusive employment and entrepreneurial opportunities in the cultural and creative industries (UNESCO n.d.).

Cultural heritage generates creativity, which in turn contributes to safeguarding cultural heritage. This process triggers development that is centred around communities and local histories. Overall, creativity is a mediator linking cultural heritage and development and contributes to a more sustainable recovery (Cerisola and Panzera 2021).

The interlinkages between creativity and cultural heritage are extensively discussed in the literature. According to Piazzoni (2020), creativity takes part in cultural heritage

production as the latter involves negotiation of ideas of the past by people in the present. Khalaf (2020) states that creativity reflects choices that people make over time to meet their needs as they "choose what, and how much, to continue and to change in the selective process of heritage-making", asserting that people in the present have as much right to use and determine the relevance of their cultural heritage as past and future generations, and to decide on how to use their past for their present wellbeing. With creativity, Giblin (2014) notes, cultural resource becomes a renewable resource, the change or loss of which can provide opportunities for subsequent production of alternative forms of knowledge that empower people during recovery. Khalaf (2020) further asserts that while heritage recovery is not a post-conflict development strategy, empowered individuals may, and likely decide to, use symbols to creatively negotiate the past as a healing practice.

Revive the spirit of Mosul

When the Islamic State of Iraq and Levant (ISIL) captured Mosul in 2014, it aggressively ransacked the city's cultural heritage and its symbolic religious monuments, shattering its pluralistic identity and threatening the coexistence of its diverse multicultural groups. The conflict disrupted and caused the loss of tangible and intangible cultural heritage and creativity: traditional arts, trades, crafts, festivals, food-related practices of the communities and minorities that are essential to their livelihoods (Khalaf 2020), displacing thousands and triggering a humanitarian crisis.

In an effort to adapt and implement the CURE Framework in Mosul following the devastating armed conflict in Iraq, UNESCO launched the "Revive the Spirit of Mosul" initiative in 2018, effectively aiming to

harness the potential of culture to not simply return the city to its status before the conflict, but to "build back better" through a people-centred future vision for Mosul (Khalaf 2020).

In the framework of the Revive the Spirit of Mosul initiative, UNESCO rebuilt the Al-Nouri Mosque and its Al-Hadba Minaret, Notre-Dame de l'Heure Convent, and Al Tahera Church, in addition to restoring and rebuilding over 120 historic houses in the Old City, increasing the livelihoods of local women and men through employment opportunities, on-the-job restoration and reconstruction trainings, apprenticeships and vocation trainings. UNESCO and its partners have also engaged in a comprehensive plan to restore cultural life and cultural institutions. From traditional music festivals, booksellers on the streets, to cinema and all creative industries are at the heart of this work (UNESCO 2022).

The ICCROM initiative on capacity building for heritage recovery in Mosul

Under the umbrella of the UNESCO initiative, the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM) is implementing a two-year capacity building programme designed to strengthen the skills of local heritage professionals and craftspeople through training and hands-on technical practice. Indeed, integrating capacity development of cultural heritage practitioners and craftspeople into the wider planning response allows to capitalize on the range of local capacities and skills, as well as contribute to the recovery of livelihoods (Barakat 2007).

The first track, Building Capacity for Professional Development, trains fifty young building professionals. The track is implemented in two cycles, each consisting

of eight specialized modules, addressing a comprehensive range of topics related to post-conflict recovery of urban heritage with special consideration of the situation in Mosul, including value assessment, context analysis, documentation, damage and risk assessment, structural stabilization, recovery planning, implementation, and recovery, as well as adaptive reuse and infrastructure upgradation (Figure 1). The main objectives of this track are to introduce participants to heritage management and conservation, train them in planning and implementation of holistic heritage recovery processes, as well as equip participants with the technical competencies and soft skills needed to take part in heritage recovery and reconstruction initiatives in Mosul.

The second track, Building Crafts Revival and Upgrading, was developed in the spirit of "building back better" and gives seventy semi-skilled craftspeople the opportunity to enhance their skills while contributing to restoration efforts. Based on the results of an assessment of crafts and craftspeople in Mosul, four traditional crafts were identified as in need of priority recovery: alabaster work, stone masonry, carpentry, and blacksmithing. The assessment as well as various consultations helped identify the master craftspeople capable of leading the workshops. The training takes into consideration affordability as well as the ground realities. To ensure sustainability, the programme establishes links with the building industry to guarantee the availability of traditional materials, and as much as possible, focuses on the recycling of usable materials from the rubble. Last but not the least, in order for the knowledge and skills imparted to both professionals and craftspeople to be economically beneficial, the programme design was informed by a thorough market research on the business opportunities and challenges of built heritage professionals and craftspeople with the hope to contribute to a truly holistic, sustainable,

Figure 1: Inventory exercise in Old Mosul.

"Cultural heritage generates creativity, which in turn contributes to safeguarding cultural heritage. This process triggers development that is centred around communities and local histories."

and resilient heritage recovery of Mosul.

The expected impact of the project is to strengthen and domesticate knowledge and expertise of the conservation and management of cultural heritage and awareness of its importance among the diverse local experts and community groups in Mosul, especially targeting young people. Moreover, in doing so, aim is to equip professionals and craftspeople with skills that can ensure long-term livelihood opportunities within the multi-year recovery and reconstruction framework for the Old City of Mosul.

Figure 2: Discussions on risk assessment at the University of Mosul based on a 3D model generated by the participants during the course. 27 June 2022. © ICCROM

Figure 3: Semi-skilled blacksmiths being introduced to traditional blacksmithing. 2 November 2022.

Embedding creativity in the curriculum

The training curriculum for both tracks does not merely focus on preservation, restoration, and reconstruction of the historic built fabric exclusively as it existed before the conflict but seeks to make the recovery process sustainable within the contemporary social, economic, environmental, and institutional context.

This is achieved by encouraging professionals to first undertake thorough situation analysis to understand current needs, priorities, and most importantly, the views and perceptions of the local people through tools such as stakeholder mapping and conflict analysis. Such a process helps in deciding not only what to prioritize but also how heritage should be creatively positioned in the present socioeconomic context. Subsequently, in the module on value assessment, the endeavour is not only to identify and assess the heritage values from "the past" but also to understand how values have been transforming over the years, especially during and after the conflict, and if new values have emerged in the process. This assessment helps in not only prioritizing the heritage attributes based on the values but also in understanding which values need to be interpreted in creative ways during the recovery process, subsequently discussed in detail during the recovery planning module (Figure 2). Further, the planning module encourages participants to develop innovating design options for linking "the old" with "the new" through infill design and finding new uses for the heritage buildings, sites, and public open spaces through adaptive reuse that meaningfully answer the current socioeconomic needs of the local communities. The emphasis here is not placed on the final design solution but on the "creative and informed process" adopted by the participants to reach solutions. The damage and risk assessment module helps understand the damages inflicted by the conflict and determines the root causes of the physical vulnerability of heritage fabric, mainly resultant from incompatible physical transformations that have happened in the past during which the original fabric was replaced with modern materials, notably concrete slabs.

Obviously, such a damaged hybrid fabric cannot be exactly restored in the conventional sense due to the lack of documentation and lack or even absence

of various resources (time, funds, skills, materials). Indeed, one of the major achievements of this endeavour was to bring back fire welding to Mosul (Figure 3). Today, after completing ICCROM's trainings on traditional blacksmithing in Mosul, twenty local blacksmiths can once again recreate and reinterpret the masterfully designed traditional handrails of the city with nothing but heat and a hammer, free of the material, structural, and visual impact of electrical welding, the use of which has been unfortunately widespread thus far.

Indeed, reconstruction of such a fabric, therefore, demands creativity that fosters compatibility between the old and the new at the material, structural, and visual levels mentioned above. While emphasis is laid on the core conservation principles of retaining the historic fabric, reversibility, and maintaining colour, height, and proportions in conformity with the traditional urban environment, participants are also encouraged to creatively explore structurally and architecturally compatible solutions to introducing "modern" materials and elements in the spirit of continuity and change in the present and through time through creativity. Moreover, wherever risks exist or are emerging, including climate change related risks, creativity must be embedded in recovery efforts to ensure the incorporation of appropriate mitigation measures in recovery planning at city, neighbourhood, and building levels. ✳

Spatial Creativity

Seoul City Hall, built during the Japanese colonial rule of Korea. © Public Domain

Determining Impacts of Creative Interventions on Heritage: cases from Korea Reflected from the Perspective of Conducting Impact Assessments

Eugene Jo, ICCROM

This chapter explores issues of time appropriateness, leadership in governance, and the potential of using creativity as a means of accomplishing the maximum possible rather than the bare minimum in heritage management. It starts with reviewing recent creative interventions on heritage places in Seoul, Republic of Korea, and focuses on the historic background, the process of selecting the design for a modern new intervention, and the result of the intervention with its repercussions on heritage conservation. Then, using the recently published *Guidance and Toolkit on Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context* (UNESCO et al. 2022), the chapter provides a reflection on how these interventions could have been reviewed within an impact assessment process, and how much, when, and whose creativity can be considered in heritage management processes.

Figure 1: Map of Seoul in the 18th century. © Seoul City Walls Study

Snapshots of Seoul Cheonggyecheon Stream Restoration project

Cheonggyecheon is a stream that flows from west to east through the historic city centre of Seoul, then turns southwards and merges into the Hangang River at the eastern side of the city (Figure 1). Historically the natural stream was the object of many dredging projects ever since Seoul became the capital of Joseon in 1394. Many bridges were built across the stream, a notable one called Supyo-gyo bridge, named after the stone water gauge that was installed in 1441 to measure the water level. Despite numerous interventions, the city centre was always prone to flooding, and modifications of waterways and strengthening of embankments were continuously implemented over the years (Figure 2).

In the modern era immediately after the end of the Korean War (1950–1953),

Figure 2: Supyo-gyo bridge, Water Gauge Bridge. © https://www.sisul.or.kr/open_content/cheonggye/intro/assets3.jsp

Cheonggyecheon was infamously known as the slum area of Seoul. To resolve this, the government initiated a large project to cover the stream, section by section between 1957–1978. The residential slum areas were demolished and replaced by an elevated express road (Cheonggye Goga), built on top of the covered stream, to enable an efficient traffic connection in the city. The road remained in use for more than 30 years with a sprawling second-hand market alongside (Figure 3). In 2003, the Seoul City Government then decided to restore the original stream. This was a major political manifesto of the then newly elected mayor (who later became the President of the country based on the success of his mayorship) and significantly shaped his representative policy agenda, as opposed to investing in maintaining the road that already since the 1990s had posed severe age-related safety problems. The project was pushed forward with enormous speed. The demolition of the Cheonggye Goga started

Figure 3: Cheonggye Goga (elevated express road) before demolition, 2003. © Yonhap News, https://www.yna.co.kr/view/AKR20210812121700505

immediately and the restoration of the entire Cheonggyecheon stream was completed in merely two years. The re-modelled recreation area opened to the public in 2005.

The restoration of the stream-scape was a huge political and economic investment from the City of Seoul that has since received many positive evaluations in terms of ensuring quality public space, restoring natural habitats, reducing noise and traffic problems of the city centre, and revitalizing

the city area with many benefits.[1] Compared to the previous chaotic road-side market that was mostly frequented by wholesale or second-hand merchants, the regenerated area attracts a much wider scope of visitors including families and younger generations who consider it a trendy place to pass time (Worldbank n.d.) (Figure 4). On the other hand, the project has also been heavily critiqued due to its lack of historic sensitivity on excavated archaeological remains and creative architectural planning. Another controversial point was the resorting to a half-artificial waterway that needs mechanical input of water collected from various sources and, therefore, has a high maintenance cost.

The Many historical bridges and significant artifacts from the Joseon era were rediscovered and excavated during the restoration. Considering the multiple layers that exist in the historic core of Seoul, such archaeological discoveries were highly expected, yet not prepared for in the project design. The bridges could for instance not be reinstated in their original locations, because the renovated stream width was conceived to be much wider than in historic times. Further, the historic remains were only minimally marked and removed to the city storage. Such interventions that neglect to include historical heritage's potential and importance, were attributed to the need of finding fast solutions, as the time factor was the most crucial in ensuring the project's success. The regeneration of the area had to be completed within the mayor's elected term, as only then the necessary financial and political commitment could be guaranteed. The rush to complete the planned project prevented any chance of accommodating alternative solutions in the implementation that could have taken into account the heritage specificities that were revealed during the construction stage.

This example shows the collision between time and leadership. Oftentimes creative projects spark controversy with the existing

fabric, and much more so when they come into conflict with heritage. Therefore, to stay grounded to the original "creative" scheme of eliminating an existing road and converting it into a modern and seemingly natural environment, leadership and political push is needed to stay committed to the original scheme and not get "distracted" by other elements that were not considered from the outset, such as the existence of heritage. This is a core element that determines the effectiveness of urban regeneration, as can be seen in the World Bank Urban Regeneration Decision Tool and case studies (World bank n.d.). Once the project starts, it is extremely difficult to insert in any other objectives into the agenda and interventions for heritage will only be possible when it does not cause delay or changes to the set-out plans. Heritage interventions could have been planned better, had there been structured research and investigations conducted prior to such regeneration schemes being established and a sound analysis involving specialists from diverse fields participating in the conceptualization of the project.

Seoul City Government Complex – old and new

The seat of the Seoul city government needed expansion as the city grew rapidly, already exceeding 10 million citizens in 1988. The original city hall was built in 1926 by the colonial Japanese Government General and remained in use after independence in 1945 (Figure 5). As the expanding government started to spread into multiple private office spaces in the vicinity to support their functions, various options were considered over the span of 30 years, from relocating completely to demolishing the existing structure and replacing it with a high-rise building. In 2005, a concrete plan focusing on renovating the original building and adding a new building right behind was established,

Figure 4: Cheonggyecheon Stream Area 10 years after regeneration, Seoul City. © Mediahubhttps://mediahub.seoul.go.kr/archives/919167

and various design options were considered.

However, since 2003, the original building was classified as a Registered Cultural Heritage, a category of heritage applicable to modern day structures. The category allows flexibility in terms of private ownership rights, has no legal restrictions for interventions, but the Cultural Heritage Administration (CHA) requires to be notified of any planned alterations. Accordingly, the city government notified the CHA of their plans to demolish the original city hall on 25 August 2008 and started physical demolition operations the very next day. CHA responded swiftly with an emergency Cultural Heritage Committee meeting and immediately declared the city hall a provisional Historic Site. This category comes with much stronger legal restrictions, based on which CHA requested a full restoration of the already demolished parts. Through a series of mediations and

resolutions, it was finally decided that the facade of the building would be maintained with the historic meeting hall component in the centre reconstructed underground. This compromise was supposed to address the lack of space and structural stability, while valuing the historic significance (Figure 6) (Seoul City Government 2013).

There were more complications when it came to the addition of a new building behind. The existing Seoul City Hall is merely separated by an approximately 40m-wide road from Deoksugung Palace (Figure 7). One of the official palaces of the Joseon Dynasty, it is a designated Historic Site and also houses individual designated treasures. Designated heritage sites within Seoul have a 100m radius of a Historic Cultural Environment Protection Area (aka buffer zone), within which the city has to observe a 27° height restriction to any new building within that area (Figure 8).

A series of building plans were presented and rejected by the Cultural Heritage Committee, on reasons that they were not compatible with the historic landscape and existing context of the heritage. Many revisions were made mainly on the height and external shape of the building. After a long deliberation and an open competition, a design was selected that was rounded in terms of its shape, and much lower in height than originally planned. Once the design was fixed, construction works started quickly, and in four years the new building was completed and opened to the public.

Despite the rather painful process of mediating through many design options and respecting the existing regulations regarding new constructions, the resulting new structure resembled a tsunami-wave of glass overpowering the original building from the back, bearing not much compatibility to the existing historic nor modern city scape (Figure 9). What is more, to overcome the negative popular opinion about the new building, much of its space

"This case shows the difficulty of arriving at mutually amicable solutions in complex governance set ups that stay true to the priority objectives."

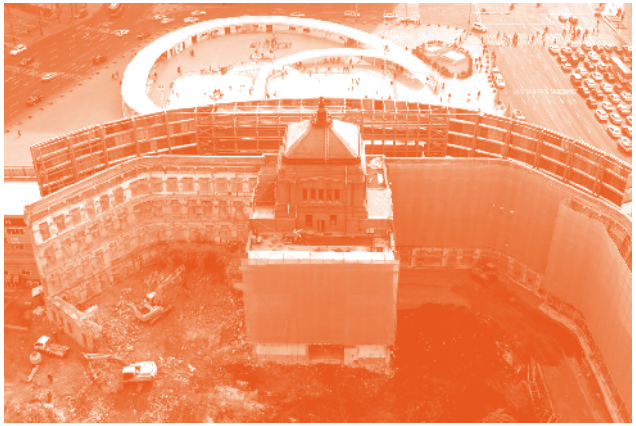


Figure 5: The old Seoul City Hall building. © Cultural Heritage Admistration, heritage.go.kr

Figure 6: Demolition of the original building leaving only the facade and main hall structure, 3.2.2009. © Yonhap New Agency, https://www.yna.co.kr/view/PYH20090203081300013

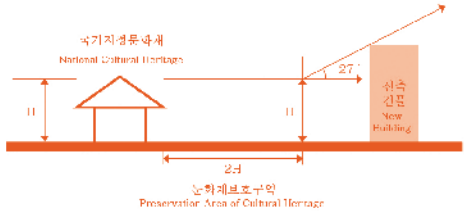


Figure 7: Location of the City Hall and the neighbouring Deoksugung Palace, Revised from Naver Maps, accessed 26.11.2022

Figure 8: Building height regulation in Seoul City © Kim and Kim 2014

was dedicated to cultural facilities and an underground archaeological exhibition hall. Consequently, the original main objective of having an integrated city hall large enough to host all the offices was not fulfilled.

This case shows the difficulty of arriving at mutually amicable solutions that stay true to the priority objectives in complex governance set ups for decision-making. Much too often, the final decision taken does not satisfy any of the involved parties, and rather than reaching a maximum potential of satisfying both heritage and development needs, the negotiation process often ends up with mediocre results that barely justify the bare minimum level of not breaking the regulations.

"Determining how long the impact assessment process takes to lead to a sound decision, is often the most pressing factor and the heritage sector needs to be more prepared for such pressure."

Figure 9: Old and new city hall buildings. © Taeshik Kim

The impact assessment process for heritage and what was missing

The case studies exemplify that the procedures currently in place to include heritage conservation in the creative process of regeneration of urban spaces are lacking. In this context, the *Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in World Heritage Context* (UNESCO et al. 2022) can offer a directive. The suggested process can be adopted for any proposed development and any type of heritage. It is based on two main parts of information, one being the baseline information of the heritage and the other the details of the proposed action. They then need to be combined and analysed together to consider the impacts (Steps 3 and 4 in Figure 10).

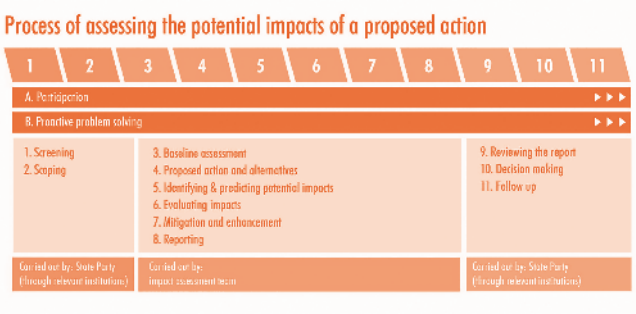


Figure 10: Process of assessing the potential impacts of a proposed action.(UNESCO et al. 2022)

In both the cases of Cheonggyecheon and Seoul City Hall, the need and prerogative of the city government for change was valid, however, the basic steps of creating a baseline assessment of the heritage (step 3) and the subsequent steps of evaluating the impacts and considering mitigation and enhancement measures (steps 5 and 6) were not included in the design procedure and not implemented properly. Rather than creating a baseline of the existing heritage and outlining what aspects form its main value and attributes, the heritage baseline was limited to understanding what is currently allowed and not allowed in terms of legal restrictions. Analysis was mostly made on merely determining the project's visual compatibility with the existing heritage as a final product, rather than having a full procedural comprehension that also includes construction, operation stages, as well as the original needs of why such a project was proposed.

The two cases bring to the fore the shortcomings of the existing heritage regulations. Although there are clear restrictions on height, functions, and general design of new buildings in the vicinity of designated heritage, the latter case of the Seoul City Hall clearly demonstrates that this alone cannot be sufficient to

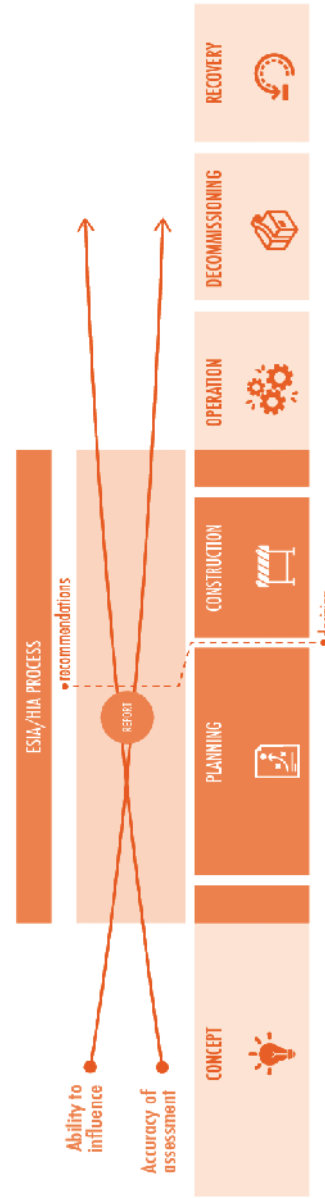


Figure 11: The ability to influence a project is much greater at the beginning of the concept being formulated and at the stages of planning UNESCO et al. 2022

protect the heritage nor to satisfy the organic development needs of a living urban environment. For over 100 years this area has been known as the city hall area and if the city hall physically relocated to a completely different area in Seoul, the entire district would have lost its cultural and historical identity. Therefore, finding a solution that was compatible to answer both the needs of heritage and the city was greatly called for, but from the start the legal battle did not leave any room for any proactive problem solving and enforced an approach of sticking to the bare minimum of not breaking existing regulations.

Both case studies raise the important element of time and governance. The projects were very much nested in the political agenda of the then mayors of Seoul, and their prompt execution was considered crucial to enable smooth administrative follow up during their mandates. Indeed, the quick implementation is considered one of the success factors in the positive reviews of the Cheonggyecheon restoration project. Confronted with these real-political situations of time crunch, the analysis highlights the need to take the time factor seriously in procedural best practice planning. Determining how long the impact assessment process takes to lead to a sound decision, is often the most pressing factor and the heritage sector needs to be more prepared for such pressure.

As heritage mostly consists of the built environment, conservation and management policy needs to be ready to contribute to within the urban regeneration projects. Proactive measures from the heritage sector on being prepared for the most pressing and predictable potential developments must be taken at the stages when plans are being established, with the aim to have a better and practical baseline of the heritage values and attributes established in advance of any proposal, rather than relying solely on legal regulations and immediate firefighting after implementation begins.

While the official and legal impact assessment process can be useful to determine the appropriateness of specific projects, it has limits in that it is only responsive to already formulated proposals. Therefore, it would be more than ideal to already consider the initial steps, such as a baseline assessment of the heritage and an understanding of the proposed actions and alternatives, at the stages of planning and conceiving the designs. These steps should be implemented at the stage when projects are being commissioned for architectural proposals, where creativity can be channelled to find better solutions to satisfy all the identified needs. ✳

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The Governance of Creative Heritage and Neo-Aesthetics: between Entertainment and Politics in Asia

1 The Nara document (1994) also played an important role in revisiting core concepts such as authenticity that refined ways of understanding and conserving cultural heritage worldwide. From another methodological angle, Asian heritage equally allows us to reflect on provincializing (Chakrabarty 2000) and decentering (Winter 2014) authorized heritage discourses.

2 https://heritagevietnamairlines.com/en/category/culture/heritage/

3 https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1328/

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Governing Narrative and Representational Creativity to Communicate Heritage Sites

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Rethinking Monuments of Oppression: the Role of Art in the Process of Historicization of Monuments

1 Signed by the Austrian-Hungary Empire and Italy in 1918, the treaty marked the end of the Empire and led to the establishment of new state boundaries.

2 Special forces serving the Austrian-Hungary Empire mostly in the area of Tyrol.

3 Including the South Tyrolean People's Party (Südtiroler Volkspartei), the Christian Democratic Party, the Italian Communist party, and the Italian Socialist party.

4 Between 1944 and 1945, the city of Bolzano/Bozen was occupied by Nazi forces and it became the headquarters of all Nazi alpine operations.

5 In Italian "BZ '18–'45. Un monumento, una città, due dittature". The acronym 'BZ' is the municipal code of Bolzano/Bozen.

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Museums in War: Luhansk Regional History Museum in Ukraine

1 International Council of Museums

2 Reference to the period between the proclamation of the independent Ukrainian state in 1991 and the invasion of the Luhansk region by the Russian Federation in 2014.

3 Sources of information: social networks and official announcements of exhibitions in the unrecognized Luhansk People's Republic.

4 Voroshilovgrad is the name of today's Luhansk that was used in the Soviet Union from 1935 to 1958 and from 1970 to 1990. This name commemorates Klim Voroshilov, one of the highest-ranking military officials during the Stalin era.

5 Famine-genocide of 1932–1933 engineered by the government of Joseph Stalin. Within the Soviet narrative of the Great Patriotic War and reinterpretation of the events of World War II, Holodomor is misrepresented as a consequence of the post-war recovery of the Soviet Union and a

result of the Nazi crimes against humanity. After the fall of the Soviet Union, this narrative was inherited by its successor, the Russian Federation.

6 The collections of each individual museum belong to the Museum Fund of Ukraine controlled by the Ministry of Culture. Each museum has its own managing institution – some are directly subordinated to the Ministry, but for the most part it is the Department (or Office) of Culture of the local administration – regional, city, district. Finally, each museum has its own management, represented by a director. Conventionally, in the case of emergency, the museum would need to submit a request to the local administration for the evacuation of the collection, wait to receive their confirmation, and only then take further steps. Moreover, the evacuation of collections requires allocation of special packaging materials for different museum objects, transport, fuel for it, security guards to accompany the transportation, and, most importantly, a place able to accept the collection in store it properly.

7 The evidence from Ukraine's de-occupied regions shows that the Ukrainian military's families are among the first victims of violence and systematic persecution by the occupiers.

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Six Areas of Conservation and Innovation: lessons from Mexico

1 See namely ICCROM's people-centred approaches (Court and Wijesuriya, 2015), and the focus on heritage places promoted by the World Heritage Leadership Programme (ICCROM-IUCN).

2 Sustainability here is seen in a broad manner, including actions, intervention processes, and use of materials that can ensure long lasting effects that support the conservation of heritage. This includes respecting conservation principles and doing as much as necessary but as little as possible, and in that process, aim for the use of processes that are feasible and whose implementation can be sustained and maintained in the long term; using, as much as possible, local resources and materials that are more easily accessible and with a smaller cost and carbon footprint; using and encouraging useful traditional knowledge; or investing in strategic maintenance, which may reduce the need for larger, more expensive conservation treatments.

3 This meant numerous challenges, particularly because concepts such as culture, heritage, and valuation had no meaning for the local community. Other words and concepts had to be used, for a meaningful dialogue to be possible.

4 For more information, see for example Alonso Olvera (2018) and Meehan Hermanson et al. (2018).

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1 https://unescochairsustainableurbanquality.org/

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From Top-Down to Collective and Intergenerational Creation: exploring Ecotourism for Heritage Conservation in Sikkim Through a Grassroots Initiative

1 The reservation system is a state-driven affirmative action system in India. It enables specific scheduled groups to get access to education, employment, specific schemes, etc. (see Shneiderman and Turin 2006 on culture, ethnic politics, and the reservation system in the Sikkim Darjeeling hills).

2 The project was funded in 2021 and 2022 by a CLOCK "Knowledge2Action South Asia" grant from the swissuniversities, co-headed by the Haute École de Travail Social Fribourg and the University of Lausanne.

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Determining Impacts of Creative Interventions on Heritage: cases from Korea Reflected from the Perspective of Conducting Impact Assessments

1 Results and effects of the regeneration (in Korean) https://www.sisul.or.kr/open_content/cheonggye/intro/effect2.jsp, accessed on July 11, 2023.

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Creative approaches to both planned and unplanned new practices remain an essential, yet somewhat invisible, part of sustaining living heritage. This collection of essays by interdisciplinary scholars and practitioners draws attention to how decisions are made about heritage and creativity issues, values, and relationships. We seek to shift away from a binary choice between authenticity versus change towards a multi-dimensional understanding of governance, creativity, and heritage. This is relevant for all forms of heritage whether described as cultural, natural or both.

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