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WHAT FUTURE FOR CULTURAL HERITAGE?
PERCEPTIONS, PROBLEMATICS AND POTENTIAL

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CULTURE, ARTS
AND SOCIETY

WHAT FUTURE FOR CULTURAL HERITAGE?
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WHAT FUTURE FOR CULTURAL HERITAGE? PERCEPTIONS, PROBLEMATICS AND POTENTIAL

This program, part of the long-running *Culture, Arts and Society* series, brought together creative thinkers and groundbreaking practitioners from around the world to reflect on and critique current approaches to cultural heritage, and to explore new frontiers in heritage innovation and collaboration.

How we think about the past and ourselves determines how we understand the present and how we build for the future. Cultural heritage shapes how we see the world. It influences the philosophy of societies and impacts education. It is based on knowledges, perceptions and contexts. Cultural heritage connects people to their histories, languages, values, traditions and lifestyles. It informs who we are as human beings and shapes our identities.

In today's volatile world, links to the past and to place have become more tenuous and contested, and threats to cultural heritage – both tangible and intangible – are extremely difficult to counter. Against this complex backdrop, Salzburg Global Seminar and the co-chairs of this program – Vishakha Desai and George Abungu – felt it was a critical moment to ask what cultural heritage actually means to different people and regions, especially in the digital era, and why it is more important than ever to preserve, enhance and share cultural heritage through all available means.

Salzburg Global has been committed to examining and supporting the role of culture in society since its beginnings in 1947. In the ten years since it convened the 2009 program *Connecting to the World's Collections*, and published the resulting *Salzburg Declaration on the Conservation and Preservation of Cultural Heritage*, a lot has been achieved.

The heritage sector, governments, non-governmental organizations, communities and other stakeholders have made progress on the way they work together. The engagement of communities has given rise to new questions particularly regarding our perceptions of the past. While technology has enabled broader educational and networking opportunities, new challenges are arising, particularly regarding access or curation of knowledge.

We live in a world that is becoming more fragmented, that swings from the irreparable loss of cultural heritage through conflict or climatic events, to the emergence of more detached relationships to heritage, with it serving only as a picturesque backdrop for the newest selfie. Socio-politics continue to evolve, necessitating the revisiting of history. Looking back makes us question whose knowledge and what culture has been preserved, made available, and mainstreamed.

It is essential to re-consider the intrinsic value of culture and cultural heritage beyond the merely economic. The potential for new opportunities exists. A more holistic and integrated concept of cultural heritage that includes tangible, intangible and natural assets and that acknowledges our precious diversity could help us reconnect with multiple knowledges. It could help us improve our wellbeing and provide us with tools to achieve sustainability.

Salzburg Global Vice President
Clare Shine opens the program

A SHARED VISION FOR CULTURAL HERITAGE: DISCUSSIONS IN SALZBURG

"Heritage is more about the present than the past."

The discussions that took place in Salzburg during the program, *What Future for Cultural Heritage? Perceptions, Problematics and Potential* aimed to outline a shared vision for the cultural heritage sector and to develop strategies for raising greater awareness of the unique and often poorly-understood role of cultural heritage.

Through the generous support of the Edward T. Cone Foundation, the five-day program from March 16 to 21, 2019, brought together 46 practitioners and thinkers from the cultural heritage sector, including museum, library, and archive professionals; representatives of international cultural heritage associations; and a cross-cutting mix of technology innovators and social entrepreneurs, civil society leaders, historians and researchers, policymakers, anthropologists and cultural philanthropists.

Participants engaged in a highly interactive program that included plenary discussions and smaller work groups, curated conversations, informal interactions, knowledge exchanges, and practical group work. The program was structured along a continuum of inquiry, with three main focus areas:

PERCEPTIONS OF THE PAST
Together and sometimes in contention with each other, participants interrogated the historical frames through which cultural heritage is viewed and how such predetermined frames color the view and value of cultural heritage. Discussions included reflections on ownership of knowledge, heritage and identity, and the exiting notions of tangible and intangible heritage.

PROBLEMATICS OF THE PRESENT
The second strand of the program sought to explore the broader social and political contexts surrounding cultural heritage and to address ways to tackle the manifold threats to cultural heritage including climate change, overtourism, conflict, and a general lack of resources. Discussions addressed issues including restitution, the intentional destruction of heritage, and sustainable development.

POTENTIAL FOR THE FUTURE
Participants then transitioned to identifying some concrete and creative recommendations to energize the field in the face of its enormous challenges including intergenerational engagement and establishing connections between cultural heritage and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

This report presents the key points of discussion, debate and learning from the Salzburg program, as well as recommendations developed by the participants.

"Our heritage is where the past meets the future."

PERCEPTIONS OF THE PAST

Both our present and future are defined by our past. Developing a new vision for cultural heritage requires recognizing that our perceptions of the past may differ and our understanding of what is to be remembered and should be preserved may not be the same as others'. Our understanding of past events may be inaccurate or incomplete and will thus inevitably differ.

To understand some of the problematics of the present we need to start by questioning our perceptions of the past, which include interrogating the self and the collective. The interrogation of the self requires a lot of kindness in these troubled times. The interrogation of the collective requires questioning why we what we do, where we are coming from – historically, socially, politically and psychologically – and how we can move forward from our collective past. If the existing structures are consequence of the power relationships of the past, we should also be aware that new definitions will also be reflecting the structures and identities of our times.

WHOSE PAST?

The way events have been curated (or not) and transmitted (or not) influence our perception of the past and how we shape our present. It is essential to rethink the relationships of power and question the impact of colonialist structures and the influence of the Global North. A small number of countries have played a very influential role in the practices resulting in epistemic injustices, greater institutional importance given to certain artefacts, little recognition of female achievements, limited visibility of archaeology in many parts of the world, and the over-promotion of outstanding universal value of certain monuments to the detriment of others, to mention only a few. Cultural heritage is based on the perception of knowledge, and who "owns" the knowledge has the power to curate and create the narratives.

Program co-chair Vishakha Desai (right) opens the program with a conversation on "Perceptions of the Past" with Webber Ndoro and Anasuya Sengupta

As we confront violent episodes from the past, we should start from a position of powerlessness and ask ourselves new questions, moving from one to multiple centers, with no fixed historical starting points. In order to do this, it is necessary to rethink the concept of cultural heritage and ask whose knowledge, whose culture is being considered. We must take into account whose knowledge, whose attitude, and whose power is being considered and from whose perspective history is written and read, as often there are deep biases in what we accept as being accepted. We need to be aware of biases in others and ourselves and take them into account in the present to move forward.

IN WHICH LANGUAGE AND WHERE?

In this context, issues of language must also be carefully considered since they play an important role in the understanding and recognition of knowledges. Oral knowledge is often undervalued and by its very nature presents challenges for long-term preservation. In addition, in many languages there are no separate words for knowledge and culture, and often nature is included in the same concept. What is traditionally defined as knowledge in the Global North is considered culture in the Global South, where also oral knowledge plays a more prominent role.

This reflection gets extended to the concepts of tangible and intangible heritage and the need to redefine heritage as a whole so that it also includes nature. The 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Heritage was a milestone in this regard. For the first time there was a recognition of the need to protect practices and customs and their associated knowledge, safeguarding the intangible elements and the precious value of communities, their stewardships, identity and pride, which are the most important factors.

Central to the program was therefore the idea of multiple perceptions of the past and diversity of knowledges and the languages in which those knowledges were – and still are – recorded and expressed. With English being the main working language for many countries and professions, elements that were, or still are, not in English are often ignored. The development of the digital world is also posing important challenges to how those knowledges and multiple perceptions of the past are curated. Minorities and women are not evenly represented in digital production and content, which again is mainly produced and curated from the Global North. With 75 percent of the internet usage coming from the Global South and with 45 percent women users, the issues of digital narratives are particularly relevant, especially as the internet has become the main resource and library of younger generations. Techno-globalization influences the perceptions of the past and the decolonization of the internet is becoming increasingly relevant.

WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS OF THESE DIFFERING PERCEPTIONS FOR OUR PRESENT AND FUTURE?

Where cultural heritage only reflects the views and interests of the peoples in positions of power, it may be contested and thus becomes divisive and destructive. Therefore, many processes surrounding cultural heritage – including memorialization – are highly political and reflect deep power dynamics.

As a result, cultural heritage might not always have positive connotations for all stakeholders. Still, it is also important to conserve what can be called "negative" heritage in order to keep a full vision of contested events. It is not always clear what is the best way to do this as what should be kept for one group or generation might be different from another, and therefore there is a need to acknowledge the right to forget as much as the right to remember.

Discarding and forgetting are also a part of cultural heritage. Decisions about what is not preserved shape our understanding and perceptions. Sometimes those past choices were

"Telling histories of the past should not be equalized with telling the real past."

"If you do it for me without me, you do it against me."

not conscious, planned or intended, while other times they responded to specific interests. At the present, contextualizing any decision is considered the best way forward; and in the cases where removing statues or contested elements from public view has been decided, they should be kept in storage or perhaps moved to museums where they can be displayed in a contextualized and educational setting. When possible, it is considered good practice to present particularly divisive histories together with respective processes of reconciliation, such as is the case at many genocide museums and memorials.

In this context, we should remember that the choices and narratives that we create now will be taken forward and shape our future. This is particularly relevant in the cases of conflict or disasters when it becomes necessary to recover heritage to help build resilience and rebuild societies. The decision-making process about what to preserve and in which format also becomes part of our cultural heritage and despite the difficulties it might pose at the present moment and it must be done carefully.

The African saying "Not for me without me" suggests a path forward. To overcome perceptions of the past we need a broader concept of cultural heritage, inclusive of multiple knowledges. This more holistic approach, new to many in the Global North, should consider people and planet, tangible and intangible heritage, as well as natural heritage, representing the precious diversity of cultural heritage going forward.

Navin Piplani (standing) leads a working group discussion in the Chinese Room of Schloss Leopoldskron

PROBLEMATICS OF THE PRESENT

Looking at the problematics of the present and discussing the main challenges and concerns confronting the cultural heritage sector enabled participants to lay the foundations for the ensuing conversations around new opportunities for cultural heritage in the future.

Despite the diverse representation of disciplines, experiences, ages and institutional backgrounds in the group, participants were very aligned regarding the main concerns that the cultural heritage sector is currently facing. They also agreed that some of these issues will persist in the short to mid-term and require global approaches to resolve them.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PRESERVATION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE?

Cultural heritage issues often involve multiple disciplines (from territories and urban planning, to ownership, maintenance, funding, etc.) and the legal responsibilities are often managed by a myriad of departments at several administrative levels that range from local and national to international.

This leads to questions of who is in charge of cultural heritage and who is ultimately responsible for its preservation. Clearer definition of roles and competencies at every level and improved consistency and coordination are needed. While national sovereignty is a key focus of current discussions, globalization and the scale of many recent cases involving the destruction or restitution of cultural heritage require that international laws and conventions also be considered. The international community should act with stewardship, however some international laws, conventions and regulations remain based on definitions of the past that no longer respond to the needs of the present, adding additional challenges to those already complex cases. Such laws need to be updated.

Even in cases where the legal responsibility is identified, this is not enough. The final decision to intervene and act in protection of the cultural heritage ultimately requires

"Consider cultural heritage less as a noun and more as verb."

"We call for radical honesty, radical openness and radical curiosity."

political commitment and agreement among multiple actors. These decisions often depend on other geopolitical or diplomatic elements, and cultural heritage in itself is often not the priority.

In the cases of armed conflict in particular, participants in Salzburg denounced inaction or action that is not taken by the global community until it is too late and the damage to cultural heritage is too large, as was the case in Palmyra. The political complexities of conflict put cultural heritage aside without taking into account the future implications of its destruction. In order to limit damage to cultural heritage in those contexts, participants proposed that the destruction of cultural heritage be considered a war crime. Overcoming the tendency to work in silos and isolation in the cultural heritage sector is also needed, since the safeguarding of cultural heritage in conflict zones requires the coordination with others such as humanitarian agencies or military forces which are often the first responders on the ground.

Many of these problematics are illustrated in the case of what was referred to as "the second destruction of Syria." The planning and reconstruction of cities such as Aleppo is taking place without taking into account the local communities, many of whom are now refugees in other countries. The plans for reconstruction are not considering traditional knowledge and the formerly existing cultural heritage of the area; instead they are based on other styles and cultures, so that even if peace is reached, the scant remains of the local identity will have been destroyed and replaced by new and disconnected cultural forms.

WHO OWNS CULTURAL HERITAGE?

Cases of trafficking and restitution are legally complex and are often dependent on countries being signatories (or not) of specific international regulations, whether the object was exported or stolen and who was responsible for the move. In particular, it was discussed how probing the ownership of an artefact within a particular timeframe reduces the number of cases that can be fought in courts, and therefore limits opportunities for the repatriation

Iman Al-Hindawi (left) and Nura Ibold (right capture their group's vision in the McGowan Room of Schloss Leopoldskron

of cultural heritage in the future. In the case of restitution when no laws apply, alternative approaches include mediation. This is considered positive in many ways as it allows the speeding up and finalization of the processes, however, more global long-term solutions should be identified thought litigation. In the case of illicit trafficking of cultural heritage, funds often end up financing other illegal trade such as drugs or arms and are connected with terrorism in many cases.

HOW DO WE VALUE CULTURAL HERITAGE?

Value is applied unevenly to cultural heritage. How do we ascribe social value to cultural heritage? The fragility of the value of cultural heritage must be recognized, especially when there is no clear commercial value.

Destruction of cultural heritage, such as in Palmyra, Syria, is an irreparable and unrecoverable loss. However, such dire cases might represent opportunities to think about cultural heritage in new ways. Although it may be difficult to measure the loss, it is important to communicate the significance of those losses for humanity more effectively. In addition to these well-known cases that shake the international community, more clarity about why cultural heritage is important and what core values it represents is needed.

In a world where most decisions are based on sound figures, metrics and impact, the sector struggles to make the case for cultural heritage, especially when it tries to communicate this value to other sectors that base their investment and partnership choices on economic value and return. There is a need to measure and quantify the relevance of cultural heritage, including those aspects that are more intangible such as pleasure, wellbeing or joy. Improved metrics can ienhance the connections to fundraising and availability of resources. Problematics include difficulties in mapping cultural heritage resources, especially intangible ones; difficulties of gathering data; unavailability of figures; and inefficiency of indicators. How to ascribe social value to cultural heritage remains one of the most complex issues, as it involves developing a methodology of quantitative assessment of the social value of heritage based on a consistent system of measurable indicators that often do not represent the intangible human, spiritual and social connections fostered by cultural projects. Therefore, a caveat was added: there is a danger in believing that everything in culture can be quantified, that all results are fast, and that impact can be measured easily. The participants warned that dedicated measures are complex and require time, and that cultural dynamics are often slower than the speedy decision-making processes in other sectors.

HOW DO WE BALANCE CULTURE AND DEVELOPMENT?

Rising tourism, the commercial exploitation of heritage, and the increase of land prices in urban areas pose threats to the conservation of heritage sites, including the associated impacts on related intangible assets and elements of identity.

Concerns about over exploitation of cultural heritage are particularly relevant in the Global South, where there is sometimes a need to compromise economic development and heritage conservation. The recommended approach for cultural heritage professionals in these contexts, as one of the participants summarized, is "to act as a good neighbor" to the local communities. They should help un-tap opportunities for better futures, balancing culture and development and fostering local pride – all of which need to be done with great respect and taking into account the specific contexts of each place.

"How do we engage in a way that allows us to navigate emotional situations in different cultures and contexts?"

THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was unanimously adopted by the 193 UN Member States in September 2015. Long debates took place within the cultural sector prior to the approval of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) about the need to have one specific goal about culture or to have culture as a transversal element of sustainable development. The latter approach was eventually adopted.

The SDGs were part of discussions in Salzburg, particularly pertaining to the transformative of power of culture to respond to global challenges. Two were highlighted in particular:

Goal 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. Accompanied by Target 11.4: Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage.

Goal 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

There was general consensus among participants that no development can be sustainable without including cultural considerations. Although some group members felt it would have been better to have culture at the center of the SDGs, the group was in full agreement regarding the aggregated contribution that the cultural heritage sector in general – and the group convened in particular – could make to sustainable development.

Culture is both an enabler and a driver of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. The role of culture is recognized in a majority of the SDGs, including those focusing on quality education, sustainable cities, the environment, economic growth, sustainable consumption and production patterns, peaceful and inclusive societies, gender equality and food security.

HOW DO CONFLICT AND CLIMATE CHANGE CAUSE LOSS OF HERITAGE AND IDENTITY?

Climate change and conflict are forces of displacement that can cause the loss of cultural heritage. The loss of cultural heritage in places of origin, combined with the development of new cultural assets on the move and the arrival to destination places – where the cultural setting might be different or unknown – is causing important shifts in identities that will continue affecting communities the future.

Climate change poses a particular challenge for cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible. Global warming, more radical storm events and the rise of waters are threatening physical spaces for humans and animals across the planet. Objects and artefacts threatened by water and temperature rise are either being lost (sometimes swept into the sea) or require updated conservation elements to cope with new weather conditions.

In the case of conflict, cultural heritage can be lost or damaged due to armed forces; on emptied lands, the lack of people and of resources to preserve the remaining heritage pose additional conservation challenges. In addition to these risks to living conditions, climate change and conflict also threaten cultural identities, practices, oral traditions and skills. Cultural expressions are also affected by new living modes and displacement. For many cultures, especially for indigenous peoples, the source of knowledge and culture is the land, which compounds these effects.

In the cases of migration and displacement due to conflict, there is a double impact. First, for displaced people, the disconnection from their past and identity affects the older generations with a sentiment of loss and the younger generations – who might have never been deeply in touch with or experienced key elements of their own culture – with a feeling of disorientation. Secondly, there is an impact on the production of new elements and artefacts that are related to new communities and to the journeys, but no longer to the territory of origin.

"There will be a higher sense urgency to preserve due to the increase of devastating climatic events."

WHAT CHALLENGES DOES THE CULTURAL HERITAGE SECTOR ITSELF FACE?

In order to improve its positioning and external consideration, the cultural heritage sector must be able to demonstrate stronger leadership in relation to other sectors, policymakers and the general public, as well as within the sector itself. The ability to present a sound case for cultural heritage, engage in and influence decision-making will determine the external support and recognition that the sector receives.

The cultural heritage sector needs to think about language when speaking to those outside the sector, so that it can adapt and connect better to diverse audiences. The language should be accessible, relevant and equipped with better arguments and tools. Although the value and relevance of cultural heritage is clear to its professionals, the reasons and motivations to engage with the sector will be different for a potential funder or for a school group. Too often the technical recommendations are deemed too distant or irrelevant to those outside the sector. More imagination is needed within the sector to explain its importance and value to others and to build stronger alliances across sectors and with local communities.

With regard to policymaking, a main challenge for cultural heritage professionals is the ability to influence decision-making. The reasons why local authorities will support or not support the preservation of heritage vary and the decisions taken are often unrelated to the intrinsic importance of the place or the urgency of the action. The most important decisions are not necessarily taken by the best informed, yet those decisions can have great impact and can affect communities for a long time. In addition, cultural heritage professionals often need to deal with several layers of bureaucracy and legislation for one and the same project. They also need to be able to relate to a large variety of professionals ranging from politicians, to religious authorities, military, community leaders and civil society. Stronger and clearer leadership from governments and decision-makers in the protection of tangible and intangible cultural heritage is essential. Support would need to come in the shape of resources, informed evaluations, and a better understanding and articulation of the important role that cultural heritages plays in communities and societies.

Leadership challenges within the cultural heritage sector were also identified. Professionals must be able to multitask and deal with a wide range of management issues that require multiple expertise, adaptive qualities, and the capacity to seize new opportunities. They must also overcome working in silos. More open and proactive relationships should be built with other disciplines: professionals working on tangible and intangible heritage should improve connections between them, and both need to connect better to professionals working on underwater heritage. They should also be open to dialogue with those teams that they meet during field work such as the humanitarian sector, and security and peacekeeping forces. There is also a need for clarity and focus to build credible leadership from within the sector to be better advocates for cultural heritage and communities. The most important element of leadership thinking for the future is empowering communities to go the way they want to go forward.

Finally, more female and more diverse leaders are needed, with greater visibility and support from peers. A better transmission of leadership to younger generations is also necessary, helping them to become the cultural heritage leaders of tomorrow.

"We need arts and culture to move from the periphery to the center of policymaking."

"In some communities, life expectancy is 45 years old: the future looks different in that reality."

POTENTIAL FOR THE FUTURE

Our understanding of the future can be linear or circular depending on our cultural system of reference. This is an important philosophical difference that acknowledges the diversity of knowledges in cultural heritage. In addition, the sense of time and urgency also differs depending on our cultural backgrounds.

From a linear perspective, global problematics such as migration, unequal relationships between the Global North and South, or gender inequalities might be considered unrelated to each other and not connected to the future of cultural heritage. However, from a circular perspective, these issues are connected in a spiral of time and place and they are both cause and consequence. Cultural heritage is one of the elements of the cultural system and its future is linked to all the other elements.

From this circular perspective, cultural heritage has the potential to lead the way forward, by offering and facilitating the spaces and knowledges that professional communities and practitioners need to address future challenges. In a world increasingly characterized by tensions, uncertainty, distrust and intolerance, cultural heritage could create enabling spaces that are more integrated and permeable and can help facilitate participation and dialogue about global problematics, whose causes are often shared and whose effects are interconnected.

Oscar Tollast demonstrates how social media can be used to promote cultural heritage

Program participants sought to define the potential for the future of cultural heritage, three opportunities were highlighted as having the potential to create a sustainable future for all:

MAXIMIZING OPPORTUNITIES FOR TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND VALUES

For indigenous communities, sustainability is at the core of their ways of life. Thinking about the future is embedded in their actions and approaches. Knowledge and respect for the environment can and must play a role in the use of the cultural and natural resources for coming decades. The use of technology can offer new ways in which their knowledges are made available and applied to modern forms of construction, production and consumption.

Fellows from India, the Middle East, and Chile shared examples of how this can be possible including sustainable crafts, architecture, and agriculture projects based on the traditional knowledges of local communities. Given the threat that climate change poses to cultural heritage, we must consider the opportunities it can represent for applying the traditional knowledges of indigenous peoples. These communities are increasingly considered as a wise and valuable reference for solutions and ways in which traditional knowledge and approaches can inform the path forward for natural conservation.

PRESERVING CULTURAL HERITAGE THROUGH DIGITIZATION

Cultural heritage is a unique vehicle to transmit the knowledges, values and history of humanity. It helps connect peoples from different backgrounds to overcome differences and learn about and from each other. Digital libraries and archives have the potential to become the best allies in the preservation and dissemination of cultural heritage, making it accessible to peoples across the planet. Digitization is particularly relevant in the case of endangered heritage or in remote areas where technology can play an invaluable role in preservation efforts.

As education systems change, the cultural heritage sector has the opportunity to re-evaluate its role and contributions. Making cultural heritage more available via digital tools can increase awareness of the importance of heritage assets not only among specialist but also among the general public and in educational settings.

FOSTERING COMMUNITIES' WELLBEING

Cultural heritage plays an important role in building and consolidating the basis for social cohesion, peace, wellbeing and accumulation of social capital. Cultural heritage projects can bring people together and promote intergenerational interaction that breaks the barriers of isolation. Visits to cultural heritage sites often require physical engagement. The discovery of artefacts and events stimulate memory and intellectual capacities.

In times when populations are aging and increasing numbers of people have mental health problems, cultural heritage professionals need to think more about connections between heritage, health and wellbeing.

Cultural heritage has the potential to inspire happiness and connect us with our humanity. As we plan for the future, these elements should remain at the core of the sector's activities and serve to identify synergies with other sectors that are also working to improve health and wellbeing for societies in the future.

"Reclaim the benefits of traditional knowledge in addressing contemporary needs."

"There is a need to increase access to cultural heritage offerings using digital tools."

HOW DO WE DEAL WITH CONTESTED HISTORIES? SCHLOSS LEOPOLDSKRON: A CASE STUDY

Schloss Leopoldskron – home of Salzburg Global Seminar – is in itself a living example of a site of contested histories, where the challenges of heritage conservation and the pressures of contemporary use and interpretation collide on a daily basis. As steward of an Austrian national monument – the Baroque building, its complex history, and Max Reinhardt's legacy – Salzburg Global is committed to the careful preservation and maintenance of the property and its thoughtful contextualization in the 21st century.

Since the very beginning, arts and culture have been a part of what the Schloss is and also what it has meant to others in every period of its history. Associations with power, persecution, and renewal reverberate throughout the almost 300-year-old building. Since its commissioning in 1736, the property has born witness to precarious and turbulent times: from its foundation by the Prince Archbishop of Salzburg, Leopold Anton Freiherr von Firmian, through a period of relative decadence and later decline in the 19th century, to its revival thanks to Max Reinhardt, Europe's most famous theater director at the time and co-founder of the Salzburg Festival in 1920; through World War II when it was confiscated by the Nazi government as "Jewish property"; to its existence since 1947 as home to Salzburg Global Seminar – a place for global dialogue and bridging divides.

The program *What Future for Cultural Heritage? Perceptions, Problematics and Potential* provided a unique opportunity for Salzburg Global to present Schloss Leopoldskron as a case study to the gathered group of international heritage specialists to examine and consider "perceptions, problematics, and potential" relating specifically to the Schloss' own contested history. A recent protest that occurred in the Schloss' Venetian Room has been a catalyst for the organization to reconsider the cultural heritage of its own building in light of current contexts, debates,

and perceptions. During Salzburg Global's Young Cultural Innovators Forum in October 2018, several posters were anonymously put up in the Schloss' Venetian Room, protesting the *commedia dell'arte* paintings in that room, which the protesters viewed as depictions of blackface and racial prejudice. This protest of the artworks, as well as critical interpretations of other elements of Schloss Leopoldskron's cultural heritage, have raised difficult questions about historical and structural injustice that Salzburg Global has the responsibility to examine in a manner consistent with its institutional respect for equality, diversity, and inclusion and its institutional mission to challenge current and future leaders to shape a better world. Salzburg Global issued a statement on the Venetian Room Protest and the Cultural Heritage of Schloss Leopoldskron in early December 2019, which can be viewed here: salzburgglobal.org/go/venetianroomstatement

ONGOING EFFORT

During the *What Future for Cultural Heritage?* program, Salzburg Global Vice President Benjamin Glahn engaged program participants in a dialogue on the Schloss' various contested histories and what Salzburg Global has done since the protest in an ongoing effort to fulfil its mission to create a safe space where difficult conversations can take place. Salzburg Global has sought for its responses to be as consultative, transparent,

educational, and additive as possible. Participants of the cultural heritage program were invited to discuss what could be done or explained better in the future, and what main challenges the property and its collections might pose to visitors and participants with differing sensibilities and perceptions.

Participants generally felt that it was important for Salzburg Global to view this challenging issue as an opportunity for institutional growth, learning and improvements in its understanding and practice. A lively debate ensued regarding the elements that would need to be considered to explain the Schloss' collections, particularly those that are contested or that represent painful and difficult histories.

Participants also felt Salzburg Global needed to make more information about the artworks accessible at all levels – including contextualizing the works and making this information more available to participants and the public through a catalogue, on the website, and via installations and educational materials in the respective rooms. Salzburg Global was advised to seek further advice from diverse outside sources in its efforts to understand, address, and communicate aspects of the Schloss' contested history. While some participants felt that aesthetic

and art-historical considerations should not be forgotten in the heat of the debate, many participants spoke very strongly to the need – evident in controversies arising all over the world – to take a critical look at the historical dominance of white culture, including representations of blackness and meanings thereof, particularly in a space such as the Schloss that, in the words of one participant, "elevates whiteness." During the discussion there was a broad consensus that there was generally greater value in keeping the images – and adding to the context and information provided about them – rather than removing them. Engaging deeply in the history of contestation can help greatly with learning processes, as has been the case on Robben Island in South Africa, as one participant suggested. Salzburg Global was warned not to use intellectualization as a way to avoid the pain, anger and frustration caused by the paintings, rather to acknowledge that it was important to allow the discomfort and to "see it in each other."

Salzburg Global remains indebted to the program's participants for their frank and helpful insights and comments, which will inform steps taken to deal with Schloss Leopoldskron's contested histories going forward.

Matariki Williams captures her group's recommendations

WAYS FORWARD: RECOMMENDATIONS FROM WORKING GROUPS

"We cannot predict the future, but we can design towards the one we want."

Focusing on six overarching themes in self-selected working groups, participants developed recommendations and future strategies for each:

- Cultural Heritage and Sustainable Development
- Making the Case for Cultural Heritage
- Cross Sectorial Alliances and Development Partnerships
- Decolonizing Heritage, Knowledge and Practice
- Intergenerational Engagement
- Technology, Digital Developments, AI, Media and Cultural Heritage

CULTURAL HERITAGE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

In a desired vision for coming decades, cultural heritage and sustainable development are closely interrelated: cultural heritage should be a core element that contributes to sustainable development and sustainable development is fundamental for the future of cultural heritage.

The guiding principles for this mutually beneficial relationship include a holistic and all-inclusive approach to cultural heritage at three levels:

1. It must include all types of heritage (tangible, intangible, cultural, natural, etc.);
2. It must include everyone – not only institutions or professionals – and embrace all ages, genders, races, and sexual preferences; and
3. It must consider cultural heritage as dynamic: constantly changing and evolving.

In addition, cultural heritage is a container of multiple values: both economic and ethical, such as regarding dignity and identity. It can be an enabler of peace and social cohesion, overall wellbeing, and of environmental protection. As a result of this holistic approach and the inclusion of multiple values, cultural heritage becomes a driver and enabler of all aspects of sustainable development.

"In the past, sustainability was about raising money, now it is about intergenerational engagement."

RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES

- Engage with, build alliances with, and gather support from different audiences (political policy-/decision-makers, industries, academics, professionals, and general public);
- Integrate cultural heritage into development and planning processes;
- Harness cultural heritage contributions to address urbanization, climate change, disaster risk, and social cohesion;
- Empower communities in developing alternative ways of creating livelihoods;
- Build capacity through education, curricula, institutional groups, individuals, and other sectors, e.g. development studies, applied disciplines, grassroots/practical;
- Strengthen the cultural heritage sector through communication, advocacy, fundraising, and data coordination;
- Foster youth engagement through inter-generational dialogue, transmission and exchange of knowledge and experience, and continuity;
- Harness digital technologies;
- Improve evidence-based reporting, monitoring and evaluation, and best practices;
- Diversify funding sources and improve resourcing for cultural heritage; and
- Advocate to strengthen cultural heritage role in next cycle of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Agenda.

"Culture, arts and humanities are significant in education."

MAKING THE CASE FOR CULTURAL HERITAGE

The values and contribution of cultural heritage to humanity are often clearer to institutions and professionals within the sector than to other sectors and society in general. Cultural heritage professionals find it challenging to make the best case for cultural heritage since it is often difficult to quantify the value and impact of its assets and projects. Its diversity is its strength, but can also become its weakness, as it can fracture or dilute its messages.

As part of the vision for coming decades, the cultural heritage sector requires greater cohesion; institutions and professionals must better communicate the importance of cultural heritage in and of itself and for sustainable development, beyond the cultural sector and without diminishing the value of culture.

Cultural heritage has the potential to address some of the main current and future challenges for humanity at different levels such as: climate change, conflict, xenophobia, displacement, poverty, social inequalities, access to education, conflicting agendas, illiteracy, etc.

RECOMMENDED STRATEGY

Engage beyond the cultural heritage sector.

To make the case for cultural heritage in the next decades, a comprehensive list of arguments is needed showing in practical ways how cultural heritage can help address the main challenges affecting humanity. What cultural heritage can do for us must be presented in a tangible and clear form at the following three levels:

1. To the sector through specialized publications and events,
2. To the general public for its discovery through social media (#HeritageCan),
3. To institutions and sector beyond cultural heritage.

Cultural Heritage **can**:
- Celebrate Humanity
- Enhance Understandings
- Combat Climate Change
- Foster Discovery
- Renew Hope
- Advance Research
- Preserve Memories
- Tell Stories
- Inspire New Direction
- Celebrate History
- Connect People
- Transmit from the Past
- Bring Joy
- Instill Respect
- Increase Confidence and Self-esteem
- Strengthen Wellbeing
- Promote Peace
- Inspire Discourse
- Promoting Intergenerational Dialogue
- Save Lives
- Educate
- Mobilize Communities
- Give Voice to the Voiceless
- Create Economic Opportunity

Amareswar Galla in a working group session

CROSS-SECTORIAL ALLIANCES AND DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIPS

"Be the people you want to invite back in the future; be a good neighbor."

Looking forward to coming decades, there is a clear need to embed cultural heritage in other sectors, building alliances based on the intrinsic value of cultural heritage to connect people to their histories, languages, values, traditions, and lifestyles in an evolving world.

To achieve this, cultural heritage considerations need to be embedded within all sectors of government and civil society through alliances and partnerships across governmental, educational, commercial, and private sector agencies.

The strategies to build cross-sectorial alliances must include all aspects of heritage, including the built environment; natural sites; and agricultural, rural, and intangible heritage. For implementation, these strategies require bottom-up and top-down approaches that complement each other.

RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES

- Improve the effectiveness of the sector by calling on national chapters and departments of international agencies and organizations such as ICOMOS, ICCROM and IUCN to:
  - evaluate heritage with a view to its potential loss through climate change and migration,
  - develop mitigation plans for heritage at risk (which could include transfer to new locations and solicitation of local input for solutions) that involve identification of partners in other sectors, and
  - coordinate international efforts to work on risk preparedness strategies and training;

- Coordinate a call to philanthropic sector partners to finance these efforts as well as provide endorsements to influence governmental policies;
- Develop stronger partnerships with the tech industry, including developing strategies to present stronger public messages;
- Develop partnerships with universities to maximize the use of intellectual capital and scientific resources for documentation, utilizing new technologies, engagement of students, and publishing information in sectors other than cultural heritage periodicals;
- Develop partnerships to encourage

the inclusion of traditional practice in educational systems to expose students to cultural heritage; this requires advocating with local decision-makers on education curricula;
- Work with ministries of labor and education, private industry associations, and Chambers of Commerce to promote cultural heritage as a partner for workforce development; and
- Develop relationships with industries that could see cultural heritage as an investment opportunity and potential workforce beyond the tourism industry.

Alissandra Cummins (center) and Iyekiyapiwin Darlene St. Clair (left) share thorughts

"How do we use this heritage in the most responsible way and how has history affected our societies and shared histories?"

DECOLONIZING HERITAGE, KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICE

Decolonization is not an easy issue to discuss and to define. There was a general agreement on the effects of colonialization in the developing world, however, the long-lasting results of those effects are not yet settled or homogeneous. For that reason, speaking about decolonization is challenging and providing the right context is essential.

There are no templates or ready-made formulas to speak about colonization and no prescribed steps for decolonization. Decolonization is a complex process that involves cultural heritage, as much as politics, economics, and social issues. For that reason, taking into account the specificity of each case and location is essential. In addition, to conceptualize the whole decolonization process from the cultural heritage sector requires a broader perspective that takes into account interactions with other sectors.

In an effort to facilitate these difficult conversations, some common elements of colonial projects were identified as follows:

1. Produced representational practices in colonial concepts of the world;
2. Separated the world into units and labeled those units;
3. Compartmentalized the colonized's relational histories;
4. Created power relations between colonizer-colonized and normalized;
5. Defined new categories of persons, land, art, heritages etc.;
6. Labeled the "other" as "irrational."

The conversations that start the processes of decolonization are often disruptive in positive ways and unmute the muted, so those who were not able to do so speak and those who were previously invisible become visible. The key to move from colonization to decolonization is to understand how and where knowledge was created in colonial contexts, and what was its relationship to the source of power so that a new and more valid basis can be established.

To be effective, decolonization should change words, actions and minds. To do that seven elements are needed:

1. Decolonization of knowledges and practices – where there is no longer one source of discourse;
2. Decolonization of discussion – where multiple narratives and lines of thought co-exist;
3. Decolonization of methodologies;

Albino Jopela (left) and Shahid Vawda discuss the decolonization of heritage

4. Decolonization of action – it is a process and action must take place;
5. Decolonization of responsibility and accountability – considering who will take responsibility and how it will be monitored;
6. Decolonization of advocacy; and
7. Decolonization of perspectives – how people see the world in a post-colonialist context and sets frames, ethics, policies, etc.

RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES

In order to move from colonized to decolonized projects and be able to decolonize words, actions and minds, the main recommendations are:
- Resist romantic notions of pre-colonial versus colonial in racial terms (including colonial racial taxonomies, hierarchy, etc.);
- Understand colonial impositions, which will be different in every case (unpacking impositions, labels, names and concepts);
- Re-center knowledge and practices from new perspectives (considering where the colonial center is and where the new perspectives are);
- Reflect on the potential hidden assumptions that may exist;
- Develop practices informed by collaborative, dialogical, multi-logical values that allow representation from all;
- Create space to address unjust practices, ideas, thinking, etc., in shared equal environments; and
- Complete processes of restitution and reparation.

INTERGENERATIONAL ENGAGEMENT

Cultural heritage will remain relevant as long as younger generations engage with the knowledge, meaning and values that have lived on through centuries and generations. As long as they feel the need to discover, relate, connect and use cultural heritage, it will remain meaningful and alive.

The main challenge seems to be how to engage youth, as there seems to be little sense of trust between generations. Participants agreed on the need to create safe environments for the exchange of ideas, giving up some authority, and recognizing that younger generations bring good new ideas into the cultural heritage conversation.

The need to change lies more with the senior, longer-serving professionals of the cultural sector, who need to be willing to listen, understand and co-create with younger professionals in the sector and also younger audiences.

To bridge the generation gap and create spaces for dialogue and creativity, older people, who feel young at heart and have the potential to connect more easily with the youngest of society, should be included.

"Spaces of dialogue and creativity are developed between the generations."

RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES

- Create the space for intergenerational dialogue and co-creation, identifying needs, aspirations and interests;
- Present and give younger audiences better exposure to cultural heritage through policy development; and
- Advocate policymakers to integrate youth.

Some of the actions would include:
- To support existing initiatives to create projects together (without imposition);
- To integrate digital and analogue experiences;
- To develop staff training for communication and participation.

"Who curates and who is impacted by this process of curation – online and offline?"

TECHNOLOGY, DIGITAL DEVELOPMENTS, AI, MEDIA AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

Many of the digital uses that have become part of our daily lives today were unimaginable just five years ago. It is thus extremely difficult to predict technological developments over coming decades. However, it is possible to create a vision of the practices that we would like to see in the upcoming future.

Participants in this group foresaw two potential scenarios for the future: a dystopia and a utopia. The dystopia was defined as "Re-colonizing the Digital" – a world in which hegemonic tech companies (in collusion with states, international non-governmental organizations, and others) have extracted cultural values and knowledges from communities across the world, and control our bodies, our minds, our souls, and the data within. The utopia, conversely was defined as "De-colonizing the Digital" – in which tech companies, cultural heritage organizations and peoples everywhere have worked and continue to work together constructively.

To achieve the "De-colonizing the Digital" utopian scenario we must center ethics and equity at the core of the way our sector works within and across other spaces, through acts of reparation, restitution, and decolonization. Communities deserve to be valued and respected and participants believe in the potential power of integrating ethical and equitable technologies in producing and amplifying cultures and knowledges (#ForEveryone).

In this scenario, the producers of knowledges and cultures must co-lead the design, architecture, governance, and experience of digital technologies to ensure that multiple forms of cultures and knowledges are valued equitably. Communities must have power over how their practices and knowledges are shared and the benefits of this sharing must be equitably distributed.

In this vision, technology is ideally produced, designed and lead by multiple communities in multiple parts of the world. No matter what particular technology is used in coming decades, plurality should be at the center of production and use.

RECOMMENDED STRATEGY

To create a Cultural Heritage Resource Council that will convene, support and act to:
1. Host critical conversations;
2. Advocate for shared action;
3. Collect and create learning patterns and tools; and
4. Build capacities within our constituencies – knowledge communities, cultural heritage organizations, tech corps, standards bodies, government, educational institutions, open knowledge communities, etc.

(Left to right) Patricia Alberth, Chunnoon Song-e Song and Oscar Tollast

Participants enjoy coffee
and conversation on the
Schloss Terrace

GEORGE ABUNGU: REFLECTING ON CULTURAL HERITAGE AND LOOKING FOR NEW ANSWERS

Program co-chair and former director-general of the National Museums of Kenya discusses the changes in his cultural heritage work over the decade since he first came to Salzburg.

In the fall of 2009, participants convened at Schloss Leopoldskron, Salzburg, for the Salzburg Global Seminar program *Connecting to the World's Collections: Making the Case for the Conservation and Preservation of our Cultural Heritage.*

At this program, the *Salzburg Declaration on the Conservation and Preservation of Cultural Heritage* was drafted, calling on governments, non-governmental organizations and the cultural heritage sector-at-large to commit to safeguarding cultural heritage for the future.

Now 10 years on, a participant at that program, George Abungu, is co-chair of the 2019 program *What Future for Cultural Heritage? Perceptions, Problematics and Potential.*

Abungu is CEO of Okello Abungu Heritage Consultants and was formerly director-general of the National Museums of Kenya.

He reflects, "We did a lot with World Heritage sites, but I also work in the area of intangible heritage. So I've been able to assist a number of countries to prepare the nomination files for the nomination for ICH [Intangible Cultural Heritage], the 2003 convention [Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage], as well as the 1972 convention [Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage of World Heritage]."

Speaking of his experience moderating panels as co-chair at the *What Future for Cultural Heritage?* program, he says, "The panelists have got very deep backgrounds in heritage matters and the fact that they can be

questioned, they can interrogate and question the subject and stick to what they're supposed to do within a very limited time, but still be able to produce what is required, for me is quite commendable."

Reflecting on cultural heritage 10 years since he last attended the program at Salzburg Global, Abungu says, "Yes I think there have been improvements.

"We've had an international meeting in Nairobi dealing with climate change which was attended by President Macron from France... It is something that we were talking about 10 years ago, and now it's materializing, and people are addressing that."

He goes on to say, "I think now today we are developing even more risk management planning in advance." However, there appear to be challenges within cultural heritage that were less prevalent back then.

"Heritage that in those days could not be touched, things that we thought were very special that nobody would ever take, no human being could touch, have actually become targets for terrorism and making political statements.

"So when you talk about Aleppo and all these places, heritage is now intentionally being destroyed as a political statement. Now 10 years ago I don't think that was something.

"Things do seem to be changing very fast. Maybe we should try to also focus more on how do we deal with situations where because of the exposure, because of the attention,

because of the resources that we are putting in, that we are now making heritage to become a target."

Progress has been made in terms of the promotion of African heritage through the establishment of the Museum of Black Civilisations in Dakar, Senegal, in December 2018, for which Abungu curated an exhibit.

The museum is a realization of Senegal's first president, Léopold Sédar Senghor's vision for a space to showcase "the achievements of the past of the continent to really showcase how Africans contributed to world civilization." Abungu says, "When I was called to do that, I felt very privileged and, as an archaeologist and a heritage person, I felt privileged.

"For me, it actually showcases the beginning of humanity. One of the greatest things that Africa has contributed to the world is the emergence of humanity. That is why this particular museum for me is important. It's

not only confined to the cradle element, but it goes up to the present – what we are today.

"We are having a dialogue of civilizations from when the first human emerged from Africa up to the present. So for me, it is important because it actually sets the ground for the discussion about humanity and human life and how we have developed up to the present."

What did Abungu expect from the five-day program? "I am hoping that we can question more, and in questioning more we can be able to start looking for answers that will answer those questions that we are asking.

"That is really to be able to question more, to interrogate more, to try to question even the obvious because, for me now, I realize that it's not obvious… to question the concepts like cultural heritage and what it means, and what it means to whom, and who defines what cultural heritage is."

Program co-chair George Abungu speaks from the floor in the Robison Gallery during a plenary discussion

CHUNNOON SONG-E SONG: NEW ANSWERS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF CULTURE

Salzburg Global Fellow reflects on her career changes since taking part in the Salzburg Global Young Cultural Innovators Forum five years ago.

In 2014, Chunnoon Song-e Song arrived at Schloss Leopoldskron looking for answers. She was one of 50 rising talents invited to attend the inaugural program of the Salzburg Global Young Cultural Innovators (YCI) Forum. At the time, she was in charge of cultural and international relations at the National Museum of Korea. Now, almost five years later, she is working for the UNESCO Office for Afghanistan as associate program manager of the National Program for Culture and Creative Economy. A lot has changed.

"[The YCI Forum] was really an eye-opener for me because it was when I was starting to think whether culture is an essential thing in your life," says Song. Responding to this question was difficult. "But I wanted to find an answer," she explains. "I wanted to help a project, or I wanted to be a person who deals

Two-time Salzburg Global Fellow Chunnoon Song-e Song

with an important thing. I wanted to find the enthusiastic point of my work."

In her role, she was coordinating the Virtual Collection of Asian Masterpieces, an Asia-Europe Museum Network project encouraging cooperation between museums in both continents. "Sitting [at a] desk in Seoul, surrounded by beautiful objects, it was [an] amazing experience, but at the same time it was very painful because I couldn't find the answer to this question: does cultural heritage actually matter to people?"

In Salzburg, Song realized there were other practitioners like her asking similar questions and trying to find answers in "the most innovative way." Song looked within herself, reminding herself of her love for cultural heritage and cultural projects.

The Asia-Europe Museum Network project involved around 150 museums. The essence of the project was to gather the digital information of these museum's masterpieces. Song says, "At first I would just continue with the work, but then after coming back from Salzburg Global Seminar, I started thinking, 'Can't we make use of this in a better way to show that culture actually matters?' Then I started thinking that maybe we should include the museums that people actually cannot visit."

Recognizing many of the participating museums were based in "relatively safer environments," Song thought, "What's the point of showing the objects that people can actually see?" She developed an interest in museums based in Iraq, Syria and Afghanistan.

The National Museum of Afghanistan was the first institution with which Song got into contact about inventorying and documenting the digital data of the museum's objects. UNESCO Afghanistan, Song, and the National Museum of Korea collaborated and launched a project in 2015.

Song then asked herself another question: Does cultural heritage matter in a country that is experiencing conflict? She accepted a job offer from UNESCO and went to work with people in Afghanistan. Three and a half years later, Song says she has an answer. "Culture actually matters to people – really matters to people… Often some donors, who are not residing in Afghanistan, they would ask, 'Do you really think that culture matters in Afghanistan when children die starving..?' I tell them you should have an interview with the Afghan people. They feel depressed without culture.

"They feel they do not get the opportunity to show their pride if they are deprived of culture. I have been working in the most unfortunate places – even in Afghanistan – which is the refugee camps and internally displaced people camps and discovered how much joy that cultural projects can bring to these people and how much of a hope that it actually brings to people. It's something that's not tangible. It's something that you cannot actually see or measure. It's often neglected by the international society which doesn't really know the situation, but if you actually go on the field, you immediately see the change."

To highlight to donors how significant cultural projects are, Song and her colleagues recently organized a participatory theater project to bring host communities and internally displaced people closer together. Song said, "There were interventions by UN agencies and in other international agencies to tackle the issue of lack of food and lack of water and lack of education. But there really hasn't been any attempts to tackle the issue of lack of cultural connection or cultural communication."

Children received professional acting classes for three months. They performed plays highlighting the narratives of their parents. Song explains, "They are the stories of why they had to move to this province, this area, and why they had to leave their own hometown… the reaction that we got from the host community was really immense. The host community [said], 'We wouldn't have imagined the difficulties that they had to go through to come and live with us…' They would feel that these internally displaced people are human beings who they can communicate with now… It's not just bread and water that they need because they are human beings and if they want to live the future, and if they want to build the future for the country and not having people to leave the country and flee the country all the time, what really matters is the cultural project."

Since working for the UNESCO Office for Afghanistan, Song has been based in Kabul, Bamiyan, and Seoul. She is mainly in charge of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage and enhancing the diversity of cultural expressions in conflict areas. One project Song is responsible for is the Bamiyan Cultural Center, which is due to open in May 2020. It will be based near the boundaries of the World Heritage property of the Cultural Landscapes and Archaeological Remains of the Bamiyan Valley, a site which made headlines following the destruction of the standing Buddhas in 2001.

Song says the community is ready to move on from this incident. She explains: "We started supporting their festivals, and we started supporting the expression of their cultural diversity and the diversity of their cultural practices… after five years of this implementation, we now have at least one festival every month. It's really fun to watch that. It's really enjoyable to watch it because you see that it was triggered by UNESCO, but then it was the role of the community to prolong with that."

ANASUYA SENGUPTA: RESPONDING TO THE HIDDEN CRISIS OF "UNKNOWING"

Co-director and co-founder of Whose Knowledge? discusses culture, knowledge, and what inspires her work.

"Here's the internet. It has the potential to be democratic and emancipatory. It has the potential to be all the things people are claiming it already is. It is not."

Anasuya Sengupta is co-founder and co-director of "Whose Knowledge?" – a global campaign that aims to center the knowledge of marginalized communities on the internet. She formerly held the position of the chief grant-making officer at the Wikimedia Foundation.

Although 75 percent of the world's online population is from the Global South, much of the content online stems from Europe and North America. Whose Knowledge? believes there is a "hidden crisis of 'unknowing,'" which is responsible for crisis of violence and injustice in the world.

Reflecting on her work, Sengupta says, "What we try and do is to work with communities who consider themselves marginalized in different ways to create with them, to curate with them, to map with them, and to bring online their different forms of knowledge, whether that is textual… visual, oral or experiential and embodied in some ways."

She considers "culture" and "knowledge" as interchangeable terms and believes the culture of marginalized communities is often sidelined from the internet under the hierarchical structure of what constitutes "knowledge."

Sengupta explains, "As a political anthropologist by training and as a community organizer by practice, I think of culture very much as knowledge. There are different ways

of knowing and we express those ways of knowing in different forms that are different forms of cultural artifact.

"I think centering it very much in ways of knowing, allows us to talk about the fact that there are multiple ways of knowing, and we have constructed through history a hierarchy around those ways of knowing."

During her stay in Salzburg, Sengupta worked alongside various practitioners from the cultural heritage sector and representatives of cultural ministries and heritage associations. What can these people do to help to assist with the decolonization of the internet?

"Decolonizing the internet for us is to recognize the challenges that are in the real world, see that they are reified and amplified in the virtual world," she explains. "We need to look at the way we understand knowledge and culture. All of these incredible people in the room [at the program] and what they're doing, we would love to see them thinking very much about this continuum between the work they do in the physical world and how to more freely and openly share that knowledge online, so that the rest of the world can also understand and know together."

However, Sengupta recognizes not all knowledge is destined to be online.

"Many indigenous communities have sacred knowledge, but the choice of sharing should be borne by the communities, not by those of us who might be seen as gate-keepers."

One of Whose Knowledge?'s initiatives is the #VisibleWikiWomen campaign, which aims

to increase the visibility of women online. Sengupta said, "Of all the biographies on Wikipedia, only about 20 percent of them are of women in any given language.

"What we've been trying to do to support those who are bringing the bios of women online is to say there's a further invisiblization literally through image. A fraction of those that exist of women's bios have images.

"The invisibility is both real and, in this case, symbolic. What we've been trying to do is to get people from across the world to upload the images of the notable women, important and influential women in their communities."

Sengupta is inspired by stories, and the work of Whose Knowledge? will ensure that more stories will be unearthed and shared online for all to see.

Discussing what inspires her to do the work she does, she says, "Recognizing that human life, human history, her story, and our stories are such rich, plural multiple, forms of knowledge that we have, I think, only just begun even to get a slight taste of in the 21st century.

"That is the promise of the 21st century. That if we could get beyond all the ridiculousness of war, violence, conflict and ego, so at the broadest macro level and at the most minute, intimate level, we could begin to see each other much more fully and through that, in some ways, find an extraordinary balance."

CONCLUSIONS

The rich exchanges of the program *What Future for Cultural Heritage? Perceptions, Problematics and Potential* broadened the collective understanding of the multiple ways in which perceptions of the past can influence the understanding of the present and the vision of the future for different communities and in different regions.

For some the main focus of the discussion was on the decolonization of the past and the need to create new diverse narratives to define the future. For others, the focus was on making a stronger case for cultural heritage and building alliances in the context of sustainability, technology and intergenerational engagement. These different yet complementary approaches reflected the plurality of visions in the group and in the sector beyond geographical boundaries. They also reflect the globalization of issues that will affect cultural heritage in the years to come.

Program participants acknowledged the concept of "Not for me without me" – accepting the need for a broader concept of cultural heritage inclusive of multiple knowledges to overcome the challenges posed by the perceptions of the past. Furthermore, they acknowledged that "We can't predict the future but we can design towards the one we want," meaning that the precious diversity of cultural heritage must be embraced and form part of all conversations with other sectors in order to shape a sustainable future for all.

Insights for the future from participants included a shared concern about the accelerating velocity of loss of cultural heritage in the coming years primarily due to the impact of climate change and voluntary and involuntary migration. In addition, a more limited access to natural environments is expected due to overuse of resources, changing land management structures and impact of climate change. These factors will create a higher sense of urgency to preserve heritage as certain cultures, practices and sites are threatened and might soon be lost.

Digital tools will have an increasingly important role to play in the preservation of those endangered elements. They will also be key to facilitating accessibility to heritage irrespective of geographical limitations. At the same time, digital tools have a crucial role to play in raising awareness of the threats that cultural heritage faces, including the devastating effects of climate change, conflict and migration, and in highlighting the importance that cultural heritage has for humanity.

The loss of cultural heritage can be limited if the benefits of traditional knowledge in addressing contemporary needs are reclaimed. Increasingly, in the search for more sustainable materials and transformation systems, traditional knowledges are being rediscovered as a reference for their understanding and long-term respect for and relationship with nature. Sustainable architecture and design, organic agriculture, therapeutic use of plants and remedies, and sustainable fishing are just a few examples of ways in which the know-how from traditional practices is helping to combat climate change and provide solutions for contemporary societies.

At the same time, other societies will be affected by increased automation and artificial intelligence, which may have negative impacts on the workforce. These factors, combined with longer life expectancy, may open up new opportunities for the cultural heritage sector to engage the under-employed and provide opportunities to occupy people as volunteers or as potential stewards of heritage assets.

Cultural heritage should therefore be recognized as a dynamic and engaging space for inclusive and participatory processes of co-creation across generations, with culture, arts and

"If you think you are too small to have an impact, you have not talked to a mosquito lately."

humanities playing a more significant role in education. Policymakers should be reminded that in outlining solutions for the years to come, cultural heritage enables sharing and mutual exchange between generations and has an untapped potential to facilitate dialogue and creativity among all peoples and sectors.

In order to play an active role in the design of a global future, the cultural heritage sector must be proactive in communicating a holistic concept that includes its tangible, intangible and natural assets. It must be able to identify stronger cross-sectorial alliances and new partnerships where it can show how its precious diversity contributes not only to individual wellbeing, but more importantly, to wider mutual understanding and to the survival of humanity and our home planet.

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Program rapporteur
Maria Fernandez Sabu (center)
and other participants enjoy
the March sunshine

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María Fernández Sabau specializes in strategic planning, advocacy and policymaking for leading institutions in the public, private and third sector worldwide. Maria's international personal and professional experience have helped her develop an ability to understand culturally diverse group's needs and agendas, making her a trusted advisor in the identification of priorities and recommendation of strategies. Civil society engagement is at the core of her work. She is passionate about institutional purpose and believes that organizations can do good and well at the same time. As senior advisor her role is to support leadership teams and boards to achieve positive change and develop their impact strategies. She has lead more than 40 projects worldwide for institutions such as UNESCO, UCLG, Guggenheim Bilbao Museum, Reset Communities and Refugees, among others. With a background in business administration and political science she has recently completed a masters in contemporary migration and a specialization in social innovation; she is currently writing her dissertation about the private sponsorship of refugees. Maria co-chaired the Salzburg Global Seminar program, *The Art of Resilience: Creativity, Courage and Renewal* in 2017, and facilitated part of program of the *Salzburg Global Forum for Young Cultural Innovators* in 2015.

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