

SUBTHEME REVIEWS

ST01

Script for GA2017 Concluding Session on ST01

I am here to present the summaries from papers presented under the sub theme 1 – Integrating Heritage and Sustainable Development by engaging diverse communities. I speak here on behalf of all the session chairs, Gurmeet Rai, Ishanlosen Odiaua, Deirdre McDermott, Sofia Avgerinou Kolonias, Khalid El Harrouni, Sanghmitra Basu and Han Pilwon. And I sincerely thank the rapporteurs, Clara Rellesman, Maïke Goedkoop, Saumya Tripathi, Koman Potdar, Sowmya Parthasarthy and Nithya Ranjan for being very immaculate with their notes.

Over 50 papers from over 30 countries presented under this sub theme, needless to say, were very diverse and extremely engaging. They not only brought out various concerns around heritage management/ conservation and sustainable development, many of them proved to be important case studies of successes and failures. There were a significant number of papers who challenged the ongoing ideals and practices of conservation and development, and many who delved deep into the much needed shifts in definitions, meanings, narratives, that were also discussed by the key note speakers at the beginning of the scientific symposium.

On the theme of the symposium, we would like to start with a point from the presentation made by Dinu Bumbaru, where he outlined four types of democracies:

- Elective Democracy, when citizens delegate the power to the elected leaders
- Participative Democracy, when citizens participate in the decision making process
- Collaborative Democracy, when citizens collaborate to defining policies and solutions and
- Deliberative Democracy, when discussion, debate and exchange between the public and its institutions is recognised as a value.
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These forms of democracy have been demonstrated in some of the case studies that were presented. In other cases, the presentations alluded to the absence of a democratic approach in the management of heritage.

We could collectively identify four areas of discussions that underpinned the discourse that not only raise concerns over current practices but potentially show a way forward to us as a global professional community in the direction of integrating Heritage Conservation and Sustainable Development.

One of the recurring discourse was about the paradigm shift that is needed in the way we understand and define (or choose not to define) heritage in context of democracy and democratic processes. Many papers articulated this discussion in context of the threats to historic sites and diverse identities. The threats came in the form of pressures of urbanisation and the vulnerable nature of the historic site itself. Like in case of Mali, where the monuments are made of mud and need constant attention, but clearly are not cared for/ not provided for due to the priorities that lie in responding to urbanisation pressures. In many cases however, the threats were the increasing homogenisation of urban areas due to uniform urban planning and urban design strategies, and increasingly in form of majoritarianism and/ or fundamentalism that result into the stressed political economies. In many presentations, such as of Chinatowns in San Francisco and Kolkata, the need to define heritage in relation to cultural identities was brought out, albeit with a caveat of how these identity play out in context of nationalities, sense of citizenship and social/ economic relationships. There were papers who made a case about shifting the heritage discourse in the relational realm of geography, ecology, place and landscape and others who advocated for an approach that privileged citizens rights to an equitable access to the city and in appropriating/ modifying it. This was also argued in context of historic cities

being modified for the benefit of visual consumption of the tourism based economies. It was clear through this discourse that the suggested shifts require an understanding of heritage that is more accepting of diversity, sometimes ambivalent and mostly arrived at through an engagement of the collective.

Many papers then went on to present aspects of practice that would need attention and sometimes redefinition. Some looked into the question of authenticity and urged to look into the idea of 'original', more from the lenses of present human association to the history and moral rights to the place, rather than from the lenses of historic origin. The Nara Document was recalled more often than not in order to point out that while it opens up the interpretation of authenticity to diverse cultures, there is a need to open the interpretation of it to accept associations across time as well. There were papers that inquired into the value based approach of identifying heritage to suggest, first; an alternative and possibly more democratic term 'dimension' instead of 'value' and secondly; a possible shift to the rights based approach.

Another aspect of practice that was brought into attention was the need to address issues of quality of life at living heritage sites, especially in countries/ areas of countries that are in need of such attention. This, as presented by many, was not only a good strategy to bring diverse communities together on the platform for a democratic dialogue, but often was the only way of managing conservation of valued heritage in dilapidated conditions or extreme poverty of the occupants. This, along with other strategies of engagement, such as youth forums, global and local networks, education programs, when integrated with the main stream urban development processes would be the way to go forward.

The envisaged people centred approaches, like demonstrated through the case studies from Canada and Australia, need simultaneous changes in implementation and monitoring frameworks. Some presentations used terms like 'horizontal governance' and 'nimble processes' that require restructuring of implementation processes in many parts of the world. This restructuring also must include participation of all stakeholders and agents of change. Through many case studies from Asia and Africa, the need to develop tools to assess people's and stakeholder's perception, empirical studies on cultural and creative economies, cultural mapping, risk preparedness, tools and processes that ensure ethical community engagement was found to be the most critical. This does give a clear way forward to us, a global professional institute that can provide a platform for collective international programs with specific focuses that deal with common challenges.

And lastly, it was clear that in order to be able to practice these shifts, the imagination of a heritage/ conservation professional must be of a co-producer of meanings and values, rather than of an expert author of them. This, as was already discussed during the key note addresses, also require a serious re-orientation of ourselves. What is it then that we do? What do we get trained for? One of the papers suggested the role of a heritage expert as the one who designs processes of coproduction rather than places, another suggested that role of heritage expert as the one who balances local knowledge, expert knowledge with rights and claims to the place. While we see this as the area that needs much more thought, what came out was that the primary responsibility of a heritage professional is to first make visible the diverse narratives of histories and associations of the place, facilitate the legitimisation of certain narratives with research, build a language of conservation that is understandable by all engaging in the process and then arrive at a scientific process of conserving the meanings that are coproduced. Conservation professionals here engage in this process with their own agency of knowledge on authenticity, integrity, historicity, materiality and place.

We urge that ICOMOS, through this forum recognises the particular expertise and diversity of contribution of citizens, communities and civil society in identification, protection, conservation and care of cultural heritage.

And that ICOMOS tangibly and usefully pursue this interest by developing, adopting and promoting to its member committees and partners, a position and set of principles through its focus on the Sustainable Development Goals over the next three years. The starting point for this could be by

adding to its Action Plan 18 – 20 a dedicated group to document, compare models and practices from different cultural, regional and institutional context and can provide a much needed platform for lessons to deal with common challenges. This would also add to the mission of ICOMOS to Act as leaders in cultural heritage conservation to manage better the challenges of future.

Prepared by Jigna Desai and Ishanlosen Odiava

ST02

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PATRIMOINE ET DEMOCRATIE

Sous Thème ST02

The role of cultural heritage for building peace and reconciliation

Le rôle du patrimoine culturel pour construire la paix et la réconciliation

Rapport du co-président international, lu à l'assemblée générale,

Le 15 décembre 2017

Samir ABDULAC, ICOMOS France

Chers collègues et amis,

Notre sujet de réflexion était particulièrement d'actualité en ces temps difficiles et il convient tout d'abord de remercier tous ceux qui ont contribué à enrichir nos débats par leurs témoignages et leurs questionnements, le comité scientifique et nos collègues locaux, les présidents de séance, Alpha Diop, Shams Sharif Imon, Aparna Tandon, Bente Mathesen, Catherine Forbes et Stephen Kelly, sans oublier nos rapporteurs Nader al Nouri, Pryanka Singh et Richa Pandey.

Les symposiums scientifiques sont une occasion privilégiée pour prendre des vues instantanées de l'état des préoccupations et des réflexions au sein de la grande communauté des membres de l'ICOMOS.

Malgré tout leur intérêt individuel, il n'est guère possible de résumer une trentaine de communications. Leur succession pourrait même donner une impression kaléidoscopique, d'où peut-être l'intérêt de commencer par en livrer une présentation analytique.

Beaucoup de nos orateurs venaient d'Europe occidentale, d'Asie de l'est ou d'Amérique, Australie, de Turquie et bien sûr du sous-continent indien. Bien peu malheureusement étaient issus d'Afrique ou de la région arabe où tant de problèmes se posent. Ce sont pourtant les professionnels des pays en crise qui doivent faire face du mieux qu'ils peuvent aux menaces et aux destructions du patrimoine culturel.

Par contre les contributions portaient sur un éventail de situations géographiquement plus étendu, comprenant l'Europe orientale, les Balkans, la Nouvelle Zélande ou même l'Antarctique. Ceci témoigne d'un esprit d'ouverture et d'entraide. Saluons à ce propos l'extraordinaire mouvement de solidarité au sein de nos membres, qui a permis d'accueillir des participants de Syrie, un pays en guerre.

Les conflits décrits ne sont pas tous actuellement actifs comme ceux de Libye, du Mali, de Syrie ou du Yémen et c'est tant mieux. Ils se réfèrent souvent à des événements du 20^e siècle, comme ceux qu'ont connus l'Ex-Yougoslavie, Chypre, la Chine, le Japon, le Liban, la Lituanie ou le Sri Lanka, ce qui permet de prendre du recul et de mieux prendre en compte les actions ultérieures de réconciliation.

Le patrimoine culturel concerné est souvent d'ordre tangible comme les églises, les mosquées, les temples, les palais, les prisons, les locaux industriels, les villes, les jardins et même les sculptures. Le patrimoine intangible n'a pas été oublié non plus, qu'il s'agisse de langues parlées, d'artisanat ou de traditions populaires. Les approches multidisciplinaires se sont d'ailleurs révélées particulièrement enrichissantes.

Les solutions évoquées visent à panser les plaies, cicatriser les blessures, réconcilier les adversaires et surtout prévenir l'éruption de nouveaux conflits. Elles se basent sur le travail de mémoire, la

sensibilisation, l'information, et la participation collective, sans oublier la participation, la démocratie et les approches basées sur les droits humains.

De cette première approche émergent quelques conclusions :

- Les blessures de l'âme subsistent souvent bien longtemps après la fin des conflits violents et il convient de les traiter au mieux.
- La prise en compte du patrimoine culturel participe de la convalescence et de la reconstruction de l'identité des individus, des groupes et des peuples.
- Pour ce faire, il n'existe cependant pas de formule miracle, ni d'outil passe-partout.
- Il faut de la part des professionnels comme des décideurs politiques, beaucoup de volonté, d'imagination, de patience et de persévérance.
- La place des populations locales, des communautés et des diverses parties prenantes est absolument centrale dans les projets de reconstruction.
- Les objectifs recherchés doivent s'inscrire dans une perspective de développement durable.

Je laisse maintenant ma collègue, la co-présidente indienne Moulshri Joshi, développer les conclusions générales avec le soutien des rapporteurs. Il est à espérer que celles-ci puissent inspirer nos démarches futures en général et celles concernant le patrimoine mondial en particulier.

Report by the national Co-Chair, presented at the General Assembly, On 15 December 2017

Moulshri Joshi, ICOMOS India

I present the summary of the session in the form of broad observations and way forward.

The stories we told each other during the two days were not easy. They deal with loss and disconnection, grief and atrocities of people around the work. We spoke about the human spirit and the resilience of our communities to work in the face of such difficulties. This session deeply engaged of our hearts and minds, sometimes one over the other and compelled us to empathise with the condition of humanity in places far away from here. This was the power of this session. My gratitude to the speakers to make these conversations possible and for drawing us into the worlds our practice should aspire to make better.

Presenters and participants were seen grappling with ethical questions regarding their roles and positions. Whose story do we tell? And how do we interpret memory when it is painful for people? One speaker at the session stated that ‘Heritage conservation should connect with the collective consciousness of a nation and enhance a people’s sense of direction’. This led to questions: firstly, whose consciousness? And secondly, how does collective consciousness work in the event of conflict? The conversation touched upon cultural heritage nominations and management that is devoid of the humane, with the discussion ranging from confederate sculptures in Eastern Europe to segmented narratives in the nomination of World Heritage Sites in East Asia.

All papers and case studies revealed that conflicts are a form of social destruction and require a nuanced understanding of the root causes related to social political contexts. Social disruptions and heritage are entangled, we saw heritage sites being physically impacted, their meaning mutated, misappropriated and often erased and sanitized of its painful or unwanted association. We saw the heritage being evoked and valorised through its selective reading and through its segmentation to make gains. Recurring themes in the session revealed that conflict was caused or exacerbated by these segmented views of heritage and the lack of acknowledgement of multiple narratives. We felt heritage has a role to play here. It can offer, through discourse and practice, multiple narratives and ways of seeing the past.

This requires a more critical stock-taking of heritage itself.

The traditional notion of heritage and heritage making is largely that heritage is apolitical and devoid of power struggles. There is an aspiration or inclination to see heritage as “clean” and “removed from problems” – a symbol of positivity/ beauty, sometimes a reflection of our utopia. However, the construction and practice of heritage rests within a society fraught with differences and inequalities of society and conflicting claims- whether visible or invisible- are present. Case after case, we saw conflicts and disasters tearing us apart along these lines of differences. We need to discuss this idea more deeply in the discourse of heritage management and training.

If multiple viewpoints need to be considered, we must reach out and work across disciplines. Heritage provides a shelter, an anchor and a canopy, tree under which this reaching out is possible. Working for peace means working with people who understand war differently from us, working on reconciliation would mean sitting across people who understand the human mind differently from us.

Bridging the difference was the realization that lessons learnt are universal and can, through engagement, be transposed across boundaries and applicable across the board. In the safeguarding of heritage as a tool for building of peace and reconciliation, recognition and acceptance of opposing/ different views is critical. Acknowledgement of these multiple interests and needs of people is

required to create a base for any future dialogue or negotiation. Objective sharing of a hurtful past with the school children and the youth creates an environment and mindset of reflection to ensure mistakes of the past aren't repeated by the next generations.

None of this is easy. And the difficulty came across poignantly through the sessions. We learnt from this '*asmanjas*' or 'the state of being unsure' that can be useful in making us all more reflexive in our practice...and ultimately connecting us better to our won selves and to one another. We must recognize the humanity in each one of us and connect as human beings, urged one of our participants. Some others made a case for including this theme in future conferences.

It is critical that conservation processes in the discourse of peace building and conflict resolution address conflict at its many stages from assessment and response to immediate reactions, at the time of transition, potential cyclical relapse and long-term peace building. Responding to this is a comprehensive subject; understanding of the patterns, triggers and causes of relapse in conflicts is vital. Inter-generational responses to trauma are often key players in both mitigating efforts of peace building. It came out strongly that younger generations needed to include so that they can become champions of the reconciliation process.

Considerations of the future were not limited to the younger generation. Through our conversation we went on a voyage to Antarctica, unravelling the history multiple claims that seek to safeguard it. The next stop was moon, should we not be co-creating a future for this shared heritage?

We must also come back to the question of now. Participants drew our attention to the ongoing turmoils, both natural and man-made affecting our world today.

None of this is easy. But observing the images, presentation after presentation, revealed to me that some of the problems of the world being discussed needed a simple apparatus to start on this long journey. A space for dialogue – across the table, around a blackboard, working together with our hands and talking. Heritage in all cases, provided the space for making place for peace.

ST03

Friends and Colleagues

Sub Theme number 3 – Protecting and Interpreting Cultural Heritage in the Age of Digital Empowerment – was originally conceived – I can say with candour as I was one of numerous people involved in early deliberations – as just that: Sub Theme number 3. An important topic no doubt, but somewhat ancillary to the main theme. Deserving of space of course, though it was allotted the smallest of the auditoria. But there was standing room only in Silver Oaks 2 through much of the last two days and some of the finest minds here assembled are addressing this issue, all of which calls for some reappraisal.

Perhaps I can best summarise the main take-away from our panel in this way. It is clear that all kinds of heritage specialists – from conservators and project managers to historians, architects, archaeologists and museum curators are employing an ever-increasing range of digital techniques. They adopt – or indeed develop – such tools to serve a particular technical need. An archaeologist, for example, might deploy remote sensing because there is simply no other way of collecting the data she needs. But a corollary of the use of digital techniques – which may or may not be intended – is that it is easier to share. It is intrinsic to digital information that it can be easily and widely disseminated. The digital world enables us to make our work more inclusive, to raise awareness and share information, to include not just other specialists but the wider public. And it is not just that our audience expands: as the general population attain access to information they can be increasingly involved in policy and decision making. The digital world makes heritage management a more democratic process. This is core to our concerns here today. Put simply, if we genuinely want heritage management to be democratic and inclusive, then the digital world is the space where that can be achieved.

There are some provisos or qualifications to this stirring headline, however:

1. Cost.

Some of the more highly developed digital techniques are expensive - as is the necessary hardware - while some are low cost or free. Highly sophisticated techniques are often harder to share than open source material. Across the world, access to digital media is still uneven –

Though this is changing, it was pointed out in discussion that many of the projects presented were initiated by well-funded institutes, but in some places (including some parts of India) there isn't the funding to work with digital tools. On the other hand some digital platforms such as Facebook and webpages are accessible at low or no cost. We heard of at least one project in India in which a conservation architect moved her project to a digital platform because, with little funding, she could achieve more there than on the ground.

2. Democracy

The second proviso is about democracy itself. The opportunities presented to us by the digital world challenge us to ask ourselves how genuinely democratic and inclusive we wish to be. We might all think instinctively that inclusiveness is good because it emanates from a democratic impulse and because the mobilisation of public opinion is a useful tool against government apathy, ill-considered development and other destructive forces. But it brings its own threats and challenges as sharing information also implies sharing control. If as specialists we know best, then we will have to work harder to persuade people that we know best or else accept that we don't. And as the interpretation of

heritage becomes a more widely shared endeavour, we must be alert to the hazards of populism, to partial and exclusive – as opposed to inclusive – readings of our past. Greater inclusion also raises threats to the physical fabric through enhanced footfall, as we have learned from the tourist industry in past decades. Though ironically here digital media can also help solve the problem. In one presentation we learned how for every one person who visits Sydney Opera House there are 16 more people who access it and engage with it via digital media.

3. Access

A topic that we touched on but that emerged slightly less than expected in the theme is the capacity for digital technology to increase participation for the visually impaired and differently abled. It is a particular interest of mine, because in March 2016 City Palace in Jaipur hosted a CAM workshop, partly sponsored by ICOMOS India, on access in museums in South Asia where we explored, among other things, the capacity for digital media to help create, for example, tactile aids, that enhance access for the differently abled. The workshop report is available on the museum website.

This brings us back the matter of the physical fabric, because at heritage sites and structures, increasing accessibility brings its own challenges. Again, digital media can help with solutions. We heard of an intriguing case of this in the presentation on the Sacred Forbidden Island of Okinoshima, Japan, recently inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage list. Somewhat contrary to the spirit of inclusiveness, the traditional taboos of the island's religious traditions deny access to anyone but officiating priests. However there is alongside the taboo, a longstanding tradition of veneration worship through distant-viewing, called Yohai. This offered a model for engagement through digital media. Sharing information about the island using digital media is seen as an extension of an established practice.

4. Longevity and quality

There were some other provisos about the nature of digital information: digital technology makes it easy to disseminate information and also harder to evaluate it. So it is crucial to retain checks on data standards. There are also issues of copyright. Of IPR and acknowledgement; and concerns about longevity: in a rapidly developing digital world, today's methods and standards may not work for the technology of the future. And despite the general ease of dissemination, there are issues of geopolitics interfering with data access.

5. Conclusion

The call for papers set out a position which looked at two issues, two related but apparently distinct uses of digital technology – techniques of conservation and vehicles for outreach and education. The presentations demonstrated these two are invariably linked: that far from being compartmentalised the development of new investigative techniques and the potential for dissemination go together.

We learned of a wide range of very practical applications of digital technologies, such as their role in disaster risk management and their ability to enhance the role that communities can play in participating in the data gathering and decision making. Digital media tools allow us, for example, to superimpose parallel strands of data and analyse them for preventive monitoring in seismic zones. We heard of such uses from Seattle to Kathmandu. There are similar applications devised by other participants to alert people to risks of flooding from York to Chennai.

But for more detail on selected highlights I am going to hand over now to my Co-Chair, Jharna Joshi.