

THE WORLD IN FLORENCE

2021
2025

by LIFE BEYOND TOURISM®



HERITAGE: PEACE & MOVE

Florence, 27-28 November 2025
Auditorium al Duomo
Palazzo Coppini

EVENT PROGRAMME



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The World in Florence – Heritage: Peace & Move was inaugurated by the ceremony **1945-2025: From the Metal of War to the Metal of Peace** with the unveiling of the artwork **STUPORE** (Wonder)

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The World in Florence - Heritage: Peace & Move

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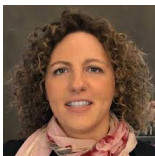
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The Final Stage of a Cycle for a New Beginning: “The World in Florence 2025 ” for the Culture of Peace



The 2025 edition of “The World in Florence” is not just an event; it is a **significant milestone**. It marks the fifth and final stage of a crucial cycle of work, a culmination that we have chosen to dedicate to the highest goal of our mission: promoting **dialogue for peace between cultures** through the universal, shared value of heritage. At a time of global uncertainty and conflict, “The World in Florence” positions itself, more than ever, as an essential space for listening, sharing, and proactive engagement.

We are purposefully building this year’s event around the most vital themes for the communities that are its protagonists. By doing so, we intend to strengthen the role of our Learning Communities as **centres of awareness**. These are dynamic spaces where people can exchange ideas, undertake dialogue-based initiatives, and actively contribute to the construction of a culture of peace.

A Journey of Growth: The Evolution of “The World in Florence”

Over the course of previous editions, the event has undergone a process of growth and transformation. What began as a venue for predominantly academic debate has evolved into an **open laboratory** for communities and territories, bringing together scholars, practitioners, and institutions from every corner of the globe:

- **2021 “Festival of Talking Places: Heritage as a Tool for Peace and Social Cohesion”** laid the groundwork for



dialogue on heritage as a driver of societal unity during COVID-19 pandemic.

- **2022 “Festival of the Diversity of World’s Cultural Expressions-Celebrating Diversity”** highlighted the plurality of identities as a fundamental resource for bringing peoples together.
- **2023 “Tourism: Unravelling Challenges, Exploring Solutions. Places and Cultures in Transition”** analyzed the transformation of places and cultures in an ever-changing world.
- **2024 “Community and Heritage”** explored the profound link between collective identities and heritage, emphasizing the power of communities in transmitting cultural assets.

2025: Launching “Heritage: Peace & Move” The 2025 edition, titled **“Heritage: Peace & Move”**, is not merely a conclusion but marks the **beginning of an ambitious new journey**. It represents a crucial turning point, enhancing the Foundation’s commitment to becoming a hub for concrete applications, linking practitioners and institutions. During this event, the valuable experiences of intercultural dialogue amassed by the Romualdo Del Bianco Foundation over the last 35 years will be presented and shared.

The core of this new phase is the launch of the **International Office of Good Practices for the Culture of Dialogue in World Heritage Sites**. This vital tool is designed to bring structure and systematicity to our meetings and disseminate the best global experiences, fostering shared, common growth. Within this framework, we will formally present the **Life Beyond Tourism® model** with its **practices**, which actively promotes intercultural dialogue and reciprocity as the bedrock for harmonious development within the international community.



Furthermore, we will officially launch two major international initiatives:

- **The “Heritage for Building Peace 2025” appeal**, a true manifesto calling for a new cultural and economic approach centered on dialogue among peoples.
- **The annual “Life Beyond Tourism – International Officina for the Culture of Dialogue in World Heritage Sites”** initiative, dedicated to gathering and evaluating the best proposals and practices from across the globe, with a yearly appointment in Florence.

The edition's program is enriched with crucial opportunities for sharing and encounters, sessions dedicated to the presentation of good practices, and evocative musical events. Featuring international artists—such as the Polish internationally renowned bass-baritone Stanisław Daniel Kotliński, Azerbaijani musicians as Narmin Najafli (piano), Tahmina Abdullayeva (violin) and Mushfig Guliyev (piano), and the Traditional Romanian Music Ensemble ICOANE, of the “Gheorghe Dima” National Academy of Music, from Cluj-Napoca—these events testify to how culture and music can become **universal languages of peace**.

Florence: A Global Laboratory for Peace

The challenge is clear: transforming cultural travel into a genuine “human experience of” encounter between cultures, a daily practice of peace that can be exercised in World Heritage Sites, which are rich in multiculturalism. This is the opportunity to promote new, non-extractive activities dedicated to the Culture of Dialogue.

The Romualdo Del Bianco Foundation, active in 111 countries with over 500 partner institutions, serves as a permanent laboratory. From Florence, with the upcoming spread of the



good practices arriving from all over the world, we aim to create not just physical spaces, but centres for action, ideation, and collaboration.

As the preamble to the UNESCO Constitution, adopted in 1945, states: ***"Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defence of peace must be constructed."*** Florence, a World Heritage Site, with its rich daily multiculturalism, plays a fundamental role in this process and acts as a guide. It is a message that spreads from Florence to the world: combining memory and perspective, enterprise and culture, innovation and sustainability in tourism, all toward the creation of new activities dedicated to the culture of dialogue. This effort is driven by the conviction that the protection of peace, heritage, and local economies are **inseparable values**. In a world increasingly shaken by conflict, division, and uncertainty, Florence relaunches its universal message: an invitation to spread the Culture of Dialogue every day, from World Heritage Sites, in order to achieve the most solid of human architectures: **shared peace**.

President

Fondazione Romualdo Del Bianco – Life Beyond Tourism

Carlotta Del Bianco





Welcome to The World in Florence

HERITAGE: PEACE & MOVE

by LIFE BEYOND TOURISM®

Events Locations



AUDITORIUM AL DUOMO
Via de' Cerretani 54r

PALAZZO COPPINI
Via del Giglio 10

Florence Venues is a Benefit Corporation, inspired by the values of the Romualdo Del Bianco Foundation and Life Beyond Tourism®. We promote all events as opportunities for meeting and growth.



Transportation

By air + tram: From Florence Airport (Peretola), take the tram line T2 toward the city center and get off at Santa Maria Novella. From there it is a short walk to both Auditorium al Duomo and Palazzo Coppini.

By train: The main train station, Santa Maria Novella (SMN), is only ~750 m from the Auditorium al Duomo (around 10 minutes walk). Palazzo Coppini is similarly within walking distance.

By city bus: Autolinee Toscane is the company that manages public transportation in Florence. To see your route and purchase tickets consult the website or app www.at-bus.it/en/app

Parking

If you come by car, the closest parking option is the underground parking at Firenze Santa Maria Novella station (Parcheggio SMN). Other garages are available nearby.

Important: The city center is mostly within a ZTL (restricted traffic zone). Make sure your route into the center is allowed and that your parking is outside or within permitted access zones.

Emergency contacts

Simone Giometti
secretarygeneral@fondazione-delbianco.org
+393924977227



Programme

November 27, 2025		
9.15 am	<p>Welcome greetings</p> <p>Introduction to the works of the Life Beyond Tourism (LBT) International Officina for Dialogue in World Heritage Sites 2025 A tool to create systematic moments of meeting to share experiences for their collection and sharing for common growth.</p>	AUDITORIUM AL DUOMO
9.45 am	<p>The Foundation's Practices A presentation and delivery of the experiences gained by the Foundation in its applied activity through their organic classification.</p> <p>Life Beyond Tourism Model Presentation From the Foundation experiences a model was born dedicated to foster intercultural dialogue to know and start reciprocity relationships for a development of the International Community in peaceful coexistence.</p> <p>Launch of the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Appeal "Heritage for Building Peace 2025" • "Life Beyond Tourism (LBT) International Officina for Dialogue in World Heritage Sites 2026" <p>Q&A</p>	AUDITORIUM AL DUOMO
10:30 am	<p>Musical Interlude</p> <p>Narmine Najafli, Azerbaijan (piano) Adil Babirov: Scherzo Fryderyk Chopin: Scherzo Op.31 in B minor</p> <p>Tahmina Abdullayeva, Azerbaijan (violin) Mushfig Guliyev, Azerbaijan (piano) Niyazi: Rast Muğam Fikret Amirov: Dance of Love Gara Garayev: Seven Beauties (Adagio, Valse)</p> <p>Stanisław Daniel Kotliński, Poland (Bass-Baritone) Narmine Najafli, Azerbaijan (Piano) Francesco Paolo Tosti: Malia Francesco Paolo Tosti: Ninon Francesco Paolo Tosti: La Serenata</p>	AUDITORIUM AL DUOMO



11:10 am	<p>Life Beyond Tourism (LBT) International Officina for Dialogue in World Heritage Sites 2025 Plenary discussion table</p> <p>Peace and Heritage Table 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Enhancing the role of heritage in creating social cohesion in the local community</i> • <i>Places of discord: when heritage is controversial or disputed</i> 	AUDITORIUM AL DUOMO
1.10 pm	Break & networking	
2.00 pm	<p>Life Beyond Tourism (LBT) International Officina for Dialogue in World Heritage Sites 2025 Parallel discussion tables</p> <p>Peace and Heritage Table 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Peace education</i> • <i>Communicating peace: the role of communication in building dialogue</i> <p>Empathic dialogue between hosts and guests Table 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Raising awareness about the acceptance and respect of diversity</i> • <i>The role of institutions in defining the limits of mutual adaptation between guests and local communities</i> 	PALAZZO COPPINI
4.00 pm	Break & networking	
4.30 pm	<p>Life Beyond Tourism (LBT) International Officina for Dialogue in World Heritage Sites 2025 Parallel discussion tables</p> <p>Tourism and Environment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Limits: understanding the carrying capacity of territories to mitigate the social, environmental, and structural impacts of tourism</i> • <i>Creating a conscious tourism movement: how to develop balanced tourism respectful of local natural resources</i> • <i>Overtourism: addressing the problem of mass tourism and its consequences</i> • <i>Zero tourism: how to develop sustainable tourism in lesser-known areas</i> <p>Empathic dialogue between hosts and guests Table 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Community-based tourism: tourism that supports local communities</i> • <i>Beyond resource-consuming tourism: making travel an authentic experience and exchange</i> 	PALAZZO COPPINI



7.00 pm	Musical and Dance Farewell Concert of Traditional Romanian Music "The Cycle of Life" (Lullabies, Wedding Songs, Military Songs, Love Songs, Instrumental Music) Performed by the "ICOANE" Ensemble – Director: Alina Stan, "Gheorghe Dima" National Academy of Music, Cluj-Napoca (Romania)	AUDITORIUM AL DUOMO
November 28, 2025		
10.00 am	Storytellation 2025 Presentation of the cultural and natural itineraries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gonzaga University (USA) <i>Cultural adventures: Connection through adaptability</i> • International University of Sarajevo (Bosnia-Herzegovina) <i>Rebuilding multicultural Mostar</i> • "Gheorghe Dima" National Academy of Music, Cluj-Napoca (Romania) <i>The agrarian ritual "Udătoriu" from Șurdești, Maramureș – between tradition and continuity</i> • Red Rock Initiative (Rwanda) <i>Community based tourism in Rwanda</i> • Odessa National University of Economics (Ukraine) <i>Italians in Odesa</i> • Chung Hwa University of Medical Technology (Taiwan) <i>Wander through the Sunlit Cradle in the Mountains</i> • Azerbaijan University of Architecture and Construction (Azerbaijan) <i>Sheki's Reverie: Memory Collected in Pieces</i> • Public Foundation "Art Araba (Kyrgyzstan) <i>World Epics Festival of the Kyrgyz Republic</i> • Associazione Amici Musei e Monumenti Fiorentini Mf (Italy) <i>Talking tabernacles: a special way to discover the history of Florence</i> • O. M. Beketov National University of Urban Economy in Kharkiv (Ukraine) <i>Kharkiv — Reinforced Concrete</i> 	AUDITORIUM AL DUOMO
12.30 am	Conclusions <i>Streaming on Life Beyond Tourism YouTube channel</i> www.youtube.com/@lifebeyondtourism	AUDITORIUM AL DUOMO
2.00 - 5.00 pm	Visits or excursions upon registration	



“The World in Florence” 2025 Life Beyond Tourism (LBT) International Officina for Dialogue in World Heritage Sites

Discussion tables programme at a glance

November 27th, 2025		
9.30 - 10.30 am	Plenary introductive session <i>Life Beyond Tourism International Officina for Dialogue in World Heritage Sites 2025</i>	AUDITORIUM AL DUOMO
11.10 - 11.10 pm	Plenary discussion table Peace and Heritage <i>Table 1</i>	AUDITORIUM AL DUOMO
2.00 - 4.00 pm	Parallel discussion table Peace and Heritage <i>Table 2</i> Empathic Dialogue Between Hosts And Guests <i>Table 1</i>	PALAZZO COPPINI
4.30 - 7.00 pm	Parallel discussion table Tourism and Environment Empathic Dialogue Between Hosts And Guests <i>Table 2</i>	PALAZZO COPPINI
November 28th, 2025		
10.00 - 12.30 am	Storytellation	AUDITORIUM AL DUOMO
12.30 - 1.00 pm	Plenary conclusive session	AUDITORIUM AL DUOMO

TOPIC 1: PEACE AND HERITAGE

Operational Objective: To collect and structure **replicable practices** using cultural heritage (tangible and intangible) as an active tool for **dialogue, social cohesion, and peace**. Speakers are asked to provide precise methodological data on their initiatives, identifying measurable outcomes and operational needs to transform historical memories into **global models of understanding** to be codified in a methodological document.



Table 1 – 11.10 am, Auditorium al Duomo

Moderator: Celia Martínez Yáñez

Co-moderators: Duccio Canestrini, Corinna Del Bianco, Giorgio von Arx

Enhancing the role of heritage in creating social cohesion in the local community

1. Diversifying History, Community and Culture: Kenya's Trans Rift Trail Tourism Model

Fergus T Maclaren

ICOMOS International Scientific Committee Cultural Tourism,
Canada

2. Faya: Heritage as a Bridge of Human Connection

Khuloud Alhouli

Sharjah Archaeology Authority, United Arab Emirates

3. The Water Ecomuseum of Douiret-Sbâa: Cultural and Water Heritage for the Resilience of a Moroccan Oasis

Vladimiro Boselli

WAMU-NET, Italy

4. Talking about PEACE. Water diplomacy resolves conflicts since 2500 BC

Henk van Schaik

ICOMOS International Scientific Committee Water and Heritage,
Netherlands

5. The Living Heart of Nkotsi: A Story of Heritage and Peace

Greg Bakunzi

Red Rocks Initiative for Sustainable Development, Rwanda

6. Heritage for Transformation: Creative Learning with Collections for a Peaceful and Sustainable Future

José Luiz Pederzoli Jr.

ICCROM, Brazil



Places of discord: when heritage is controversial or disputed

7. Heritage & Peace: the music of interpretation: c'est le ton qui fait la musique

Jurn A.W. Buisman

Stichting Museum Geelvinck, Netherlands

8. Global review of borders that should connect instead of divide

Gabor Beszterczey

United Nations, USA

Table 2 – 2.00 pm, Palazzo Coppini

Moderator: Celia Martínez Yáñez

Co-moderator: Corinna Del Bianco

Peace education

1. Peace Education during the war

Olga Degtiareva

Odessa National University of Economics, Ukraine

2. Enhancing the role of heritage in creating social cohesion in the local community

Adi Corovic

International University of Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina

3. Living Voices. The Roseboro Project – Elevating women's voices across generations

Regina Binder

The Provincetown Community Compact, USA

4. Posušje - an experience of peace at the crossroads of cultures

Jozo Kolobarić

Municipality of Posušje, Bosnia and Herzegovina



Communicating peace: the role of communication in building dialogue

5. Culture as a tool of peace and dialogue

Giorgio Starace

Former Ambassador, Italy

6. Reviving the Spirit of 'Dolle Mina'-Feminist Movement: Communication, Creativity and Collective Action

Dunya Verwey

'Dolle Mina' 1970 - 2025, Netherlands

TOPIC 2: EMPATHIC DIALOGUE BETWEEN HOSTS AND GUESTS

Operational Objective: To identify and codify **successful models** of **tourism** to promote authentic cultural exchange and respect for diversity. Speakers must provide structured data to create a **repository of ethical and measurable practices** for inclusion in the international methodological document.

Table 1 – 2.00 pm, Palazzo Coppini

Moderator: Marc Laenen

Co-Moderators: Duccio Canestrini, Giorgio von Arx

Raising awareness about the acceptance and respect of diversity

1. Welcome diversity, managing inclusion: superpowers of tourism innovation

Daniela Campora

Associazione Italiana Turismo Responsabile AITR, Italy

2. The Management of Terraced Rice Fields in West Sumatra and in Japan

Kae Oyama

Chukyo University, Japan

Akifumi Iwabuchi

Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology, Japan



The role of institutions in defining the limits of mutual adaptation between guests and local communities

3. Operationalising Empathic Dialogue: A Data-Driven Framework for Host-Guest Coexistence in the World Heritage Site Historic Centre of Córdoba

Fernando Osuna-Pérez
University of Granada, Spain

4. ICOMOS International Charter for Cultural Heritage Tourism 2022 - realising the transformative potential of cultural tourism

Cecilie Smith-Christensen
ICOMOS International Scientific Committee Cultural Tourism,
Norway

5. Heritage access, presentation & interpretation: fundamental rights, inclusiveness and authenticity

Celia Martínez Yáñez
University of Granada, Spain

Table 2 – 4.30 pm, Palazzo Coppini

Moderator: Maria Teresa Jaquinta

Co-Moderators: Duccio Canestrini, Giorgio von Arx

Community-based tourism: tourism that supports local communities

1. Community-Based Tourism: Tourism that Supports Local Communities in Angkor World Heritage Site

Yit Chandaroat
APSARA National Authority, Cambodia

2. UNESCO Tourism Business Directory

Peter DeBrine
UNESCO, France

3. Sustainable Tourism development in the Giraffe zone of Niger

Issoufou Adamou Hassane
ONG Tourism and Local Development (TOLD-Niger), Niger



Beyond resource-consuming tourism: making travel an authentic experience and exchange

4. Beyond resource-intensive tourism: making travel an authentic experience and an opportunity for exchange

Gbaman Dogoua Paul Alain and Kitobo Marietta Orlyne Ma Fleure
Cellule C2d Urbain Communauté Urbaine Bertoua, Cameroon

5. Reviving the Udătoriul of Șurdești: an ancient agrarian ritual and its impact on the village community

Prună Larisa-Vasilica
Gheorghe Dima National Academy of Music, Cluj-Napoca,
Romania

TOPIC 3: TOURISM AND ENVIRONMENT

Operational Objective: To select and examine **innovative practices** for managing the environmental and social impacts of tourism. Speakers must provide structured data and operational methodologies to formulate and connect the most effective and replicable strategies in a final document.

4.30 pm, Palazzo Coppini

Moderator: José Luiz Pederzoli

Co-Moderator: Corinna Del Bianco

Overtourism: addressing the problem of mass tourism and its consequences

1. Neuroscience and touristification: Preliminary evidence on urban perception in contexts of overtourism

Francisco Javier Abarca-Alvarez
University of Granada, Spain

Limits: understanding the carrying capacity of territories to mitigate the social, environmental, and structural impacts of tourism

2. Dialogue in Motion: Managing Tourism in the Galápagos after the World Heritage in Danger List

Stephanie Veith
University of Granada, Spain



3. Sustainable Management of Public Visitation at the Alhambra: Balancing Heritage Conservation, Education, and Tourism Pressure

Beatriz M^a Girela Muñoz

Patronato De La Alhambra Y Generalife (Junta De Andalucía), Spain

Creating a conscious tourism movement: how to develop balanced tourism respectful of local natural resources

4. Faro Story Spot: Storytelling, Food Heritage, and Sustainable Tourism in a Lesser-Known City of the Algarve

Sofia Fonseca

Teiduma, Consultancy on Heritage, Culture and Sustainability, Portugal

5. From Zero to Impact: Building a Sustainable Tourism Ecosystem in Rural Rwanda Through Community-Led Development

Greg Bakunzi

Red Rocks Initiative for Sustainable Development, Rwanda

Zero tourism: how to develop sustainable tourism in lesser-known areas

6. The Cultural Landscape of Khinalig as an Example of Human–Nature Harmony: Sustainable Development in the Context of Conscious Tourism

Aygun Imanova

Azerbaijan University of Architecture and Construction, Azerbaijan

7. Tourism zero: how to develop sustainable tourism in the present territories

Daniel Douckaga

Cellule C2d Urbain Communauté Urbaine Bertoua, Cameroon



Abstracts

Neuroscience and touristification: Preliminary evidence on urban perception in contexts of overtourism

Francisco Javier Abarca-Alvarez
University of Granada, Spain
Associate Professor

Abstract

The phenomenon of overtourism generates profound transformations in the urban experience, affecting both visitors and residents, with impacts that extend beyond environmental issues to health and well-being. It shows these preliminary findings from several experimental studies employing neuroscientific methodologies, combining electroencephalography (EEG), galvanic skin response (GSR), and other physiological biomarkers. Initial results indicate that highly touristified environments induce alterations in attention patterns, stress levels, and cognitive load, thereby reshaping the way subjects perceive and process the city environments. These distortions influence comprehensive appreciation, the relationship with cultural heritage, and the overall satisfaction of the residents and tourists. The research opens a promising research field, demonstrating how applied neuroscience can provide evidence to support urban managers, heritage policymakers, and tourism stakeholders in mitigating the adverse consequences of overtourism.

Biography

Francisco J. Abarca-Álvarez, PhD Architect, is an Associate Professor of Urban and Spatial Planning and Vice Dean for Internationalisation at the Faculty of Architecture, University of Granada. His research applies data-driven methods to enhance urban quality, sustainability, and social vulnerability improvement. After 15 years in professional practice, he co-founded GIS4tech, a spin-off using AI and geospatial data for humanitarian innovation. He has led internationally funded projects and authored over 100 publications, including more than 20 in top-tier scientific journals.

Sustainable Tourism development in the Giraffe zone of Niger

Issoufou Adamou Hassane
ONG Tourism and Local Development (TOLD), Niger
President



Abstract

The National Giraffe Reserve is located 60 km east of the capital Niamey and is home to the last remaining specimens of white giraffes in West Africa. This makes it an attractive tourist destination for both residents and foreigners visiting Niger. The reserve straddles the departments of Kollo (Tillabéry region) and Boboye (Dosso region) across the rural communes of Kouré, Fakara, N'Gonga, and Harikanassou. With the support of partners and surrounding local communities, Niger has successfully conserved this emblematic species, whose numbers have grown from 46 individuals in 1996 to more than 900 in 2024. In order to achieve the goal of harmonious and sustainable tourism development combining giraffe watching and cultural immersion, the NGO Tourism and Local Development (TOLD-Niger) intends to set up a project to support the development of sustainable tourism in the Giraffe Zone, specifically in the rural communities of Kouré, N'Gonga, and Harikanassou. This is a form of community-based tourism that aims to implement actions with local stakeholders in order to promote the area's tourism potential, create economic opportunities, especially for young people, women, and artisans in these municipalities, and revive tourism with a positive impact on the environment.

Through this project, we intend to implement the following best practices:

1. Establishment of tourism volunteer clubs:

The main objective of the tourism volunteer clubs will be to promote sustainable tourism in the giraffe zone (Kouré, Harikanassou, and Ngonga municipalities) by highlighting its natural, wildlife, cultural, and historical riches. Trained volunteers will be responsible for raising awareness among local populations of the importance of tourism for the national economy, promoting local initiatives in responsible tourism, and actively participating in environmental conservation efforts. These clubs will be led by young people identified at the local level based on criteria established by the project team.

2. Support for the activities of tourism volunteer clubs:

The activities of volunteer tourism clubs may take various forms, ranging from organizing guided tours and tourist circuits to setting up community initiatives related to tourism. Volunteers will be involved in promoting responsible tourism among travelers, raising their awareness of sustainability issues and encouraging them to adopt responsible behavior when visiting the area.

3. Training and support for young people in tourism sectors

Promising tourism sectors will be identified at the municipal level, and 150 young people (50 per municipality) will benefit from capacity building in the identified sectors (reception, accommodation, catering, guiding, etc.).

4. Organization of awareness-raising sessions

Through a schedule to be established in the project planning, awareness-raising sessions will be organized at the municipal level on various topics such as social cohesion, sustainable tourism, environmental protection, and conflicts over natural resources, with a particular focus on human-wildlife conflict.

5. Environmental education

Environmental education sessions will be organized for children in local



communities to raise awareness of the importance of nature and wildlife conservation. Best practices in environmental protection and conservation will be shared with farmers, mainly agroecological practices and natural regeneration.

6. Planting of 1,000 trees

1,000 trees of various species, including fruit trees, will be planted in the villages of these municipalities. This activity aims to regenerate grazing areas for animals, particularly giraffes, strengthen environmental protection, and create microclimates around tourist sites.

Strategy to counter the dominance of large hotel chains and short-term rental platforms

In order to maximize the benefits of tourism for the populations of these three targeted municipalities, we plan to develop:

1. Homestays: Since the area has very few tourist accommodation establishments, we plan to promote homestays to enable communities to generate significant income and allow visitors to fully immerse themselves in the culture of the Giraffe area. Therefore, in consultation with local communities, houses will be identified and selected based on criteria such as hygiene, residents' quality of life, architectural and decorative style, etc.
2. Construction of hostels and a platform managed by local community groups: In the medium term, we plan to build youth hostels in the three municipalities, which will be managed by local communities through groups or cooperatives that will be created for this purpose. In addition, a global platform will be created for communication, promotion and booking of accommodation and other services in the three municipalities.
3. Incubation center for entrepreneurship projects in various tourism sectors: Also with the aim of contributing to the empowerment of local communities, entrepreneurship support mechanisms will be established. Thus, tourism entrepreneurship support centers will be created to mentor and support local project leaders, particularly women and youth, in developing their business plans, seeking financing, and implementing their activities. Examples of these projects include: projects to create local travel agencies, projects to create bed and breakfasts, restaurants, souvenir shops, etc.

Biography

Issoufou Adamou Hassane is the President of the NGO Tourism and Local Development (TOLD-Niger), where he coordinates initiatives to promote sustainable Tourism and heritage conservation. His work includes advocacy and awareness- raising efforts particularly engaging young Nigeriens through online forums to support the revival of tourism and the protection of Niger's cultural, natural and wildlife heritage. Through TOLD-Niger, he actively works to enhance local development by fostering appreciation and sustainable management of the country's rich heritage.



Faya: Heritage as a Bridge of Human Connection

Khuloud Alhouli

Sharjah Archaeology Authority, United Arab Emirates

Director of Tangible Cultural Heritage Department

Abstract

Heritage and Unity in the Local and Global Level

The Emirate of Sharjah and UAE have celebrated the inscription of Faya Palaeolandscape on the World Heritage List in 2025, a remarkable achievement in a region with fewer 100 World Heritage Sites in 18 Arab Countries. Faya inscription was a testament to how heritage can unite both local and global communities.

On an international level, Faya connects humanity through a shared narrative of origins as this desert landscape preserves over 200,000 years of human history and their out-of-Africa journey, through Arabia to inhabit the World, a fact that was widely received in astonishment.

At the local level, Faya enhances the role of heritage in creating social cohesion through the Sharjah Government policy of employing residents from each region in cultural, tourism and economic sectors to ensure that those who know the land best are its stewards. The community repeatedly helped in the site protection, halting harmful activities such as quarrying, and excessive off-roads fun activities.

Today, responsible tourism frameworks, educational workshops and festivals are introduced such as Tanweer Festival to engage communities with the landscape in a new way they have not experienced.

Biography

Khuloud Alhouli is the Director of the Tangible Cultural Heritage Department at the Sharjah Archaeology Authority, UAE, where she leads Sharjah's national efforts in the field of World Heritage and cultural diplomacy. Her leadership has been instrumental in securing global recognition for the UAE's heritage, culminating in the inscription of the Faya Palaeolandscape on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2025, a landmark achievement documenting 200,000 years of shared human origins. She coordinated Sharjah's emirate-wide efforts to issue the Sharjah Cultural Heritage Law in 2020, and continues to shape policies that safeguard cultural identity while aligning with international heritage frameworks. A seasoned cultural management professional, Alhouli's work bridges heritage, policy, and international relations, positioning culture as a platform for dialogue, identity, and global engagement. She previously served as Director of the *Sharjah: Gateway to the Trucial States* initiative under the Executive Office of H.H. Sheikha Bodour bint Sultan Al Qasimi, where she managed heritage nomination strategies and institutional partnerships, and as Curator of Al Hisn Fort Museum, where she oversaw the complete re-display and curatorial redevelopment of this 19th-century landmark central to Sharjah's modern history. Earlier in her career, she led the restructuring of the Sharjah Business Women Council, introducing a new strategic framework to empower women and enhance institutional performance. Beyond her official role, Alhouli uses social media to narrate Sharjah's



heritage story through engaging storytelling, fostering public awareness of culture and identity. She has also co-authored several scientific articles on Sharjah's cultural heritage and holds a Master's degree in International Politics from Queen's University, Canada. She is a recipient of the Sheikh Rashid Award for Academic Excellence.

From Zero to Impact: Building a Sustainable Tourism Ecosystem in Rural Rwanda Through Community-Led Development

Greg Bakunzi

Red Rocks Initiative for Sustainable Development, Rwanda
Managing Director

Abstract

This case study examines the transformative journey of Red Rocks Rwanda in developing sustainable tourism in the Musanze District, a region previously known only as a gateway to gorilla trekking. Facing the challenges of a "zero tourism" baseline in community-based experiences, the initiative focused on creating a model that prioritizes cultural preservation, economic equity, and environmental stewardship. The strategy pivots on three core pillars: Community Ownership, Authentic Storytelling, and Strategic Partnerships. Instead of marketing the destination to mass tourism, Red Rocks invested in capacity building, training local communities in hospitality, storytelling, and enterprise management. Experiences were co-created with communities—from traditional pottery and basket weaving to agricultural tours and homestays—ensuring authenticity and direct economic benefit. Partnerships with tour operators like Amahoro Tours provided market access without compromising values, effectively branding and selling these experiences to a global audience seeking meaningful travel. The results demonstrate a viable blueprint for "zero tourism" territories: over 50 local families now derive sustainable income, women-led cooperatives thrive, and cultural practices are preserved through intergenerational learning. The model avoids exploitation by ensuring revenue-sharing agreements are transparent and community-driven. This case study argues that the development of little-known territories must start from within, leveraging local assets and patient capital to build resilience against the pitfalls of mass tourism, creating a self-sustaining ecosystem where tourism becomes a tool for empowerment rather than extraction.

The Living Heart of Nkotsi: A Story of Heritage and Peace

Greg Bakunzi

Red Rocks Initiative for Sustainable Development, Rwanda
Managing Director



Abstract

In the heart of the Virunga Mountains, where mist drapes over rolling green hills and volcanoes touch the sky, lies Nkotsi Village — a humble yet vibrant place the world now knows as one of the Best Tourism Villages, recognized by the UNWTO.

Here, the rhythm of life is woven with song, color, and compassion — a living heritage that teaches us how peace is built not through monuments of stone, but through the daily acts of community, creativity, and care for the land.

This is the story of Nkotsi, the story of how heritage breathes, connects, and builds bridges — between people and planet.

I. The Geography of the Soul

Nkotsi rests just outside Musanze, Rwanda's northern province, embraced by the Volcanoes National Park. The peaks of Sabyinyo, Karisimbi, and Bisoke stand like ancient guardians of memory.

The land is fertile — volcanic soils feed banana groves, beans, and sorghum. Rivers whisper through valleys, carrying stories older than our language. Each hill here has a name, each path a purpose. Travelers who arrive at Red Rocks Intercultural Center are welcomed not by gates, but by smiles and songs. The place feels like a heartbeat — steady, inclusive, alive. It is here that Red Rocks Initiatives was born — not as a business, but as a bridge: between culture and conservation, tradition and technology, visitors and villagers.

II. Where Heritage Meets Humanity

Walk with me through Nkotsi. At sunrise, women gather in a circle, weaving Agaseke baskets — the peace baskets — whose spiral patterns symbolize unity and hope. Their hands move with the precision of memory, guided by skills passed down through generations. Nearby, the Imigongo artists mix clay and cow dung into intricate geometric designs, painting them in black, white, and ochre. What once adorned royal huts now adorns the walls of homes and galleries, a testament to creativity reborn. Down the path, a group of young drummers practices the Intore dance — the dance of heroes. Their bare feet strike the earth with reverence, their spears rise toward the mountains. For them, tradition is not old — it is fuel for the future. And in the community garden, elders teach children how to plant trees and cultivate medicinal herbs. "To heal the land," they say, "is to heal ourselves." Everywhere, heritage is not frozen in time — it moves, it evolves, it speaks.

III. The Hands-On Heritage

At Red Rocks Art Center, travelers become learners. They do not just observe — they participate.

They learn to brew Urwagwa, the traditional banana beer, from women who share laughter as freely as they share technique. The process — crushing, fermenting, waiting — becomes a lesson in patience and gratitude. In the pottery workshop, artisans shape clay gathered from the nearby riverbeds. Visitors try their hands at forming a bowl or a vase.

The clay resists at first, then yields — much like the story of Rwanda itself: strong, resilient, forgiving. At the farm-to-table kitchen, local women teach how to cook local traditional foods like Isombe — cassava



leaves pounded with peanut sauce — and how every ingredient carries a story of land and family. This is not tourism. This is transformation.

IV. Nature as Neighbor, Peace as Practice

From Nkotsi, trails wind toward the Volcanoes National Park, home of the majestic mountain gorillas. But Red Rocks reminds every traveler: the story of conservation is also a story of community. We tell visitors how local people once feared the forest — how poverty bred poaching — and how tourism, when shared fairly, turned conflict into coexistence. Now, gorillas thrive because villages thrive. Part of every visit supports reforestation, environmental education, and youth projects. Here, heritage is peace in action — a harmony between human livelihood and ecological balance.

V. Imagination and Technology – The New Custodians of Culture

In the age of digital connection, Nkotsi is reimagining how traditions are shared. Young storytellers trained by Red Rocks use digital cameras and mobile storytelling apps to record cultural traditions tours we showcase to tourists, like harvest rituals, and songs once nearly forgotten. We anticipate to see through virtual workshops, our local artisans connect with learners across continents and in future visitors can now learn Imigongo painting or Rwandan cooking through digital classrooms, creating income for the community even from afar. Technology becomes not a threat to tradition, but its protector — amplifying the voices of those once unheard.

VI. The Spirit of Umuganda – Working Together

On the last Saturday of every month, the people of Nkotsi gather for Umuganda — Rwanda's traditional community service. Visitors are welcome to join: planting trees, cleaning roads, repairing schools. Here, we realize that peace is not only spoken — it is done.

Through shared work, we remember that the truest heritage is solidarity.

VII. Building Peace Through Heritage

What makes Nkotsi special is not just its crafts, dances, or landscapes — it is the way these elements come together to tell a bigger story: A story of a nation that rose from ashes to become a beacon of unity. A story of how cultural heritage becomes a tool for peacebuilding, education, and sustainable growth.

At Red Rocks Rwanda, we say: "When people meet as equals — not as tourist and guide, but as learner and teacher — peace begins."

Every song sung, every basket woven, every tree planted is an act of hope. And every traveler who visits Nkotsi leaves with more than memories — they carry a piece of Rwanda's cultural soul, a reminder that the future of peace begins with respect for the past.

We are the keepers of the past, the builders of the future, this makes Nkotsi village more than a destination. It is a living classroom of humanity, where culture connects hearts and tourism becomes a path to peace.

"In Nkotsi Village, heritage is not something we visit — it's something we live. And through Red Rocks Rwanda, we invite the world to live it with us — to build peace, one story, one song, and one shared smile at a time."



Biography

Greg Bakunzi is the Executive Director at Red Rocks Initiative for Sustainable Development and a passionate advocate for cultural preservation and community empowerment in Rwanda. Based in Musanze, Greg has led innovative heritage driven programs that bridge traditional knowledge and modern peacebuilding, including the expansion of Red Rocks Rwanda Cultural Center as a regional model for cultural sustainability. With a background in conservation, community engagement, and eco-tourism, he collaborates with elders, artists, and educators to create platforms for local voices and intercultural understanding. His work focuses on using storytelling and participatory heritage practices to build inclusive identities, particularly among youth and marginalized groups. Greg believes that culture is not only memory it is a movement toward unity and resilience.

Global review of borders that should connect instead of divide

Gabor Beszterczey
United Nations, USA
Retired

Abstract

Heritage: Peace and Move Places of discord into bridges of tourism A global review of borders that should connect instead of divide - The story of Munkács – Mukachevo - complex history of national belonging, changing hands at least seven times over the past millennium, five times during the lifetime of an old person living today - Central Europe abound of such stories, not exploited enough for tourism. History is becoming an important part of tourism, but not reflected in media, tourism organizations competing, not enough cross-border cooperation - South Tirol and Tirol, Silesia's Czech and Polish parts (Silesia has been part of Poland, Bohemia, Austria, Prussia, Germany, Czechoslovakia, and now Poland and the Czech Republic), Sudetenland – Czechs and Germans, Transylvania, Macedonia, French and Spanish Basque countries, Greece and Turkey, Cyprus; - Beyond Europe: Africa: Morocco-Andalusia, the new dam between Ethiopia-Sudan-Egypt; Goma between DR Congo and Rwanda; Beagle canal between Argentina-Chile; Nepal-India border or Sindh-Gujarat; Amritsar-Lahore (Punjab, Mughal architecture, gardens, and cuisine), Thailand-Cambodia tourism instead of border clashes; Central Asia Silk road, Fergana Valley (Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan); - Role of Florence: looking back in history, Etruscan heritage, Greco-Roman connections, Mediterranean unity of Antiquity, from Levante to Algarve, Florence-Milan alliance of the Médicis - Cities, i.e. Alexandria, Tangier, Toledo, Venice can be global depositories of connections (library, lighthouse, Ibn Battuta, Marco Polo) - Romualdo Del Bianco Foundation: using website for distribution of how-to materials, best practices, joint fundraising efforts, focused cross-border projects, cross-border project of the year competition - Hungary and Austria playing soccer – in the news – against whom? Towards such cross-border teams of tourism.



Biography

Gabor Beszterczey is an international development executive with twenty years of experience in socio economic project design, implementation and management and humanitarian response in Africa, Latin America, Eurasia, Asia, US and Europe. He also worked as external relations, media and communications professional, developed public-private partnerships and coalitions across four continents. He has extensive experience in poverty reduction, democratic transitions, post-conflict development, food security, gender and youth empowerment, protection and capacity building, as well as generating sustainable investment projects in emerging economies. Gabor specialized in strategic analysis, planning and streamlining and merging operations. designed and implemented development strategies and programmes for the UN, international NGOs, businesses and media; He accumulated country residence experience in the US, UK, France, Kenya, Colombia, DR Congo, Russia, Hungary and is fluent in English, Spanish, French, German, Russian and his native Hungarian.

Living Voices: The Roseboro Project - Elevating women's voices across generations

Regina Binder

The Provincetown Community Compact, USA
Chairman of the Board

Abstract

Education for peace requires spaces where listening and debate are practiced. In Provincetown, the Community Compact revives the salon tradition of Viola Roseboro, a pioneering editor, and Jessie Cora Chamberlain, a poet and environmentalist, who welcomed marginalized women and allies into weekly gatherings. Building on that legacy, The Dinner Party: East End Women of Provincetown turns scholarly research into staged dialogues where historic voices are placed in conversation with contemporary citizens. This participatory practice transforms heritage into an educational tool, offering lessons in empathy, recognition, and civic responsibility. By anchoring these narratives in Roseboro Cottage and linking archival study to lived experience, the Compact shows how heritage can become a classroom for peace, equipping communities with the skills to engage differences constructively.

Biography

Regina Binder is Chairman of the Provincetown Community Compact, where the mission is nurturing community through culture, environment, and heritage. She has led initiatives that expand the definition of significance to include LGBTQ pioneers, women, immigrants, and working-class residents whose contributions shaped Provincetown but remain underrepresented in official histories. Under her leadership, the Compact has developed the Think-ubator, which mentors and fiscally sponsors emerging cultural and



environmental projects; the dune shack residencies that preserve fragile cultural landscapes; and Swim for Life, which for nearly four decades has raised critical funds for community organizations. Binder is also founder of The Binder Group, a consultancy specializing in heritage and resilient tourism, and serves as an expert consultant to the Asian Development Bank. A member of ICOMOS, she brings both global perspective and deep local commitment, positioning Provincetown as a model of inclusive practice with worldwide resonance.

The Water Ecomuseum of Douiret-Sbâa: Cultural and Water Heritage for the Resilience of a Moroccan Oasis

Vladimiro Boselli
Researcher CNR-IREA, Italy

Abstract

In the arid Figuig region of Morocco, the village of Douiret-Sbâa and its oasis represent a remarkable example of socio-ecological resilience. A centuries-old water management system, passed down through generations, not only supports agriculture but structures the community's entire social life. This case study explores how this cultural heritage—both tangible and intangible—can be activated as a key resource to foster participation, inclusion, and resilience in the face of climatic and socio-demographic pressures.

The system is centred on the Ain Sbaâ spring. Each night, the spring feeds a main reservoir. Water allocation for irrigation is governed by an ingenious and precise mechanism: a notched wooden trunk, calibrated with nails and string, regulates the irrigation shifts. To adapt to seasonal water availability, the community collectively adjusts the duration of the complete irrigation cycle—a flexible decision-making process demonstrating a deep understanding of the ecosystem. Equity and shared responsibility are ensured by assigning maintenance tasks, such as cleaning canals, by draw. This holistic system is a "living heritage" that perfectly embodies the interconnection between different forms of heritage:

- **Tangible Heritage:** The irrigation canals (*seguias*), the reservoir, and physical measurement tools.
- **Intangible Heritage:** The empirical knowledge of calibrating the trunk, the social rules of distribution, decision-making rituals, and the knowledge of sustainable oasis agriculture.
- **Natural Heritage:** The oasis itself, a cultural landscape created and maintained by the synergistic interaction between the community and its arid environment.

However, this heritage is vulnerable. Rural exodus of the youth, the pressure of modern development models, and increasing drought due to climate change risk eroding this knowledge and fragmenting the social fabric that supports it.

In response, we propose implementing an ecomuseum. More than a



traditional museum, an ecomuseum is a “pact” through which a community takes care of its heritage within a defined territory. This participatory framework is the ideal tool to activate Douiret-Sbâa’s heritage, actively involving the local population, cultural and scientific institutions, schools, and regional associations.

The process has already begun with fieldwork and local consultations to map the water system in its dual tangible and intangible nature. This participatory mapping is not just a preliminary research phase but the founding act of the ecomuseum itself—a process that already values the knowledge of elders and stimulates intergenerational dialogue.

The ultimate goal is to turn the entire village and its oasis into a diffuse museum, where water heritage becomes:

- An Educational Tool: for local schools and visitors, transforming local knowledge into an educational resource.
- An Engine for Social Cohesion: strengthening identity pride and encouraging the youth to become active custodians of their inheritance.
- A Climate Adaptation Strategy: documenting and scientifically validating these traditional practices to propose them as models for sustainable water governance in similar arid contexts.

The work in Douiret-Sbâa is an ongoing process, evolving without a definitive conclusion. Its advancement can not only valorise and strengthen the traditional system through grassroots action but also inspire community-led efforts in other regions facing climate vulnerability and social change.

A Best Practice or Implemented Solution

The core best practice we are implementing to address the challenges in Douiret-Sbâa is the participatory process of co-creating a community-based inventory of water heritage.

The Challenge: Knowledge of the traditional water system is held primarily by elder farmers. With rural exodus, this knowledge risks being lost before being properly documented and transmitted. Any intervention from “the outside” without the community’s full involvement would fail, as it would undermine the sense of ownership and existing governance structures.

The Solution: The Participatory Inventory

We have initiated a project to collectively create a comprehensive inventory of water heritage. This is not a traditional academic survey but an exercise in “living mapping” with several objectives:

1. To Document: Systematically record (through video, audio, photographs, sketches) the techniques, tools, social rules, and place names related to water.
2. To Engage: Activate intergenerational dialogue, where trained village youth become the researchers “interviewing” their grandparents and parents.
3. To Validate: Reinforce the value of local knowledge, showing it is worthy of study and preservation, thereby boosting community pride.
4. To Lay the Foundation: This inventory will form the narrative and scientific core of the future ecomuseum, ensuring its authentic voice is that of the community.

Implementation and Expected Outcomes:

- Forming a “Water Heritage Working Group”: A small, mixed group of youth, elders, and farmers to guide the process.



- **Collective Mapping Walks:** Walks through the territory to identify and georeference system components (springs, canals, reservoirs, fields).
- **Storytelling Workshops:** Sessions dedicated to collecting memories, stories, and anecdotes related to water, recognising the value of oral heritage.
- **Creating a Shared Digital Archive:** Collected materials will be organised into a simple database accessible to the community, perhaps displayed in a common space, becoming a living resource.

This practice is "best" because it is:

- **Inherently Inclusive:** It breaks down knowledge hierarchies and gives a voice to all stakeholders.
- **Empowering:** It transforms the community from a passive subject of study to the primary actor in its own valorisation.
- **Resilience-Building:** By documenting and strengthening existing social institutions, it helps them better withstand external pressures. The process itself is an act of adaptation, as it systematises and makes more visible a governance model that has proven effective for centuries.

Biography

Vladimiro Andrea Boselli, an environmental engineer and hydrologist by training — more by chance than by design — earned a PhD in International Cooperation and Water Resource Management from the University of Brescia, with a thesis focused on the terraced oases of the Anti-Atlas. He has over ten years of experience in water resources, with research interests spanning the epistemology of the water cycle in the Islamic world, hydropolitics, the anthropology of water, the study of complex dynamics between humans, technology, and nature in arid climates, as well as hydrology and geomorphology.

He currently works as a fixed-term researcher at CNR-IREA, where he deals with remote sensing and environmental monitoring, in addition to collaborating with WAMU-NET, focusing primarily on ancestral hydro-technologies.

Heritage & Peace: the music of interpretation: c'est le ton qui fait la musique

Jurn A.W. Buisman
 ICOMOS
 Secretary General
 ICOMOS-IFLA ISC Cultural Landscapes
 Vice-President Europe
 Stichting Museum Geelvinck, Kolthoorn, Netherlands
 General Director

Abstract

This contribution, written in a personal capacity, explores how interpretation can become a practice of peace. Heritage holds both harmony and



dissonance; the way we interpret it determines whether it divides or connects. Drawing on the metaphor of music - as both a form of intangible heritage and a language beyond words - this reflection considers how tone, rhythm, and resonance can guide us toward non-violence, compassion, empathy, and social justice. Interpretation, like music, requires active listening and responsiveness: a balance between structure and improvisation, between memory and imagination. It invites us to hear the echoes of humanity within heritage, and to transform them into understanding and care for all living beings.

Biography

Dr. Jurn Buisman is Secretary General of ICOMOS and Vice-President Europe of ICOMOS-IFLA ISC on Cultural Landscapes. He serves on the Supervisory Councils of Europa Nostra and Interpret Europe. As founder and General Director of Museum Geelvinck, he has led numerous heritage and music projects in the Netherlands and abroad. Since the late 1980s, he has developed the historic house museum into an internationally connected institution, which stewards the largest Dutch historic keyboard instruments collection, and produces exhibitions, symposia, festivals, and concert-series linking heritage, cultural dialogue and living music traditions. Buisman previously advised the United Nations on heritage preservation and co-initiated the Foundation for Democratic Media in Russia. An economist by learning, he was a member of WEF, ICC and UNECE. Since 2003 serving as Honorary Consul of Belarus, today he supports the democratic forces. His work bridges tangible and intangible heritage, intercultural understanding and sustainable cultural development.

Welcome diversity, managing inclusion: superpowers of tourism innovation

Daniela Campora
Associazione Italiana Turismo Responsabile AITR, Italy
Vice President

Abstract

My talk will start from the vision of diversity in contemporary hyper-tourist culture and the transformation of the way we welcome diversity. The relationship between tourists and hosts requires training in a completely new form of empathy based on emerging trends: - a radical vision of strong innovation, with robotics and AI on the media agenda setting and beyond - neuroscience discoveries on how the brain can deal with diversity - behavioral design suggestions to guide hospitality and correct tourists' attitudes towards more responsible tourism (nudging) - a strong call for double-alphabetization, which proposes combining digital tools with convivial analog means, including staging, to guide hospitality and understanding of needs - the value of tourism in cultural welfare, rediscovering the original healing dimension of tourism together with



the fundamental ability to measure it - the value of tourism in embracing intersectionality, a concept that extends the concept of diversity to the full spectrum of human experience, including ethnic, religious, linguistic, social, economic, and ideological aspects. - This change of pace forces us to reflect on how tourism as a whole should evolve and, above all, how we should evolve the ways in which we motivate the next generations to learn through the tourist experience. The presentation will analyze, on the one hand, how and with what tools host communities and those working in sustainable tourism can respond to the new demands of "augmented hospitality (digital or otherwise)" and how, through these methods, it is possible today to build the critical and conscious citizenship skills of the new generations. Cases of "responsible tourism innovators" will be highlighted to stimulate discussion and the creation of immersive and complementary experiences.

Biography

Daniela Campora is the Vicepresident for the ITALIAN RESPONSIBLE TOURISM ASSOCIATION (AITR) and DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION coordinator; she was the communication manager of AITR until 2023 and is a member of the European coordinating committee of ISTO (International Social Tourism Association)

She has a wide experience in managing hospitality businesses, in European Projects coordination, in teaching and mentoring (Gender Tourism Lab) and in cultural welfare tourism plans.

She is currently President of Il Volo della Rondine Natural Holidays working in the Cilento Park in slow tourism related to food wellness (vegan/vegetarian//mediterranean), lifestyle (sustainable, climatarian), territoriality (active villages, community and regenerative tourism).

Community-Based Tourism: Tourism that Supports Local Communities in Angkor World Heritage Site

Yit Chandaroat
APSARA National Authority, Cambodia
Deputy Director General

Abstract

Community-Based Tourism (CBT) has emerged as a sustainable development strategy in heritage destinations, linking cultural preservation with local livelihood enhancement. Within 401km² of the Angkor World Heritage Site, one of the biggest archeological sites in the world, multiple initiatives and projects supported by APSARA National Authority, the Authority for the Protection and Safeguarding of Angkor and the Region of Angkor in Cambodia and its partners, private sectors and NGOs illustrate how CBT can generate livelihood opportunities while reinforcing heritage values. APSARA National Authority employs almost 3000 staff who have different skills in relation to the conservation, restauration and sustainable development of the site. As a state party, it is very crucial to implement the



both conventions of UNESCO to generate greater synergies between 1972 Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage and the 2003 Convention for Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage to contribute to a broadened concept of cultural heritage that includes practices representations, expressions, knowledge and skills, transmitted from generation to generations, and testifying to rich diversity of the cultural assets for sustainable development of peoples and communities. This paper examines three complementary case studies: community handicraft production in Rohal and Srah Srang Villages, which sustains traditional skills while creating direct benefits for artisans; boat riding services at Baray Neak Pean, which promote eco-tourism and offer alternative incomes for local families, and Artisans Angkor, which has revived endangered Khmer crafts and provided equitable employment to rural youth and women. Together, these initiatives demonstrate how multi-stakeholder collaboration can diversify tourism products, empower marginalized groups, and strengthen links between heritage conservation and economic development. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, such projects contributed significantly to Siem Reap's tourism economy while promoting cultural pride and resilience. In 2019, Angkor site itself attracted approximately 2.5 million international tourists who bought the tickets which can generate direct revenue around 100 million USD. With a focus on Artisans Angkor, established in the 1990s through vocational training initiatives and later formalized as a social enterprise, Artisans Angkor has played an essential role in reviving traditional Khmer crafts such as stone and wood carving, lacquerware, and silk weaving. By creating employment opportunities for more than a thousand artisans in different villages with Angkor-Siem Reap, especially women and youth from rural communities, Artisans Angkor demonstrates how CBT can simultaneously safeguard intangible cultural heritage and reduce poverty. Beyond providing jobs, the company reinvests profits into training programs, workshop development, and cultural promotion, thereby contributing to community empowerment and rural development. The organization also serves as a cultural attraction, drawing hundreds of thousands of international visitors annually before the COVID-19 pandemic, and thus supporting the broader tourism economy in Angkor-Siem Reap. Although the pandemic disrupted operations, renewed investments and institutional partnerships have revitalized these initiatives, with emphasis on sustainable management, skill development, and inclusive participation. The case studies highlight that CBT form should not be a classical form but should be an interdisciplinary, human centered and integrated approach. When strategically supported by all relevant stakeholders, it not only enhances community resilient livelihoods but also reinforces the Outstanding Universal Value of Angkor as a living heritage.

Biography

H.E. Mr. Chandaroat Yit, got his second master's degree in Tourism and Leisure Management from University of Corsica in France after his first Master of Management at Royal University of Laws and Economics. Since 2000, When he graduated a Bachelor of French Literature in Major of Teaching and Tourism, he has immediately started to work for the APSARA National Authority. He is currently the Focal Point for Angkor World Heritage Site and Deputy



Director-General of APSARA in charge of Management of Natural Resources, Infrastructure, Land, Habitat, Urban Heritage, Community, and a part time Lecturer in Tourism at some private universities. He has been, for ten years, a Chief of Secretariat at the Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training. Over 25 years in his career, He gains some international trainings and professional experiences in Tourism, Museum, Historical Site Management and T.V.E.T. Development, from France, Belgium, USA, Senegal, Tunisia, Burkina Faso, etc.

Enhancing the role of heritage in creating social cohesion in the local community

Adi Corovic

International University of Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Associate Professor

Abstract

Sarajevo Bazaar represents the historical core of the city of Sarajevo, which was formed in the mid-15th century at the beginning of the Ottoman period and which became a metaphor for multiculturalism, although it should be said that the roots of such relations go far back in time.

Regardless of all the trials, the tradition of multicultural tolerance, which is based on harmonious interpenetration, and not giving space to others and different, has survived to this day, and Pope Francis had determined that this city represents the European Jerusalem.

The architectural heritage of different religious communities is, as a rule, universally linked to the identity of all residents of the city, regardless of religion or nation. In this way, it literally creates social cohesion in the local community, and the positive influences are felt in the wider regional area.

In addition to the fact that architectural heritage of this kind has been recognized as the core of social cohesion, the local community has recognized that the maintenance of heritage is an excellent basis for the development of cultural tourism, which has recently strongly stimulated economic development, further strengthening social cohesion and an example from which to learn and transfer the model to areas in the world where peace has been disrupted and the survival of heritage has been questioned.

Biography

Adi Ćorović is an associate professor at the Architecture Program of the International University in Sarajevo and Expert for the architectural heritage in the Commission to Preserve National Monuments of B&H, where he carried out more than 85 researches, including research related to the Historical nucleus of Sarajevo.

He coordinated architectural heritage protection projects financed in large part by the Special Fund of the American Ambassadors in BH for cultural heritage, including the Preventive Conservation of the collections of the National Museum of BH. In 2018, after the completion of three phases of



the Red Cross building restoration project in Sarajevo, the President of the Republic of Italy awarded him the Knight of the Republic of Italy. In 1995, he won the First Prize for the documentary film which deals with the themes of uricide and the crisis of the city, at the International Festival in Milan. He publishes scientific works in professional journals and participates in international conferences related to the areas of architectural heritage and urbanism.

UNESCO Tourism Business Directory

Peter DeBrine
UNESCO, France
Senior Project Officer

Abstract

The Visitor Management Assessment & Strategy Tool (VMAST) is a practical framework developed by UNESCO to help World Heritage site managers and destination authorities assess and strengthen visitor management in support of heritage conservation and sustainable tourism. VMAST guides users through a structured self-assessment process to evaluate current management practices, identify risks and opportunities, and prioritize actions for improvement. It covers key dimensions such as governance, visitor experience, community engagement, infrastructure, and monitoring. By promoting an integrated, participatory, and adaptive approach, VMAST helps sites align tourism development with the protection of Outstanding Universal Value while delivering socio-economic benefits for local communities. The tool also facilitates knowledge exchange and benchmarking across sites, building capacity and fostering evidence-based decision-making for sustainable visitor management.

Biography

Mr. Peter DeBrine is a Senior Project Officer for Sustainable Tourism at UNESCO, where he leads global initiatives and partnerships promoting tourism that supports heritage conservation and local communities. From 2021 to 2023, he served as Destination Advisor and Sustainable Tourism Expert for UNESCO, and previously coordinated the UNESCO World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism Programme, developing a global framework for sustainable tourism management at World Heritage sites. Before joining UNESCO, Mr. DeBrine directed the World Heritage Alliance at the United Nations Foundation, building partnerships among the travel industry, governments, NGOs, and the UN to protect heritage and benefit local people. Earlier, he was Deputy Director of the International Tourism Partnership for the Prince of Wales International Business Leaders Forum and a Forestry Officer at the UN Food and Agriculture Organization. He began his career at WWF. Mr. DeBrine holds an MBA from Thunderbird and a bachelor's in chemistry from the University of Colorado, Boulder.



Peace Education during the war

Olga Degtiareva, Ukraine
Odessa National University of Economics, Ukraine
Professor

Abstract

Peace is not only an absence of war; it is a virtue, a state of mind, a disposition for benevolence, confidence, justice (Baruch Spinoza), The children of Ukraine learn peace from war. We as educators have the biggest challenge to show them the world without war, other nations which accept them so as they are in friendship and love. My case study is based on the long-lasting bridging of young people in different parts of the world, foremost, including the long and fruitful participation in events provided by the Romualdo Del Bianco Foundation. The team of ONEU under my leadership participated in student workshops starting from 2004. Since 2022, we have been participating in the Festival "The World in Florence" and the students were very proud to win the best presentation award. Thus, peace education is possible also in wartime. It must include international experience and an understanding of peaceful values, freedom and openness to different cultures.

Biography

Prof. Dr. Olga Degtiareva is a professor of the Odessa National University of Economics. For a long time, she coordinated the cooperation between ONEU and RDBF, later with LBT. Prof. Degtiareva's research interests cover energy economics/management/controlling, AI and sustainability as it concerns renewable energy and Smart Grids. She led international educational and research projects in sustainability; used to teach at universities in different parts of the world; organized international summer schools and workshops in different European countries; contributed to study trips of ONEU students abroad; launched double degree programs and so on. The full-scale invasion of Ukraine made her to continue her professional activity in Europe with double affiliation. Currently, she is a professor in Germany with the Humboldt Foundation Research Prize.

Tourism zero: how to develop sustainable tourism in the present territories

Daniel Douckaga
Cellule C2d Urbain Communauté Urbaine Bertoua, Cameroon
Technical Assistant for the program C2D Urbain

Abstract

Developing sustainable tourism in lesser-known areas requires a thoughtful approach that respects the environment and



local communities. Here are a few steps to follow:

1. Assess resources and potential: Identify the area's natural, cultural, and historical assets that could attract tourists.
2. Involvement of local communities: Involve local residents in tourism planning and management to ensure that benefits are shared fairly and traditions are respected.
3. Development of sustainable infrastructure: Create tourism infrastructure that respects the environment and local culture, such as eco-friendly accommodation and hiking trails.
4. Promotion of responsible tourism: Encourage tourists to adopt responsible behaviour that respects the environment and local communities.
5. Training and awareness-raising: Train local stakeholders and tourists in good sustainable tourism practices and the importance of preserving the environment and local culture.
6. Impact management: Put mechanisms in place to manage the negative impacts of tourism, such as overcrowding or pollution.
7. Partnerships and collaborations: Establish partnerships with local, national and international organisations to support the development of sustainable tourism.
8. Monitoring and evaluation: Establish indicators to measure the impact of tourism on the area and adjust strategies accordingly.

By following these steps, you can develop sustainable tourism that benefits local communities and preserves the environment and culture of the area.

Biography

Sir, Douckaga Daniel was born on 13/03/1985 in Libreville (Gabon) to a Gabonese father and mother, married and father of two (02) children. Technical assistant on the Ostra-Port d'Owendo Road Project, 2 July 2011, with SOCOBA, financing: AFD/Gabonese government, length: 2X5,017 km. Technical Assistant on the Fougamou-Mouila Road project, 27 July 2014, with China Construction Company Corporation, financed by the African Development Bank (67%) and the Gabonese State (33%), length 105.0 km. Technical Assistant on the Mikouyi-Carrefour Leroy Road project, 30 March 2016, with SYNOHYDRO, financed by the Gabonese Government (100%). Logistics Director at Etude Contrôle et Réalisation Travaux Publique (ECRTP) since 5 January 2022.

Faro Story Spot: Storytelling, Food Heritage, and Sustainable Tourism in a Lesser-Known City of the Algarve

Sofia Fonseca

Teiduma Consultancy on Heritage, Culture and Sustainability, Portugal

Founder

ICOMOS International Scientific Committee Cultural Tourism

Secretary General



Abstract

Faro, often overlooked as a transit point to the Algarve's beaches, is a city rich in history, identity, and cultural diversity. The Faro Story Spot, co-created by Tertúlia Algarvia, Teiduma and the local community, repositions Faro as a destination for meaningful cultural encounters. Conceived as a virtual museum of the city, it offers immersive rooms dedicated to Faro's heritage, including a space centered on the Mediterranean diet, where visitors discover the deep links between food, sustainability, and community identity. The project embodies a slow approach: rather than pursuing mass visitation, it promotes small-scale, authentic experiences grounded in local narratives. Storytelling was built from contributions by chefs, artisans, historians, and community members, whose perspectives were gathered and distilled into a narrative character guiding the visitor experience. This figure embodies the collective memory and knowledge of Faro, making complex heritage accessible and engaging. At the same time, the Mediterranean diet room integrates environmental awareness—from food waste reduction to sustainable agriculture—showing how gastronomy can be both cultural heritage and a pathway to sustainability. Faro Story Spot demonstrates how lesser-known urban centers can develop tourism models that privilege cultural resilience, community participation, and environmental responsibility. It offers a replicable framework for slow and sustainable tourism that transforms how visitors experience not just Faro, but heritage destinations worldwide.

Biography

Sofia Fonseca is an archaeologist and heritage specialist with over two decades of international experience in Africa, Europe, and the Middle East. She is the Founder and Director of Teiduma, a consultancy dedicated to heritage, culture, and sustainability, and currently serves as Secretary-General of the ICOMOS International Cultural Tourism Committee and Co-Chair of the European Association of Archaeologists Community on Archaeology and Tourism. Sofia has contributed to UNESCO World Heritage initiatives in sites such as Memphis (Egypt), Walata and Tichitt (Mauritania), and the Benin Moats (Nigeria). She coordinates the ONLAH MOOC on African Archaeology and Heritage, reaching thousands of learners worldwide, and is deeply engaged in projects linking cultural heritage, climate action, and sustainable tourism. Residing in Abu Dhabi, she continues to advocate for culture's role in sustainable and climate-resilient development.

Beyond resource-intensive tourism: making travel an authentic experience and an opportunity for exchange

Paul Alain Gbaman Dogoua
Cellule C2D Urbain Communauté Urbaine Bertoua, Cameroon
Programs Coordinator C2D Urbain et SPORCAP Regional Capitals



Marietta Orlyne Ma Fleure Kitobo
Cellule C2d Urbain Communauté Urbaine Bertoua, Cameroon
Accounting Assistant

Abstract

Tourism is one of the world's most important industries, enabling many countries to raise their profile and develop. However, it can also have negative impacts on the environment and local communities. That is why, in order to mitigate the degradation of the environment and culture, we will bring a more modern vision to tourism in order to make travel an authentic and enriching experience.

The work will focus on several points that will be presented in depth during the round table discussion, but as a rough outline of ideas, we will have the following cases:

- I. The foundations of authentic travel and exchange
- II. Examples of travel that aims to be authentic and exchange-based
- III. The stakeholders responsible for making tourism more modern and authentic
- IV. The advantages and challenges

It is important to take into account the specific characteristics of each region, because making travel an authentic experience and an opportunity for exchange is not just an alternative but a revolution in tourism. It not only enriches the traveller but also contributes to sustainable development and the preservation of cultures, thus making travel a tool for education, tolerance, diversity and mutual respect.

Biography

I am Gbaman Dogoua Paul Alain, born on 25 January 1973 in Bertoua de nationalité Camerounaise. I am an engineer of public works and have a master's degree in engineering. I have a long career in the municipalities and I have already worked in the Communauté Urbaine de Douala which is the 2nd town of Cameroon and since 2014 I have joined the Communauté Urbaine de Bertoua where I am the coordinator of the C2D Urbain and SPORCAP programmes.

My name is Kitobo Marietta Orlyne Ma Fleur, I was born on 23 October 1996 in Yaoundé, Cameroon. I am a lawyer by training. After obtaining my degree in Public Law from the University of Yaoundé II SOA, I worked for several companies, including the C2D "regional capitals" programme, where I am currently a public funds account assistant. In my free time, I enjoy going out with friends because I cherish these moments of sharing with others. I also love travelling around my country because it is culturally and touristically diverse, and being able to contemplate the wonders of nature is a boon to my personal development.



Sustainable Management of Public Visitation at the Alhambra: Balancing Heritage Conservation, Education, and Tourism Pressure

Beatriz M^a Girela Muñoz

Patronato De La Alhambra Y Generalife (Junta De Andalucía), Spain
Sustainable Management of Public Visitation at the Alhambra: Capacity Limitation, Diversification, and Advance Commercialization

Abstract

The Alhambra and Generalife face strong pressure from high visitor demand and tourism-related interests. The Patronato de la Alhambra y Generalife, responsible for its management, regulates access and ticketing to preserve the monument and ensure a sustainable visit. To balance heritage protection with educational and social goals, the Patronato develops programs that diversify audiences and promote awareness. "Alhambra Educa" reserves tickets for educational activities for schools; "La Alhambra más Cerca" connects the site with the local community through free and thematic visits; and "La Alhambra se Mueve" promotes inclusion by bringing heritage experiences to hospitals, civic centers, and associations. These initiatives reduce tourism pressure, promote equitable access, and strengthen ties between heritage and society, showing how balanced planning and education can drive sustainable and responsible tourism.

Biography

I hold degrees in Sociology and Market Research Techniques and I am a civil servant with the Junta de Andalucía. I have extensive experience in managing training, employment, and social programs within the public sector. For the past six months, I have served as Head of the Public Visitation and Commercialization Service at the Patronato de la Alhambra y Generalife, where I coordinate, organize, and supervise the ticket reservation and sales system, as well as the planning and management of the different types of visits to the monument. This service manages public visitation to the Alhambra and its associated assets 363 days a year, welcoming around 7,000 visitors per day over 12 hours of opening. It also develops and oversees programs such as Alhambra Educa and other initiatives aimed at the local community. My work focuses on improving visitor flow management and achieving a sustainable balance between heritage conservation, education, and tourism pressure.

The Cultural Landscape of Khinalig as an Example of Human–Nature Harmony: Sustainable Development in the Context of Conscious Tourism

Aygun Imanova

Azerbaijan University of Architecture and Construction, Azerbaijan
PhD student



Abstract

The village of Khinalig, located at an altitude of approximately 2,300 meters above sea level in the Greater Caucasus mountain range, represents a unique example of the harmonious coexistence between humans and nature. It is one of the oldest continuously inhabited settlements in Azerbaijan, with a history spanning more than three millennia. Khinalig is inhabited by an indigenous ethnic group—the Kets—who have preserved their distinctive language, traditions, and forms of environmental management, making the settlement a valuable site for ethnology, architecture, and sustainable tourism alike. Owing to its isolated geographical position and natural protection by the surrounding mountains, the village has preserved its cultural character and distinctive features of both tangible and intangible heritage for centuries. The Khinalig language has been recognized by UNESCO as "severely endangered" and is included in the *Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger*. The preservation of this language, together with the village's unique architecture, is not only a matter of cultural safeguarding but also serves as a foundation for conscious, research-based tourism that respects and sustains local identity. The architecture of Khinalig demonstrates a rare example of traditional mountain construction adapted to a complex terrain and extreme climatic conditions. The houses are built in a terraced formation following the contours of the slope, creating an integrated spatial system in which the roof of one house serves as the courtyard for the one above it. The use of local natural materials—river stone, clay, and timber from oak and elm—reflects a high level of ecological adaptation and a rational approach to resource use. In 2007, the territory of Khinalig was declared a State Cultural, Architectural, and Ethnographic Reserve. In 2023, following the expansion of the protected area, the State Historical, Cultural, and Ethnographic Reserve "Khinalig and Köç Yolu" ("Migration Route") was established. That same year, the cultural landscape of Khinalig and the transhumance route "Köç Yolu" were inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List. This recognition emphasized Khinalig's significance as a living example of sustainable coexistence between humans and the natural environment, where architectural, ethnographic, and ecological values form a unified cultural landscape. The restoration project of 60 traditional houses, implemented between 2020 and 2022 by the Azerbaijan University of Architecture and Construction, marked an important step toward the development of conscious tourism, which integrates heritage conservation with improving the quality of life of local residents. The promotion of domestic and small-scale tourism based on traditional hospitality practices strengthens the local economy and helps to mitigate the destructive effects of mass tourism. Khinalig thus becomes a laboratory for sustainable tourism, where every stage of restoration and tourism planning adheres to the principle of "zero impact" on both the natural and cultural environment. The experience of Khinalig demonstrates that sustainable development in lesser-known and sparsely visited regions is possible when guided by respect for the historical, natural, and human capital of a territory. This case illustrates that responsible tourism can both preserve and revitalize unique forms of cultural heritage while ensuring social justice, economic stability, and ecological balance. Khinalig thus stands not only as an integral part of Azerbaijan's national identity but also as an international symbol of a new,



thoughtful, and sustainable approach to tourism—one rooted in respect, equity, and environmental stewardship.

Biography

Aygun Imanova was born on April 21, 1987, in Baku. In 2009, she graduated from the Azerbaijan University of Architecture and Construction with a bachelor's degree in the field of Restoration of Architectural Monuments, and in 2011 she obtained her master's degree. She began interning at a private design company during her first year of university. After completing her bachelor's degree, she started her practical career as an architect, gaining experience in the field of architectural design. Since February 16, 2021, she has been working as a lecturer at the Department of "Architectural Construction and Restoration of the Monuments" at the Azerbaijan University of Architecture and Construction (AzUAC). Since 2023, she is the PhD student, conducting research on "The Architecture of German Settlements in Azerbaijan". In addition to her academic work, she continues to actively practice as a professional architect, participating in restoration and design projects. She is also involved in international and national initiatives dedicated to the preservation of cultural heritage.

The Management of Terraced Rice Fields in West Sumatra and in Japan

Kae Oyama

Professor of International Law

Chukyo University

ICOMOS-ISC Water & Heritage National Representative for Japan

Akifumi Iwabuchi

Professor of Marine Culturology

Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology

ICOMOS-ICUCH National Representative for Japan

Abstract

Because rice is staple food both in Indonesia and in Japan, terraced rice fields are widely observed there. The UNESCO World Cultural Heritage of 'Cultural Landscape of Bali: the *Subak* System as a Manifestation of the *Tri Hita Karana* Philosophy' consists of five terraced rice fields and their water temples. In Bali, in particular, there is a spiritual relationship between human beings and nature by way of water, which has traditionally come from Hinduism or its religious rituals.

Though in the same country, the management system of terraced rice fields in western Sumatra is different from that in Bali. The ethnic group of Islamic Minangkabau is mainly living in the area, and they also use terraced rice fields extensively to cultivate rice. The Minangkabau terraced rice field management system is named *lumbung*, and the irrigated water management system is *paraku* in their language. Each terraced rice field with its irrigated water canals or canal weirs is governed by a village,



which is sometimes divided into a few hamlets, or a hamlet. The village is composed of several matrilineal descent groups and the village headman is the central person of managing its rice fields, and on the basis of the customary law and its traditional ecological knowledge he supervises the indigenous agricultural rituals around rice cultivation such as harvest ceremony. In addition to him, each village usually has a water master and a canal man, who are responsible for the irrigation. The maintenance of terraced rice fields and their irrigations is controlled by the cooperative work participation by all members of a village. Recently, on the other hand, young generations have assumed an attitude of unconcern about the customary law or belief, for example, in sacred water resources.

Each terraced rice field, which is named *tanada*, in Japan is owned by a family in principle, although in former days cooperative activities such as joint transplanting or constructing irrigated canals were ubiquitous. As Japan is a non-lineal society, no descent group exists. So far the biggest threat to the terraced rice fields is the governmental policy of trimming rice production by reducing rice acreage; it has been continued since 1970, mainly because of the domestic reduction of rice consumption. Subsequently, an extensive amount of terraced rice fields was fallow or abandoned, as there was no possibility to convert manual operations to mechanized system there and in many remoted areas having terraced rice fields the depopulation started to be progressing. While agricultural rituals were becoming obsolete, the traditional knowledge upon water resources, which were always protected by the water god or *suijin*, was dismissed. It is true that some terraced rice fields in Japan are safeguarded as important landscapes by the government; one has been designated as the National Site of Scenic Beauty according to Act on Protection of Cultural Properties. In actual practice, however, most of them are not actively producing rice, but tourist attractions only. The policy maker, which feels a sense of danger, has commenced the Tanada Ownership System.

Biography

Oyama is Professor of International Law at Chukyo University, Japan. She specializes in the Law of the Sea, international environmental law, and the legal frameworks for protecting underwater and water-related cultural heritage. She obtained her LLM from Keio University in 1999. She serves as the ICOMOS-ISC Water & Heritage National Representative for Japan. In addition, she belongs to IUCN Commission on Environmental Law, Association International du Droit de la Mer, Association des Auditeurs et Anciens Auditeurs de l'Académie de Droit International de la Haye, Japanese Society of International Law, Japanese Association of World Law, Japanese Association of the International Law of the Sea, and Japan Association for Environmental Law and Policy. Her work focuses on integrating legal and policy perspectives into the conservation and management of water-related sites.

Akifumi Iwabuchi is Professor of Maritime Anthropology and Nautical Archaeology at Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology, which is a member institution of the UNESCO UNITWIN Network for Underwater Archaeology, and a lecturer at the School of Law of Waseda University.



He obtained his doctorate from the University of Oxford in 1990. He is the ICOMOS-ICUCH National Representative for Japan, an expert member of ICOMOS-ISC Water & Heritage, a vice-president of the Japan Society for Nautical Research, and a director of the Asian Research Institute of Underwater Archaeology. He leads the project team of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030) titled 'Indigenous People, Traditional Ecological Knowledge, and Climate Change: The Iconic Underwater Cultural Heritage of Stone Tidal Weirs', together with University of Guam, Chikushi Jogakuen University, Mokpo National University, University of the Philippines, University of Warsaw, Trinity College, and Nelson Mandela University.

Operationalising Empathic Dialogue: A Data-Driven Framework for Host-Guest Coexistence in the World Heritage Site Historic Centre of Córdoba

Fernando Osuna-Pérez
University of Granada, Spain
Assistant Professor

Abstract

In living World Heritage sites, achieving a balance between tourism growth and community well-being is a critical challenge, central to UNESCO's Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) approach. This paper presents the Management Plan for Historic Centre of Córdoba (Spain) as a best-practice model that operationalises the concept of empathic dialogue through an institutional, data-driven framework. The plan establishes a comprehensive indicator system that quantifies pressures from 'guests' (e.g., tourist accommodation density) and impacts on 'hosts' (e.g., population decline, noise pollution). Crucially, it defines quantitative thresholds for these indicators, creating objective limits for mutual adaptation. When these limits are breached, they provide a legitimate mandate for governance interventions, transforming abstract dialogue into a tangible process for ensuring sustainable coexistence and safeguarding the site's Outstanding Universal Value.

Biography

Fernando Osuna-Pérez is an Assistant Professor of Urban Design at the School of Architecture, University of Granada. His research centres on the relationships between architecture, infrastructure, and landscape; the architecture of the city-river interface; nature-based ecosystem regeneration in cities; and architectural design within the historic city. Professionally, he is engaged in architectural and urban projects in heritage settings, as well as natural regeneration and green infrastructure strategies. His notable works include the Córdoba City-River Strategy 2020-30-50, the Loja River Restoration and Sustainable Tourism Plan, and the Management Plan for the World Heritage site of the Historic Centre of Córdoba.



Heritage for Transformation: Creative Learning with Collections for a Peaceful and Sustainable Future

José Luiz Pederzoli Jr.
ICCROM, Brazil
Unit Manager, Strategic Planning

Abstract

As the 2025 edition of "The World in Florence" celebrates five years of intercultural dialogue, this milestone offers a timely opportunity to reflect on how heritage can serve as a dynamic force for peace, learning, and transformation. Within this context, ICCROM will present the Our Collections Matter^[1] (OCM) initiative - an embodiment of the event's core message: fostering peace and sustainable development through heritage and creative learning.

Launched in 2020, OCM seeks to accelerate and amplify the role of heritage collections in advancing sustainable development across its five pillars: *People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace, and Partnership*. Heritage collections, ranging from archives and museums to libraries and valued community-held materials, are not static repositories of the past. They are living resources that can inspire and support inclusive, peaceful, and sustainable societies. Through its "3T" strategy - Tools, Training, and Transformation - OCM equips institutions and professionals with knowledge, skills, and practical resources to unlock the potential of their collections-based work to address pressing global challenges, such as climate change, biodiversity loss, inequality, and intolerance.

Central to this approach are the OCM Toolkit^[2] and the OCM Self-assessment Tool^[3], two online resources that help collections-based organizations evaluate their practices, align with relevant Sustainable Development Goals and Targets, and plan concrete actions for greater societal impact. By fostering collaboration and shared learning, these tools promote dialogue across institutions, sectors, and communities, enhancing the role of heritage collections as catalysts for social innovation and peacebuilding. The initiative underscores that sustainable development is unattainable without cultural understanding, empathy, and mutual respect - values the heritage helps cultivate by connecting people through shared histories, values, and identities.

Complementing OCM is TOWCHED, a project supported by the European Union that enhances Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) through arts and heritage collections. With a special focus on children and youth, TOWCHED promotes critical thinking, intercultural awareness, and self-expression, applying a Human Rights-Based Approach at every stage. This inclusive and participatory learning approach to EDS sets a strong foundation for peaceful coexistence. In addition, TOWCHED pioneers innovative teaching methodologies and tools designed to support educators and cultural heritage professionals in fostering impactful learning environments based on cultural heritage.

This illustrates ICCROM's holistic vision: leveraging heritage as a powerful driver of human development and well-being. When understood as a shared and participatory process, heritage becomes a bridge that connects



people across generations and geographies, inspiring collaboration. At The World in Florence 2025, ICCROM's contribution invites participants to reflect on how heritage learning communities - from museums, libraries, and archives to schools and creative hubs - can serve as spaces for awareness, empathy, and transformation. Through collective action, these communities can advance not only the safeguarding of heritage but also the cultivation of a global culture of peace, where creativity, sustainability, and dialogue move us forward - together.

Biography

Background in polymer chemistry and paper-based heritage conservation. Served as a conservation scientist at the Netherlands Institute for Cultural Heritage (1997-2003) and ICCROM (2005-2008). Since 2005, has led extensive international initiatives in risk management for cultural heritage. Returned to ICCROM in 2018 and currently manages the Strategic Planning Unit, while also contributing to a portfolio of projects focused on heritage collections, risk management, and sustainable development.

[1] www.iccrom.org/programmes/our-collections-matter

[2] <https://ocm.iccrom.org/>

[3] <https://satocm.iccrom.org/>

Dialogue in Motion: Managing Tourism in the Galápagos after the World Heritage in Danger List

Stephanie Veith
Universidad de Granada, Spain
PhD Student
ICOMOS International Scientific Committee Cultural Tourism

Abstract

In 2007, the World Heritage property "Galápagos Islands (Ecuador)" was placed on the World Heritage List in Danger (UNESCO World Heritage Committee 2007, Decision 31 COM 7B.35). This was due to the property facing systemic risks, such as biosecurity threats, illegal fishing, rapid migration, and fast-growing tourism. In the following years, from 2007 to 2010, the State Party responded by designing a structured and multi-level dialogue that allowed for the co-creation of visitor management strategies. Strategies such as for example acceptable load limits per site, fixed itineraries, certified guides, and strict biosecurity measures, led to the removal of the natural heritage property from the World Heritage List in Danger. As not all monitoring measures were successful, adaptive strategies and management decisions were implemented among the various stakeholders. Several frameworks were established to promote dialogue among park authorities, municipalities, operators, communities, fishers, scientists, and mediators for conflict resolution. This co-design approach between stakeholders and decision-makers transformed the site



from being in danger to becoming a living laboratory for dialogue-driven tourism monitoring and governance.

Biography

With a bachelor's degree in Tourism Management and international semesters spent in the United States and Ecuador, Stephanie discovered her passion for world heritage and tourism after working on the Galapagos Islands. This led to a master's program in World Heritage Studies at Brandenburg Technical University, followed by a project management role at the Institute for Heritage Management. For her master's thesis, she focused on how tourism is represented within the Second Periodic Reporting exercise for World Heritage Cultural Landscapes. In addition to that, Stephanie contributes to the ICOMOS cultural tourism committee as emerging professional representative. As a PhD candidate, she is studying at the University of Granada and Brandenburg Technical University with a focus on whether and how the comparative analysis within a nomination contributes to the Global Strategy for a Representative, Balanced and Credible World Heritage List.

Reviving the Udătoriu of Șurdești: an ancient agrarian ritual and its impact on the village community

Prună Larisa-Vasilica

Gheorghe Dima National Academy of Music, Cluj-Napoca, Romania

Lecturer, PhD

Abstract

The beginning of the agricultural year in the Chioar villages was marked by numerous rituals. UDĂTORIU is an ancient agrarian ritual, motivated by springtime work, aimed at celebrating the most diligent person in the village—the first to take the plow to the village fields. Until the 1940s, the ritual was practiced in the villages along the Fisculaș River—Șurdești, Plopiș, Cetățele, Bontăieni, Rus, Dumbrăvița—but gradually disappeared due to several factors, including the post-1945 agricultural reform and the migration of young people to cities. Of all the villages on Fisculaș, the UDĂTORIU agrarian ritual has been preserved and is still performed today only in Șurdești. The ritual had a significant social role in the life of the patriarchal village, involving the entire community. It usually took place on the day after Easter or on Thomas Sunday, though preparations began as early as the Feast of the Forty Saints. Organizing the ceremony to honor the first person to plow was the responsibility of the youth groups, formed at the beginning of Cășlegile. This tradition is rooted in ancient popular beliefs regarding the fertility of the land, likely introduced during the Roman occupation of Dacia. Beyond its fertility ritual function, the ritual had evident implications for village social life. After the 1990s, the ritual was revived and has now reached its 25th edition. The celebration has had a positive impact on the development of rural tourism and brings public attention to



the beauty of traditional songs, dances, and costumes from Țara Chioarului and the Fisculaș sub-region. The target audience of this celebration is diverse: the youth groups from the villages along Fisculaș, children already involved in local artistic ensembles, young girls and women who continue traditional crafts (spinning, weaving on looms, sewing and decorating shirts and collars, etc.), and the elders, as guarantors of preserving the authenticity of the ancient custom. Udătoriu from Șurdești, as a traditional event, has managed to enter the national calendar of the most valuable Romanian traditional cultural events, as evidenced by the participation of numerous foreign tourists and ethnologists.

Description of the ritual

The beginning of the agricultural year in the Chioar villages was marked by numerous rituals. From the "Head of Spring" celebration on February 24 to Thomas Sunday, all rituals and popular festivals signaled the awakening of nature. Of all the villages on Fisculaș, the UDĂTORIU agrarian ritual has been preserved and is still performed today only in Șurdești. The ritual had a significant social role in the patriarchal village, involving the entire community. It usually took place the day after Easter or on Thomas Sunday, but preparations began as early as the Feast of the Forty Saints. Organizing the ceremony to honor the first person to plow was the responsibility of the youth groups, formed at the beginning of Cășlegile. Before plowing, the farmer would bring the oxen and plow to the barn, where his wife would circle them three times, in the direction of the sun, sprinkling them with holy water and fumigating with incense to protect them from harm. The plowman sowed with his head uncovered, urging the oxen with a green branch to make the furrow flourish. During this period, the land boundaries were overseen by the "crai" (village elders). Once the Udătoriu was chosen, the youth would negotiate with the farmer, starting on Easter, to announce the purpose of the ritual—primarily to have a dance in the village, for which the celebrant would pay the musicians. Approval for the ritual was granted in exchange for a fee paid to the priest. The event was announced during Easter evening service so that the entire community would know, and to ensure the youth were present for the assignment of ritual roles. On the day after Easter, after attending the church service, the youths arranged with the priest to reopen the church, the "aldămaș" being a jug of horincă (local spirit). The Udătoriu was lifted three times in the narthex by the crai, while shouting: "This is Udătoriu! Long live, long live, long live!" Other roles were then assigned: four feșnicii, one comarnic, four jendari, a judge, an enforcer, a mitigator, a doctor, a boacter, each with clearly defined duties. The ceremonial raising of roles three times was a characteristic of the youth group. In Cetățele, the two crai were selected through a difficult physical test: climbing the bell rope. Udătoriu returned home before the youths finished their jumping ritual to prepare the small cart and plow, and most importantly, to hide a coin in cracks of pre-prepared logs. Rarely did the youths fail to find the coin. The spectacle of this hunt was highly entertaining. If the coin was not found, all the costs of the feast and musicians' payment fell to them. From the church, the youths returned with the entire procession accompanied by musicians. Armed with axes, clubs, whips, and knives, as well as jugs of horincă, they diligently searched for the coin while supervising the celebrant to prevent him from avoiding responsibility.



Eventually, the coin was found, and the band began to play, much to the audience's delight. The entire procession proceeded to a flowing water source where the celebrant would be sprinkled and blessed, wishing him a fertile year. On the way, the youths ensured he did not run away or stop at any fountain along the route, applying "globirea" (punishment for lack of vigilance). When Udătoriu tried to escape, it created a lively spectacle. The festivities and merrymaking continued at the celebrant's house, where the entire procession was welcomed with pancakes, pastries, and horincă. During the dance, the crai announced punishments for youths who courted during Lent or married men dancing with virgins. The judge passed sentences based on accusations, the doctor checked fitness, the enforcer increased the penalty, the mitigator attempted to reduce it, and the comarnic, a strong man, struck the soles of offenders' boots with a mallet. Once the mallet was thrown, after the Thomas Sunday dance, the prohibitions were lifted, achieving the moralizing effect.

Biography

Larisa-Vasilica Prună is a Lecturer, PhD, at the Gheorghe Dima National Music Academy in Cluj-Napoca, in the Musicology Department. At the same institution (ANMGD), in 2021 she was awarded a Doctorate in Music with Summa cum laude. Her professional activity is based on multiple perspectives. Her teaching at ANMGD includes courses such as Musical Folklore, Notation and Restoration of Traditional Vocal Music, and Folk Singing. This teaching activity is combined with her artistic work, as she is a member of the ICOANE Romanian Traditional Music Ensemble, where, both as a soloist and performing group songs, she has given numerous concerts in Romania and abroad. Since 2007, as a folk performer, she has participated in numerous festivals and competitions, consistently achieving top prizes. As a researcher and ethnomusicologist, she has participated in various specialized conferences, contributing interesting topics to the understanding of the musical-folkloric phenomenon.

Reviving the Spirit of 'Dolle Mina'-Feminist Movement: Communication, Creativity and Collective Action

Dunya Verwey
 'Dolle Mina' 1970 - 2025
 Co-initiator
 Stichting Museum Geelvinck
 Vice-Chair & Program Curator
 Foundation Monuments of the Dutch West-India Company
 President

Abstract

In 1970, Dunya Verwey co-founded Dolle Mina, a small group of young Dutch women and men who used creativity, humour and media-savvy actions to spark a national feminist movement overnight. Within days, local groups formed across the Netherlands and Flanders, demanding



equality and social change. Media attention turned spontaneous acts into a shared language of empowerment. In 2025, Verwey revived Dolle Mina with the same spirit of civic engagement, now amplified by social media and joined by a new generation addressing issues such as social safety and femicide. Her story illustrates how communication rooted in collective creativity and ethical purpose can unite communities and ignite dialogue across generations, embodying the principle that heritage and shared narratives can build peace.

Biography

Dunya Verwey is a cultural anthropologist, documentary filmmaker, feminist, and program curator. She is President of the Foundation Monuments of the Dutch West-India Company, Vice-President of Stichting Museum Geelvinck, and Member of ICOMOS, ICOM and REMA-EEMN. Since 1997 she has been co-curator and programme director of Museum Geelvinck, which, besides exhibitions, also presents concert series, festivals, and productions, such as 'Beethoven is Black' (addressing underrepresentation of musicians of color in the professional classical and early music sectors), and the documentary 'Bigi Kaaiman – Songs & Tales from Slavery Times'. Previously, she served at the Dutch Ministry of Internal Affairs as a policy officer on minority groups. She co-initiated the Dutch Dragon Boat Federation and the NGO Comprehensive Dialogue among Civilizations (UN) and sat on the boards of the Netherlands-Turkey Friendship Foundation and Islamic Women Netherlands. In 1970, she co-founded 'Dolle Mina'; in 2025, she revitalised this movement nationwide.

Diversifying History, Community and Culture: Kenya's Trans Rift Trail Tourism Model

Fergus T Maclaren
ICOMOS International Scientific Committee Cultural Tourism
President Emeritus

Abstract

Kenya's Great Rift Valley is the origin place of humanity, with the discovery there of humanoid archaeological fossils dating back over five million years. It has many World and Olympic champion long distance runners emerging from the hills and valleys that make up the region. Today, it has become the basis of a pioneer adventure tourism brand supported by the ICOMOS International Cultural Heritage Tourism Charter's Principles, for the Kenya Tourism Board as it markets the country's visitor offering beyond safaris and beaches. The Trans-Rift Trails' use of the Charter can promote responsible, integrated and diversified cultural tourism development and management. In future, the application of the Charter's seven principles in the Trail's tourism planning and development phases will support the establishment of a sustainable network of paths that provide corridors of attachment and association and can form new bonds of peace and understanding between visitors and communities alike.



Biography

Mr. MacLaren is a Canadian sustainable tourism and cultural heritage management professional with more than 25 years of experience in Africa, North America, Europe and Asia, with much of his current professional focusing on World Heritage sites tourism and the implementation of the 2030 UN Sustainable Development Goals. His background includes: a broad range of tourism planning, destination management and development expertise. His professional experience includes: coordinating international meetings and input as the Director of the UN-funded International Year of Ecotourism; teaching sustainable tourism at Canada's McGill University and lecturing on the subject at post-secondary institutions internationally; and co-led the development of the ICOMOS Charter for International Cultural Heritage Tourism. He serves as in an Expert capacity for UNESCO, UN Tourism, ICOMOS, the Organization of World Heritage Cities, the World Monuments Fund, and the Heritage and Cultural Society for Africa (HACSA).

Heritage access, presentation & interpretation: fundamental rights, inclusiveness and authenticity

Celia Martínez Yáñez
University of Granada, Spain
Full Professor
ICOMOS International Scientific Committee Cultural Tourism
Vice President
ICOMOS
Board member

Abstract

The aim of this presentation is to stimulate a debate on the need to consider and formalise the presentation, interpretation and access to heritage as vehicles of the fundamental right to culture and as an integral part of heritage protection and management. We wish to stress the importance of these activities to enhance dialogue and inclusiveness, especially in the context of dissonant heritage sites, using some particular and contested Spanish examples. Our thesis is that although these claims are well established in international doctrine and legislation since at least the Athens Charter 1931, they are not fundamental for other influential sectors, as tourism, which has a mercantilist vision of heritage enjoyment, sometimes even in the most painful sites. We will frame these claims in key legislation, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948, the Constitución Española 1978, the World Heritage Convention system, and the ICOMOS Doctrine, focusing particularly in the ICOMOS International Charter for Cultural Heritage Tourism 2022, its principle 3, and the theory of commons and its effects on dissonant heritage resignification and public narrative.

Biography

Dr. Celia Martínez is Full Professor at the Art History Department of the University of Granada. She is member of the Board of ICOMOS since 2023



and Vice-President of the ICOMOS International Scientific Committee on Cultural Tourism since 2017. Coordinator of the ICOMOS International Charter for Cultural Heritage Tourism (2022), she works extensively in this Charter dissemination representing the ICTC and ICOMOS position on this field in numerous conferences and meetings organised by the UN agencies and advisory bodies of the World Heritage Convention. She is Director of *erph_* Scientific Electronic Journal of Historical Heritage (WOS ESCI indexed) and Tutor of the Master's Degree in Architecture and Historic Heritage by the University of Seville, Andalusian Institute of Historical Heritage & Council of the Alhambra and Generalife. Since 2020 she is an expert of the Horizon 2020 and Horizon Europe Programmes, having assessed several of its granted projects and consortiums on cultural tourism

ICOMOS International Charter for Cultural Heritage Tourism 2022 - realising the transformative potential of cultural tourism

Cecilie Smith-Christensen

ICOMOS International Scientific Committee Cultural Tourism

Board member

World Heritage Catalysis, Norway

Founding catalyst

Abstract

ICOMOS International Charter for Cultural Heritage Tourism: Reinforcing cultural heritage protection and community resilience through responsible and sustainable tourism management was adopted in 2022. Since then it has been translated into more than seven languages guiding heritage and tourism professionals and practitioners around the World. Beyond recognising responsible tourism as a contributor to intercultural dialogue cooperation, mutual understanding, and peace-building, the Charter also addresses unsustainable developments, extractive practices, and rights-based issues in tourism, the need and opportunity to recalibrate the perpetual economic growth based approach to tourism. Moreover it calls for a transformational and regenerative approach to cultural tourism, and aims to align the work of cultural heritage and tourism stakeholders in the pursuit of positive transformative change.

But what does this mean in practice? And how does the Charter align in support of Life Beyond Tourism's Appeal to build peace through heritage?

ICOMOS International Cultural Tourism Committee (ICTC) is currently undertaking efforts to operationalise the Charter with focus on how to realise the transformative potential of cultural tourism. This specifically involves the ongoing formulation of a Charter Application (ChAp) Compendium, which, in addition to the Charter as adopted, will offer three resources set out through distinct annexes: 1. Glossary and Concept Clusters; 2. Foundational Reorientation; and 3. Charter Application by Stakeholder Group



Words and definitions are fundamental to how objectives and principles are understood, communicated, and put into practice. While the Charter uses terms and concepts well known by heritage and tourism professionals and practitioners, it also applies terminology from emergent discourses on climate change and economics in a changing climate including "resilience," "commons," and "regeneration" - concepts that may benefit from contextualised definitions. The forthcoming ChAp Annex 1: *Glossary and concept clusters* presents a contextualised glossary and concept clusters that explains the Charter terminology as well as terminology applied in the Compendium. As such it aims to offer a more nuanced vocabulary drawing upon and supporting the involvement of a broader spectre of domains in pursuit of transformative change through tourism.

Transformation or transformative change in the context of cultural tourism refers to a fundamental, system-wide reorganization, and represents a radical departure from business-as-usual approaches. It calls for reimagining and restructuring rules, incentives, and power dynamics that govern societal interactions with the environment to achieve sustainability. For heritage and tourism professionals, practitioners and stakeholders, it involves rethinking the underlying worldviews, assumptions and values that shape the tourism sector, visitor destinations and host communities. ChAp Annex 2: *Foundational reorientation* highlights some of the most critical aspects and potential blindspots underpinning the calls and arguments for transformative change in and through cultural heritage management and tourism, with a specific focus on the embedded unsustainability of our current dominant economic and financial system. By setting out conceptual reorientations brought forward by the 2022 Charter it seeks to offer a narrative that can help and inspire critical advancement from extractive to regenerative development through tourism.

For tourism to become a truly transformational pathway, moving beyond dialogue to actively foster reciprocity is essential. Framing heritage as a commons highlights community involvement, mutual responsibility, sustainable use, and intergenerational care positions heritage as a living resource continually shaped by social practice. In the context of societal resilience, interdependence and reciprocity strengthens the social fabric by cultivating trust, collaboration, and mutual support - qualities that help communities adapt to change and recover from challenges. It is equally vital for building and maintaining peace, as relationships grounded in care and shared responsibility counteract competition and exploitation. This annex elaborates on how a networked and reciprocal approach to tourism could support the evolution of non-exploitative and regenerative economies that sustain communities and their environments, fostering long-term resilience and peace rooted in shared well-being and collaboration.

The Charter explicitly states that "the responsible management of tourism is a shared responsibility of governments, tour operators, tourism businesses, destination managers and marketing organisations, site management authorities, land-use planners, heritage and tourism professionals, civil society and visitors. ChAp Annex 3: *Charter Application by Stakeholder Groups* provides guidance for practitioners and decision-makers at all levels, aiming to align their efforts for positive, sustainable outcomes. Recognising the many leverage points for systems change, it specifically



aims to address the most powerful being awareness and intent - offering reflective questions relating to each of Charter principles in context of the foundational reorientations called for through the Charter.

This case - the ongoing effort to operationalise ICOMOS International Charter for Cultural Heritage Tourism (2022) - lends itself to discussions of to what extent we need to expand the vocabulary and evolve narratives in support of the change we hope to see; the need to recognise and address the economic and financial structures as root cause of systemic challenges including overtourism, and potential pathway to non-exploitative and regenerative economies through tourism; and leverage points for systems change, and institutional and individual agency and opportunities.

Biography

Cecilie Smith-Christensen is a Norwegian economist with over 25 years international working experience focusing on tourism- and heritage management for sustainable development. Her extensive and diverse experience includes working as a social entrepreneur in South Africa offering innovative research services on the developmental impact of festivals and events; As deputy director of the Nordic World Heritage Foundation 2008-2014 (UNESCO category 2 center) supporting UNESCOs World Heritage Centre developing and implementing UNESCOs World Heritage Sustainable Tourism Programme - a role in which she led the development of UNESCOs Visitor Management Assessment & Strategy Tool (VMAST). In 2015 she founded World Heritage Catalysis supporting an emerging community of practice focused on the transformative potential of tourism and heritage management for societal resilience. Cecilie is an active ICOMOS member and through the ICOMOS ICTC Bureau coordinating the operationalisation of ICOMOS International Charter for Cultural Heritage Tourism 2022.

Culture as a tool of peace and dialogue

Giorgio Starace
Former Ambassador, Italy

Abstract

During my recent experience as Ambassador of Italy to the Russian Federation in the troubled times of the war in Ukraine, I tried to promote culture and cultural dialogue not only with institutional counterparts (universities, centres of research) but also with common people and particularly youngsters. I will briefly list some examples of best practices I followed enforcing the idea that culture and communication are key tools in order to maintain dialogue in situations of political tension among nations.

Biography

Married, two children, graduated in Economics, Bocconi University Milano. Entered in diplomacy in 1985. Served as diplomat in the Italians



Embassies in Guatemala City, Beijing, permanent representative to the United Nations New York and as deputy Ambassador in India Ambassador of Italy in Abu Dhabi (2010-2015), Special envoy to Libya (2015-2017), Ambassador of Italy in Tokyo (2017-2021), Ambassador of Italy in Moscow (2021-2023) Retired from march 2024 Vice president of Aeneas group (airports) Member of the board of the Chamber of Commerce Italy - Libya Author of the Book : " La Pace Difficile - Diari di un Ambasciatore a Mosca - edizione Mauro Pagliai, 2025 Firenze

Talking about PEACE. Water diplomacy resolves conflicts since 2500 BC

Henk van Schaik

ICOMOS International Scientific Committee Water and Heritage, Netherlands
Honorary Vice President

Abstract

In March 2001 Kofi Annan, then Secretary General of the United Nations stated that "fierce competition for fresh water may well become a source of conflict and wars in the future." In January 2002 the same Kofi Annan stated that "water problems of our world need not be only a cause of tensions; they can also be a catalyst for cooperation.....If we work together, a secure and sustainable water future can be ours." This striking change of opinion in less only 7 months was based on research work a.o. by Prof. Aaron Wolf of Oregon State University. Aaron Wolf analysed the data of some 2000 water conflicts all over the world going back to 2500 BC when the first conflict ever recorded was between the cities of Lagash and Umma in the Tigris river basin. His research showed that thanks to water diplomacy over 60 % of the cases led to resolution and cooperation, some 25 percent led to conflict related events, and some 15 percent persist even up to today.

The most well-known water related conflicts are in the arid countries and in particular the Middle East. But, also we, The Netherlands, have water conflicts with both Belgium over the river Scheldt in the South West and with Germany over the Dollard in the North East of our country. Both of them are persistent, but have not led to formal war. In fact out of the almost 2000 conflict recorded none have led to formal water over water, 21 to extensive military acts, 16 to small scale military acts and some 50 to diplomatic economic hostile acts.

How does prof Wolf explain his astonishing research results. Well, he relates it to WATER being the source of life, of everybody's source of life, also those that compete over water. As a mediator in water conflicts at international level, he found that despite formal rights such as Egypt got from the British in 1929 to 55,5 billion cubic meter per day of Nile water out of 84 billion, these rights were for decades severely contested by upstream countries, but to date this has not been led to outright war.

Why? Because diplomacy at the highest level and the creation of river basin authorities such as the Nile Basin Authority but also the Mekong Basin



Authority and the Rhine Basin Authority always found a way forward. For me these results are very encouraging, and have learnt me that when talking about Water, Culture and Heritage, the most important cultural heritage related to water is not the physical structures such as polders, dams, water pumps, or even aquaducts. And it is also not the water related governance structures....Rather, the most important water related heritage is that humankind has understood throughout the ages that water is LIFE, and that in case of a conflict about water, the conflict is about LIFE of you and me. In conclusion, my message here is to repeat the words of Kofi Annan... water may be a source of conflict, but our most precious heritage and wisdom today is that societies have been able to overcome their conflicts in by far the most cases by seeking ways forward through cooperation. This insight is also the corner stone under the international Platform on Water, Culture and Heritage, that was proposed at the UN Water conference at New York in 2023.

We, the ISC Water of ICOMOS, is committed within its capacity to work towards this international Platform in collaboration with as many partners as possible. Our aim is to report on progress on the creation of the international platform at the next UN Water Conference in Dubai and the General Assembly of ICOMOS in Malaysia both in December 2026.

In preparation for these events we, the ISC Water, the International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage, the Future Food Institute and the Fondazione Romualdo del Bianco had on 24 November a scientific symposium at the beautiful Villa Montepaldi, in the Province of Florence.

I thank the Fondazione Romualdo del Bianco for your participation in the scientific symposium at the Villa and for the opportunity you gave me here, today, to report on our Mission and Passion.

Biography

Henk van Schaik (Ir) is a water professional with 50 years of working experience in rural water supply at field level up to international policies level. He was the Director of the global Water and Climate Dialogue (2001-2012), the Lead Water of the University for Peace Costa Rica (2009 – 2017), Member of the International Technical Advisory Committee of the World Water Development Programme of UNESCO in Perugia, (2010-2015) Board Member of the Water Integrity Network (2012-2017), and Partner in Water Partner consultants (2012- present) and since 2012 with Sir Diederik Six the initiator of Water, Culture and Heritage of ICOMOS. Presently he is the Honorary Advisor to the International Scientific Committee on Water and Heritage of ICOMOS. He has organised numerous conferences on Water and Climate, Water and Peace and Water and Heritage at local, regional and global level. He has contributed to numerous articles, publications as well as films on Water and Climate, Water Diplomacy and Water, Culture and Heritage.



MODERATORS

Maria Teresa Jaquinta

Maria Teresa Jaquinta is an architect and expert in heritage conservation, with leadership roles in numerous international organizations. She is the Director at UNIDROIT for the International Programme on Law and Development, Secretary General of the Italian Committee, and Vice President of the International Scientific Committee for Education and Training in Conservation at ICOMOS. Registered with the CNAPPC since 1997, she held managerial positions at ICCROM (1987–2021), leading major projects, including the NAMEC programme and initiatives in the Mediterranean. She successfully oversaw Italy's cases for UNESCO's Memory of the World Register and actively participates in international academic and professional forums.

Marc Laenen

Marc Laenen (b. 1945, Antwerp) is a distinguished figure in cultural heritage conservation and management. His academic credentials include degrees in Philosophy, Classical Philology, and Archaeology/History of Art from the Catholic University of Leuven. Laenen held key leadership roles, notably as Director of the Open-Air Museum Bokrijk (1972–1992) and later as Director-General of ICCROM in Rome (1992–2000). He subsequently directed the Centre for Cultural Property of the Province of Limburg. An active educator, he has lectured extensively on vernacular architecture at institutions like the Artesis University of Antwerp. His international influence is demonstrated through his work as a UNESCO consultant and his role as Secretary General of the ICOMOS International Committee for Vernacular Architecture. His expertise focuses on heritage interpretation and cultural tourism.

Celia Martínez Yáñez

Dr. Celia Martínez is Full Professor at the Art History Department of the University of Granada. She is member of the Board of ICOMOS since 2023 and Vice-President of the ICOMOS International Scientific Committee on Cultural Tourism since 2017. Coordinator of the ICOMOS International Charter for Cultural Heritage Tourism (2022), she works extensively in this Charter dissemination representing the ICTC and ICOMOS position on this field in numerous conferences and meetings organised by the UN agencies and advisory bodies of the World Heritage Convention. She is Director of *erph_ Scientific Electronic Journal of Historical Heritage* (WOS ESCI indexed) and Tutor of the Master's Degree in Architecture and Historic Heritage by the University of Seville, Andalusian Institute of Historical Heritage & Council of the Alhambra and Generalife. Since 2020 she is an expert of the Horizon 2020 and Horizon Europe Programmes, having assessed several of its granted projects and consortiums on cultural tourism



Josè Luiz Pederzoli

Background in polymer chemistry and paper-based heritage conservation. Served as a conservation scientist at the Netherlands Institute for Cultural Heritage (1997-2003) and ICCROM (2005-2008). Since 2005, has led extensive international initiatives in risk management for cultural heritage. Returned to ICCROM in 2018 and currently manages the Strategic Planning Unit, while also contributing to a portfolio of projects focused on heritage collections, risk management, and sustainable development.



MUSICIANS

The Romualdo Del Bianco Foundation – Life Beyond Tourism wishes to express its sincere gratitude to the artists, whose presence and performances have elevated the cultural and interdisciplinary profile of the programme.

Narmin Najafli, pianist, Azerbaijan

From a young age, music was the language through which Narmin Najafli found her voice. She graduated in 2014 from the Bulbul Secondary Music School in Baku, where she honed her skills and deepened her love for the piano.

She continued her studies at the prestigious Hanover University of Music, Drama, and Media, under the guidance of Professor Bernd Goetzke, refining her technique and artistic expression and establishing herself on the international stage.

Narmin has won numerous international piano competitions across Italy, England, Spain, Russia, Estonia, and Poland, and has performed at leading European festivals, including the Euro Music Festival in Germany, the Neuhaus Piano Festival in Russia, the Paderewski Piano Academy in Poland, the Piano Pic Festival in France, and the International Vilnius Piano Festival in Lithuania.

Her musical development has been enriched by masterclasses with renowned pianists such as Robert McDonald, Michel Beroff, Hamish Milne, Andrea Bonatta, Muza Rybackyte, and Pascal Nemirowski, shaping her unique style that blends technical precision with emotional depth.

As a performer, she has appeared in Europe and the USA, both as a soloist and with distinguished orchestras including the Orchestra Filarmonica Italiana, the Torun Symphonic Orchestra, the West German Chamber Orchestra, the Kiev Virtuosi Symphonic Orchestra, the NSO Hannover, and the Azerbaijan State and Chamber Orchestras. Since 2021, Narmin has also been teaching at the Hanover University of Music, Drama, and Media, sharing her knowledge and passion with the next generation of musicians.

Her achievements include the "Live Music Now" scholarship in Hannover, the "Youth of the Year" award in Azerbaijan, and her induction into the Golden Book of Azerbaijan in recognition of her contributions to the arts.

Tahmina Abdullayeva, violinist, Azerbaijan

Tahmina Abdullayeva is an Azerbaijani musician with an international career, acclaimed for the refinement of her sound and musical versatility. She began her studies at the Bul-Bul Special Music School in Baku, dedicated to young talents, and continued her education at the Baku Music Academy under the guidance of the Honored Teacher of Azerbaijan, Professor Fatima Idyatullina. She later completed her Master of Arts degree in Vienna at the Konservatorium Wien



Privatuniversität, studying with Dominika Falger.

She has collaborated with renowned orchestras such as the CIS Youth Orchestra conducted by Vladimir Spivakov and Marc Gorenstein, the I, Culture Orchestra under Sir Neville Marriner and Pawel Kotla, and the OTO Orchestra of the Teatro Olimpico in Vicenza with Alexander Lonquich. Since 2016, she has been performing with the Orchestra dei Pomeriggi Musicali in Milan.

Since 2019, she has been collaborating with both the Orchestra of Teatro alla Scala and the Filarmonica della Scala.

She has served as concertmaster of the Orchestra Verdi di Milano and as associate concertmaster (second violins) of the Orchestra dei Pomeriggi Musicali in Milan.

As a soloist, she has performed with the Azerbaijan State Symphony Orchestra and the Azerbaijan Chamber Orchestra in Baku, and has given recitals in Italy, Austria, Slovenia, Turkey, Hungary, and Poland.

Her artistic path combines a solid academic background with an international career, establishing her as both an orchestral leader and an accomplished chamber musician.

Mushfig Guliyev, pianist, Azerbaijan

Mushfig Guliyev is an Azerbaijani pianist with extensive international experience as a soloist, chamber musician, and ballet accompanist. Since 2024, he has been working as a pianist for ballet at the Paris Opera, following his engagement with the Istanbul State Opera and Ballet (2020–2023) and his work at ADA University (2023–2024).

He studied at several leading institutions, including the Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia in Rome under Benedetto Lupo, the Academy of Performing Arts in Bratislava, the Joseph Haydn Conservatory in Eisenstadt, and the Baku Music Academy. Mushfig has appeared at major venues and festivals across Europe and Azerbaijan, including the Gabala International Music Festival, Savonlinna Festival in Finland, Festival Piano Pic in France, Sala Casella in Rome, and the Auditorium Parco della Musica in Rome. He has also performed with orchestras such as the Azerbaijan State Symphony Orchestra, the Caspian Virtuosos, and the Joseph Haydn Conservatory Orchestra.

A prize-winner of numerous competitions — among them the Pietro Argento Competition in Italy, the Piano Talents Competition in Milan, and the Stockholm International Music Competition — Mushfig is also the recipient of multiple scholarships and awards, including the "Towards the Future" scholarship by Fuad Ismayilov Foundation (2013–2016), support from the Youth Foundation of Azerbaijan, and the SIAE (Società Italiana degli Autori ed Editori).

Fluent in Azerbaijani, Turkish, Russian, English, German, and Italian, Mushfig combines his international training with a deep commitment to both classical and contemporary repertoire, continuing to develop his career as a versatile and dynamic musician.



Stanisław Daniel Kotliński, bass-baritone, Poland

He studied singing in Poland and Italy with Barbara Iglikowska, Giorgio Favaretto and Rolando Panerai. As the youngest spokesman for the "Solidarity" movement he had been a political prisoner in communist Poland. He made his debut in Schönberg's "Moses und Aron" in Florence with Zubin Mehta, was Eddy in the Italian premiere of Turnage's "Greek" (1991) with Hans Werner Henze, sang at the "Maggio Musicale Fiorentino" Festival.

Due to health problems he couldn't sing for some years. He was artistic director, journalist and cultural manager. Since resuming his career he sang with important conductors and orchestras – in Berlin, Bonn, Alicante, Florence, Doha, Dresden, Beijing, Jinan, Hangzhou, Nanchang, Parma, Petersburg, Rome, Mexico City, Bad Kissingen, Martina Franca, Marseilles, Milan, Monte-Carlo, Munich, Moscow, Muscat, Prague, Ravenna, Salzburg, Lisbon, Lucerne, Vaduz, Valencia, Warsaw, Vienna, Vilnius and New York. He shared the concerts and projects with pianists as Rudolf Buchbinder, Evgeny Bozhanov, Khatia Buniatishvili, Igor Levit, Daniil Trifonov and Lang Lang. As a full university professor of art (S. Moniuszko Gdańsk Music Academy), he is internationally considered a specialist of Italian belcanto and Slavic music. He gave masterclasses and seminars in Florence, Parma, Pescara, Teramo, Berlin, Dresden, Munich, Beijing, Mexico City, Saarbrücken and Warsaw. He was a guest professor of the Mozarteum University Salzburg and Munich Academy of Music. He received awards and distinctions including the prestigious Italian „Premio Europeo Lorenzo il Magnifico" (2017). He made nu, merous recordings for Polish Radio & Television, RAI, Qatar & Oman TV, CCTV China, National Russian TV, Bayerischer Rundfunk Munich, in France, Czech Republic, Switzerland and Spain, as well as for CD labels as Foné, Dux, Naxos America and Da Vinci Classics.

The Traditional Romanian Music Ensemble ICOANE, of the "Gheorghe Dima" National Academy of Music, from Cluj-Napoca, Romania – Director Alina Stan

The Traditional Romanian Music Ensemble ICOANE, of the "Gheorghe Dima" National Academy of Music, from Cluj-Napoca, prepared by Associated Professor PhD Alina Stan and led by University Professor PhD Ioan Bocşa is composed of students and graduates of the Folklore Module, brought together by their passion for everything that relates to popular tradition. Through the recitals they hold, the vocal group (composed of either girls, or boys, or mixed), the individual singers and the traditional band have set for themselves the goal of acoustically restoring several archaic popular music productions, taken either from collections of folklorists, which appeared at the beginning of the 20th century, or from materials gathered directly in the field by members of the group – students and teachers – from areas of the country where folklore is still practiced according to ancient rituals. The chosen repertoire covers the entire cycle of life, by including ritual songs that go along with the major steps or crucial events of man's passage through life: birth, military service, marriage, work and



death, comprising lullabies, love songs and songs for military service, bride, harvest, dance, as well as carols and laments.

By the manner of arranging the songs and the typically folkloric sound, by the instrumental formula that is typical of Transylvanian popular music, we aim to attain the natural and, often, the dramatic behind Romanian folkloric rituals and, moreover, to recreate an atmosphere which used to be common to the Romanian village more than one hundred years ago.



SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

Duccio Canestrini

Referring expert for cultural anthropology at the Del Bianco Foundation, Duccio Canestrini is an Italian cultural anthropologist, and university lecturer. He has focused his research on tourism, heritage and contemporary rituals. He has taught Anthropology of Tourism in the Trento School of Management (University of Trento) and at the University Campus of Lucca (University of Pisa). He has published books on sustainable tourism, travel safety and identity representations of tourist destinations through the production of souvenir objects. He is one of the founders of AITR, the Italian Responsible Tourism Association, whose aim is to plan forms of participatory tourism that benefit village communities. He works in education and visual communication of values related to intercultural issues and the evolution of tourism.

Corinna Del Bianco

Visual artist and researcher analyzing and documenting the cultural landscape of places, she holds a PhD cum laude in Architectural, Urban and Interior Design at the Politecnico di Milano. She is founder and board member of the Fondazione Romualdo Del Bianco, based in Florence, Italy, dedicated to dialogue among cultures. In her practice she mainly uses photography as a method of investigation and works also with videos and installations. She looks at places' cultural identity with a focus on the culture of living in contemporary urban environments, intertwining it with modern forms of heritage, tourism and nature-culture relationships. She has long focused on countries of the global south, particularly in Latin America and sub-Saharan Africa but has also worked in European heritage and post-industrial contexts. Her works have been featured in numerous monographic exhibitions at leading international art and cultural institutions..

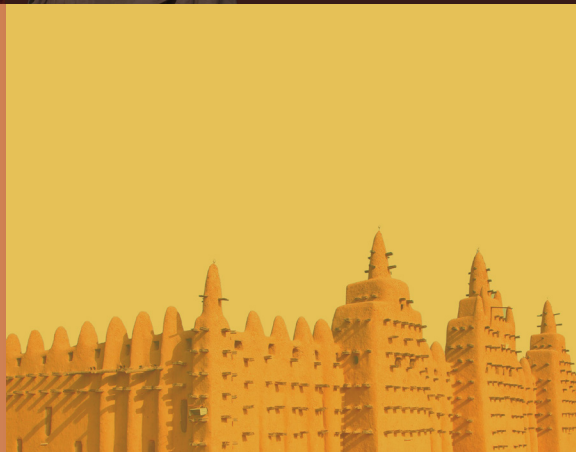
Giorgio von Arx

Board member of Travel to Dialogue Evolution and Head of Marketing and Training Development for the Life Beyond Tourism brand. As an independent consultant and corporate trainer, he supports companies in strategic and operational marketing, corporate communication, and training design. He works on Industry 4.0 strategies, identifying technological solutions for immersive and interactive experiences in both real and virtual environments. Giorgio also lectures in marketing and business communication and contributes to the planning and execution of trade fairs and corporate events, helping organizations align their communication and business goals with innovation and sustainability.





INTRODUCTION TO THE
“**HERITAGE FOR BUILDING PEACE 2025**”
APPEAL (H4BP.2025)



STUPORE - WONDER BUILDING PEACE through HERITAGE

The *Fondazione Romualdo Del Bianco-Life Beyond Tourism*¹ has chosen to celebrate the 80th anniversary of the end of World War II and the establishment of the new world order by issuing an Appeal to the International Community following the unveiling of a work of art commissioned by Paolo Del Bianco, the founder of COMI SpA, a hotelier in the World Heritage Site of Florence, on the 50th anniversary of the company starting to work in the field of **welcome** and **hospitality**, the 80th anniversary of the establishment of UNESCO and the 50th anniversary of the UNWTO.

1. *Stupore* - Wonder!

The bronze sculpture entitled ***Stupore***, or **Wonder**², symbolically contrasts **the metal of war with the metal for peace** by translating into a universally understood textural form the vision of **Life Beyond Tourism: In World Heritage Sites for world peace, the richness of multiculturalism spawns new opportunities and non-extractive ethical activities for the 'Culture of Encounter and of Intercultural Dialogue'**. That is why World Heritage Sites, which are naturally rich in multiculturalism, can become a fertile breeding ground of specific and replicable activities for '*best practices*' for '*encounters with others*'.

This vision gives rise to a crucial principle: *Heritage is a builder of Peace*, thus by extension *Heritage safeguards Heritage*.

Hence the name of the sculpture, **Wonder**, because one is struck with wonder by the simplicity and the incisive strength of this

1 Comi SpA founder.

2 The sculpture was devised, designed, executed in part and the work directed by Paolo Del Bianco, CEO of Florentine hoteliers COMI SpA and President Emeritus of the Fondazione Romualdo Del Bianco.

The sculpture was produced with the artisans of Pietrasanta (Lucca), Viareggio (Lucca), Cusona (San Gimignano) (Siena), Reggello (Florence) and Florence.



planetwide idea and because it announces with "wonder" that heritage is a potential *builder of peace in those sites and an opportunity not to be missed.*

Amid the rich presence of visitors from various cultural backgrounds on holiday, thus in the same condition of amenability to listen, the initiatives' professional nature must prove capable of turning an otherwise hasty tourist visit into dialogue, communication, knowledge and respect.

There is also opportunity here to foster the site's entrepreneurial creativity with new ethical activities capable of turning tourism into a journey for appreciating others, thus witnessing the start of quality activities designed to help visitors share in the importance **of the Culture of Encounter, Dialogue and Reciprocity with Others.**

The bronze sculpture is being unveiled today, 26 November 2025, in the Amphitheatre of the Andrzej Tomaszewski Auditorium al Duomo in Florence in order to impart visibility to the simplicity and virtuous strength of World Heritage sites where ethical activities based on intercultural dialogue, offered and run by professionals, breathe new life into the human aspect of *extending a welcome and offering hospitality*, thus allowing visitors to experience a site not only for its heritage but also for activities designed to promote *encounters for knowledge and interaction with others.*

2. World Heritage Sites, Overtourism, Multiculturalism

World Heritage Sites – UNESCO Convention 1972 – are unquestionably one of UNESCO's most important successes and initiatives, attracting numerous visitors from a large number of different countries and cultural backgrounds, thus opening up opportunities for also knowing and appreciating the UNESCO 2003³ and 2005⁴ Conventions. The current boom in tourism is creating unprecedented opportunities for World Heritage, but it also created problems in many sites where the impact of overtourism is becoming increasingly apparent.

UNWTO figures⁵ suggest that over one billion four hundred million people

3 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage – signed in Paris on 17 October 2003.

4 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions – signed in Paris on 20 October 2005.

5 UNWTO, 2024. <https://www.unwto.org/news/international-tourism-recovers-pre-pandemic-levels-in-2024>



travel every year. At the same time, many other sites would require a larger tourist presence to boost their economic viability and to contribute to local development. Overtourism leads to the distortion of an area's identity and reality and to a drastic decrease in the value of its hospitality. This is a major and, unfortunately, irreversible critical issue⁶ that needs to be managed. In view of overtourism's irreversibility, we need to find in it an equally important opportunity: *we at the Fondazione see it harbouring multicultural richness*, a positive factor which is accessible but which has not yet been exploited to systematically, ethically and professionally foster the kind of intercultural dialogue, knowledge and reciprocity that the international community so badly needs.

In a world crying out for more humanity and more brotherhood, this wealth of opportunities cannot be allowed to go to waste. Ignoring the opportunities for peace offered by World Heritage would be unforgivable, given that we desire *a common future to build on our one and only planet Earth, which we all need to share together*.

3. A Model

The experience built up by the Fondazione Romualdo Del Bianco-Life Beyond Tourism offers itself today as an example with thirty years' experience in practices, initially with its hotel company and, since 1998, with a foundation expressly established by the company to pursue its research into heritage, encounter and dialogue among visitors as a contribution from heritage to the promotion of world peace.

Throughout this experience, the Fondazione has invariably found that art is a source of attraction for many young visitors from all over the world, including from areas of conflict. In the course of their encounters, with these practices – communication, knowledge, physical human relations – art has brought them together in group encounters, it has changed them, and thus youths from warring countries have even ended up dancing together, proving that “Heritage is a builder of peace”!

⁶ Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions – signed in Paris on 20 October 2005.



In 2006 the Fondazione defined a model that it christened *Life Beyond Tourism (LBT)* with art, with the heritage that is Florence. From the model, however, it is then necessary to move on to activities involving its practical implementation: innovative, non-extractive ethical activities that develop with the site's determination and the creativity of its entrepreneurs, but also through new services and activities capable of bringing together the site's rich variety of visitors from different cultural backgrounds.

The Life Beyond Tourism Glossary⁷ Life defines the certainty of the model's message. The model proposes the achievement of *Quality Certification*⁸, where the guests themselves gauge the product or service offered in order to ensure its public dissemination. Naturally this includes interaction with residents, although unfortunately their number is currently tending to decrease in number, on account of the gentrification process triggered by a tourism-based economy that prompts members of local communities to quit their places of residence, an issue that needs to be properly managed.

*Thus the model hopes to see World Heritage Sites engaging in virtuous competition with one another on a global scale, promoting virtuous activities for **the Culture of Dialogue**.*

4. Our Mottoes Down the Years

1998 For peace in the world among young people from different countries, through culture, to meet, get to know each other and understand each other so as to develop friendship among peoples.

2005 International integration, without competition, respecting individual identities.

2010 Contributing from Florence to trigger feelings in young people with thoughts of use to the international community.

2013 Travel for Dialogue - a past to get to know together, a common future to build together.

7 Del Bianco, C., Savelli, A., 2018, Life Beyond Tourism Glossary, Life Beyond Tourism edizioni.

8 Fondazione Romualdo Del Bianco (2018) The Certification for Dialogue among Cultures - Life Beyond Tourism® DTC-LBT: 2018, Florence, Nardini Editore ISBN 978-88-404-7459-5 eng.



2025 Wonder: Let World Heritage sites become workshops for dialogue and reciprocity.

5. The Third Way

This is how the Life Beyond Tourism model defines *the third way, the third direction*:

- **an initial direction** from the global community towards heritage, for its conservation and its enhancement, with the UNESCO Conventions of 1972⁹, followed by the Conventions of 2003¹⁰ and, we would add, of 2005¹¹;
- **a second direction**, one might say, moves from heritage towards the community, for its use and enjoyment, with the Faro 2005 Convention¹²;
- **the third direction, the “third way”** that the Life Beyond Tourism Model proposes is the path *where the gazes of all those from many different cultural backgrounds involved in heritage meet*, in full awareness of their powerful opportunity to develop dialogue-focused activities for the growth of the international community in a context of peaceful coexistence, in other words, travelling with the deliberate commitment to meet and dialogue with other cultures by choosing Sites that host *the best programmes for the **Culture of Encounter***.

In this context, World Heritage Sites can play a strategic role as fully-fledged catalysts for a global change of direction: **I travel for peace.**

6. An Economy for the “Culture of Dialogue and Reciprocity”

In multiculturally rich World Heritage Sites, with *The Third Way* the local business community will proceed to devise and develop a non-extractive, ethical economy capable of redirecting creativity and financial resources towards activities that will facilitate successful

9 UNESCO, 1972, Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage – signed in Paris on 16 November 1972.

10 UNESCO, 2003, Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.

11 UNESCO, 2005, Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions.

12 European Council, 2005, Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (Faro Convention).



choices for turning the site into a *workshop for encounters for intercultural dialogue and reciprocity*.

This way, World Heritage sites will take part in a virtuous competition at the global level that will contribute to the culture of dialogue for world peace, and develop activities operating that may well also spawn new models: this will make a concrete contribution to reducing the – occasionally serious – risk of intercultural incomprehension; *and it may also reduce the serious risk, run by certain Sites, of dependence on international tourism with development shaped within the market itself.*

7. A few references

Among the many initiatives that have highlighted the value of intercultural dialogue, it is worth underscoring two important messages from UNESCO Director General Irina Bokova:

- *International Year for the Rapprochement of Cultures (2010)*
- *International Decade for the Rapprochement of Cultures (2013-2022).*

Nor should we overlook:

- the above-mentioned Faro Convention of Faro 2005, recognising people's right to cultural heritage
- the ICTC International Cultural Tourism Charter, ICOMOS GA 2022 Bangkok, Thailand.

And it is also worth highlighting:

- the 18GA 2014/42 Resolution adopted by the ICOMOS General Assembly, recognising the value of travel as a tool for dialogue, supporting "Life Beyond Tourism® – Travel for Dialogue" and, in particular, the commitment of the younger generations in promoting peace through culture and heritage: "supports the notion and activity of travel to promote dialogue among international youth."



8. The LBT Best Practices Workshop in Florence for Dialogue and Reciprocity in World Heritage Sites

With its Best Practices Workshop in Florence, the Fondazione offers its *Life Beyond Tourism Model* on the strength of the experience it has built up within its own international network, the aim being to boost awareness of multiculturalism's natural richness and of the resulting opportunities in the sites involved.

Life Beyond Tourism is a model that can be replicated and that is open to innovation. It is a philosophy based on tried and tested practical experience, and developed directly in a UNESCO Site, Florence, well beyond service-driven and consumption-driven tourism, transcending hit-and-run rationales to restore a central role to hospitality, to human encounter with others, to knowledge and mutual respect for world peace, a necessary **insurance policy for the welcome and hospitality business**.

IN A NUTSHELL, SITES SHOULD AIM TO:

- **use the site's rich asset of multiculturalism**
to devise, implement and manage practices designed to promote activities focusing on dialogue and reciprocity among visitors from different cultural backgrounds;
- **optimise the area's welcome and hospitality**
by identifying them as key elements in fostering intercultural dialogue, transitioning from tourism driven by the provision of services and by consumption to regenerative thinking and practices that restore value to communities and to the environment;
- **generate an economy in support of world peace**
with welcome and hospitality activities based on the development of local capabilities and on resilience, transcending tourism driven by the provision of services and by consumption;
- **turn the sites into an example and a beacon at the global level**
in disseminating the strategic value of the **culture**



of encounter and reciprocity for the development of intercultural, interpersonal and intergenerational relations in places with a strong multicultural presence;

- **impart a higher profile to less visited sites.**

The hope is that Italy may become an international model in this sense, thanks to its unique heritage and the fact that it has the highest number of World Heritage Sites.



APPEAL

HERITAGE for BUILDING PEACE 2025 (H4BP-2025)

to the international community, and in particular to UNESCO in its capacity as a specialist United Nations Agency, UNESCO – in keeping with its Constitution – contributes to building peace, to rooting out poverty, to sustainable development and to intercultural dialogue through education, science, culture, communication, interpretation and information and to all public and private international organisations involved in the conservation and enhancement of heritage and to all those that have recourse to heritage in the pursuit of their activities.

Context

Our appeal to *build peace through heritage* is rooted in the origins and the very foundations of UNESCO – the United Nations Organisation for Education, Science and Culture. As soon as hostilities ceased in the period immediately after the end of World War II, a conference was held in London, in the United Kingdom, in the course of which it was decided to set up an organisation embodying a genuine culture of peace. This new organisation was designed to constitute the *intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind* and, in so doing, to prevent the outbreak of another world war. At the end of the conference, thirty-seven countries founded the United Nations Organisation for Education, Science and Culture. The UNESCO Constitution, signed on 16 November 1945, came into force on 4 November 1946 after being ratified by twenty countries.

Recalling

the words of UNESCO Director General Audrey Azoulay at the most recent session of the Executive Board in April 2025, to the effect that: *“Education, science, culture and the free circulation of ideas and knowledge embody fundamental human values. They also constitute the basis for lasting peace. Over 75 years after its establishment, UNESCO reiterates the importance of its humanist vision for guaranteeing respect for human dignity. Our world needs education, science, culture and information. Our world needs humanity”*.

From the Andrzej Tomaszewski Amphitheatre in Florence,

the Fondazione Romualdo Del Bianco-Life Beyond Tourism and all the signatories issue the following



APPEAL

HERITAGE for BUILDING PEACE 2025 (H4BP-2025)

**For contributing to World Peace at both the local and global levels,
in multiculturally rich World Heritage Sites,**

**promoting workshops for
the Culture of Encounter, Dialogue and Reciprocity with Others**

**co-creating, implementing and promoting
innovative and ethical activities and initiatives.**

(ed.01.10.2025)

To sign the Appeal, please visit www.fondazione-delbianco.org





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Headquarters

Operational Office
Via del Giglio 10 50123
Florence (FI) Italy

Contacts

Tel.: +39 055 288642
WhatsApp.: +39
3929061783
info@florencevenues.com

Info

Centro Eventi Firenze S.r.l.
Benefit Company
Registered Office:
Via della Condotta 12,
50122 Florence (FI) Italy



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THE WORLD IN FLORENCE

2021
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