

Reimagining Cultural Heritage: The Role Of Extremist Ideology And Its Intersection With Technology

Round Table

Protection and preservation of cultural heritage depends on multiple factors: awareness of its importance, the wish to have it preserved, the way we identify with it and the funds we use towards this preservation. In particular, how we perceive our identity - be it identity of any group and at any level, from state down - can play an active role in creating the wish to protect it, which in turn may minimise or maximise the awareness of its importance and the funds we are willing (or unwilling) to put towards it. This same four-factor division is true when cultural heritage is deliberately obscured, destroyed or enters illicit global antiques trade; the identity of those to whom it would apply or matter, and the identity of those who feel it does not apply to, create a conflict of interest, which may result in irreversible harm to priceless material culture. There are several examples of how extant cultural heritage can be reimagined in case of extremist ideologies that has left or may leave, in the future, its mark on heritage - from the conflict in Middle East and the trafficking and destruction of its cultural heritage, to the fate of Ukrainian museums, to deliberate appropriation, minimisation or ignoring of minority-related cultural heritage in certain movements in the US and elsewhere. The role of technology in this matter is important. Not only can it influence what we know about heritage crime, it also has a role in group identity formation, trafficking and tracking down trafficked antiques, acts of vandalism and more...even reconstruction and partial reconstruction. It therefore follows that understanding how reimagining heritage features and what consequences it might have into the heritage professionals' dialogue, particularly when establishing a dialogue may be hard due to conflict, lack of interest or clashing perceptions of importance.

Motivation

Building awareness of how identity and behaviour around this topic influences vulnerable material culture, establishing dialogues about how best to approach preservation under difficult circumstances, building understanding on the role of technology involved.

Target Audience

Academics, NGOs, International heritage bodies, educators

Keywords

#Heritage #identity #technology #extremism