



One of the most enduring nostalgia of the German half of my family is the Snowy Mountain Hydro Scheme, the birthplace of Australian multiculturalism. Immigrants from over 60 countries, mostly white, came and built the greatest public project in Australian history. In doing so they caused a great disjunction in Australian history - that it no longer was mono cultural and that indigeneity and immigrant signatures would be written large on the Australian historical cultural landscapes. They continue to change the very identity of the country and its liberation as the lone Eurocentric country in Asia. The majority of the elderly Europeans now pine for the Alpine memories and long for snow and all the romanticism it brings. It was very much the nostalgia for a golden age that irrespective of their location, every culture in the world longs for when culture informs our heritage, health and wellbeing.

At the same time Europe was going through its rebuilding through the Marshall Plan. It needed a thinktank of ideas that would underpin the post WW II Social and Cultural Fabric of Europe. It called for innovation and bold initiatives. That is exactly what the Salzburg Global Seminar provided. It was established in 1947 as the Marshall Plan for the Mind. Rebuilding communities needs serious intellectual engagement that respects and honours the history and diversity of the places where the rebuilding is taking place. Moreover, WW II saw the beginning of the process of decolonisation across the world. It was the

end of Europe as we knew it, a hub of metropolitan colonial powers that became opulent extracting resources and wealth from the rest of the world.

We are at the crossroads of endeavouring psychological decolonisation; reconciling fractured identities; searching for models and modalities of inclusion; transitioning from the disappointment of the delivery of the Millennium Development Goals to a fresh euphoria of the Sustainable Development Goals; and dealing with digital tsunamis that drown out the collective consciousness to the I - Individual. In this context it is significant that the Salzburg Global Seminar program focussed on 'What Future for Cultural Heritage? Perceptions, Problematics, and Potential'. This program was supported by the Edward T Cone Foundation and the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education and Science.

The Seminar 614 in its iteration (<https://www.salzburgglobal.org/>) focussed on facilitating dialogue, exchanging and enabling new forms of networking and collaboration; developing strategies for raising greater awareness of the unique and often poorly understood role of cultural heritage; sharing learnings from Salzburg Global through dynamic reporting (blogs, newsletters, substantive report) with a broad, international group of stakeholders and with the help of a media partner; drafting and widely disseminating a Salzburg Global Statement on the problematics and potential of cultural heritage in the 21st Century, building/expanding on the 2009 Salzburg Declaration on the Conservation

and Preservation of Cultural Heritage; and inspiring, incubating, and catalysing several creative and unorthodox/unconventional cultural heritage projects and networks, across generations, regions, disciplines, and sectors.

What Future for Cultural Heritage? Perceptions, Problematics, and Potential 16-21 March 2019 was facilitated by two eminent cultural interlocutors - George Abungu and Vishakha Desai. George reminded us about the problematics of inequality. Vishakha, a great synthesiser, continuously tried to bring together divergent and dissenting views. Over forty Fellows and the inspirational Salzburg Global team led by Claire Shine and others were the animators in the Schloss Leopoldskron and its environs mostly captured in the frames of the movie the Sound of Music. It was interactive. Agenda and facilitation determined by the participants. Crossings across cultural borders - race, ethnicity, gender, language, faith, economic status, age, regionalism, sexuality and more. No one voice was dominant. But the collective voice was



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loud and clear - better translated in the Rio+20 statement of the former UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon - More of the same will not do.

There are many takeaways from Seminar 614. Museums and Heritage (non-binary natural and cultural) are continually being questioned and the multiple understandings of what they mean is pluralistic. While, standard setting instruments and definitions have a role to play to facilitate shared professional practice one should be careful not to homogenise the diversity of discourses. Decolonisation of the mind or mentality is an ongoing process. Legacies of the past have two sides. Colonisation and its imprint and diverse formations of resistance.

Tourism continues to be the leading growth industry for almost two decades. In its way this growth is seriously minimising our heritage values and their significances, be they natural or cultural, movable or immovable, tangible and intangible. All tourism is cultural, tourism often impacts on non-renewable heritage resources. The focus has been more on theory, marketing and charters and other soft law instruments, but much needs to be done to raise heritage consciousness so that the local custodians, carriers and transmitters of knowledge systems need self-empowerment to safeguard their values and resources. Who owns whose heritage - who interprets whose heritage - who benefits from whose heritage are ongoing refrains for decades now. Alissandra Cummins, former President of the International Council of Museums and the former President

of the Executive Board of UNESCO emphasized that we need to understand the process of investment in tourism by governments and the private sector and then make appropriate interventions.

Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2030 provide a framework with measurables. What is needed is to work with and beyond the converted. It means new partners and minimising coteries of influence and opportunism from past relationships. New relationship building is at the heart of the Goals. It is needed to genuinely locate culture at the heart of sustainable development. We need to go beyond the binaries and the tyranny of stereotypes to be inclusive, holistic and sustainable in our responsibilities to posterity.

The Seminar shows that we need think-tanks to deal with various situations, be they emergent, emergency or transformative. Actions will at best result in band aid solutions or ad hoc in addressal without forums that are interdisciplinary, intersectoral and challenging. The word stakeholder and sustainability are some of the most used or abused without in depth understanding of the contextual museum or heritage. I will continue with my advocacy that we need in India and elsewhere clear and well-articulated heritage policies and strategies that are transparent and accountable. At the core of it should be the contextuality of museums; ethical engagement of all stakeholders and most importantly an inclusive understanding of what heritage means to the primary stakeholder communities and that it is honoured and respected as a living process of their sense of place.



Photo credit: International Institute for the Inclusive Museum and the Salzburg Global Seminar



1. Mozart memorialised in the city centre of his birthplace Salzburg
2. Schloss Leopoldskron, the place of romantic scenes in the Sound of Music, where the Fellows stayed and met throughout the week in an intensive immersion of ideas, debates and discussions
3. Salzburg Art Project 2007. Sphaera on Kapitelplatz by Stephan Balkenhol illustrates the artist's ability for sculptural expression. Würth Collection., Inv 15622. Figurative sculpture open to interpretations, the man on the sphere reflects everyday realities outwardly but enigmatic and anonymous... doubt, proximity and distance are present. It challenges conventional memorialisation through statues making it more interactive for the viewer
4. Intergenerational transmission is honoured, respected, challenged and interrogated by the next generation in the Seminar among the Fellows Nura Tbold and Freda Nkirete M'Mbogori
5. Fellows at the Memorial in sombre remembrance of book burning that the Nazis staged on Residenzplatz on April 30, 1938
6. Salzburg Global Seminar Fellows at the lake front where the children fall into the water from the boat in the film the Sound of Music



NEXT WEEK

Heritage Matters will take you to the 9th Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art in Brisbane

Past columns of Heritage Matters can be downloaded at: <http://inclusivemuseum.org/heritage-matters/>