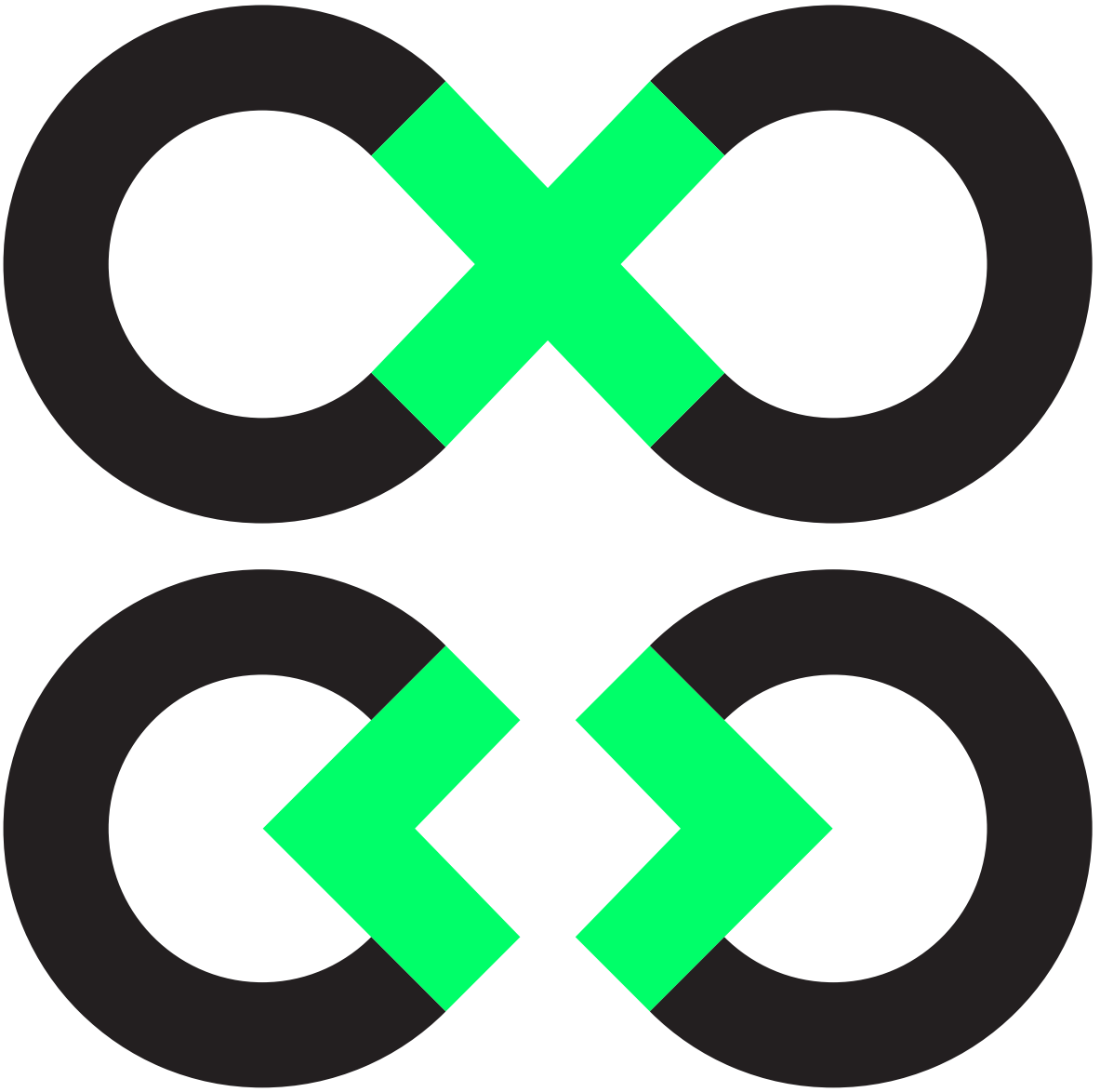
From Conservation to Conversation

Rethinking Collections Care



From Conservation to Conversation Rethinking Collections Care

MARKK
IN MOTION

Mitteilungen aus dem Museum am Rothenbaum
Neue Folge, Band 53, 2023

MARKK
IN MOTION

VORWORT
Barbara Plankensteiner

Diese Publikation vereint Beiträge und Diskussionen der richtungsweisenden Online-Konferenz „From Conservation to Conversation. Rethinking Collections Care“, die im September 2021 stattfand.

Ich freue mich sehr, dass diese Zusammenfassung nun endlich in gedruckter Form sowie online verfügbar ist, um eine Veranstaltung zu dokumentieren, an der rund 400 am Thema interessierte Kolleg:innen aus der ganzen Welt digital teilgenommen haben, um über eine andere Zukunft der Konservierungspraxis zu diskutieren und ihre vielfältigen Ideen aus unterschiedlichsten Perspektiven beizutragen.

Es war ein langer Weg, von der ersten Idee im Jahr 2018, bis zur digitalen Umsetzung drei Jahre später und schließlich zu dieser schriftlichen Dokumentation dieser in vielerlei Hinsicht besonderen Konferenz zur Sammlungspflege. Für das MARKK, Museum am Rothenbaum – Kulturen und Künste des Welt, war es eine besondere Ehre, Gastgeber und Initiator für diesen Workshop zu einem so aktuellen und relevanten Thema zu sein, das auf besondere Weise mit aktuellen Anliegen der Museumsarbeit korrespondiert: Dekolonisierung, Transparenz, Zugänglichkeit, Prozesshaftigkeit, Nachhaltigkeit, Zusammenarbeit, Sharing oder Restitutionsprozesse. Diese Themen betreffen nicht nur die kuratorische Arbeit, sondern wirken sich auch zunehmend auf die Konservierungspraxis aus. Mehrere unserer eingeladenen Expert:innen und Autor:innen berichten in diesem Buch über ihre Erfahrungen mit derartigen Entwicklungen.

Museen betrachten es als eine ihrer Hauptaufgaben, moderne und strategische Ansätze für die Pflege der wertvollen Sammlungen zu verfolgen, um die materiellen Zeugnisse des kulturellen Erbes in Einklang mit den allgemeinen institutionellen Zielen zu schützen und zu bewahren. Die Bewahrung von Sammlungen und Sichtweisen über dafür angemessene Bedingungen sind nach wie vor Gegenstand aktueller Debatten, insbesondere, aber nicht nur, im Zusammenhang mit Sammlungen aus kolonialen Kontexten. Die Fragen reichen von Themen der Mobilität von Sammlungen, hoher Kosten, überzogener Standards für Ausstellungs- oder Lagerungsbedingungen oder Fragen der Nachhaltigkeit bis hin zu Vorstellungen eines „Grünen Museums“. Sogenannte konservatorische Standards oder ihr vermeintlicher Mangel wurden von wichtigen Institutionen als Argument gegen die Mobilität von Sammlungen angeführt und waren Faktoren dafür, den Austausch und die Nutzung von Sammlungen

sowie Restitutionen zu verhindern oder zu verzögern. Heute geben aktuelle Forschungsergebnisse zu den Grundsätzen der Sammlungspflege wichtige neue Impulse, um gängige Standards der Sammlungspflege zu überdenken und kritisch zu reflektieren.

Aktuell haben wir ein sich veränderndes Verständnis von Sammlungspflege und legen den Schwerpunkt auf menschliche Interaktionen mit den Objekten und auf eine einfachere und flexiblere Nutzung derselben. In den letzten Jahren war dies ein wichtiges Anliegen ethnographischer Museen in ihrem Bemühen, mit den Nachfahren der ursprünglichen Besitzer:innen und Schöpfer:innen dieser Objekte zusammenzuarbeiten, um eine spirituelle Erweckung, eine praktische Nutzung oder ein detailliertes Studium zu ermöglichen. Zunehmend setzt sich die Einsicht durch, dass Konservierungspraktiken, die für den Schutz von kulturellem Material sorgen, auch zu einer „kulturellen Heilung" beitragen sollten. Die Sammlungspflege sollte unterschiedliche Auffassungen von angemessenen Konservierungspraktiken berücksichtigen und diese mit Fragen der Nachhaltigkeit, des architektonischen Umfelds sowie der klimatischen Bedingungen für die Lagerung und Ausstellung in Einklang bringen, die Risiken für das materielle Erbe in Museumssammlungen minimieren.

Ein ganzheitlicherer Ansatz für den Erhalt und die Bewahrung des kulturellen Erbes ist nicht nur für Museen mit Weltkulturen-Sammlungen, wie dem MARKK, von Belang, sondern für alle Museen, die Zusammenarbeit, Zugänglichkeit und eine andere menschliche Auseinandersetzung mit den Objekten in ihrer Obhut erleichtern wollen. Das Museum der Zukunft bewegt sich jenseits von Glasvitrinen, das wissen wir alle, und das müssen wir auch in unserem Umgang mit dem materiellen Erbe berücksichtigen.

Mein ganz besonderer Dank gilt Farideh Fekrsanati, unserer ehemaligen Leiterin der Abteilung Konservierung/Restaurierung, die mit ihrem Interesse, ihrem profunden Wissen und ihren Netzwerken vom ersten Tag an, als sie 2019 für das MARKK zu arbeiten begann, die Konferenz und dieses Buch entscheidend geprägt hat. Ein ganz herzliches Dankeschön geht auch an den Mitherausgeber und Mitorganisator der Tagung, Gabriel Schimmeroth, unseren Leiter der Veranstaltungsabteilung und Projektkurator, für seinen kreativen Input und dafür, dass er das Projekt über fünf Jahre am Leben gehalten und zu einem wunderbaren Abschluss gebracht hat sowie Caroline Schäfer, die das Projekt in den letzten Wochen bis zur Fertigstellung der Publikation intensiv und mit großer Begeisterung begleitet hat.

Unser großer Dank gilt der Kulturstiftung des Bundes und ihrer ehemaligen Direktorin Hortensia Völckers für die Finanzierung und die Möglichkeit, dieses Buch im Rahmen des MARKK in Motion Projekts herauszugeben und die wunderbare Zusammenkunft mit Diskussionen zu einem für unsere Museen sehr relevanten Thema zu organisieren. Ein ganz besonderer Dank gilt Lutz Nitsche von der Stiftung, der das Projekt die gesamte Zeit über begleitet hat, für seine kontinuierliche Unterstützung, seine Einsichten und sein umfassendes Interesse an den Themen, die unsere Museumsarbeit bestimmen.

PREFACE

Barbara Plankensteiner

This publication summarizes papers and discussions that shaped the ground-breaking online conference *From Conservation to Conversation. Rethinking Collections Care* held in September 2021. I am very happy that finally this written synthesis is available in print and online to document an event that approximately 400 colleagues interested in the subject from all over the world attended digitally and joined discussions about a different future for conservation practices from a variety of backgrounds, sharing their ideas from a multiplicity of perspectives.

It was a long journey from the first idea in 2018 to the digital realization 3 years later, and finally to this written testament, for this in many respects special conference about collections care. It was a special honour for us at the MARKK, Museum am Rothenbaum, World Cultures and Arts, to be the host and initiator for this workshop on such a timely, relevant subject that is so much in line with contemporary concerns of museum work: decolonization, transparency, accessibility, processuality, sustainability, collaboration, sharing or restitution processes. These do not only affect curatorial work, but increasingly impact conservation practices. Several of our invited expert speakers and authors in this book share their experiences with such developments.

Museums consider it as one of their core duties to adopt state-of-the-art and strategic approaches to care for valued collections in order to protect and conserve the material evidence of cultural heritage in line with the overall institutional goals. Care of collections and views on the appropriate preservation conditions continue to be a subject of current debate, particularly, but not only in connection with collections from colonial contexts. Questions range from issues such as collection mobility, high costs, exaggerated standards for conditions of display or storage, sustainability to concepts for the

‘Green Museum’. So-called conservation standards, or a perceived lack thereof, have been used by major institutions to argue against mobility of collections and have been experienced as factors in delaying exchange and use of collections as well as restitutions. Today, results of current research on principles of collections care do provide important new impulses to revisit and critically reflect developed standards of collections care.

We are now talking about care of collections in a different sense with an emphasis on human interaction with objects and easier and more flexible use of them. In recent years this was a major concern for museums with ethnographic collections in their endeavours to collaborate with descendants of the original owners and creators of these objects aimed to re-allow a spiritual awakening, practical use or detailed study. There is an increasing understanding that conservation practices aimed at safeguarding cultural material should also contribute to ‘cultural healing’. Care of collections therefore needs to include conversations about differing perceptions of appropriate care and equally consider issues of sustainability, architectural environment, climate conditions for storage and display to manage risks for tangible material heritage in museum collections.

A more holistic approach to conservation and preservation of cultural heritage is not only needed for our museum category of world cultures collections but is relevant for all museums aiming to ease collaboration, access and another human engagement with objects in their care. The museum of the future is moving beyond glass cases, we all know that and we need to consider that also in the way how we deal with material heritage.

I owe a very special thank you to Farideh Fekrsanati, our former head of the conservation/restoration department, who decisively shaped the conference and this book with her interest, deep knowledge and networks from the first day she started to work for the MARKK in 2019. A very warm thank you also goes to the co-editor and co-organizer of the conference, Gabriel Schimmeroth, our head of public programming and project curator, for his creative input, for keeping the project alive for over five years and bringing this book project to a wonderful conclusion as well as Caroline Schäfer, who in the last weeks until the printing accompanied the project intensively and with great passion.

Our great gratitude goes to the Kulturstiftung des Bundes, the German Cultural Foundation, and its former director Hortensia Völckers for the funding and the opportunity to publish this book and to organize the wonderful gathering with discussions on a very relevant subject for our museums. We also owe a very particular thank you to Lutz Nitsche from the foundation for accompanying the project all the way, for his continuous support, his insights, and his deep interest in the subjects that drive our museum work.

GRUSSWORT DER KULTURSTIFTUNG DES BUNDES

Von der Konservierung zur Konversation – und von hier aus weiter: zur Partizipation, zur Inklusion und Kooperation ethnologischer Museen mit den verschiedenen stake-holdern einer Sammlung in der Stadtgesellschaft oder in den Herkunftsgemeinschaften der ehemaligen Kolonialregionen. Dieses Buch und die vorausgehende Konferenz am Hamburger MARKK markieren einen Richtungswechsel für die Art und Weise, wie ethnologische Sammlungen im 21. Jahrhundert arbeiten. Die Aufgabe der Dekolonisierung steht seit Jahren im politischen Raum. Wie aber ein Museum sein koloniales Gepäck in konkreter Praxis verringern kann und welche Rolle der Bereich der Konservierung hierbei spielt – das führt diese Dokumentation an zahlreichen internationalen Beispielen eindrucksvoll vor Augen.

Dabei wird eines deutlich: Wer Konservierungsmodelle verändert, rührt an die Fundamente des europäischen Museums. Wo es früher darum ging, Objekte im Zustand vermeintlicher Authentizität einzufrieren – um sie zu „erretten" vor kolonialer Macht und Modernisierung – sehen sich ethnologische Museen heute mit völlig neuen sozialen, epistemischen oder politischen Dynamiken konfrontiert: Was als Musikinstrument, Flechtwerk, Gefäß oder Kleidungsstück im Depot oder Ausstellungsraum permanent arretiert war, erfährt eine Aktivierung durch neuen Gebrauch: zum Beispiel durch tradierte Knüpftechniken, durch kulturelle und spirituelle (Wieder-)aneignung in indigenen Zeremonien oder durch die Restitution in transkontinentale Herkunftsländer. Keine dieser Objekt-Aktivierungen wäre möglich ohne die Begleitung durch Konservator:innen. Ihre Sorge und ihr Wissen um historische Materialität, Überlieferung oder Handwerk bilden die Anker für all die zeitgenössischen partizipativen Nutzungsformen, die übliche museale Kontexte weit hinter sich lassen.

Es ist bemerkenswert, dass die im Rahmen dieser Konferenz diskutierten Neuorientierungen ihren Ausgangspunkt als eine „Konversation" unter Fachkolleg:innen genommen hat. Neben Diskurs und Politik standen von Beginn an Fallbeispiele und veränderte Praktiken im Zentrum eines Austauschs, der über zahlreiche internationale und disziplinäre Grenzen hinweg geführt wurde. Ein Austausch, der glücklicherweise nicht Halt machte vor Fragen, die auf obsolete Verleih-Konventionen oder das Engagement für ökologische Nachhaltigkeit zielten.

Am Ende ist dieses Buch das Dokument einer bewundernswerten Professionalität und Passion auf Seiten der Projektverantwortlichen im

Hamburger MARKK: bereits geplante Veranstaltungstermine mussten corona-bedingt abgesagt werden, das Miteinander fand schließlich im digitalen Raum statt: Der Weg zum Konferenz-Erfolg war kein leichter. Umso größer ist der Dank der Kulturstiftung des Bundes an das gesamte Team des MARKK unter der Leitung von Barbara Plankensteiner sowie insbesondere an die Projektleitung Farideh Fekrsanati und Gabriel Schimmeroth – ohne sie wären diese Konversationen über die dynamische Zukunft der Konservierung nicht in Fahrt gekommen. Wir hoffen, dass ihr Echo über die Grenzen des Museums hinaus auch in Bildungseinrichtungen für Konservierung und Restaurierung nachhallt und ein zahlreiches Publikum im In- und Ausland erreicht.

Katarzyna Wielga-Skolimowska
Vorstand / Künstlerische Direktorin

Kirsten Haß
Vorstand / Verwaltungsdirektorin

GREETING FROM THE FEDERAL CULTURAL FOUNDATION

From conservation to conversation—and from here on: to participation, inclusion and cooperation of ethnological museums with different stakeholders of a collection—in the urban society or in the communities of origin of the former colonial regions. This book and the preceding conference at the MARKK in Hamburg indicate a new direction for the functioning of ethnological collections in the 21st century. Decolonization has been discussed in the political arena for years. But how the concrete role of a museum looks like, working to reduce its colonial baggage in practice, and what role the field of conservation plays in this process, is impressively demonstrated in this publication, by using numerous international examples.

What becomes clear in the process: those who change the models of conservation are touching the foundations of the European museum. Whereas in the past it was a matter of preserving objects in a state of supposed authenticity—in order to "save" them from colonial power and modernization—ethnological museums today are confronted with completely new social, epistemic or political dynamics: Objects that were permanently arrested in the depot or exhibition spaces as musical instruments, wickerwork, vessels, or garments are activated through new usages: for example, through traditional knotting techniques, through cultural and spiritual (re) appropriation in indigenous ceremonies, or through restitution to transcontinental countries of origin. None of these object activations would be possible without the guidance of conservators. Their care and knowledge of historical materiality, heritage, or craft provide

the anchors for all the contemporary participatory usages that go far beyond the conventional museum contexts.

It is noteworthy that the reorientations discussed in the context of this conference took their starting point as a "conversation" among professional colleagues. In addition to discourse and policy, case studies and changing practices were at the center of an exchange from the very beginning crossing numerous international and disciplinary boundaries. An exchange that fortunately did not stop at questions targeting obsolete lending conventions or a commitment to environmental sustainability.

In the end, this book is the document of an admirable professionalism and passion on the side of those responsible for the project at the MARKK in Hamburg: Already scheduled events had to be cancelled due to corona, and the encounter finally took place in the digital space: The road to a successful conference was not an easy one. All the more reason for the Federal Cultural Foundation to thank the entire MARKK team, led by Barbara Plankensteiner, and especially to the project leaders Farideh Fekrsanati and Gabriel Schimmeroth—without whom these conversations about the dynamic future of conservation would not have gotten off the ground. We hope that their echo will resonate beyond the confines of the museum into educational institutions for conservation and restoration and reach a large audience at home and abroad.

Katarzyna Wielga-Skolimowska
Executive Board / Artistic Director

Kirsten Haß
Executive Board / Administrative Director

FROM CONSERVATION TO CONVERSATION – INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Farideh Fekrsanati und Gabriel Schimmeroth

Im Kontext von Dekolonisierungsbemühungen von Museen sind auch die Sammlungspflege und Überlegungen zu angemessenen Erhaltungsbedingungen seit einigen Jahren Gegenstand fachlicher Debatten. Denn die Grundsätze und Werte, die Strategien zur Sammlungspflege zugrunde liegen, sind je nach Kontext sehr unterschiedlich und entsprechen oft nicht den ursprünglichen kulturellen Anforderungen im Umgang mit dem materiellen Erbe.

Insbesondere im Zusammenhang mit Sammlungen aus kolonialen Kontexten gewinnen dabei Fragen zur Aktivierung, Nutzung und Mobilität von Sammlungen, aber auch zu hohen Kosten, Nachhaltigkeit und einem „Grünen Museum“ an Bedeutung.

VON DER KONFERENZPLANUNG ZUM DIGITALEN WORKSHOP BIS ZUR PUBLIKATION

Als Konferenz im Rahmen des MARKK in Motion Projekts, gefördert durch die Initiative für ethnologische Sammlungen der Kulturstiftung des Bundes, ursprünglich für April 2020 am MARKK in Hamburg geplant, war die Realisierung aufgrund der großen Unwägbarkeiten der COVID-19 Pandemie immer wieder gefährdet und wurde schließlich im September 2021 als digitales Format realisiert. Im Mai 2023 erscheint nun endlich die gedruckte und digital zugängliche Workshop-Publikation.

Aktuelle Gespräche und Ergebnisse der Forschung zu Prinzipien der Sammlungspflege haben wichtige Impulse für den digitalen Workshop geliefert.

Die Etablierung des Museums in der (kolonialen) europäischen Kulturlandschaft hatte zur Folge, dass sich weitestgehend eurozentrische Vorstellungen von Konservierung/Erhaltung als Standards für die Sammlungspflege durchgesetzt haben. Diese Vorstellungen werden sowohl innerhalb als auch außerhalb des Berufsfeldes immer mehr in Frage gestellt. In den letzten 20 Jahren hat die zunehmende Einbeziehung indigener und lokaler Gemeinschaften sowie einer breiteren und kritischen Öffentlichkeit in Fragen der Repräsentation, Präsentation und Bewahrung dazu geführt, dass sich die Konservierungspraxis weniger exklusiv gestaltet und der Entscheidungsfindungsprozess zunehmend

auf eine integrative, multidisziplinäre Verhandlung von Ideen ausgerichtet wird.

Im Kontext der Weltkulturen-Sammlungen in Deutschland diente diese zweitägige Konferenz, die trotz der digitalen Realisierung eher als Workshop-Format funktionierte, dazu, über die die laufende Entwicklung der sich verändernden Konservierungs- und Sammlungspflegepraktiken zu reflektieren. Indem wir Kolleg:innen aus dem nationalen und internationalen Bereich zusammenbrachten, wollten wir einen Raum für offene Kommunikation schaffen und hierzu die Rolle der Konservierung bei der Erleichterung des Zugangs zu und der Nutzung von Sammlungen erkunden. Auch fragten wir, welche konservatorischen Kompetenzen erforderlich sind, wenn es um Positionen und Entwicklungen im Bereich der Sammlungsaktivierung, Dekolonisierung und Restitution geht. Was bestimmt die heutigen Ansätze zu Materialität und ihrer Bedeutung? Wie verändern sich Ethik und Methodik und welche Grenzen und Konflikte werden – sowohl emotional als auch wissenschaftlich – erlebt?

Mit diesen Fragen möchte das MARKK eine lebhafte Diskussion und kritische Reflexion darüber anregen, was Konservierung/Restaurierung erreichen will und wer die entscheidenden Akteure sind.

Die Workshopbeiträge der Vortragenden sind auf einer eigens eingerichteten Website zusammen gebracht und über die MARKK Website zugänglich. → HTTPS://MARKK-HAMBURG.DE/FROM-CONSERVATION-TO-CONVERSATION

Die Publikation greift die Workshop-Struktur der Konferenz auf und strukturiert die Beiträge in drei Themenbereiche:

● WISSENS- UND MACHTSYSTEME:
AUSTAUSCH VON WISSEN UND SAMMLUNGSZUGANG
Raum für Gespräche, die sich kritisch mit Entscheidungsprozessen und den darin eingebetteten Machtverhältnissen auseinandersetzen und dabei auf Ansätze und Erfahrungen von Kolleg:innen zurückgreifen, bei denen Museen/Institutionen an der Erleichterung des Zugangs zu und der Nutzung von Sammlungen beteiligt sind. Anhand dieser Beispiele wollten wir die Chancen und Herausforderungen erörtern, die sich daraus ergeben, und über die Bedeutung des Zugangs zu Sammlungen für Gemeinschaften und als Beitrag zur „kulturellen Gesundheit“ sprechen.

● KONSERVATORISCHE KOMPETENZEN FÜR DIE KONVERSATION
Ausgehend von aktuellen internationalen Entwicklungen in der Ausbildung von Restaurator:innen diskutierten wir Formate, die bereits praktiziert oder entwickelt werden. Wir fragten, welche Fähigkeiten

und Ausbildungen in deutschen/europäischen Institutionen entwickelt werden müssen, wenn ein Wandel in der Konservierungspraxis in Betracht gezogen wird, der den Entscheidungsprozess in Richtung eines umfassenden, multidisziplinären Wissensaustauschs verschiebt. Was wird bereits praktiziert, wie effektiv sind diese Methoden, und erzielen sie die notwendigen Ergebnisse?

● WIE PFLEGEN – DIE (WEITER)ENTWICKLUNG VON STANDARDS
Welchen Einfluss hat ein Wandel in der Ethik auf die Methoden der Sammlungspflege? Welche Grenzen oder Konflikte gibt es (emotional/wissenschaftlich)? Wie beeinflussen Fragen der Kosten und der Nachhaltigkeit die Anwendung von Erhaltungsrichtlinien? Wir wollen uns mit den aktuellen Ansätzen von Pflegevorstellungen auseinandersetzen und fragen, was sich verändert hat, wo Ansätze entwickelt werden und wie neue Entwicklungen aussehen könnten.

ILLUSTRATIVE INTERVENTION IN DIE DEBATTE
Die konkrete konservatorische Praxis transformiert sich vor dem Hintergrund einer sich wandelnden Museumsarbeit. Die Künstlerinnen und Illustratorinnen Jiaona Hu und Aiqi Sun haben auf der Grundlage des Eröffnungspanels und der anschließenden Diskussion die künstlerische Illustration „con_er_ation“ gestaltet, die die Grundfragen und Stimmungen des digitalen Workshops und der Publikation einfängt und die Gemeinsamkeiten zwischen den Wörtern „conservation“ und „conversation“ – ähnlich wie bei einem Lückentext-Spiel – in einem illustrierten Gesprächskontext aufgreift. Das Eröffnungspanel brachte Barbara Plankensteiner, Farideh Fekrsanati, Laura van Broekhoven, Monica Hanna und Shadreck Chirikure ins Gespräch und ermöglichte die Einordung der Beiträge in die wichtigen Fragen einer Dekolonisierung der institutionellen Wirklichkeit.

IST KONSERVIERUNG FLUIDE KOMMUNIKATION?
EIN SOKRATISCHER DIALOG
Gemeinsam mit den Kolleg:innen aus den Restaurierungs-/Konservierungsabteilungen der Partnermuseen der „Initiative für ethnologische Sammlungen“ der Kulturstiftung des Bundes, des Linden Museums in Stuttgart und des Grassi Museums für Völkerkunde Leipzig trafen wir uns Ende November 2021 für einen sokratischen Dialog mit Bill Wei (Cultural Heritage Agency Netherlands) im Zwischenraum am MARKK. Dabei ging es uns auch um den Anspruch nachhaltige Netzwerke zu etablieren und Austausch zu fördern.

Wir danken allen Teilnehmenden der Konferenz, sich auf ein digitales experimentelles Format eingelassen zu haben und im Besonderen den Vortragenden: Ana Maria Theresa Labrador, Annissa Gultom, Awhina Tamarapa, Barbara Borghese, Barbara Plankensteiner, Catherine Smith, Diana Gabler, Ellen Pearlstein, Gabriel Nodea, Heidi Swierenga, Hélia Marçal, Jane Henderson, Johanna Ndahekelekwa Nghishiko, José Luiz Pedersoli Jr., Kelly McHugh, Laura van Broekhoven, Lynley Nargoodah, Monica Hanna, Renata F. Peters, Robyn Sloggett, Shadreck Chirikure, Sonja Schwoll, Stefan Michalski und Valerie Magar für ihre interessanten Beiträge.

Auch geht unser Dank an Skadi Sarnoch und Miriam Hellerich, die beide intensiv an der Realisierung der Konferenz mitgewirkt haben, an das Team unseres technischen Dienstleisters von Syrinx und an Caroline Schäfer, die die Fertigstellung der Publikation 2023 eng und intensiv begleitet hat.

Wir hoffen, mit der Publikation einen weiteren Beitrag zu einer Dynamik leisten zu können, die durch den Wandel *from conservation to conversation* in der täglichen Museumsarbeit bereits stattfindet.

FROM CONSERVATION TO CONVERSATION— RETHINKING COLLECTIONS CARE

Farideh Fekrsanati and Gabriel Schimmeroth

In the context of attempts to decolonize cultural institutions, such as museums, the care of collections and considerations about the appropriate preservation conditions have been subject of professional debates over the past few years. This is because the principles and values that underlie strategies for collections care vary greatly depending on the context and often do not correspond to the original cultural requirements when dealing with material heritage.

Therefore, questions about the activation, use, and mobility of collections, but also about high costs, sustainability, and a “green museum” are becoming increasingly urgent, particularly in the context of collections from colonial contexts.

FROM CONFERENCE PLANNING TO DIGITAL WORKSHOP TO PUBLICATION:

Originally planned as a conference at MARKK in Hamburg in April 2020, as part of the MARKK in Motion project of the Initiative for Ethnological Collections of the German Federal Cultural Foundation, the realization was repeatedly jeopardized due to the major uncertainties of the COVID-19 pandemic and was finally held in a digital format in September 2021. In May 2023, the printed and digitally accessible workshop publication will finally be available.

Contemporary developments and current research on the principles of collections care provided important impulses for the digital workshop.

The establishment of the museum in the (colonial) European cultural landscape had the consequence that largely eurocentric notions of conservation/preservation prevailed as standards for collection care. These notions have been increasingly challenged both within and outside the profession. Over the past 20 years, the increasing involvement of indigenous and local communities, as well as a broader and critical public, in issues of representation, presentation, and preservation has led to a shift in conservation practice away from exclusivity and toward an inclusive, multidisciplinary negotiation of ideas in the decision-making process.

Preservation practice that aims to protect cultural materials should also contribute to "cultural health." Collections care must include conversations about the interpretation and representation of culture that inform appropriate care in a particular context. Similarly, issues of sustainability, architecture, climatic conditions, storage, and display inform the criteria for managing risks to the material culture of museum collections.

In the context of world culture collections in Germany, this two-day conference, which functioned more as a workshop format despite its digital realization, served to reflect on the ongoing evolution of changing conservation and collections care practices. By bringing together colleagues from the national and international fields, we aimed to create a space for open communication and, to this end, explore the role of conservation in facilitating access to and use of collections. We also asked what conservation skills are required when considering positions and developments in the field of collection activation, decolonization, and restitution. What determines contemporary approaches to materiality and meaning? How are ethics and methodology changing, and what limits and conflicts are experienced-both emotionally and scientifically?

With these questions, MARKK aims to stimulate a lively discussion and critical reflection on what conservation/restoration seeks to achieve and who the crucial actors are.

The contributions of the speakers are digitally available on the dedicated workshop website through the MARKK website.

→ HTTPS://MARKK-HAMBURG.DE/FROM-CONSERVATION-TO-CONVERSATION

The publication takes up the workshop structure of the conference and bundles the contributions into three thematic areas:

● SYSTEMS OF KNOWLEDGE AND POWER:
KNOWLEDGE SHARING AND COLLECTION ACCESS.
Space for conversations, which critically examine decision-making processes and the power relations embedded within them, drawing on approaches and experiences of colleagues where museums/institutions are involved in facilitating access to and use of collections. Using these examples, we will discuss the opportunities and challenges that arise and talk about the importance of access to collections for communities and as a contribution to "cultural health."

● CONSERVATION SKILLS FOR CONVERSATION.
Considering current developments in conservation education and formats that are already being practiced and developed. We want to explore what skills and training elements need to be developed in German/European institutions when considering a change in conservation practice that shifts the decision-making process toward a comprehensive multidisciplinary knowledge exchange. What is already practiced, how effective are these methods, do they achieve the necessary results?

● HOW TO MAINTAIN—
THE (FURTHER) DEVELOPMENT OF STANDARDS.
What impact does a shift in ethics have on collections care methods? What are the limits or conflicts (emotional/scientific)? How do issues of cost and sustainability influence the application of preservation guidelines? We will look at current approaches to ideas of care, what has changed, where approaches are being developed, and what new developments might look like.

ILLUSTRATIVE INTERVENTION IN THE DEBATE
Concrete conservation practice transforms against the backdrop of changing museum work. Based on the opening panel and subsequent discussion, the artists and illustrators Jiaona Hu and Aiqi Sun created the artistic illustration "con_er_ation", which captures the basic questions and moods of the digital workshop and publication and conveys the commonalities between the words "conservation" and "conversation"—much like a fill-in-the-blank word game—in an illustrated conversational context. The opening panel brought into conversation Barbara Plankensteiner, Farideh Fekrsanati, Laura van Broekhoven, Monica Hanna, and Shadreck Chirikure, allowing the contributions to be framed within the important questions of a decolonization of the institutional reality.

IS CONSERVATION FLUID COMMUNICATION?
A SOCRATIC DIALOGUE
Together with colleagues from the conservation departments of the partner museums of the "Initiative for Ethnological Collections" of the German Federal Cultural Foundation, Linden Museum in Stuttgart and the Grassi Museum für Völkerkunde Leipzig, we met at the end

of November 2021 for a Socratic dialogue with Bill Wei (Cultural Heritage Agency Netherlands) in the "Zwischenraum – A Space Between" at MARKK. We were also interested in establishing sustainable networks and in promoting exchange.

We would like to thank all participants of the conference for engaging in a digital experimental format and especially the speakers: Ana Maria Theresa Labrador, Annissa Gultom, Awhina Tamarapa, Barbara Borghese, Barbara Plankensteiner, Catherine Smith, Diana Gabler, Ellen Pearlstein, Gabriel Nodea, Heidi Swierenga, Hélia Marçal, Jane Henderson, Johanna Ndahekelekwa Nghishiko, José Luiz Pedersoli Jr, Kelly McHugh, Laura van Broekhoven, Lynley Nargoodah, Monica Hanna, Renata F. Peters, Robyn Sloggett, Shadreck Chirikure, Sonja Schwoll, Stefan Michalski and Valerie Magar for their insightful contributions.

Our thanks also goes to Skadi Sarnoch and Miriam Hellerich for working intensively on the realization of the conference, to the team of our technical service provider from Syrinx and to Caroline Schäfer, who closely and intensively accompanied the completion of the publication in 2023.

We hope that the publication will contribute to the dynamics that are already taking place in daily museum work as a result of the shift from *Conservation to Conversation*.

The Illustration “con_er_ation” by Aiqi Sun and Jiaona Hu was inspired by the opening panel of the digital Workshop *From Conservation to Conversation. Rethinking Collections Care*

- Barbara Plankensteiner (Director of the MARKK)
- Farideh Fekrsanati (Head of Art Handling, Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, formerly MARKK)
- Laura van Broekhoven (Director Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford)
- Monica Hanna (Associate Professor and Acting Dean, College of Archaeology and Cultural Heritage, The Arab Academy for Science, Technology and Maritime Transport)
- Shadreck Chirikure (Oxford University—British Academy Global Professor)

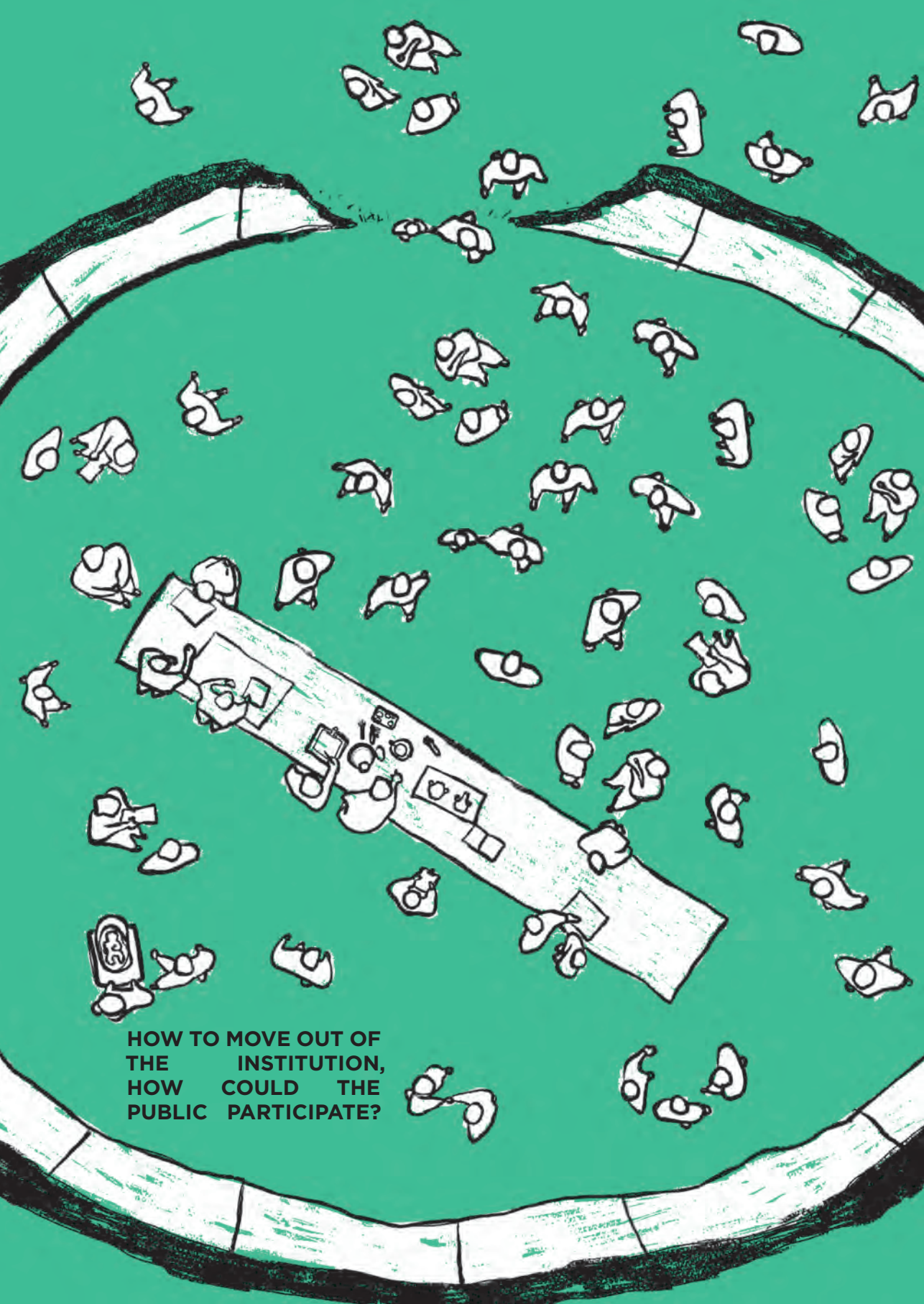
HOW TO MOVE FROM MATERIAL-BASED PRESERVATION TO CULTURAL CARE?

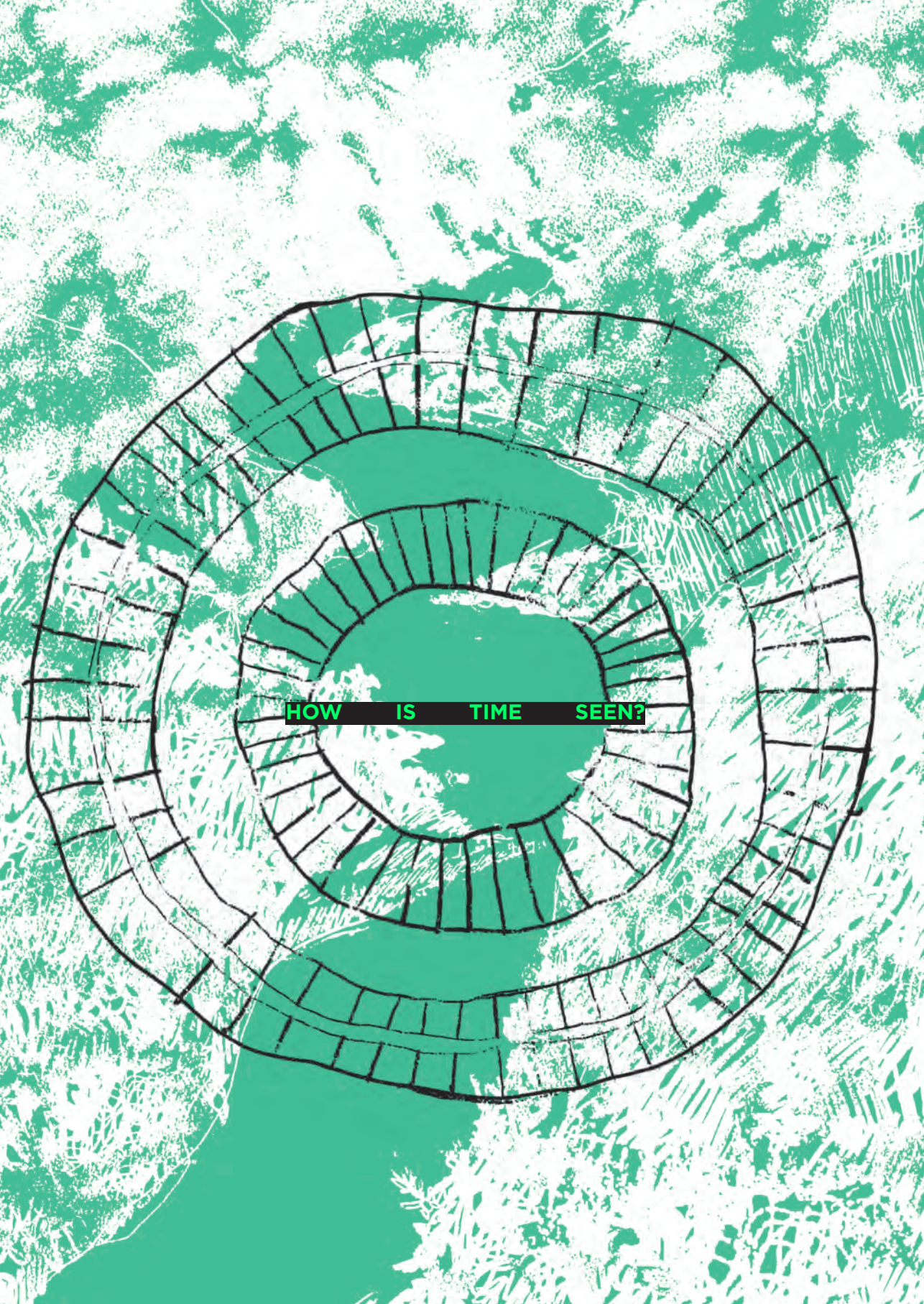

WHEN IS SOMETHING SAFE?

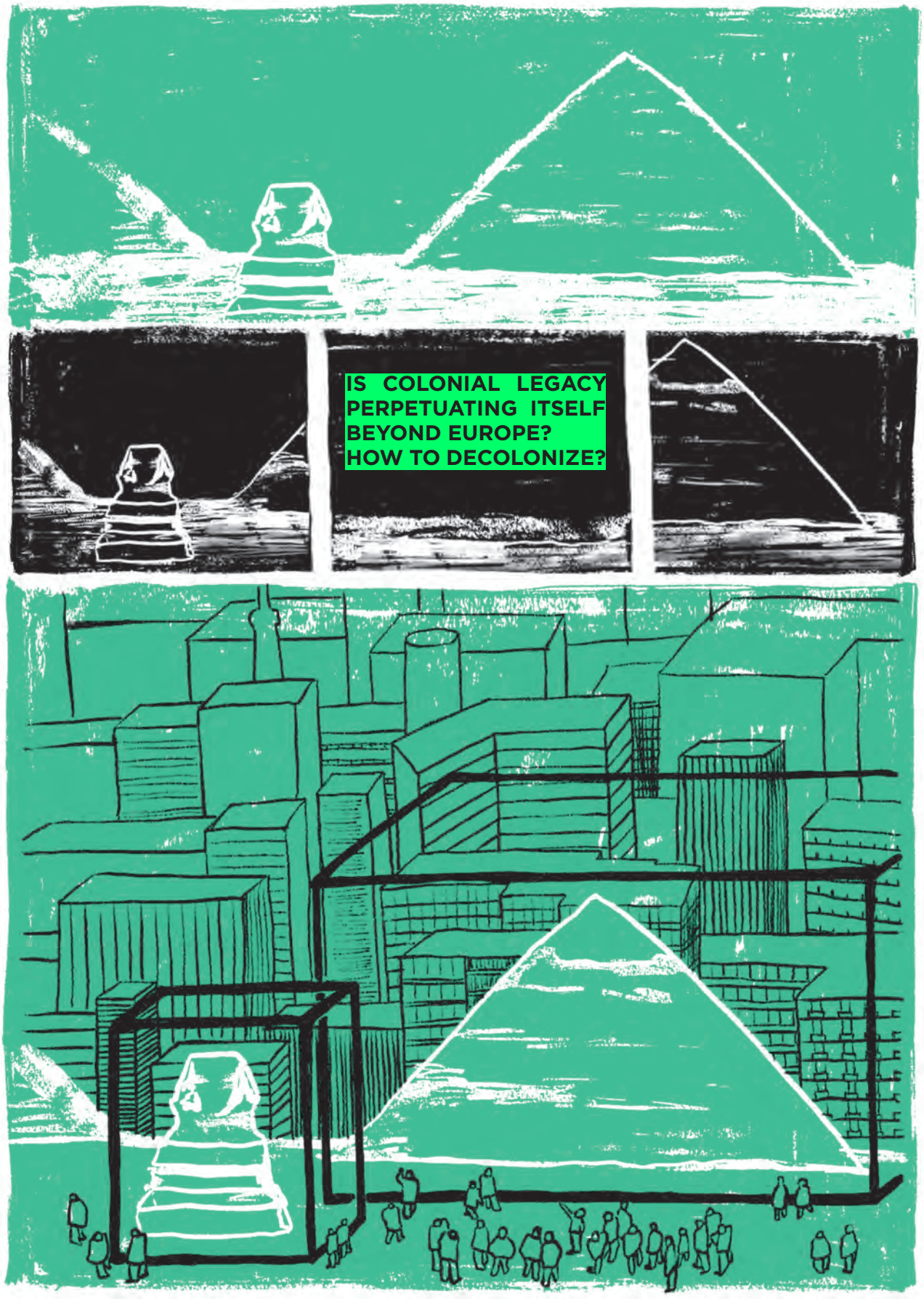

HOW DO VALUES AND
MEANINGS CHANGE?

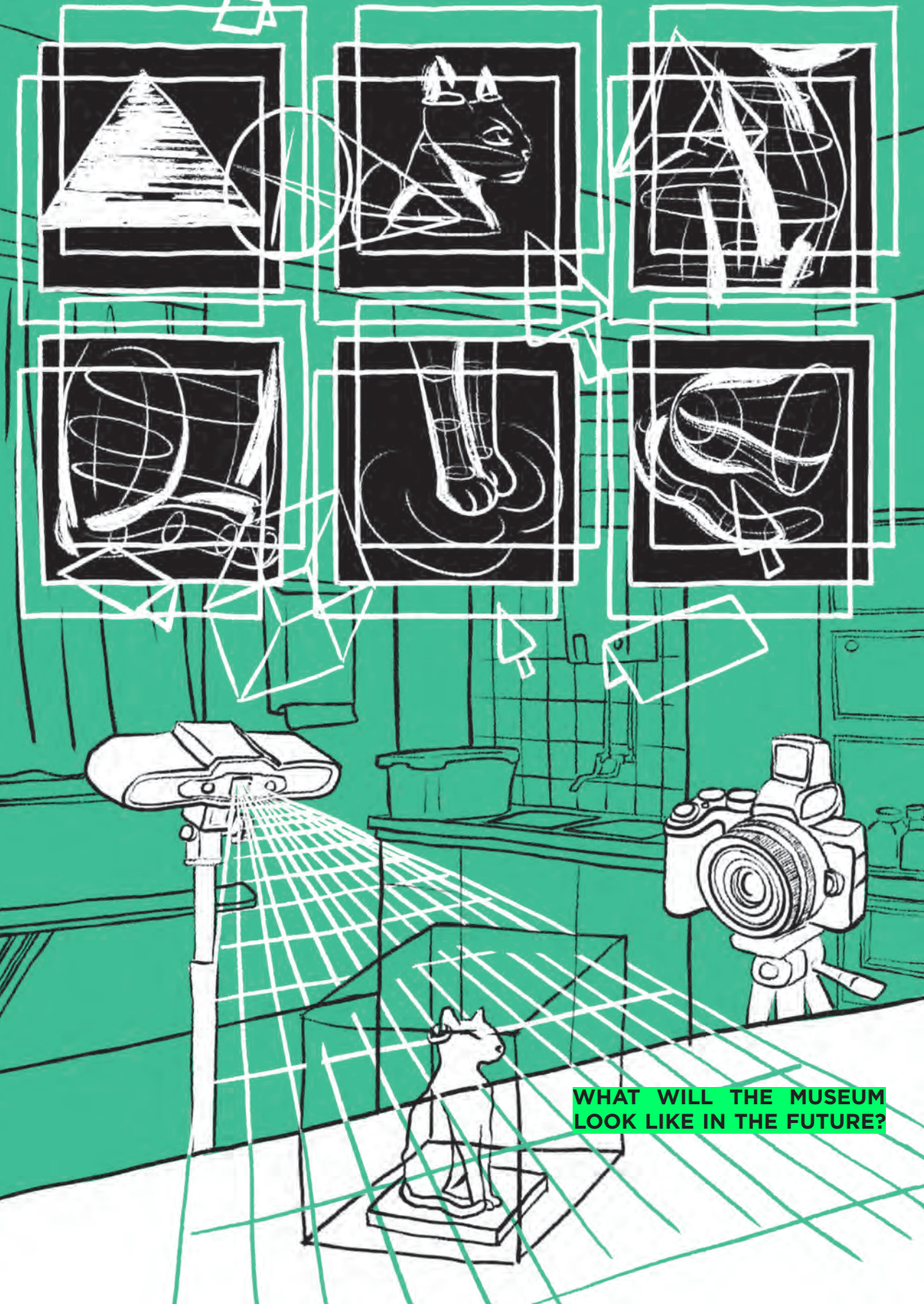

HOW CAN CONSERVATORS AND CREATORS COLLABORATE IN MEANINGFUL WAYS?

SHOULD MUSEUMS STILL WORK ETHNOGRAPHICALLY?


HOW TO MOVE OUT OF THE INSTITUTION, HOW COULD THE PUBLIC PARTICIPATE?


HOW IS TIME SEEN?


IS COLONIAL LEGACY
PERPETUATING ITSELF
BEYOND EUROPE?
HOW TO DECOLONIZE?


WHAT WILL THE MUSEUM
LOOK LIKE IN THE FUTURE?


HOW DO WE MAKE CHANGES AT A PERSONAL LEVEL?
HOW DOES ONE EDUCATE ONESELF?


HOW TO CREATE EQUITABLE ACCESS?

Knowledge Systems: Sharing Knowledge and Facilitating Access and Use of Collections

In den letzten Jahren haben rechtmäßige Eigentümer:innen und Nachkomm:innen zunehmend Zugang zu kulturellen Objekten und Gegenständen in Museumssammlungen erhalten, um diese zu aktivieren oder in der Gemeinschaft auszustellen. Das „Museum of Anthropology“ (MOA) ermöglicht diese Zugangsgesuche seit den frühen 1980er Jahren. Mit der Veränderung von Museums- und Konservierungspraktiken wurden kontinuierlich auch die Richtlinien und Maßnahmen, die diese Arbeit unterstützen, aktualisiert. Der Beitrag zeigt anschaulich, dass im Spannungsfeld zwischen Erhaltung und Nutzung, Restaurator:innen nicht alleinig Entscheidungen treffen können und dass die Weiterentwicklung der Konservierungspraxis eine kritische Betrachtung von „Best Practice“ Beispielen, sowie ein Verständnis dafür erfordert, wie sich die zur Beschreibung dieser Tätigkeiten verwendeten Begriffe auf alle Beteiligten auswirken.

Just like Day Parole: Temporary Visits Home of Family Belongings Held in Museum Collections

Heidi Swierenga → 144

In recent years, cultural objects and belongings held in museum collections have been increasingly accessed by rights holders and family descendants for activation or display in the community. The Museum of Anthropology (MOA) has been facilitating these access requests since the early 1980's and the guidelines and policies put in place to support this work are updated as museum and conservation practices evolve. The paper suggests that defining the balance point between preservation and use cannot be done by the conservator alone and that the evolution of practice requires a critical reading of "best practices", as well as an understanding of how the words used to describe these functions impact all involved.

INTRODUCTION

Some principles in conservation are easy to understand. We understand that the loan of an object is a privilege granted when specific criteria are met by the borrower. We understand that the decision to permit a loan is guided by the standards and "best practices" that have developed over many decades—institutional standards that help mitigate risk of damage. We understand clearly that damage is a possible outcome of use. We know these things because they are core to conservation training, and we know them because they are often true. They are, however, increasingly uncomfortable truths when it comes to the use and activation of family belongings held in museum collections as they can be used as reasons to deny Indigenous people the authority to control their material culture—a right called for in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) (UN, 2008). This paper questions some of the truths we tend to hold around loans, and explores both the role that conservation can play in resetting the understanding of "best practice" as well as how the language that we use may influence these understandings.

I was asked a very good question recently in relation to the use and activation of regalia that are in the collection of Museum of Anthropology (MOA): How do you know that you have successfully achieved a balance between preservation and access? My answer at the time spoke of how witnessing the use of museum objects by families and rights holders results in a clear understanding that the belongings, regalia, and ancestors held in collections are still critically important to the families who once owned them, making it easy to

understand why the activation of these pieces in ceremony needs to happen. And these activations may happen for many different reasons: the need to give life to a mask, robe, or other item that has been confined to a museum shelf for too long; the need for evidence to uphold an important hereditary privilege or claim to specific rights; or the wish to have participants witness the richness of a family's cultural heritage that they possessed before their belongings were lost through the oppressive forces of colonialization.

I also said that, in the end, I do not believe it was my question to answer alone. Practicing conservation in adherence with one of UNDRIP's key directives—that Indigenous peoples have the right to control their material culture—means that this is a question that must be answered by the First Nations families who have been separated from their treasures. It is about their right to make decisions relating to care, use and representation—an idea that requires acknowledgment and shift of the traditional balance of power between institution and community. While I still hold to my original answer, I do not believe it was sufficient. It did not address the work that needs to be done within the conservation profession to motivate those who sit in higher positions of power in allowing for change—specifically a change to the criteria that have been set around access and use. Without this change within the institution, there can be no balance.

Museum boards, directors, and managers understand from conservators that in order to mitigate damage to collections, established professional standards must be met. These understandings, or truths, are based on often rigid interpretations of national or international ethical guidelines and standards of "best practices" for conservation. A critical content review of such guidelines, however, should lead us to ask who these best practices are meant to benefit. The institution? The object? The family? What is best for one may not be best for the other. Even the basic idea that there is one ideal way for all disciplines of conservation to practice is confounding. "Individualized practice" may be a more useful term to use in the care of Indigenous belongings. In his 2017 article "A Role for Bespoke Codes of Ethics," Johnathan Ashley-Smith proposes that the term "bespoke practice" be used to identify the codes of practice particular to an institution's individual needs (Ashley-Smith, 2017). His suggestion provides an encouraging vision that can easily be broadened to encompass what some institutions already do: employ care and access practices specific not to the discipline but to the individual Indigenous community. The conservator's role in all of this should not be to advocate for the object but rather to advocate for change through a fully informed understanding of needs.

One example of "bespoke" or individualized practice is demonstrated by MOA's collection access program at the Museum of Anthropology (MOA). There, when pieces from the collection travel to communities for display, study, or use in ceremony, the environmental requirements normally specified for institutional loans are dropped. This adjustment to practice does not mean that the risks are being ignored; instead, the barrier to access has been removed.

Our experience with community access has shown that the environmental requirements are not required. Many of the activations, especially ceremonial use of the belongings, take place in the fall and winter, a period that brings with it predominantly wet and humid conditions on the Pacific Northwest Coast. Moreover, the events, including potlatch ceremonies, usually happen in big houses that have no temperature or humidity control, and that usually feature a large wood-burning fire in the centre of the performance space. These events may result in some change to the physical object, but to date we have not observed any negative impacts.

As it is the risk of loss or damage to objects that is commonly used as an argument for not allowing cultural treasures to travel or be used, it is helpful to look at the idea of damage itself. What is it that constitutes damage, and who gets to make the assessment? Even the use of the word "damage" relative to "change" is something that should be considered carefully. "Damage" is a heavily loaded word that implies blame and consequence. While there will always be instances where damage can be clearly defined—such as when a ceramic vessel is knocked to the floor and shatters into pieces—in many other instances the distinction between damage and change can be far more subjective. The following list exemplifies the range of changes that have occurred during visits home of belongings held in MOA's collection:

- A robe that is danced around a fire on an earthen floor comes back to the museum with new traces of red ochre on the collar and a small amount of earth on the bottom fringe, and it is imbued with the scent of smoke;
- A headdress is resized by shaving a thin layer of wood from the interior so that it may better fit the descendent who holds the hereditary rights to the prerogatives the headdress embodies;
- A weaving worn to her university graduation by the granddaughter of the maker returns with a smudge of red lipstick on the outside edge;
- A mask is modified by adding new rigging and replicated components so that it can be safely danced in order to display specific inherited rights.

The decision to proceed with each of the above examples of use was made by museum staff together with the rights holder or maker after identifying the risks and weighing them against the value gained by the activation. Everyone involved prioritizes the physical safety of the treasure without fail. This idea of safety, however, does not conform to the typical museum understanding, where "safe" means having the object be exactly the same as when it left the institution. The potential changes or alterations made to ready a piece of regalia are instead seen as valued evidence of the continued life of the belonging: enriching for the object, the family, and the institution.

Returning to the matter of language, it is important to make note of how the words we choose to use can impact all of the community

members involved. Consideration of and changing habitual language can help shift understandings and mindsets. At MOA, we have struggled with how to frame community loans in a way that acknowledges the power imbalance that exists while also challenging institutions to reconsider how they think about the community use of collections. To be called a "borrower" of your own family's treasures (regardless of how they left the community) is unsettling at best. The idea that you must ask permission of the museum to be loaned a piece of your culture—an object that may have been lost to your community under duress due to colonial systems of assimilation and cultural genocide—can trigger and deepen the trauma associated with that loss. The use of terms like "borrowing" confirms the power imbalance from the outset.

The term "returns" has been suggested but this can imply a no-strings-attached giving back where full control accompanies the object, as occurs with repatriation. This is not the case with these temporary visits. The host of a Dawson family potlatch in 2021, G̲ixkastallasame-gi (Cecil Dawson), who is an historian, artist and hereditary Kwakwaka'wakw chief, said that having his family's pieces brought back home for his family's potlatch[1] provided clarity for him as to what the relationship between community and museum could be. Before experiencing this event, he said that coming to the museum was "like visiting family in a penitentiary" (Dawson, 2021). Following this analogy, it could be said that the family's treasures are brought home on a kind of "day parole." The jailers (the museum staff) are still there, holding the keys, but at least the treasures are temporarily back home and reconnecting with family. It is a start.

MOA's policy and procedural documents attempt to reflect where the institution currently sits in regards to the administration of access requests for Indigenous communities in British Columbia. Inclusion of visits home by cultural belongings have been removed from the institution's loans policy with the acknowledgment that they are not loans at all—that is, that these arrangements do not follow any of the requirements associated with institutional loans, such the ability to provide specific environmental conditions, the need to purchase insurance, or the signing of legal agreements between lender and borrower. Instead, MOA's *Guidelines for Collections Access by Indigenous Communities* (MOA, 2022) lays out clear information for families who wish to have belongings return home for inclusion in ceremonies or events. For example:

Can ancestral belongings be used or activated? Yes. MOA conservators will work with the family or designate of the family to determine if pieces are strong enough to be worn or danced. Sometimes this may involve modifying or adding to a piece in order to

1 Additional information on this event can be found in Heidi Swierenga (2021). "A subtle shift: The care and use of Indigenous belongings after the Calls to Action," in *Transcending Boundaries: Integrated Approaches to Conservation. ICOM-CC 19th Triennial Conference Preprints, Beijing, 17–21 May 2021* (ed. J. Bridgland. Paris: International Council of Museums), 2021.

1
Kwanxwamł (Kwak'wala: Thunderbird mask or headdress) made by Herbert Johnson (1896–1953). Original belonging of Sisaxolas—Chief Alex Morgan (1869–1945). A4500.

2
Thunderbird headdress after being prepared for use with new rigging and replicated components.

3
Hamat'sa Raven mask, c. 1910 made by Dick Hawkins, Kingcome Inlet; Ukwanalis. A6317.

4
Kwakwaka'wakw and Tlingit artist Alan Hunt preparing the Dick Hawkins mask for dancing in the 'Namgis Bighouse, 'Yalis (Alert Bay), Kwakwaka'wakw territory, BC, Aug 3, 2019.

make it stronger. If it is decided that an item is too fragile, then it may still travel in order to be presented at an event (MOA, 2022).

Even the words that we use to describe what we hold in our institutions have a complex and evolving relationship to colonial history and the associated study of world cultures. Institutions have been built upon founding collections of "curios" from distant lands amassed for study and public entertainment. "Relics" of presumed, soon-to-be-disappeared cultures were harvested under the guise of preservation, each object coveted as a "shiny artifact of the past" (Cohen, 1988). That which we can hold in our hands or place on the table before us is absolutely an "object", but it is also much more than that. How, that thing/artwork/piece is named and described is, for some community members from which these objects came, an indicator of power and ownership. The term "belongings" is now increasingly used by some as a way to acknowledge that museum objects often continue to be linked to culture, identify and place. Curators Karen Duffek and Jordan Wilson point out that the term has "numerous potential connotations and offers a generative ambiguity by raising the question, To whom do these objects belong?" They further explain that "the term acts as an implicit challenge to institutional possession of historical objects by suggesting the difference between ownership and possession: the former is determined not by a Western legal framework but by the associated knowledge, rights, and prerogatives of Indigenous legal orders. It reinforces the importance of intellectual property and the stewardship of both material objects and their intangible qualities" (Duffek, McLennan and Wilson, 2021: 47).

John Moses, a member of the Delaware and Upper Mohawk bands from Six Nations of the Grand River Territory in Ontario and Director of Repatriation and Indigenous Initiatives at the Canadian Museum of History, identifies another reason why language is critical in the care of Indigenous cultural materials. In his keynote address to the 12th North American Textile Conservation Conference in 2019, Moses spoke of the central role that langue retention and revitalization has in the response by Indigenous peoples "to the legacy of the residential schools experience and other colonial impositions" and that those involved with the conservation of Indigenous cultural materials should "do your utmost to retrieve and record the appropriate Indigenous-language names and terminology associated with the objects you are treating, and include in your treatment documentation even just a single paragraph describing the cultural setting within which the object was used (Moses, 2019). Moses argues that this act of including Indigenous language in reporting can provide a valuable source of information for future generations of researchers. Similar to MOA's critical review of language used in institutional policy, it also serves as evidence of one's commitment to change from well-established colonial conservation practice. Such initiatives, in turn, provide other conservation professionals who are attempting to initiate change within their own institutions, and with their own managers, directors and boards, with examples of what can now

be considered as appropriate or "best" practices when caring for Indigenous belongings.

Returning now to the question of achieving balance, the vital issue is that "balance" implies two equally weighted sides. We are not there yet. What we have been gifted through these visits home, however, is the understanding that access and preservation are tightly entwined. Much more than the physical object can be preserved if the balance of power is tipped so that the museum is not independently deciding what is best. In conclusion, I will leave you with words from Cecil Dawson, who has advised us to think of the belongings that we hold in our institutions not as objects, but as lost family members. Like the thousands of children who did not survive Canada's Indian residential school system, who were known to be lost by their families, and whose graves are only now being found, these are the ones that never came back. Chief Dawson's advice to museums when speaking with families is to say, "These are yours. This part of your family can visit home again" (Dawson, 2021).

ENDNOTES

Additional information on this event can be found in Heidi Swierenga. 2021. A subtle shift: The care and use of Indigenous belongings after the Calls to Action, in J. Bridgland (ed.), *Transcending Boundaries: Integrated Approaches to Conservation. ICOM-CC 19th Triennial Conference Preprints, Beijing, 17–21 May 2021*. Paris: International Council of Museums.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

With thanks to G̲ixkastallasame-gi, Cecil Dawson, for allowing his words to be shared.

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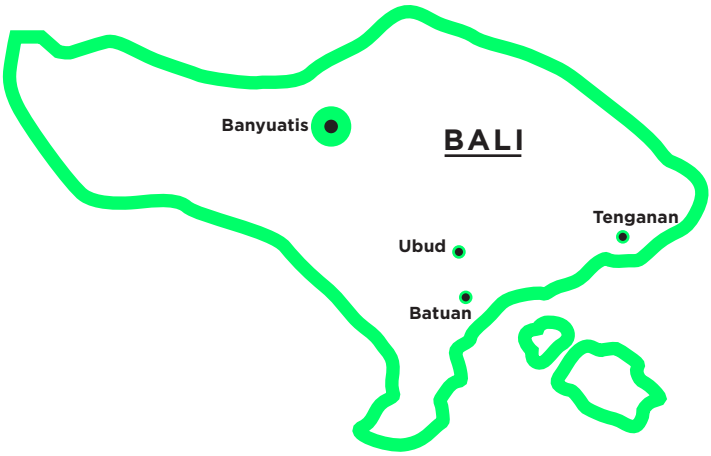
Das Projekt „Our Ancestors Knew Best“ (Unsere Vorfahren wussten es am besten) ist ein wichtiger Meilenstein in der Bereitstellung von Open-Source-Wissen, das indigenes/lokales Wissen sowie Wissenschaft aus dem Labor verbindet. Das Projekt ist das Ergebnis von Gesprächen zwischen Museen, Kultureinrichtungen sowie den zentralen Protagonist:innen dieser Initiative: den Bewahrer:innen von indigenem Wissen. Forschende des örtlichen Museums, des Kulturbüros und der Gemeinde trugen Interviews, Aufzeichnungen und Materialproben in einem Länderbericht zusammen. Diese Berichte wurden gesammelt und durch Wissenschaftler:innen analysiert, um eine praxisnahe und wissenschaftliche Interpretation der verwendeten Methoden und Materialien zu ermöglichen. Die Forscher:innen führten dabei Laboruntersuchungen und weitere Experimente durch, um die Wirksamkeit der Konservierungsmethoden zu messen. 2019 veröffentlichten SEAMEO-SPAFA und das Königin-Sirikit-Textilmuseum Thailand die Forschungsergebnisse in einem 210-seitigen, abwechslungsreichen Buch mit wissenschaftlichen Erkenntnissen, bereichert durch Tipps und Anleitungen. Das digitale Format des Buches und der Poster sind auf der Website der SEAMEO-SPAFA zum kostenlosen Download verfügbar.

Conversations with Our Ancestors

Annissa Maulina Gultom → 142

"Our Ancestors Knew Best" is a breakthrough in providing open-source wisdom that combines indigenous knowledge and lab-based science. It results from conversations between museums, cultural institutions, and the core of this initiative: the caretaker of indigenous knowledge. Researchers from the local museum, cultural office and community gathered interviews, documentation, and material samplings into a country report. These reports were compiled and then analyzed by scientists to provide hands-on scientific interpretation of the methods and material used. Scientists established lab-based analyses and further experiments to measure efficacy. In 2019, SEAMEO-SPAFA and the Queen Sirikit Textile Museum Thailand published the research's result in 210 colourful pages of scientific discoveries complemented with "how-to" tips and recipes. The digital format of the book and posters are currently available for free download through the website of SEAMEO-SPAFA.

Balinese Cloth Making Regions



INTRODUCTION

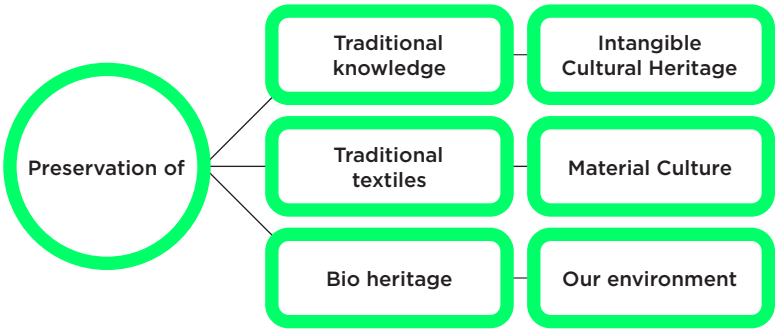
"Our Ancestors Knew Best" is a breakthrough in providing open-source wisdom that combines indigenous knowledge and lab-based science. It is a result of conversations since 2016 between museums, cultural institutions, and the core of this initiative: the caretaker of indigenous knowledge in textile care in southeast Asian countries.

The project was initiated in Thailand and reached out to Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, The Phillippines, Singapore, Timor-Leste and Vietnam. In a later stage, two conservation scientists from the United States of America and Mexico got involved in the lab-based analysis, and a United Kingdom-based senior conservator contributed a second foreword in the publication following a Laotian senior author and textile researcher.

The project started from a conversation in one of the textile conservation capacity-building programs that SEAMEO-SPAFA organized in November 2012. SEAMEO stands for Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization, while SPAFA stands for Southeast Asian Regional Centre for Archaeology and Fine Arts. From this point on, I will refer to them as SPAFA. The program titled "Contrasting Methods in Textile Conservation in Southeast Asia" was organized along with Queen Sirikit Textile Museum (QSMT), Thailand. There were 11 participating southeast Asian countries in the program. They discussed the challenges of obtaining museum-grade conservation materials, as the chemical materials used by the internationally recognized conservation efforts are not always easy to come by in Southeast Asian countries, nor affordable. One of the participants from Mandalay's National University of Arts and Culture of Myanmar mentioned traditional plants that are useful in creating natural detergents. This comment started a lively discussion on the need to explore and capture traditions of tips and tricks for maintaining their textile collection, especially for cleaning and storing.

RESEARCH AND METHODS

The project consisted of a few steps of pilot research, region-wide research, analysis, and discussions. SPAFA and QSMT launched a pilot research for this idea in north Thailand in 2014. Its finding was published in the 2014 ICOM-CC preprints: "Before they are gone: Capturing and sharing the traditional methods of textile preservation in Thailand." This pilot research to establish a simoultaneous field research in 2016 that covers contributing countries in Southeast Asia. This regional-wide project included researchers from local museums, cultural offices, and the traditional textile community. Researchers compiled the data through interviews, direct observations and documentation



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1
Publication by SPAFA.
Image: SPAFA.

2
Natural Indigo Dye processing in Pejeng, Bali 2016. Image: Gultom.

3
Soapnut is a fruit that comes from plants that grows in southeast Asia. (Left) Soapnut in its fresh form, 2016. Image: Benny Gratha. (Right) Soapnut essence being processed in the project's workshop in QSMT, 2016. Image: QSMT.

4
Toddy palm leaves basket, 2016. Image: Claudio Marques Cabral & Fernando Sousa Lay.

5
Balinese Cloth Making Methods. Image: Gultom.

5
Balinese Cloth Making Methods. Image: Gultom.

gathered from cleaning agent materials. In some cases, the researchers also brought in the modern version that was recently made based on the older tradition, trying to mimic the old ways.

The research findings gathered into country reports that where presented in a regional forum in QSMT Bangkok in August 2016. Ms. Julia M. Brennan, an American conservator whose the Chief Conservation Consultant at QSMT'S Conservation Department, led the discussion in connecting findings from each country. The forum also invited Dr. Lilian Garcia Alonso-Alba, a Conservation scientist at Mexico's National School of Conservation, Restoration and Museography (ENCRyM). Both scientists led a workshop within the program to test the research finding's efficacy together with the researchers. Natural ingredients were measured against modern-industrial-made solutions. Dr. Lilian Garcia continued the analysis in her laboratory, which included in this project's publication. The workshop proved to be a bridge that meets the scientific aspect of conservation and the social-culture point of view brought by the field researchers. One focus in the efficacy measurements of the cleaning agents is comparing the "traditional" version and the "modern" incarnation of most saponin. This last point opened a conversation about how sometimes the idea of the tradition can be adapted in a new form, although not be as strong.

The motor of the whole project was SPAFA's role as the bridge between different countries and cultures in the Southeast Asian region. The vision was a cross-border effort in discovering similarities and the diversed intelligence of our ancestors' heritage. SPAFA spearheaded the project by:

TEAMBUILDING

Museums and cultural institutions are the core of this initiative, as they are the caretaker of indigenous knowledge in textile care in southeast Asian countries. The teambuilding was established through previously established contact by the SPAFA office from previous conservation or textile-themed projects. The total number of participating country representatives were ten countries: Thailand; Laos; Malaysia; Brunei Darussalam; Myanmar; Vietnam; East Timor; Singapore; the Philippines, and two researchers from Indonesia who cover the islands Java and Bali separately.

RESEARCH TOOLS

SPAFA prepared data-collecting guidance for the researchers to ensure the fieldwork covers the needed aspects. It was helpful to organize a simultaneous research done in different countries. The scope of the research covers culture's tangible and intangible aspects through questionnaires and literature research. The data topics cover:

- Wet or Dry Cleaning
- Stain Removal
- Insect Mitigation
- Storage Methods

COUNTRY REPORTS

SPAFA gathered the reports and built a database of agents found from which plants in which countries and their targeted fabrics. Different agents work differently with silk in comparison with cotton. The research gathered information from a total of 75 plants. → **FIGURE 1**

WORKSHOP

The cleaning agent materials brought by researchers were tested in a workshop before later being further analysed by scientists to provide hands-on scientific interpretation of the methods and material used. The workshop was established in Queen Sirikit Textile Museum (QSMT)'s extensive textile conservation laboratory to measure the efficacy of material agents.

PUBLICATION AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING

SPAFA and the Queen Sirikit Textile Museum published the book and the illustrated poster in 2019. Hard copies were distributed in hard copies for free in limited numbers and its pdf format is downloadable from SPAFA 's website.

While waiting for the publication process, team members continued to share the knowledge gained in this project through their work, teaching sessions and a webinar that was part of UCLA 's Asia Pacific Center series (UCLA Asia Pacific Center, 2020). → **FIGURE 2**

MY RESEARCH: BALI, INDONESIA

The research for this in Indonesia was on two islands with distinct continuous living traditional textile heritage: Java island with its Batik textile heritage and Bali with its own Ikat textile. Population of both islands has similar yet different ways in continuously adopting the traditional textiles into their daily clothing option.

Bali was my assignment as I have worked with a textile museum in Bali. The field research was in the form of interviews and documenting processes with experts in the centuries-old heritage; makers in contemporary Bali and the wearers. The research covered Balinese cloth-making regions that include Tenganan; Sidemen; Klungkung; Batuan; Ubud; Pejeng and Banyuatis.

Among those regions, Tenganan and Pejeng are the places that stand out for two different things. Tenganan is known as the place to get the "authentic" Balinese Ikat, with dominant red colour, and received unique treatment in its making process and maintenance. The threads dipped into castor oil before the dyeing process, this determines their maintainence. According to one of the experts, Ikat from Tenganan are only aired and not washed. There is also a belief that the more often the Ikat is worn and absorbing the oily sweat of its wearer, the makes the red colour looks shiny. This discovery of cleaning by "not cleaning" was something that shocked us all.

Pejeng is the place of revival of the Indigo Blue. The village chief of Pejeng started a revolutionary step in textile preservation by building an ecosystem around it. He included farmers to plant indigo plants in their barrend land or in between the main crops. The Indigo

harvest then made into indigo dies in the textile-making workshops that he built. The workshops also employed local mothers to make Batik Tulis (Dye resists Wax thats "written" on the cloth); Batik Lukis (Dye Painted on the textile) and local male workers to do the Batik Cap (Dye resists Wax thats "stamped" on the cloth). His products only being sold in his workshop in Pejeng and in a neighboring-more famous village nearby, Ubud. This act of revival is one of the unexpected discovery in this project. → FIGURE 3

MAIN POINTS

The projects eventually showed the immense wealth of textile preservation from the previous generation that is alive. About 7 out of 10 countries reported local practices still in use; all reported memories of extinct practices, and only a little percentage of them were in published literature. Soapnut was and is still—to a limited extent—the talk of the town. More than half (54.5%) of the research reports cite the use of soapnut, either in the past or in the current time. Yet only 16.7% use the traditional soapnut and only 83.3% have memories of its usage. Specific mention on cleaning is the mix of a few different materials into a recipe, such as the concoction of rinsed rice water and coconut water to clean silks. → FIGURE 4

Other topics gathered are pest mitigation methods and storage. Most pest mitigation methods uses some plants, herbs or spices that were dried or smoked. While mothball or naphthalene use also is reported, some are making arrangements in order for the storage conditions to deter pests. A few essential plants on this subject are betel leaf which works as pest repellent other than a stain remover; another is Pandan leaf, another effective pest repellent.

Research on storage methods discover a mix of old and new things, such as the use of plastic a bag or box as part of organic material made storages such as: basketry made of woven leaves/fiber; solid wood storage or chest, cabinet and earthenware vases or pots. In addition, a light controlled access and good ventilation should be ensured. → FIGURE 5

The project was visionary in demonstrating how the (usually) tangible works of conservation are inseparable from the intangibility of culture and efforts of preservation. As the diagram above shows, the project documented traditional knowledge (intangible cultural heritage), while also collecting working methods in preserving traditional textiles (Material Culture) and collecting the Bio Heritage that increased the understanding of our environment.

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Zusammenarbeit mit den Urheber:innen von Sammlungen und ihren Nachfahren wurde in den letzten 30 Jahren umfangreich praktiziert, ist jedoch häufig durch bestehende koloniale Strukturen im Kultursektor beeinflusst. Die Wirksamkeit von Kollaborationen hängt auch von unserer Fähigkeit ab, zuzuhören, zu lernen und manchmal sogar Dinge zu verlernen. Die kürzlich erfolgten vorsätzlichen Beschädigungen der Statuen von Pedro Alvares Cabral in Brasilien sind beispielhaft für mögliche Konsequenzen schlechten Zuhörens. Anhand einer Reihe von Tupinambá-Mänteln, Aspekten der dialogischen Methode von Paulo Freire und anschließenden Gesprächen mit einem wichtigen Anführer der Tupinambá, Rosivaldo Ferreira da Silva (Cacique Babau), werden sowohl die Erkenntnisse als auch die komplexen Zusammenhänge erörtert, die sich ergeben, wenn wir auf Menschen außerhalb unserer unmittelbaren Fachgebiete zugehen und ihnen zuhören. Die Diskussion befasst sich mit Tupinambá-Federmänteln, die vor drei Jahrhunderten nach Europa gebracht wurden und schließlich in europäischen Museen landeten. In Brasilien gibt es heute keine solchen Umhänge mehr; die daraus resultierenden Eigentumsverhältnisse werden von den lebenden Tupinambá in Frage gestellt. Sowohl die Umhänge als auch die Statuen veranschaulichen einige der Effekte der konsequenten Berücksichtigung von Ansichten und Interessen der Eliten, die die Geschichte aus ihrer alleinigen Sicht schreiben und keine andere Art von Erzählung zulassen. Die Diskussion mit Cacique Babau hingegen zeigt die Komplexität und die möglichen Vorteile der Integration weiterer Stimmen in unsere Entscheidungsfindung. Der Diskurs bietet zum einen umfassende Erkenntnisse, fordert aber zum anderen, durch unbequeme, offene Fragen, Museen zum Handeln und Nachdenken auf.

Who is Afraid of Listening to the Tupinambá?

Renata F. Peters → 144

Collaborations with originators of collections and their descendants have been conducted extensively in the last 30 years but are often influenced by the colonial baggage of the heritage sector. Their effectiveness is also affected by our ability to listen, learn and sometimes even unlearn things. Recent actions of deliberate damage aimed at statues of Pedro Alvares Cabral in Brazil are introduced as examples of some of the possible consequences of poor listening. A group of Tupinambá cloaks, aspects of Paulo Freire's dialogical method, and subsequent conversations with an important leader of the Tupinambá nation, Rosivaldo Ferreira da Silva (Cacique Babau), are used to discuss both the enlightenment and complexities that can be brought about by reaching out and listening to people outside our immediate disciplines. The discussion evolves around Tupinambá feather cloaks that were taken to Europe three centuries ago and eventually turned up in European museums. None of such cloaks exist in Brazil today and their ownership has been challenged by the living Tupinambá. Both the cloaks and the statues illustrate some of the impacts of putting consistent emphasis on the views and interests of elites that write history from their sole point of view and do not allow any other kind of narrative to be included. The discussion with Cacique Babau, on the other hand, demonstrates the complexity and possible benefits of including more voices in our decision-making. It brings generous enlightenment but also compels action and reflection from museum professionals by leaving some difficult questions for us to answer.

INTRODUCTION

Anyone that has tried to use inclusive or bottom-up approaches to decision-making in the museum or broader heritage sector knows that these are complex initiatives, and often influenced by the colonial baggage of the field and other structures of power. We also know that the effectiveness of these engagements varies according to context, objectives, methods used, people involved, and resources available. But also, according to our ability to listen, learn and sometimes even unlearn things.

In this paper, I discuss a group of Tupinambá cloaks and aspects of Paulo Freire's dialogical method (1996 [1970]) to demonstrate the kind of enlightenment that can be brought about by reaching out and listening to people outside our immediate disciplines. Conservators

working with indigenous collections have been employing similar methods for many years now (Clavir, 2002; Johnson, Heald, McHugh, Brown and Kaminitz, 2005; Peters, 2008). But I believe we need to build on this work, as there is a clear rise in intolerance towards diversity in societies around us—even in those with established democratic traditions. As heritage professionals, we have both the tools and the responsibility to respond and help fight prejudices that are invariably based on ignorance, misinformation, fake news and manipulation of facts. Crucially, we also have the duty to avoid the oversimplification of processes of participation and engagement. But we need to refine our listening abilities if we are to have a chance at understanding different ways of perceiving and interpreting the world, different systems of knowledge and ways of living.

RAMIFICATIONS OF 'NOT LISTENING'

First, however, let's consider a common impact of poor listening or unwillingness to listen: the deliberate damage of public monuments. The so-called 'statues wars' have become an almost universal challenge with new events happening often and all over the planet. Here, I want to bring focus to recent actions aimed at two different statues of Pedro Alvares Cabral in Brazil, a Portuguese navigator credited with having 'discovered' the land of Brazil in the year 1500—even though this land had been inhabited for thousands of years before Europeans' arrival.

The first event occurred in Rio de Janeiro in August 2021, when a statue to honour Cabral was set alight. According to reports in social media, this was a protest against a bill that was being discussed in the Brazilian Congress and that would reduce Indigenous nations' rights to their ancestral lands (Folha de São Paulo, 2021).

In April 2022, members of the Pataxó nation were reported to have spilled red paint on another Cabral statue during a ceremony organized by governmental officials to celebrate 522 years of the arrival of Portuguese colonizers in Porto Seguro, state of Bahia (Radar, 2022). Besides being the exact geographic point of Cabral's arrival, this is also the ancestral homeland to various Indigenous nations such as the Pataxó and further south, the Tupinambá.

The lack of 'listening' here comes in the form of honouring a European navigator for the discovery of a land that was already inhabited. While this paper does not support any kind of vandalism, it is undeniable that not only can such oversight be perceived as Eurocentric and colonialist, but also offensive to the descendants of those whose lands were invaded in 1500. It is possible to further understand the resentment by examining the violent colonization that followed the invasion, which included destruction, pillage, slavery, evangelization, and the eventual extermination or near-extermination of many Indigenous nations all over Brazil. Unfortunately, the same phenomenon is found all over the Americas and the damaging consequences are still felt today.

THE TUPINAMBÁ

The Tupinambá were well known in Europe from the middle of the sixteenth century on due to the richly illustrated chronicles written by Europeans who visited Brazil during the first centuries of occupation and are believed to have inspired Michel de Montaigne's celebrated elaborations on the bon sauvage ([1580] 1952). As mentioned above, their traditional lands are located relatively close to the Cabral statue vandalized in Bahia in 2022, as they are a branch of the Tupí, the largest Indigenous nation on the Brazilian coast at the time of Europeans' arrival in 1500 (Fausto, [1992] 2002: 382; Staden, [1557] 2008: 98–100, 160–71).

The Tupinambá went on long seasonal expeditions to collect the raw materials necessary for the production of various items, including exuberant feather headdresses and cloaks. → FIGURES 1 + 2 The most coveted feathers had special aesthetic and divine qualities, and symbolized connections to ethereal and non-material dimensions of the world. Tupinambá cloaks denoted prestige and various natures of power. They were only worn by people of the highest ranks as embellishment, symbols of political and sacred power and incitements to bravery in various ceremonies, including human sacrifices and funerary rites (d'Abbeville, 1614: 274; Léry, [1578] 1990: 123; Staden, 2008: 79).

Tupinambá cloaks clearly appealed to European eyes, as many were taken to Europe between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Eventually, some of them turned up in European museums, where they have remained for over three centuries, cared for and conserved.[1] None of such cloaks exist in Brazil today and requests for exhibition loans have been met with resistance by the holding institutions. Refusal to loan has often been justified based on conservation concerns although some of the cloaks have been loaned to other countries (Grupioni, 2005). Up to now, 'Brasil +500', an exhibition marking the 500th anniversary of European presence in Brazil in 2000, was the only time one of such cloaks was allowed to visit its original land. The cloak was loaned by the Nationalmuseet of Denmark (National Museum of Denmark) and is believed to have been taken to Europe by the governor of the Dutch territories in Brazil from 1636 to 1644 and then presented by him to the then king of Denmark (Folha Online, 2000).

The other Tupinambá cloaks known to be currently housed in European museums are also believed to have been taken to Europe during this period, some by explorers, others by missionaries and/or military men who were involved in the various European initiatives to conquer the Atlantic coast of South America at the time (Métraux, 1928: 128–56; Calberg, 1939: 116–23; Massing, 1991: 574; Grupioni, 2005: 251).

1 Institutions known to hold Tupinambá cloaks: Musée du Quai Branly, France; Museo di Storia Naturale, Universitá degli Studi di Firenzi, Italy; Museum Septalianum, Biblioteca Ambrosiana di Milano, Italy; Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire, Belgium; Museum für Völkerkunde, Switzerland; Nationalmuseet of Denmark, Denmark.

Soon after 'Brasil +500' opened in 2000, representatives of the Tupinambá of Olivença in Bahia were reported to have requested the repatriation of the cloak on display, as they believed they were its rightful owners. They also claimed that the removal of the Tupinambá's sacred and powerful artifacts (the cloak being one of the most important) would have triggered a cycle of decline that culminated in their virtual extinction (Viegas, 2005: 765). Regardless of the claims and subsequent legal charges pressed against the National Museum of Denmark, the cloak was quietly returned to Copenhagen at the end of the exhibition, where it remains (Ministério Público Federal, 2009: 3; Borges, 2013).

DIALOGUE

The history of these cloaks and the quest of the Tupinambá have inspired me to pursue the conservation profession and to work with indigenous collections. But for many years they have also made me question the way we approach this kind of material. The more I studied the cloaks and the relationships around them, the more uncomfortable I felt, and the clearer it became that they were surrounded by complexities that were impossible to fully understand without listening to the views of the Tupinambá. Thus, I decided to try to engage with them. This decision was informed by the dialogical method proposed by educator Paulo Freire in the seminal 'Pedagogy of the Oppressed' (1996 [1970]). His method has been developed and used as a platform to implement more engaging, inclusive and democratic practices in many disciplines since its publication.

Freire's text is grounded in compassion and respect for people's knowledge and for their perceptions of the world. It focuses on the concept of conscientisation (also known as 'dialogical method'), an elaboration on how critical reflection can play essential roles in individual and social changes. Freire proposes a de-hierarchization of 'knowledge' or 'expertise' to allow space for trust and reflection on everyone's ability to understand and address the issues that concern a particular moment or situation. Similar approaches are proposed by many of his influential followers, such as bell hooks (2003; 2004) in writings on anti-racist and anti-sexist politics. These engagements, however, will only happen effectively when grounded on respectful and balanced dialogue, in which non-experts play a central role, or at least as central as experts. Freire considers there are various elements necessary for true dialogue to exist, but gives prominence to 'humility', which encompasses respect for what the other has to say. He also asks questions that might be uncomfortably familiar but are not always easy to answer. For example, "How can I dialogue if I always project ignorance onto others and never perceive my own?" (Freire, 1996 [1970]: 71) may indeed sound familiar to some professionals working in institutions where knowledge is hierarchized. While there may be legitimate reasons underlining this hierarchy, it is almost impossible to deny that 'fear' is also often present. But as Freire puts it "How can I dialogue if I am afraid of being

1
Tupinambá dance wearing several featherwork pieces such as headdresses, cloaks, enduapes (adornment covering lower torso), down adhered to the skin, etc. By Hans Staden (c. 1525–c. 1576). Image: Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons.

2
Tupinambá leaders wearing full regalia. Hans Staden (c. 1525–c. 1576). Image: Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons.

3
Serra do Padeiro, Bahia, 2017. Image: Glicéria Ferreira da Silva (Célia Tupinambá).

4
Glicéria Ferreira da Silva (Célia Tupinambá), 2017. Image: Glicéria Ferreira da Silva (Célia Tupinambá).

5
Rosemiro Ferreira da Silva, 2017. Image: Glicéria Ferreira da Silva (Célia Tupinambá).

6
Rosivaldo Ferreira da Silva, Cacique Babau, accepting the 'Chico Mendes Medal of Resistance', awarded by 'Tortura Nunca Mais' (Torture Never Again) a Brazilian human rights NGO, 2017. Image: Facebook.

displaced, the mere possibility causing me torment and weakness?" (Freire, 1996 [1970]: 71). Importantly, he also demonstrates that True Dialogue cannot exist unless all the participants engage in critical thinking "thinking which does not separate itself from action" (Freire, 1996 [1970]: 72). Consequently, the method does not simply strive to provide the means to ask people what they think. It seeks to empower them to formulate their own opinions through reflection and dialogue, and to transform all who are involved in the process. 'Dialogue', in short, is as an essential tool for transformations (Freire, 1996 [1970]).

Thus, equipped with a combination of Freire's lessons and eager to bring more meaning to the roles I could play, as an individual and a professional, in the intricate layers of knowledge and power around these cloaks, their use today, and the claims towards their ownership, I sought to engage with representatives of the Tupinambá.

THE VOICE OF THE TUPINAMBÁ: "THESE MUSEUMS THAT ARE DISPLAYING OUR THINGS. WHAT HAVE THEY GIVEN TO US?"

Like all other Brazilian Indigenous nations, the Tupinambá's main priorities today are related to education, health, food, transportation (Froio, 2012; APIB, 2019a, 2019b), and the use and ownership of their ancestral lands. Still, cultural materials and practices that may strengthen their social cohesion and cultural identity are also high on their agenda.

In December 2015, I was invited to visit Serra do Padeiro → FIGURE 3 to talk to representatives of the Tupinambá of Olivença about the cloaks. I interviewed Glicéria Ferreira da Silva (known as Célia Tupinambá) → FIGURE 4, a teacher; Rosemiro Ferreira da Silva → FIGURE 5, a pajé (shaman); and Rosivaldo Ferreira da Silva (known as Cacique Babau) → FIGURE 6 who is an important leader not only for the Tupinambá but for all Brazilian Indigenous peoples. All three expressed similarly complex views about the cloaks. Here I will focus on Cacique Babau's words, who right at the beginning of the interview showed his agency in the debate and reversed our roles by asking me: "These museums that are displaying our things... What have they given to us?". To this he added his views on the history of Brazilian indigenous nations by saying that:

> "The genocide was not only of people—it included our culture. These museums have a responsibility to help us recover our lost culture that was taken from us by force. All on Europeans' command. They came here and they caused all this. Everything that was beautiful was taken away from us. Whoever has the cloaks, has the most sacred part of the Tupinambá culture." (Cacique Babau, personal communication, December 18, 2015)

Cacique Babau went on to say that museum professionals and academics could help the Tupinambá get their lands back, as museums are able to fund research and depending on specialisms, the institutions

could invest in the recovery of their culture, language, and material held in collections. Later, however, he brought more layers to the conversation by saying that "What they took away from us, were only adornments. We can make other cloaks, conduct the appropriate rituals, and they can become as sacred as the ones that were taken away from us." At this point, I asked for clarification, as if that was the case, then why were the cloaks in Europe so important to the Tupinambá?

> "They represent the time before the invasion. Our native/original culture, without interventions, without fragments of other cultures. So, there, they represent our origin. We do things today, but we do in fragments. When you said some museums "have fragments of cloaks" [he was referring to the way I had described one of the cloaks I had seen in a European museum] it reminded me that it is the same with us. Even some of the species used to manufacture some of the cloaks have disappeared from nature." (Cacique Babau, personal communication, December 18, 2015)

A common concern about returning collection items to descendants of originators is the fate that will be given to them. Thus, I asked what they would do if the European museums agreed to return the cloaks, or at least one of them.

> "Even if the Brazilian government doesn't agree to build a museum here in our village, we would build it ourselves. And the cloak would stay in the Praying House, it would never leave it. The way it is supposed to be. We need a place like this to continue the education of our children. Our history is based on oral history through the elements that are present in our culture. There are moments when the history fades because there is a lack of tangible references. No one would wear these cloaks. Because we do not wear or use things without the owner's consent." (Cacique Babau, personal communication, December 18, 2015)

This triggered him to talk about a sense of responsibility towards the preservation of the cloaks, which demonstrates the sophistication of his concerns and the fact that he is not afraid of talking about the difficulties involved:

> "Even though we do not know how our objects were taken, we know that someone thought they were so beautiful that they protected them. Then, if we take that away from the one who is protecting it and bring it to a place where it will not be given the same care... where there are no resources to preserve the material with the same standards... I don't know. What if in less than 50 years from now, it decays and disappears? By being preserved and displayed in the museums, the

> existence of the Tupinambá is also displayed. No matter how many years from now, someone will look and say: "Look, this belongs to the Tupinambá". And the world will know that the Tupinambá exist." (Cacique Babau, personal communication, December 18, 2015)

When I encouraged Cacique Babau to clarify whether he thought the cloaks should remain in Europe, he elaborated: "From a historic point of view, they should stay there, they should be there so that our nation is recognized. From the ritual, spiritual, and cultural angles, they should be returned to us and stay here, in our village" [in a structure built specially for them, not in a museum in the city] (Cacique Babau, personal communication, December 18, 2015).

SHIFTING POWERS

The Tupinambá cloaks were made by skilful crafters and worn by important tribal members on special rites of passage, which imbued them with sacredness and power. The European invaders were obviously taken by the beauty of these garments, and perhaps also by the way in which they were perceived as politically and sacredly powerful. Upon their removal from the American continent and arrival in Europe, they became war trophies, symbols of the conquering of the Americas. Later, the intensity of these values was dissipated, and for many years they were only considered in terms of a perceived exoticism and their connections to old and inoperative powers. But when they were requested for Brazilian exhibitions, the cloaks' historic associations were refreshed. This was intensified when the Tupinambá claimed their ownership, as it reactivated many layers of history and values that were dormant then. Declining the requests may have created diplomatic tension and perhaps some embarrassment for the related European museum professionals. After all, the removal, retention, and cultural domination that were common until a few decades ago are not so easily accepted today.

Several layers of power relationships have, therefore, been mediated through the cloaks. The different perceptions have given them new sociocultural roles, have formed new relationship structures, and created new contexts from which to look at, understand, and experience them. Ultimately, every time the cloaks are claimed or remembered, they are imbued with renewed meanings, such as a sense of sacredness for some, and of political power for others. Conservators became increasingly even if unwittingly embroiled in the power negotiations each time concepts related to "conservation concerns" or the "condition of material fabric" were used to justify decisions. Interestingly though, the fact that conservation concerns may be used to justify difficult decisions also indicates its potential to affect relationships of power, inside and outside the museum.

CONCLUSIONS

The Tupinambá cloaks are evidence of the long history of the Tupinambá and the fact that European navigators did not 'discover' their

lands. Both the cloaks and the statues mentioned above show that not only may perceptions of objects change according to socio-political perspectives, but that they may also affect them. They also exemplify some impacts of focusing on the views and interests of elites that wrote history from their sole point of view and did not allow any other kind of narrative to be listened to, thereby omitting the roles the Indigenous populations played in the formation of their country. Consequently, many Indigenous nations today face the complex challenge of articulating a public identity that demonstrates their cultural diversity, traditional knowledge systems and ways of living, but also communicates the contemporaneity of their identities.

Cacique Babau demonstrated that returning the cloaks is neither enough nor the only way museum professionals could act. But let's focus on conservation here, as conservators have knowledge and skills to bring unique meaning to these engagements. Several practical, theoretical and material information could be exchanged between indigenous and professional groups, such as identification of manufacturing techniques, raw materials or current replacements, traditional care, condition assessments and documentation, risk assessments, conception of safe environments and displays. Conservators could offer expertise and basic training in the conservation needs of the cloaks and confirm or challenge the accuracy of the standards established by international institutions. Undoubtedly, if the Tupinambá could use conservation knowledge with more proficiency, they would also be able to argue more strongly in ownership debates, if they ever take place.

As Ascherson (1997, §5) put it when discussing the ownership of the Parthenon marbles, "When one nation appropriates the treasures of another into its own culture, you have to ask what the new owners get out of it." Accordingly, if the European museums keep the cloaks, it will be necessary to consider what is being gained and lost. One of many difficult questions to answer is whether this is really the best way available to safeguard these cloaks for future generations that may want to know about and understand not only the ancient, but also the living Tupinambá.

Finally, it is almost impossible to avoid considering that returning the cloaks to the Tupinambá might benefit the survival of their culture, as such an action would entail an admirable sense of entitlement and empowerment for them. As museum professionals, we need to consider whether the responsibility to keep these cloaks for future generations should be entrusted to the descendants of their originators. After all, they are the ones who, following their ancient traditions of bravery and warfare, have defied extinction and established powers, conquered back ancestral lands that had long been lost, and are now generously enlightening the stewardship of these collections.

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Das Museum am Rothenbaum—Kulturen und Künste der Welt in Hamburg befindet sich mitten in einem umfassenden Neupositionierungsprozess. In diesem Zusammenhang wurde im September 2021 ein zweitägiger digitaler Workshop „From Conservation to Conversation—Rethinking Collections Care“ veranstaltet, ermöglicht durch das Projekt „MARKK in Motion“, als Teil der von der Kulturstiftung des Bundes geförderten „Initiative für ethnologische Sammlungen“. Ziel des Workshops war es, einen Raum für offene Kommunikation unter Kolleg:innen zu schaffen und einen kontinuierlichen Informations- und Erfahrungsaustausch zu starten. Die Beiträge konzentrierten sich auf die Arbeit von Museumsfachleuten, die Praktiken der kollaborativen und inklusiven Konservierung und Sammlungspflege entwickelt und umgesetzt haben, oder daran arbeiten. Der Workshop bot den Restaurator:innen des MARKK wichtige Einblicke und Anregungen. In diesem Beitrag wird dargelegt, was „From Conservation to Conversation“ für die Praxis des Museums am Rothenbaum und für die Konservierungsabteilung bedeutet. Die Autor:innen befassen sich mit verschiedenen Ansätzen für die Museumspraxis, mit der Öffnung von Sammlungen für ein breites Publikum und mit der Frage, was zur Erleichterung des Zugangs und zur Erhaltung der Sammlungen erforderlich sein könnte.

From Conservation to Conversation: Rethinking Collections Care at MARKK

Farideh Fekrsanati, Diana Gabler → 142

The Museum am Rothenbaum—Kulturen und Künste der Welt in Hamburg has been undergoing a comprehensive repositioning process. In this context, a two-day digital workshop "From Conservation to Conversation—Rethinking Collections Care" was organized in September 2021, made possible by the "MARKK in Motion" project, which is part of the "Initiative for Ethnological Collections" funded by the German Federal Cultural Foundation. The aim of the workshop was to create a space for open communication between colleagues and to start an ongoing exchange of information and experiences. The contributions centered on the work of museum professionals who have shaped and integrated or are working towards integrating collaborative and inclusive conservation and collections care practices. This workshop provided crucial insight and inspiration for the conservation staff at the MARKK. This paper outlines what "From Conservation to Conversation" means within the practice of the museum and its conservation department. The authors look at different approaches to museum practices, opening collections to a wide range of audiences, and what might be needed for facilitating access and preserving the collections.

INTRODUCTION

Since 2017 the Museum am Rothenbaum—Kulturen und Künste der Welt (MARKK) in Hamburg has been undergoing an intensive repositioning process guided by critical self-reflection to increase accessibility of the collections for diverse audiences and to facilitate access for communities to whom the collections hold meaning (MARKK 2021). To encourage and inspire the redesign of the institutional approach regarding conservation and collections care at MARKK, a two-day digital workshop "From Conservation to Conversation—Rethinking Collections Care" [1] was organized in September 2021 through the "MARKK in Motion" project [2], which is part of the "Initiative for Ethnological Collections" funded by the German Federal Cultural Foundation [3].

Prior to the workshop, discussions were initiated on the current approach to conservation and collections care as part of MARKK's repositioning activities. The content was heavily influenced by the intention to enable exchange with colleagues on participatory and inclusive approaches to collections care and to look critically at the approaches practiced in the specific institutional context of

the MARKK but also more broadly in the German context of conservation. The workshop enabled important steps in connecting the department with national and international colleagues who are committed to rethinking collections care with inclusive and collaborative practices, facilitated through providing a space for open communication and reflection regarding ongoing discussions and developments.

In this paper, the authors will reflect on what "From Conservation to Conversation" looks like for MARKK's conservation department practices, situated in the context of ethnological and world cultures museums in Germany and the museum's institutional mission statement [4].

REPOSITIONING PROCESS AT MARKK

The examination of the aftermath of collecting intentions and practices in the 19th and early 20th centuries, which were prevalent not only at MARKK in Hamburg (cf. Köpke, 2004) but in many comparable institutions of the time, has been part of a decades-long discussion about colonial museum structures (cf. Förster and Bose, 2018). From today's perspective, collecting cultural material was situated in a Eurocentric colonial mindset and was understood as a systematic approach to "preserving" knowledge about "vanishing cultures" threatened by Western modernization processes. Paired with the objective to generate knowledge by constructing a history of mankind through comparing cultural material, distinctions between "European" and "non-European" cultures were hierarchized (Förster and Edenheiser 2019: 17).

Prior to the appointment of the current director Barbara Plankensteiner in 2017, the museum made first steps towards a confrontation of its colonial past (Gaupp et al.: 131) and has been (since 2017) working to establish itself as a "reflexive forum that critically examines traces of the colonial heritage, traditional patterns of thinking, and issues of the post-migrant globalized urban society. [...] The focus has been on the cultural anchoring of people, on the appreciation of coherences, similarities, and differences, and on the diversity of cultural and artistic achievements of the world" (MARKK, n.d.).

The repositioning of MARKK is an ongoing process concurrent with political debates reflecting on Germany's colonial past and is meant to accompany all aspects of the museum's work in the years to come. It not only envisages new concepts for permanent and temporary exhibitions as well as programming, but also the renovation of the museum's main building at Rothenbaumchaussee and the establishment of a sustainable and adequate solution for the much-needed storage of the collections and archival materials through a new storage facility, where the museum's entire collection can be brought together in one location.

MARKK has been fortunate to secure support and substantial funding for collaborative and multidisciplinary projects that help facilitate and encourage debate within the museum:

"TAKING CARE"—Ethnographic and World Cultures Museums as Spaces of Care—a joint European funded project with 14 participating institutions, addressing the role ethnographic museums inhabit on topics of care. The program entails a work package designated to preservation and conservation of tangible and intangible cultural heritage [5]. The Museum has worked collaboratively on developing the exhibition "Water Messages" as part of the work package "Designing Sustainable Futures" [6]. Moreover, "360°—Fund for New City Cultures" is a program funded by the German Federal Cultural Foundation in which MARKK explores its own working methods and reflects on its institutional and collection history [7]. "MARKK in Motion" is part of the "Initiative for Ethnological Collections" funded by the German Federal Cultural Foundation. This four-year phase of research, planning, and experimentation allows MARKK to continuously work on its repositioning. The findings and considerations presented in the exhibition- and public workspace „Zwischenraum—A Space Between" [8], will be incorporated into the concept of new permanent exhibitions.

All three projects have provided the conservation and collections care department with a forum to enter the inner-institutional debate on repositioning and to explore ideas on how to engage with broader developments regarding people-centered approaches to conservation and preservation of collections within the institution.

CHANGING APPROACHES WITHIN THE FIELD OF CONSERVATION

The initial establishment of museums in the (colonial) European cultural landscape resulted in largely Eurocentric notions of museum practices—also in the field of conservation and collections care. The preservation of the material of cultural heritage in its assumed "original state" focused on a European scientific approach to issues of deterioration, originality, authenticity, and the formulation of standards for practice (Clavir, 2002; Sully, 2007). Ideas around materiality of collections, their preservation, and standards of care have been increasingly challenged through communities seeking access to collections held in museums and from within the profession itself. Over the past 20 years, the growing involvement of indigenous and originating communities as well as a wider critical public, shifted conservation practice away from the expectation of being the sole deciding entity, moving the decision-making process towards inclusive, multidisciplinary negotiation of ideas (Sully, 2015; Clavir, 2020; Peters, 2020; Henderson, 2020; Fekrsanati and Marçal, 2022). Collaboration between different stakeholders and conservators has been internationally practiced and various examples of such practices have been published (cf. Clavir, 2002, 2009; Dignard, 2008, Bloomfield, 2013; Fekrsanati et al., 2014; Vieira, 2017; Heald, 2017; Peters, 2008; Swierenga, 2021; Sagiya, 2021). Numerous institutions have been instrumental in enabling access to collections for diverse audiences and engaging in a collaborative decision-making process to establish more people-centered and culturally appropriate strategies in caring for collections.

Care of collections in the context of museums and views on appropriate preservation conditions continue to be subject of current debate within the practice of conservation, particularly in connection with collections from colonial contexts (Sully, 2015; Pearlstein, 2016; Balachandran and McHugh, 2019; Clavir, 2020; Peters, 2020). A shifting perspective on collections care involves conversations about the interpretation and representation of culture that inform appropriate care in a particular context (Swierenga, 2021; Kaminitz et al., 2009). Sustainability, architecture, climate conditions, storage, and display increasingly inform measurements to manage risks for the tangible material of museum collections. Aspects such as conservation standards are often connected to an institutional reference frame (Western knowledge system) on climate conditions, lighting levels, and approaches to preservation and storage of collections. Paired with arguments about high costs to achieve such standards, an open access strategy becomes more difficult to implement. This can manifest itself in predefined conditions for loans (formulated rigidly and with little room for contextual concessions), which can result in a loan not materializing simply because the borrowing institution cannot meet the requirements of the lending institution—not necessarily because of a tangible higher risk posed to the material integrity of the collections. The conservation field at large has started to recognize that formulated standards are perceived as restrictive. They play an active role in preventing mobility and use of collections and therefore need to be considered in a more context driven and differentiated approach (Henderson and Dai, 2013).

Collaborative approaches as part of a renegotiation process of museum practices between a diverse group of stakeholders such as indigenous actors, city residents, and members from diaspora communities with museum professionals are being discussed internationally but are not widely or systematically reflected in the German speaking conservation field (Gabler and Tello, 2019). Especially perspectives regarding collections care enter the broader conversation on “decolonization” and “repositioning” of western museum structures (cf. Visser and Barlovic, 2020 on restitution claims). Nevertheless, existing connections between decades-long international collaborative conservation practices and the German conservation field are not (yet) explicitly being incorporated into everyday collections care. Changing approaches have been mostly based on intellectual discussions and began to manifest in curatorial practice. Developments at MARKK must be considered in this context.

FROM CONSERVATION TO CONVERSATION AT MARKK

MARKK places the collections and their preservation at the center of its mission statement and emphasizes the importance of connecting the collections to people: “Our work is based on the collections. The museum is committed to preserving and expanding these collections as well as to making them available [...] It invites us to look at them

from a variety of perspectives, which comprise an understanding of their context of origin, historical correlations, and their significance in a globalized society." Focusing on this aspect, there is a direct connection between the mission of the institution and its approaches to conservation and collections care. What are the practical implications of the mission statement for the day-to-day approach to caring for the collections at MARKK? Answering this question seems a key factor to rethinking and formulating sustainable approaches to establishing a more people-centered practice of conservation and collections care.

Tight deadlines and a high demand for productivity limit the extent to which it is possible to engage in conversations about and development of collaborative approaches to conservation. Collaborative decision making requires openness, trust as well as investing time in building relations and establishing long term relationships with representatives of the communities to whom the collections hold meaning (Balachandran and McHugh, 2019; Clavir, 2020; Peters, 2020; Fekrsanati and Marçal, 2022). The collaborative approach in conservation and collections care at MARKK has been a developing practice. Up to date, collaborative projects have been centered mostly around curatorial work with some opportunities for rethinking and renegotiating institutional approaches to conservation and collections care. Further reflection is needed on policies regarding the definition of collections' use along with creating conditions for engagement with the collections. The conservation department has yet to develop its full potential within the institution-wide repositioning processes. Its primarily supportive role in creating access to collections could change to a more active and participatory role, shaping institutional approaches to working with communities and opening collections care to a collaborative, multi-stakeholder practice.

Current realities of the conservation department, as in many institutions, are significantly guided by exhibitions, program schedules and available resources. Access to the collection itself is influenced by the current set-up of the storage facilities, which are split over three locations and in need of major improvements. Availability of conservation relevant information on the collections is limited. Collections might be mislabeled, or their cultural context has been historically misrepresented. Also, MARKK's collections' conservation history is not well documented and the information available through the collection management system is limited. Few direct exchanges are taking place with stakeholders about treatment decisions or ideas for appropriate storage and presentation. In MARKK's current conservation practice, missing institutional knowledge about the cultural context and restricted access to respective knowledge from cultural experts—and therefore lack of culturally appropriate preservation practices—leads to a focus on the material and aesthetics of presentation during decision-making processes. These challenges, common in museums that collected and now preserve cultural material from colonial contexts, make caring for the collections a complex endeavor.

As a result, the work of MARKK's conservation department towards a more people-centered approach took place mainly through departmental conversations, despite restrictions in available time, on finding answers to the underlying questions: What does repositioning mean in practice and how is it expressed in conservation and collection care work? How can the conservation department contribute to achieving institutional goals and what does it mean for the daily practice, guidelines, and definition of care?

One of the ways to practically meet the repositioning process has been to create space for encounters as a facilitator through reducing barriers of collections' access for visitors e.g. actively inviting stakeholders into collections spaces and engaging in conversations when possible. This includes considering material preservation as a central conservation goal as well as contextualizing conditions for handling and treatment decisions. It also entails reviewing required exhibition and loan conditions on a case-by-case basis in order to reach envisioned goals for exhibitions, loans or other activities.

As MARKK's conservation department currently does not develop its own collaborative projects but contributes to MARKK-wide initiatives, the department regularly facilitates interactions with collections. It has been working towards a practice enabling the use of and interaction with the collections and develops approaches that allow safe handling and activation of the collections: Making use of the collections as much as possible without having a predefined definition of "use", thus taking an active role in redesigning institutional approaches to access.

The performance "Everything Is Connected" by L.I.N.E.S (2021) [9] in which teenage performers interacted with a MARKK collection of masks (originating from different countries on the African continent) is one example. To enable the performance including the masks, approaches to handling the collections were put into practice by openly communicating with the group about the condition of the objects, possible risks and training the performers beforehand in the handling of the masks during the performance. Through conversations between conservation staff and engaged stakeholders, the main trajectories of the performance were jointly identified and could then be considered during the handling sessions organized and carried out by MARKK'S conservation staff.

The conservation department at MARKK was launched in its current form in 2019 with the appointment of head of conservation, combining conservation, collection management and art handling into one department. The internal structures, ways of working together as a department, and defining the position of the department within the broader scope of the institution have been ongoing. Creating a departmental practice of trust and open communication have been the focus of the past years, aiming towards a shift in mindset. The workshop "From Conservation to Conversation" presented a major opportunity for such reflections. As a follow up to this workshop, MARKK's collections' care staff had the opportunity

to organize a focused conversation on conservation in the form of a "Socratic Dialog" [10] supervised by moderator Bill Wei. A Socratic dialog is a group discussion following specific rules of engagement, which serve the joint clarification of specific concepts. Staff members from MARKK and partners from the Initiative for Ethnological Collections [11] came together to discuss two main questions: "For which generations do we want to preserve cultural heritage?" and "What is damage?" These questions were prepared by the organizers as a result of main discussions during the workshop. They allowed a guided dialog on definitions of basic terms revealing different perspectives on the basic concepts of what damage is and for whom the museum preserves things. The event stimulated a learning process on how to approach discussions between participants with a diverse range of expertise as conservators, collection technicians, and curators participated. Aside from the content work and the possibility to explore differences and similarities in personal answers to the questions posed, the day provided the opportunity to reflect on ways of listening, posing arguments, and discussing opinions of others. This process was valued greatly by all participants.

CONCLUSION

The day-to-day practice and decision-making process within conservation and collections care at MARKK has been dominated by deliberations about material stability and aesthetic appearance. Inclusion of views on preservation, culturally appropriate handling, and treatment of collections led by representatives of originating communities, has been an aspiration of the department with few opportunities to do so. For MARKK's conservation department "From Conservation to Conversation" has been translated into conversation, informing, and allowing personal shifts of mindset by understanding how common conservation practices might be perceived diversely by staff and communities outside the museum when regarding different perspectives and contexts.

In the short term, the goals focus on finding a common language within the department, formulating new ideas and consequently guidelines on what people-centered conservation looks like at the MARKK. Creating a culture of trust within the department itself has been one of the most important developments: The undelaying idea was that if staff members feel comfortable expressing their ideas, reservations, or concerns, and if a culture of respect and listening is cultivated in the department's daily practices, then listening to voices from outside of the department will also be welcomed.

In the long term, the conservation department would be working towards tangible improvement of the conditions in which the collections are stored and exhibited at MARKK, with the aim to formulate conditions that are sustainable and allow for culturally appropriate storage and care. It has been an aspiration of the conservation department to establish collaborative practices with stakeholder and communities as an integral part of rethinking and practicing collections care.

ENDNOTES

[1] "From Conservation to Conversation—Rethinking Collections Care" https://markk-hamburg.de/from-conservation-to-conversation/ (last viewed 01.03.2023).

[2] "MARKK in Motion" https://markk-hamburg.de/en/category/markk-in-motion-2/(last viewed 01.03.2023).

[3] "Initiative for Ethnological Collections" funded by the German Federal Cultural Foundation https://www.kulturstiftung-des-bundes.de/en/programmes_projects/image_and_space/detail/programme_for_ethnological_collections.html (last viewed 01.03.2023).

[4] MARKK's mission statement: "The museum promotes the appreciation for and knowledge of the cultures and arts of the world. Through exhibitions, events and research, it provides spaces for cultural encounters and critical reflection. Founded in an era of colonial power imbalance, the museum today aims to question traditional certainties and encourage global citizenship through cooperation and in an atmosphere of respect, openness and empathy. Our work is based on the collections. The museum is committed to preserving and expanding these collections as well as to making them available, and it wants to make the meaning of things, their beauty and the knowledge stored in them accessible to the public. It invites to look at them from a variety of perspectives, which comprise an understanding of their context of origin, historical correlations and their significance in a globalized society." https://markk-hamburg.de/en/about-us (last viewed 01.03.2023).

[5] TAKING CARE—Ethnographic and World Cultures Museums as Spaces of Care co-funded by the Creative Europe programme of the European Union. https://takingcare project.eu (last viewed 01.03.2023); https://markk-hamburg.de/en/category/taking-care-en (last viewed 01.03.2023).

[6] Water Messages (Wasser Botschaften) https://markk-hamburg.de/ausstellungen/wasser-botschaften. Read more on the exhibition here: https://takingcareproject.eu/article/working-with-knowledge-holders-on-creating-experimental-exhibition-at-the-markk-hamburg (last viewed 01.03.2023).

[7] 360°—Fund for New City Cultures https://www.360-fonds.de/projekte/markk (last viewed 01.03.2023); https://markk-hamburg.de/en/category/program-360 (last viewed 01.03.2023).

[8] Public workspace „Zwischenraum—A Space Between" https://markk-hamburg.de/zwischenraum-the-space-between (last viewed 01.03.2023).

[9] The performance "Everything Is Connected" by L.I.N.E.S on October 26, 2021 was part of the COME IN TENT project Re-Enactment of Things (26.–31.10.2021), see https://come-in-tent.com/projects/re-enactment-of-things (last viewed 01.03.2023).

[10] Socratic Dialog November 23, 2021 10am through 5pm at MARKK

[11] Participants of the Initiative for Ethnological Collections funded by the Federal Cultural Foundation are: Museum am Rothenbaum Kulturen und Künste der Welt (MARKK), the GRASSI Museum in Leipzig and the Linden-Museum in Stuttgart.

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Conservation Skills for Engaging in Conversation

Australien ist einerseits durch eine reiche kulturelle Vielfalt und andererseits durch die sogenannte „tyranny of distance“ geprägt. Während die meisten Restaurator:innen in den Hauptstädten beschäftigt sind, findet sich ein Großteil des wichtigsten kulturellen Erbes des Landes in abgelegenen lokalen Gemeinschaften wieder. Die Risiken bezüglich dieses wertvollen Kulturerbes sind hoch. Dazu gehören beispielsweise der Verlust von Wissen über Inhalt und Bedeutung, wenn die Ältesten einer Gemeinschaft sterben; eine zunehmend lebensfeindliche und unberechenbare Umgebung mit heftigeren Wirbelstürmen und Überschwemmungen; die ständigen Herausforderungen in Bezug auf die Existenzfähigkeit und Nachhaltigkeit abgelegener Kunstinstitutionen; die Ausbreitung von Schädlingen im Zuge des Artenwandels, in Folge der Anpassung an den Klimawandel sowie schließlich das Fehlen von Kenntnissen, Netzwerken und Fähigkeiten im Bereich der Konservierung in den Gemeinschaften. Wie überall auf der Welt gibt es auch in Australien viel zu wenige lokale Restaurator:innen und zu wenige Restaurator:innen, die mit der Arbeit in und mit lokalen Gemeinschaften vertraut sind. Die in den Gemeinschaften genutzten konservatorischen Fähigkeiten und Kenntnisse müssen sich deshalb durch Lernen aus zwei Perspektiven weiterentwickeln: Restaurator:innen lernen von lokalen Gemeinschaften während diese Restaurator:innen wiederum die lokalen Kunstschaffenden unterstützen. Auf diese Weise können lokale Kunstschaffende Konservierungsprogramme innerhalb der Gemeinschaften leiten und sind nicht auf externes Fachwissen angewiesen. Denn wesentliche Voraussetzung für eine verantwortungsvolle Entscheidungsfindung im Umgang mit materieller Kultur, die bedeutendes kulturelles, lokales Wissen enthält, ist ein umfassendes Verständnis der lokalen Verantwortung einer Gemeinschaft. Dieses Kapitel konzentriert sich auf die Mangkaja Arts Resources und das Warmun Art Centre im abgelegenen nördlichen Westaustralien und untersucht, wie lokale Absolvent:innen des Grimwade Centre for Cultural Materials Conservation (Grimwade Centre) an der Universität Melbourne Fachwissen im Bereich der Konservierung aufbauen und Wissen über Konservierung innerhalb ihrer Gemeinschaften weitergeben.

Conservation Across a Continent: Exploring Training and Two-Way Education at Mangkaja Arts Resource Agency, Warmun Art Centre and the Grimwade Centre at the University of Melbourne

Lynley Nargoodah, Gabriel Nodea, Robyn Sloggett → 143, 144

Australia is characterized by rich cultural diversity and the tyranny of distance. While most conservators are employed in capital cities, much of the nation's most significant cultural material is held in remote Indigenous communities. The risks to this valuable cultural heritage are high. They include: loss of knowledge about content and meaning when Elders pass away; an increasingly hostile and unpredictable environment with more intense cyclonic and flooding activity; ongoing challenges of viability and sustainability for remote Art Centres; the proliferation of pests as species change and adapt to climate change; and, finally, not having conservation knowledge, networks and capability available in community. Reflecting a worldwide situation, Australia has far too few Indigenous conservators, and too few conservators who are familiar with working in, and with, Indigenous communities. Conservation skills and knowledge utilised in Indigenous communities needs to advance from shared two-way leaning, with Indigenous communities educating conservation professionals and conservation educators supporting Indigenous artworkers. With this in place, Indigenous artworkers can lead conservation programs from within communities, rather than being reliant on external expertise. When cultural material holds significant cultural knowledge, then having a proper understanding of community cultural responsibility is essential in culturally safe and sound decision-making. This paper focuses on Mangkaja Arts Resources and Warmun Art Centre, located in remote northern Western Australia to examine how Indigenous graduates of the Grimwade Centre for Cultural Materials Conservation (the Grimwade Centre) at the University of Melbourne are building conservation expertise and transferring conservation knowledge within their communities.

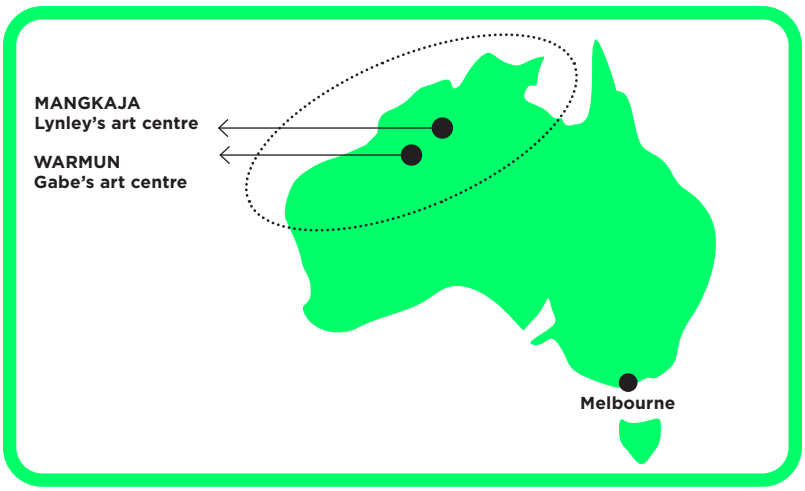
INTRODUCTION

Across Australia Indigenous communities hold significant cultural collections. These collections are diverse in their purpose, use, object types and materials. They include artefacts, artwork, paper-based and photographic archives, digitised and born-digital records, and time-based media. Many communities care for extremely important historical collections that preserve cultural material made by community leaders and Elders in the past. These collections contain valuable cultural knowledge and rich historical information, and as such are an irreplaceable cultural legacy that is of national and

international significance. These collections can include records left in, or gifted to community, including by anthropologists, missionaries, linguists, teachers, police and others who have lived or visited. Indigenous art centres are also the production centres of some of the most significant contemporary Indigenous art in the country, which is also the main income for many artists and their families. In art centres cultural collections inform and inspire the creation or production of commercial contemporary art, new archives, education resources and support a range of cultural programs. Looking after these collections presents some complex challenges. Some material may need to be restricted material because it is sacred/secret, made by those who are recently deceased, or be subject to other restrictions that a community might place on objects from time to time. One collection may hold material that has been made using the most traditional of materials; resin from an endemic species of bloodwood tree, ochre from clan and family-owned ochre-mining sites, through to very contemporary media such as films produced on the latest Apple or Android operating systems. Increasingly Indigenous community collections are also receiving material that is being repatriated from individuals and institutions who may have collected this material and who now wish to return it to the community of origin.

While community art centre collections are important, they also create significant responsibilities. Chairman of the peak representative body Arnhem, Northern and Kimberley Artists Aboriginal Corporation (ANKA), Mr Djambawa Marawili described the aim of Indigenous art centre thus:

> To keep culture alive in our blood and our soul, we need to continue looking after and caring for these collections. To have other tools to teach so that art and patterns will be safe, clean and well looked after. This is important; it is the history of Australia. (Scott, 2017: 4)



1
Map showing ANKA art centre membership

The complexity of caring for these collections is further complicated by the remote location of the majority of these art centres, with many communities situated in what is designated 'very remote area'. [1] In these communities, people may often travel a day to get to the nearest town and any travel to Australia's capital cities can often require two or three days travel. In some communities travel is impossible at some times of the year, such as during the Wet Season. In 2017 ANKA commissioned Dr. Marcelle Scott, through the Grimwade Centre, to work in collaboration on a study to examine 'the care and management of Art Centre-based Community Collections' (Scott, 2017). The project's final report concluded that community collections held in local Aboriginal art centres are important knowledge repositories. Scott observed that their social, cultural, aesthetic, intellectual, and economic value is underpinned by their location within the community that created them, and has the expertise to properly understand them.

> When located in-community they perform vital social, cultural, and educational roles. When associated with an Art or Cultural Centre, or artist group, they provide inspiration and guidance to emerging artists, and support research, education, and public programs. Each of these activities has multiple intrinsic, social, and economic benefits. (Scott, 2017: 24)

These goals cannot be achieved, however, unless the risks to the long-term preservation of community collections, and the knowledge embedded in them, are addressed. This requires investment in infrastructure, staffing, capacity building and education programs. Above all it requires strong partnerships that are sustained over many years, and education programs that are relevant to these partnerships.

SPECIALIST CERTIFICATE IN CROSS-CULTURAL CONSERVATION AND HERITAGE

Since 2011 ANKA has delivered the Artworkers Extension Program which has tailored professional development and targeted training for artworkers in ANKA's membership art centres (Lane et al., 2013). The Grimwade Centre has been part of this program from its beginning, providing an immersive program of conservation training at the Centre. By 2016 this program had graduated over 50 Aboriginal artworkers, and many were keen to expand their conservation expertise.

> In response, the Grimwade Centre developed the Specialist Certificate in Cross-Cultural Conservation and Heritage, which was designed as a knowledge exchange program and draws on the Centre for Cultural Material Conservation's extensive industry and community partnerships to combine traditional and contemporary approaches to the preservation of cultural objects across a range of cultural settings. (Grimwade Centre, 2018)

In December 2018 nine artists and arts workers from ANKA member art centres across northern Australia, specifically from the Kimberley, Arnhem Land, Tiwi Islands, and the Darwin/Katherine region completed the Specialist Certificate at the Grimwade Centre. → FIGURE 1 Participants shared in a collaborative learning program, contributing their experiences and knowledge of conservation in their art centre, and learning about conservation and collection development and management. Over two weeks students completed two subjects: Issues in Cross-Cultural Conservation, which included a grant application, a discussion of various ethical responses to conservation care and treatment and the completion of a proposal for a project at the participant's art centre; and Cross-Cultural Assessment and Treatment, which included examination and assessment, treatment proposals and treatment. Subjects were designed for attendees to share experiences with fellow artworkers and with Grimwade staff. Lynley Nargoodah and Gabriel Nodea both graduated from the program, with first class honours, and are major contributors to their respective art centres.

LYNLEY NARGOODAH AT MANGKAJA ARTS RESOURCE AGENCY

I'm a Nyikina and Walmajarri woman, so my ancestors come from the Great Sandy Desert and Fitzroy River. I graduated from the Specialist Certificate in 2019. My job is Specialist Manager and director of Mangkaja Arts at Mangkaja Arts Resource Agency. I am also a director of ANKA. In 2021 I was awarded a University of Melbourne Faculty of Arts Indigenous Scholar-In-Residence at Grimwade Centre. → FIGURE 2

My art centre, Mangkaja Arts, is in Fitzroy Crossing. Fitzroy Crossing is on the Great Northern Highway, 391 kilometres east of Broome and 647 kilometres west of Kununurra. We rebuilt the art centre after the previous one was burnt down, and before that we also had another building, so this is our third art centre building that we have constructed. Mangkaja Arts represents four language groups: the Bunuba and Gooniyandi of martuwarra (river country) and Walmajarri and Wangkajunga from the jilji (sand hill country) of the Great Sandy Desert, who are immigrants into Fitzroy (Mangkaja Arts Resource Agency, 2022).

MY ROLE AT MANGKAJA ARTS

My position at Mangkaja Arts is Specialist Projects Coordinator, administration assistant, and with all the training that I have done I am now the collections manager. I am also director of Mangkaja Arts and a director of ANKA. I have responsibility for the collection which is housed in the storeroom, and I reorganise it to better house the artworks. Another important part of my job is training other people at Mangkaja. I also work as a curator working to educate others about Mangkaja artists, particularly our senior artists. An example is the exhibition in 2020 which showcased one of our senior Elder, Janangoo Butcher Chere (Freemantle Arts Centre, 2020). Janangoo Butcher Chere was a senior knowledge holder who played a very important

2
Lynley Nargoodah, Grimwade Centre. Image: The University of Melbourne.

3
Gabriel Nodea at Warmun Art Centre. Image: The University of Melbourne.

role within the Gooniyandi song cycles. His traditional stories are kept alive through his paintings. Janangoo Butcher Chere passed away in 2009. In accordance with custom, works by deceased artists are kept in storage until the family makes a decision about when they can be displayed; in this case this was not until over a decade later. As Mangkaja Arts started with works on paper and important early history of the centre are in works on paper that are in storage.

MY SECOND LOVE—CONSERVATION

I began conservation when I attended ANKA Arts Workers Extension Program in 2016 at the Grimwade Centre. This was the first time I worked on objects in a laboratory, and conservation immediately became my second love. Of course, my family comes first but I have a definite love for conservation. I was back in the laboratory in 2019 for the Specialist Certificate in Cross Cultural Conservation and Heritage. Since then, I have tackled conservation projects at Mangkaja including sticky tape removal on a painting on board. At first, I was not sure what to do, but following conservation decision-making and after thinking through and testing different options I successfully removed the tape with soapy water, and not more aggressive options such as eucalyptus oil. Solvents are not easy to access, and the health and safety issues mean that it is preferable to use materials that are readily available at the art centre.

My work doing conservation continues at Mangkaja. It is linked to my curatorial work. At Mangkaja artists started doing works on paper in the 1970s. These works were put in plastic sleeves, put in the back storeroom and left there. An important part of my current job now is to go through all the works on paper to make sure they are properly documented and photographed, and that there is proper paperwork relating to these works. I also check works that have been sold before they leave Mangkaja. For example, a work by a senior artist who is deceased was sold, but nobody had looked at it before it was sold, so I had to clean it up before it was packed and sent. I've also had to deal with tears in paintings in storage.

GABRIEL NODEA AT WARMUN ART CENTRE

My name is Gabriel Nodea, my skin name is Jangari, my full blood brother is the Wedgetail Eagle, who is same skin. He's Jangari too. I'm a Gija Walmajarri man. My father is Walmajarri, my mother is Gija. In Gija country, if your mother is Gija, then Gija comes first. If you live in Walmajarri, your father is Walmajarri, Walmajarri comes first. So when I travel down to Walmajarri country, Fitzroy, I swap the names around. I'm Walmajarri-Gija. When I go back Warmun, I'm a Gija-Walmajarri. For more than a decade I have been Cultural Facilitator at the Warmun Art Centre, which involves organising the bush program, traditional dance (joonba and wangga), as well as working with the University of Melbourne to organise the oncountry subject Ngarranggarni Gija Art and Country and visits to country. I have also been chairman and, at other times, acting chairman at Warmun for ten years, and a director of ANKA and the Deputy Chair for nine

years. I am currently the Gija Research Fellow at the Grimwade Centre. I graduated from the Specialist Certificate in 2019. I was also a member of NORFORCE (North-West Mobile Force of the Australian Army). → FIGURE 3

THE WARMUN ART CENTRE

The Warmun Art Centre is located in the Warmun Community, 200 kilometres south of Kununurra on the Great Northern Highway. To get to Warmun from Australia's major capital cities requires a long journey via Darwin of over a thousand kilometers travelling south on the Great Northern Highway or 846 kilometres via Broome travelling north on the Highway. The Gija community at Warmun is situated away from the roadhouse and publicly accessible tourist stopping areas, in the area that is known as the Other Side. It is necessary to get permission to visit the Other Side, unless you come in to visit the Art Centre. The area around Warmun is rich in scenic and cultural places; if you continue to drive down the Great Northern Highway then you come to the magnificent world heritage listed Purnululu National Park. Our art tells the story of our country.

The Warmun Art Centre was started back in 1998, but before this, back in the camps in the early 70s, people were painting to keep culture strong, and to teach the kids about their culture. In the 1970s this fellow called Rover Thomas, who was from the desert, came to Warmun (Carrigan, 2003). He changed the whole scene, and in doing so helped to create the Warmun art movement, which is now a highly recognised art movement around the world.

CONSERVATION AND TRAINING

In 2011 the Warmun township was destroyed when a flash flood warrambany (angry water) rushed along Turkey Creek. The Creek broke its banks and ran straight through our Gallery. The contemporary artworks were washed out of the building and along the creek. The room with the Community Collection, which contained the paintings and objects the Old People made to teach the kids and dating back to the 1970s, filled with water. When the water subsided, the Collection was saturated and mouldy. Eighty percent of the Community Collection artwork and objects went to the Grimwade Centre for conservation. Three years later we were in partnership with the Grimwade Centre and Gija people were teaching into the Masters by Coursework in Cultural Materials Conservation. Liaising between both organisations is my role in Partnership Liaison.

LEADERSHIP AND CHANGE IN COMMUNITY AND ART CENTRE

Wirnan is the Gija concept of sharing or trade, it is based on caring, sharing, helping us on our journey. Another way of thinking about *wirnan* is that it is a form of networking. Our Old People's vision remains our goal; the same goal that was established back in 1998 when they established the Warmun Art Centre. Over time this might take a slightly different direction, but we stick to the same goal, and never change it. I thought leadership was about our senior Elders

leading the way, but now new leaders have to step up and still follow the goal that was established back in 1998. There is something particular to our way of leadership. It focuses on cultural maintenance, traditional dancing, going out bush. Work at the Art Centre was all about how to run the gallery and museum, and how to do conservation the proper whitefella way; totally different from proper blackfella way.

Today Gija people live in a cyber world. Computers have taken over and we are controlled by them. We do acknowledge that. In terms of new technology our Old People are still back in the past. People in my age group, we call ourselves the middle people of the land. We know that it is really the younger generation who are into the digital world, and they are the ones who are going to be running the show. What they know now at their young age is more than what we know so far—that's called moving with the times.

WHY WARMUN ART CENTRE, AND MY WORK THERE, ARE IMPORTANT

What is so special, or the very most important thing, for Gija people is they can adapt to change quickly in this rapidly changing world. They have responded to change often instigated at the government's whim, since early colonisation up to today. Everyone has their ways of maintaining and preserving culture and Gija people have their ways. When it comes to our law, culture, country and language Gija people know what is right from what is wrong. Everything from Ngarranggarni (sometimes referred to as The Dreaming) to real life events are kept alive in our traditional archives, and that archive is joonba (performance) (Warmun Art Centre n.d.). Within that we always have our wirnan systems, of sharing and caring, accompanying us on our journeys. In 2009 I wrote this about the Art Centre:

> The most important thing I want to communicate is that
> our art centre is our last line of defence.
> It is living the Warmun Dream, chasing Gija Destiny.
> Corroboree and painting are like our archives.
> This is what the art centre is.
> That's what the Old People wanted.
> It keeps us strong and keeps connection to country and
> gives us strength to live in the white man's world.

CONCLUSION

While there are many opportunities for training for art centre workers in Indigenous art centres in Australia very few provide accredited qualifications, and the usual pathways to university are not easily available. The ICOM-CC Definition of the Profession calls for conservators to have completed a 'university graduate degree' (ICOM-CC 1984: 5.4). For many senior artists and artworkers in remote Indigenous communities English may not

be a first language. Similarly, it is often difficult for conservators to be educated by Indigenous artworkers as to the need in remote community art centres. For these reasons trained experts who are also community leaders are an important part of ensuring effective conservation programs in Australia. The Specialist Certificate in Cross-Cultural Conservation and Heritage has been structured as a programme that provides a tertiary qualification that can articulate to the Grimwade Centre's Masters by Coursework in Cultural Materials Conservation. More importantly, two-way education is essential in conservation in Australia. In this respect, the graduates of the Specialist Certificate are leading the way for conservation in this country.

NOTES

Australia has five geographical locations—Major cities, Inner Regional Australia, Outer Regional Australia, Remote Australia and Very Remote Australia. Very Remote Australia (VRA) is the greatest area but the least populated with 0.84% of the Australian population living in VRA (Royal Flying Doctor Service n.d.). This means that there are vast distances between many communities, sometimes a day or more of continuous car travel. In many communities there are significant periods during the year when it is not possible to travel in or out of community. Both Warmun and Fitzroy Crossing are designated Very Remote.

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Es ist weitgehend bekannt, dass Restaurator:innen damit zu kämpfen haben, die Einflussnahme von immateriellen auf materielle Eigenschaften zuzulassen. Doch ganzheitliche Konservierung erfordert zunehmend die Abkehr von praktischen Fertigkeiten an der Werkbank hin zu einer umfassenden Mitverantwortung und den erforderlichen Kommunikationsfähigkeiten im Restaurierungsprozess. Seit 2005 nehmen alle Studierenden der UCLA/Getty Conservation an einem Kurs teil, in dem sie mit indigenen Museen zusammenarbeiten, die Geschichte von lokalen Gemeinschaften kennenlernen und an Strategien zur Selbstdarstellung dieser arbeiten. Zu dem Kurs gehören vielfältige Aktivitäten, wie gemeinsame Mahlzeiten und Gespräche. Arbeiten am Objekt bedürfen der Genehmigung durch den Rat der Ältesten. Die Wiederbelebung der Sprache – die für lokale Gemeinschaften von entscheidender Bedeutung ist – wird dabei, durch die Einbeziehung lokal verwendeter Begriffe für Materialien und Prozesse in die Dokumentation der Konservierung, betont. Forschungsfragen und -bedürfnisse, die von Kolleg:innen vor Ort kommen, werden bei der Kursarbeit vorrangig berücksichtigt. Viele indigene Museen leiden ähnlich wie nicht-indigene Museen unter dem Verlust der Geschichte der von ihnen bewahrten Sammlungen, so dass die Erforschung der Provenienz einen wichtigen Beitrag leistet. Gemeinschaften, die von Genozid und Wiederbesiedlung betroffen sind, gründen Museen, um ihre Vergangenheit zu rekonstruieren. Den Studierenden die Bedeutung der Sprache und die Rolle des Museums in der Geschichte der Gemeinschaft zu vermitteln, bietet nicht nur einen sinnvollen Kontext für die Konservierung, sondern verlangt von den Studierenden auch, zu hinterfragen, welche vielfältigen Zwecke und Bedeutungen Sammlungen haben können. Entsprechende Interaktionen sind für angehende Restaurator:innen, die ihre eigenen sozialen und kulturellen Zugehörigkeiten als Teil eines Berufs mit spezialisiertem Fachwissen, technologischen und handwerklichen Fertigkeiten sowie einer speziellen Sprache entwickeln, sowohl eine Herausforderung als auch eine Bereicherung. Außerdem ist Bescheidenheit gefordert, denn während Restaurator:innen Expert:innen bleiben, lernen sie gleichzeitig, Ansprüche an die materielle Restaurierung zugunsten von Zielen anderer Formen der kulturellen Konservierung, zurückzustellen.

Curriculum Shifts: Humility in Conservation

Ellen Pearlstein → 143,144

It is well known that conservators struggle with allowing intangible properties to compromise material ones, yet comprehensive conservation increasingly requires a departure from material bench skills toward overall co-stewardship and requisite communication skills. Since 2005, all UCLA/Getty Conservation students have enrolled in a course where they work collaboratively with Indigenous museums, learn tribal history, and consider strategies for self-representation. Multiple engagements such as shared meals and conversations are part of the course, and treatments require approval by the tribal council of Elders. Language revitalization—of crucial importance to Indigenous communities—is stressed by incorporating Indigenous terms for materials and processes in conservation documentation. Research questions and needs coming from our Indigenous colleagues are prioritized for course work. Many Indigenous museums suffer from a loss of history for collections in their care much like non-Indigenous museums, so that researching provenance and parallel items contributes value. Communities subject to genocide and repopulation create museums to help reconstruct their pasts. Teaching students to understand the importance of language and the role of the museum in tribal history provides not only meaningful context but requires students to reconsider what is important in the face of the multiple purposes collections may serve. Yet these interactions are both challenging and rewarding for emerging conservators who are developing their own social and cultural allegiances as part of a profession with specialized expertise, technological and artisanal acumen, and a specialized language. The humility required is one in which conservators remain experts, while learning to compromise material goals for the sake of goals that encompass other types of cultural preservation.

INTANGIBLE PROPERTIES OF HERITAGE

As a field deeply grounded in the material, conservation experienced a paradigm shift when thought leaders acknowledged that not everything could be discovered through substance analysis. In my forthcoming Getty Readings in Conservation book I describe the decade beginning in 2000 as one in which conservators focus on significance, values and intangible heritage (Pearlstein, forthcoming):

"The decade beginning in 2000 is characterized by important scholarship about the role of values in conservation decision making, as well as the rapid uptake of the acknowledgement of intangible

values. Conservation thought leaders focusing on Indigenous collections were acutely aware that their own past practices, including preventive knowledge and scientific treatment strategies, provided little to no insights into the intangible. Lessons learned through field work, and statements of value and significance had not become mainstream in conservation practice and documentation, and, while dialogue has increased, they are still not mainstream in 2021. Conservators who do not find alternate ways to integrate community values still confound or confuse intangible meanings through their material interventions."

Important examples where the intangible is directly expressed through the material are those that are most likely to be compromised through mis-conservation, and misrepresentation while exhibited. Examples of these include filling ceremonial losses contemporary with burial in Mimbres ceramics (Smith, 2010: 135–142), conserving holy or sacred Jewish ritual art (Greene, 1992), and removing as "unoriginal" tattered velvet borders from Armenian needlework modified to be part of a dowry (Pearlstein, 2017). Different realities are privileged when these items are conserved within the narrow focus of material stabilization. It is only through the practice of increased conversation and consultation that conservators have the possibility to understand and translate meanings and their materiality.

Reflecting upon intangible heritage and its protection, we necessarily arrive at the new and important roles conservators must take on. Australian conservator Alison Wain (2014: 55) states specifically that the work of the conservator may need to "…investigate intellectual areas that once have been considered the preserve of curators". She states: "The perception that change is in opposition to the preservation of tangible heritage…is flawed" (Wain, 2014: 53). Conservators have long acknowledged the significance of cultural use, and authors such as Miriam Clavir have noted that what we might categorize as damage may in fact be immaterial preservation (Clavir, 1996: 99–107).

The questions of value and significance have been codified by important studies and through some academic changes in conservation education. Erica Avrami, Randall Mason, and Marta de la Torre's important 2000 Getty Conservation Institute study entitled "Values and Heritage Conservation" introduced the importance of the values inherent in cultural heritage in directing its conservation (Getty Conservation Institute, n.d.). Equally important is the introduction in 2001 of a guide entitled Significance by Roslyn Russell and Kylie Winkworth (2009) for cultural ministers responsible for heritage and the arts in Australia, designed to permit users to assess the significance of such materials in public collections. It was reprinted in 2003 and again, as Significance 2.0, in 2009. Volumes that review philosophical shifts in conservation decision making were meanwhile proliferating (Caple, 2000; Muñoz Viñas, 2005; Applebaum, 2007). Conservation graduate faculty in the U.S., the U.K., and Australia took note, with significance statements being appended to conservation documentation (Pearlstein, 2017), with classes on ethics expanding to include intangible heritage values (Marincola, 2017), and with

stakeholder interactions becoming an essential part of education (Pearlstein, 2008; Nodea and Sloggett, 2021).

Exceptional examples of values-based conservation are provided by Balachandran and McHugh when they discuss collections care as a holistic form of stewardship (2019: 3–24), by Balachandran when she asserts steps taken toward humanizing ancient human remains in her care (2009: 199–222), and by Atkinson et al. when they describe collaborative work with Elders, artists, curators, conservators, and collection managers in revitalizing the southeast Australian Aboriginal practice of making possum skin cloaks (2017: 49–64). The commitment to values-based conservation, along with re-treatability to which conservators are ethically bound, motivated colleagues at the Brooklyn Museum in 2010 to rewrap a male Egyptian mummy dating to the 3rd period C.E. that had been unwrapped in the 1960s (Brooklyn Museum, 2010). Such examples inspire us with their willingness to move away from neutrality, from stability as the primary motivation, and toward procedures requiring extensive conversations that enhance conservation work.

UCLA/GETTY COURSE

It is important to reflect on how graduate conservation education is adapting to impart the requisite skills needed for co-stewardship and collaboration. Since 2005, each of the close to 50 graduates of the UCLA/Getty Program for the Conservation of Cultural Heritage (formerly Conservation of Archaeological and Ethnographic Materials) (Wharton, 2021) has enrolled in a course in which the collections under consideration have been drawn from an Indigenous museum affiliated with a particular nation (Pearlstein, 2008: 305–310). While students are encouraged to be proud of their expertise in materials understanding, documentation, and thoughtful and ethical treatments, they are also supported in recognizing other kinds of expertise that come from a close cultural or familial connection to collection items where intangible values can be relayed. In working closely with these knowledge bearers to interpret collections, students are required to demonstrate humility, including learning to respect communications from sources outside of academia, learning to limit their own use of jargon, and learning to receive and extend hospitality as part of the process.

Indigenous museums in the United States play significant roles in sharing tribal histories and providing cultural self-representation and valuable insights into ongoing struggles and triumphs. It is crucial to not generalize expectations and practices when working with Indigenous caretakers, but instead to pay attention to individual histories. While some museums—for example those at the Pueblos of Zuni and Acoma— have websites that describe building on unbroken histories of occupation in their ancestral lands (A:shiwi A:wan Museum and Heritage Center; SKY CITY CULTURAL CENTER & HAAK'U MUSEUM), many communities and museums do not. Staff at Indigenous museums in southern California are more typically working to revitalize language and traditional practices and

recover cultural items that passed out of the communities' hands during periods of genocide. In the case of recently purchased or donated collection items that have been in circulation among traders and collectors for decades prior to acquisition, there is not always a known thread of ownership and use that conservators might utilize to contextualize their own approaches and decision-making. In the case of baskets—a significant cultural tradition in California—identification of materials in consultation with weavers → FIGURE 1–3 and research into comparable examples with detailed collections information sometimes found in older colonial museums, assists the Indigenous museum in understanding which band may have made this item, and how use has been described and evidenced. In other words, conservators may use their skills to help in recovering information of value to the Indigenous caretakers, an approach that requires an understanding of history and context and not just materials. Such needs, which appear to contradict the knowledge exchange expected when working with Indigenous cultural caretakers, are prioritized exactly because they are of service to the community and museum.

LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION

Since conservation documentation is considered part of the permanent and generally trusted record for associated heritage, it is crucial that its production is critically reviewed alongside all other conservation practices. The documentation produced by conservators working with Indigenous communities may be read by Elders, by community members visiting museums to study traditional items they wish to replicate, or by other researchers (Ledford and McCarty, 2019). As part of the museum record, conservation documentation is maintained and migrated, and updated and expanded. Conservation documentation may explicitly include references to significance and values that informed decision-making, and it may record information shared by Elders, and treatments made by Elders with specific skills (Heald and Ash-Milby, 1998: 334–345).

Given the importance of the role of documentation, conservators have the opportunity to incorporate Indigenous words that designate cultural materials and practices. Such a practice shows respect for language revitalization efforts and increases the importance of such documentation for current and future readers. In the example of California nations, language revitalization is amongst the highest priorities for cultural preservation (Hinton, 1998: 83–93). Linguist scholars Nettle and Romaine point out that "Because the loss of indigenous languages is tied closely to the usurpation of indigenous lands, the destruction of indigenous habitats, and the involuntary incorporation of indigenous peoples into the larger society (generally into the lower-class margins of that society), language death has become part of a human rights struggle" (Nettle and Romaine, 2000). As conservators enter into more collaborative work with greater respect for intangible values and knowledge holders, we are privileging the social side of conservation, and we can take steps to promote these human rights values.

1
Graduate students Kasey Hamilton and Austin Anderson look on as Ellen Pearlstein and weaver Eva Salazar discuss a Kumeyaay basket at the Barona Cultural Center and Museum. Image: Laurie Egan-Hedley.

2
Cahuilla weaver Roseann Hamilton uses a head loupe to examine a basket in the UCLA/ Getty Conservation Program labs. Image: Ellen Pearlstein.

3
Weaver Eva Salazar demonstrates splitting juncus. Image: Ellen Pearlstein.

4
UCLA/Getty graduate student Emily Rezes is assisted in weaving by Eva Salazar. Image: Ellen Pearlstein.

5
UCLA/Getty graduate student Skyler Jenkins is assisted in weaving by Eva Salazar. Image: Ellen Pearlstein.

An example drawn from instruction at the UCLA/Getty Program in the Conservation for Cultural Heritage is the request for students to access and utilize Kumeyaay language terms when working with the Barona Cultural Center and Museum in Lakeside, California. In the case of basketry, students are able to access sources for the Kumeyaay language terms for plants used as weaving elements and dye materials (Hinton and Barona Band 2011; Moerman, 1998; Salazar, 2022; Wilken-Robertson, 2017). Students learn, for example, that long and short juncus, which derive from different growth elevations and produce different coloration, are referenced by different Indigenous terms. Students utilize common plant names as well as Latin names for genus and species, but up to the recent past, the use of Indigenous terminology had not been considered. Examining who is considered as the audience for our work, which language traditions we promote (Khandekar, 2021), and how we might shift toward greater legibility requires humility on the part of conservators. This is part of the paradigm shift as we consider ways to demonstrate respect and to further assure that our conservation documentation is reaching its fullest audience.

CONCLUSIONS

Conservation graduate curricula plays the role of both responding to while also promoting significant developments in the conservation profession. The emergent focus on intangible values and significance of heritage has created needs for pedagogical responses. While maintaining the emphasis on preparing students technically for the roles they will encounter, conservation faculty are also considering ways to permit their students to "create identity and community in the present" (UCLA/Getty Mission Statement, 2020) and "[work] with source communities and recognize their right to make decisions on how to best preserve their heritage" (Grimwade Centre for Conservation, n.d.). These include enacting curricular shifts that permit students to develop skills previously absent from conservation education.

At the UCLA/Getty Program in the Conservation of Cultural Heritage these efforts in skills development began in 2005 with the required course offering in which students work with Indigenous instructors and an Indigenous repository. This course has left a marked impression upon students (Salas, 2022), and more than half of the graduates have earned positions in museums with Indigenous holdings as their majority collections (UCLA/Getty n.d.). Only in 2020 did respect for Indigenous language revitalization sharpen the focus on ways in which our own documentation might contribute to these efforts.

Conservation students identify strongly and proudly with a shared professional culture that takes pride in its considerable skill, including specialized expertise and technological and artisanal acumen, and a specialized language. The humility required to work more collaboratively is one in which conservators retain their expertise, but they are able to compromise material goals for the sake of goals that encompass other types of preservation.

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Der Begriff „kulturelles Erbe“ hat in den letzten Jahrzehnten an Bedeutung und Reichweite gewonnen. Das Anforderungsprofil an praktische Fähigkeiten sowie das Wissen über Konservierung, mussten sich dementsprechend anpassen. Weltweit verändern sich durch den Klimawandel, eine rapide Urbanisierung, Massentourismus und soziale Bewegungen, die Herausforderungen für eine gesellschaftlich sinnvolle Pflege des kulturellen Erbes. Dieser Beitrag wird sich auf einige der Themen, Ansätze und Werkzeuge konzentrieren, die bei den Aktivitäten der ICCROM zum Kompetenzaufbau eingesetzt werden. Der Inhalt stützt sich auf Überlegungen und Erfahrungen, die bei ICCROM gemacht wurden, und kommentiert die neuen Fähigkeiten, die für künftige Generationen von Restaurator:innen erforderlich sind.

New Skills and Tools for Conservation Professionals in a Changing World

Valerie Magar → 143

The term heritage has expanded its meaning and scope during the last decades. The profile of skills and knowledge required by conservation professionals has had to adapt accordingly. Furthermore, changing conditions worldwide, triggered by climate change, rapid urbanisation, mass tourism, and social movements have created or enhanced challenges to care for heritage in a meaningful manner for society. This paper will focus on some of the issues, approaches and tools used in ICCROM's capacity building activities. The content draws on reflections made and lessons learned at ICCROM, and comments on new skills required for new generations of conservation professionals.

A CHANGING AND CHALLENGING WORLD

Conservation of heritage has always been about the long term. We endeavour to protect and maintain objects and sites, so that their stories can be remembered, celebrated, and studied in the present, and for the future. For this, since the second half of the 20th century, university programmes around the world were developed to train conservation professionals, with highly specialised skills to analyse, document, assess and undertake conservation treatments on valuable elements of our past. In the last decades, however, we have been facing increasing challenges affecting all corners of the world. We have therefore needed to embrace changes in the way we consider heritage, in the way we act, and in the way we train new generations of conservation professionals (Pye and Sully, 2007).

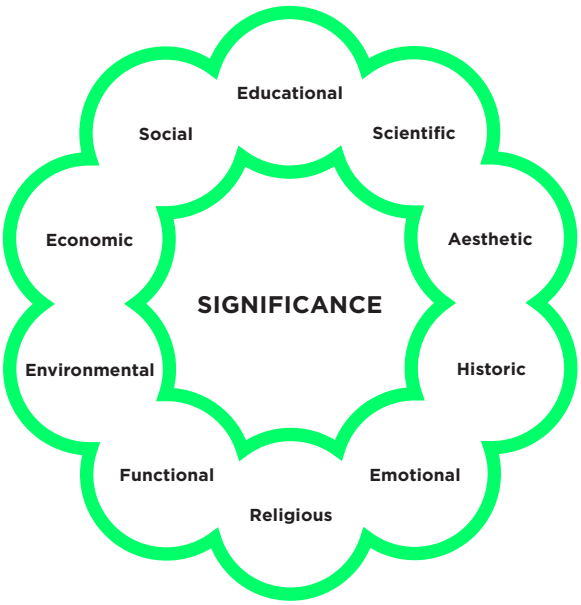
We have seen the notion of cultural heritage expand to an incredible diversity of elements in recent decades. If we consider for example an image from Varanasi in India, along the Ganges River. → FIGURE 1 What is heritage in this image? Is it the temples, the artefacts, the ceremonies, the river itself? Or is everything meaningful, including people and their actions? The answer may have been different half a century ago, but now a far better question would be to ask what is not heritage in that image. Similar situations may be found in all corners of the world, where more diverse meanings of heritage are now accepted, understanding that this will continue evolving over time.

The range of values associated with heritage, including tangible and intangible elements, are intricately linked to who is looking at it, from various professional or personal perspectives, and these can include scientific, aesthetic, historic, educational, social, functional,

1
Varanasi. Image: Ken Wieland. Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic licence.

religious, environmental, economic, or even emotional values. → FIGURE 2 There has also been increasing recognition of the need to consider nature and culture together and link their conservation in joint strategies, acknowledging not only the logic behind this approach but also the fact that in many societies the two are "complementary and indissociable" (Larsen and Wijesuriya, 2017: 142).

We are also facing increasing challenges, due to climate change (Harvey and Perry, 2015; IPCC, 2022), urbanization and population growth, migrations, conflicts, and development projects, and we are often seeing less resources devoted to heritage conservation. This has been made more acute by the crisis triggered by the Covid-19 pandemic (UNESCO, 2020; ICOM, 2021). In this changing world, how heritage and its conservation are perceived will continue to shape the new skills that need to come forward. One key element will be our ability to be able to demonstrate and communicate that heritage has a value and can impact the quality of life, that it can lead to development of our society, with actual benefits for local communities, that it can increase the sense of place, and can lead to better educational skills and personal development (Villaseñor and Magar, 2012; Historic England, 2014; CHCfE Consortium, 2015). Heritage can play a fundamental role in sustainable development, but how do we make this happen, and how do we make it visible to people inside and outside our sector? Those are some of the issues which have been at the centre of discussions, and which underpin the content of many courses at ICCROM (ICCROM, 2020; Magar, King and Jigyasu, 2020; Loddo et al., 2021). ICCROM's actions are aligned with the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), and we strive to place conservation in a meaningful way in the 2030 Agenda



2
Values associated with heritage. Image: Valerie Magar.

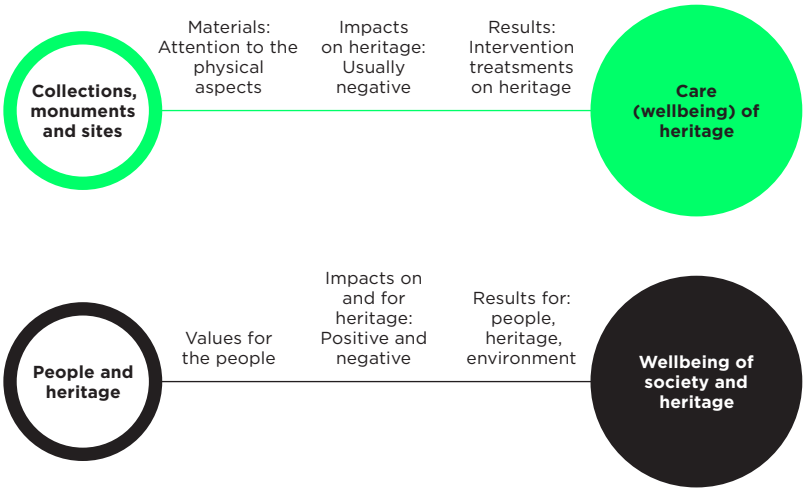
for Sustainable development. Sustainability is seen as a wide-ranging theme, that cuts across all areas of our activities, and where heritage can play a significant role for more participative societies, built around the respect for diversity.

CONSERVATION AND THE ROLE OF HERITAGE IN SOCIETY

There has been a paradigm shift in the way we work. We have moved away from traditional conservation, which focused almost entirely on collections and sites and their material and physical aspects, analysing mostly the negative impacts on heritage, and leading to conservation treatments that cared for the wellbeing of heritage. We now concentrate on people and heritage, understanding the values for the people, analysing the negative and positive impacts on our collections and sites, and promoting activities that lead to a meaningful role of heritage in our society (Court and Wijesuriya, 2015). → FIGURE 3

A number of recent studies have focused on the role of heritage and wellbeing (Fujiwara, Cornwall and Dolan, 2014; Historic England, 2014; Heritage, Tissot and Barnaje, 2019; Taçon and Baker, 2019), and how heritage can have a significant impact not only on social, economic, cultural, and environmental aspects, but also on psychological, spiritual and physical aspects as well (Ander et al., 2019). This has been made much more evident during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Our heritage collections and sites can therefore not be considered as isolated islands (Larsen and Logan, 2018), which are the sole responsibility of conservation professionals. We now need to have technical skills and knowledge, and critical and ethical thinking to work on our heritage, but also be able to work with other disciplines; this has now long been established, although we sometimes



3
Paradigm shift in heritage conservation. Image: ICCROM.

still struggle to put down barriers between disciplines. We are now also seeing the need to work with other sectors, and particularly to have the capacity to work with people and communities, including minorities or marginalised groups, without losing the specificity of our own area of specialization. This includes having the capacity to work with artists, creators, conservation scientists, curators, institution managers, but also with education, information and awareness professionals, decisions-makers such as mayors, governors and other politicians, as well as economists, urban planners, civil protection, firefighters, the health sector, and broad sectors of the civil society.

CONSERVATION, OLD AND NEW SKILLS AND ATTITUDES

Working with each of these communities, and particularly with civil society is not always easy. It is time-consuming. It is not always straightforward, and it often takes time to understand who the community or communities are, including all stakeholders and rightsholders (Larsen and Buckley, 2017). There will often be conflicting interests, and we cannot perform a balancing act. We will need to make choices, based on listening, respecting diverging points of view, building trust, and finding ways to communicate effectively. This is the only way to achieve informed decisions that may lead to sustainable solutions. This affects conservation decisions, but also presentation of heritage collections and sites, and can lead to a redefinition of the narratives used for the objects, including those for contested heritage (Byrne, 2004; Ndoro and Wijesuriya, 2015).

There are a number of tools and methods available for this, which we can use to achieve better results. These include, particularly when working with communities, interviews and community meetings and assemblies, consultations or crowdsourcing information, or using tools such as cultural mapping or methods for impact assessments (Byrne and Nugent, 2004; ICCROM et al., 2022). There are existing publications also to deal with conflicting values and needs, such as the triple bottom line tool, which assesses decisions against their impact at social, economic and environmental levels (Drewe, 2008; Nocca, 2017). Other useful tools comprise methods for conflict resolution, or participatory approaches to assess heritage in situations of conflict such as ICCROM's PATH and Insight recent publications (Tandon, Harrowell and Selter, 2021; Tandon and Chmutina, 2021).

Each approach and tool will have a different level of participation, with consequently different results, from informing, to consulting, to involving, to collaborating, and finally empowering. Each will serve a different purpose, which needs to be clearly understood by all parts and communicated to everyone involved in the process (Ndoro and Wijesuriya, 2015). Heritage policies may not always be in line with customary laws of indigenous or traditional groups. The main aim is to achieve equitable and participatory management systems.

The skills of conservation professionals will need to continue focusing on conservation and restoration practices, in order to ensure that high quality conservation can be achieved. Only with a good

understanding of theory and practice can broader challenges be faced, including those of climate change, which will require understanding and resolving changes in the behaviour of materials and structures. The skills will also need to consider project management, including team and partnership working, process management and change management. Most importantly, conservation professionals need to be able to understand, compile, use and share data, often involving new tools, such as those offered by digital media and artificial intelligence, to offer enable more detailed and finer assessment, modelling and monitoring tools and methods, with comparable data, leading to informed decision-making. Communication finally, is a key element in the skills for conservation professionals. This is fundamental to ensure exchanging of information among peers, securing peer-review, consultation and sharing advice, but also communication with other sectors, including other professionals but also society in general. With such vast requirements for skills, attitudes, behaviours and knowledge, it is clear that not all may master all elements, but having a good basis of those elements is required to then specialise into an area of the discipline. → FIGURE 4

Including new skills will lead to behaviours allowing creativity, strategic thinking, being open to change and cooperation, being aware of limits, and being able to ask for help, humility, flexibility, clarity in what we do and say, and respect for heritage, and for different voices

4
New skills.
Image: Valerie Magar, ICCROM.

and narratives on heritage. Reflection, debate and inspiration, coupled with creativity must always be at the centre of the conservation discipline, considering the value and uniqueness of our living heritage.

This will hopefully lead to strong materials knowledge coupled with ethics, strong data to showcase the impact of conservation, but also fundamental knowledge about governance systems linked to heritage and of wider local, national and international concerns that will affect our collections, directly or indirectly (Taçon and Baker, 2019).

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Heritage was never an island. It is now clearly understood as a much broader and more complex ecosystem, involving numerous actors. In order to be able to preserve our heritage collections and sites, we need to see issues that apparently seem beyond heritage, and place our profession with a strong voice in this larger system with unprecedented cultural and environmental change, and marked by unstable and shifting political landscapes. Having skills to analyse the bigger picture, and act in it will be fundamental for the future of our profession. By also enhancing the visibility of conservation, it will be possible to insert it in longer-term plans and visions. Future generations will need to connect our practice to the world, and ensure that heritage is comprised in the political agenda. The future of heritage, deeply associated with healthy societies and a healthier planet, will hopefully be recognised in its full importance.

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How to Care—the Evolution of Standards

Dieses Kapitel ist aus einer persönlichen Perspektive geschrieben, die auf meinen jahrzehntelangen Erfahrungen als Expertin für die Erhaltung von kulturellem Erbe und auf meiner Rolle als Mitglied britischer und europäischer Standardisierungsausschüsse für die Erhaltung von materiellen Kulturgütern aufbaut. Zunächst wird der Begriff der „Standards" näher betrachtet, anschließend werden Ursache und Folgen einer zunehmenden Standardisierung erörtert. Außerdem wird eine Gefahr im Standardisierungsprozess aufgezeigt, die darin besteht, dass versucht wird, Präferenzen anstatt des fundamental Wichtigen zu normieren. Darüber hinaus bieten Standardisierungsprozesse aber die Möglichkeit, zuzuhören und die Beteiligung von lokalen Gemeinschaften zu erhöhen. Ausgehend von meinen Erfahrungen werde ich darlegen, welche Lehren für die Konservierungspraxis, aus den Auswirkungen von Standards und den dahinter stehenden Prozessen und Annahmen zu ziehen sind. Das Kapitel endet mit der Betrachtung der Entwicklung von Standards in der präventiven Konservierung und einer Erörterung der Entscheidungskriterien, die zu ihrer Gestaltung herangezogen werden. Über die Berücksichtigung der Entwicklung von Standards kann die Fähigkeit von Fachleuten der Sammlungspflege verbessert werden, die Verantwortlichkeit ihrer Arbeit und ihre Wirksamkeit in der Praxis zu überprüfen.

The Pitfalls and Possibilities of Standardisation

Jane Henderson → 142

This chapter is written from a personal perspective, drawing on experiences working as a heritage conservation professional for many decades, and from my role as a member of British and European standards committees for conservation of tangible cultural heritage. The chapter will define standards and then consider the cause and consequence of standards proliferation, the danger of attempting to standardise preference rather than what is fundamental and the opportunity to use the standards process to listen and increase participation. I will use my experiences to examine lessons for conservation practice about the impact of standards and the process and assumptions that sit behind them. The chapter will end by considering the evolution of standards in preventive conservation and discuss the decision-making criteria utilised to shape them. Considering the evolution of standards can improve the ability of collections care professionals to scrutinise the accountability of their production and their effectiveness in practice.

INTRODUCTION

Standards could be conceived of as neutral or a natural good, offering direction and guidance towards better and more harmonious practice. This is neither the only perspective nor the only assessment of their impact on cultural heritage practice.

DEFINING STANDARDS

It is helpful to precede any discussion about standards with clarification of the term. In common usage the term 'standards' is used interchangeably for rigid rules, benchmarks, guidance, or even personal preference. In this chapter the term is used in the following way: standards 'consistently measure ways of producing objects, processes, and services. Standards help to ensure uniformity and reduce complexity, they give us confidence to follow a common method and make it easier to make decisions' (Henderson and Dai, 2013).

A useful classification tool for standards is to describe how they were created. The conception of de jure or de facto standards describes their origin and informs the priorities of those constructing the standard (Henderson and Dai, 2013). The distinction can guide their appropriate application, or indeed expose use inconsistent with original intent. A de jure standard is one issued by a formal body, it carries the support of appointed experts, it may not represent consensus

and normally comes with measures to ensure its application and review. A de jure standard is the kind you might expect to govern the safe design and manufacture of an electric plug. A de facto standard emerges from the sector, it becomes the norm as it is adopted and used, perhaps representing best practice or convenience for its creators. As time passes, a de facto standard may become sub-optimal, but the cost of change can mean it becomes locked in, like the layout of a keyboard or the gauge of a railway network.

Both de facto and de jure standards operate in conservation. Notably Garry Thomson's book *The Museum Environment* (Thomson, 1978, 1986) was one of the first sources to make comprehensive environmental recommendation metrics which quickly emerged as a consensus (de facto standard) within what was then and remains a colonially constrained international museum structure. De jure standards are the more formal standards, such as those produced by the European Committee for Standardization (CEN, French: Comité Européen de Normalisation). Formal standards from CEN have an explicit scope as they are produced by and for defined groups, as set out in their introduction.

STANDARD PRODUCTION AND COMPLIANCE

The European committee responsible for our sector is known by the following title: 'CEN/TC/346 for the Conservation of tangible cultural heritage'. The committee has many working groups, each with a specialist focus, such as exhibition cases or the conservation of waterlogged wood ('About CEN'). I am a member of working group11, a group which has been responsible for devising standards for: the conservation process and decision making; for procurement; for principles of documentation; and for terminology. CEN/TC/346 is a core source of standards for conservation, however although de jure standards are endorsed, they are neither necessarily comprehensive, nor exclusive so other forms of standard may govern aspects of conservation practice. It is valuable to consider the many sources of standards **(TABLE 1) IN THE SECTOR.**

The originating body for each standard will shape its creation, scope, and evolution. Formal standards agencies such as CEN & government bodies can normally require compliance. Professional bodies might produce standards that encapsulate the collective wisdom of the sector, but compliance is more based on the motivation of professionals to engage. Professional body standards tend to become dominant if they are effective within the context and priorities of the users. Professional accreditation schemes and collection management standards such as Spectrum (Introduction to Spectrum 5.0—Collections Trust) are examples of these. Large and influential organisations may set standards simply because they have the time and resource to develop them. In these cases, compliance is perhaps utilitarian in that the creators have identified a gap in provision and produced something of use, so it is adopted. The Oddy test (Oddy, 1973) or the Getty's guide to LED lighting (Institute Canadian Conservation, 2020) being such examples.

Standards agencies	Government, inter-governmental and non-departmental government bodies	Professional bodies	Large influential Institutions
CEN European Committee for standardization (Example National bodies) ● British Standards Institution (BSI) ● Bureau de Normalisation (NBN) ● Deutsches Institut für Normung (DIN) ● Standards Norway (SN) ● ISO—The International Organization for Standardization worldwide federation of national standards bodies (Example National bodies) ● Standards Australia ● Standardization Administration of the P. R. China (SAC) ● Standards Organisation of Nigeria (SON)	● Historic Scotland ● Historic England ● Ministry for Heritage and Cultural Activities Italy ● ICCROM ● Arts Council England	● IIC ● ICOM-CC ● ECCO ● Museums Associations ● American society of heating, refrigerating and air-conditioning engineers (ASHRAE)	● Getty Conservation Institute ● Canadian Conservation Institute ● British Museum

1
Examples of different types of agencies

STANDARDS PROLIFERATION

Unfortunately, sometimes a problem is observed or imagined, and practitioners consider (sometimes against available evidence) that the root cause is a lack of standards to direct behaviour. The actual cause may relate to factors such as poor communication or a lack of value sharing. This leads to standards proliferation; a new standard is produced which solves no problem beyond the projection of the authors' ego and the fundamental problem continues undisturbed.

Everyone has the right to deliver and develop standardisation projects. Where developed for an operating context that the creators are familiar with, they may even harmonise practice and promote efficiency. However, when those involved aggrandise their solution and seek to expand its scope beyond the originating institution the standard grows beyond its initial context and in seeking to determine how things should be done elsewhere becomes clumsy or inappropriate. Scaling standards up is risky, unless the value of the newly developed standard is tested in multiple contexts and mutual benefits are resolved. Overreach without careful calibration will exhaust the energy and resources of the creators of the standard which will then fade into irrelevance having sucked in precious resources that could have been spent on buying shelves and fixing roofs.

Standards that are not justified, elaborated, or explained, simply exist. They are neither de jure (enforced) nor de facto (adopted) yet

their existence (when observed) creates the sense that conservation standards can be ignored with no consequences, or even that they should be avoided.

IMAGINARY STANDARDS (THAT SERVE YOUR MOTIVES)

One form of 'standard' that proves both tenacious and restrictive is the imagined standard. Our work is haunted by the spectre of a disgruntled conservator inculcating every event with a prohibition of all meaningful activity. The 'conservator says no' mantra has been used to ban photography in galleries, any form of touching and has required the installation of energy intense HVAC systems to create equilibrium-defying artificial environmental conditions. This 'standard' has sometimes been deployed without any conservator involvement or is implemented by conservators concerned to be seen to be complying with standards. Such standards may be totally unsuitable for context and can even break effective habits of care leading to poorer care (Ntieche, 2021). Such examples of intransience undermine the concept of standards and damages the reputation of those cited as being the source. Tackling the negative impact of imaginary standards is one of the more nebulous battles of conservation and yet it is an essential one.

BEYOND THE SCOPE OF A STANDARD

In a similar way to imaginary standards, the use of a standard outside of its correct scope is problematic. The insistence of highly controlled humidity outside of 'major national museums, old or new, and for all important new museum building' (Thomson, 1986: 268) is one of the most ubiquitous in the sector. Such misapplication can be avoided if feedback is actively solicited especially from outside the group. It is easier to identify and map the scope of de jure standards as this will be described within the standard and the process for revision is also made explicit. Although they may feel benign, de facto standards can prove surprisingly tenacious. Once they are locked-in, the critical determining factor for changing the situation is not the efficacy of the standard, but the cost of change whether in resource or reputation (Henderson, 2018).

THE BASICS OF HOW EUROPEAN STANDARDS WORK

I am one of many professionals who contribute to the work of the CEN Technical Committee (TC), TC346 Conservation of cultural heritage. Within the TC there are several working groups and each WG will work on one standard at a time with representatives from across Europe. In the pre-pandemic era this involved much travel and meeting in venues around Europe but now, of course, the work is conducted virtually. Each country represented at CEN has a national standards body that contributes to the process. Any national committee can put forward a proposal for a standard that they are prepared to lead. This proposal is voted on and if sufficient national groups approve the concept it is allocated to an existing TC or if necessary, a new one is created.

Once initiated, representatives from many countries attempt to write a standard that is 'normative' meaning that it defines what you must do and that makes sense in each country and for different type of organisations. Each iteration of the process is put back for consultation or approval by member countries. There is a very rigid way of responding to consultation—which supports the work of editing the standard. When feedback is not supplied on the standardised format it is harder to consider. This process may feel draconian, but it helps maintain a (just) manageable process when integrating multiple responses all of which must be addressed. This is an interesting lesson that regardless of the passion with which we hold our own view it can be negated if we are unable to present it in a format that others can use. Sometimes it is necessary to commit effort to contribute to a process out of respect for the burden that our opinion has on the workload of others.

CONSENSUS OR DOMINATION

Standards work best when everyone has their voice heard. Developing a standard may take three years of work and once completed the TC passes the proposal to a vote of national committees where countries can vote against a proposal regardless of whether they have participated in constructing it. If there are sufficient 'no' votes all the work is lost. It is possible for a standard to be voted down by the same parties who were in the room when it was created. This illustrates the distinction between a majority decision and consensus. Progressing by majority decision does not always lead to satisfaction and harmonisation: it can lead to a withdrawal of consent and silent resentment. In the formalised procedure of the CEN, this can be seen in the votes or abstentions, but the more general lesson is that in any standards process you may win the vote but loose the argument.

LESSONS IN LISTENING

One of the things that I found astonishing was how long it took to write a standard. For every single word or concept, its necessary to think about many different perspectives and details. It forces each participant to examine their practices and beliefs about the topic. In participating in this process, I have seen the best and worst of international cooperation. An event I witnessed at one of my first meetings was where delegates were discussing how best to arrange the lunch break (have a break or a working lunch) which quickly descended into a national disagreement about the correct way to do things. One delegate sat down to eat lunch in the restaurant then another grabbed their meal and carried it back to the meeting room. The original delegate proceeded to turn their back on the meeting and continue to eat. This elevation from preference to non-negotiable principle was illuminating, no one had a satisfactory outcome and both sides left the encounter more firmly entrenched in their own perspective.

To devise standards, it is important to separate processes from principles. To distinguish between 'this is how I like to do things' and

'this is how all those who practice professionally should do things'. This calls on the individual to examine their world view, which is easier if they have the opportunity and capacity to understand other peoples' perspective. The mindset that 'my approach is the only one' is narrow and unconstructive. People can and have used standards to push their own personal institutional or national narrative or to dominate a discussion. A well-known heuristic 'my side-bias' (Stanovich and Topiak, 2013) describes precisely the difficulty that even highly intelligent people have because they bring their own opinions and attitudes to a topic and struggle to recognise alternative paths. To move beyond this instinct requires an incredible finesse, amazing listening skills and tremendous humility (Pearlstein, 2022).

THE POLITICS OF STANDARDS

The politics of standards is illuminated by the fact that so many standards currently operating in our sector represent the opportunities and possibilities of those with power and resources. The implications arising from a de jure standard for documenting objects are spelt out vividly by Greene (2016) who examined museum documentation and tracked the evolution of standardised columns and headings from ledger books to software showing that cultural information was omitted but location information was retained. Greene describes these 'silences of omission' (Greene, 2016) as serving to remind readers of the lack of neutrality of data systems. In conservation the continuity pressure of the standards developed by Thomson for 'major national museums' (Thomson, 1986: 268) have appeared worldwide and within loan agreements with a net effect of restricting loans and thus access in contexts that simply do not conform to the original scope (Henderson, 2020). A recognition of the political implications of standards allows any assumed neutrality to be set aside and the issues addressed. It is not the standard itself that is problematic, it is the extension of its application beyond context that leads to so much harm. Recognising that standards sit in a socio-political landscape and capture cultural norms and privilege is a simple first step in minimising this harm.

It is easier to practice a bias without regard to its negative impact on others when you believe that it is for their own good. Therefore, by examining any assumed or unconscious sense that standards are inevitably virtuous we can consider the implications of standards beyond their description of technical processes or targets and ask if they acknowledge context or attempt restitution. There is no clearer illustration of this than the growing ethical recognition of restitution; Sarr and Savoy comment that it 'seems necessary, within the framework of reflections concerning restitutions, to demystify western notions of cultural heritage and preservation, (Sarr and Savoy, 2018: 33). Standards of conservation have been used to oppose restitution and mask cultural assumptions that sit upon the infrastructure of power, control and exploitation.

"The question of a life of an object is often thought of solely from the unique perspective of their conservation. This question

often plays the part of a hidden fear on the part of professionals and the public at large. This often leads to regular issues questioning the adequate competencies throughout African museums in regard to the conservation of objects without ever having a larger discussion about how these societies were able to conserve items produced there over a number of centuries within their respective climates and ecologies. If indeed the question concerning the various ways of conserving these objects is important it will only be facilitated by the project and restitution" (Sarr and Savoy, 2018: 33 f.).

EVOLUTION OF STANDARDS

Tracing how a standard has been conceived through to how it is delivered can offer some insight into its perspective, purpose, and impact. It is also possible to see a shift in approach to the way that standards have been developed and emerged over time **TABLE 2**. In the past some of the most influential standards came from observation of safe conditions. The famous wartime storage of art from the UK's National Gallery in caves at Manod Quarry allowed conservators to observe that the caves provided conditions which reduced signs of damage. This allowed such known safe conditions to be reproduced in galleries where the resources, climate and collection might justify such a precautionary approach. Pragmatic standards such as the (now irrelevant but nonetheless persistent (Surrey County Council, 2022)) target of <75 microwatts per lumen for UV light were governed by practical considerations based on the ubiquity of the tungsten lamp. Unfortunately, some rather more negative qualities such as habit and dogma also informs standard development and implementation.

In the late 1980s onwards it becomes more common to see standards evolve towards tolerance limits based on a combination of rigorous scientific experimentation and an increasing awareness of climate and sustainability. Standards began to be more informed by the combination of different factors such as light and pollution but nonetheless the limits of research meant that we continued to use proxy values for collection care such as human health targets for air quality in collection stores. In the last few decades, we have seen collection needs, user needs, and stainability come together in both de jure and de facto standards. The concept of acceptable rates of damage popularised by Ashley Smith (1995) is represented in ideas

2
Criteria for setting standards past, present and future

Past	Present	Future
● Observation ● Study of composition and decay ● Known Safety ● Deliverable ● Standardisation ● Habit/Dogma	● Rigorous scientific experimentation ● Combined properties ● Proxy values ie human health ● Whole collection needs opportunities ● User needs ● Sustainability ● Lifetime	● From ordinal to process ● Approaches to risk ● cultural deficit ● Tolerance limits ● Life experience ● New technological possibilities ● Authentic practice

about Just Noticeable Difference and acceptable lifetimes which has enabled more thoughtful approach to intergenerational needs.

I hope that in the future we will see standards move away from ordinal standards (descriptions based on ordinal numbers) to process standards which help describe a process or way to do things, whilst maintaining the opportunity for new technical possibilities. I hope that our future standards will start to acknowledge cultural deficit and will look more at what we prepared to tolerate and for what benefit. I hope that we broaden the concept of lifetimes to life experiences (Henderson, 2020).

CONCLUSION

Considering the evolution of standards can enable professionals to be critical of the accountability of their production and their effectiveness in practice. An understanding of the origin of standards, seeking out multiple views and maintaining an openness to listen and adapt will fuel a healthy process of standards evolution. Failing to understand the criteria for their creation will prevent intelligent adaptation based of founding principles. Within every standards project the opportunity should be taken to ask if it is really needed, whether its scope is well considered and whether there may be negative unforeseen consequences from standard proliferation. Those who seek to promulgate standards with no understanding of context are at best vain or ignorant but at worst they divert resources and damage collection care.

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Konservierung fängt mit Dokumentation an. Die Bedeutung einer detaillierten Erfassung von Objekten gehört zu den Standardverfahren der Sammlungsverwaltung in einem Museum, aber ihre zentrale Funktion zeigt sich erst in der praktischen Umsetzung vor Ort und insbesondere dann, wenn ein hohes Risiko für die Objekte besteht, wie etwa bei Wanderausstellungen. In diesem Kapitel möchte ich mich auf ein kürzlich durchgeführtes Projekt beziehen, bei dem, während des Lockdowns im letzten Jahr, vorübergehend 115 Kunstwerke, aus dem Philippine Center in New York, nach Manila zurückgeführt wurden. Ursprünglich sollte ein Datalogger im Inneren und Äußeren der sechs Kisten installiert werden, um Informationen über Temperaturen und Erschütterungen zu erfassen. Dieser Plan konnte jedoch nicht umgesetzt werden, denn wir mussten uns mit dem Verpacken und Versenden beeilen, um den nächsten verfügbaren Frachtflug aus New York, im Februar 2020 zu erwischen. Die Kunstwerke gerieten durch diese Situation sozusagen in Vergessenheit, was die Ankunft in Manila erschwerte. Kurier und Zoll gaben die Kunstwerke schließlich für das Nationalmuseum der Philippinen frei, denn wir hatten diese zuvor ausführlich dokumentiert, gesichert und ihre Provenienz bescheinigt. Durch vorbeugende, konservatorische Maßnahmen wurden die Risiken während der unerwartet langen Reise außerdem minimiert. Dennoch waren wir schlussendlich erleichtert, dass die Mindestanforderungen für die Sicherheit der Wanderausstellung von uns gewährleistet wurden.

Art in Limbo: Logistical Challenges, Cultural Differences and the Complications of Collection Access During the Pandemic

Ana Maria Theresa P. Labrador → 142,143

Conservation starts with documentation. While the significance of detailed recording is a standard practice in a museum's collections management, its translation on the ground and its necessity becomes acute during high risk episodes, such as during traveling exhibitions. In this paper, I would like to focus on a recent program involving the temporary repatriation of 115 artworks from the Philippine Center in New York to Manila amid the lockdown last year. Having planned with a US-based conservator to use this opportunity to elicit information about temperatures and vibration, we were hoping to install dataloggers inside and outside the six crates but did not materialize. Instead, it became a transaction of making haste packing and shipping to play catchup with the next available cargo flight out of New York in February 2020. As the situation cast the artworks into oblivion, so to speak, it turned into a stressful episode even upon arriving in Manila. Eventually the courier and the customs released the artworks to the National Museum of the Philippines because of our detailed documentation of the artworks, securing them and attesting to their provenance. Preventive conservation measures also insured minimizing risks during the unexpected long journey, although we were relieved that we observed the basic minimum of the traveling exhibition.

INTRODUCTION

In 1974, more than a hundred representative artworks selected by the preeminent artist and art manager Arturo Luz were brought to New York City from Manila to grace the walls in anticipation of the inauguration of the Philippine Center New York (PCNY) on Fifth Avenue in Midtown Manhattan. The prestigious address was meant to signal the aspirations of a nation striving to convey a cosmopolitan and international outlook.

This took place at a controversial period of Philippine history in which self-censorship became the norm as then President Ferdinand Marcos extended his rule beyond the constitutional requisites (cf. Le, 2018). In 1974, the Martial Law was declared two years earlier, the then grandiose Cultural Center of the Philippines was on its fifth year and hosted for the first time the Miss Universe Contest at the brand-new Folk Arts Theater. Such dissonant mix of events of the country's recent past became fertile ground for Filipino artists to create and experiment with materials, styles, and techniques. A representation of these were flown to and proudly displayed in the PCNY offices.

Eventually, these were referred to as the Philippine Center Core Collection of 1974 (PCNY Collection), initially selected to epitomize the Filipino national identity following the prevalent style of the international arts scene of the 1970s. These can generally be classified as modern and contemporary art rendered in a range of different approaches that depict realistic, stylized, and abstract compositions but with themes that have collective reference to Philippine folk aesthetics and indigenization of Western techniques. While this was the concept that initially brought together these artworks, the interpretation of these have gone beyond fulfilling this idea, as their historical and cultural significance has grown since then.

Inaugurated on November 14, 1974, the Philippine Center, located at 556 5th Avenue, New York City, was established on May 10, 1973, by virtue of Presidential Decree 188. Signed into law by President Ferdinand Marcos, the Philippine Center was created to "consolidate, integrate and coordinate all the activities of all Philippine Government offices and agencies abroad." Its mandate is "to nurture, promote and propagate Philippine culture, to encourage foreign tourists to visit the Philippines, to expand the foreign market for Philippine products, to provide efficient and comprehensive public service in the country and abroad, and in general to enhance the image of the Philippines." The First Lady Imelda Romualdez Marcos led this project and assigned a team to bring her vision into reality.

Artist Arturo Luz—then held directorships of the Metropolitan Museum of Manila, the Design Center of the Philippines, and the Museum of Philippine Arts—along with renowned designer Wili Fernandez, gathered and purchased these artworks through Rustan's Galerie Bleue and his own Luz Gallery. They were assisted by artists Mauro Malang Santos and Jerry Elizalde Navarro.

One hundred twenty artworks by 52 Filipino artists were represented in the collection. Nine of them coincidentally were later conferred the Order of National Artists, namely Federico Aguilar Alcuaz, Ang Kiukok, Benedicto Cabrera, Jose Joya, Cesar Legaspi, Arturo Luz, Vicente Manansala, Jerry Elizalde Navarro and Hernando Ocampo. Also featured were limited edition prints by Manuel Rodriguez Sr. renowned for his advocacy of Philippine Printmaking and those by Romulo Olazo, Rodolfo Samonte, and Rod. Paras Perez. Notable artists were included in the collection, including Mauro Malang Santos, Roberto Chabet, Solomon Saprid, Juvenal Sanso, Manuel Baldemor, Augusto Albor, Cid Reyes and Raul Isidro, among others. Curiously, Lilian Hwang and Norma Belleza were the only female artists whose artworks were included in the collection (cf. Cajipe-Endaya et. al, 2011).

As art for offices in the Philippine Consulate General and Philippine Mission for the United Nations, those artworks have not been displayed together nor seen by Filipinos based in the Philippines. For the first time since their acquisition and journey to New York, these artworks were returned to Manila in August 2020 and exhibited in February 2021 at the National Museum of Fine Arts (NMFA) but not without their challenges. The pandemic caused alarm for this collection while stuck in an airport warehouse, delayed their

conservation and display, and limited possibilities for further studies. In this paper, I will discuss the difficulties and the triumphs of this journey and how other contemporary concerns will continue to have an impact in the way the National Museum of the Philippines (NMP) develop international traveling exhibitions in the context of preventive conservation.

BRIEF BACKGROUND ON THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE PHILIPPINES

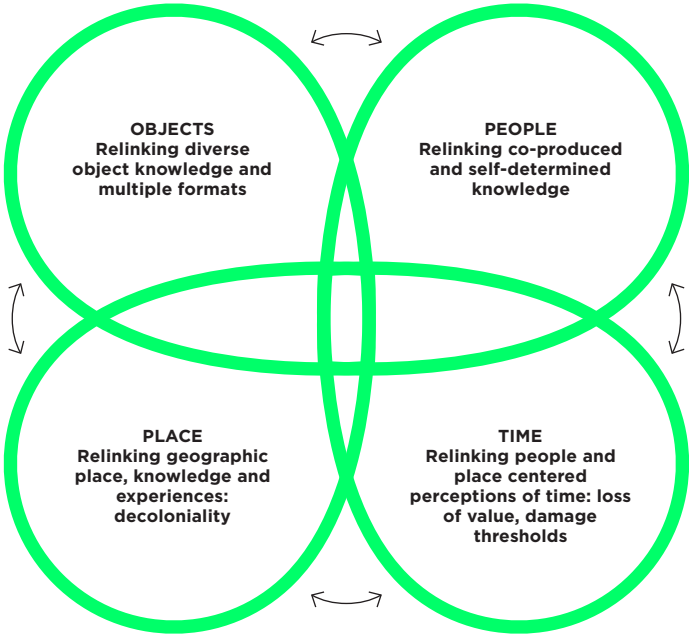
The NMP is recognized as a centre of authority and one that has emerged from ideas of 'modernity'. It has a three-fold mandate: educational, scientific, and cultural. It is not so dissimilar to the universal museum goals. In 2019, a new law, Republic Act 11333 superseded the 1998 one. Its collections may be described as encyclopaedic in scope, covering the intense cultural and biological diversity of the Philippines. The NMFA is part of the complex of museums in Rizal Park Manila under the NMP, along with the National Museum of Anthropology (NMA) and the National Museum of Natural History (NMNH). Besides that, there are also 15 National Museums all over the country and two more under construction.

The NMFA is a repurposed building that was the Legislative Building housing the Philippine Congress. → FIGURE 1 This and nearby buildings were created in the 1930s by the US American colonial government. The NMP offices and galleries shared spaces with the Philippine Senate and other government institutions from the 1970s, while its collections were stored or displayed in other facilities. From mixed use to a dedicated museum, this architectural marvel done by the preeminent architect Juan Arellano became the NMFA because of the National Museum Law of 1998 (RA 8492) and when the Philippine Senate moved in 1994. It would take fifteen more years to convert the office rooms into proper galleries and its inauguration and renaming, from the National Art Gallery into the NMFA in 2013. The National Fine Arts Collection is displayed in its 29 galleries, representing the work of Filipino artists from the 18th century to the 1990s (Del Rosario, 2012).

It is within this context that our fine arts curatorial team developed the exhibition of the temporarily repatriated Philippines artworks from New York. As of this writing, these are still on display at the fourth level of the NMFA where special exhibitions are shown. Besides mechanical cleaning and reframing, the collection did not require intervention as they were in good condition. It may have been useful that the artworks were in offices that had thermostat control that kept the climatic conditions consistent. This, however, may be subject for future study (cf. Boylan, 2004).

OBJECTS, PEOPLE, PLACE AND TIME IN THE CARE OF THE PCNY CORE COLLECTION OF 1974

In 2018, Dr. Nicole Tse and I presented at the International Institute of Conservation conference in Turin our analysis of preventive conservation models (Tse et al, 2018). We argued that the conventional tools to assert preventive conservation principles, namely the



2
Four agent(cies) of preventive conservation: objects, people, place and time.

assessment and management of risks to cultural material from the "ten agents of deterioration", have a central focus on the primacy of objects, physical materials, and degradation, with less focus on a relationship with *people, place*, and *time* in its modelling. → FIGURE 2

With OBJECTS, we aim to delink authorised knowledge systems and relink diverse object knowledge and consider multiple formats. With PEOPLE, we value co-produced knowledge and self-determination of knowledge. With PLACE, we value the geo-political, economic, and environmental spaces where decolonial experiences have taken place (Mignolo, 2007; Sloggett, 2019). And with TIME, we acknowledge that loss of value and damage thresholds are culturally contingent.

In developing the proposal for transporting the PCNY Collection to Manila, our curatorial team wanted to use this framework since the collections was not part of a museum and has not benefitted from conventional conservation care.

The standard used in the past, were the determination of ten agents of deterioration—physical forces; thieves, vandals and displacers; fire; water; pests; pollutants; light; incorrect temperature; incorrect relative humidity; and custodial neglect and dissociation (CCI, 2017). I find that these are insufficient to address the way in which we noted the stable condition of the PCNY Collection. Similarly, there have been other discussions about overly focusing on those agents of deterioration as if they are entities unto themselves rather than interventions brought about people, climate change and other factors that deserve our closer scrutiny (Waller and Michalski, 2005).

In conservation and restoration projects in which Dr. Tse and I were involved, we found that lessons we learned went beyond museum

contexts. Part of the NMP's technical support to restoration of heritage structures due to damage from disasters have become important grounds for not just conservation intervention but also understanding how to prevent such incidents from being repeated. Some examples of these were church rebuilding in Bohol in Central Visayas after the 2013 earthquake and in Guiuan, Eastern Samar in which Typhoon Haiyan severely devastated the National Cultural Treasure church.

From the experience working with community members, we found that it is possible to develop a process of co-production using formats 'beyond text'. → FIGURE 3 Such practice on the ground contributes to knowledge creation that uses non linguistical formats such as images and performative conservation, and its actions and senses—such as this image of conservators and local church artists learning from each other to redefine practice.

At the APTCCARN (Asia Pacific Tropical Climate Conservation Art Research Network) such people-based programs through conservation actions are also fostered by our partners in government and the Church who now see conservation as part of the creative economy and promote sites as a 'living heritage conservation laboratory'. This acknowledges the role that people play in the care and recovery of church heritage, to embrace the opportunities that lie in the unexpected natural disasters and contingencies, fostering economic and social development in the process.

During the 2017 APTCCARN Meeting in Bohol, four years after the devastating earthquake, we learned a great deal from those who shared their preventive conservation experiences with us, including local volunteers such as Cleofe Genabe and Reverend Father Gerardo Saco, Jr., parish priest of Maribojoc Parish. → FIGURE 4 These encounters have contributed to our museum practice, making us understand the importance of going beyond our texts and standards. Local processes must be taken into consideration and account for knowledge generation in the field of conservation.

ART IN LIMBO: THE PCNY COLLECTION DURING THE PANDEMIC

This has resonance for several of our projects at the NMP, particularly the Philippine Center New York Core Collection of 1974 (PCNY Collection) which took place at the height of the pandemic lockdown last year. The "homecoming" exhibition was actually a 7-year project: repatriating temporarily 115 artworks from New York to Manila.

After initially inspecting the PCNY Collection in 2014, I noticed that the condition of each artwork were stable. However, it took years of negotiations. Personally I had to make repeat visits to help out in their appraisal, run workshops on handling collections and find the funds to bring them home for an exhibition intended for PCNY's 45th anniversary. In early 2020, we were finally ready to transport them. At that point, we were worrying about usual risks like vibrations caused by airlifting them from New York to Manila.

The motivation for the NMP's loan was that the PCNY Collection has the distinct quality of being able to retain an intrinsic harmony in style and timeline so that the collection is significant whether

through the individual works in the collection or taken together as a whole. There is coherence in the artworks which gravitate towards Neo Realism and Abstraction. Adding to this unity is the fact that at least 98% of the artworks were also done in the same year they were assembled and launched in 1974.

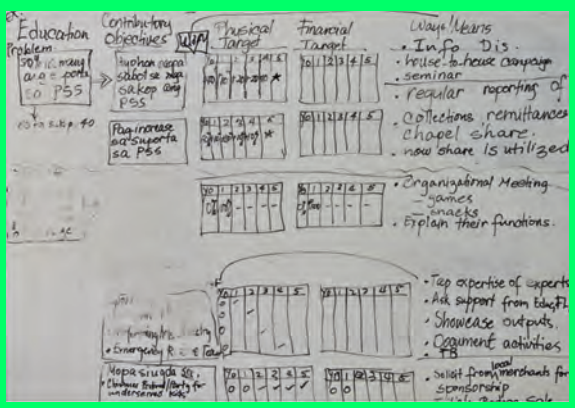
While this was the first time that the collection is to be displayed in the Philippines, such a project was only possible because the artworks were in stable condition. This was brought about by the care and supervision of Victor Cruz who is the Philippine Center Management Bureau's Property Manager and supported by the Administrative Officer Melinda Capinpin and their team. Both are Filipinos and locally hired in New York but their awareness of Philippine art and their esteem for the PCNY Collection has made all the difference in ensuring its maintenance. I have noted that the four agent(cies) of preventive conservation were very much in place in the care of artworks in their custody. → **FIGURE 5**

When COVID happened it was like the rug was pulled under us. It took 6 months rather than two weeks (including customs clearances) for the Collection to arrive at the NMP in Manila. → **FIGURE 6** We were able to manage their situation of "art in limbo" precisely because of our experience in responding to disasters and using the four agent(cies) of preventive conservation as our tool and inspiration. However, we are uncertain of the long term effects of the delay and sitting in warehouses but our program to monitor the collection will go beyond their return to New York. → **FIGURE 7**

THE IMPORTANCE OF SHARED DECISION-MAKING

The importance of shared decision-making and de-colonial thinking in conservation are among the factors that prompts us to continue to go through the rigors of installing physical exhibitions despite the pandemic when we have been closed most of the time from March 2020 to September 2021. There are risks to this due to the situation of our place, such as the challenges of maintaining and monitoring temperature and humidity as the environments of the galleries are not as optimal for many reasons. Windows that were probably installed in the 1970s are not well-sealed while the mechanical cooling system is not efficient. Moreover part of it is the NMP's staff who needs further training in maintenance of museums while considering their safety and security (Labrador and Tauro, 2019). The issue of place goes to the geo-environmental realities of non-standard museum climates, and the extreme climates of hot and humid conditions in the Philippines. Fluctuations of temperature and humidity have become the norm in our operations.

Like the global north, the NMP and Southeast Asian museums more broadly, have contended with the universal environmental guidelines of 20°C± 2°C and 50%RH ±5%. Introduced through international training workshops by authorised experts, these guidelines and the use of HVAC are environmentally, economically, and socially unsustainable. In relation to the PCNY Collection, our team tried our best to ease the adaptation of artworks made of wood or paper to ensure the



1
Drone shot of the National Museum of Fine Arts (foreground) in Manila. Image: Jeffrey Cobilla.

3
Cleofe Genabe (left) and Father Gerardo Saco (right), from the Maribojoc Parish in Bohol, shared their preventive conservation experiences at the 2017 APTCCARN Meeting in 2017. Image: AMT Labrador.

4
Cleofe Genabe leads the StarDust volunteers after recovery of objects from the Maribojoc Church in Bohol that collapsed during the 2013 earthquake. They are a dedicated team of senior-citizen volunteers who provide security, regular monitoring and care for the ecclesiastical collections. Image: N. Tse.

6
Professional couriers contracted to handle, pack, and transport the 115 artworks from the Philippine Center New York Core Collection in the 5th Avenue premises in Manhattan. Image: Philippine Center Management Board, New York.

5
Detailed documentation of the Philippine Center New York Core Collection of 1974 at the National Museum of Fine Arts Collection. Image: AMT Labrador.

7
Crates containing the 115 artworks in a New York City warehouse, April 2020. Image: Philippine Center Management Board, New York.

adjustment from temperate to tropical conditions → FIGURE 8. The restrictions imposed by the PCMB-NY and Mr. Cruz, the property officer, focused mainly on securing the collection, leaving the conservation decisions to our NMP team. We, nevertheless, consulted them periodically for certain procedures such as reframing or replacing identifying marks.

For many conservators and those participating in APTCCARN Conferences since 2008, this has created professional ambiguities. In → FIGURE 9, we can see the diversity of external climates in the Philippines, Malaysia, Thailand, and Singapore from 1949 to 2007 (APTCCARN, 2018). They are very different from each other and the global north, where much preventive conservation research resides, and thus the means to determine the "incorrect temperatures and relative humidities" in Philippine Museum contexts are unresolved with limited building infrastructure codes for passive cooling design (Tse et al., 2018). There is so far little research done on this area, considering less focus on global north standards.

While guidelines for Southeast Asian collection's care and an understanding of their unique material degradation pathways in tropical environments have not been a major focus of mainstream conservation research, the level of awareness among heritage professionals is there. This has implications for determining the probability of damage and magnitude of risks in preventive conservation (Labrador et al., 2011).

There is also a people-centred expectation that public places are air conditioned due to the heat outside buildings (like most shopping centres in Singapore, Malaysia, Philippines, and Thailand), attracting visitors to spend their leisure time in museums. The same can be said for the concepts of "proofed fluctuations" and "acceptable loss" where dialogues between people and place, have not wholly captured experiential knowledge of deterioration and people perceptions.

Michalski (2007) mentioned that proofed fluctuations is the largest or lowest relative humidity or temperature to which the object has been exposed in the past and determining acceptable loss in the process is a way of measurement for a "one size fits all" standard, making life easier for managers of collections. This universal approach, according to Boersma et al. (2014), is unsustainable as collecting institutions such as museums have faced financial crises and global climate change. Such rigid guidelines from European museums have deterred the NMP from loaning key items from the Prado Museum (i.e., *The Death of Cleopatra* by 19th century Filipino master Juan Luna) and ethnographic objects donated by Filipino national hero Dr. José Rizal to the Berlin Ethnological Museum for the benefit of local audiences. It is for this reason that we deemed the temporary repatriation of the PCNY Collection a success.

The next point as related to *place* is the effect of natural disasters and climate change in the Philippines. The Asian Development Bank notes that natural disasters are more intense and frequent, while the Philippines is ranked on the Global Climate Risk Index as the most affected country (1994–2013). This points to the new normal, where there is an acceptance of the unexpected, and likewise

the need for preventive conservation to embrace and develop planning cycles in its actions. As → FIGURE 10 shows, weather patterns are becoming extreme and the natural occurrences such as earthquakes and volcano eruptions have had devastating effects on people living in harms' way due to economic pressures.

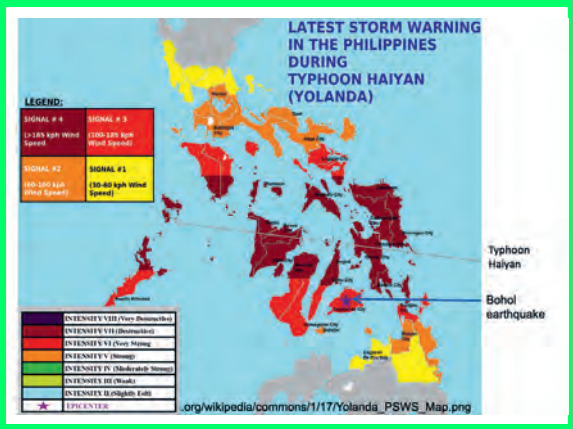
CONCLUSION

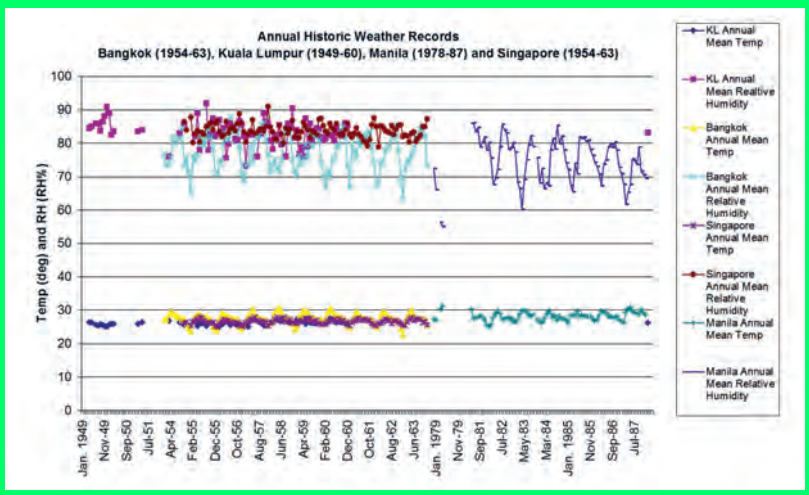
Our museum practice has been shaped by our work both from within and outside the museum, where more innovations are taking place as the situation demands it (Labrador, 2014). So, in coming to the end of our analysis of preventive conservation as an authorised tool of best practice, I have presented the four spheres: objects, people, place, and time, to delink our relationship with centres of authority and consider new ways.

Through this examination in the Philippines, I have provided examples of how a reflective community of practice is emerging that is engaged with people and diverse knowledge hierarchies from where cultural assets originate and are valued. Contextualizing these discussions has been 'de-colonial thinking' as Filipino museums and collections outside museums navigate their positions in society and articulate what they do in reference to their own values and actions, as distinct from their colonial past (Labrador, 2010). To achieve the aims, delinking notions of originality, centres of expertise, authorship, empowerment and best practices in preventive conservation have been raised for the purposes of 'relinking' and for transformations to occur. The arguments presented are drawn from our partners in the Philippines: the Filipino people—places—objects, and I thank them for being part of this analysis.

As a precaution, just because we are using these labels, does not mean that we have always delivered the aims. The four agent(cies) of preventive conservation have many deep challenges and transformation is slow. It has required our professional, authorised discourses to be willing, have enough confidence and commitment to create new spaces and trade off the traditional forms of rewards (Mignolo, 2015).

The PCNY Collection is a product of its time, and it is our duty as custodians of the nation's heritage to make these appreciated by contemporary viewers. As in a journey through time, artworks are material culture of a period shaped by events and environments, making us imagine the inspiration, materials and techniques of those artists represented here. → FIGURE 11 AND 12 It is my hope that in further documenting them and deciding on their preventive conservation as part of our co-produced knowledge and enskillment. As I like to say about this collection, we must view the artworks with an understanding of their time, travel and "time-travel", which we experienced with this exhibition. It has been worthwhile if only to permit us to glimpse at their world beyond cultural diplomacy that is our legacy.





9
The diversity of external climates in the Philippines, Malaysia, Thailand and Singapore from 1949 to 2007. Image: AMT Labrador.

10
Earthquake: first on 15 October 2013, at 7.2 on the Richter scale in Bohol, then the Super Category 5 Typhoon Haiyan on 8 November 2013. Image: AMT Labrador.

8
Decision-making to plan for the conservation of a PCNY Collection artwork. Image: AMT Labrador.

11
Installation view of the Abstract section of the PCNY Collection at the National Museum of Fine Arts. Image: AMT Labrador.

12
Early visitors of the PCNY Collection exhibition at the National Museum of Fine Arts in February 2021 showing Czech Ambassador Jana Sediva-Treybalova (right) and Deputy Chief of Missions Jana Peterková. Image: AMT Labrador.

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Übertragbarkeit, oder die Fähigkeit, etwas von einem Organismus oder einer Entität auf eine andere zu übertragen, ist eine Eigenschaft, die sich auf das Überleben von Informationen und Materie auswirkt. Im Falle der Epidemiologie ist sie einer der Faktoren, anhand derer Viren und ihre Varianten bewertet und die Risiken für den Menschen eingeschätzt werden. Je übertragbarer Viren und ihre Varianten sind, desto größer ist das Risiko für den Menschen. Im Falle der Konservierung kann die Übertragbarkeit jedoch auch ein Maß für Widerstandsfähigkeit sein. Je übertragbarer eine bestimmte Erscheinungsform des kulturellen Erbes ist, desto wahrscheinlicher ist es, dass diese Erscheinungsformen fortbestehen, und desto geringer ist daher das Risiko für die Menschen und ihr kulturelles Erbe. Umgekehrt besteht bei geringerer Übertragbarkeit die Gefahr, dass einige oder alle Aspekte verloren gehen, die bestimmte kulturelle Erscheinungsformen „einzigartig“ oder „wertvoll“ machen. Wie aber kann Konservierung in einer zunehmend komplexen Welt mit systemischer Ungleichheit und widersprüchlichen Wertesystemen Formen der Weitergabe fördern? Dieser Beitrag plädiert für eine verschränkte Ethik des Konservierens, die auf einer Verpflichtung zur Anerkennung der inhärenten Verhältnismäßigkeit aller Konservierungsmaßnahmen beruht. Durch eine feministische und neu-materialistische Betrachtungsweise der Verhältnismäßigkeit, wird der Beitrag die Art und Weise erörtern, in der die Erhaltung und andere Praktiken zur Schaffung von kulturellem Erbe mit verschiedenen menschlichen und nicht-menschlichen Akteuren interagieren, und gleichzeitig argumentieren, dass eine nachhaltige Weitergabe von kulturellem Erbe eine Konservierungsethik erfordert, die auf radikal engagierte, offene und inklusive Formen der Beteiligung ausgerichtet ist.

Entangled Ethics: Heritage Conservation, Transmission and Participation

Hélia Marçal → 143

Transmissibility, or the ability of something to be transmitted from one organism or entity to another, is a characteristic that impacts how information and matter survive. In the case of epidemiology, it is one of the variables upon which the viruses and their variants are evaluated, and the risks for people are assessed. The more transmissible, the more risk these viruses and their variants pose. In the case of conservation, however, it can be a measure of resilience. For example, the more transmissible a particular cultural heritage manifestation is, the more likely those manifestations are to survive. Therefore, the less risk for people and their cultural heritage. Similarly, with lower transmissibility comes the risk of losing some or all the aspects that make certain cultural manifestations 'unique' or 'valued'. But how can conservation promote forms of transmission in a growingly complex world with systemic inequality and conflicting value systems?

This paper argues for an entangled ethics of conservation grounded on a commitment to recognise the inherent relationality of all conservation actions. In understanding relationality through a feminist new materialist lens, the paper will discuss the ways in which conservation and other heritage-making practices intra-act with several human and nonhuman agents while arguing that a sustainable transmission of heritage demands conservation ethics positioned towards radically committed, open, and inclusive forms of participation.

INTRODUCTION

There is no conservation without transmission and no ethical conservation without participation. While this statement may seem blunt or, for some, somewhat obvious, this paper will demonstrate that an ethics grounded on relationality—or an entangled ethics of heritage conservation—is inherently associated with a positioning towards radically committed, open, and inclusive forms of participation.

Conservation's concern with politics of participation is not exactly new. Indeed, several contributions to theoretical discourses on conservation and forms of participation—such as collaboration—have been popping up since the 1980s (e.g., Barclay et al., 1988; Clavir, 2002; Sully, 2007; Dignard et al., 2008; Peters, 2008, 2020; Fekrsanati, 2010; Henderson and Nakamoto, 2016; Marçal, 2017, 2022; Balachandran and McHugh, 2019; Fekrsanati and Marçal, 2022).

While this effort was pioneered mainly by conservation professionals working with objects from Indigenous Cultures, the drive to (re) thinking ethics of participation in conservation activities can now be considered somewhat ubiquitous across conservation areas and specialisms. Nevertheless, questions on the limits and politics of participation and how it is (or can be) entangled with ethics remain. Specifically, although some forms of participation with various stakeholders are gathering consensus as essential in deliberative processes across conservation specialisms, inquiries on the limits of available tools and conceptual frameworks are still scarce. This leads, for example, to the confluence of the understanding of processes that are both theoretically and practically very different, such as consultation, inclusion, engagement, and participation.[1] Moreover, suppose one considers that notions of participation are, in itself, politically committed. In that case, assuming that the same concepts and terminologies do not necessarily translate into the same practical and political outcomes is crucial. Similarly, understanding these processes as operative tools (or as somehow belonging solely to the domain of technique), erases (or, at least, contradicts) the ethico-political onus of methodological choices.

These questions are too broad, too complex, and contingent to be answered in a single paper, and I have attempted to rehearse these topics before both individually (specifically Marçal, 2018, 2021, forthcoming) and, especially, in collaboration namely with Brian Castriota (Castriota and Marçal, 2021), Farideh Fekrsanati (Fekrsanati and Marçal, 2022), and Rebecca Gordon (Marçal and Gordon, 2023). Yet, this article will attempt to answer the lack of conceptual tools to frame these debates by proposing conservation ethics as an ethics of entanglement. To conceptualise this approach, I will try not to shy away from affirming my situated practice, which, much as conservation practice itself, is defined by specific positionings that are not only theoretical and ethical but are also political and circumstantial.

In juxtaposing ethics, heritage conservation, and participation, the article draws on post-Marxist feminist scholarship—specifically, new materialist ethics. New materialism is a field of inquiry focused on rethinking forms of materialism and how they are framed, measured, and ontologically defined across disciplines. Feminist new materialist approaches (performative new materialisms in particular—see Gamble, Hanan, and Neil, 2019) are characterised by recognising the inseparability of the nature of things and the practices

1 While these terms are sometimes used interchangeably in conservation and heritage studies literature, it is crucial to understand the ways in which they differ both in concept and in how they operate within the social fabric. The notion of social inclusion, for example, comes from discourses that typically aim to maintain the current order of things, while reducing the chances for uprising of individuals in less privileged positions. As mentioned by the art historian Claire Bishop, discourses on social inclusion have been essential to New Labour's cultural policy, which was, in turn, impacted a report by François Matarasso that argued for "the positive impact of social participation in the arts" (Bishop, 2012: 14). Yet, "social participation is viewed positively because it creates submissive citizens who respect authority and accept the 'risk' and responsibility of looking after themselves in the face of diminished public services" (2012: 14), without actually impacting socio-economic conditions or contributing to forms of class consciousness, solidarity, and struggle.

of knowledge-making themselves. In other words, feminist new materialisms acknowledge that the ways in which we get to know, observe, measure phenomena impact the phenomena itself; in this sense, one cannot speak of ontologies as isolated from acts of knowledge-making (epistemologies), saying, instead, of onto-epistemologies. Moreover, when knowledge-making is prompted, described, or guided by people, feminist new materialisms also recognise that those acts are as much onto-epistemological as they are ethical (Barad, 2007). Instead of assuming a default-position of neutrality, this ethico-onto-epistemological approach declares knowledge-making activities as fundamentally biased and situated while highlighting the knowledge-maker's responsibility to map out the inclusions and exclusions that their position is or can yield. Indeed, thinking about knowledge here, I am also reminded of Maria Puig de la Bellacasa's words in *Matters of Care. Speculative Ethics in More than Human Worlds*, when the author recognises the porosity of knowledge and knowledge-making activities suggesting that it "is not any more considered a discrete human affair that filters an objective world out there; it is embedded in the ongoing remaking of the world" (2017: 28). At the same time, by assuming that all knowledge-making practices are situated and partial, feminist new materialisms propose the flattening of the intra-agential network that characterises phenomena, or, as Puig de la Bellacasa puts it:

> In this world of imploded frontiers, there is no way to think sentimentally about purportedly pre-technoscientific pasts and no way to think epistemologically straight. But as blurred boundaries deepen entanglements and inter-dependencies, the ethico-political demand persists and maybe intensifies for elucidating how different configurations of knowledge practices are consequential, contributing to specific rearrangements. Even more than before, knowledge as relating—while thinking, researching, storytelling, wording, accounting—matters in the mattering of worlds. (Puig de la Bellacasa 2017: 28)

To simplify, if all knowledge and, by association, phenomena, is grounded on partial acts of observation, no perspective is more valuable than all others, truth-statements are contingent. In this sense, this article looks at conservation as a knowledge-making activity that is inherently situated, as it sees cultural heritage and its manifestations as being simultaneously made by practices and co-constituted by people, materials, technology, infrastructures, and nature.

The article is structured into two parts. The first part looks at heritage practices to unpack the relationship among materials, materialities, and affects. This argument sets the basis for understanding the ways in which cultural heritage items are co-constituted by what new materialist approaches (such as Barad, who coined the

term) call intra-actions of humans and nonhumans.[2] The second part focuses on the ways in which we can devise an entangled ethics of conservation or, more specifically, an ethical standpoint that recognises the intra-actions among the many agents that co-constitute heritage and its manifestations. To develop this claim, I will introduce the notion of transmission and transmissibility to argue for the resilience of a distributed approach to conservation.

ENTANGLED HERITAGE PRACTICES: THE HUMAN AND THE NONHUMAN

Heritage and its manifestations have long been considered a product of social constructions, underpinned by values and materialities that are co-constituted by various stakeholders (or agents). Heritage is built with materials and/or materialities, affects, emotions, values, and meanings. Let's consider Laurajane Smith's stance that all heritage is inherently intangible (Smith, 2006), constructed through the values and meanings of the communities that make it heritage (and not something else). We also must recognise that heritage is contingent, potentially contested, and—consequently—relational. Indeed, perspectives stemming from critical heritage studies in the last two decades have proposed that cultural heritage could be considered a communicative and performative (Haldrup and Bærenholdt, 2015) social practice (Dicks, 2000; Smith, 2006), that is made and remade through processes of tense negotiations between conscious and unconscious acts of remembering and forgetting.[3] If, on the one hand, this condition of cultural heritage suggests an epistemic shift from objects to "living processes and manifestations" (Machuca, 2013: 61), on the other hand, it also qualifies heritage as a process inherently tied to power imbalances and social struggle (Smith, 2006; Harvey, 2001). In other words, not only are the objects we conserve materialised through these processes of heritage-making, but the ways in which we conserve them render materialisations that are influenced by those epistemic practices.

Although those shifting materialities exist across all forms of cultural heritage and their manifestations, they are particularly visible in works of contemporary culture. One example I explored elsewhere (Marçal, 2021) is that of performance artworks with sculptural elements (or archival materials) where their categorisation as performance or sculpture impacts conservation strategies and standards of care. Conserving an object as a performance instead of a sculpture implies a particular set of tools and approaches and

2 Barad considers all entities as inherently relational, meaning that agential realism does not acknowledge entities as separated (or, as stated by Barad, "relata do not precede relations"—Barad, 2007: 334). The notion of intra-actions manifests this ontological positioning. For more on the notion of intra-action see Barad, 2007. For more on this in the context of conservation research, see Marçal, 2018, 2021, and, importantly, Castriota forthcoming.

3 Conservator and theorist Joel Taylor brings a similar perspective to the field of conservation, suggesting that while the field has been focused on the idea of heritage as "the object, the embodiment", heritage "is not the object or material itself, but the reason that the object is conserved" (Taylor, 2015: 6).

different expectations regarding the futures of practices and their materialisations. A similar dichotomy can be found when considering the collection-type of film materials in conservation decisions. For example, while archival collections focus their conservation efforts on expanding access—sometimes privileging the digitisation of footage and documents over the preservation of the carrier—art collections tend to favour conditions that allow for the continuous display-ability of these materials—which, many times, implies conserving and ensuring the duplicability of the carrier (e.g. Lawson et al., 2022).

These two examples demonstrate not only how conservation activities are inherently situated and contingent but also some of the ways in which those positions and contingencies impact the present and future materiality of these cultural heritage manifestations. Various humans (curators and conservators) and nonhumans assemble these positions and contingent practices. Although the human factor (and the biases of each's positionality) is somewhat self-explanatory, the impact of nonhumans in those decisions is not immediately as clear until we analyse the epistemic structures in which humans operate. One striking example is the use of Collection Management Systems (CMSs) to facilitate these decisions.[4] Data inputted in CMSs (and their associated categories and pre-determined fields) will, for example, define the identity of a complex and multifaceted object, very rarely allowing for the ambiguity that some of these objects require (for more on this, see van Saaze, 2009, and Marçal and Gordon, 2023). That is the case, again, when a given object can be a performance, a sculpture, and archival material *at the same time*. These platforms will also serve as the basis for collection research (curatorial and otherwise). Typically, objects closer to the pre-determined categories (such as paintings) are more likely to be found—and therefore displayed and cared for—than others (such as performance, or networked art) which might be harder to define using existing frames. This is what the sociologist Fernando Dominguez Rubio calls the difference between "docile" and "unruly" artworks—"docile" works are those which fit pre-established knowledge categories, while "unruly" objects are those that, by their very nature, defy these epistemic practices (Dominguez Rubio, 2014). In the case of CMSs, this form of "algorithm power" makes clear the agency of the nonhuman in processes of making and unmaking heritage.[5] On a bigger scale, the definition of institutional aims and overarching strategies (for example, of a museum and an archive) will also determine the type of care given to certain types of objects

4 Note that there are various types of CMSs and there has been a push towards the development of relational and/or iterative databases (e.g. Haidvogl and White, 2020). This analysis relates specifically to CMSs that have been used for documentation in the last decades.

5 For more on "algorithm power" (specifically addressing visibility in social media), see Bucher, 2012. Note that the present text does not intend to make a direct comparison between platforms, but to highlight that heritage-making practices are defined by politics of visibility and (as it will become clear later in the text) participation that do not belong solely to the human realm.

(especially those in a liminal object-position between documentary and artistic—see also Marçal, 2022).[6] In a way, those are all codes and codifications that underpin practice.[7] The fact is that these small and big epistemic frames—which are both conceptual and material—end up defining conservation and other heritagisation strategies and how they are applied. Indeed, using the concept coined by Barad, humans and nonhumans intra-act to determining the material possibilities (and actualities) of cultural heritage items.

These materialisations also take place in the realm of the intangible. Discourses are entangled with practices, and the mattering of these objects and their potential futures are impacted by how interest groups understand and value them. However, some groups hold more power than others in deliberative and structural processes. Specifically, feminist scholarship has clarified how a white, male, bourgeois society has been centred in the so-called public sphere and its many deliberative *fora* (Fraser, 1990). Typically, the voices and concerns of non-male, non-white, and non-heterosexual populations, as well as the dislocated, migrants, religious minorities, and the proletariat (or the subaltern, "the silent, silenced centre" in all these intersections—see Spivak, 1988: 25), are either tamed or cancelled altogether to enhance the ones of those in hegemonic positions. These are the dynamics at play when we speak about participation in conservation and cultural heritage decision-making at large—and discuss, among other things, the interest groups to approach and involve and how to involve them (for more on this, see Fekrsanati and Marçal, 2022).

If it is clear that some voices speak louder (or are more clearly heard) than others, it is not as transparent how those voices also impact the structures that underpin decision-making processes. Going back to algorithms, for example, the scholar Safiya U. Noble demonstrates in Algorithms of Oppression that search engine algorithms reproduce systemic racism, particularly toward black women (2018). It is not that they are inherently racist, but that they were made to be racist. Through a similar process, and looking specifically at most CMSs, it is not that the algorithm itself is inherently exclusionary but that the practices underpinning collection management, exhibition, and conservation (and that served as a basis to develop those systems) reproduce epistemic frames that exclude objects and stories that do not fit certain categories. Indeed, the project of modernity and post-Enlightenment that is at the heart of the epistemic practices that we see across society and how it operates promotes these forms of exclusion. And exclusions typically also concern the nonhuman. Beyond algorithms and technological infrastructures, other nonhumans are agents in the making of heritage –structures and processes of collections, organisations, or sites, ecologies of practice that coexist with heritage structures (for example, tourism, development, companies, or grassroots formal and informal associations),

6 For more on the use of the term 'object-position' see Dominguez Rubio, 2016.
7 See, for example, how these are seen in heritage-related Charters and Documents in Castriota and Marçal, 2021.

the environment, urban constructions, natural resources, supply chains, among other. Importantly, cultural heritage manifestations are also agents in their own making and the makings of others.

This relational perspective on how heritage is (continuously) (re)created through intra-actions raises several questions for conservation. A feminist approach to this context is politically committed to the conservator's positioning and to their modes of exclusion, or, to use the words of Celina Su, these practices "urge us to listen, to recognize (sic) each other, but also to listen to the silences, bear in mind those who *aren't* with us—youth, for example, the incarcerated, those who couldn't take time away from work. To be mindful of typically invisible axes of inclusion and exclusion—mental illness, sexual violence, disability" (Su, 2020: 119). But how can we recognise the intra-activity of these relational processes in our decision-making? Can we even practice diffraction when engaging with conservation actions if the assumption of independence is off the table? Are there ways to utilise the awareness of our inherent relationality with humans and nonhumans to develop new theoretical frameworks?

TOWARDS AN ENTANGLED ETHICS OF CONSERVATION

An entangled conservation ethics recognises the relational intra-activity of connections, decisions, and actions. This recognition process is, however, just the first step to affirming new possible (and entangled) futures of conservation and cultural heritage. In this concluding section, I will highlight potential strategies that can contribute to this recognition process while activating forms of meaningful participation. I will do so by unpacking the notion of transmissibility and arguing for the resilience of a distributed approach to conservation.

Transmissibility is the ability of something to be transmitted from one organism or entity to another. When considering the new materialist approach discussed above, one could consider that transmission is not necessarily a one-way process of transference but a process in which two or more entities intra-act to perform a mutual transformation. Speaking about the thermonuclear tests enacted by the US during the Cold War, the philosopher and theorist Karen Barad makes these intra-connections very clear. The violence of the detonation of thermonuclear bombs on the Marshall Islands is one that lingers and intra-connects with other forms of violence, "past-present-future" (Barad, 2021: 48). As the author puts it:

> [L]ike other forms of colonialism, the temporality of radioactive colonialism is not of a past that is passed, or even decays with time, but rather, an ongoingness that is present; and at the same time, as it were, the particularity of its nuclear nature is such that it has already colonized the future as well. (Barad 2021: 48).

Forms of transmission perform similar entanglements as they disappear and linger, sometimes at the same time and in varying degrees. Trace elements of these transmission processes can be present in

how we speak, move, or perform our everyday life. Echoing the process of nuclear decay, the half-life of objects changes with their material characteristics—if a painting lingers for more time, a performance artwork, on the other hand, reaches its half-life much faster. And if the temporality of these objects can indeed be seen as ongoing, their transmissibility is enacted by their material circumstances, which are inevitably relational. In this sense, transmissibility becomes the ability to perform these acts of transmission through forms of communal—or relational—transformation.

Transmissibility is also a variable that impacts how information and matter survive. While this is terrible if we are talking about a virus (please note that I am writing this text only a few years after the start of the Covid-19 pandemic) or, indeed, thermonuclear bombs, in the case of conservation, transmissibility can be a measure of resilience or endurance, which are usually conceived as positive outcomes. For example, the more transmissible a particular cultural heritage manifestation is, the more likely those manifestations are to survive and, therefore, the less risk there is for people and their cultural heritage. Similarly, with lower transmissibility comes the risk of losing some or all the aspects that make specific cultural manifestations heritage in the first place.

When considering the transmissibility of cultural heritage and its manifestations, it is crucial to determine the potential for transmission through their transformation (or, their relational transformation, to make use of Renata Peter's approach, 2020)—not only of the objects themselves, but also of the structures that underpin their transmissibility. The previous section has discussed the ways in which certain structures—such as collections, software, and discourses—can impact how cultural heritage is materialised and, in this sense, transmitted (and transformed) to present and future generations. Similarly, the exclusionary nature of epistemic frames leads to inequalities regarding the type of cultural heritage transmitted and strategies employed in this process. Therefore, an entangled ethics of conservation is one that actively questions the contexts in which conservation takes place on par with conservation activities, battling to change those conditions and, in turn, enhance the potential for a fair and politically-committed transformation of cultural heritage and its manifestations. Going back to the definitions of heritage—proposed as a shift from objects to living processes (see Manchuca, 2013)—we here see another shift: one that proposes conservation as an operative framework to transform the heritage world and its structures. This means, for example, changing models of ownership and, consequently, stewardship. It could mean refusing to engage in conservation work sponsored by fossil fuel companies, or being aware of colonialism's legacies in how objects are acquired and preserved and being an active force against those processes. It could also mean distributing knowledge and recognising the need to sustain meaningful participation practices beyond the institution, to multiply the stewards of the objects and other cultural heritage manifestations we ought to conserve. Looking back at the notion

of transmissibility, one could argue that promoting a virality of knowledge—one that is multiple and which ownership is essentially distributed—and guaranteeing access to cultural heritage manifestations would allow for transformation and transmission beyond the boundaries of current practice, fostering the creation of more intra-actions that, in turn, would lead to more forms and processes of mattering.

In trying to rehearse an ethico-onto-epistemology of conservation, I proposed at the beginning of this paper that there is no conservation without transmission, and there is no ethical conservation without participation. Diffracting and multiplying the instances of cultural heritage and how it is manifested vigorously pursues the goal of its transmission. Moreover, actively chasing opportunities for meaningful and diverse participation with humans and nonhumans expands the role of conservation and invigorates the potential for transmitting objects and material manifestations of cultural practices. It is not certain that the responsibility to recognise and expand the opportunities for participation lies exclusively with conservators—one could argue, for example, that systematic change cannot (or will not) happen at the hands of a single individual, department or, even, organisation—and, yet, establishing an entangled ethics of conservation can serve as a standpoint for future arguments and discussions within and outside the field.

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Appendix

● FARIDEH FEKRSANATI schloss ihr Studium der Objektrestaurierung an der Staatlichen Akademie der Bildenden Künste Stuttgart ab und war von 2019 bis 2022 Leiterin der Abteilung Konservierung/Restaurierung am Museum am Rothenbaum, Kulturen und Künste der Welt (MARKK) in Hamburg, Deutschland. Seit September 2022 ist sie Leiterin der Abteilung Art Handling im Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, Niederlande. Vor ihrer Anstellung in Hamburg hat sie in verschiedenen Institutionen in Deutschland, den USA, den Vereinigten Arabischen Emiraten und den Niederlanden gearbeitet. Ihre Arbeits- und Forschungsinteressen konzentrieren sich auf kulturelle Güter im Museumskontext und liegen vor allem in den Bereichen Zugang zu Sammlungen, kollaborative und nachhaltige Ansätze in der Konservierungspraxis, Sammlungsnutzung, präventive Konservierung und Risikomanagement.

FARIDEH FEKRSANATI received her MA in objects conservation from the State Academy of Fine Art and Design Stuttgart, Germany and was Head of Conservation Department at Museum am Rothenbaum, Kulturen und Künste der Welt (MARKK) in Hamburg, Germany from 2019 to 2022, and is currently Head of the Art Handling Department with Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, The Netherlands. Prior to her appointment in Hamburg, she has worked with a variety of institutions in Germany, United States of Amerika, United Arab Emirates and the Netherlands. Her work and research interests centre around cultural material in the context of museums and are primarily in the areas of access to collections, collaborative and sustainable approaches to conservation practice, collections use, preventive conservation and risk management.

● DIANA GABLER ist seit August 2021 Objektrestauratorin am MARKK und auf die Pflege und den Erhalt von kulturellen Objekten spezialisiert. Sie studierte Konservierung von archäologischen, ethnografischen und kunstgewerblichen Objekten an der Staatlichen Akademie der Bildenden Künste in Stuttgart (2007–2012) und war als Objektrestauratorin in Museen wie dem Ethnologischen Museum in Berlin (2013-2015), dem National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, D.C. (Andrew W. Mellon Fellowship, 2015–2018) und dem American Museum of Natural History in New York (2018-2019) beschäftigt; zuletzt in freier Praxis in Berlin. Als Doktorandin der Sozial- und Kulturanthropologie an der LMU München konzentriert sich ihre Forschung auf kollaborative Konservierung als Instrument zur Öffnung der Museumspraxis für Herkunftsgemeinschaften.

DIANA GABLER is an objects conservator at MARKK since August 2021 and specialized in the care and treatment of cultural materials. She studied conservation of archaeological, ethnographic, and decorated arts' objects at the State Academy of Fine Arts in Stuttgart (2007-2012) and has been working as an objects conservator in museums such as the Ethnological Museum in Berlin (2013–2015), the National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, D.C. (Andrew W. Mellon Fellowship, 2015-2018) and the American Museum of Natural History in New York (2018–2019); most recently in private practice in Berlin. As a PhD student in Social and Cultural Anthropology at LMU Munich her research focuses on collaborative conservation as a tool to support the opening up of museum practices to heritage communities.

● ANNISSA GULTOM hat 15 Jahre Erfahrung in der Museumsarbeit mit gemeinschaftsbezogenen Projekten in West Papua, Baduy und Bali. Derzeit ist sie Leiterin der Museumsabteilung in Ras Al Khaimah, in den Vereinigten Arabischen Emiraten. Ihre Abteilung arbeitet, gemeinsam mit den lokalen Gemeinschaften der Emirati, an der Entwicklung von Ausstellungen zum Thema kulturelles Erbe und zu Neukonzeptionierungen der Sammlungen, die Archäologie und Ethnografie miteinander verbinden.

ANNISSA GULTOM has 15 years of museum work experiences with some community related projects in West Papua, Baduy and Bali. She currently the Manager of Museum Department in Ras Al Khaimah, UAE. Her department works with local Emirati communities in developing heritage-themed exhibitions and further use of collection that connects archaeology and ethnography.

● JANE HENDERSON ist Generalsekretärin des International Institute for Conservation. Sie ist Mitglied des Redaktionsausschusses des Journal of the Institute for Conservation, des Kuratoriums der Welsh Federation of Museums und außerdem Mitglied der europäischen und britischen Standardisierungsgremien für die Erhaltung von materiellem Kulturerbe.

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● ANA LABRADOR ist Ehrenmitglied der Universität Melbourne und Mitglied in verschiedenen Beratungsgremien und Verbänden. Neben ihrer Mitgliedschaft im

International Conservation Advisory Panel des National Heritage Board, Singapur, ist sie auch Mitglied des ICOM Standing Committee for Museum Definition und Sekretärin der ICOM Asia Pacific Regional Alliance. Mit umfangreichen Veröffentlichungen zu den Themen Sozialanthropologie, präventive Konservierung und Kunstgeschichte ist sie eine renommierte Autorin. Ihr neuestes Werk, „The Empty Museum: A Southeast Asian Perspective" gibt einen Einblick in die Auswirkungen der Pandemie auf die Museen in der Region. Darüber hinaus ist sie Mitglied des Redaktionsbeirats mehrerer Fachzeitschriften, darunter Museum Management and Curatorship, Museum International und International Journal of Sociomuseology. Vor ihrer jetzigen Tätigkeit war Ana stellvertretende Generaldirektorin für Museen am Nationalmuseum der Philippinen und arbeitete viele Jahre als Wissenschaftlerin an der Universität der Philippinen und der Ateneo de Manila Universität.

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● VALERIE MAGAR ist Restauratorin und Archäologin und auf archäologische Konservierung sowie die Geschichte der Konservierung spezialisiert. Sie arbeitete im nationalen Konservierungszentrum in Mexiko und übernahm dort von 2013–2016 die Leitung des Zentrums. Von 2004 bis 2010 arbeitete sie bereits bei ICCROM, 2018 kehrte sie, als Leiterin der Programmabteilung, zurück.

VALERIE MAGAR is a conservator and archaeologist, specializing in archaeological conservation and in history of conservation. She has worked in Mexico at the national conservation centre, of which she became the head between 2013 and 2016. She worked at ICCROM between 2004–2010, and she returned in 2018, as Manager of the Programmes Unit.

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● LYNLEY NARGOODAH ist Vorsitzende von Mangkaja Arts und Direktorin von Arnhem Northern and Kimberley Artists (ANKA). Sie setzt sich für den generationenübergreifenden Erhalt von kulturellem Erbe ein. Lynley ist Stipendiatin am Grimwade Centre und Absolventin des Zertifikats "Cross Cultural Conservation and Heritage".

LYNLEY NARGOODAH is Chairwoman at Mangkaja Arts, and a Director of Arnhem Northern and Kimberley Artists (ANKA). She is dedicated to conservation to ensure culture continues across generations. Lynley is Indigenous Scholar-In-Residence at the Grimwade Centre, and graduate of the Specialist Certificate in Cross Cultural Conservation and Heritage.

● GABRIEL NODEA war Vorsitzender des Warmun Art Centre und ist Direktor sowie ehemaliger stellvertretender Direktor von Arnhem Northern and Kimberley Artists (ANKA). Gabriel ist Gija-Forschungsstipendiat am Grimwade Centre und spezialisierte sich im Rahmen des Zertifikats „Cross Cultural Conservation and Heritage" auf Zusammenhänge zwischen Kulturpolitik, Restaurierung und lokaler Identität, insbesondere in lokalen Gemeinschaften.

GABRIEL NODEA has held leadership positions as Chairman Warmun Art Centre, and is a Director and past Deputy Director of Arnhem Northern and Kimberley Artists (ANKA). Gabriel is Gija Research Fellow at the Grimwade Centre, and holds postgraduate qualifications in the Centre's Specialist Certificate in Cross Cultural Conservation and Heritage.

● ELLEN PEARLSTEIN bindet lokales und indigenes Wissen als Bestandteil des Lehrplans in das Konservierungsstudium

ein. Sie ist Direktorin der Andrew W. Mellon Opportunity for Diversity in Conservation, Preisträgerin des Keck Prize und erhielt kürzlich den Rome Prize. Ellen Pearlstein arbeitet aktuell an dem Band: „Conservation and Stewardship of Indigenous Collections. Changes and Transformations“, in der GCI-Reihe „Readings in Conservation“.

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● BARBARA PLANKENSTEINER ist seit 2017 Direktorin des Museums am Rothenbaum–Kulturen und Künste der Welt (MARKK) in Hamburg. Unter ihrer Leitung begann das Museum einen umfassenden Erneuerungs- und Dekolonisierungsprozess. Von 2015–2017 war sie Senior Curator for African Art an der Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, Connecticut. Davor wirkte sie als stellvertretende Direktorin und Chefkuratorin des Weltmuseums Wien sowie als langjährige Kuratorin der dortigen Afrika-Abteilung.

BARBARA PLANKENSTEINER is director of the Museum am Rothenbaum—World Cultures and Arts (MARKK) since April 2017. Under her leadership, the museum initiated a repositioning and decolonization process that also lead to a change of name. From 2015, she was Frances and Benjamin Benenson Foundation Senior Curator of African Art at the Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, Connecticut. Prior to this, she served as deputy director, chief curator and curator of the Africa collections at the Weltmuseum Wien where she had a decisive impact in the repositioning of the museum and the conceptualization of the new permanent collection.

● GABRIEL SCHIMMEROTH ist Kurator, Historiker und Leiter der Veranstaltungsabteilung am Museum am Rothenbaum – Kulturen und Künste der Welt (MARKK). Er ist verantwortlich für den experimentellen Projektort „Zwischenraum – A Space Between“ und das Projekt „MARKK in Motion“, Teil der Initiative für ethnologische Sammlungen der Kulturstiftung des Bundes.

GABRIEL SCHIMMEROTH is a curator, historian and head of public programming at the Museum am Rothenbaum—Kulturen und Künste der Welt (MARKK). He is responsible for the experimental project space "Zwischenraum—A Space Between" and the project "MARKK in Motion", which is part of the Initiative of Ethnological Collections of the German Federal Cultural Foundation.

● ROBYN SLOGGETT ist Lehrstuhlinhaberin der Cripps Foundation und Direktorin des Grimwade Centre an der Universität Melbourne. Zu ihren Forschungsschwerpunkten gehören: die Untersuchung von Künstler:innenmaterial und -techniken, Zuschreibung und Authentifizierung von kulturellen Gütern, Sammlungsentwicklung und -geschichte, Engagement von lokalen Gemeinschaften bei der Konservierung sowie die Bewahrung von materiellem, kulturellen Erbe, in lokalen Gemeinschaften Australiens.

ROBYN SLOGGETT is Cripps Foundation Chair and Director of the Grimwade Centre, the University of Melbourne. Her research includes: the investigation of artists' materials and techniques; attribution and authentication; collection development and history; community engagement in conservation; and the preservation of cultural materials in Australian heritage communities.

● HEIDI SWIERENGA ist Senior Restauratorin und Leiterin der Abteilung für Sammlungspflege, Verwaltungs- und Zugänglichkeitsmanagement am Museum für Anthropologie (MOA) an der Universität British Columbia, Kanada. Ihre Forschungs- und Arbeitsschwerpunkte sind die (Wieder-) Verwendung und Aktivierung von Objekten aus Herkunftsgesellschaften, die in Sammlungen verwahrt werden sowie die Bedeutung von Konservierung und Pflege bei der Ermöglichung dieser Prozesse.

HEIDI SWIERENGA is Senior Conservator and Head of the Collections Care, Management and Access Department at the Museum of Anthropology (MOA) at the University of British Columbia, Canada. Her practice and research focus on the use and activation of Indigenous belongings that are held in collections and the role that the conservation profession plays in facilitating these activities.

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● BEGLEITPROJEKT/ ACCOMPANYING PROJECT

Workshop Sokratischer Dialog mit Bill Wei am 23. November 2021 im Zwischenraum, zu den zwei Fragen, „Für welche Generation(en) würdest du kulturelles Erbe gerne bewahren?" und „Wie definierst du ‚Schaden/ Beschädigung'?".

Workshop Socratic Dialogue with Bill Wei am 23. November 2021 at the Zwischenraum about the two questions 'For which generation(s) would you like to preserve cultural heritage?' and 'How you would define "damage"?'.

ASSISTENZ / ASSISTANT
Elisabeth Forte

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MARKK IN MOTION

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Link to conference website *From Conservation to Conversation*

Die Restaurierung und Konservierung musealer Sammlungen ist eine der zentralen Aktivitäten in der Bewahrung und Pflege materieller Kultur. Die im institutionellen und vorwiegend europäischen Umfeld sorgfältig entwickelten und erforschten Strategien der Pflege bedeutungsvoller Sammlungen entsprechen oft nicht den ursprünglichen kulturellen Anforderungen im Umgang mit dem materiellen Erbe und werden zunehmend kritisch neu betrachtet. Die vorliegende Publikation dokumentiert die im September 2021 am MARKK (Museum am Rothenbaum – Kulturen und Künste der Welt) digital ausgerichtete Konferenz zu einem Neu- und Weiterdenken der Restaurierung/Konservierung und Sammlungspflege und bietet einen spannenden Einstieg in eine Debatte, die sich *from conservation to conversation* weiterentwickelt.

The practice of conservation within museums is one of the central activities with a substantial impact on preservation, usability and future development of collections. Over the past decades, often in European institutional contexts, approaches to collections care were developed through careful consideration and research. These approaches often do not align with the originating cultural requirements in caring for meaningful collections and are increasingly critically reconsidered. This publication documents the digital conference held in September 2021 at MARKK (Museum am Rothenbaum – World Cultures and Arts) on rethinking and repositioning conservation and care of collections, offering an exciting entry into a debate that has evolved *from conservation to conversation.*

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