

Community-based conservation: exploring rights-based approaches

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Background

- Longstanding practitioner / policy
- Evaluation
- SNIS project on Understanding rights and World Heritage
- Lecturer Anthropology, University of Lucerne



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Times of change?



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Paradigm shift: changes in the air

- *What* heritage is considered important
- *How* values are identified
- *How* management is done
- *How* goals and objectives are set
- *Who* sets the goals
- *Who* benefits
- From single to multiple heritage values
- From government only to co-management
- From expert-goal setting to participatory
- Recognition of tradition
- Equitable benefit-sharing

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People-Centred conservation: yes, but.. what's in a community?



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Politics of cultural landscapes

- Much progress in challenging divide between culture and nature
- Recognizing cultural landscapes, links between tangible and intangible, living heritage etc.
- New management models – e.g. cultural landscapes in the World Heritage convention
- Community-based conservation
- What about culture, community when they don't fit the « united colours » of heritage conservation?

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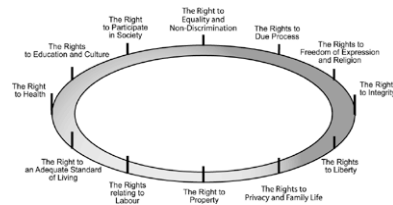
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What then if we look at growing intersection between human rights and heritage conservation?

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Diversity of rights



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Rights are fine, but not a Heritage/ conservation thing *per se* (at least not for my work)?



- A concern in **both cultural and natural sites**
- Heritage processes can be a powerful force and may infringe upon rights, but is also an **opportunity** to support their realization
- Recognizing **our responsibility** as conservation professionals

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Heritage may intersect with a range of rights – recognized (or not) in international standards and jurisprudence

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of **Racial Discrimination** (1965)
- International Covenant on **Civil and Political Rights** (1966)
- International Covenant on **Economic, Social and Cultural Rights** (1966)
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of **Discrimination Against Women** (1979)
- Convention **Against Torture** and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (1984)
- Convention on the **Rights of the Child** (1989)
- International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All **Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families** (1990)
- United Nations Declaration on the Rights of **Indigenous Peoples**

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We're already doing it we just don't (need to) call it human rights: yes or no?

- **Yes:** just a different language and way of framing questions of social justice, community involvement etc.
- **No:** inequalities persist, unless state-society relations are grounded in human rights

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How well do we know whether or heritage concepts intersect with wider community concerns?

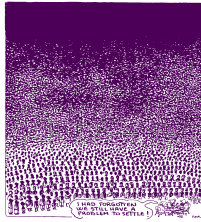
- Not very well
- Issues not always in the public space
- We discover it once trouble is there
- Japanese industrial heritage 2015
- Lesson learnt: ghosts in the closet
- How well do we know the social, political, historical implications/ contexts of heritage?
- **Does heritage conservation reinforce historical or on-going injustices or become a vector of social change?**

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Knowledge fragmented, yet some rights challenges are common..

- Poorest and most vulnerable often pay the cost
- Loss of customary rights and access
- Exclusion from „official“ community
- Stakeholders & rightsholders
- Lack of effective and equitable participation and consultation
- Certain groups particularly vulnerable: indigenous peoples – need for specific approaches
- Neglect of rights a recurrent challenge and lost opportunity to engage communities equitably



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Example of World Heritage

- World Heritage “as a source of identity and dignity for local communities”!, Bokova 2012



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What do human rights do that we are not already doing?

- Reference to common set of rules
- Sets standards.. Challenges of universality?
- responsibility rather than option
- Differences between stakeholders and rights-holders
- Responsibility of duty bearers (not just up to professional choice)
- Raise individual and collective rights issues
- Procedural and substantive aspects

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Starting point – the obvious

- How we think about and define heritage matters!
- Not merely a theoretical exercise, but implications for practice
- Heritage concepts are more than concepts
- Legal and institutional implications
- Heritage practice has social impact; may enhance or infringe upon a range of human rights

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Heritage concepts are more than concepts

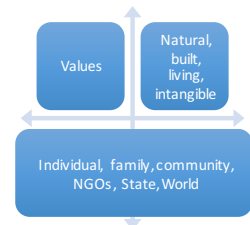
- Heritage linked to systems, practices, people and power
- May justify what is considered relevant knowledge – and what is considered irrelevant
- Justify particular instruments
- Associated with particular forms of management action
- Empower/ disempower in particular ways
- « Things » done in the name of heritage

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What do we know?

- Heritage concepts vary throughout time and space
- Means something different to different people – may be contested
- Huge implications for who is considered relevant stake and rights-holders as well as forms of recognition and access

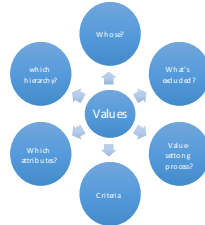


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Values

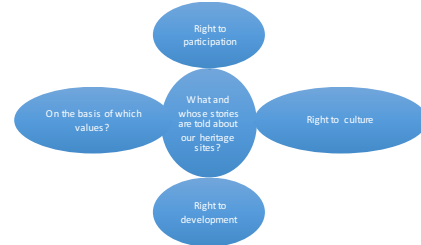
- Which/ Whose values are reflected?
- Whose aren't?
- Role of expertise?
- Whose voices?
- Process of identifying values i.e. setting heritage priorities
- Hierarchy and levels of values
- Attributes?
- Context?



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Creating narratives

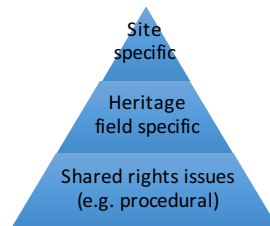


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Heritage and rights implications

- Objects/ places of heritage (artefacts, buildings, sites, landscapes) – **Tangible heritage**
- practices of heritage (languages, music, community commemorations) **Intangible heritage**
- Past, present, future significance?



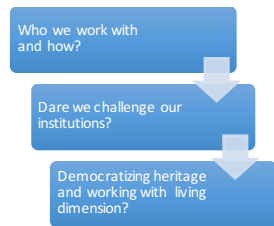
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Using community-based conservation to contribute to wider social and rights issues in society

- How does...
 - heritage designation and management activities contribute to wider questions of how we deal with nature, culture, places, things?
 - Address historical and contemporary inequalities?
 - Enable peaceful, consultative and informed practice?
 - Entrench inequalities, exclusion of minorities, dismiss women's participation?
 - Create new forms of social vulnerability or empowerment?



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