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How best to plan for disaster ... A summary of the argument for further discussion

Cornelius Holtorf

1. Disaster risk-reduction is the area of heritage management that has probably come furthest in planning for the long-term future. That is why this topic is particularly significant to the future development of the emerging field of *Heritage Futures*.
2. The prospect of disaster makes us all consider carefully what is important to us, to what extent we can reduce the risk of future disasters threatening what is important to us, and how well we are prepared to mitigate the consequences of disaster should it happen.
3. Instead of focusing mainly on how to protect heritage from anticipated disaster, it would be good to think more about the potential of heritage to mitigate the impact of disaster.
4. All heritage manifests change over time. Disasters modify and create heritage, allowing important stories to be told to future generations about processes and events of change.
5. Loss and transformation of specific manifestations of heritage are inevitable outcomes of a living culture and historical development.
6. Cultural heritage that has persisted to the present-day can tell powerful stories about transformation over time. The question is not whether some of it is gone, together with the times that are gone, but how much of it has been developed and adapted to new realities.
7. Cultural heritage often witnesses how people in the past have proven to be resilient by absorbing adversity. Understanding heritage can thus build capacity to adapt and reinvent life after transformation, enhancing human resilience.
8. Understanding cultural heritage enhances the human capability to accept the possibility of loss over time – much in the same way as we all have come to accept the need to cope with the possibility of death and disaster in our personal lives. If loss and transformation do not weigh quite as heavily, a community will be more resilient to disasters that cause transformation including loss.

9. Cultural heritage can boost the human capability of adapting their lives to changing circumstances: not as reminders of tribal belongings from time immemorial but as inspiration for the need to embrace uncertainty and the human potential to keep developing over time.

10. Cultural heritage should not be seen as precious remains of the past, manifesting inherent values and timeless qualities, bequeathed to us but now threatened. Cultural heritage is a tool of facilitating changes that improve peoples' lives under new circumstances and thus enhance cultural sustainability.

11. An increased resilience including the capacity to deal with transformation and loss of specific manifestations of cultural heritage can help people to adapt to new circumstances and absorb adversity in their own lives.

12. Increasing human resilience and the capability to absorb adversity can be achieved by lessening psychosocial dependencies on past certainties while at the same time fostering curiosity, resourcefulness and entrepreneurship in relation to the uncertainties of the future.

13. As far as disaster relate to heritage, the most important risk could be that the heritage has not sufficiently prepared the people affected to accept change, be able to adapt, and realize their capability to move on.

Reference:

Holtorf C, 2018. Embracing change: how cultural resilience is increased through cultural heritage. *World Archaeology* 50(4). Open access: <https://doi.org/10.1080/00438243.2018.1510340>