

# **WP2: Co-design of the tools for cultural heritage co-creation**

**SO-CLOSE**

**Peace School Foundation of  
Monte Sole - MONTE**

**Training Seminar - LUND  
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# Themes From Interviews

- ★ **WITNESS:** in our work we are often asked for a *witness*, someone who has experienced the horrors of Monte Sole firsthand and is willing to tell his/her story, with the worry of meeting these people before it is too late.
  - On one hand, there is a lot of attention to witnesses of wars and massacres of more recent years and the person acquires value only because he or she has suffered [Policy makers], forgetting that the person has the right to be recognised as a human being with all personal characteristics, beyond his or her suffering.
  - On the other hand, there is instead a limited interest in these witnesses, as if somehow these people story had immediately acquired the "witness" status, but losing it very quickly for the action of incomprehensible social acceptance of tragedy and horror.
    - Refugees want to be recognised not only as victims of tragic stories, but as people who can contribute through their work and participation in the society projected into the present [Refugees].
    - It is also important to pay attention to considering the experience of displacement or violence as a cultural heritage, as it lacks the constructive and universalizable element that a cultural heritage should have; it is more an experiential heritage that should certainly be known while being very careful to stay away from any form of pietistic sensationalism [Cultural Institutions].

# Themes From Interviews

- ★ **WORK:** the importance of work as a means of sustenance, integration and recognition emerges as a fundamental and priority element with respect to cultural participation, to which energy and time can be dedicated if and only if the work issue is satisfied. In addition, it takes money to participate in cultural activities [Refugees].
  - *More than a refugee asked us for a job during the interview.*
  - Work is the first dimension in which the refugee gives meaning to his or her stay in the host country, in which he or she feels part of something, in which he or she feels to be “normal”. It is therefore perceived as the first means of integration [Policy Makers; NGOs].
  - Without a job, they can’t develop relationships in the host society, or take part to cultural life, as they don’t have money.
  - With respect to new technologies/apps, the development of technologies that can help in job search [Refugees] and competences acquisition and certification [Policy Makers] is suggested.

# Themes From Interviews

- ★ **HERE AND NOW:** the painful past is often something a person struggles to share, while the present, where s/he is healthy and the biggest difficulties are behind him/her, is an easier and more positive dimension that s/he is willing to talk about.
  - Sharing through the story of food, sport, music, work, traditions, political activism is the form that many choose also in order to escape from the painful experiences or to strengthen integration, few people are willing to report painful events that caused migration or happened through the journey.
  - The main interest is in the “here and now”, with all the potential that can be grasped in terms of work, autonomy, relationships, personal fulfillment [Refugees; NGOs; Policy Makers].
- ★ **SOCIAL COHESION: WHICH SOCIETY?**
  - Refugees who came in the recent years didn't choose to stay in Italy, They are here only because of the Dublin Agreement and if they were given the chance they would move to other countries with more working opportunities. To them, investing time and efforts in social cohesion when their hope is to go elsewhere is not an option. [Refugees, NGOs, Cultural institutions]
  - Rage is rising, due to bureaucracy, lack of a job, and so is the gap between their expectations and reality, which corresponds to the gap between their past and their present. Italians and Italy are not perceived in a positive way [Refugees, NGOs]

# Themes From Interviews

- ★ **THE VIRTUAL ENVIRONMENT AS INSTRUMENT:** social media and digital tools in general are perceived as fundamental to live in today's society and to carry out various activities, including some more related to study/work (sending emails, teaching, reading job advertisements), others related to everyday life (searching for service hours, booking a doctor's appointment), others related to sociality (staying in touch with friends, posting photos, video calls). For some of them social networks are a tool to build a network or stay in touch with people or refugees from their home country, living far from them.
  - However, digital is not necessarily perceived by some refugees as a place for culture, but as a tool to make known and convey the contents of real events and activities. In this sense digital is a tool, but the recognition as a person occurs through real life experiences [Refugees].
  - It can be sterile to work on projects that take place exclusively on the net, while experiences in presence allow and promote a participation that involves both physical and emotional aspects, which allow elaboration and awareness that can trigger changes [NGOs; Cultural Institutions; Policy Makers; Refugees].
- ★ **DIGITAL AS A TRAINING OPPORTUNITY:** a need felt by some people is to work on the training of those who work in reception, to allow a greater awareness of the dynamics and how to manage them in everyday life to actively promote integration [Policy Makers; Cultural Institutions; Refugees].

# Themes From Interviews

- ★ **PERVASIVE PROJECTS AND UNIVERSAL SERVICES:** in order to initiate dynamics of change with respect to refugee integration, events/activities on this issue should be included in the programming for the general public, not only for an audience of high school students led by the sensitivity of teachers or in restricted situations aimed at an already aware audience.
  - The impact can be real if one arrives at those people who are not normally interested in the topic [Policy Makers; NGOs; Cultural Institutions]
  - A change of frame is needed in order to think to universal services that are therefore able to include the whole population, without ghettoising minorities [Policy Makers; NGOs].
  
- ★ **GENDER ISSUES:** it is very difficult to find refugee women and, when they are found, it is difficult to find availability for interviews.
  - For the majority of male refugees, the problems faced by women are almost the same.
  - In some cases it is thought to be easier for them to travel rapidly (sexual violence as payment for the human traffickers “speed up the process” and it is seen as a better condition than 6/12 months of tortures).
  - In some cases it is thought to be impossible for women to travel because it is too dangerous.
  - Others suffer from the lack of women from their country in Europe.

# Themes From Interviews

## ★ INTERSECTIONALITY

- Facing the migration theme, Academia should do a bigger effort to move toward interdisciplinarity. This means not only to use methodologies and tools from other study fields but to learn to conceive the person = object of study as a multidimensional person.
- Doing so Academia will better serve the goal to be a reliable and effective advisor for political decisions and social / public opinion changes [Academics; Cultural Institutions]

## ★ CHANGING THE DIRECTION OF ANALYSIS AND ACTION

- a different wording is necessary in order to frame differently the field of action.
  - Example: the right of children to go to school is a limited way to express the right for education. It implies the presence of a school building where children are supposed to go every morning but if you are focused on the core of the right than you can imagine mobile teachers going to different locations in different moment of the day taking into consideration different needs, habits, traditions...
- a different wording is necessary in order to build real intercultural encounters [Academics; Cultural Institutions; NGOs]

# Themes From Interviews

## ★ APP/PROJECT DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS PERCEIVED AS USEFUL \_ 1

- apps that teach how life works in the host country (transport, educational institutions, obtaining documents, etc.) [Refugees]
- blog of refugee experiences to share useful information [Refugees]
- chat and video calls to connect people who need to practice a language [Refugees]
- video call support services to carry out reception tasks [Refugees]
- connecting groups of people such as schools, institutions in various parts of the world, also to help understand how to live [Refugees; Cultural Institutions, Policy Makers]
- to create something on universal themes, to show how they are dealt with in different parts of the world (e.g. how to make bread, how to give birth) [Refugees]
- apps that connect refugees from the same tribe/nationality to celebrate traditional festivities and to inform if there are communities organizing something on the territory of the host country [we came up with this idea because some refugees said they cannot celebrate their festivities because there are no refugees of their nationality/ethnicity and some things are only done in groups].



# Themes From Interviews

## ★ APP/PROJECT DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS PERCEIVED AS USEFUL \_ 2

- to build generational meeting/confrontation projects, bearing in mind that the majority of refugees are young people, who have interests and languages in common with young Europeans [Ngos]. Create a parallelism with the discourse of young people leaving in search of work: Italian young people leaving are not all "migrant brains", many seek fortune and experience like many migrants. Personal history as a moment of encounter if contextualized in a certain way [Refugees; NGOs; Cultural Institutions; Policy Makers].
- creation of tools that are not necessarily in museums or places recognized as cultural, but in places that are attended not only by people interested in meeting refugees, e.g. a shopping center [NGOs; Cultural Institutions; Policy Makers].



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# FGs Bullets Points

- ❖ FGs are not workshops, therapy, decision making, education, organizing, art creation activities or behavior change activities (although focus groups that are primarily for data collection may have some of these outcomes as well)
- ❖ “Tools range is limited but how you create a tool may widely vary” (Marc)
  - Each decision is like a movie director decision and it gives back the point of view of the producer: this is the center of a sharing that can be both effective and ethic
- ❖ Content creation. So-Close core idea is that sharing a difficult past can enhance social cohesion. Nevertheless this sharing is inherently asymmetrical: Host Countries are sharing a far and collective past while newcomers are asked to share a very close and private tragedy.
  - FGs are not supposed to repeat what was in the individual interviews: storytelling was already problematic there, why to go on?



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# FGs Bullets Points

- ❖ Dealing with traumatized individuals can bring:
  - Desire for avoidance of sufferance by the speaker (better to talk about cooking recipes)
  - Burnout, victimhood, emotional contagion by the researcher
- ❖ We have an incredibly wide range of countries, stories, experiences: how to find a common shared narrative if we do not move to more general themes?
  - Example: some people are leaving home countries because their rights are not respected but when they arrive here rights are violated as well...
- ❖ We have to decide if we want to have homogeneous or heterogeneous FGs. Both decisions have pros and cons but the criteria should consider FGs effectiveness and not different sets of questions.
- ❖ MONTE suggests...



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