What is heritage; an Alien concept?
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This document was produced within the framework of the Joint Project “EU/CoE Support to the Promotion of Cultural Diversity in Kosovo”. The content does not necessarily represent the official position of the European Union and/or the Council of Europe.

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.
Foreword

The Council of Europe (CoE) is an intergovernmental organisation with the dual purpose of promoting and protecting human rights and ensuring the practice of democratic processes across the European continent. These issues are as applicable to the fields of culture and cultural heritage as other sectors managed by the Council of Europe. Our work moves through the making of policy based upon agreed standards, to providing support and assistance to governments and other partners to implement policy by means of various instruments and projects. However important this work is, it often not understood fully by the general public. A question we face is how to explain the work to a wider public without using the highly technical and often specialist language of human rights or heritage, which many find incomprehensible. We are challenged to find creative ways to connect with our many stakeholders and convey the importance cultural heritage to all communities.

The comic strip booklet, “What is Heritage; An Alien Concept?” produced by the EU/CoE Joint Project - Support to the Promotion of Cultural Diversity in Kosovo (PCDK) is an attempt to raise awareness about the value of heritage, inspired by content provided by our colleagues. Humour is used to focus public attention on important issues, and to engage people of all ages to consider a number of fundamental issues relevant to heritage and diversity.

This booklet aims to promote debate about our understanding of heritage and diversity. It is
produced in the context of the education and awareness raising component of the PCDK project to encourage dialogue, creative thinking and a dynamic process of recognising the advantage of diversity. The characters of ‘aliens’ and the notion of ‘alienation’ from one’s own heritage we hope will help open a door to further discussion.

With continued commitment to the preservation and protection of cultural and natural heritage as a means of fostering the basic principles of human rights and democracy, the Council of Europe remains committed to the promotion of intercultural dialogue and the encouragement of collective responsibility by everyone towards recognising the critical value of cultural heritage and the a primary need for a genuine understanding and celebration of difference, and a recognition of a common heritage that belongs to all.

Robert Palmer
Director of Democratic Governance, Culture and Diversity
Council of Europe
Cultural heritage is widely recognised across Europe as a vehicle of cultural identity. The protection of our common heritage and the promotion of cultural diversity are also very important instruments for bringing different communities closer and enhancing dialogue between different cultures. How much people know about cultural heritage depends both on what is done to promote it and also on the capacity of Europeans to become familiar with and appreciate their own culture and those of the other communities.

This is why one of the main objectives of the “European Union/Council of Europe Joint Action – Support to the Promotion of Cultural Diversity in Kosovo (PCDK)” is to increase the awareness of the population with regard to the importance of cultural heritage as a common good, independent from any ethnic or religious considerations.

This comic strip booklet “What is Heritage; an Alien Concept?” illustrates the importance of cultural heritage in a humorous way, exemplified by extraterrestrial characters pondering on the peculiarities of terrestrial heritage. The booklet implies that it is this terrestrial heritage which is our common patrimony and for the protection of which we need to join forces and work together.

Preservation and promotion of cultural diversity are among the founding principles of the European Union, and a guiding principle for our cooperation with Kosovo. By promoting a better understanding of the role and importance of cultural heritage, I hope that the “alien” characters of this booklet will contribute in an entertaining way to strengthening the dialogue between different communities and fostering reconciliation in the longer-term.

Samuel Žbogar
Head of the EU Office/EU Special Representative
Introduction

The Education and Awareness Raising component of the European Union / Council of Europe Joint Action- Support to the Promotion of Cultural Diversity in Kosovo (PCDK) has been reaching out schools and general public through various tools for formal and informal education. Awareness raising of the general public on issues relevant to heritage and diversity took place through the production of a handbook for elementary schools teachers, a university module on heritage and diversity, dialogue sessions, and “Hajde!” site visits.

Throughout the PCDK project, creative and innovative ways were actively sought out to bring public attention to issues around heritage and diversity. One of these efforts is presented in this booklet; these comic strips aim to bring flavour and humour to our work which we believe reflects the irony and call for creativity in the field. The comic strip and its characters are the production of a local company, Trembelat, in coordination with the PCDK team. Each comic strip tries to bring a sense of humour to issues relevant to the PCDK project. We believe that humour is always useful to encourage critical thinking and find creative solutions. We hope you enjoy them.

Hakan Shearer Demir
PCDK Team Leader
We all live with the objective of being happy; our lives are all different and yet the same.

(Anne Frank, writer and Holocaust victim)
FOR TODAY’S LESSON ON HUMAN BEHAVIOR WE WILL OBSERVE A SITUATION BETWEEN TWO EARTHLYNKS DEMONSTRATING THEIR TOOL-SHARING ABILITIES.

JIM-102 ASKS HIS NEIGHBOR, TOM-337, TO LEND HIM HIS HAMMER.

ALTHOUGH, TOM IS CLEARLY NOT USING HIS TOOL AND HAS NO REASON NOT TO LEND IT TO JIM, HE DENIES HIS REQUEST BY TELLING HIM SOME INACCURATE INFORMATION - SEE "LIES" ON PAGE 68.

IT MIGHT SEEM THAT WAY, BUT IT IS COMPLETELY DIFFERENT WITH HUMANS.

JIM OFTEN FORGETS HIS GLASSES AND ONCE HE READ THE MAP INACCURATELY AND BOTH OF THEM ENDED UP BEING LOST, SO TOM MADE HIM PAY FOR GAS AT WHICH POINT JIM’S WALLET GOT STOLEN, AND IT TOOK THEM TWO DAYS TO GET BACK. DURING THIS TIME TOM ALSO DISCOVERED THAT JIM LISTENS TO MUSIC WHICH TOM DESCRIBED AS IMORAL....

... TOM NOW THINKS THAT JIM IS IN FACT PLANNING TO TAKE REVENGE FOR WHAT HAD HAPPENED BY TAKING HIS HAMMER AND NOT RETURNING IT. EVEN WORSE, HE MIGHT USE IT TO HARM HIM OR BUILD A CATAPULT ON HIS BACKYARD TO DESTROY TOM’S HOSUE.

NOW, WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM ALL THIS?

ALTHOUGH, TOM IS CLEARLY NOT USING HIS TOOL AND HAS NO REASON NOT TO LEND IT TO JIM, HE DENIES HIS REQUEST BY TELLING HIM SOME INACCURATE INFORMATION - SEE "LIES" ON PAGE 68.

CAN ANYONE TELL ME WHY THIS HAPPENS?

TOM CANNOT LIFT THE HAMMER?

BECAUSE THE HAMMER IS NOT COMPATIBLE WITH JIM’S NAILS?

THE HAMMER IS INVISIBLE?

UMM.... THAT WE SHOULD ALWAYS WASH OUR HANDS BEFORE DINNER?

THE OTHER
Does urbanity, the fact that somebody lives in city, mark that person’s identity to the degree that it is specifically urban? The identity of the city bears on the identity of those living in it, and vice versa: the urban environment reflects human needs and values.

(http://www.eki.ee/km/place/pdf/kp3_01_Haapala.pdf)
Urban identity

I'm telling you, it's true! Humans are all slowly getting themselves enslaved to these machines. I've seen them myself. These machines stand by the sides of road intersections giving orders to humans. The machines use some beams of different colored light to order people to stop or start moving. You should see them. They all just blindly obey the orders.

Hmm... do you think this might be a part of a larger plan? I don't know yet. In fact, I even heard they've got some other people that make sure everyone respects the machines' will, and punish those who don't.
...intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity.

(Article 2.1, Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, UNESCO)
Intangible Heritage

Disguised as a man, Kidas is sent on a mission to do some research on the origin of earth and life on it...

One day while it was drinking water from the lake close by, the funniest man on the village, snaked up behind the dragon and told it the funniest joke that ever existed.

The dragon started choking and was coughing out water and fire. It's body became the mountains and hot water still comes out from it's springs.

SOMEWHERE IN KOSOVO...

You see those, pointy mountains over there? Those are the ribs of a dragon who would terrorise the people in these villages.

... the funny man was hailed as a hero until he started to annoy everyone with his jokes and so he was cursed and became a small, flying, feathery creature...

... and from that day on, these crows still annoy the villagers with their singing.

MEANIME IN SGCBA*...

So, is that why they don't trim their nails on Tuesdays?

*STRANGULA GALAXY CENTER FOR BLOYZPHLUG STUDIES (ANTHROPOLOGY IS CALLED BLOYZPHLUG IN THEIR PLANET)
The rise of the industrial society and growth of prosperity turned tourism into a mass leisure activity, while, at the same time, individualism and postmodernism have contributed to the creation of an increasingly fragmented and diverse field of tourism supply and demand.

(Impact of European Cultural Routes on SMEs' innovation and competitiveness)
So, Kidas, what are you doing for this year’s Ijam Enj? Going somewhere exiting?

Nah, after my disastrous hitchhiking trip in Cvejnarv galaxy, I decided to go somewhere quiet this time. I’ll be touring somewhere calm, like this little planet called Earth.

Really? And what will you be seeing there?

I was thinking of seeing Kullas. They look like some sort of large, square, stone-made bunkers but apparently humans used to live in them.

Also, during a specific time of the year, when the northern part of the planet starts to get warmer by the nearest star, the people take some capsules produced by some small feathery creatures, boil them so their shell gets hardened and then color them. I heard it gives them the power of reincarnation.

Really? And what do they call these capsules?

They’re called “Eggs”.

Huh... and what do they call these capsules?

Now that’s an unusual name.

Very mystical! I’m thinking of bringing one with me.

Oh, and they have a little sculpture of one of us that visited the place a couple of thousand years ago.
People are the common denominator of progress.

(John Kenneth Galbraith, economist and author)
Alright, I want everyone's attention. Here is the plan...

We have located a small town to setup our base on Earth. Full cooperation with the local people is needed in order to make this work.

They will also feel the need to buy t-shirts, postcards, mugs, books or any handmade products we can locally produce so they can take as souvenirs.

The humans will be blinded by their interest in learning about other cultures. We will be rich!

Erm... and what do we buy with useless human money?

Ice-cream, my friends. Lots of ice-cream!

We will use their traditional buildings and architecture to lure the tourists to visit this place.

Once they get there, they will find it impossible to resist the local food that we will provide.

Economic development
Stereotypes do exist, but we have to walk through them.

(Forest Whitaker, actor)
What's up?

Not much. I'm watching a documentary film about stereotypes of the solar system. Right now they're telling about the different stereotypes that exist amongst humans. It's depressing to see how things like appearance, origin or language can cause so much trouble between groups.

Uh-huh... sounds boring.

Well, it's much more interesting than spending my whole life painting triangles on surfaces of dimly lit planets.

What?! Just because I come from a part of the galaxy that is renowned for a stunning contemporary art scene doesn't mean I am an ignorant.

Yeah, your hairstyle tells a lot about that.

Well, it's much better than numbing your mind while black hole fishing which is what everyone here does.

Black hole fishing is not mind-numbing!!! It teaches you a lot about the universe. You should try it once, instead of riding spaceships like crazy as do most of you from the north side of the galaxy.

Stereotypes
Everyone has the right to freely participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share the scientific advancement and its benefits.

(Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948, Article 27)
The good news is that because of our early reaction, Earth’s destruction, which was scheduled for 2012 ELT*, has been postponed and a new location is being reconsidered for building the statue of Asblyth, our galactic hero.

*Earth local time

Today, many planets on which life is still in its early stages, are destroyed by the carelessness of the superior beings in the universe, such as us.

Last week, a planet whose inhabitants were just about to discover that they are not the center of the universe, got destroyed in order to make room for a spaceship parking lot. We should be ashamed of that.

... in planets like these, we can observe cultures that are still struggling with gravity. It has not been long before when we were in the same situation and lived on one planet only and the protection which is vital for every being on it.
...positive aspects of globalisation are enabling nations and people to become politically, economically and socially interdependent, making war an increasingly unacceptable option.

(Mohamed El Baradei, Egyptian diplomat, and the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency)
Globalization

What’s wrong?

Nothing, it’s just that I traveled 23,000 light-years and I get the same food, same music, same shows I have back home. I want to try some new and original cultures!

That’s galacticalization for you. Maybe you should’ve tried visiting Earth.

I did, and I survived by a hair’s breadth. Humans there confused me for a fish of some sort and I was about to become a delicious dish for them. Don’t ever mention Earth to me!

So... what shall we with Earth now?

I was thinking of buying it and starting a coffee shop there.
Europe, a common heritage
They call it "European Heritage Days", an annual programme providing opportunities to visit buildings, monuments and sites which are not normally accessible to the public. It raises citizens' awareness of Europe's cultural diversity and richness. People learn to appreciate their architectural and environmental heritage, strengthening a sense of shared identity among all Europeans. Combating racism and xenophobia and encouraging greater tolerance in Europe across national borders. So, after the "days" are over, does everyone start hating each other again and stop caring about cultural heritage? There's only one way to find out... Get ready, Earth, we're coming!
Diversity is the one truth we all have in common. Celebrate it every day.

(Anonymous)
Diversity

First you have to try and divide them. Try to group them based on their colour, behaviour and origin. Origin is a tricky one to spot.

Choose only one kind and only allow that one to spread.

Once you manage to isolate every other group you can immediately terminate them until there's only one group occupying the whole area.

Terminate them?! Are you mad?!

Diversity is key to improving communication between people of different backgrounds and lifestyles, leading to greater knowledge, understanding. It allows individuals to truly express who they are within a society. Diversity is what makes universe what it is.

Umm, I was just showing him video game about arranging blocks...

Oh...
...the architectural heritage constitutes an irreplaceable expression of the richness and diversity of Europe’s cultural heritage, bears inestimable witness to our past and is a common heritage of all Europeans.

(Preamble of the Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe, Granada, 1985)
ON OUR NEXT JOURNEY WE WILL BE VISITING ARCHITECTURAL LANDMARKS AND OTHER ARTISTIC MASTERPIECES THAT WE, THE STRANGLULONS, HAVE CREATED THROUGHOUT THE GALAXY.


THEN WE’LL GO TO EUROPE AND SEE “THE LAST SUPPER”, “MONA LISA” AND MANY OTHER DRAWINGS AND SKETCHES DONE BY ZAMLE ITILAH...

WAIT! I THOUGHT LEONARDO DA VINCI DID THOSE?!

HAHAHA YES, THAT WAS HIS OTHER IDENTITY. HE WAS A MASTER OF DISGUISE ALSO. YOU DIDN’T REALLY THINK DA VINCI WAS HUMAN, DID YOU?

Common Cultural Heritage
Heritage is a part of our cultural DNA.
It tells us who we were and who we are today.

(Thorbjorn Jagland, Secretary General of the Council of Europe)
Rehabilitation of Cultural Heritage

What do you mean you forgot the instructions?

How are we supposed to restore a medieval building without them?

Oh come on! How hard can it be? It's probably like putting together pieces of a puzzle.

There you go! It's perfect!

Something tells me that this is not how it was supposed to look like.

Later...
Landscape is an important part of the quality of life for people everywhere.

(Preamble of the European Landscape Convention, Florence, 20 October 2000)
Each week, our carrier spaceships transport 3.2 million liters of freshwater to Earth.

It is then distributed to all the springs that would not be sufficient to fulfill the people’s needs on their own.

This way we make sure that after the water starts running down the stream it will be enough for drinking, irrigation.

And to keep the tourist attractions, like the Mirusha waterfall, on their optimal form most of the time.

Of course, the humans are unaware of all this and think that the water cycle on earth is perfectly balanced.

I forget, why is it that we do so much for the humans?

I keep telling you, it’s all about the ice-cream.

Natural Heritage
Access to culture and heritage is a fundamental right that enables the attainment of democratic values, justice, stability and peace, and the improvement of our quality of life.

(Vision Statement, Directorate of Culture, Cultural and Natural Heritage, Council of Europe,)

Purple Team, what’s your status?

We’ve just managed to get some pictures of the woman that seems to be the highlight of this ceremony.

It seems that her face has been painted in some mysterious way. It’s a symmetrical design of lines and circles.

Did you get any information at all about what function it serves?

We have no idea yet. It might be some kind of information coding, or maybe some sort of protection.

The locals are saying that she is getting prepared to live with another human being now or as they say “getting married”.

It just keeps getting stranger and stranger.

Celebration of Heritage