

1 Introduction

Over the last decade, through my research and fieldwork, I have engaged with many heritage sites and museums and their education programmes across Europe. In Turkey and the United Kingdom, I conducted ethnographic fieldwork to evaluate the role of heritage and museums as social and cultural spaces, and have examined education programmes to analyse levels of engagement and their impact on diverse communities and audiences. While some museums and heritage sites in the United Kingdom and other parts of Europe have a more democratic approach to education through participatory models in their displays and programmes, Turkey's approach to heritage and museum displays is far more top down, whereby communities are excluded from decision-making processes and from participating in the design of such programmes. This difference can also be seen when looking at the representation of diverse communities. UK museum and heritage practices in particular have shifted to a more representative model with the inclusion of multiple narratives and diverse histories. This can especially be seen in small and community museum practices. In contrast, such movement towards more multivalent and representative practices is rarely found in Turkey.

In this Element I address the heritage and museum practices of both countries. In my research projects, especially in Turkey, I have come across extreme uses of top-down approaches by museums and heritage sites. This is an impact of Turkey's political system, which has become increasingly authoritarian in the last two decades (Brown 2019). In 2010, I went to Ani, a medieval Armenian site that still contains substantial architecture and monuments and is located in the East of Turkey, close to the Armenian border. Here I aimed to examine how minority ethnic groups' heritage is treated in Turkey.

Ani has been excavated by Turkish archaeologists for decades and most of its artefacts are displayed at the Kars Museum, which is in the nearest town. The first time I went to visit the museum to collect data and interview museum professionals, one thing was extremely clear: the word 'Armenian' was carefully avoided in the museum displays. This undermining (and arguably manipulative) approach against other minority communities in Turkey can be seen in many other state museums. This is a reflection of Turkish nationalism, which began in the early years of the Republic but has become increasingly obvious in the last two decades. In particular, ethnic Turkish heritage has been given more attention than these other groups in order to consolidate an official Turkish ideology of national identity (Zencirci 2014).

Another example of how my experiences shaped this Element is that for many years, my MA students and I have run workshops with London's

museums and heritage sites – for example, at Hackney Museum – that reflect upon diversity, recognition and representation of social justice through these sites’ displays and education programmes. In this we use the museum as a space to reflect on social, historical and political issues and reflect on best practices. In these visits as well as through years of observations, ethnographic fieldwork, discussions and conversations with my students and museum professionals it had become clear to me that we need more effective social justice-based approaches and practices to better support communities, and as heritage and museum researchers and professionals, that we need to take a more determined role in social, cultural and political life. Throughout this Element, I return to the following core themes: how heritage sites and museums can support communities’ well-being and sustainability; how these sites can act as agents to provide support for developing skills; how heritage sites and museums can better reflect on social, political, economic and historical issues to develop dialogues between communities; how they can act to reduce inequalities that have developed over centuries that still need to be discussed and researched and how such sites can develop creative methods to enable these issues to be addressed and resolved.

Over the last two decades, heritage and museum practices have significantly progressed through the development of a range of methods to more directly engage the public in curatorial and educational activities (Macdonald 2006; Janes and Sandell 2019). To move beyond the colonial and ideological roles of heritage and museums, in place of the top-down decision-making processes traditionally used, appeals have also been made to make heritage and museums more public and participatory in their practices. Additionally, in some parts of the world, social and political issues have begun to be tackled more directly in the field of heritage and museum studies.

For instance, in Australia and Canada, dealing with historical, political and social issues in the context of indigenous heritage and rights can clearly be seen. This also is reflected in these countries’ heritage, museum and learning practices, as some indigenous communities are managing their own heritage (Nicholas and Smith 2020). This stands in contrast to traditional, authoritarian and oppressive heritage practices in undemocratic nation states that exclude diversity and increase inequalities and social injustices. However, in those countries, where the social justice approach is lacking, we see increasing grassroots heritage movements. The recent grassroots movement in Turkey, which mounted resistance to the demolition of Gezi Park in the centre of Istanbul (see Apaydin 2020b for more discussions about Gezi Park), is a good example. This clearly demonstrated that top-down or authoritarian approaches to heritage create tension between the people and the state. This results from dissonance in how meanings and values of heritage differ at a local or popular level as

compared to the vision of the state (see Apaydin 2018 for Turkey; Evans and Rowlands 2021 for China). This type of top-down approach also fuels inequalities and injustices by excluding communities from their own heritage and by consuming, using and abusing their cultural resources, as in the case of Turkey.

In response to such challenges this research focuses on how heritage sites and museums can tackle the issues around inequalities and injustices, particularly in the design, development and delivery of education programmes and museum displays, and in the use of heritage sites and museums as social–political and cultural spaces to respond to injustices. *Heritage, Education and Social Justice* considers heritage sites and museums as not only places where the public can have fun and learn about the history and the past, but also as crucial concepts and social, economic and cultural spaces that have the power to reflect on the injustices and inequalities of wider society. To do this, the Element explores the concept and practice of social justice and how it plays a crucial role in a heritage and museum context.

Social justice has been defined differently in many political spheres and the social sciences, all of which have framed it in relation to their respective fields and agendas. For example, in the heritage and museum context, Charlotte Joy, in her recent book, *Heritage Justice* (2020), clearly demonstrates how justice can reflect in repatriation and restitution contexts in relation to objects and artefacts in European museums that were brought from the Global South. This is an understanding of social justice and a contextualisation of it in museums from a legal perspective and ethical approaches related mainly to restitution. While important, I discuss social justice in this research differently and define it as equal access to and distribution of wealth and resources; equal and fair opportunities in social, economic, cultural and political life, regardless of economic, social, political, cultural and identity backgrounds; and as having an equal voice in decision-making processes (see Fraser 2003) in the heritage and museum context (see Fraser 2003). Thus, building on this core definition, my main focus is on the value and rights of local and disadvantaged groups and to consider the role of education and museums to support and empower these groups to develop skills and take equal part in social, cultural and political life.

In this Element I lay out the values of ‘anti-oppressive’ (Bell 2016) heritage and museum practice that recognise diversities, advocate equality and that aim to prevent all forms of prejudice, racism and bias. In this way, I argue that the main social role of museums and heritage practice is to provide the groundwork for developing sustainable and equal societies. To support this, this Element critically examines Pierre Bourdieu’s concepts of ‘the forms of capital’ and ‘habitus’ (1984, 1986, 2005), Iris Marion Young’s forms of ‘oppression’ (1990), Paulo Freire’s concept of ‘dialogue’ (1970) and Nancy Fraser’s social justice

concepts, particularly ‘recognition’, ‘redistribution’ and ‘representation’ (1997, 2000, 2003, 2009, 2013), and situating them in the heritage and museum context.

I focus on the theories of these thinkers as a means to draw out their critical reflections on inequalities and injustices throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries and show how these might help to elucidate discourses of injustices that heavily affected understanding and use of heritage and museums. *Heritage, Education and Social Justice* takes a strong interdisciplinary approach and draws on intensive theoretical and practical research. To do this I examine a range of case studies across Europe. The focal point of comparison is between the United Kingdom – which prides itself on being at the forefront of heritage practice – and Turkey, which has become an extremely authoritarian nation state in the last two decades with consequent effects on heritage and museum practices.

I examine current practices in light of my own recent ethnographic fieldwork on heritage sites and museums in the United Kingdom and Turkey. This includes investigation of people-centred museum practices that utilise digital tools for onsite and offsite experiences. While the use of digital tools can be encouraging for learning and engaging audiences both at and away from museum and sites, they are also a crucial part of redistribution of knowledge to wider audiences as part of social justice. That said, digital media and online engagement can create new forms of exclusion that need to be considered (Robinson et al. 2015) because a large proportion of society does not have access to the skills to use digital tools (i.e., digital poverty; I return to this in Section 2).

By focusing on key aspects of social justice – particularly the roles of recognition, representation, redistribution that were developed and discussed by Nancy Fraser (2003, 2009) – I will outline a critical toolkit to understand social justice in the heritage and museum contexts, and offer a way forward to design and develop social justice-focused heritage and museum practices and education programmes alongside effective, critical and constructive people-centred engagement strategies. Although I will delve into social justice and its dimensions more deeply in Section 4, for context here, the dimension of **recognition** seeks to acknowledge all differences in the society from ethnic backgrounds to gender differences; the **representation** dimension looks at how diverse voices can be brought into the decision-making process as part of democratic approach and **redistribution** seeks equal distribution of wealth and resources.

My main aims in this Element are to contextualise these social justice dimensions in the heritage context by critically reflecting on how heritage

sites and museums can be spaces where all differences are recognised; how heritage sites and museums as spaces transfer their power to the people who then manage these cultural settings, from curatorial practices to education programmes (as I consider this a starting point of achieving social justice in heritage and museum contexts) and how all communities, regardless of their ethnic, gender, economic and/or educational backgrounds, are able to obtain an equal and equitable share from the knowledge that is produced, stored and used in heritage sites and museums. While I aim to contextualise social justice in heritage sites and museum settings, I also specifically aim to analyse questions that are more related to current education and learning programmes at heritage sites¹ and museums: How can these education programmes be shifted in terms of their designs and content to meet community needs and priorities? Can they provide the groundwork for communities to develop skills to actively take a greater role in social, political and economic life so inequalities are reduced rather than developing these education programmes in parallel to expert and institutional agendas? I also refer to a question about criticality in education: Who is education for? Is it for the protection and preservation of material culture of the past only? Or is it for people who need to have an equal access to cultural settings and, therefore, access to education to develop skills and thus take equal distribution from cultural capital? And importantly, how does the content of these education programmes help to develop critical consciousness to prevent all forms of racism, prejudice and discrimination in today's world?

In the heritage and museum context, social justice can be manifested and constructed in different ways, from the design and development of exhibitions to education programmes and community and public engagement, and the sharing of the power of heritage and museums as institutions. Most importantly, social justice is about using heritage sites and museums as a space where people's voices can be heard, not only about heritage and museum work and issues but also about wider social, political and economic issues that create inequalities in society. In other words, using heritage and museums in parallel to reflect on needs, priorities and agendas of communities rather than those of institutions and experts. Throughout this Element, I will argue that heritage sites and museums, as a space, can use their collections and material culture to respond to contemporary social and political issues and to draw on social justice concepts and promote equal access to resources, justice and well-being for all people, regardless of their social, ethnic, gender, sexual, political and economic backgrounds, in order to develop dialogues between communities to discuss contemporary and historical issues.

The material culture in the care or otherwise connected with heritage and museum institutions can act as a powerful resource for individuals and

communities. Adapted from the perspectives of memory, identity, well-being and belonging, these are particularly vital aspects for communities and minority ethnic groups at risk of discrimination or even disappearing (see Butler 2006; Smith 2006, 2021; Harrison 2013; Apaydin 2018, 2020a). This is even true for archaeological heritage, which has the potential to show us alternative ways of social, cultural, political and economic life and possibilities of creating sustainable and peaceful futures drawn from new insights about the past (see Graeber and Wengrow 2021).

In this Element, I will discuss a framework for the concept of social justice adapted specifically to the museum and heritage context. Although scholars (e.g., Coffee 2008; Sandell and Nightingale 2012; Kinsley 2016; Lynch 2021) reflect on social justice and the social role of museums, the question of what social justice is, in a wider social and political context and how it is situated from heritage, museum and material culture perspectives, needs more exploration and discussion (see Joy 2020). The oppressive forces that create inequalities and injustices and the ‘redistribution’, ‘recognition’ and ‘representation’ dimensions of social justice in particular need further analysis and exploration. By recognising important aspects of both group and individual identities through the creation of spaces and opportunities for education, museums and sites become crucial community spaces where new meanings and memories can be ascribed and developed as sites of activism, especially for disadvantaged, economically deprived and socially and politically discriminated groups.

The increased social inequalities, pervasive in every aspect of life, have also influenced museum and heritage institutions which had once been spaces only for certain groups that held higher levels of social, cultural and economic capital. While current practices in some museums offer innovative learning opportunities through presenting visual and intangible practices and material culture, as well as through creating virtual cultural experiences using digital tools, the understanding and application of the role of social justice in heritage and museums are still broadly lacking. This lack of understanding of social justice and its applications can be seen in many large museums across the globe, where the past and contemporary material culture is displayed as primarily separate from the concerns of contemporary societies. However, the ‘old museology’ and these more traditional museum practices, which retain heavy traces of colonial and nationalist approaches (see Bennett 1995, 2017; Bennett et al. 2017), are nonetheless shifting in terms of curatorial and managerial practices (see Janes and Sandell 2019; Lynch 2021), especially through some grassroots movements (i.e., in terms of community and social issues engagement) and small community museum practices. Examples of this include the ‘museums are

not neutral'¹ movement that advocates the potential of museums to engage with social and political issues that communities face and act as agents for positive change in society. Other important examples are found in the 'decolonising museums' debates that many Western museums, of former western imperial powers, have faced recently and museum and heritage practices that consider issues of migration and homelessness, such as the Museum of Homelessness² and Hackney Museum in the United Kingdom.³ Additionally, the increasing nationalism across Europe and Turkey is pushing heritage and museum practice – from displays to education programmes to public engagement – to take more responsibility and reflect on contested histories and to present social, political and economic issues.

Although there are good examples that directly engage with social inequalities and injustices, it is crucial to expose how heritage sites and museums can take more responsibility and play a part in challenging and preventing prejudices and racism and, in doing so, also make material culture and heritage and museum spaces more accessible to wider and more diverse audiences. This is especially necessary for those who have been deprived from social, economic and cultural life. Therefore, it is crucial to analyse whether current heritage and museum practices are critical in reflecting on social and political issues; how heritage and museums can provide support for disadvantaged, deprived and discriminated groups; how heritage sites and museums as an educational tool can be used to respond to the changing social, political and economic parameters in the world; to understand what methods can be developed to make heritage and museums act as social and cultural agents that empower individuals, groups and communities, regardless of their backgrounds, to develop organisational skills and knowledge to create equal, sustainable societies.

In today's world, with increasingly intense use of neoliberal policies across the world, archaeology, heritage and museums have an important role because social and economic inequality is increasing and impacting every individual and group, especially disadvantaged people and groups who are deprived of their basic human rights (e.g., access to food, water, health, education, shelter). These are the 'people's priorities' that need to be dealt with, according to the recent survey by United Nations. In particular, exclusion from equal access to education leads to inequalities for communities that span generations prevents people from developing the skills to take part in economic and cultural life (Bourdieu 2005) and leads to oppression and poverty, as Freire (1970) demonstrated in the case of the poorest and most underdeveloped areas of north east Brazil.

¹ See www.museumsarenotneutral.com/. ² See <https://museumofhomelessness.org/>.

³ See <https://hackney-museum.hackney.gov.uk>.

Education acts as major resource for communities and heritage sites and museums are important informal education spaces, linked to cultural, social and economic resources or, in other words, they hold ‘capital’ as Bourdieu (1986) explains. This is also linked to Bourdieu’s concept of ‘habitus’. According to Bourdieu, habitus can be anywhere where people interact with each other, it can be used in daily life or for economic and political purposes and where knowledge is produced (Bourdieu 2005, 43):

... habitus is a system of disposition, that is of permanent manners of being, seeing, acting and thinking or a system of long lasting (rather than permanent) schemes of schemata or structures of perception, conception and action ...

In other words, what Bourdieu emphasises is that habitus is social, cultural, economic and political as in the case of heritage sites, museums and galleries. I stress this link because heritage sites and museums are being used as social and cultural spaces for social and cultural production. In order to elucidate the concept and use of habitus, Bourdieu (1986) discusses three types of capital: ‘economic’, ‘social’ and ‘cultural’. It is the relative lack and unequal access to these forms of capital that are the main causes of inequality and injustices in today’s world.

Bourdieu’s concept of economic capital is based on materiality, which can be anything that has economic value and can be converted into money or profit making. This is a capitalist definition of materiality and is highly linked to mass consumption (Miller 2005). This is widely explored in the heritage and museum context (see Mazzanti 2003; Mason 2008) and on a basic level, is related to the question of the economic value of heritage sites: how do they make a profit, especially through tourism? This is because material culture and heritage sites are part of a broader consumerist culture, particularly with the intense use of neoliberal policies over the last few decades (see Harvey 2005), which has increased the unequal sharing of wealth and resources among individuals and communities. In a heritage and museum context, this is linked to the questions of economic value for whom, and around who benefits from economic capital? These questions have largely been neglected as local communities have frequently been excluded from the economic benefits of heritage sites (see also Zhu 2021). For instance, in Turkey where museums and heritage sites are controlled centrally (Baraldi et al. 2013), all such sites’ income goes to the central government. Even if tourism and income increase, local communities are only seeing limited benefits (Apaydin 2016b).

This also highlights the links and importance of social capital which Bourdieu (1986) defines as ‘possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalised relationship of mutual acquaintance and recognition – or in other words, to membership in a group’. In other words, social capital provides

resources for individuals and groups to gain power and status and therefore have a voice in social and economic life. Heritage sites, museums and other forms of cultural settings are spaces where individual and collective identities and memories are developed or, in other words, these spaces play an important role in ‘social production’ (Lefebvre 1991). Considering heritage sites, museums and galleries where knowledge of material culture is stored and displayed, we need to give more attention to who accesses this social capital and to make it more accessible to all, regardless of background. This is important because heritage sites, museums and galleries are mostly accessed by certain classes who also hold higher levels of economic capital. For instance, the *Taking Part* surveys⁴ demonstrate that more deprived populations within the United Kingdom access and use heritage sites, museums and galleries far less than economically more prosperous areas. Likewise, the *City Household Survey* in 2011 (Ipsos MORI 2011) also showed inequality in those using museums: community members from the most deprived areas of Glasgow used museums and galleries far less than community members from the wealthy areas of the city. Research conducted by Nick Merriman (1991), more than three decades ago, also showed that museum visitors come from well-educated or high-status groups (also see O’Neill 2021).

Although in Turkey there is no detailed data about who visits these cultural settings, the Turkish Statistical Institute shows access to museums city by city and it can be seen that the western cities of Turkey that are more developed economically provide access to museums and sites much more than poorer areas (see Tuik 2020). Therefore, we as heritage researchers and practitioners, need to focus more on how we can make these cultural settings more accessible to diverse audiences.

While unequal use and access of and to museums and heritage sites is linked to social and economic capital, it is also strongly interrelated with cultural capital. Bourdieu (1986, 18–19) defines two types of cultural capital: ‘the embodied cultural capital’, which is linked to the unequal access to opportunities of institutional resources (e.g., education); and ‘the objectified state’, which refers to ‘material objects and media such as writings, painting, monuments, instruments, etc., ... transmissible in its materiality’. In the heritage context, I confer this second type to cultural goods, production and material culture that are vital for communities. The second type also has social, economic and cultural value for individuals and groups who develop skills and knowledge through the material culture of the past and present, which are placed in heritage sites or displayed at museums and other cultural settings.

⁴ See the Taking Part Surveys: www.artscouncil.org.uk/taking-part-survey.

In this sense, I would argue that two types of skills linked to cultural capital can be identified in the heritage and museum context: (1) skills that people already have to be able to understand and engage with the material culture, heritage and museums and get the most from museum and heritage visit; and (2) skills the individual gains from visiting cultural settings and institutions, such as improving their knowledge of their society, their ability to contribute to debates, political consciousness, critical thinking and comprehension – transferable skills that help individuals to be stronger economically and culturally in society. While Bourdieu's reflections on cultural capital lead some groups to use material culture for their development and sustainability, it also draws a line between those groups and the disadvantaged groups, who are economically, socially and culturally deprived from these resources.

As discussed in Bourdieu's theory of capital, groups that hold economic power are also able to form, reshape and control social and cultural life. This idea of the influence of capital is strongly bound up with the concept of 'oppression', which creates unequal access to heritage and museum settings as well as introduces inequality in using material culture as an educational and cultural resource which is an established right. Political theorist Iris Marion Young (1990, 41) discusses 'oppression' when describing injustices and points out that "oppressions are systematically reproduced in major economic, political, and cultural institutions". She emphasises 'five faces of oppression: exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism and violence', and shows how oppression itself is also an inequality as people are exploited through their labour and marginalised with their world views, backgrounds and identities and, therefore, become powerless as they are deprived of using resources. She also discusses how cultural resources are consumed or colonised and how people have been under threat because of their race or religious beliefs (see Young 1990 for more about oppression). In this Element, I take the example of Turkey to illustrate this, where this kind of oppression can be more clearly seen because of the intensive use of neoliberalism, nationalism and authoritarianism (see Brown 2019). In this context, groups that hold economic power oppress the 'other' or minority ethnic groups by not recognising their economic, social and cultural rights – including race, ethnicity, sexuality and gender – in heritage and museum settings or any cultural spaces, and this is linked to the redistribution and recognition dimensions of social justice. Therefore, as Fraser (2003) emphasises, both the redistribution and recognition concepts need to be considered together for social justice to overcome the main features of oppression.

The 'five faces of oppression' as defined by Young are strongly reflected in museum and heritage institutions and, whether intentionally or not, as heritage