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UNESCO Regional Office for Egypt and Sudan
Liaison Office with the League of Arab States

MONDIACULT 2025 CONFERENCE WEBINAR SERIES SESSION VI

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) AND UNESCO 1972 WORLD HERITAGE CONVENTION

THURSDAY, 19 JUNE 2025
FROM 13:00H – 15:00H





SESSION VI

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) AND UNESCO 1972 WORLD HERITAGE CONVENTION

Thursday, 19 June 2025
from 13:00h – 15:00h

MONDIACULT WEBINAR SERIES SESSION VI

As Egypt advances its national agenda for digital transformation, artificial intelligence (AI) is rapidly emerging as a powerful enabler in the fields of cultural heritage preservation and sustainable tourism.

Within the framework of the 1972 UNESCO World Heritage Convention, which aims to identify, protect, conserve, and transmit cultural and natural heritage of outstanding universal value, AI offers transformative solutions to address both longstanding and emerging challenges in heritage site management.

Given the critical role of AI in managing and protecting World Heritage properties, the UNESCO Cairo Office organizes the 6th session of the MONDIACULT webinar series on AI and culture, focusing on the 1972 World Heritage Convention. The discussion will spotlight the use of AI in four key areas:

- Visitor management and tourism planning,
- Conservation and site monitoring,
- Immersive storytelling using AR/VR,
- Big data and AI research in support of heritage protection.

This webinar also reaffirms UNESCO's global leadership in promoting ethical and human-centered AI, anchored in the Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence adopted in 2021 by all 194 UNESCO Member States. It underscores the need for AI to support the public good, safeguard cultural diversity, and foster inclusive and sustainable development.



SPEAKERS

Dr. Marinos Ioannides is the founder and holder of the UNESCO Chair on Digital Cultural Heritage and Director of the Digital Heritage Research Lab at the Cyprus University of Technology. He holds an MSc in Computer Science and PhD in Engineering from the University of Stuttgart, Germany, specializing in 3D volumetric reconstruction from digitized data. A pioneer in digital heritage, Dr. Ioannides is the founder of the first-of-its-kind Research Center on Digital Cultural Heritage in Cyprus. He has secured over €12 million in highly competitive EU-funded projects since 2013, including [MSCA ITN-DCH](#) and [ViMM](#). He is the main author of the [EU Study VIGI2020/654 on quality in 3D digitisation of tangible cultural heritage](#) and a key contributor to the innovative “Memory Twin” methodology. His achievements have earned him international awards such as the EU KIT, IBM and Tartessos Prizes. Since 2020, he has also been a corresponding member of the German Archaeological Institute. His leadership has firmly positioned Cyprus as a global hub for digital cultural heritage. His presentation will be themed on “digital twin” and “memory twin” by integrating the technologies of artificial intelligence, big data analytics, and advanced 3D reconstruction techniques.



Dr. Marinos Ioannides

Professor Mohamed Gamal Abdelmonem is Chair of Architecture and the Founding Director of Research at the York School of Architecture, The University of York. Gamal was a Chair in Architecture at Nottingham Trent University and worked at Queen’s University Belfast and the University of Sheffield, and was a Visiting Professor at the University of California at Berkeley, the Royal College of Art, and Beijing Institute of Technology. Gamal is the recipient of The Queen’s Anniversary Prize (2021), Jeffrey Cook Award (2014), and Newton Prize runner-up (2020). Professor Abdelmonem’s research focuses on architectural history and urban heritage, the architecture of the home, virtual technologies, and smart preservation of world heritage, as well as the application of AI to cultural heritage. Gamal has led world-leading projects and government policies covering virtual technology and AI applications for smart heritage preservation. Gamal is a Featured Routledge Author, and his books include ‘Peripheries: Edge Conditions in Architecture’ (2012), ‘The Architecture of Home in Cairo’ (2016), and “Architecture, Space, and Memory of Resurrection in Northern Ireland” (2019). His presentation in this webinar is themed on “AI for World Heritage Convention: Transitioning from resistance to embrace of transformative technologies for World Heritage.”



Prof. Mohamed Gamal



SPEAKERS

Dr. Daniele Burisch is a Research Fellow at the University of Verona. He received his PhD at the University of Salerno in Archaeological Research Methodology, and he is the founder of 7emezzo.biz, a digital design studio composed of archaeologists, 3D artists, and graphic designers, which deals with promoting and disseminating cultural heritage through new technologies (virtual heritage). His research ranges from new photogrammetric acquisition systems (e.g., body scanners) to printed dissemination ecosystems also accessible through virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR). During his career, he has dealt with GIS data storage and management systems, 2.0 websites, APPs, and interactive installations for museums (projectors, totems, touch, ...). The ten years of experience gained has allowed him to collaborate with the Ministry of Culture (MiC), several national museums, and numerous private and public university research institutions, with which some European projects are underway. Among these, the HEPHAESTUS project—HERitage Protocols for ArchItecturAl European cross-bordering sites evaluations (HORIZON-MSCA-2023-SE-01, N°101182877)—started in 2024, which operates between the Dalmatian coast (HR), the Pomeranian coast (DE+PL), and the Ruhr area (DE). For this project, he is a member of the scientific and organizational committee and is responsible for coordinating a working group for the photogrammetric survey from the ground and by drone of structures temporally allocated between the Middle Ages and the sighting posts of the 20th century.



Dr. Daniele Burisch

Dr. Sakai Masato was born in Chiba, Japan, in 1963. After studying in the doctoral program at the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, University of Tokyo, in 1996, he joined the Faculty of Humanities at Yamagata University as an associate professor. He was promoted to full professor in 2009 and became deputy director of Yamagata University's Institute of Nasca in 2012.

Since 1989, he has conducted archaeological research at sites throughout Peru. He has participated in projects at Kuntur Wasi and Pacopampa and has led investigations at Chan Chan, Limoncarro, and Espíritu Pampa. Since 2010, he has been carrying out continuous fieldwork on the Nasca Lines on Peru's southern coast, which remains the main focus of his current research. His honors include the Japanese Foreign Minister's Commendation (2017) and the Cozzarelli Prize from the U.S. National Academy of Sciences (2025).



Dr. Sakai Masato



DISCUSSANT

Giorgia Cafici is a Research Fellow at the University of Verona. She is an Egyptologist specializing in Ptolemaic and Roman Egypt. In 2017, she was awarded a Ph.D. in Egyptology and Classical Archaeology at the Scuola Normale Superiore, Pisa. In 2018, she was a research fellow at the same institution, studying the Antiquities collections in Turin's museums. Currently, she is responsible for the project entitled "The Roman Emperor Seen from the Province of Egypt," which is part of a broader ERC project entitled "The Roman Emperor Seen from the Provinces" (PI Prof. Calomino).

Her research interests are focused on Ptolemaic and Roman statuary, Egyptian art, archival research, and Digital Humanities. She has conducted research widely, including at the École Normale Supérieure of Paris, the University of Oxford, and museums worldwide. She has published the results of her research extensively (books and articles), has archaeological experience in Italy and Egypt, where she served as the Assistant to the Director of the Italian Archaeological Centre in Cairo, and has taught Egyptology at the Universities of Pisa, Catania, and Verona.



Dr. Giorgia Cafici



[Click Here to join the webinar via Zoom](#)

Webinar ID: 825 0779 5195

Passcode: 495826

AGENDA

Time	Activity
13:00–13:15	Opening Remarks and Introduction by Dr. Nuria Sanz, Director of the UNESCO Regional Office of Egypt and Sudan.
13:15–13:30	Dr. Marinos Ioannides
13:30–13:45	Dr. Mohamed Gamal Abdelmonem
13:45–14:00	Dr. Daniele Burisch
14:00–14:15	Dr. Sakai Masato
14:15–14:45	Q&A Session Discussant: Dr. Giorgia Cafici
14:45–15:00	Wrap-Up and Closing Remarks by Dr. Nuria Sanz, Director of the UNESCO Regional Office of Egypt and Sudan.



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