

## EDITORIAL NOTE

This special issue of *Libellarium* features selected papers presented at the virtual conference on *Solidarity in Culture: Heritage Protection under Conditions of Crisis* that was held in March 2020. It was organised by the National and University Library in Zagreb, Croatia, in partnership with the European Commission as well as the State Archives of Croatia, Croatian Ethnographic Museum, Ruđer Bošković Institute (Radiation Chemistry and Dosimetry Laboratory), University of Dubrovnik Department of Art and Restoration, Zagreb City Office of Emergency Management, International Group for conservation of historic and artistic group: Croatian group and International Council of Museums (ICOM) Croatia. The conference was also supported by the Ministry of Culture and Media of the Republic of Croatia and the Croatian Commission for UNESCO.

The conference programme consisted of 45 oral lectures, 17 poster presentations, 4 workshops with 10 lectures and one roundtable. The details of all the presentations are available in the Book of abstracts. The conference focused on interoperability and collaboration across sectors and fields, capacity building in the cultural sector, in particular within heritage communities, scientific and technological innovations, and solidarity and volunteering in the context of crisis management. Ironically, perhaps, the conference itself was prepared and held not only during the Covid-19 global pandemic but also in the wake of two major earthquakes that caused extensive damage in Croatia (one that was centred around Zagreb that occurred on March 22, 2020 and one in the Banovina region on December 29, 2020). This short editorial introduction to the conference papers has also been written while the military conflict in Europe with the Russian invasion of Ukraine is causing enormous human and cultural tragedies and destruction. At the same time, while in Croatia we inevitably focus on local, regional and European crises and disasters, we tend to overlook those that are distant to us, geographically or temporally. Scholarly and professional contributions to research and the dissemination of knowledge and expertise, conveyed through publications such as this one, help to bridge those gaps. Having in mind the recommendation for extended collaboration and inclusion of various perspectives and knowledge basis that was stipulated in the Sendai framework for disaster risk reduction 2015–2030, this publication seeks to contribute to ongoing processes of risk mitigation, specifically in the cultural sector.

The range of contributions in this special issue mirrors the breadth of papers presented at the conference, and the interdisciplinary and intersectoral approaches they brought to bear. The contributions are compiled within four major areas: risk management and cultural heritage, the Covid-19 pandemic, libraries in crises, and the role of volunteers in the cultural sector after disasters. All these aspects contribute to education and capacity building, the importance of which is highlighted by the Council Conclusions on European Union Approach to Cultural Heritage in conflicts and crises published in 2021. It should also be noted that many of the papers in this issue refer to important survey data that describe the specific contexts of crises, and in that way enhance our knowledge of particular places or events. They document specific situations and the resulting data can be used in future

assessments. The data collected by the RIZIK survey and elaborated in the paper authored by Valentina Ljubić Tobisch, Mirta Pavić, Jasna Širec and Žana Matulić Bilač are a case in point. The authors identify and analyse risk management in the context of Croatian museums that were heavily damaged in the 2020 earthquakes. Long-term planning and clear risk management strategies are the key features of the sustainable approach they advocate. Vesna Živković and Vicki-Anne Heikell, discussing their work in New Zealand, stress the importance of including local communities in the development of risk management strategies. In particular, they advocate the importance of including local indigenous communities in the decision-making processes, adding another layer of complexity to risk management in the cultural sector. Sagita Mirjam Sunara's work looks at education concerns, but it also discusses data and lessons learned from academic work with conservation and restoration students in Croatia during the Covid-19 pandemic. Similarly, but in the Italian context, Marta Gómez Ubierna proposes a systematic method for assessing risk in contemporary public art collections and examines its application at the World Heritage Historic Center of San Gimignano. Writing from the perspective of Italian capacity building to safeguard cultural heritage that is at risk from disasters, Veronica Piacentini presents the contributions of the PROCULTHER project to the European Union Civil Protection Mechanism in Reinforcing Cultural Heritage Protection. Piacentini's findings highlight the need for greater international and intersectoral collaboration, both in size and in concept, with the aim of developing a common European methodology.

The Covid-19 crisis has resulted in many lessons being learned by both professionals and scholars in the cultural sector. Some of the learning has not yet been completed and conclusions are yet to be drawn, but the expression build back better has now entered regular discourse. Chiara Ronchini's contribution on futures thinking approaches to aid recovery and renewal during the Covid-19 crisis within Historic Environment Scotland, a public body dedicated to the protection and planning protection of Scotland's historic environment, reveals the value of scenario-based planning. Intersectional coherence across the cultural sector and the creative industries that emphasises cultural heritage workers and freelance professionals and artists and the impact of the Covid-19 crisis is elaborated in Inês de Carvalho Costa's paper. One of the positive consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic was the rapid digital transformation in cultural heritage institutions. Business operations of cultural institutions had to adapt to the distorted situation, switch to other communication channels, and test new outreach methods ad hoc. From the perspective of the Croatian History Museum, Mislav Barić discusses how the Museum's virtual presence was enhanced as a result of coping with the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic and the Zagreb earthquake. His paper discusses the Croatian History Museum website and social media analytic data and reveals how the techniques used by the Museum in adapting to the twin crises eventually showed benefits in terms of outreach to new audiences. Jelena Balog Vojak and Maja Mladinov's paper, also written from the perspective of the Croatian History Museum regarding efforts during Covid-19, shows some aspects of the crisis that turned out to be a business opportunity.

As already stipulated, one of the most important features of the papers in this special issue is that they incorporate quantitative and qualitative data and other information gathered in the field that reflect aspects of the situation at specific moments. The survey conducted by Jelena Duh, Aleksandra Pikić and Lucija Ašler on academic and special libraries in Croatia and their crisis preparedness resulted in valuable data regarding the importance of risk

management, strategic planning and preventive conservation effected through the collaboration among conservator-restorers and librarians. The challenges of overlapping crises are elaborated in the paper by Irena Šimić, Lina Šojat, Magdalena Blažić and Filip Kartelo which discusses the case of the Library of the Institute of Art History in Zagreb where, in addition to the Covid-19 crisis, the library was damaged in the earthquake and flooding. This paper also points to the value of volunteers and their immediate help in response to the crisis. Volunteering in the cultural sector in the context of crisis preparedness and response is a general topic that will likely develop even further given the global challenges precipitated by the Covid-19 pandemic, the tremendous damage to cultural heritage caused by the war in Ukraine, and, in the Croatian context, two major earthquakes. The European Union, as well as Croatia (since 2007), have adopted regulations regarding volunteering and, as already noted, the inclusion of volunteers and community members in the cultural sector is of immense importance. Antonija Ujević's contribution reports on volunteers' actions after the last earthquake in Norcia in Italy when European Solidarity Corps and young volunteers helped in conservation-restoration works as well as with cultural initiatives to promote community healing.

Finally, it should be noted that the idea for the conference on Solidarity in Culture: Heritage Protection under Conditions of Crisis, was first proposed by dr. sc. Dragica Krstić, the Head of the Department of Preservation and Storage in the National and University Library in Zagreb at the time. The aim was to gather experts from various disciplines to discuss the issues of solidarity, cultural heritage under threat or affected by the crisis, and the value of intersectoral and interdisciplinary approaches. Therefore, in line with that vision, the aim of this special issue is to introduce these issues from various national and local contexts to the readers who wish to gain insights into the complex area of cultural heritage protection.

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*Guest Editor*  
*Tamara Štefanac, National and University Library in Zagreb*

