

Dr. Yara Moualla  
**PhD dissertation**  
*Mobilising Syrian Cultural Heritage:  
making change towards social and cultural inclusion and integration.  
A Meta-Frame Analysis of Two Case Studies:  
The Case of Mozan, Syria: 2010-2016.  
The Case of Über den Tellerrand, Germany: 2016-2018.*

**Abstract**

Following the ten years of devastating conflict in Syria, Syrians in their homeland and in diaspora are in dire need of every effort to bring them together and enable them to adapt to their new communities. Syria's rich and diverse heritage has the power to shape the future of Syrian society towards further inclusivity and lead to open relationships between Syria and the world based on mutual respect and understanding. This thesis aims to position cultural heritage, in both tangible and intangible forms, as a vehicle of soft power to make social and cultural change in diverse communities more inclusive and integrated by creating new ties, or empowering existing social and cultural bonds between people on a foundation of mutual understanding, respect, and trust.

To examine the scale of social and cultural change, this research examines cultural heritage from its functional view as a social construct and adopts a theory of change as a methodological approach to investigate the necessary indicators and preconditions to reach social and cultural inclusion and integration. Two embodied and explanatory cases studies have been conducted in Syria and in Germany to examine the contributions of two different forms of cultural heritage and discuss the qualitative findings of the open ended and in-depth interviews. Through a meta-frame analysis, this examination aims to create a narrative link between theories and empirical data in order to ascertain the credibility of the data collected, and the validity of the theories applied.

The results reveal that using cultural heritage as a soft power vehicle can aid and build the mutual understanding, trust, and respect required to develop sustainable ties between people, and encourage further participation, however, proper partnership requires consistent long-term commitment. I discuss the limitations of using cultural heritage as a vehicle for social cohesion and inclusion, and indicate further the required conditions, namely a consistency of approach, to offer a model for the development of a theory of change, and a new qualitative evaluation of the impact of cultural heritage.