Application of Digital Tools in Cultural Héritage Valorisation : The Example of Sigiriya

Claire Delalande

contact@yusit.fr / contactyusit@gmail.com

The evolution of digital technologies has paved way to the valorization of cultural heritage in a whole new approach. Cultural sites in ruin are thus being virtually reconstructed to restore their former grandeur. Hence, with the development of visitor guiding mobile applications, the visits to cultural landscapes and museums have become more meaningful. This paper studies how the dynamics of digital tools can be applied to develop cultural heritage valorization projects, within the respective socio-cultural contexts. One of the main problems identified in cultural landscapes is the visitors' lack of cultural and historical knowledge of the site. One has therefore limited access to the historical and cultural content of the site, which weakens its cultural communication. Thus, the main objective of digital tools in cultural mediation projects is to make cultural heritage understandable and approachable to a diversified public. Attractive visual media content gives the desire to come and explore the site. New technologies such as Three Dimensional, Virtual and Augmented Reality create real-life models of monuments, not only to educate the visitors on the cultural and historical content of heritage sites, but also to provide them a remarkable experience. However, new technology is not a miracle solution to valorize the cultural heritage. One should be careful not to fall in to traps of high-tech gadgets while using these tools. Besides, content creation complies with specific rules and requires an expertise in cultural mediation and technological knowledge. The study analyses the overall question of applying digital technologies in cultural heritage valorization, through the example of Sigiriya, a prominent historical site in Sri Lanka.