This paper aims to explore how intangible cultural heritage (ICH) could inform reshaping cities/towns in post-conflict Syria by studying the deep-rooted interdependency between ICH and their architectural settings. Since the start of the Syrian armed-conflict in 2011, statements from local and international authorities have reported devastating destructions of most of the country’s historic assets. These, along with the loss of lives and of livelihoods of thousands through displacement, today, threaten Syria’s cultural heritage and continuity. Tangible cultural heritage may be reconstructed or protected by law when conflict eventually ceases; however, ICH is significantly more vulnerable to such catastrophic
The practice of ICH is the anthropological performance within physical and architectural settings that provides significance and meaning to tangible heritage. Thus, ICH is the vehicle for understanding the social, cultural, historical and creative identities of communities.

Civic spaces in Syria, for centuries, have been used for community gatherings and as settings for traditional music or other performances, while religious traditions have been practiced in public or private spaces. Investigating the relationship between ICH and their traditional architectural contexts will help preserve and reconstruct ICH and tangible heritage, reshape destroyed cities, as well as create symbolic places in post-conflict reconstruction. This will not only contribute towards post-conflict mitigation and reconstruction, but also will help to understand the historical and socio-cultural context and heritage values of tangible heritage settings.

The focus will be on two types of traditions and skills employed and practiced by the majority of Syrians in the old cities of Aleppo and Damascus. These are: traditional performing arts and traditional handcraftsmanship. The data are collected from secondary and primary resources and based on personal contacts and materials. The main aim is to provide the first comprehensive understanding of the relationship between built and intangible heritage; to inform heritage polices for an inclusive post-conflict reconciliation in Syria; in addition to providing clear guidance on the role of heritage in sustaining peace and informing reconstruction strategies.

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Dr Ataa Alsalloum is a Lecturer in Architecture and Urban Heritage at the Liverpool School of Architecture. She is also the heritage expert of ArCHIAM Centre. Ataa’s research and teaching interests are within the broad field of world heritage studies, with a particular focus on the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, in addition to investigating the heritage management principles in the UK. Her research interest focuses on world heritage policies and associated values, particularly heritage-led post conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation processes.

Ataa holds a PhD degree from the Liverpool School of Architecture, and she studied Master’s degree at the School of Architecture, Damascus University; where she had previously held a full lecturer position. Concurrently, she was a part-time lecturer at Yarmouk and Arab International Private Universities in Damascus.

Ataa is registered with the Syrian Engineers and Teachers Organizations, she is an affiliated member of the Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC, UK) and a young Practitioner member of International Network for Traditional Building, Architecture and Urbanism (INTBAU, UK).

Dr Alsalloum has also an extensive teaching experience in Syria, as well as in the UK. She teaches, inter alia, Studio Design, Research Methods in Architecture, Theory and History of Architecture, Urban Landscape and Urban Design Modules.
**Prof Soumyen Bandyopadhyay** is the Stirling Chair of Architecture and currently serves as Head of School of Architecture at the University of Liverpool. He is the founder and director of the ArCHIAM research center. Soumyen has researched and published widely on aspects of Omani and Arabian vernacular architecture, supported by grants from the Government of Oman, the AHRC, the Historical Association of Oman and the US government. He has been involved as advisor and lead contributor to a number of prestigious projects in the Middle East, including the Bahla World Heritage Site and the Muscat Urban Renewal projects in Oman.

Soumyen Bandyopadhyay had previously held professorial positions at the Manchester School of Architecture (MSA) and Nottingham Trent University. At MSA Soumyen headed the Architecture research group. At Nottingham Trent University, he led the REF submission for Architecture, Built Environment and Planning (Unit C16), where he was Research Coordinator for the School of Architecture, Design and the Built Environment. Before taking up his first professorial appointment at Nottingham Trent he taught at Liverpool and Leeds Metropolitan University.

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