Title: Indo-Swiss Bilateral Project with IIT Jodhpur, IIT Indore and EPLF, Lausanne, Switzerland

Digital Twins: negotiating identity and translocated heritage in the global age

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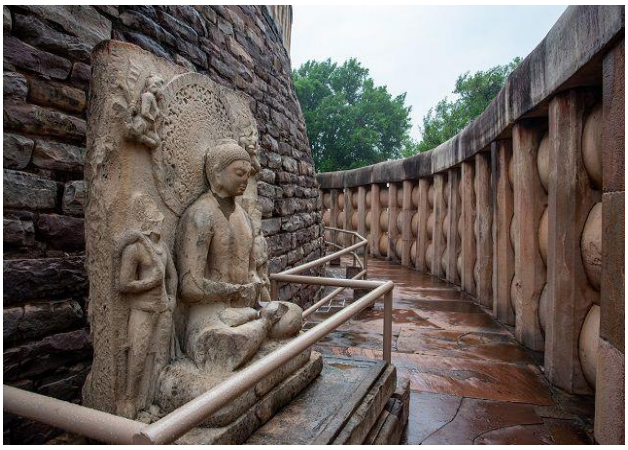

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Overview of the project:

Digital Twins: negotiating identity and translocated heritage in the global age addresses the urgent transnational challenges of heritage exchange in the digital era. The project unites humanities, digital heritage, and social science experts to grapple with the compound predicaments facing museums and curators worldwide: to distribute their collections ethically, democratically, and equitably to diverse, internationally located audiences. Creating a digital museum with careful curation and attention to the specific contexts of the location and origin of these sculptures will be the focus of the project setting a benchmark for a democratic digital curatorial space that normalizes the distance (and disparity) of locations of culture and its consumption.

Research Methodology:

The project undertakes its study on seminal sculptures originating in Sarnath, India. At the core of pilgrimage, trade, and cultural exchange for thousands of years, Buddhist collections exemplify the forms of migratory, translocated heritage now found in collections worldwide. The project will thus expand curatorial practices to encompass digital twins in gallery settings, focusing on the public reception of these objects through exploring heritage ownership, identity, narrative, and transnational significance. Using blockchain technologies and smart contracts, the project proposes new models to help resolve issues of copyright, data security, data sovereignty and privacy, as well as contested provenance.

Deliverables:

In an era of rapidly changing values associated with decolonialization and repatriation as well as increased risk caused by warfare and climate change, the project addresses: (i) the circulation of digital art treasures and heritage, a translocated phenomenon with psycho-social ramifications for local and transnational identities; (ii) the creation and exhibition of high-fidelity 3D digital twins as a means to transform engagement with heritage objects and; (iii) the potential for digital twins in combination with blockchain technologies to enable more equitable, trustworthy, and ethical distributions of heritage.