

Working group: Cultural heritage and projects

Moderated by: Dr. Dušana Findeisen, Slovenian Third Age University

Cultural heritage becomes heritage on condition people and institutions attribute them cultural and social values. On condition they embody their memories, they give them aesthetic values. Put under a lot of pressure heritage needs to be better recognised, protected and preserved by institutions, civil society organisations, experts, as well as policies. etc.

While the idea of heritage is still drawing heavily from the history of Western European architectural and archeological conservation and preservation debates where heritage is mostly defined as material (tangible), monumental, grand, of good aesthetic... *intangible heritage* breaks from these currently dominating western perceptions. Intangible cultural heritage is a body of knowledge, it is a political and cultural process of remembering/ forgetting and communicating.

Intangible cultural heritage is not easy to define precisely because it is intangible and constantly evolving, because it is less concentrated on the products than it is focused on processes. To illustrate this point knowledge acquired is less important than how it is acquired. Cultural spaces like a town square where traditionally artists have been performing is a cultural heritage because of oral traditions that have been concentrating there. Intangible heritage is mostly about "oral history of humanity", it is "living culture" which lives within cultural communities.

In this working group participants will present and analyse their projects asking themselves:

(1) What is (tangible/intangible) cultural heritage?

(2) What represents intangible heritage? Colourful national events or/and people's creations?

(3) Which criteria were taken into account in single (tangible/intangible) heritage projects? /authenticity/ its cultural and social role/ current importance for the cultural community/ its testimony/ its characteristics/ the danger of its disappearing?

(4) What measures were taken in the projects to empower the community concerned to preserve and promote its own heritage.

(5) What did they undertake to raise the awareness of the value of the heritage for the community concerned?