

ANNALES

Anali za istrske in mediteranske študije
Annali di Studi istriani e mediterranee
Annals for Istrian and Mediterranean Studies
Series Historia et Sociologia, 30, 2020, 2





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AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO THE REVITALIZATION, SAFEGUARDING AND MANAGEMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE: HOW TO ESTABLISH A DURABLE AND ACTIVE LOCAL GROUP OF STAKEHOLDERS

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ABSTRACT

Many conventions relating to the revitalization, safeguarding and management of cultural heritage require the inclusion of different actors in heritage projects, from the idea and planning stage of a project through its implementation and finally to evaluation of the results achieved. Based on recent studies, local residents (along with experts and decision-makers) have become one of the most important stakeholders in heritage management. However, the so-called integrated approach raises many questions as to how to implement theory in practice, how to coordinate the different interests and views of the actors involved, and how to achieve mutual partnerships, among others. This paper describes some of the informal occasions to build multi-level community networks which were practiced and analysed through different heritage projects.

Keywords: heritage management, integrated and participatory approaches, sustainable development, multi-level community networks

UN APPROCCIO INTEGRATO ALLA RIVITALIZZAZIONE, ALLA SALVAGUARDIA E ALLA GESTIONE DEL PATRIMONIO CULTURALE: COME CREARE UNA COMUNITÀ LOCALE PERMANENTE E ATTIVA?

SINTESI

Molte convenzioni che si riferiscono alla rivitalizzazione, allo salvaguardare e alla gestione del patrimonio culturale richiedono l'inclusione nei progetti di diversi attori, dall'idea e dalla fase di pianificazione di un progetto attraverso la sua implementazione e infine dalla valutazione dei risultati raggiunti. Sulla base di studi recenti, i residenti locali (insieme ai esperti e ai decision-makers) sono diventati una delle parti interessate più importanti nella gestione del patrimonio. Tuttavia, il cosiddetto approccio integrato solleva molte questioni su come implementare nella pratica la teoria, come coordinare i diversi interessi e le opinioni degli attori coinvolti e, tra l'altro, come realizzare i partenariati reciproci. Il saggio presenta alcune delle occasioni informali per la creazione di reti comunitarie e di quelle a più livelli che sono state messe in pratica e analizzate attraverso diversi progetti sul patrimonio.

Parole chiave: gestione del patrimonio, approcci integrati e partecipativi, sviluppo sostenibile, reti comunitarie e multilivello

INTRODUCTION¹

Cultural heritage can exist only in its enactment by local residents (living in historic towns or heritage sites) who together with experts from heritage institutions and local decision-making bodies give to the selected remnants from the past different kinds of values and significance (Blake, 2009; Clark, 2008; Low, 2008; Byrne 2008). According to the many contemporary international conventions dedicated to the protection and management of cultural heritage² and scholars' studies (Chitty, 2017; Bold & Pickard, 2018; Onciul, Stefano & Hawke, 2017; Labrador & Silberman, 2018),³ communities (groups and in some cases also individuals) have become the key actors in the processes of restoring, reviving, inventorying, safeguarding, maintaining, promoting and sustainably utilizing past achievements. According to their attitude towards the cultural tangible and intangible heritage, and the meanings, values and importance they give to them, they also preserve, maintain and utilize their past's remnants for different purposes (social, cultural, educational, developmental, economic, etc.) and occasions.

Until the early 2000s the involvement of local communities did not attract much attention in heritage processes (in the field of conservation of built heritage as well as in safeguarding and maintaining local rituals). The heritage field was relatively isolated, composed of small groups of specialists and experts. These groups designed different measures and criteria to determine what has significance and value from the past and consequently what should be renovated, protected and sustainably developed in the community. As professor in arts management and museology Marta de la Torre and professor in historic preservation Randall Mason observed, *"the right to decide of these specialists was validated by the authorities between the groups with the power to act"* (De la Torre & Mason, 2002, 3). In this context, anthropologist Laurajane Smith pointed out *"heritage can be unproblematically identified as old, grand, monumental and aesthetically pleasing sites, buildings, places, and artefacts"* (Smith, 2006, 11). However, deeper investigation of the process of the construction of its values, inscription into national registers and UNESCO's world lists evidently shows that there is *"a hegemonic discourse about heritage, which acts to constitute the way we think, talk, and*

write about the heritage. The heritage discourse therefore naturalizes the practice of rounding up the usual suspects to conserve and pass on to future generations, and in so doing promotes a certain set of Western values as being universally applicable" (Smith, 2006, 11).

Nevertheless, the consequences of ongoing global socio-political, economic and communication-technological influences as well as the development of critical heritage studies (Smith, 2006; Winter & Waterton, 2013) brought about the modification of the concept of heritage, including a new understanding of heritage as a social action, and involvement of new groups who have joined the specialists in its identification (De la Torre & Mason, 2002, 3; Byrne, 2008; Smith, 2006 etc.). These groups are citizens who live in heritage sites or perform heritage practice, professionals from other fields, and representatives of special interests (e.g. entrepreneurs). Newly involved actors pointed out new criteria and opinions – their own values – which often differed from those of heritage specialists (De la Torre & Mason, 2002, 3). Among many new approaches, the finding that *"what 'ordinary' people value might be different from what experts value, or they might value the same things but for quite different reasons, such as for reasons of association, memory, or locality"* (Fairclough, 2009, 299) has become one of the most important guidelines in many heritage projects.

Notwithstanding the reflection of people-centred approaches (e.g. public participation and local community involvement) to heritage conservation and management that have been taking place from the beginning of the 21st century, many experts from different heritage institutions (like the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property) or recent studies (Court & Wijesuriya, 2015, 2; Chitty, 2017; Onciul, Stefano & Hawke, 2017) continue to emphasize that there is still a big challenge as to how to involve community members in conservation or social practices in many heritage places. Moreover, Chitty argued that in many documents (like the UK White Paper on Culture) the focus is firmly on what *"culture"* can do for society and the economy, rather than on recognition and nurturing what communities do to enrich and creatively shape their own culture and heritage (Chitty, 2017, 1). Therefore, in the field of conservation, the shift of conservators should

1 The presented research was done in the framework of the research programme *Historical interpretations of the 20th century* (P6-0347), financed by the Slovenian Research Agency and international Interreg project *NewPilgrimAge: 21st century reinterpretation of the St. Martin related shared values and cultural heritage as a new driver for community-sourced hospitality* (<https://www.interreg-central.eu/Content.Node/NewPilgrimAge.html>), financed by the Central Europe programme and the Slovenian Research Agency.

2 E.g. the Convention on the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, the European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (Valletta), the Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe (Granada), the Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (Faro), the recommendations and monitoring strategies of the European Cultural Heritage Strategy for the 21st century, European Convention on Offences relating to Cultural Property, etc.

3 Some internationally known scholars presented their findings on community involvement in the conservation of built heritage in a recently published book *Heritage, Conservation and Communities: Engagement, participation and capacity building* (Chitty, 2017). The Council of Europe also published a book *An integrated approach to cultural heritage; The Council of Europe's Technical Co-operation and Consultancy Programme*, where the presented projects highlighted many challenges in involving local inhabitants in inclusive heritage maintenance and sustainable management (Bold & Pickard, 2018).

be from “*conserving historic buildings’ to ‘helping to save the places people value and provide communities with much-needed facilities”* (Chitty, 2017, 3).

As heritage has been created by people and for people and heritage places should be considered as a living part of a community, the engagement of its members often brings advantages to both heritage and community alike. Local inhabitants contain capacities and assets that outlast political or professional impact and complement specialist knowledge and skills (Court & Wijesuriya, 2015, 2). The insufficient involvement of them in development led to unbalanced social and economic local growth, poor identification of relevant actors and the exclusion of various marginal groups (young people, migrants, people with special needs, etc.).

The main purpose of this paper is therefore to outline possible ways and conditions to empower different stakeholders and raise awareness among them that their active and mutual participation has an important value and significance in integrated heritage processes. Local people should build an inclusive, respectful and strong community that will, consequently, take the initiative in future activities (Chitty, 2017, 1). Moreover, the case studies described and analysed also present how to successfully form a multi-level community network through heritage activities such as researching local history, organizing village and local celebrations, reviving old customs, restoring local architectural objects or researching and using old skills and knowledge for creating new products. The starting point of the reflection is the recognition that the process of researching, evaluating, presenting, and interpreting the remnants of the past is a social activity. In many local communities heritage practices are carried out by local associations (NGOs), schools, study circles, etc. Members who voluntarily spend their free time in the heritage field have a positive attitude towards the local past as well as different types of knowledge and experience. Perhaps they also work professionally in different sectors and as such share their knowledge in voluntary activities. In this way voluntary work in heritage fields can together with the public and private sectors provide opportunities for establishing formal networks and partnerships that can foster an inclusive community and achieve an integrated approach (Bold & Pickard, 2018, 7; Fakin Bajec, 2016). Moreover, sharing knowledge and experience among sectors enables new or modified content of the restored castle, villas or other built monuments. Scholars highlight that in the era of new technology, new ways of life and trends, a balance in renovating or safeguarding old buildings and intangible cultural heritage and at the

same time exploring new ways for its modifications and sustainable re-uses have to be found. “*For the survival of the heritage buildings in future and at the same time to raise the awareness level of youths on the importance, the buildings will need to be upgraded to cater current users’ interests”* (Wan Ismal & Nadarajah, 2016, 476).

In order to assure the existence of cultural heritage and use its development potential, local people need possibilities, opportunities and skills to be actively involved in integrated heritage processes, to interpret and sustainably use heritage and transmit it to younger generations. Heritage institutions and/or government officials (state parties) are thus required to strive for new participatory approaches, which could ensure that local people and other relevant non-governmental organizations gather the necessary courage to effectively participate in various aspects of cultural heritage. It still happens, unfortunately, that although the project team organizes different workshops and lectures for local residents, just a few of participants come and actively participate in project activities. How to involve the community through innovative initiatives is still a big question (Onciul, Stefano & Hawke, 2017). Another important challenge is to ensure mutual cooperation and inclusive collaboration of all heritage actors (especially political decision-makers, experts, local residents) and to construct multi-level community networks.

This paper first reflects on theoretical issues of understanding culture and its heritage as an important resource in fostering sustainable development, especially social sustainability, a coherent society and empowered community (Clark, 2008; Low, 2008). Next, some stakeholders’ barriers that prevent the formation of integrated heritage processes are presented and analysed. The last section presents some of the informal occasions, methods and tools that show “soft” ways to foster participatory activities and can help project teams to achieve inclusive management of cultural heritage and multi-level sectoral interactions. The case studies and findings presented were reflected and analysed in different heritage projects where the author of the paper helped partners from different municipalities, regional development agencies, NGOs, and local villages to understand the role and mission of local cultural heritage in contemporary society, where development is designed together with people and not for people.⁴ The paper thus builds upon the wealth of literature on community engagement and practical resources in order to help project teams who carried out heritage projects ensure an integrative approach and durable project results that will also benefit local inhabitants after the end of the project.

4 In the last European project period (2014–2020) the author worked in the following Interreg projects: *NewPilgrimAge: 21st century reinterpretation of the St. Martin related shared values and cultural heritage as a new driver for community-sourced hospitality* (2017–2020); *Alpfoodway: a cross-disciplinary, transnational and participative approach to Alpine food cultural heritage* (2016–2019); *RES-TAURA: Revitalising Historic Buildings through Public-Private Partnership Schemes* (2016–2019); *UGB - Urban Green Belts – Smart integrated models for sustainable management of urban green spaces for creating more healthy and liveable urban environments* (2016–2019) and *MEDFEST: Mediterranean culinary heritage experiences: how to create sustainable tourist destinations* (2016–2019).



Image 1: A scene from making a documentary film in Volčji Grad (Photo: Boštjan Štolfa, the local association Debela Griža, Volčji Grad, July 2005).

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Nowadays the concept of cultural heritage takes on a variety of meanings, roles and expressions. Its new understanding is underpinned by the constructive paradigm (Bourdieu, 2002), the growth of critical heritage studies (Smith, 2006; Byrne, 2008; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998, etc.) as well as the contemporary social, cultural, economic and technological development in the world. A newly developed concept is based on findings that cultural heritage is a social action (Smith, 2006; Byrne, 2008) that can foster emotional affect in a community (Winter & Waterton, 2013; Hofman, 2015). This means the main point of doing research on heritage lies less in investigating the materiality or immateriality of heritage elements, but more in understanding the social process of the construction of meanings, values, and significance that particular tangible and intangible cultural elements embody (Byrne, 2008; Fakin Bajec, 2011). The focus of the researcher is therefore on reflections,

attitudes, memories, emotions and other stories the heritage elements trigger among individuals or within the community, and how visiting or researching heritage sites, towns, celebrations, etc. can affect knowledge, behaviour and attitudes among people toward the past, present and future (Smith, 2006). In this context, understanding the role of local communities, groups and in some cases individuals who live with and potentially change and use heritage elements is significant. Moreover, influenced by the policy of Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development (Labadi & Gould, 2015), heritage practices are no longer understood as being just the protection and restoration of heritage items but also include the reflection how to modify and sustainably use them for a variety of contemporary needs and purposes. In this context heritage has been recognized as an enabler for multi-vector challenges, such as cultural and environmental sustainability, economic inequalities, conflict resolution, social cohesion, future of cities, human rights, democracy, future of the state and other communities,



Image 2: *Ethnographic workshop of making bread and other bakery products in Planina pri Ajdovščini. The workshop was organised by the Municipality of Ajdovščina and the Housewife association from Planina in order to raise awareness about the bakery tradition in Vipava valley (Photo: Jasna Fakin Bajec, Planina pri Ajdovščini, October 2019).*

etc. (Winter & Waterton, 2013, 533, 542). The newly launched Strategy 21, prepared by the Council of Europe, states that “*cultural heritage, in all its components, is a key factor for the refocusing of our societies on the basis of dialogue between cultures, respect for identities and diversity, and a feeling of belonging to a community of values*” (Bold & Pickard, 2018, 21). Basically, heritage is still associated with the historical, art historical, ethnological, folklore and other goods (such as knowledge, skills, memories, experiences, etc.) of our forebears, but it no longer refers just to the past but rather draws power from the past for the development of the present and the planning of the future (Harrison et al., 2008).

In order to protect and inclusively manage local cultural heritage as a resource for many types of development potential, experts, politicians and local people have to overcome different obstacles that prevent the community-based conservation and liveable performance of cultural traditions.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT BETWEEN THEORY AND PRACTICE

Many declarations note that the interpretation, safeguarding, and management of cultural heritage have to be in keeping with the views and needs of the local people who live or work in the communities where the heritage is located. However, in some communities citizens are passive in their interactions and collaboration with local decision-makers, experts and other involved actors (e.g. entrepreneurs), although the village, neighbourhood or city has a historical, cultural, architectural or aesthetic castle, villa or other built heritage or traditional customs (Fakin Bajec, 2016). Active participation of the community means that members of communities are involved in heritage activities from the very beginning of the project or heritage activity (Fisher, 2001; Müller & Stotten, 2011). This includes different phases: planning the activity, implementation of the tasks, management of the heritage item, maintaining

the heritage as well as sustainable utilization of the item for different purposes, e.g. interactive educational programmes, inter-generational social programmes, cultural tourism, the creative industries, etc. (Participatory Techniques and Tools, 2001). The main definition of community engagement includes *“the process of working collaboratively with and through groups of people affiliated by geographic proximity, special interest, or similar situations to address issues affecting the well-being of those people”* (McCloskey et al., 2011, 3). However, as recent studies also show, *“while the word “engaging” can be used positively; it can also describe more limiting and restricting forms of relationships”* (Onciul, Stefano & Hawke, 2017, 1). These findings also demand reconceptualization and challenge traditional thinking around co-production and participation (Onciul, Stefano & Hawke, 2017, 1).

Many experts who work with people or try to involve them in different project activities confess that community engagement is a long, strategic and difficult process (McCloskey et al., 2011, 3), which demands that project teams obtain appropriate skills, knowledge and the ability to work with people. In general, the goals of community engagement are to build trust, enlist new resources and allies, create better communication, and improve overall health outcomes as successful projects evolve into lasting collaboration (McCloskey et al., 2011, 3). However, who is in a community, why a community would want to be engaged in heritage, and how communities and heritage professionals perceive one another are still unanswered questions. According to anthropologists Emma Waterton and Laurajane Smith and many other scholars (Adell et al., 2015) *“community”* is a nebulous term with multiple meanings and understandings. Therefore, it is very difficult to explain it (Waterton & Smith, 2010, 4). It has been involved in the heritage sector because of policy directives, professional practice initiatives and grassroots projects. It has easily become an explanation or solution for heritage challenges rather than something to be explained (Waterton & Smith, 2010, 4). In practice, the community engages with social relationships in all their messiness, taking into account action, process, power and change (Waterton & Smith, 2010, 4). Understanding that the community is not static and unchanging but rather a fluid entity is an important starting point in many projects. It is not always clear what the relationships between communities and among its members who practice certain rituals or hold certain types of knowledge are (Blake, 2009, 62; Waterton & Smith, 2010, 9). Moreover, as Cohen stressed, *“community exists in the minds of its members, and should not be confused with geographic or sociographic assertions of facts. By extension, the distinctiveness of communities and, thus, the reality of their boundaries, similarly lies in the mind, in the meanings which people attach to them, not in the structural forms”* (Cohen, 1985, 98). Moreover, people may have various

roles and powers in a community (e.g. act as residents of the village, members of association, experts, women, politicians, etc.) as well as give different meanings or importance to the same elements of a cultural heritage, because of different experiences, knowledge, historical background, needs, interests, etc. For this reason the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, adopted in 2003, refers to communities and groups of tradition-bearers in a non-specific way. Although the Convention focuses on viability of cultural heritage, meaning that heritage is constantly recreated by local communities in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, the community is seen as having an open character, not necessarily linked to specific territories (The Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, 2003). Their diversity can also be recognized in terms of gender, occupation, age, faith, and other forms of affiliation. The general characteristic of a community is that it encompasses groups of people who have shared history, experience, practice, knowledge, values, and aesthetics (Baird N'Diaye, 2019).

Another concept, proposed by scholars in the book collection of research papers titled *Between Imagined Communities and Communities of Practice: Participation, Territory and the Making of Heritage* (Adell et al., 2015), is *“community in practice”* introduced in learning theory (Wenger, 2010). Through this concept, Etienne Wenger sought to express that individuals from diverse backgrounds and interests could, nonetheless, work together productively on joint goals. In the heritage field it encompasses the meaning that

actors interested in garnering a heritage title may cooperate with experts and politicians to generate a nomination dossier; decision making bodies from the regional to the national and international level bring together individuals of diverse persuasion, yet they form a community of practice in their administrative and negotiation work. On the ground, individuals devoted to maintaining, restoring or reviving a cultural tradition may form a community of practice, not necessarily sharing ethnic identities, but cooperating for the sake of shared political or economic interests (Adell et al., 2015, 7–8).

Based on experience from fieldwork, we can conclude that the community can be composed of village residents who come together and renovate old physical remnants or practice traditions for social and individual benefits, or of members of local associations who gather together to implement a certain cultural activity or task. One of the ways to involve local residents in heritage projects could be that the project team works with local heritage associations, where members already have a positive attitude towards the



Image 3: Food competition “Zrij Rejpo” prepared for the primary schools in Primorska region, Slovenia, organised by the Housewife association in Planina pri Ajdovščini (Photo: Jasna Fakin Bajec, Planina pri Ajdovščini, November 2017).

local past and their environment. For this reason they will be more receptive to new activities and to the acquisition of additional knowledge. A presentation of their activities and products to the wider public can then gain the attention of others, who for various reasons (age, education, health reasons, passivity, etc.) had not been interested in the topics. Perhaps they will be influenced by other ongoing discourse (Fakin Bajec, 2016). Moreover, the FARO convention established the term “heritage community” and defined it as “people who value specific aspects of cultural heritage which they wish, within the framework of public action, to sustain and transmit to future generations” (Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society – Faro Convention, 2005). In this scenario, communities are not only considered the “bearers” of heritage, but they are also supposed to be actively involved in its transmission (Adell et al., 2015, 8). The heritage community could also be a group of members (e.g. women, young people, artists, migrants, etc.) from different regions or even states who work

on specific heritage preservation, safeguarding or utilization of traditional elements, e.g. weaving, cooking a specific dish, etc. (Delak Koželj, 2013, 42).

Hence, the UNESCO convention also refers to responsibility of the international community to contribute, together with the States Parties, to safeguarding and sustainable performing intangible cultural heritage in a spirit of cooperation and mutual assistance (Baird N’Diaye, 2019). However, to achieve an active international community network, local networks in the nation states and regions should be set up, fortified and empowered. A transnational network is easier to build and strengthen if we work with robust, active and empowered local networks.

Another obstacle that can arise in the heritage process is the question of who the owner of cultural heritage is and who “owns” the heritage management process. This is crucial especially when experts try to help and empower local residents in their safeguarding or management practices. If the “owners” are not the same entity, the relationship between the parties involved needs to

be carefully defined at the start of negotiating the identification and management of a cultural heritage element (Blake, 2009, 62). To overcome this challenge, the use of participatory approaches is recommended by experts, where the involvement of a multiplicity of stakeholders from the very beginning of the activities can be achieved (Blake, 2009, 62). In this way partnerships can connect the bottom-up and top-down approaches, which means to take into account the needs of those in power and those affected by the decisions of authorities (Pogačar et al., 2019). This is also the main feature of an integrated approach, which incorporates components from the top-down and bottom-up approaches (Sesana et al., 2020, 212). According to the document *An Integrated Approach to Cultural Heritage: The Council of Europe's Technical Co-operation and Consultancy Programme* (Bold & Pickard, 2018), an integrated approach combines the promotion and protection of cultural diversity, democratic governance and democratic innovation. It is essential that decision-making involve those most directly affected – the owners, inhabitants, local communities and local authorities – who recognize the specific value of heritage for society. Indeed, national level cultural heritage protection policies and practices must not be removed from these stakeholders (Johnson, 2018, 7). The main achievement is an interaction between the administrative bodies at different levels and civil society agents and avoiding a hierarchical approach.

In European INTERREG projects, in which programmes are based on the Europa 2020 strategy and follow the mission of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth of communities, special attention is placed on the inclusion of diverse stakeholders (especially local politicians, experts, and civil society as well as entrepreneurs) in local groups. This should be implemented by constructing a “multi-level community network”. The term originates from market and governance theory. In governance, the term “multi-level” refers to an inclusive decision-making process. It was also adopted by the European Commission, which aims to build “Europe in partnership” through a more cross-cutting holistic and inclusive approach, resulting in more targeted strategies and the introduction of coordinated and integrated common policies (European Committee of the Regions, 2009). The main idea is cooperation among different governing levels in a unique formulation, e.g. in the framework of the European Union. The clearly vertical cooperation (from supranational to local level) was soon enlarged with a horizontal approach, first tackling the cooperation among bodies at the same governance level, e.g. municipalities or sectoral policies (ibid). Similarly, structural changes in the economy allowed and forced people to make wider, multi-level networks

with co-workers, as they were not limited to performing a specific task, but have had to engage in various activities and to cooperate with people working in different sectors, from managers to assistant workers. In the field of cultural heritage, a multi-level community network in one region can incorporate actors from diverse sectors (education, environment, culture, welfare), on different levels of decision-making (municipality, regions, provinces, state and transnational bodies), and with different statuses (public institutions, NGOs, private companies, etc.). Cooperation in all these dimensions is important (even obligatory) for the inclusive management of cultural heritage.

Due to the difficulty of constructing and carrying out an integrative approach and multilevel community networks in practice, as they involve complex and often difficult negotiations as well as power relations, a cultural mediator (cultural driver, facilitator, etc.) should be involved as well. These could be community representatives, cultural custodians, technical and administrative personnel of government institutions, independent experts and political activists involved in the institutional practices, or entrepreneurs seeking to develop business opportunities related to cultural resources (Blake, 2009, 64). The mediator's function is to enter into dialogue with involved stakeholders, especially decision-makers, experts or other officials, and to motivate the community sufficiently to ensure continued engagement. The facilitator should also have the administrative skills required to lead the organization of events or to run different meetings; the community development skills to involve people; negotiating and mediation skills; planning and preparation skills; project development skills; research skills; monitoring and evaluation skills; and the ability to think strategically (MindSpace, 2017, 5). It is not easy to find this kind of person; however, based on experience from the European heritage project dedicated to the innovative promotion of the European cultural route of St. Martin, based on community-sourced values (see NewPilgrimAge project),⁵ a carefully selected change driver in Maribor greatly helped the public decision institution – the Municipality of Maribor – in linking the project activities with other work and demands of the national association in charge of the cultural route of St. Martin in Slovenia (Cultural Centre of St. Martin in Slovenia), and local people from Maribor and surrounding villages who are attached to the famous European saint and frequently use its path for different sacral and leisure activities. The facilitator also encouraged local people to actively participate in the project's workshops, where different decisions about the ICT promotion of heritage were negotiated and finally accepted.

5 Partner cities of the Interreg NewPilgrimAge project are located along the Central European part of the Via Sancti Martini European Cultural Route. In the project the partners have joined forces to revive the cultural heritage and promote the common values of solidarity, hospitality and sharing linked to St Martin. Cities and cultural organizations from five countries have mobilized their citizens, most of all young people and small businesses, to propose and jointly develop new creative initiatives valorizing the untapped heritage potential.

Although the project team found a very good facilitator or cultural driver to help in implementation of the project's activities and achieve the expected results, the members of the community should be open to and prepared for new roles and responsibilities in integrated heritage processes. Thus, the question that arises is still how to make people proud of their past's achievements and how to build trust, cooperation and good relationships among inhabitants that live in historical towns or heritage sites as well as among other involved actors. The answers can be sought by using different methods and tools of participatory approach and community building that enhance interaction and dialogue among actors who influence the management of heritage and its environment, by understanding the meanings that cultural heritage holds for people and how they perceive, use and interpret it (Feretti & Comuino, 2015, 696).

ACTIVE PARTICIPATION APPROACHES IN INCLUSIVE HERITAGE PROCESSES

The need for participatory approaches emerged in the 1960s in response to the political realm being too formalistic and detached from citizens. As a result, participatory democracy developed giving people the right, or at least the possibility, to take a more active part in decision-making processes by using different participatory paths. Therefore, normative participation concepts extend the definition of participation as "*taking part in the process of formulation, passage and implementation of public policies*" (Parry, Moyser & Day, 1992, 16; Müller & Stotten, 2011, 5). One of the main objectives of the implementation of participatory approaches is to encourage "good governance", which generally comprises decision-making processes that are transparent and accountable, responsive, equitable and inclusive, effective and respect the rule of law (Müller & Stotten, 2011, 7). In general, policy processes can be seen as a three-step cycle of *planning, implementation and evaluation*, in which a participatory approach may be used in one or more of the steps (Müller & Stotten, 2011, 6).

The common starting point in practicing a participatory approach is to recognize the role and function as well as the necessity and added value of involving different groups of stakeholders in the processes of identifying problems, creating and implementing solutions, and ensuring the sustainability of citizen involvement and management. Since citizens live in their environments, they can provide valuable observations and knowledge otherwise inaccessible to experts and authorities alike. Listening and being open to different inputs is key to mutual understanding.

In recent years the idea of participatory democracy has entered numerous areas of social life, including the economy as well as neighbourhoods and race relations. It has been increasingly promoted in different commu-

nity programmes and governments. Two types of participation are prevalent: *formal participation* encompasses legal forms, usually regulated by law. In a representative democracy it is linked to voting rights, effectively excluding some groups (children, teenagers and migrants) from formal participation. *Informal participation* allows an inclusion of groups who cannot formally take part in decision-making processes. It is used only for certain issues in the creation and management of environments, for example in planning, management, maintenance of different public spaces and objects (Parry, Moyser & Day, 1992, 16; Müller & Stotten, 2011, 5).

The main challenge in using a participatory approach is the involvement of different stakeholders in a project's activities, providing them with a place and an opportunity not just to listen and observe, but also to actively interact in the process. There are different types of participatory approaches: passive, information-giving, consultative, functional, interactive and self-mobilized (Participatory Techniques and Tools, 2001). To achieve the goal of active participation, interactive and self-mobilized participation should be applied. Interactive participation means that partners and communities participate in joint analysis leading to action, formation of new local groups or strengthening existing ones; local stakeholders take control over local decisions, giving them an incentive to maintain structures and/or practices. Self-mobilized participation includes paths where communities or local partners participate by taking initiatives independently of external institutions. They take on a more important role within the project, such as creating events, sending newsletters and other jobs (Fisher, 2001, 5).

It is up to the local authorities or project team to find appropriate ways to hear the needs, expectations, and ideas of local residents. One such possibility is organizing informal events to build a strong and empowered community (more on that below) and afterwards organizing interactive workshops, where the facilitator uses various interactive methods and tools to involve all participants in the discussion. The most often used methods in workshops were presentation of the project, lectures and afterwards holding a discussion led by a good facilitator. Project teams have a variety of new interactive methods and tools at their disposal, such as problem tree, word café, Delphi Technique, net mapping, OPERA, the Nominal Group Technique, consultation, back-casting, and storytelling, which have generated results and positive feedback from participants who felt inspired by them (Nanasi et al., 2019, 62). A participatory approach tends to create links among groups of stakeholders that ordinarily do not communicate with one another, giving them the possibility to familiarize themselves with different perspectives and in this way to open up a space for discovering new ways of detecting and solving problems (Bole & Bigaran, 2013). However, in considering the use of the participatory approach,



Image 4: One of the ways to encourage the young generation to participate in heritage activities is to organize ethnographic workshops where young people have the opportunity to practice traditional knowledge. Ethnographic workshop on dry stone walling in the Karst region (Photo: Jasna Fakin Bajec, Branik, May 2011).

the process is more important than the end product. As Fisher has expressed very well:

Participation is more a set of principles than an ideology, an ethic more than a model... deep down, participation is about learning to respect and listen to the opinions, feelings, and knowledge of those we have in the past "targeted"; being transparent regarding our intentions to intervene in their lives ... being careful to decentralize and delegate, allowing the less powerful to manage greater resources and assume more responsibility; sharing our knowledge and expertise ... in short, it is about opening up, taking risks and showing trust. Such changes do not come easy to those weighted down with the baggage of long years of formal education and hieratical cultures (Fisher, 2001, 9).

A participatory approach is important as a process for contribution and accumulation of a community's

social capital, where social capital can be described as "features of social organization, such as trust, norms, and networks that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions" (Fisher, 2001, 20). The most important principles are: diversity, equity, openness, accountability, and transparency, which also contribute to civic trust.

Notwithstanding a well-developed participative theory, which is used in heritage studies as well, the first step that should be done is to enhance awareness among local inhabitants to be proud of their past's achievements and to reach consensus among them on what they want to do with their heritage elements. Furthermore, as the participatory approach gives particular special attention to inclusion of diverse stakeholders (local politicians, experts, entrepreneurs and civil society, marginalized groups), the project partners should strive to form some kind of local development group or multi-level community networks, formed at local or national levels, to ensure continued engagement of all heritage

actors involved. Working on the development potential of culture and its heritage requires long-term activities. As already mentioned, working with people is not an easy or short process, but involves step by step actions that only after five or more years bear fruit and bring results.

SOME "SOFT" WAYS, METHODS AND TOOLS TO ACHIEVE AN INTEGRATED HERITAGE PROCESS

Many research findings and community actions have already shown that heritage activities as social practices can contribute to the well-being of society, better interpersonal relations, intergenerational connections, stronger social cohesion, social identity and a healthier life for the population. Furthermore, traditional knowledge can enrich informal forms of learning, improve ideas for new commercial products (e.g. in cuisine), and represent sustainable use of natural materials, etc.

There are many informal ways to make people proud of the achievements of their ancestors. One important tool to show people that they are the main bearers and practitioners of cultural heritage is preparing a documentary film featuring locals as the main actors. Based on the experience in making a documentary film in the Slovenian village of Volčji Grad in the Karst region, at the beginning of the activity local actors may be opposed to activities and they will have a funk when performing in front of the camera, but after a few days of filming they become more relaxed and take pride in their work as well as the way of life, traditions and knowledge they represent. Moreover, they start to describe the life of their grandparents with particular attention and they want to show the audience everything that was typical for their village or region. Local history can thus be presented in an innovative way, including for the generation of the digital age, and local identity can be strengthened, new social relations and friendships can develop, and local people become more self-confident and informed. Based on our experience making a documentary film in the village of Volčji Grad, we can confirm that although the film was made a long time ago (2004), local residents are still very proud of their work and they are happy to show the film to their grandchildren (Fakin Bajec, 2012, 24).

Moreover, because in the contemporary world people grow apart because of economic impacts, racism, class divisions, precariousness, etc., the need for different social actions has increased. Among other events, those fostering intergenerational ties become more and more important, as they involve generations with different backgrounds, experiences and visions, empower the participants and encourage people of different age to socialize. They aim to form ties between older and younger generations, as each generation relies on the support of the others to overcome life obstacles. A possible method to form new intergenerational ties through

heritage activities is an interview, where children ask older people about their life in the past, old customs, recipes, products, experiences and philosophy. An interview provides an opportunity to establish a personal connection and gather information, opinions and ideas about the specific issue. Both generations can gain new knowledge and search for a common solution of how to properly safeguard, utilize, or modify heritage. Moreover, participants can understand particular fears of each generation and better understand what members of different generation would like to do with their cultural achievements. Children can better understand problems faced by aging people, and develop respect towards older people. At the same time, socializing can help the elderly in overcoming isolation and depression due to loneliness. Through intergenerational interviews we can also learn family stories, which can in the long run improve the content of the cultural products as well as their promotion and marketing.

Another method to link different generations through heritage activities is collaboration between kindergartens or primary schools and certain associations (e.g. housewives, farmers, hunters, mushroom-pickers), where older members show children how to make special local dishes or dishes from local products. Children like this kind of practical education, though which they gain new knowledge, and can express their creativity through active participation. Older people get an opportunity to share their knowledge, gain new experience, and acquire more self-confidence and satisfaction.

Ethnographic workshops are well-attended heritage activities in many historical sites. They are attended by different generations, especially children, their parents and grandparents. Workshops can be an educational, social and cultural event, when participants – together with a mentor (who can be an expert or member of the community with special skills) – research, perform, present, or further develop cultural tangible or intangible elements. The purpose of the event is not only to gather new knowledge and do something for the preservation and utilization of local cultural heritage, but can also allow practitioners to familiarize themselves. Not least, it can be a way to find common solutions to personal and community challenges. If participants come from different social and professional backgrounds, or if they work in different public or private organizations, collaboration among different sectors can develop, potentially leading to expanded professional networks. It can also promote local heritage or past experience, help people acquire traditional skills, and stimulate creative solutions for adapting traditional knowledge to contemporary needs, technologies and approaches (Pogačar et al., 2019, 36).

Heritage activities can provide a tool for introducing multi-level community networks and construction of so-called local development clusters/groups as



Image 5: The methodology of the Interreg European heritage projects offers many opportunities to develop participatory methods and tools to actively involve the local population in a constructive debate about cultural items. Meeting of the project partners within the NewPilgrimAge project (Photo: Archive of the NPA project, Albenga (Italy), November 2018).

well. Due to the difficulty of involving all groups of stakeholders around one table in practice, some informal ways or opportunities to make friends among stakeholders should be organized. An informal way to link different local associations, companies, heritage institutions and local inhabitants could be different kind of competitions, such as a culinary competition where participants present their culinary knowledge as well as typical local ingredients. Participants can range from primary school children to young professionals and the elderly. Nowadays, cooking competitions are well known and popular all around Slovenia and abroad, often supported by food companies, which provide ingredients or awards. The competitions gain additional value if the judges are nationally or internationally known cooks or chefs, who not only evaluate the dishes prepared but also provide moral support and encouragement to participants and useful suggestions by sharing their knowledge. Furthermore, participating companies enhance their reputation,

social value and public recognition. One such competition was organized by the heritage association in Planina pri Ajdovščini in Slovenia, which empowered not only children and their parents, but especially the world famous Slovenian chef Tomaž Kavčič, who was one of the three judges. In the competition children from primary school had to prepare dishes from turnips in traditional or innovative ways, using domestic ingredients. The competition was called “Zrij Rejpo” (Dig Up Turnips) and was led by the local association of housewives, which hosted visits from five school groups. Their theoretical and practical knowledge was reflected in very innovative recipes, judged by three nationally recognized experts. Besides Tomaž Kavčič, food technologist Marija Merljak and agronomist Davor Špehar participated as well. Turnip has been a typical crop in the Vipava Valley and an indispensable ingredient in the daily menu of people in Planina pri Ajdovščini. Children presented some traditional as well as some innovative dishes.

An important tool to foster collaboration is also organization of celebrations (e.g., a community picnic, cultural events), which can be a core part of the community building process. Celebration has always played an important role in communities and it can create an opportunity for bonding and building trust. Moreover, community actions might be a very important step to rethink not only heritage, but also the maintenance and improvement of other public resources. Furthermore, celebrations can link various people from diverse public and private organizations (e.g. museums, libraries, NGOs, research institutions, tourist organizations and businesses). Members not only display and sell their products at these events, but they also have opportunities for conversation, making friends, and furthering formal cooperation and networks. There are many such events in Slovenia, one of them the culinary festival JESTIVAL, a mix of Great Cuisine and Art in Kobarid in the Upper Soča Valley in Slovenia. This is a culinary event organized at the beginning of October, where local chefs and artists together to create, exhibit and exchange inspirations. Among performances, creative workshops, film projections, discussions and exhibitions, visitors can also taste and sample original local dishes ranging from cheeses from the Soča Valley to marble trout and other freshwater fish together with selected Slovenian wines. The main star of the event is still a special sweet – the “štrukelj” (dumpling) from Kobarid. In the past it was made by every housewife from Kobarid, who each prepared it in a slightly different way and signed it with theirs fingerprint in the middle of the “strukelj”.

CONCLUSION

Cultural heritage in the modern, global world, which is facing drastic environmental, economic, social and cultural changes, is understood in the context of new development paradigms and content. Although the social, economic, and development roles of heritage practices are intertwined and operate in the direction of ensuring the well-being of local residents, their role in local communities is still not sufficiently developed. The key to overcoming the challenge of community engagement and thus form a multi-level community network can be seen in better cooperation among the main stakeholders of development, especially among experts, local decision-makers and residents from particular local areas. The combination of the principles of bottom-up and top-down approaches can bring fruitful results, but all involved parties should be proud of their past’s

achievements and motivated to take common steps in order to transmit heritage to the younger generation in innovative ways. Although the local population are becoming increasingly aware of the importance of the knowledge of their ancestors and realize that the past is not something technologically backward, but rather something of value which can in conjunction with modern innovative approaches be enriched for a better tomorrow, often they do not have appropriate stimulation or a clear vision of how to implement past practices. Project teams can contribute greatly to this effort, but they must not take on the role of all-knowing actors, but more the role of consultant, facilitator, and proposer of different ideas and thoughts that the local population are willing to accept, supplement and enhance with respect to their own expectations and needs.

There are many methods and techniques for including the public in the development of local communities. Among other things they can also be seen through the practices of creating local heritage in societies, where heritage elements can become a component for ensuring sustainable development and the formation of sustainable communities. The engagement process is not easy in practice and can represent a big challenge. It takes considerable time and depends on the selection of the right approaches. Important tools to engage people, which has not been particularly highlighted in this text, are also communication channels such as social media, websites, personal and telephone communication, TV broadcasting, newspapers and radio. The wide variety of channels used – traditional and digital – help to ensure that people of all ages and socioeconomic groups can be reached.

The activities described here can be prepared in any village, town or other heritage centres. This can enhance awareness among all heritage actors as to how to achieve an inclusive heritage process, to build community capacities and bring personal benefits. They could also enrich the content of museums, villas, castles and other heritage monuments or sites. A heritage project without taking into consideration people, the characteristics of their natural and built environment, and their culture is like writing a book using an unfamiliar alphabet: the book may lie on a bookshelf, but it will remain untouched, unread, unused, and uninterpreted. Heritage is not here for its own sake, but it can encourage us all to think about the achievements of our predecessors, to unite all relevant heritage actors and to take common steps in order to sustainably preserve, renovate, interpret and improve and modify heritage.

CELOSTNI PRISTOP K REVITALIZACIJI, VAROVANJU IN UPRAVLJANJU KULTURNE DEDIŠČINE: KAKO USTVARITI TRAJNO IN AKTIVNO LOKALNO SKUPNOST

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POVZETEK

Številne konvencije o revitalizaciji, varovanju in upravljanju kulturne dediščine (prim. Konvencija o varovanju nesnovne kulturne dediščine, Konvencija o vrednosti kulturne dediščine za družbo, Evropska strategija kulturne dediščine za 21. stoletje, idr.) poudarjajo pomen aktivnega vključevanja različnih akterjev v dediščinske projekte; tako od načrtovanja projektne ideje, njegove izvedbe, kot pri ocenjevanju doseženih rezultatov. Zadnje dediščinske raziskave izrecno poudarjajo, da so lokalni prebivalci (poleg strokovnjakov in politikov) postali najpomembnejši deležniki pri celostnem (integriranem) upravljanju kulturni spomenikov in nesnovnih elementov. Še več, novi participativni pristopi upravljanja s kulturno dediščino zahtevajo povezovanje tako pristopa od »spodaj navzgor«, kot pristopa »od zgoraj navzdol«, kar pa v praksi odpira več izzivov. Članek poskuša odgovoriti na vprašanja, kdo v dediščinskih projektih, ki se nanašajo na vrednotenje in trajnostno rabo lokalnih kulturnih stvaritev, konstruirati skupnost; kako v skupnosti doseči medsebojno zaupanje in prevzemanje odgovornosti; s katerimi ovirami se projektna skupina lahko sooči, ko želi vključiti skupnost v dediščinske procese; kako doseči več-nivojsko skupnostno mrežo ter kako uskladiti različne interese, stališča vključenih akterjev in posledično medsebojno in odgovorno partnerstvo itd. Poleg predstavitev in analize teoretskega aparata, ki se razvija v okviru dediščinskih in kulturnih študij in se nanaša na participativne pristope in povezovanja javno, zasebnega in volonterskega sektorja, so v prispevku predstavljene tudi možne neformalne poti, metode in orodja, kako člane skupnosti ozaveščati o sodobnem pomenu kulturne dediščine, aktivni participaciji in pomenu več-nivojskih mrež in lokalnih skupin, ki bodo dovolj močne za nadaljevanje dediščinskih praks po uradnem zaključku financiranja projekta. Podrobneje so predstavljene prakse, kako se lahko odnos lokalnega prebivalstva do kulturne dediščine spremeni s pomočjo snemanja dokumentarnega filma o zgodovini načina življenja v določeni vasi. Pomembno metodo za participativno raziskovanje in upravljanje lokalne dediščine predstavljajo intervjuji med otroci in starejšimi, ki opolnomočijo in ozaveščajo mlade raziskovalce in starejše generacije. Priložnosti za mreženje znanj, medsebojno opogumljanje in sodelovanje predstavljajo tudi etnografske delavnice, ki lahko združijo različne generacije. Med pomembne priložnosti za graditev in krepitev skupnosti uvrščamo tudi festivale in vaške prireditve. Priložnost za večjo angažiranost mladih v dediščinske prakse pa predstavljajo osnovnošolska tekmovanja (prim. kuharska tekmovanja), kjer se priložnost za sodelovanje ponuja tudi gospodarstvu (prim. prehrabnim podjetjem in turističnim ponudnikom). Predstavljeni primeri praks so bili izvedeni in analizirani v številnih lokalnih in mednarodnih projektih, kjer je avtorica članka aktivno sodelovala.

Ključne besede: upravljanje dediščine, celostni in participativni pristopi, trajnostni razvoj, več-sektorske in nivojske mreže v skupnosti

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