

**Review of the Panel on „HERITAGE, AN EDUCATIONAL CHALLENGE FOR WORLD CITIZENS” (No. 56), organized at the IUAES 2021 Yucatan Congress, Mexico on November 12, 2021**

In collaboration with IUAES Commission on Anthropology and Education, and Commission on Documentation, WCAA Global Cultural Policies Task Force co-sponsored Panel 56 entitled „Heritage, an Educational Challenge for World Citizens.”

Giovanna Guslini (formerly of the Italian Ministry of Education, University and Research), Sabine Klocke-Daffa (University of Universität Tübingen, Germany), and Antonella Imperatriz Tassinari (Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, Brasil) organized this panel, while Vesna Vučinić Nešković (University of Belgrade, Serbia) took the role of the discussant. The panel comprising three sessions and ten papers took pace on November 12, 2021.

The panel started with the premise that educational challenge related to different heritages concerns not only specialists but every citizen. It therefore requires the consolidation of educational networks in many contexts, from the local to the global level, in the teaching and learning of anthropology in the broadest sense, in order to become world citizens. This refers to the academic context, but, in a logic of educational continuity and life-long learning, refers also and above all to what happens outside the universities, in schools of all levels, in an audience of all ages and non-professionals to reach. With this in mind, the panel invited papers from anthropologists, interdisciplinary researchers, educators

and educational communicators to focus on heritage(s) in formal, informal and public education, exploring past, present and potential future possibilities.

Participating as a discussant, I was honored to be part of this thought-provoking but also experience-sharing panel, dealing with alternative and complementary modes of education related to preservation and promotion of cultural heritage. It was a real delight to hear the presenters, coming from different parts of the world – Belgium, Brazil, China, Congo, Germany, Italy, Mexico, Poland, Portugal and USA. I tried to review individual papers in the order they were presented, and point to their specificities and commonalities.

The first paper, **Search for mankind cultural heritage by Green Angel – New activity of ‘Nuwa Mending Heaven’ and ‘Search of Roots’ in Leshan** (by Wang et al), was conceived by four Chinese colleagues, working within two NGOs, and involved in tying in archaeology and anthropology with cultural tourism projects, aimed at educating children on cultural heritage. Their programs aim at showing how archaeological research brings forth scientific evidence that certain ancient cultural elements of China in fact had true practical significance, and are not only mythical stories passed on to the present. These programs show that stories like „Nuwa Mending Heaven” and „Fuxi deducing Eight Trigrams” were part of the real history of this ancient civilization. In addition, using the example of Heavenly Stems and Earthly Branches, they show that this was a real calendar model based on early Chinese astronomy, recorded in the Book of Mountains and Sea. The cultural tourism project „Search of Roots” of the Leshan Municipal Government

centered on dissemination of such findings in the summer student camp. This is a case how civil society institutions can organize complementary courses through alternative programs.

The second paper, **Teaching solar calendar knowledge of Yi, Mayan and Polish culture at Lvyin School – Protecting Kushi ich related literature** (by Wu et al), written in collaboration of the Chinese and a Polish colleague, tells us how a multiculturally based program for small children may be productive in developing emotional ties between cultures and a common childhood memory, using heritage of three cultures – those of Yi People of China, Maya People of Yucatan in Mexico, and the people of Poland. One part of the program is based on the three-year old children learning to recite ancient poetry of all three cultures. The second part assumes Lvyin rural school classical literature courses related to solar-calendar cultural traits that could be found in the music and poetry of those three cultures. The project of this school relied on the program of Rural Revitalization (Xiāngcūn zhènxīng), which created its own teaching materials, based on the state and society's efforts to form the intangible cultural heritage governance institutions that would respond to the local people's needs but also state protocols of codification and standards of maintenance.

Modernization, urbanization and westernization are some of the main threats that contribute to the rapid loss of the intangible cultural heritage (ICH). The third paper, **Integrating intangible cultural heritage into education** (by Chen and Liang), thus accentuates the importance of developing public awareness regarding ICH, which has been

pronounced an important agenda in China for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The aging inheritor population is a serious issue. The problem is that the Chinese citizens who had the first-hand experience of traditional rituals, customs, artisan skills, food production, etc. are disappearing. Due to the gap in these practices in the period from 1949 and 1979, when many of them were prohibited, as they were treated as backward remnants of feudalism, the present middle aged and young generations are not able to reproduce them. Over the past 12 years, Seven Valleys Nature School devoted itself to cultural education of children aged 7 to 14. Observing museums, exhibitions and performances as static and formalistic modes of promoting ICH, this school has developed alternative ways to do so.

The fourth paper, **The role of the teacher: Anthropology in the education for tomorrow** (by Tereshchenko), is devoted to the deliberations of an anthropologist, teacher and global citizen, who educates young people about 'heritage' worldwide online. Taking examples from encounters with students in a classroom from the UK, Greece, India and other countries, she shares the best practices and ideas, as well as the challenges she faces in her work. The paper is set within the framework of opposing forces of globalization and localization. One of her main questions is: how do we create and deliver meaningful content at the level of the individual, local and global community?

The fifth paper, entitled **Some reasons to include the study of cultural and biological heritage in a Faculty of Biology in Morelos, Mexico** (by Monroy-Ortiz et al), introduces the problems of disappearing traditional

knowledge on the cultural and biological heritage of the Morelos State in Mexico. This region, situated near Mexico City is experiencing accelerated transformation. The researchers present the study program of the Faculty of Biology in Universidad Autonoma del Estado de Morelos, which focuses on the biodiversity and the Olmec cultural heritage of their state. This program is aimed at students of different disciplines, which would enable them to better understand the complex socio-environmental problems. They also present activities in the non-formal educational sphere, where students at different levels of education attend classes in the Botanical Garden. This paper is a case study of successful initiatives realized by public institutions – a public university and the city botanical garden, first one as a formal course, and the second one as an informal program.

By presenting the cultural biography of Iyonda, a leprosarium built in Belgian Congo, the authors of the sixth paper, **Touring Iyonda leprosarium again? Leprosy, modernity, and sharing heritage through public education in DR Congo and Belgium** (Devlieger and MethoNkayilu), set a stage for a discussion on what intertwining of anthropology and public education can offer. Following the ‘life’ of the Iyonda, from its colonial times, it starts with this village being set up in 1950s by the missionaries and the colonial state to accommodate the leprosy infected patients, when it was toured by royal Belgian religious and lay dignitaries and representatives of ‘high culture’. It then follows the post-colonial times (after 1960), when it was toured by people who offered ‘symbolic development aid’, and even later by academics and historians who seek opportunities for inserting

this ‘artifact’ in public education. The paper focuses on the one-year Iyonda@Lab project, which tries to set balance in positioning this ‘heritage space’ between colonial violence and affective relations. This is a case how a very unusual locality can be a cultural heritage space, but carrying with it contestation of colonial and post-colonial interpretations of its social role.

The seventh paper **Ethnographic maps of nearby territories: The space of the village as seen by the local community** (by Binka and Kojder-Demska) sets to discuss the use of ethnographic maps of local communities. Throughout two projects of the ‘Ethnographic Laboratory’ Association, realized in Podlasie and Krajna regions of Poland, the authors describe how the process of map making proceeded in the researched communities. The basic approach was to initiate cooperation between ethnographers and the villagers in order to define, localize, and identify the local cultural heritage together. The paper reflects on ethnographic maps as a tool for working with local communities, so that their voices may be built into identification of their cultural heritage. This is a case of innovative methodology where anthropological/ethnographic methods were put to use in identification of cultural heritage.

**Indigenous museums in Brazil: New ways of cultural heritage transmission**, is the eighth paper in which the author (Tassinari) reflects on engagement of indigenous groups in projects of creation of local museums, taking place since the 1990s. The author closely follows the strategies of setting up city museums in cities neighboring indigenous villages, such as the Maguta Museum created by

Ticuna people in Benjamin Constant and the Kuahi Museum in Oiapoque. The first one deals with preservation, valorization and dissemination of the local heritage, while the second functions as the center of documentation and research for the indigenous people living in the region. There are also village museums, such as the Kaninde Museum, which reflect the leadership's strategy to legitimize a process of ethnic recognition. All the analysis of the indigenous engagement in planning and management of the museums leads the authors to the core question, which is: For what reasons are indigenous populations so engaged in forms of production and transmission of memory that are so different from their own traditional learning processes? Why do they give up so easily their own ways of transmission? The paper concludes that exactly these native processes of knowledge transmission and memory production should be studied more profoundly.

The ninth paper, **O patrimônio cultural: o desafio tem início no contexto educacional de todos** (by Guimaraes Brochado and Mendonca), focused on demonstrating that heritage education results in a mutual benefit for the heritage itself and for the individuals insofar as it is possible to reach awareness for safeguarding of cultural heritage. Further, the safeguarding will serve as a means that allows the acquisition of competencies based on education. The authors take a stance that cultural heritage should be experienced as an integral part of elementary education, to become the basis of cooperation, communication and entrepreneurship. The paper is based on the experience of realizing a project with a group of young learners from Vila

Nova de Gaia, in the northern region of Portugal. Intending to incorporate ethical and responsibility approach to historic society, it dealt with visual arts, to provide an understanding of arts without context, stimulating aesthetic and cultural appreciation and specific perception that stimulates cognition and psychomotor skills. This paper shows how innovative informal projects can educate youngsters to appreciate artistic cultural heritage without the political and socio-cultural pressures of the wider society surrounding them.

The last, tenth paper **Drawing on the documentation of international heritage projects to redesign an education for conscious and active local/global citizenship** (by Guslini), is an overarching discussion of how anthropologists and educators can put to use the very rich documentation of international heritage projects – both of the European Union and of other International Organizations connecting all world regions. These projects are often recognized as best practices because they point to ways forward through interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary and transdisciplinary approaches, in which the role of anthropology is crucial. Global threats of Anthropocene are discussed through educational networks in many contexts, from local to global. The paper examines the ways of building a citizenship at different levels that would allow people of all ages to confront the global threats related to environment, food, culture, human health and wellbeing. Among other approaches, the use of enhanced technological tools may help in this process.

In conclusion, it may be said that the papers illustrate how innovative

anthropologists interested in education about cultural heritage may be. It is fascinating how many niches our authors have found to develop and promote education for cultural heritage.

Even though the here described suggested and realized programs consider the need for education of all generations of world citizens, most of them focus on youth. The institutional frameworks from which these programs can work also vary widely – they span from NGO projects implemented informally, through experimental programs in kindergartens and elementary schools, to public institutions such as universities and botanical gardens. The sources of knowledge vary – from the use of archaeological finds, poetry containing mythical and traditional calendric data, local culture and biodiversity, a deserted health institution like leprosarium, local residents' knowledge and criteria for identifying cultural heritage, artifacts to

create indigenous community museums, heritage of plastic arts, and documentation of international heritage projects of the EU and other International Organizations.

We can conclude that the educational methods and institutional frameworks are endless. The network of institutions, NGOs, citizen groups and individuals involved in this process is expanding day by day. The question for me at this point is: How will we recognize qualitative change that results from all these efforts? Related to that, should there be a formal proposal to UNESCO or another global organization to organize a world congress on Anthropological Education for Management of Cultural Heritage.

*Prof. Vesna Vučinić Nešković*

*University of Belgrade*

*Past Chair, World Council of Anthropological Associations, WCAA*

*Chair of WCAA Global Cultural Policies*

*Task Force*