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EDUCATION ABOUT INTANGIBLE HERITAGE OF THE CITY

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Active Methods of Museum-Based Education. Teaching About Intangible Cultural Heritage

Gregory Ashworth in his text, *True potential hidden problems. Tales of the five Central European cities and their heritage*, notes that the city should be looked at “through the spectrum of time - from the past, the present and the forecasts for the future.” He further points out that “the present can be understood only if the past is seen as its inseparable part, and similarly the future is shaped by the projections of the past in the present”¹. Such a perception of the past enables better understanding, and interpreting of heritage, which the author defines as the conscious creation on the basis of the stored and recorded past². Ashworth therefore, understands heritage as a process of usage of the past, the use of “media history” in order to meet diverse today’s social, cultural, political, needs etc. As Ashworth writes in his article *Protection, maintenance and inheritance. The past in the present, on the example of the built environment*, it the past manifests in the present

¹ Ashworth Gregory, *Planowanie dziedzictwa*, trans. Marta Duda-Gryc, Kraków 2015, p. 59.

² *Ibidem*, p. 61.

through various forms of remembering, stories, traditions, artifacts and monuments of the past. It transforms the experience lived here and now, creating images of the past in the present³. Heritage describes the present⁴, which testifies to the continuity, origin and existence of the past. And it concerns itself on how the city presents the past in such a perceived manner. It is steeped in history, places of memory and remembrance, - all of which should be subjectified. To quote Henri Lefebvre⁵, it is a place to meet people, but also to merge the past with the present. And according to the author of *The Urban Revolution*, it becomes an element that combines contemporary urban discourse. As Florian Znaniecki wrote, the city is a whole humanistic unit⁶, realizing the experiences and actions of its people or, as mentioned Lefebvre, a perception of space, understanding and life⁷. Furthermore this space, which is created in order to build membership and *communitas*, with their building blocks not only refer to specific places and monuments, but also behavior, traditions and practices of everyday life. It is important to remember and cultivate the cultural elements of the city that seem the most fleeting - fading handicrafts and crafts, vintage instruments, songs, narrated stories, local traditions, night vigils, processions, any ceremonial practices: religious and secular, dialects, customs-related leisure services, feasting, celebration of religious holidays and state etc. Thus, these cultural, social and spiritual elements are involved in the process of building, defining and translating local identity. All these elements are classified as intangible cultural heritage, which include the practices, ideas, messages, knowledge and skills - as well as the associated instruments, objects, artifacts and cultural space - that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage⁸. Is transmitted from generation to generation, constantly being reproduced. It provides a sense of identity and continuity, thus contributing in this way to promote respect for cultural diversity and human creativity. It exists within the community. Authors of a study published by the National Heritage Institute stressed that "the transmission of

³ *Ibidem*, p. 21, 22.

⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 32.

⁵ Lefebvre Henri, *The urban revolution*, Minneapolis-London 2003.

⁶ Znaniecki Florian, *Miasto w świadomości jego obywateli*, Poznań 1931, p. 9-10.

⁷ Lefebvre Henri, *The production of space*, Oxford-Cambridge 1991.

⁸ The UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003), art. 2 - definitions.

such heritage often includes communicating the meaning, history, related values, and even the recognition and appreciation of the word culture"⁹. The need for protection of such heritage involves the next generations to identify and define, strengthen and promote. "Protection - they wrote- is understood here as a fixation, preservation and transfer of heritage to the next generation, thus keeping it alive, and at the same time changing and adapting it . This mainly concerns the transfer of skills and knowledge"¹⁰. Moreover, the best form of protection is perceived as education.

Piotr Żuchowski, Secretary of State in the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage in the aforesaid introduction stresses that

[...] there is no doubt that the effective protection of what is dearest to man, requires education. Man's relationship with the heritage of the region is a value that young people should realize, what will certainly lead to the evolution of their sense of self-identity, and hence - the attitude of involvement in matters related to the everyday life of the community, in which they grow up in, as well as opening up towards other communities and cultures.¹¹

And further:

Realizing what the cultural heritage of their region, town, village is the starting point to cultivate, revival or reactivation of local traditions. One of the ways for the ability to see the value and potential of the local cultural heritage is the realization of the broader education in this field.¹²

Protecting and learning about intangible cultural heritage is one of the tasks facing the museums. After all, the 1996 law on museums clearly states that the purpose of the museum is "to collect and ensure durable protection of natural and cultural heritage of humanity of a tangible and intangible, information about

⁹ *Niematerialne dziedzictwo kulturowe*, eds. Anna Marconi-Betka, Katarzyna Sadowska-Mazur, Julia Włodarczyk, p. 22, http://niematerialne.nid.pl/Dziedzictwo_niematerialne/Czytelnia/Dziedzictwo_niematerialne%20w%20Polsce.pdf [accessed 10.05.2016].

¹⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 21.

¹¹ *Ibidem*, p. 6.

¹² *Ibidem*.

values and content (...), dissemination (...), the formation of cognitive and aesthetic sensitivity”¹³. The aim of the museum-based education is, among other things, the formation of identity and local memory by allowing visitors to commune with intangible heritage. Learning about intangible heritage fosters its commemoration and protection, but it also assists in counteracting intolerance, degradation, extinction. It aims to foster among students a duty to respect the heritage of other communities, groups and individuals, cities. Furthermore, it hopes to increase awareness on the importance of this heritage, ensuring its appreciation. It is much easier, however, to illustrate and teach about tangible heritage presented in the museum, than to refer to ephemeral cultural elements. For this purpose, educators together with the students decided to go beyond the museum walls and treat the city as an extension of museum space, paying attention not only to infrastructure but to the behavior of people, traditions, race, which had and still have a significant impact on the contemporary perception of reality. It proves that the city space is an active space of experience; intangible cultural heritage is considered to be a source of cultural diversity and a guarantee of sustainable development and protection of traditional culture and folk. And in an effort, to further promote museum-based education, the Częstochowa Museum¹⁴, for example, organizes themed bike tours during which participants address issues of historic trees and parks, ancient suburbs of Częstochowa, monuments, historic railway, as well as hiking. Meanwhile, the Galicia Jewish Museum began recurring event organizing thematic walks in Kraków’s Kazimierz district. The walks correspond with forgotten events of the life of the Jewish community and involve many areas of Jewish

¹³ Ustawa o muzeach z dnia 21 listopada 1996, rodz.1. art.1.

¹⁴ Museum-based models of teaching were selected from several methods of museum education, which are described in the frame of the Research financed by the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage called *Regional or trans-regional cultural education using the example of museums*. The aim of the project is to show how changing the culture of education through integrating in formal education aspects of informal education using visual culture over the last five years. The European Commission sees combined formal education with informal opportunity to improve the quality of education. To informal education we may include museum lessons that use visual culture. We will examine in what ways has the approach to visual culture in education undergone changes, and what educational range do institutions offer schools. The project will prepare a report illustrating the relationships between museums as cultural institutions and schools at all three levels of education in the province of Malopolska and Silesian, as well as recommendations for Marshals of Southern Poland Macro-region on inter-provincial cooperation, and a website devoted to cultural observatory in education. The research will be supplemented with new elements of visual culture and the region (project’s details on the website: <http://www.obserwatoriumkultury.edu.pl/index.php?lang=en>).

culture, including history and biographies of rabbis, sacred and secular buildings, cemeteries and tombstone symbolism, or touching upon sporting events such as the commemoration of the 94th anniversary of the first goal for the Polish national football team shot by Joseph Klotz, a Jewish player from Jutrzenka. Kraków and the International Cultural Centre organizes themed walks around the theme of Polish-Lithuanian relations in the cultural and artistic exchange as well as trails documenting vanishing professions or visiting traditional craft workshops and services. During one of those trails, the National Museum in Kraków in connection with an exhibition entitled *Ottomania. The Ottoman Orient in Renaissance Art* tells the story of Kraków in the face of the Turkish power. During other events remnants of the Wyspiański heritage is presented in the form of thematic paths across the city. A Historical Museum of Kraków invites people to participate in educational walks through the grounds of the former Jewish ghetto in Kraków, in order to learn about its history. A Historical Museum in Bielsko-Biala organizes similar walks around the city, thematically addressing the city’s religious heritage and the (multi) cultural center, national movements, the history of colonization, as well as focusing on existing industry and technology. Authors of the touristic trails write: “The city tells its story incoherently, jumping from subject to subject. The historical routes (...) help to organize it so that the story is divided into thematic chapters”¹⁵. As the organizers of the walks of Historical Museum of Kraków note, “the purpose of each of these walks is to encourage participants to independently explore its history”¹⁶.

Such walks and themed trails of course, are only some of the numerous teaching models of museum-based education. Apart from the models already discussed, it is worth mentioning the organization of urban games, fairs, festivals, and staging of major historical events. These methods rely on learning by actively engaging participants, with the museum, and treating them as equal participants’ co-creating the event. The city becomes a visited site, and walking becomes a fact, as wrote Lefebvre- a meeting place for participants, educators and students, merging the past and present. Walking around the city, participants can experience and visually check how the past intervenes in the present, and how much has been forgotten and must be reconstructed. Furthermore, participants can learn

¹⁵ *Zwiedzaj Bielsko-Białą. Trasy turystyczne. Przewodnik*, eds. Bogusław Chorąży, Piotr Kenig, Bielsko-Biala 2014.

¹⁶ <http://www.mhk.pl/oddzialy/fabryka-schindlera/spacery> [accessed 12.05.2016].

about the point of contact of two perspectives of time and discourses, as well as learn what the intangible heritage is based upon, and how through performative play it must be protected from oblivion and non-existence. Walking across the city space, visiting new places according to a particular route theme is a physical operation, but also a cultural one - visiting places and sometimes not-places, meeting with relics of the past. Today, there are still few people left who can still talk about a dying profession or tradition, giving new meaning to the past, by making it part of the present. This joint action is precisely the goal here, but also a model of teaching. This is action-oriented pedagogy and experience. The essence of education is in fact an adventure. This model is closely related to a postmodern treatment of education. Therefore, it refers to the use of the "eye friendly" method as an educational practice, which aims to find opportunities to share experiences of participation inheritance among the participants, but also between the recipient and the exhibit. This method is based on a conscious performing of a dialogue, by the participant and his empowerment as well as his subjective perspective and acceptance. Such a dialogic relationship between the recipient and the exhibit (in this case, a relic of the past) is stimulated by the educator. A museum lesson does not become merely a dry lecture, but incarnate embodiment of the past; the past living in the streets, memories, people and being once again spoken of. Thus, walking becomes a multi-narrative story of participants, actors, events, and sometimes silent witnesses disappearing rituals and traditions. It is an unearthing of history and discovery of local places. A common story of heritage becomes, as noted in Charlotte Linde's article, *The acquisition of a speaker by a story: How history becomes memory and identity*¹⁷, an act of building a sense of belonging to the past and local identity. Because in order to be a member of the community, one should tell his or her story. According to Linde, formal and informal learning, should therefore be learning how to tell a coherent story of a group. It should illustrate how contemporary group of judges interprets and relates to the past. The educators during such walks not only transmit specific knowledge, but they also create local community, protect heritage and increase the competence of students – mutually constructing with them the story of the past. The aim of the walk is in fact to accompany the independent discovery of history.

¹⁷ Linde Charlotte, *The acquisition of a speaker by a story: How history becomes memory and identity*, „Ethos: Special Issue on History and Subjectivity” 2000, no 28, p. 608-632.

Nature trails used by museums as a model to protect and educate about the intangible cultural heritage of the city are, to paraphrase the title of the article written by Krystyna Kaminska¹⁸, the new strategy of the past made present. The author devotes her text to cultural trails, which in a micro version become urban walks and educational trails. It shows that walking is a kind of approximation and appeal to tradition- the search for authenticity supported by the reconstruction of the past. It combining locality with tradition. It is therefore inextricably linked with the legacy understood by Gregory Ashworth. Kaminska defined this type of trail as a form of narrative presentation of cultural exploration, dissemination and promotion, as well as the protection of its resources, which shows the "human development as a multidimensional and continuous exchange of goods, ideas, knowledge and values"¹⁹. She further notes that "cultural trail is a kind of breaking of prism of a standard museum presentation of cultural heritage"²⁰.

It was this last remark that seems to be most relevant in these considerations. It argues for a new perception of museum-based education. The new understanding of the customer as co-founder along with a new discourse on the museum having a performative impact on the recipient, and not only faith in the self-contained power of content within the exhibit, entailed the need for development of new models for museum-based education. This new model is based on learning through direct participation, experience, or action. New concepts were eventually formulated, such as the concept of Ecomuseum, closely associated with the self-education- models of intensive cooperation with local schools. Thus, the museum-based education is being increasingly implemented referring to the interdisciplinary and modern methods of communication.

Guichard²¹ wrote that the aim of museum-based education is the transition from informal discoveries to a search for elements constructing knowledge in relation to the object of scientific study. As noted by Irena Wojnar, museums²², in addition to the function of being a collector, focus their efforts on conservation,

¹⁸ Kamińska Krystyna, *Szlak kulturowy – nowa strategia uobecniania przeszłości (Cultural route – the new strategy of representing the past)*, „Zeszyty Naukowe Ostrołęckiego Towarzystwa Naukowego” 2013, no 27, p. 319-329, <http://mazowsze.hist.pl/678/1999/981/1/36054/> [accessed 10.04.2016].

¹⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 320.

²⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 321.

²¹ Guichard Jack, *Démarche pédagogique et autonomie de l'enfant dans une exposition scientifique*, „Aster” 1989, no. 9, p. 17-42.

²² Wojnar Irena, *Muzeum czyli trwanie obecności*, Warszawa 1991, p. 16.

research-based acquisition of knowledge, popularization and education, but also aim to fulfill their role as a communicator²³. She further wrote, that the museum as a cultural focus has grown to the size of a model of art which is both stimulating and educational. Museum-based pedagogy created by Alfred Lichtwark²⁴ is thus education and development of children and youth in the museum, and through the museum. Is related to education through art and new concepts of education, which imply education on the basis of daily experience (John Dewey), the development of abstract thinking (Jean Piaget) and creative and self-discovering the world around us (Maria Montessori). Educational activities of a museum are intentional and are run separately from information activities, and they not only transmit knowledge, but also educate as to the ability to read visual culture. It corresponds with the concept of lifelong education. An important voice in this debate also seems to be that of Leszek Sosnowski²⁵, who notes that everyone should be entitled to the so-called, right to culture. He defines it as the universal knowledge of culture. It emphasizes that culture must be inoculated from the earliest years, along with a commitment to culture that should span a lifetime. The ability to participate in culture is seen as soft skills.

Such walks are an active meeting not only with one's past and heritage, but also with other people. When incorporated in the museum setting, it makes a visit to the museum a journey aimed at "processing of meanings present location"²⁶.

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²³ Wojnar Irena, *Teoria wychowywania estetycznego*, Warszawa 1995, p. 197.

²⁴ As cited in Pater Renata, *Edukacja muzealna dla dzieci. Alternatywne przestrzenie*, http://eetp.ignatianum.edu.pl/sites/eetp/files/artykuly/art.3.30.pater_.pdf [accessed 21.08.2014].

²⁵ *The importance of the modern university and the right to culture* – the lead lecture during panel *Academic Culture* in the frame of conference organised by Jagiellonian University called *The ideal of the University and social needs* (21.01.20015).

²⁶ Kamińska Krystyna, *op. cit.*, p. 326.

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