
Bridging universities and communities from the heritage learning perspective

Based on the results of EU-CUL project Erasmus+ Programme

22 March 2022, 17.00 h

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The aim of the seminar is in some way to return to the debate on the third mission of the university. In particular, we will consider the role that cultural heritage can play in this process and how it can support the solution of everyday, social problems towards citizenship and social inclusion. Strengthening cooperation between universities and communities also requires appropriate, open, democratic universities. How can heritage strengthen these university's qualities?

Cultural heritage, if explored in a critical way and with respect to its very broad and interdisciplinary notion, can bring educational added value to the practices of teaching, learning and researching, also bridging the gap between universities and local actors and benefiting the communities and society at large, in a long term. Cultural heritage also carries the emancipatory potential of addressing difficult and controversial issues of oppression, violence, colonisation, injustice and misrepresentation, embedded in social narratives of institutions, groups and individuals. Its constant construction and deconstruction in a variety of social spaces can be seen as an educational process leading to empowerment, increase of participation and democratic engagement. Broader theoretical strands framing the project are located mostly in critical theory (Habermas, Honneth) and issues of participation (Arnstein) and belonging (Yuval – Davies). We also plan to present and discuss “the learning heritage concept” as the main result of the interdisciplinary and international study.

European universities with their own institutional heritage are important actors in these social discourses, but it is essential that they built a network of formal and informal links with non – academic actors engaged in heritage processes. It also differs across the Europe till what extent and in what way universities are using cultural heritage in education, research and social outreach activities. To explore these issues in a comparative perspective, grasping the variety of practices, a consortium of five European universities, composed of scholars in the field of education, art, philosophy, archaeology and heritage management undertook the Erasmus + research project *EU_CUL Exploring European Cultural Heritage for fostering academic teaching and social responsibility in Higher Education* (www.eucul.com)

Ewa Kurantowicz, PhD, Habil.; University of Lower Silesia, Wrocław, Poland. Research interests: civic society and organizations, local community development learning, non-traditional students and graduates, recognition of the prior learning in HE, socio-educational aspects of cultural heritage. Research approach: the narrative and critical research on adult learning, local sustainable development and education, the communities of practices, HE policies and practices to non-traditional students and employers, the cultural heritage management. International cooperation: member of the European Society for Research on the Education of Adults (SC till 2012), co-convenor of the ESREA network: Between local and global. Adult Learning and Communities (from 2006).

Adrianna Nizinska is a Senior Lecturer at the Department of Education and Special Education, Faculty of Education, University of Gothenburg, Sweden, where she is responsible for a programme International Master in Educational Research. She is an active member of European Society for Research on the Education of Adults, interested in intersectionality of adult learning and its socio – cultural dimension. She has published and researched on adult learning in higher education, non-traditional students and social dimensions of European universities. Currently involved in an international study on critical heritage and higher education in European Universities.