

16th International “Border Crossings” Student Conference

26 – 29 April, 2018, Skopje

Balkan Cultural Heritage. Borders, Boundaries, Images, Interpretations, Protection Practices and Tourist Perspectives

The concepts that have been coined with relation to the notion of cultural heritage have been developing and constantly evolving as a result of complex historical processes. They have been based on historically changing social, political, as well as value systems. These value systems are acknowledged by different centres of powers and their interests. As a result, this process contributes to the creation of various categories/notions of cultural heritage (world heritage, national heritage, etc.).

The notion of cultural heritage is made up of and involves many things, some of a large and others of a small scale and level of action. It can be traced and observed in the buildings, townscapes, and even in archaeological remains. In the same context, the idea of culture can be linked to and perceived through natural sources as well: the agriculture and the landscapes associated with it. It is preserved through books, artifacts, objects, pictures, photographs, art, and oral tradition. Cultural heritage is part of the food we eat, the clothes we wear, the religions we follow, and the skills we learn. Sometimes, we can touch and see what makes up a culture; other times it is intangible.

Cultural heritage objects are full of symbolic meanings. They represent identities based on the grounds of culture. Ties to and traditional activities (rituals etc.) that implicate these objects create a sense of community. At the same time, the selection process of which objects, monuments or events are to be preserved sets the future trajectory for various cultural narratives and societal consensus about both the past and present.

Since the 19th century, the idea of national heritage has been pivotal in what related to its preservation and, at the same time, re-imagination, re-contextualization and re-incorporation into the national, political and social contexts of modernity. This resulted in the creation of national museums and of commissions or institutions of monument protection.

In the second half of the 20th century, spontaneously emerging movements, organizations and political groups have been successful in gaining the necessary support to preserve particular aspects of the heritage of many nations. The terms World Heritage, World Memory have been some of the conceptual tools that arose from this development.

At the same time, recent outcomes with regard to the cultural heritage practices, as well as forms of the use and abuse of the concepts of cultural heritage have led to a strong critical approach to what has been called as “heritage commercialization” and “heritage politicization”. While the concepts of cultural heritage contributed to the protection of values and objects, they have also often played a negative role in the destruction of monuments, the replacement with new ones, as well as the renewing nationalist movements, and the adoption of extremist and even chauvinistic policies. Deliberate elimination of heritage values and objects, on the one hand, and distorted, ahistoric or propagandistic interpretations, on the other, can be detected in different parts of the world. Moreover, one can study the ways these values and objects have been influenced by varied ideologies, religious and/or political movements.

Cultural heritage within the tourism industry is a worldwide flourishing phenomenon, and the cultural tourist who partakes in this type of tourism is equally burgeoning and multiplying at excessive speed. The consumption of cultural heritage in the tourism industry is seen to be undertaken in different social and cultural circumstances. Furthermore, within these global processes of national and local importance, it is the boundaries and border lines between communities and collective categories of identification that are re-set, re-negotiated and re-established.

While discussing the main theme, the conference wishes to tackle various **subtopics**, such as:

- Contextualising and problematising the concepts of Culture and Heritage in south-eastern Europe
- Religious, linguistic, local, rural, urban, ethnic and national Heritage Diversity: Challenges and Opportunities;

- Cultural heritage, tourism, nostalgia and economic development
- Cultural heritage and hegemonic discourses of identity and difference
- Materiality, authenticity and ideology
- Visual, textual and other representations of cultural heritage
- Social media and cultural heritage
- Local, national, international Heritage institutions and the politics of culture and identity
- Constructing and de-constructing border and boundaries through cultural heritage
- Blurred borders - Strengthened Borders: Local and Global Consumerism and cultural heritage
- Border Crossing Pollution or New Types of Colonialism in South Eastern Europe;
- Cultural resource management: conservation of cultural heritage
- Ethnography of Balkan contemporarity: doing fieldwork in and about cultural heritage sites
- Anthropological research and its social responsibility
- Anthropologists as researchers and anthropologists as activists.
- The student as author: ethnographic writing as narrative non-fiction;

Organising Institutions:

- Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology, Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics, St Cyril and Methodius University, Skopje
- Border Crossings Network
- Department of History and Archaeology, University of Ioannina
- Department of Balkan, Slavic and Oriental Studies, University of Macedonia, Thessaloniki
- Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb, Zagreb
- Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, University of Ljubljana, Ljubljana
- National School of Political Studies and Administration, Bucharest
- Department of Ethnology and Anthropology, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade, Belgrade
- Department of History and Ethnology, Democritus University of Thrace

Eligibility

Eligible to apply are BA students, BA graduates, MA students, MA graduates, PhD candidates.

Conference sessions and paper presentations

The conference sessions will take place on Friday, April 27 and Saturday, April 28 in the venues of the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology, Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics, “St Cyril and Methodius” University, Skopje. Check on the following links:

<http://etno.pmf.ukim.mk/ocs/index.php/border/Conferece/>
www.iea.pmf.ukim.edu.mk.

Paper presentations are expected to be in English and last not more than 10 minutes (plus 5 minutes for discussion).

Power-point and multimedia presentations are welcome.

The conference programme will be announced in the beginning of April 2018. Check on

<http://etno.pmf.ukim.mk/ocs/index.php/border/Conferece/>
<http://www.border-crossings.eu/> and www.iea.pmf.ukim.edu.mk.

Conference Costs

There is no conference fee.

Travel and accommodation costs should be covered by the participants themselves.

Participants are expected to make their own arrangements for the accommodation. For useful information about travel and staying in Skopje check:

<http://etno.pmf.ukim.mk/ocs/index.php/border/Conferece/schedConf/accommodation>

Application procedure:

Paper presenters are expected to submit online a paper abstract (around 250-300 words), their academic status and institutional affiliation by **March 25**, 2018 on the following address:

<http://etno.pmf.ukim.mk/ocs/index.php/border/Conferece/>

Successful applicants will be notified by March 31, 2018.

Conference Email contact address: risteski@ukim.edu.mk

Conference Email contact person: Ljupco S. Risteski, PhD, Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology, "Ss.Cyril and Methodius" University, Skopje

Conference Scientific Committee

- Prof. Vassilis Nitsiakos, Department of History and Archaeology, University of Ioannina, Ioannina
- Prof. Vintila Mihailescu, National School of Political Studies and Administration, Bucharest
- Prof. Rajko Muršič, Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, University of Ljubljana, Ljubljana
- Prof. Ljupčo Risteski, Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology, St Cyril and Methodious University, Skopje
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- Eda Starova, PhD student, Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology, St Cyril and Methodious University, Skopje
- Andrej Tatarchevski, BA student, Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology, St Cyril and Methodious University, Skopje

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