

Passing-On Cultural Heritage Knowledge: Entrepreneurial Approaches for a Higher Educational Sustainability

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Abstract : As institutional initiatives often fail to provide good practices when it comes to heritage management or to adapt to the changing environment in which they function and to the audiences they address, private actions represent viable strategies for sustainable knowledge acquisition. Information dissemination to future generations is one of the key aspects in preserving cultural heritage and is successfully feasible even in the absence of original artifacts. Combined with the (re)discovery of natural landscape, open-air exploratory approaches (archeoparks) versus an enclosed monodisciplinary rigid framework (traditional museums) are more likely to 'speak the language' of a larger number of people, belonging to a variety of categories, ages, and professions. Interactive sites are efficient ways of stimulating heritage awareness and increasing the number of visitors of non-interactive/static cultural institutions owning original pieces of history, delivering specialized information, and making continuous efforts to preserve historical evidence (relics, manuscripts, etc.). It is high time entrepreneurs took over the role of promoting cultural heritage, but it under a more commercial yet more attractive form (business). Inclusive, participatory type of activities conceived by experts from different domains/fields (history, anthropology, tourism, sociology, business management, integrative sustainability, etc.) have better chances to ensure long term cultural benefits for both adults and children, especially when and where the educational discourse fails. These unique self-experience leisure activities, which offer everyone the opportunity to recreate history by him-/her-self, to relive the ancestors' way of living, surviving and exploring should be regarded not as pseudo-scientific approaches but as important pre-steps to museum experiences. In order to support this theory, focus will be laid on two different examples: one dynamic, in the outdoors (the Boario Terme Archeopark from Italy) and one experimental, held indoor (the reconstruction of the Neolithic sanctuary of Parta, Romania as part of a transdisciplinary academic course) and their impact on young generations. The conclusion of this study shows that the increasingly lower engagement of youth (students) in discovering and understanding history, archaeology, and heritage can be revived by entrepreneurial projects.

Keywords : archeopark, educational tourism, open air museum, Parta sanctuary, prehistory

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