

# Reviews

***Intangible Heritage*. Editors Laurajane Smith and Natsuko Akagawa, London and New York: Routledge, Key Issues in Cultural Heritage, 2009, 312 pag., ISBN 9780415473965**

A community, a nation makes its way into posterity by their cultural heritage. The proofs of past and present times are a must-known items for next generations.

That is why the research on rescue, protection, and safeguarding of the national and international cultural heritage has become a focal point for both public audience and worldwide institutions such as: UNESCO, World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO), International Council of Museums (ICOM). Beyond this, the cultural heritage has become the target of several areas: social, economic, political, tourism, favouring the emergence of conflicts, thefts and elaboration of state policies.

Starting from the above-mentioned domains, the intangible heritage includes the totality of the cultural practices that have been rooted in the course of time. Activities such as folklore, arts, crafts, sports, games are increasingly embedded in social and economic contexts of great relevance to community members. In this situation, what dimension does the inheritance heritage have?

The 'Intangible Heritage' edited by Laurajane Smith and Natsuko Akagawa offers a perspective related to the concepts of heritage and its issues. It is focused on intangible heritage across many disciplines. These are some perspectives addressed in this volume that included a collection of essays written by an international group of researchers who have been directly involved in establishing key points of the 2003 Convention.

The book is concentrated on the UNESCO Convention on the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage which was developed in 2003 but the Convention came into force in 2006.

The volume contains fifteen entries organised into three distinct parts. The first part shows the history of the Convention and identifies the debates, the concepts that influenced its development. Behind the definitions presented in chapter one, two in chapter three, it is stated that the community is also involved and learn how to protect the cultural heritage based on the case of the Jemaa el Fna Square in Marrakesh and the Moussem of Tan-Tan (Morocco) in chapter four. Owing to these cases, UNESCO has taken up the mantle on an international level and is attempting to find the most appropriate means of securing its safeguard in order to prevent destructions.

The second part of the reviewed book is related to the political aspects and practices concerning the intangible heritage, which is about the relations between the states and communities regarding the heritage. Authors such Dawson Munjeri, Mary Lorena Kenny, Henrietta Marrie, Christina Kreps and Amanda Kearny show in their papers aspects related to: theorising heritage, difficulties in applying the concepts of the convention within society and community. The perspective of Kearny and Marrie is based on cautions. They debate on the Convention for the Indigenous people whether

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the heritage is well-defined or it may exclude or limit the some practices. Christina Kreps has an important statement about the implications and potential effects of the curation on practices. She states that the curation means long term preservation, retention of heritage and regular access of it.

The third part is focused on theoretic aspects as noticed in the studies by Denis Byrne, Regina Bendix, Frank Hassard, Laurajane Smith. The authors are pointing out how cultural issues can be framed within economic and political environment. Why is so important to be taken?

The heritage is not just some monuments or objects protected by the law and by the people. The culture is what defines the specific of an entity. This concept -cultural heritage - is the best way to transmit and preserve the national and international identity of people.

The book *Intangible Heritage* offers an excellent perspective to the key issues owing to the variety of cases presented in this rapidly growing field. It is an opportunity to know and understand the importance of the cultural heritage.