

CULTURAL HERITAGE: ENTANGLEMENTS OF KNOWLEDGE, CREATIVITY AND PROPERTY I

PREFACE TO THE SPECIAL ISSUE

The current special issue of JEF presents a selection of articles that were written as a result of two interrelated scholarly events arranged at the University of Tartu, Estonia in the summer of 2009. One of them, an interdisciplinary international network and training course entitled “Local Knowledge and Open Borders: Creativity and Heritage” comprised a session of lectures and seminars that discussed various perspectives and methodological approaches in heritage studies. At the same time this event introduced an overview of the maintenance, celebration and manipulation of cultural heritage in its role of negotiating between creativity and conservation, with both senior and junior scholars from various parts of Europe contributing. Cultural heritage is a value-laden term that implies locality, and yet its categorisation or political implementation is embedded in the globalised world. The other interlinked session convened the SIEF (Société Internationale d’Ethnologie et de Folklore) Working Group on Cultural Heritage and Property. This academic network proposes to analyse the position and meanings of cultural heritage and cultural property at different societal levels in the modern world and its individual nation states, to examine the repercussions of heritage politics or the concurrent influence of tourism on existing practices and to investigate the negotiated or contested relationships between tangible and intangible heritage from the perspective of the transnational organisations of cultural politics.

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Guest editor of the Special Issue