



Forschungskolloquium – MA-Studiengang *Cultural Heritage & Kulturgüterschutz*

WiSe 24/25

Prof. Dr. Thomas Schmitt

Dr. Mechtild Rössler (Paris/Freiburg)

Intangible heritage practices in UNESCO World Heritage cultural landscapes: examples from drystone areas

We will discuss with examples the connection between two key UNESCO conventions, the World Heritage Convention of 1972 and the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of 2003.

Examples of traditional practices in drystone construction and drystone buildings in cultural landscapes that have been included in the UNESCO World Heritage List from various countries illustrate the interrelationship between humans and the natural environment and the direct relationship between tangible and intangible heritage.

The 50th anniversary of the World Heritage Convention in 2022 and the 20th anniversary of the Convention on Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2023 have led to diverse discussions and reflections that will strengthen both instruments and further deepen connections, as documented in the 2022 Seoul Vision for the Future of Safeguarding Living Heritage for Sustainable Development and Peace (<https://ich.unesco.org/en/seoul-vision-01330>) and the 2023 Call for Action “The Naples Spirit” (https://www.unesco.nl/sites/default/files/2023-12/UNESCO_CALL_FOR_ACTION.pdf)

Drystone construction is emerging as an important example of cultural heritage in the field of sustainable development and the safeguarding of both biodiversity and cultural diversity. It is also an essential contribution to the cooperation of different generations in tackling the global climate crisis.

Dr. Mechtild Rössler is a Political and Cultural Geographer (Degree from the University of Freiburg, doctorate in Hamburg) and has been working for UNESCO for 30 years. From 2015 until 2021 she was Director of the UNESCO World Heritage Center in Paris.

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