



SEASONED TALES - CULTURAL HERITAGE MOMENTS ALONG THE DANUBE RIVER

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ABSTRACT

Common cultural heritage moments and places are present in the Danube region, partly based on material river elements, like water and stones, partly based on social and cultural practices like cooking and storytelling. The DANUrB project¹ discovers, reveals and maps the underused cultural heritage and resources as well as living cultural traditions in regions near the Danube, thereby strengthening the Danube regional cultural identity and creating a common brand. By exploring the unused or hidden cultural and social capital, it fosters transnational cultural ties between settlements along the Danube and creates socioeconomic return. The paper ‘Seasoned Tales – Cultural Heritage Moments along the Danube River’ selects practices which expose personal belonging to places nearby the river suitable to redefine the regions unique selling proposition.

With the methods of participatory photo interview and participatory observation, the research team collected photographs, narratives and situational knowledge from people living in Danube villages and towns. It turns out that national and religious identities, local sportive activities like fishing, and food production are bonds and basic elements strengthening specific traditional practices dependent on the availability for places in the Danube region and space. Results show two dimensions influencing the present cultural heritage activities: firstly the river is still connecting and knitting together the regions since it establishes a specific common social and cultural setting. Secondly the meanings attributed to natural and material elements, like stone, water and places nearby the river forms social, cultural and historical incidents. Considering the results of both dimensions shows a unique, at the same time common cultural heritage present in religious faith, environmental care and a great attitude towards hospitality expressed through food and in fairy tales that might be exploited by the tourism industry to permit for a greater socio-economic return.

Keywords: Cultural heritage, Emotional Co-ownership, Belonging, Space and place.

¹ <http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/danurb>