

Intangible Heritage in the Maritime Realm: The Pedagogy of Functional Preservation

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The preservation and maintenance of locally built, handcrafted vessels is costly and time consuming, with skills of construction and operation both esoteric and rare. Functionally, such craft may be unable to fulfil their original missions to fish, carry cargo, or serve as a platform for other maritime trade. With modernization, the loss of local vessels is imminent, as are the skills, songs, work ethic and stories associated with them. This paper provides a conceptual framework for describing this quickly changing cultural dynamic, focusing on how vessel-related cultural knowledge in Croatia is preserved and transformed through various types of educational and interpretive practices.

Key words: intangible heritage, maritime pedagogy, education

INTRODUCTION: PRESERVATION AS A PROBLEM AND A PARADOX

In Croatia, handcrafted small boats of the rowing and sailing type, like the *gajeta*, *falkuša*, *leut*, and *bracera*, are unique, as are all indigenous craft. The lateen sail and rotund hull shape, characteristic of boats throughout Croatia from the 16th century onward, is functionally ideal in its local environment. Their ability to be moved easily with oars in light wind, and their capacity to safely transport heavy goods and cargo across open water in a moderate seaway, makes their design ideal. Contemporary construction of these boats, one means of vessel preservation, is made possible through local knowledge acquired through generations of experience involving craft forms and the functions they afford. In this way, the boat itself becomes an embodiment of local knowledge, and is recognized as a heritage vessel. The vessel's design and the associated knowledge of boat operations have developed over centuries, in response to dynamic changes in the coastal environment, technol-

ogy and community needs. For example, fishermen from Komiža, who used *falkuša*, built removable bulwarks, which are high, mostly temporary planks, *falke*, for open sea passages; arriving in the remote Palagruža, the *falke* could be removed, creating a fishing vessel with a low freeboard, and enabling the *falke* to double as a platform for drying sardines on the rocky uneven shores of the remote archipelago. Such innovations make the craft versatile and well-suited to maritime tasks for the environment in which they are carried out.

This rich context of “place” and boat design also implies a challenge for the future of these vessels and presents a paradox of preservation. The representation of hundreds of years of accumulated knowledge, a craft’s intangible heritage, is to be preserved in the tangible form of a sailing vessel. Today this usually means that the form of the craft is expected by many to be preserved as a “relic” or an artefact of a previous era. The challenge of vessel preservation is to combine the “intrinsic” value of the vessel, as a physical object, with its roles as understood by the individual and the society. The challenge of ascribing value to a heritage object should also include transferring this value to the younger generation, stewards of an intangible legacy.

About ten years ago, UNESCO created the Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage¹ to address these combined issues of material and cultural preservation. The convention shifted traditional priorities from objects to ideas, and from preservation coming from outside the culture of the vessel in which the craft had a role, to within it, thereby including associated practices. The change in focus from a “western” sense of preserving material objects for observation, to repurposing preservation for the retention of skills and knowledge, changed the “how” of preservation. This was a shift from a perspective centred on passive objectification to one emphasizing active participation, especially intergenerational education and community preservation programs. In this way the UNESCO Convention implicitly recognized, and acted on, the two poles of the “preservation paradox”.

To be successful, a change in focus, from vessel as object to vessel practices embodying vessel knowledge, requires preservation practices themselves to be carried out through the context of vessel use, design or maintenance. Maritime intangible knowledge is held by captains, sailors, boat builders, fishermen and family members who work and live, or used to work and live, near bodies of water. A historic watercraft naturally serves as a situated placeholder for their practice-based knowledge, skills and abilities. Just as the weaver needs a loom in order to create and teach how to make fine garments, sailors and fishermen need to be aboard their craft and on the sea to

¹ Text of the Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage. Article 2. Available at: <http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?pg=00006> (accessed 5 November 2013).

fully explain their vessels' proper functioning and what they do to make that happen. Unfortunately, in Croatia over the last few decades, fibreglass and factory-made boats have led to a dwindling supply and use of locally-made boats, both on the islands and on the mainland. This shortage of vessels transpires in the present era of globalization accompanied by a growing influence of the mass media and global capital, such as through Croatian coastal tourism, a particularly powerful force. Perhaps in response to cultural homogenization, there has been a renaissance of boat-preservation programs in several places on the Croatian Adriatic. Many communities have formed programs with the goal of preserving local vessels and the associated maritime arts.

For example, on the island of Murter, and other islands in central Dalmatia, there is a wide range of working *gajeta* and restorations of this craft. The Batana House Eco-museum in Rovinj has become a community hub, employing a boat builder to continue the tradition of building a *batana* each year. In Komiža, replicas of the *falkuša*, a traditional fishing boat, continue their annual regatta to the remote islands of Palagruža. Such activities are excellent examples of active preservation of intangible maritime heritage on the Croatian islands and on the mainland.

Other vessel and seamanship programs aim to preserve local cultural and environmental knowledge directly for young people. In these programs (activities such as regattas, sailing schools and youth programs) knowledge is passed down through youth engagement and community action. Social construction of heritage relies on identity and meaning, and, for many, the unique maritime heritage in Croatia associated with the *gajeta* or *falkuša* tangibly embody this heritage. Unfortunately, communities without working vessels cannot be active in the same way. Preserving incomplete maritime "pieces", whether of craft or fishing gear, is not enough to preserve knowledge. This is the paradox, or contradiction, in preserving maritime arts. Groups need the physical vessel as an instrument in order to preserve intangible heritage, but the physical vessel itself cannot be preserved without associated expertise. A programmatic framework that actively engages young people is therefore a key means for creating a community network to value the vessel and preserve its legacy. With intergenerational education, there is preservation of knowledge, and a vessel is necessary as the vehicle for preserving knowledge across generations. The unique maritime heritage in Croatia associated with the *gajeta* or *falkuša* has successfully achieved this dual goal.

The following sections explore variants of this preservation paradigm, in which the boat, as a material object, gets used to preserve intangible heritage by understanding how a vessel's functions and cultural contexts are expressed and understood through different preservation practices. The practical question for boat preservation is how to think about such practices

as part of preservation program planning and implementation. The framework described below shows how intangible knowledge of vessel functionality can be preserved through active contexts of boat use, particularly in educational settings. The thesis is that vessel preservation succeeds when a craft's "function" and "place" get mobilized together in the preservation effort. The examples include one of the most iconic vessels in Croatia, the *falkuša*. This unique craft has gone from near total extinction to its current state of active restoration, the creation of several replicas, and the foundation of education organizations dedicated to preserving the skills and lore of the *falkuša's* maritime heritage.

REBIRTH OF CULTURAL ICONS

By the 1980's, the mechanization of the fishing fleet in Komiža on the island of Vis left many of the traditional *falkuša* unused. At the time, it was thought that only one functional boat was left, named the Cicibela. While moored on the west side of the island of Biševo, the craft was wrecked by a great storm. Residents of Komiža salvaged the boat and placed it in a salt house, which has since become a museum dedicated to Komiža's fishermen. Today, visitors can see the boat there. They may observe the boat, walk around it, and admire the craft in its idle form. Explanatory panels describe how the *falkuša* is sailed and the techniques for fishing. People who remember can still tell stories and reminisce about the feeling or the enterprise that took place on board long ago, but the expert knowledge of weather lore and other maritime disciplines are mostly inaccessible. This knowledge would be even further diminished if the vessel was moved away from its current location in Komiža. Some might argue that exhibiting the Cicibela elsewhere would be a sound preservation choice. After all, there are exhibitions in national museums and watercraft collections all around the world today, including the Technical Museum in Zagreb, with many vessels on display and explanations of craft engineering and uses. In these places, the models, art, and artefacts are showcased in extra-local contexts. These settings, however well done, create a new symbolic form, of "another time and place", with the shape, form and tangible character of the artefact well-protected, but missing the subtle expert knowledge formerly used to build or sail it, let alone its purpose or meaning as recollected by individuals who knew the boats in the sea or their port.

Just what is lost when a vessel is in effect displaced from its aquatic home? In the museum and on shore in maritime communities, understanding the form of the vessel is the boat builder and model maker's art. That knowledge is either reconstructed through painstaking research or known

directly, through a lifelong commitment to design and construction. The craft of building is a heritage skill, while the object alone is only a partial representation of the accumulated skill and the techniques leading to boat design. The model can be a tool for transmission of intangible heritage, if accompanied by the craftsman or a person who knows the functional aspects of the vessel or other local cultural knowledge. One approach to preserving this knowledge is provided in Croatia by the author and model maker Luciano Keber, who has documented hundreds of traditional vessel shapes and design features, including many of their local intricacies. This work is recorded in *Tradicionalne brodice hrvatskog Jadrana* (Traditional Boats of the Croatian Adriatic), a nearly comprehensive compendium of traditional vessels in Croatia today. Another scholar, Velimir Salamon of the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering and Naval Architecture in Zagreb, has prepared drawings of vessels long since gone. The body of work created by these two scholars and others has been used to memorialize the detailed design of traditional vessels no longer found in boatyards today. Drawings and monographs can be used to create plans which boat builders can in turn use to build replicas of historic craft, thus creating and resulting in a somewhat idealized but functionally complete watercraft. This is how a replica of *falkuša* was created, combining Velimir Salamon's design guidance with details from the Cicibela wreck. This rebuilding task, supported by scholars and institutions, has become the preservation action or "praxis", as the vessels are actively "transported" from idle relic to active icon. The academic and engineering project itself has turned into a source of inspiration and identity for the community where these indigenous watercraft reside, and a tacit commitment to the reconstructed vessel's future preserved status. Here again, the paradox of preservation is apparent.

The predicament of representing both tangible and intangible heritage is a problem that museums and their personnel have been grappling with for some time, even before the UNESCO convention, as is explicit in the article "Museums and Intangible Heritage: The dynamics of an unconventional relationship" (Alivizatou 2009). While balancing dynamic aspects of culture and heritage in a formal setting is a challenge, there are innovations, such as the eco-museum, with its decentralized exhibition approach, involving re-designation of the community space (Boylan 2006), and "post-museums" which act more as immersive educational spaces than external structures for housing objects (Watermeyer 2012). Creative relationships to combine the tangible and the intangible through museums and community centres will develop over time as priorities shift from objects to culture and heritage, or as objects are reappropriated through museum efforts to enable community development and educational programs, which communicate the intangible practices once supported by curated objects.

Even with dual preservation goals in mind, practical or political considerations can mean compromises between the preservation of vessels as objects and their intangible heritage. Over the years following the wreck of the *Cicibella*, Velimir Salamon worked with Joško Božanić and others from Komiža and beyond to rebuild a replica from photographs, drawings, and lines from the existing *falkuša*. This boat was built and was showcased at the World Expo '98 in Lisbon, and was hence named the Komiža-Lisboa. Built during a difficult time in Croatia's history, the recreation of the *falkuša* has led to innumerable benefits, including sparking a renaissance in the interest in maritime heritage. Over the past decade, two other replica *falkušas* have been built, and recently a historic *falkuša* hull was located on the island of Hvar and craftsmen have begun a complete restoration and rebuild. The continuity of tradition was revitalized, and has gained national and international attention. However, even after the restoration was complete, much of the public agency focus has nonetheless been on the building and creating of museum structures to house artefacts, with local and national funds used to create educational panels, not functioning watercraft or support for boat owners in the preservation-as-use of historic craft.

THE LIVING VESSEL

After the replica Komiža-Lisboa was completed, the new *falkuša* was brought to Komiža. For more than fifteen years, the boat has served as a functional icon of the community, representing Komiža and Croatia in several counties and in on-water festivities. As another example, it has been the author's privilege to be a crew member on the vessel Komiža-Lisboa during Komiža's Festival of the Sea. The regatta, Rota Palagruzona, recreates a race to the islands that served as historic fishing grounds for the Komižan people for centuries. Palagruža is some 42 nautical miles from the port of Komiža, and is the outermost island group in the Croatian archipelago. Božanić has documented much of the history of the race and the vessel *falkuša* going back to 1593, making this possibly the oldest offshore regatta in Europe.

During this race, and the preparation that preceded it, I saw how the seafaring knowledge was passed down. My crew member role therefore was also that of a "participant observer". The value here is more than academic. Maritime lessons given underway do not typically come with, or even follow, an explicit outline or agenda. The master of the vessel or another member of the crew relates information, using specialized language, only as it is needed. The language of manoeuvres, boat parts, wind or weather is used sparingly, and not communicated with a subtle tone. During the 2012 regatta, I sailed with one of the great captains of Komiža, Tonko Gruje, and with the sail

master Jadran Gamulin of Dubrovnik. The learning that occurred on that day was possible only because of the nearly unique, specific circumstances. Had our island destination been different, or the weather conditions changed, so too would have the captain's approach, and therefore the lesson. This pedagogical specificity is typical for many maritime activities, and shows how intangible transmission of knowledge, even on a fully functional vessel, depends on its local environment. Place and vessel function combine to create an immersive pedagogy through the demands of the race, the vessel, and the interactions aboard. The following narrative report shows how the transmission of maritime knowledge emerged from the elements at hand and in the environment aboard the vessel.

Shortly after the race started, one of the crew brought the compass out to put at the helm. Captain Gruje, who was 76 years old at the time, said he did not need the compass. Palagruža is a lonely rock in the open sea, out of sight of land for at least three hours, but he insisted he would not need any instruments to make the journey.

While they were surprised by this, Gruje then told the crew how he would make it without the compass to find direction. He said: "When you line the point of Stupišće on the south west corner of Vis with the small island Barjak, there is a perfect transit straight to Palagruža". He went on to say: "When you can no longer see the point, keep the wind on the quarter and steer straight using the wind and waves as a guide. Before long Palagruža will come up on the horizon". After the race was over, the young man with the compass called the rest of the crew over. He had left a GPS on in his bag and it had recorded our route. Captain Gruje had sailed a perfectly straight course for the eight hours to Palagruža. That night, looking at the track on the screen, it seemed as though the line was carved from the sea, straight as an arrow.²

The sailing transit was true, as was the course given. It is also likely that Captain Gruje himself had learned the sailing directions in a similar fashion years before. No one aboard was aware of the transit marks even though several crewmembers were from Komiža. Navigation handed down from generation to generation was not the only thing they learned. The lessons the younger sailors acquired that day were numerous. The language he used was the dialect from Komiža, technical words barely in use in any other venue. On the *falkuša*, there are many moving parts and fixed components to operate the vessel while underway, and each line and where it is fastened has a name. When the captain told the crew to tie the line of a given location there was not a conversation about pronunciation, word origin or meaning. The act must be accomplished quickly and efficiently. He also spoke of details

² Conversations recorded during the 2012 Rota Palaguzona Regatta onboard Komiža-Lisboa and on the shores of Palagruža by the author, 22 June 2012.

about anchoring, names and stories associated with underwater features, and the behaviour of the winds as they wrap and spin around Palagruža. As we sailed through an area known as *ždrijelo*, the “throat”, he cautioned that the wind would increase in force and shift thirty degrees to the north. We set up for the shift and transferred the sails through the jibe as it came. Lack of this knowledge would have put the crew and the vessel in danger.



Photo 1: *Falkuša* Komiža-Lisboa under sail and oar below the cliffs of Palagruža
(photo by Ivo Pervan)

The information that Captain Gruje related by the “throat” place name was obvious in its description: the funnelling of the wind and current between a narrow passage between the rocks. There has been much scholarship, by Vladimir Skračić, Božanić and others, of such names, and the naming practices which relate historical and environmental data through toponyms. Pedagogically, the importance is that learning the sailors’ language occurs by being in the appropriate place and time of its salient use. This contextual organization allows for more complete understanding than strictly empirical knowledge. During this day there were many other subtleties which are difficult to describe using words at all: a firm resolute stare to be intent on the race; or how Captain Gruje grabbed an oar from a younger crew member

and with one hand took the long and heavy piece of wood and said “just like a pen”, while he whipped the oar back and forth in the water. How a five-meter oar is like a pen I’m unsure, but the crew member got it, and the rowing improved.

Such examples illustrate the intergenerational aspects of the transmission of intangible heritage, and the dynamic nature of cultural knowledge, layered and intertwined with technology and change in a local setting and its present time. Having the GPS did more than legitimize the sailing directions, it elevated the local knowledge and demonstrated its superiority to modern technology, illustrating how the skills used by the crew and local environmental knowledge can be implemented to help young people fully understand the place and identity of their heritage. Such pedagogical engagement may also help them better negotiate change in their own society.

For the most part, the pedagogy of intangible maritime heritage gets created as part of daily life, in port, the islands, or on the sea, and is delivered in a non-formalized learning environment. Much communication aboard the *falkuša* occurred with a minimum of explicit discourse: how and where to sit or stand on the vessel, what is an acceptable level of communication, and how one should respond when given a command. Such tacit communication has been described by Michael Eraut, UK’s leading researcher into how professionals learn in work place settings, as knowledge to be acquired in situations, which is strikingly relevant to the transmission of intangible maritime heritage. This is related as the unconscious transference of knowledge of which the user is unaware, which enables rapid, intuitive understanding or response and knowledge embedded in taken-for-granted activities, perceptions and norms (2000: 133). Each of these categories relates information in ways that could never be done in an exhibition, book, or presentation.

Tacit knowledge and intrinsic learning are vital to the transference of the type of knowledge used by sailors and fishermen at sea. The preceding examples show that teaching tacit knowledge must occur in the practitioner’s area of occupation in order to relate information, through rapid response, norms, and intuitive understanding. In his article on the ritual of boat incineration on the island of Vis, Božanić describes the power of experiences at sea and learning about the inner self. “Sailing was, from the beginning of time an adventure in which one learned what one was made of and gained knowledge of the inner self”, an experience, according to Božanić, evident from the affective expressions in the faces of sailors and fishermen (2012: 23). It is this tacit knowledge that is imparted in these moments. The calm and steady captain, whose eyes seem to look to the horizon rather than at the gaze of others on board, is not just being attentive to forces of the sea and air, but epitomizes a moral and ethical understanding of oneself as a Croatian seaman and heir to a long tradition. The idea that such ways of human being

can be impersonally preserved in a land-based museum building, and not at sea, may be an honourable dedication to the memories to great captains, but unfortunately misses the intangible and essential ties among the vessel, the captain and the crew.

The ideal of preservation shown by the recreation of the *falkuša* illustrates transitions in a vessel's functionality, from wreck to replica, in the preservation process. While the symbol of the *falkuša*, as object, did not change, the restoration of the boat's functionality increased the community's ability to teach language, craft and environmental knowledge to the younger generation. This education is most evident in the training of new *falkuša* captains. One of them, Pino Vojković, originally learned to sail from Captain Gruje and others in Komiža as a teenager aboard the Komiža-Lisboa. He later became captain of the replica Mikula and has now begun to build his own replica. His plan is to use that vessel for racing, as in the old days, but also, for tourism, as today's most viable means of support in the Croatian maritime setting. To build a business, he has reappropriated and preserved the legacy in a new economic environment.

APPROPRIATION OF FOREIGN ICONS

The examples thus far show changes in a preserved boat's functionality from a wreck to a replica through the story of the Cicibela and the Komiža-Lisboa. They demonstrate how intrinsic learning takes place and is best conveyed by an expert, on board a functional vessel in the local setting. We now turn to other ways in which function and place interact in preservation. Just like the *falkuša* with its complicated rigging and demands on the sailors, the sailing vessel Bente Dörte, built in 1929, is another authentic heritage fishing vessel. However the Bente Dörte is not originally from Croatia, but from Denmark. The example shows transitions that occur as foreign vessels are utilized for sail training programs far from their home waters, with the Bente Dörte's pedagogical program showing how this can work in practice.

Since 2009, the Bente Dörte has sailed among the Dalmatian and Kvarner archipelagos, teaching young people and tourists about the sea and history of Croatia. The ship's owner, Krešimir Vidas, is of Croatian origin, and rebuilt the vessel over six years in Sweden. After the boat was brought to Croatia, it has done a number of ecotourism and educational programs throughout the islands. That journey is itself of interest, as part of the dynamic nature of preservation and place; for not only did Vidas learn the customs of boat-building in Scandinavia and bring the knowledge to Croatia, he also brought an artefact, an authentic Danish heritage vessel, with him.

Again as a participant observer, and serving as the vessel's captain for a maritime skills program, it was possible for the author to observe several stu-

dents learning Croatian maritime heritage aboard the Danish sailing vessel. Students were taught to sail while recreating a historic cargo voyage from the Neretva Valley through the islands, carrying watermelons donated by farmers in the valley as cargo. Being on a Danish vessel, with Croatian students, teaching the names of lines, spars and sails in the Čakavian dialect³ made for an interesting juxtaposition of postmodern cultural reality. In this case, the Danish sailing vessel, the *Bente Dörte*, became a tool for Croatian students to learn, live, and enjoy their waters. While a Danish historian or sailor may see this vessel and wonder why things were not done a particular way or sailed with the Danish tradition in mind, the Croatian students were able to learn Croatian seamanship and intangible heritage through active participation in on-water programs. The Čakavian dialect is the dialect of the Croatian language used along the coast and on the islands. There are many variants of vessel-related vocabulary that can be different from island to island, and the students learned boat terms in this way. So, somewhat paradoxically, even a “foreign” vessel can be an excellent means of heritage preservation.



Photo 2: *Bente Dörte* loading watermelons in Ploče harbour
(photo by James Bender)

³ For a good description of vessel-related vocabulary and its changes, see Keber (2002).

It is not obvious to casual observers that the vessel is from the North Sea. However, the astute sailor would see that its sheer straight bow and high bulwarks are there to protect the fishermen in big seas, large waves, and strong winds common in northern Europe. Here again, functionality is key to the ability to transmit intangible heritage. If the Bente Dörte was not functional and just served as an object, an item from a distant land, it would be of little use in training or fostering an interest in the skill, the stories and other intangible themes surrounding the craft. The functionality of the vessel, as a stable and spacious melon cargo carrier, provided the platform for this type of education. The appropriation of the object allowed for the transmission of heritage through the actions performed.



Photo 3: A young cadet confidently steers Bente Dörte just after dawn on the way to the Neretva Valley (photo by James Bender)

With these two examples of functional watercraft, the Bente Dörte and the Komiža-Lisboa, several parallel motifs occur. The recreation of historic voyages expressed aspects of intangible heritage that would have otherwise remained hidden. The role of on-board education was critical to the transmis-

sion of knowledge, with all crew members being participants and not only observers. Both vessels were piloted based on teamwork and provided the platform for the accumulation of skills and crafts needed to perform sailing manoeuvres. The experiential education of being underway on a magnificent heritage vessel regardless of nationality enabled lessons which young sailors may never even have learned through intrinsic learning.

The value of the experience for the participants may be seen through increased self-esteem and an appreciation for the environment in which the voyage takes place. A possible research agenda therefore could include changes in self- and environmental efficacy in the participants, in relation to the authenticity of the experience and the level of intangible transmission that occurs. Sailing aboard a heritage vessel, within its historic locality and with a master of that lineage, provides an experience that honours the lineage and the indigenous knowledge that has accumulated in that place. The experience strengthened intergenerational bonds in the community through the preservation of valuable environmental and technical oral tradition, which are a measurable outcome of such experiential learning.

ON PLACE AND FUNCTION OF HERITAGE VESSELS

As indicated in the introduction, two characteristics are central to the community status of a vessel and the opportunities it provides for a younger generation to learn about the cultural and ecological environment in which they reside: these are the vessels' functionality and its cultural context or "place". These two terms summarize the vessel's role in the maritime society, relevant to the methods for preservation. In comparison, the exhibition of coastal craft in the Technical Museum in the nation's capital, Zagreb, does little to preserve intangible heritage, while the presentation of the *Cicibela* in *Komiža* helps to preserve identity, and serves as a reminder and record of the past for local people to use. The vessel still falls short in that it does not convey the tacit knowledge accumulated in a non-traditional learning environment. Changes in place orient the vessel to its cultural heritage, but will vary depending on how the vessel and the "exhibition" venue are coordinated. The *Bente Dörte* example is of a functional heritage vessel far from home, nonetheless serving in Croatia as a training ground for the Croatian heritage. In the case of Captain Gruje and Pino Vojković, the young apprentice and now captain, heritage was preserved as part of the new captain's economic reality of contemporary Croatian maritime tourism. No simple formula should be expected for preservation outcomes because of the ways in which place and function may merge in heritage preservation.

The remarkable narrative of the rebirth of the *falkuša* exemplifies how communities can facilitate these transitions, with restorations and replicas erected from wrecks or historical memories. As the derelict vessel becomes understood and as a restoration project or a model becomes a working replica, new life is brought to the participating group through acts of recreation. The heritage object comes into being as attendant stories, customs and rituals get utilized for the vessel's rebirth into the community. Conversely, as an aging boat becomes idle, or the heritage craft is removed from its local environment, opportunities to use the vessel for education or other programs are missed. Preservation of function and place is also a dynamic process, and may progress or decline.

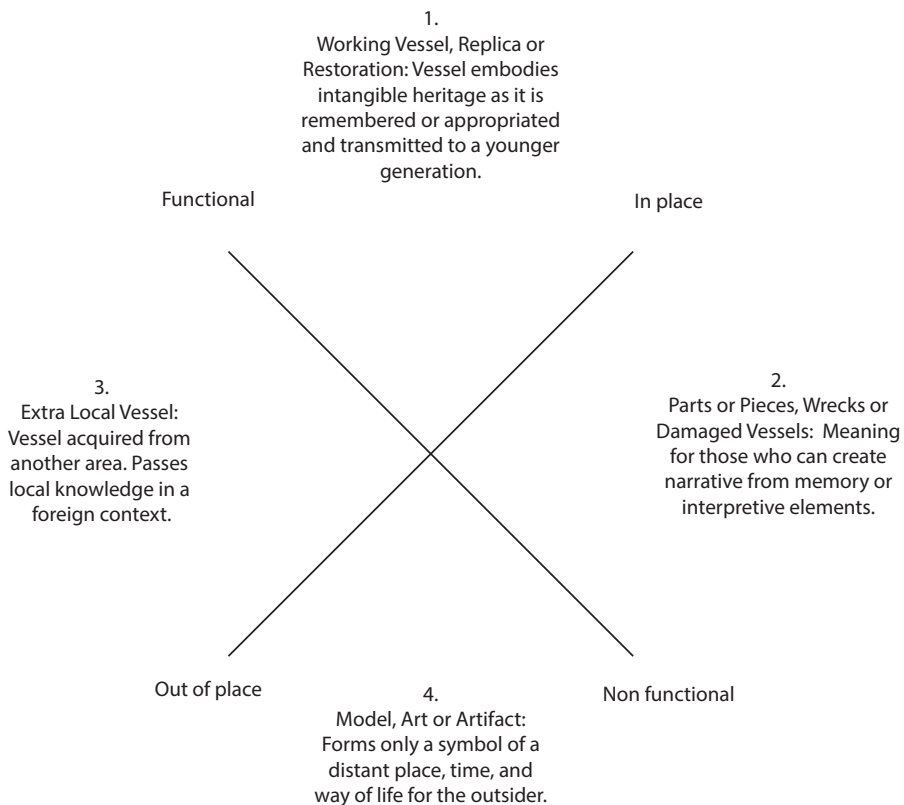


Figure 1: Adapted from Clifford (1988) art – culture system

These transitions can be understood by appropriating a semiotic, or symbolic, framework to visually delineate how local watercraft play different community roles and preserve intangible heritage. Using Algirdas Greimas's notion of a semiotic square (Figure 1), the two key terms, function and place, are placed along with their opposites. This means that a vessel may be considered as *functional* or *non-functional*, and *in place* or *out of place*. For preservation purposes, the square summarizes the several ways in which function and place interact both in reality and in terms of their symbolic meanings. As the vessel is seen by community members and preservationists as "residing" in one quadrant or the other, from "functional, in place" to "non-functional, out of place", the perceived relationships change, along with cultural meanings and intangible transmission for the group to which the vessel belongs. The orientation of the vessel within the framework is delineated vertically, with the highest level of intangible transmission occurring on heritage vessels when ideally operated in their home waters. In contrast, vessels forfeited though idleness create missed opportunities that retard heritage preservation objectives.

CHALLENGES AND THE FUTURE OF VESSEL PRESERVATION

The monetary and human resources required to build even a small locally-made boat are immense, with the costs reaching over twenty-thousand euros. Once the building process is complete, another economic level of preservation is introduced, including maintenance, upkeep, storage, training skilled operators, and the creation of opportunities for young people to learn vessel sailing and maintenance skills. Those activities may be as simple as taking friends or family out for the afternoon paid for by family budgets, or more substantive activities like those created by community organizations relying on agency funding. Preservationist skills therefore include establishing nonprofits, grant writing, and youth development, all of which may be difficult for aging fisherman and boat builders to acquire. Creating momentum to plan such projects also requires charismatic vessel representatives who speak for the project and how it serves cultural preservation. Until recently, vessel preservation and community engagement in maritime activities remained just out of the scope of most municipalities, and regional or national funds for vessel preservation are still rare or non-existent.

One place where the creation of a programmatic framework supports local boats is on and around the island of Murter in central Dalmatia. Found here is a large contingent of traditional sailing craft, with the island being home to many small boat shops and wooden boat shipyards. Each year the *Latinsko*

*'idro*⁴ Regatta attracts nearly 100 wooden lateen rigged sailing craft from the surrounding islands for the festival of St. Michael. The group proclaims,

Latinsko 'idro is not a boat, not a regatta, not a tourist fest... *Latinsko 'idro* is a reminder of a lifestyle and of the spiritual world. *Latinsko 'idro* is a synthesis of all the actions and methods, knowledge and crafts, all the sea skills and testing, of spirit and believing, of everything intertwined in this area.⁵



Photo 4: *Gajeta* and *leut* battle to the mark during the *Latinsko 'idro* Regatta (photo by Mladen Ščerbe)

This heritage tradition has found its way into the modern era through a regatta, a festival, an action, and involving the participation of seaworthy functioning craft in the region where they were traditionally used. Again, place and function are aligned to give structure to intangible transmission.

The community-building work done by the *Latinsko 'idro* organization has inspired several other regattas locally and regionally. Because the functional-

⁴ *Latinsko 'idro* is a phonetic spelling of the term *latinsko jedro* which means lateen rigged sail, or “sailing boat” pronounced in the local dialect, emphasizing locality, and identity of the boats and racers through pronunciation.

⁵ Šibenik Tourist Board “Regatta Latinsko Idro Murter September” Available at: <http://www.sibenikregion.com/en/manifestacije-rss-en/438-regatta-latinsko-idro-murter-september> (accessed 15 November 2014).

ity and cultural context are intact, the vessel serves as the main conduit of transmission of intangible maritime heritage. Work needed to prepare the vessels and crews is passed down generationally, supporting a relatively large local economy of sailors, boat builders and fishermen. In Murter, there are as many as eight shipyards and additional small boatbuilding shops, as well as riggers, and even blacksmiths. Aided by the economic benefits of regional synergies, these activities jointly support the large fleet of *gajeta* and *leut* that frequent the islands. In turn, the local economic value of the boats maintains occupations associated with the craft and the intangible heritage of the community.

Such a process is not easy to develop or maintain. To preserve a large fleet of heritage vessels requires a great deal of social and economic capital. While the regatta is a focus for owners, and much preparation goes into boat preparations, many owners struggle to find the money needed to maintain their boats. Presently, the Croatian economic situation is bleak, and for many, especially young people, boats are not the economic tools they used to be. Fish stocks seem to dwindle and owners with heritage vessels have not yet been able to catch the eye of the tourists that come to the islands in the summer. In past years, local vessels were used to carry goods and people to and from the Kornati archipelago, an area primarily used for agriculture and fishing grounds near the island of Murter. People in the islands made their living from fishing and caring for sheep and olives. Today, for some island residents, annual income is derived from tourism through restaurants, apartment rental, and modern boat charter. Reduction in fish stocks, relative abundance, and other environmental factors have also changed the dynamics of maritime occupations.

Recent policy changes have also affected island communities. Over the past two decades the Kornati archipelago has come under the jurisdiction of the National Parks, and the new designation and management created changes in the lives and the livelihood of the inhabitants. In 2012, National Park staff made fishing illegal within park boundaries, threatening the basic survival of the island communities.⁶ An appeal was made, citing basic human rights to acquire food, and the ban was lifted. This action shows the National Parks staff's detachment from the local communities they govern. While the law may have been well-intentioned, and may have targeted larger boats that fish for the restaurants, many subsistence fishermen were affected. Economic change in what people can do to make a living, and policy change as to what is allowed in the National Park boundaries, can result in a loss of functionality. Without purpose in the community or in coastal society, the

⁶ Ministry of Environmental and Nature Protection, (2012). "Announcement". Available at: <http://www.mzoip.hr/default.aspx?id=12984> (accessed 15 December 2013).

vessel is vulnerable to change. As time goes on, the *gajeta*, a heritage craft with a continuous lineage dating back hundreds of years may not disappear, but possibly, without protection, it will be changed into a symbol of what it used to be. It could become an exhibition for the national park or a static demonstration to be shown to visitors or as a brand for regional tourism. These are some of the forms the vessel could take if change is made to the object and its functionality is removed.

More generally, *Parks and Peoples: the Social Impacts of Protected Areas* by West, Igoe, and Brockington, chronicles over 20 years of studies on the demarcation of land and marine-protected areas, and how communities must adapt their uses to newly-designated categories. While direct displacement is not often explicit in the founding of the park, and may create more land for subsistence activities and social needs, restriction in other areas such as hunting, grazing, and fishing activities may lead to “conflict, economic loss, and destroy local land tenure systems” (2006: 259).

Challenges that threaten the existence of community economic structures also threaten the survival and the associated objects and intangible heritage needed to preserve them, including watercraft activities. The *gajeta* is the symbol of Murter, and its picture is ubiquitous as a brand for local restaurants, apartments, and other tourist venues. The image of the lateen rigged sailing vessel appears on signs, cards and brochures of the island, however little support is given for the difficult task of maintaining and preserving heritage vessels. The boat itself is also a fully functional vessel used by family members to transport goods and gather food on the land on the islands. In order to preserve the heritage of the community, including its consumer “branding”, community value must be placed on active participation of on-water activities that engage youth and otherwise facilitate transmission of cultural and environmental knowledge.

Preparing for change should come on the local and regional levels. Networks supporting local vessels, which have worked successfully in other areas, could become a source for the tourist enterprise. In China, for example, heritage preservation accomplished through economically viable cultural tourism is now a significant strategy. Li Wei cites five development strategies that preserve intangible heritage and help local economic development: festivity development, hands-on experience model, central zone model, industrial development, and collective representation (2013: 45). Each of these strategies adds value to the community. The *Latinsko 'idro* regatta already uses festivity development, but other models can be implemented. For example, the community may create a hands-on experience for tourists to sail or learn about the vessels or designate a central place to go to see heritage vessels in the harbour or on the *riva*, the main waterfront street, as an attraction. To gain political support, such activities may be described,

as Wei puts it, as “industrial development” and explain the marketing of intangible heritage as an “emergent cultural industry” (ibid.). To keep such practical methods from displacing preservation goals, Wei depicts a museum for intangible culture that is not based on passive objectification of objects but on active participation and community involvement. Each of these methods potentially helps to preserve and increase heritage value as they are shared with the outsider. Here again we can see the dynamic of place and function, now in the context of preservation policy and its economics. In Murter, much of the groundwork for this has already been done, and similar activities, tailored to their local contexts, should be useful elsewhere along the Croatian coast.

CONCLUSION

Nautical heritage in Croatia remains an immensely rich part of the coastal life. Stories, songs, customs and ritual, as well as work ethic and an embodiment of cultural identity often accompany the vessels that have historically been used along the coast. In Croatia, as in many other parts of the world, cultural traditions and historic objects are in danger of being lost or forgotten. This occurs for many reasons, including the lack of resources, the disinterest of the younger generation, and changes in local technology and economies. Through a series of examples, we’ve argued that the interplay between material vessels and immaterial skills essential to their use is a central feature of heritage preservation. The material side includes tools and associated devices for fishing or other functional tasks, and the immaterial side includes methods or knowledge involving navigation, seasonal patterns, ecological and environmental relationships, weather lore and so forth. This dual perspective on heritage preservation creates a depth of knowledge rooted in the community and grown through direct intergenerational education. The cultural dependence of the tangible and intangible nautical heritage implies that historic maritime objects and traditions have to exist side by side. As a strategic concern, the vessels’ cultural relevance and meaning is changed when its functionality shifts from a working vessel to a museum artefact, from functional use to a non-functional aestheticism, or from the context within the local culture to the object’s removal to a place of arbitrary locality. The way in which these observations meld with current preservation strategies, including those of UNESCO discussed earlier, reveals challenges in economic and value identification for communities that have heritage vessels and struggle to keep them up without the aid of government agency participation.

In conclusion, the relationship of public policy to the realities of maritime life may not be easy to reconcile. While demands on fishing and ecological habitat increase, so does economic pressure. Most commonly, tourism is identified as the common thread between groups and public agencies, and between ecological and economic needs. However, the commodification of intangible heritage is not without its issues. Besides the basic challenges of how to treat and sell culture to outsiders, there is a further dimension that exists in the dynamics and change that occurs when culture is marketed, since “not only can tourism affect a community’s daily life patterns and habits, it can induce a set of dynamics that will alter the social construction of the community” (George 2013: 282). An important future topic is to explore this intersection of Croatian culture, tourism and the roles of community inclusion in environmental and economic policy decisions and planning.

Arguably, without a consolidation of priorities, preservation of intangible heritage may be missed in the list of concerns for agencies and their community partners. To create programs that preserve heritage vessels, several subtle shifts must occur. First, the value of these objects needs to be recognized; not solely for the symbolic value of the icon of the vessel, but for the intrinsic value of the medium of on-water education and other active forms of cultural preservation in coastal communities. Secondly, the preservation of these vessels must be made a priority, with support to local stakeholders to access program funds, possibly in ways that historic building preservation is made possible for families living in traditional houses. Similar programs exist for restoration of some historic landmarks, such as *spomenička renta* (monument annuity), which is a tax used to support the preservation of “immovable” cultural heritage such as buildings and monuments found in many municipalities. The same process of validation, protection and financing could be applied to “movable” and “intangible” heritage along the coast.⁷ Lastly, because Croatia has one of the largest and most intact heritage watercraft collections in the Mediterranean, the necessity of its survival will be a source of pride for all countrymen and European citizens as well. The current risk to maritime heritage is that each day, many locally-built craft fall into disuse, and with idleness comes a loss of heritage, which, like the material vessel, cannot be rebuilt from rotten timbers. However, if shifts in preservation policies suggested here occur, the future of Croatia’s maritime fleet, and its historic preservation, will have more than a fighting chance.

⁷ From the Croatian Chamber of Trades and Crafts. Available at: http://infos.hok.hr/faq/c_porezi_i_carine/c9_spomenicka_renta/ (accessed 1 February 2014).

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NEMATERIJALNA MARITIMNA BAŠTINA: PEDAGOGIJA FUNKCIONALNOG OČUVANJA

SAŽETAK

Tradicijski brod na jedra sugestivan je i bezvremeni simbol podjednako za ljude s mora i kopna. U Hrvatskoj su povijesni ribarski brod, brod za prijevoz tereta i druge vrste brodova važni podsjetnici na povezanost ljudi s morem. U pomorskim, otočkim i priobalnim zajednicama ta je povezanost naročito snažna, a brod je često i više od simbola: on je sredstvo kojim se kulturna baština prenosi mlađim generacijama.

Poznavanje lokalnoga životnog prostora tijekom stoljeća dovelo je do inovacija u dizajnu brodova, u skladu s posebnim životnim uvjetima i funkcijama samog broda (ribarenje ili prijevoz tereta). Smještaj broda u luci i njegov radni kontekst oblikuju praktično i kulturno "mjesto", gdje funkcionalne uloge broda postaju načinima za prenošenje nematerijalnoga znanja o njegovu dizajnu i upotrebi. Oslanjajući se na etnografsku naraciju, ovaj rad daje okvir za razumijevanje pedagogije mjesta i funkcije koja se koristi na primjeru tradicijskih brodova te nudi uvid u izazove s kojima se susreću oni koji su izravno uključeni u očuvanje maritimne baštine.

Ključne riječi: nematerijalna baština, maritimna baština, pedagogija, obrazovanje