

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

LOST AND TRANSFORMED CITIES: A digital perspective
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Friday 18 November

Room 2 Multiusos 3 – Building I&D, 14:45 – 15:00

The “old” new online platforms and participatory dynamics in “Heritage making”: from a specific manifestation/element to the city as a whole

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Cultural Heritage is not and must not be assumed or defined as History, although it maintains a notion of historic record, or as in a free translation of ALMEIDA (1993: 414): “(...) [Heritage] only truly is, when it [the community] is aware of and assumes Heritage as such”. In that sense, the models and processes of participatory dynamics are best suited to analyze and intervene within and regarding Heritage.

The Viseu’s Feira de S. Mateus [hereforth FSM] research project can be an example of what was stated. FSM is an annual fair that dates back to the late fourteenth century and has come to adapt and adopt new dimensions throughout the times. Nevertheless, every new edition regular complaints and critics stated that it no longer was “the old FSM”. In 2015 one of the first actions was to create a “mapping”, by asking participants to mark where in the FSM they used to go and what was there, also what time frame they were referring to (and how old they were at the time). It resulted in a 100% reference to childhood, when that was their first contact with the FSM. The “old FSM” was mostly the FSM each remembered as a child or youngster. But, the one they remembered: not the one that had in fact occurred (as can be shown by documental records).

The next step was to create a platform that allowed for multiple remembrances could be inserted and complemented with factual or recorded information. That was achieved by use of a Wiki (that although recent is “intuitive” enough for the general info-included audience). By this, the results were even more surprising: each, maintained vivid memories of what was lived and experienced by them and close relatives, “missing out” on every other dimension of the FSM.

On another hand, memories of the FSM intertwined with Viseu’s territory and its agents: by recording FSM, they recorded the city.

Can digital citizenship related to Heritage be something different than “Heritage making” or should we assume the bias and strive to complement it?

Keywords:

Heritage; “Heritage Making”; Participatory Dynamics; Online Platforms; FSM