

THE TRANSFORMATIONS OF CULTURE INTO HERITAGE

Commodification, Mediatization, Governmentalization, Protection

We have the pleasure to invite members of the working group and all other scholars interested in the subject to our forthcoming workshop on the transformations of culture into heritage, in Bergen, Norway. A significant aspect of contemporary culture is the conversion of (tacit) cultural practices into explicit heritage. Practices once given as lived experience, are being increasingly raised to the level of awareness through discourses and signs marking out elements of culture – and in some cases parts of nature as well - as heritage. But how do these processes come about, and how can we describe and understand them within the perspectives of cultural studies?

We propose four areas where the problematic of the transformation of culture (and nature) into heritage can be studied:

- 1) Commodification; how do commercialization, tourism, branding of products, «symbolic production» affect heritage processes?
- 2) Mediatization; how do images or representations of culture in various media affect understandings of heritage?
- 3) Governmentalization; how do political strategies and interests, antiquarian organizations and government (on different levels) regulate cultural practices towards or against 'heritage'?"
- 4) Protection; in what sense is natural heritage spoken about as something concerning human action, and how is protective measures related to natural parks, endangered animals or plants, and natural formations, justified within heritage discourses?