Dr. Thorolf Lipp
Cultural Anthropologist & Filmmaker
Berlin, Germany

Doing or Deconstructing
Intangible Cultural Heritage

Without doubt, a critical review of concepts of Intangible Heritage is needed. Obviously, economic and commercial considerations weigh heavily on the dissemination of cultural events, on the choice of conservation projects and on the reinvention of ceremonial practices. Hence, the notion, that the concept of "heritage" or "patrimony" is per se ambivalent is certainly true.

It is naiv, also. Cultural memory does never automatically come into being. It is always shaped by the (social, political and economical etc.) will of people and institutions. To me it seems that basic findings of both Visual Anthropology as well as of the "Doing Culture" debate suggest that playing an active and constructive role in this process is at least as important as trying to deconstruct the concept of intangible heritage *as such* by revealing inevitable economic interests of certain groups. Put it simple: the meaning of heritage depends on the actions of people.

The talk will explore some key ideas for desirable future actions in dealing with the concept of defining and disseminating immaterial heritage from an anthropological perspective.

Archiving and digitizing Intangible Cultural Heritage is an intricate task because these cultural expressions do not exist *as such.* They need to be mediated to come into being. Naturally, Intangible Heritage is mediated by humans acting as mediums. It is with the aid of audiovisual means, however, that cultural expressions are enabled to transcend space and time and become part of global cultural memory.

I would like to present some thoughts about questions pertaining to picturing Intangible Heritage. I stress that there is a need to move away from the classical discourse on ethnographic film and its ever present idea of representing culture as a master narrative. Instead we need to take into account todays and tomorrrows internet technology as the most powerful tool for disseminating and archiving cultural expressions. Key ideas for desirable future actions are multivocality and multisitedness, empowerement and experiment, cooperation and co-production.