

**UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITES:
WAYS OF PRESENTING & INTERPRETING THE PAST
As seen in: Kutná Hora, Hiroshima and Villa Romana del Casale,
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Linda Kovářová graduated in History and Ethnology at the Faculty of Arts of the Charles University, obtained her MA, and then in October 2009 she joined the Doctoral studies in the field of History - General History. Her research project for doctoral studies was focused on the perception and representation of the historical and cultural heritage registered on the UNESCO World Heritage List in various civilization and cultural environments. The representative strategy and tactics of the three towns associated with such registration were studied in the example of Kutná Hora, Hiroshima and Villa Romana del Casale.

Linda Kovářová successfully completed all the required diplomas during her doctoral studies, she completed a two-year study stay in Japan, which she devoted to studies of language and research for her dissertation – second case study, and a six-month "Erasmus Placement" at the University of Catania (Sicily), where she collected the material for another part of her dissertation – the third case study.


During her Master's and Postgraduate studies, she participated in a wider team that helped organize international conferences (the CLIOHRES.net Plenary Meeting for 180 participants in November 2009, an international conference of the European Association for Urban History for 600 participants in September 2012). She was a team member in a research project “Concepts of space in the historical perspective” that resulted in the publication of collective monograph. Her engagement has grown in intensity over the years and has changed qualitatively. She became more active in presentation of her research and offered to organize successful sessions focused on UNESCO heritage at international conferences of European Association for Urban History. Linda has accomplished two years course of heritage protection course at National Heritage Institute, speaker at conferences devoted to heritage studies in Třebíč and Catania (AISU), member of Czech Society for Urban Studies. In the past two years she carried interdisciplinary applied research specialist for the ESF projects on regional development in anthropological research in the framework of membership in an NGO Anthropictures (Independent anthropological studio), whose aim is not only to study peripheral / excluded regions but also to help seek way out to the people who live in them and offer them inspiration and incentives to motivate development strategies. In these projects she gained the opportunity to apply gained theoretical knowledge in the field.

I have been working with Linda for about 10 years, she has always been one of my most active and exploratory students. Highly cultivated, communicative, excellent discussant, team builder and team worker, very well linguistically equipped, perceptive. Doctoral Dissertation presented for defense rests methodologically on the conceptualization of the memory of Maurice Halbwachs and Jan Assmann and the places of memory of Pierre Nora. On the other hand, it is based on UNESCO-inspired research, the concept of World Cultural Heritage, which must represent authentic extraordinary universal values with unbroken integrity. The author builds on a relatively extensive literature on UNESCO's cultural heritage and focuses on aspects that arise for local and regional administration from the simple fact of ownership of such a classified monument in its cadaster. It monitors, in selected cases, how the UNESCO monument is perceived and presented locally. She analysis how historical interpretation is used. What relationship is reflected in the presentation of the monument and what impact it has on its use in the tourist industry.

The thesis is divided into two parts. A theoretical study in the first part of the dissertation devoted to issues of memory, history and cultural heritage in the context of discourse analysis whose development is influenced by ICOMOS and UNESCO. In the second part, there are three empirical studies to explore ways of presenting UNESCO sites and their interactions with the public in their own space and exposure to the general public. The author has chosen three examples of UNESCO monuments of a different nature and a different cultural / civilization circuit. Kutná Hora as perhaps the most common type of the object enlisted in the first years of the existence of the WHL - a historic city whose period of greatest prosperity lies in medieval period. Villa Romana del Casale as an ancient residence revealed by archaeological research. The Genbaku Dome in Hiroshima, a reminder of the human tragedy, and the fight against Nazism on a global scale, belongs to the records that point to the political dimension of the project. Three case studies are the basis for a symmetrically conceived analysis that leads to conclusive comparative chapter which plays with several spatial scales and forms of heritage interpretation and representation to the local community and wider international public.

The thesis is interesting methodologically, well written, agreeable to read, and satisfies formal requirements. I fully agree with its submission and support it for successful defense.

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