CULTURAL HERITAGE AND HISTORICAL IDENTITY

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Abstract: Starting from, David Lowenthal's assertion that "heritage interprets the past," patrimony has, over time, been the subject of a double evolution; on the one hand, we can talk about an extension that covers all cultural goods today and on the other hand there is an identification of the actors and institutions that manage this cultural heritage (public institutions, private associations, etc.).
The first aspect concerns the progressive extension of the concept of cultural heritage in its various manifestations, this extension being marked by the inclusion of cultural assets in material and immaterial cultural patrimony. However, the change with the greatest implications is the assertion of what constitutes a "cultural heritage" at a given historical moment. Thus, it is necessary to attribute to heritage an authentic value, in this light, this becoming the first representation we could say eloquent to humanity and extrapolating, it can become a genuine social construction of the community that interprets it and preserves it as a living testimony of consciousness its collective and why not common.

Keywords: Cultural material patrimony, Immaterial cultural heritage, historical identity, UNESCO, The Charter from Venezia

Introductory Note

The prerequisite for our scientific approach is rooted in the idea that culture, especially in its natural, material and non-material heritage, is configured as a fundamental resource and a lever for sustainable development. Thus, the present study aims to address "common concerns" as regards the protection of cultural heritage by focusing on the risks to the future, on the role of the international economy and on the best known definition of sustainable development promoted by the European Union.

For the reasons mentioned above, cultural and natural heritage needs to be identified in the contemporary age as an active function in collective life. It must be said that its values, which are the testimonies of the past - and its natural beauty - are integrated into a single policy. Indeed, the cultural and natural heritage inevitably refers to two concepts that represent the main thematic lines of this study. The first concept is "valorisation" of cultural heritage, which means, therefore, the commitment of communities to value patrimony, putting it in the position of expressing its qualities and functions, recognizing it as an appropriate role; the other important word is "protecting or protecting cultural heritage," which embodies the three concepts of "protection"[1].

Conservation, valorisation, and the protection of cultural goods refer not only to their material integrity but also to their function and significance for the communities in which they are. In addition, the heritage is what we decide is from the past expressing a historical identity, attributing to it cultural and natural elements of special value, helping us better distinguish now and in the future a major objective in regarding its protection[2].

[1] Smith R Craufurd, *Culture and European Union Law,* Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2004, p. 1.
[2] E. Psychogiopoulou, *The Integration of Cultural Considerations in EU Law and Policies,* Editura Brill, 2007, p. 3.

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1. The concept of cultural heritage

It is important to focus on the current consideration of cultural heritage, which becomes a concept that is the result of a long historical, political and ideological reflection in the world and in Europe. Today's attention to the cultural heritage and the extension of what can be considered as such is given by the fact that, in a functionalist perspective, these attitudes are also related to the renewal of the society for which the cultural heritage acquires important meanings, environment, culture, tradition, identity - in a new project, from which economic, cultural and social development is expected[3].

As Zerbi writes[4], the term "patrimony" expresses well this action of transforming the inherited cultural heritage into a developmental potential.Such a concept of cultural heritage inevitably refers to two concepts which are the main thematic lines. The first concept is "valorisation", which therefore means community commitment to value heritage, putting it in the position of expressing its qualities and functions, recognizing an appropriate role.

It is well known that UNESCO[5] has provided a good framework for the construction and implementation of the Management Plan of some archaeological sites included in the World Heritage List of Humanities - suggesting precise guidelines for World Heritage Management, sustainable development in Romania where cultural heritage is both objective and at the same time a planning tool "able to protect the territory as well as to organize it and give it historical significance"[6] by belonging to a model of development based on the close link between heritage and local identity, between the value of culture and territory and socio-economic regeneration, between tradition and innovation. In Europe, an approach is emerging where local territory and communities, with their history, traditions and identity, are a competitive value difficult to reproduce[7].

The word "patrimony" indicates a set of objects, knowledge, memories that are important to an individual or group. Thus, there are local communities that have symbolic places, sites and reference points loaded with cultural values that are assigned to them. "Heritage does not exist in a state of nature," says Jacques Mathieu[8], is "The result of a selection process, what is called an inheritance deriving from a decision, from a desire for individual and collective sensitivity, from the need to preserve , and cultural patrimonial analysis that have the effect of highlighting values. It can also be said that the heritage is the result of a choice, a selection of facts exploited by social memory, a set of material and immaterial elements and facts, from the cultural order, loaded with multiple meanings, collective dimension and passed from generation to generation : what has been transmitted, both in the material dimension and in the symbolic way, what passed through the various tests of the next stage is already the subject of memory selection[9].

M. Colardelle in his essay on the constitution of the cultural patrimony[10], explains how the birth of heritage is generally characterized by three stages: the first, spontaneous, is the one in which society produces what it needs;

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[3]Ion Diaconu, *Cultura şi drepturile omului. Identitate. Diversitate. Multiculturalsim*, Bucureşti, Editura Pro Universitaria, 2012, p. 21.

[4] M.C. Zerbi, (a cura di), *Il paesaggio rurale: un approccio patrimoniale*, Giappichelli Editore, Torino, 2007.

[5] UNESCO, *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*, art. 49, p. 24. Aggiornato a Luglio 2013. http://whc.unesco.org/pg.cfm?cid=57.

[6] M. Carta., *L'armatura culturale del territorio. Il patrimonio culturale come matrice di identità e strumento di sviluppo*, Franco Angeli, Milano, 1999.

[7] Nicolas Mezghani, M. Cornu, *Interet culturel et mondialisation*, Paris, Editura L Hartmattan, 2004, p. 137.

[8] Jacques Mathieu, *Confidence d,un Historien*, Quebec, 2012.

[9] Pierre L. Frier, *Droit du patrimoine culturel*, Paris, Editura PUF, 1997, p. 28.

[10] M. Caldarella, "Les acteurs de la constitution du patrimoine", in Le Goff J. (sous la présidence de), *Patrimoine et passions identitaires, Actes de Entretiens du Patrimoine*, Théatre National de Chaillot, Paris, 6- 7 et 8 janvier, 1997, Paris, Editions du Patrimoine, Fayard, p. 125.

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- the second is to become aware of the importance of cultural heritage;
- the third step is where the object or cultural object has acquired an active status justifying its collective management status.

Cultural goods are thus loaded with significant value at the end of the adoption process called "credit"; this credit appears behind - and through a process of cultural interpretation. The lending procedure gives rise to a "patrimonial" phenomenon. It is the transition from the second to the third phase that generates the concept of "patrimony"[11].

Therefore, patrimony does not exist a priori. The set of assets that a generation wants to pass on to the next generation is the result of decisions, choices in the field of human production, a convention defined by Jean-Michel Leniaud[12], or, as we are reminded, Pascal Ory[13], a social contract in a particular company, and a specific one, object to which an interest, if not universal, is at least collectively recognized.

It follows that when this interest is no longer shared, its patrimony status through preservation and subsequent safeguard can be challenged. As a result, good culture becomes part of the patrimony when it loses its value of use and acquires historical value. This initial moment is based on certain criteria that constitute a body of values that have gradually established, generation by generation. From these values we can identify the scientific value, on the basis of which a documentary interest is recognized for the desired object and hence becomes an instrument of knowledge; In other words, the cultural good turns into a communication tool. It follows that, in addition to being the result of a variable concept resulting from a cumulative change of cultural background and historical context, cultural heritage is the result of a journey involving what needs to be defined "Heritage interpretation[14] .

2. The broad concept of cultural heritage

In this context, the phenomenon of "capitalization" highlights the attitude by which conservation of heritage aims to protect the cultural heritage from the effects of time. This balance sheet changes from one country to another because the selection process is strongly conditioned by history and time changing its values and features. According to Jacques Rigaurd[15], in order to fully understand the evolution of the concepts of the correct perception of the protection of the cultural patrimony, it must be taken into account that this evolution is inseparable from the historical, social and cultural dimension of the peoples and it is necessary to contextualize and take into account the evolution itself of the concept of culture, which inevitably involves reassessing asset selection criteria[16].

The term "cultural heritage" means the sum of material and immaterial assets representing the expression of the culture of a particular community. Only this seemingly simple definition hides in fact a long debate that has taken place over time among scholars around the world about defining the boundaries of building the cultural "patrimony", what can and should be included in this definition and what remains of it, besides the difficulties of establishing, in an unequivocal and unambiguous manner, the concept of "Culture" itself[17].

The common idea of cultural values has always been that different expressions of community culture must be taught to future generations. Thus it becomes the basis or

[11] *Ibidem.*
[12] J. M., Leniaud , *L'utopie francaise, Mengès*, Paris, p. 5.
[13] P. Ory, "De la nécessité du patri moine, in Ory P. (sous la direction de), *De l'utilité du patrimoine: actes des colloques de la Direction du patrimoine*, Paris, Ministère de la Culture, p. 239.
[14] C. Bories, *Le patrimoine cultural en droit international*, Paris, Editura, A Pedone, 2011, p. 59.
[15] J. Rigaud , "Patrimoine, évolution culturelle. L'utilisation des monuments historiques", *Le Monuments historiques*, n. 5, p. 6.
[16] *Ibidem.*
[17] Pierre L. Frier, *op.cit*, p. 28.

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foundation of many agreements, documents, resolutions of international bodies on cultural heritage preservation, and whose analysis shows a progressive extension of the limits of the concept of cultural heritage[18].

A real significance are the concepts enunciated in the Charter of Venice[19]regarding the preservation or protection of cultural heritage, where it is emphasized that the protection of the monumental heritage creates conditions of economic and social development, because it is able to consolidate the use of the cultural patrimony compatible with tourist activity[20].

In 1972, UNESCO in the World Cultural and Natural Convention defines "cultural heritage"; this being composed of: "monuments: architectural works, plastic or monumental paintings, elements or archaeological structures, inscriptions, caves and groups of valuable items universally exceptional with a historical, artistic or scientific aspect[21];

- agglomerations: isolated or united building blocks which, for architecture, or unit landscape integration has an exceptional universal value in terms of history, artistic or scientific;

-locals: human works or conjugated works of man and nature, as well as areas, including archaeological sites of exceptional universal value, historical and an esthetic ethnological or anthropological ". Similarly, it defines "natural heritage";

- "natural monuments consisting of physical and biological formations or groups of such universally valuable training, aesthetic or scientifically exceptional;

- Geological and physiographic formations and strictly limited constituent areas habitat of animal species and plants threatened by exceptional universal value from a scientific or conservative point of view;

- natural sites or natural areas strictly limited to an exceptional universal value from the scientific, conservative or aesthetic aspect[22].

Over time, public bodies responsible for protection and conservation cultural heritage, have begun to expand their interest and range of actions both for the natural heritage, intended as an intrinsic element of the culture of a community, as well as for the intangible cultural patrimony[23].

In fact, "the next step is to be aware of the importance of preserving cultural assets that cannot be based on the intrinsic quality of work, but must be based on the ability to recognize aesthetic, historical, scientific, and social values, , therefore, a task of society or community to identify the values on which to build their cultural identity In this context one can speak of a cultural heritage that has both tangible and intangible features and is therefore not only related of the physical heritage dimension "[24].

In other words, intangible cultural heritage is embodied in" practices, representations, expressions, knowledge - as well as in instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated with them - which communities, groups and individuals recognize them as part of

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[18] Francioni Così, P*rotezione internazionale del patrimonio culturale: interessi nazionali e difesa del patrimonio comune della cultura*, Milano, Collana Luiss, 2000, p. 49.

[19] The Venice Charter for the restoration and conservation of monuments and sites (International Congress of the Architects and Technicians of Monuments, May 31, 1964) is a document drawn up with the intention of fixing a code of professional standards and guidelines that constitute an international framework for to regulate the methods with which to conduct conservation and restoration interventions of monuments, artifacts architectural and historical and archaeological sites. http://www.charta-von-venedig.de/carta-di-venezia_congresso-direstauro_preambolo_italiano.html.

[20] *Ibidem.*

[21] *Unesco,* Convention on the Protection of World, Cultural and Natural Heritage of Humanity, art. 1 Paris, 1972. www.unesco.it/cni/index.php/convenzione.

[22] *Ibidem*

[23] Francioni Cosi, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

[24] M. Mazzanti , *La valutazione economica del patrimonio culturale,* Franco Angeli, Milano, 2003.

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the cultural heritage"[25]. The other, namely intangible cultural heritage, is manifested, among other things, in the following sectors: - Oral traditions and expressions, including language, as a vehicle of intangible cultural heritage; - performing arts; - social habits, ritual and festive events; - knowledge and practices related to nature and the universe; - knowledge of traditional craftsmanship[26].

In this sense, C. Shore always emphasizes the close interdependence between intangible assets and natural inheritance resulting from the UNESCO Convention, which states: "This intangible cultural patrimony transmitted from one generation to the next is in constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with the community, their nature and history, and gives them a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity"[27]. For the purposes of our research activity , it is interesting to note that UNESCO also identifies the intangible cultural heritage, strongly linked to the natural heritage, as a fundamental asset for achieving and maintaining sustainable development[28].

Conclusions

Concluding, we can say that cultural heritage is an essential element of European historical identity and is at the heart of the European project; cultural heritage is not only a means of understanding our past, but also a condition likely to help in the construction of the European project.

In other words, cultural heritage is particularly valuable to European society from a spiritual, social and environmental point of view. It is known that the Patrimony has, over time, been the subject of a dual evolutionary evolution; on the one hand, as can be seen from the present study, one can speak of an extinction, which now covers all cultural assets that are cultural patrimony, and, on the other hand, highlights the importance of the decision-makers and the institutions that manage this inheritance cultural.

Thus, it is necessary for us, to attribute to heritage an authentic value. In this light, heritage is emerging as the first eloquent representation for humankind over the years, and, extrapolating, it becomes a true social construction of the community that interprets and preserves it as a living testimony of its collective and common heritage.

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[26] *Ibidem.*
[27] C.Shore, "The cultural policies of the European Union and cultural diversity" înT.Bennett. *Differing diversities transversal study on the theme of cultural policy and cultural diversity followed by seven research position papers*, (Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing, 2001), 77.
[28] *Unesco,* Convention for the Protection ….

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