Heritage Theory

Teoría sobre el Patrimonio
On Definitions of Cultural Heritage

Prof. Dr. Jukka Jokilehto
(16 July 2008)

The definition of practices, places, objects and the various types of properties conceived as ‘heritage’ is generally considered one of the acquisitions of modern society. Indeed, the recognition of something as heritage is the fundamental condition for the protection of such properties and the basis for special care, conservation and restoration. Above all, the second half of the 20th century has been characterized by the evolution of modern conservation doctrine, which has gradually expanded to all corners of the, by now, globalized world. Definitions are found in national legislation, norms and guidelines, as well as in the international doctrine, such as the charters of ICOMOS or the recommendations of UNESCO. The purpose of this paper is to look particularly into this international doctrine, taking into account the changing definitions over time and the types of heritage that have been considered in the different periods.

In the history of the conservation of cultural heritage, one can identify periods articulated by moments of discontinuity. From the conservation point of view, the traditional continuity that characterized the different world regions from the Antiquity was subject to major changes as a result of the scientific, technological, cultural and philosophical innovations that made Europe a major reference from the 15th to the 18th centuries. The 19th century was marked by increased attention to local traditions and consequent revivals. It is a period of intense debates about restoration principles and the establishment of state protection of collections, historic objects and monuments in many countries of the world. Another major transition period was the first part of the 20th century, characterized by the two World Wars, and the emerging Modern Movement in art, architecture and urban planning. In the history of conservation, finally, the second half of the 20th century can be characterized as the period of the international conservation movement, the recognition of principles taken as universals as well as the diversity and specificity of the different cultures, two apparently contradictory notions.
Sacred places

Contrary to what is often thought, the protection and conservation of places or properties has existed well before the 18th and 19th centuries. We can identify a variety of definitions for places to be protected or managed respecting their characteristics. Traditionally, man lived in close relationship with nature, based on fear and respect. Nature and natural phenomena were associated with belief systems and myths, reflected in cultural traditions and patterns of behaviour. Places such as mountains, forests, tall trees, waterways, etc., were associated with spiritual meanings and divinities. The American aboriginals considered the entire land as sacred exclaiming (Jokilehto, 1999: 7): ‘Every part of this land is sacred to us. ... The resin that rises in the veins of the trees carries in it the past of the Red Man. ... The glittering water that moves in the streams and rivers is not only water, it is the blood of our ancestors.’

Mountains were particularly important considering their close relationship with the sky god. For example in China the five principal sacred mountains include Taishan, inscribed on UNESCO World Heritage List, which was a place of ritual visits by emperors; in Japan, Fujiyama still retains its symbolic meaning for the entire country. Symbolism associated with sacred trees or mountains could be taken as reference for the design of buildings, such as the pyramids, dagabas, pagodas and bell towers. The appreciation of nature was reflected in literary descriptions and paintings. In China, landscape painting evolved into an independent art form already by the late Tang dynasty, i.e. ninth century AD. In Europe, landscape painting developed mainly from the Italian Renaissance in the 15th and 16th centuries. In the early 18th century, the English landscape garden became a symbolic representation of mythological, literary and aesthetic aspects of nature and culture. The ‘picturesque’ quality of landscapes and ancient monuments were later integrated as one of the references for the definition of heritage in protective instruments in various countries.

Care for public ensembles and ancient monuments

Buildings and large ensembles, dedicated to cult or governors, often required efforts by many generations, such as the temple complexes in ancient Egypt. Consequently, these were respected and maintained over centuries. Not by accident, people recognized some achievements as the Seven Wonders of the [Ancient] World, though
of these only the Pyramids of Egypt are still standing. In Mesopotamia, rulers collected historic texts or objects in libraries or treasure houses. Often, builders in Antiquity included inscriptions calling for the protection of their buildings or monuments. The inscription at the monument of Bisotun, created by the Persian king Darius The Great, declares (Soheil, 2000): ‘Thou who shalt hereafter behold this inscription which I have inscribed, or these sculptures, do thou not destroy them, (but) thence onward protect them, as long as thou shalt be in good strength!’ The 14th-century Muslim politician and historian Ibn Khaldun lists various pre-Islamic monuments and ensembles, such as the ancient Parthian-Sassanian palace of Ctesiphon, as achievements that testify to the greatness of the people who built them. Indeed, such monuments were appreciated for their symbolic and identity values for the regime. Such values would often lead to protective measures in later centuries. However, in some cases, such symbolic associations could also be the cause of deliberate destruction so as to eliminate undesired memories.

In China, royal ensembles, including palaces, sanctuaries, and tombs, were managed by teams appointed for their maintenance and conservation. In India, the 9th-century building manual, Mayamata, states about renovation work on ruined temples (Silva, 2007: 207): ‘Those (temples) whose characteristics are still perceptible in their principal and secondary elements (are to be renovated) with their own materials. If they are lacking in anything or have some similar type of flaw, the sage wishing to restore them, (must proceed in such a way that) they regain their integrity and that they are pleasantly arranged (anew).’ In ancient Rome, there were several protection orders, particularly in the fourth and fifth centuries, when paganism was being replaced by Christianity. Thus in 458, Emperors Leo and Majorian gave an order to the Prefect of Rome regarding ‘beautiful ancient buildings’ (Theosodianus, 1952:553): ‘All the buildings that have been founded by the ancients as temples and as other monuments, and that were constructed for the public use or pleasure, shall not be destroyed by any person, and that it shall transpire that a judge who should decree that this be done shall be punished by the payment of fifty pounds of gold.’ Disobedience could be punished by mutilating hands.

The Italian Renaissance shows the beginnings of Western archaeological explorations, resulting in the rediscovery of the historical and aesthetic qualities of the Greek and Roman Antiquity. Soon this interest is carried over to the entire
Mediterranean region and beyond resulting eventually also in protection orders. For example, an early protection order, a papal bull of 1462, was given by Pope Pius II Piccolomini for the protection of ancient remains in Rome: ‘Cum alamam nostram urbem’. This was followed by many others, which however did not stop destruction. In fact, Raphael was one who drew the attention of the Pope on the situation (Jokilehto, 1999: 32): ‘How may popes, Holy Father, having had the same office as Your Holiness, but not the same wisdom nor the same value and greatness of spirit; how many popes – I say – have permitted the ruin and destruction of antique temples, of statues, of arches and of other structures, that were the glory of their founders?’ In 1515, Raphael was appointed the first Conservator responsible for the protection of ancient monuments in the Church State. The Latin word monumeta was referred to memorials or buildings, which carried inscriptions or were otherwise associated with a message from the past. The word, in fact, derives from the Latin verb moneo (monere), meaning ‘to remind’, ‘to admonish’, ‘to carry a message’. The Renaissance also contributed to the enjoyment of ‘beauty’ as a special quality, leading to the notion of ‘work of art’ and to the new appreciation of aesthetic qualities in objects or buildings. From this time on, there was an increasing interest in the protection of ancient monuments or sites for their historical and aesthetic values, resulting in orders by popes and other rulers, such as the Antiquities Ordinance by the king of Sweden in 1666, and gradually building up to the modern legal protection and state administration in the 19th and early 20th century.

**Enlightenment**

The Age of Enlightenment (Age des Lumières), in the eighteenth century, reveals perhaps better than any other period the difference of the Western philosophy from thinking in the rest of the world. It was a crucial period for the emerging of modernity, though it obviously was based on earlier foundations. This Age was reflected in the ideology of the American Declaration of Independence and in the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, and it was also crucial for some of the fundamental ideas related to the modern concepts of history, aesthetics, and science. The Renaissance idea of beauty evolves into ‘ideal beauty’, and the notion of the work of art is recognized in relation to a specific creative process. Through the increasing interest in history and past achievements, there emerges nostalgia for the past. All
On definitions of cultural heritage

these elements culminate in the desire to establish a proper framework for the protection and safeguarding of the cultural heritage, which are further developed in the 19th century.

The French Revolution, in the last decade of the 18th century, gave the first synthesis for the definitions of cultural heritage. It was a period of destruction but also of creative thinking. The intention was to look for revenge by annihilating the properties by former rulers. Without a doubt much damage was caused to ancient monasteries, churches, royal and noble residences, and important treasures were dispersed to other countries. At the same time, however, a new consciousness emerged resulting in the recognition of the past works of art, history and science, motivated particularly by their educational value and the issue of prestige. In 1794, the Commission temporaire des arts ordered the protection of such properties, which were perceived as the product of the nation:

The objects which are to be used for instruction, and of which a great number belongs to abolished establishments, deserve the complete attention by the true friends of the country. One will find these in the libraries, museums, cabinets, and collections to which the Republic has a right; in the workshops where the instruments most necessary to our needs are kept; in the palaces and temples which ornament the masterpieces of art; in all the places where monuments recall what men and peoples were; finally, wherever the lessons of the past, firmly impressed, may be gathered by our century, in order to transmit them with new pages to the memory of posterity.

These early orders were followed by several attempts to establish inventories, such as the order of 1819, when it was again proposed that an inventory should include the Greek, Roman and Gallic monuments, the tombs, epitaphs and other documentary evidence of history. Creating an inventory was not an easy task, and in reality it took until the 1830s when the position of Inspecteur Général des monuments historiques was established followed by the creation of the Commission des monuments historiques in 1837.

Early State Protection

In the 19th century, there is growing political awareness of the nation state, leading to the idea to care for the common property of the people, the national monuments. To give a few examples of the development of national legislation for the protection of
national monuments and ancient works of art, it is worth mentioning the edict of 1802, published by the Papal Administration in Rome on the conservation of monuments and works of art: ‘The conservation of Monuments, and the productions of the Fine Arts, that owing to the audacity of time has reached us, has always been considered by Our Predecessors as a most interesting and deserving commitment. These precious remains of the Antiquity provide the City of Rome an ornament that distinguishes it among all the other renowned Cities of Europe ...’ In addition to being a question of prestige, ancient monuments were seen as an asset attracting researchers and artists, and something that could contribute to the economy and industry of the city through visitors and tourism.

In Prussia, in 1815, following the survey report by Karl Friedrich Schinkel on the war-damaged monuments of the Rhineland, the Ober-Bau-Deputation of Prussia presented to the King a document summarizing the basic principles for the conservation of ancient monuments and antiquities. Following the earlier example of France, the first step was to prepare an inventory in order to get a panorama of the built heritage in the country. The buildings that were proposed to be taken into account included churches, chapels, cloisters and convents, public fountains, tombstones, and town halls. This means: basically public buildings. However, the idea was also launched to establish local house museums, Heimatmuseum, which later became a fashionable issue not only in German lands but also in other countries.

In England, there was a long debate about conservation principles, putting restorers against conservationists, i.e. Scott vs. Ruskin. In 1877, William Morris established the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings. In his manifesto, Morris condemned restoration in toto. Concerning the type of built heritage that should be protected, he exclaimed: ‘If, for the rest, it be asked us to specify what kind of amount of art, style, or other interest in a building, makes it worth protecting, we answer, anything which can be looked on as artistic, picturesque, historical, antique, or substantial: any work, in short, over which educated, artistic people would think it worthwhile to argue at all.’ The actual state legislation for the protection of ancient monuments was only accorded relatively late, in 1882, after long debates in the Parliament.

In Italy, after the unification, there were attempts to establish common guidelines for the protection and restoration of ancient monuments. The legal basis had to wait until the early 20th century. Nevertheless, there guidelines were circulated to the regional
administrations in this regard. In 1883, a national congress of engineers and architects in Rome proposed principles that were summarized by Camillo Boito in seven points. Here it is stated (Jokilehto, 1999: 201): ‘Considering that architectural monuments from the past are not only valuable for the study of architecture but also contribute as essential documents to explain and illustrate all the facets of the history of various peoples throughout the ages, they should, therefore, be scrupulously and religiously respected as documents in which any alteration, however slight, if it appears to be part of the original, could be misleading and eventually give rise to erroneous assumptions.’

The first legal protection at the state level, in several European countries, was established in the second half of the 19th century. However, some countries outside Europe also had their first laws in this same period, such as Japan, India and Sri Lanka.

**Initial International Measures**

By the first half of the 20th century, the concern for the protection of cultural heritage had reached an international dimension though the first attempts for international collaboration date from the 19th century. During the Napoleonic period, the Allied Powers were involved in trying to return some works of art and collections, such as some ancient monuments from Rome, back to their original place. In 1874, on the invitation of the Russian Emperor, Alexander II, an international conference was organized in Brussels to discuss the protection of historic monuments and places in the case of armed conflict. The resulting declaration became the antecedent of *THE HAGUE CONVENTION*, of which new editions were proposed before and after the First World War. It was adopted by UNESCO in 1954 as its first international convention for the protection of cultural properties.

In the aftermath of the First World War when many major public buildings, such as ancient cathedrals and important libraries, were lying in ruins, it was decided to create the League of Nations with the purpose of trying to solve the conflicts before they escalated into war. In turn, this organization appointed commissions for various purposes, including culture and cultural heritage. In 1926, the **International Museums Office** was created in order to promote the activities of the museums and related
cultural heritage of every country by organising joint work and research. According to its statutes, the Office was concerned with museums, collections, works of art, buildings of historical and archaeological interest, and works of popular art. In 1931, the Office organized an important conference in Athens to discuss the restoration of ancient monuments. The emphasis was given to conservation rather than restoration, following the 19th-century conservation movement headed by Ruskin and Morris. Two years later, in 1933, another conference took place in Athens, which was part of the series of Congrès internationaux d’Architecture moderne (CIAM). This conference focused on modern town planning, but recommended that isolated historic buildings and historic urban quarters should be safeguarded, ‘if they are the expression of a former culture and if they respond to a general interest’.

Definitions of Heritage in International Doctrine

The second half of the 20th century can be seen as the epoch of international collaboration. Time will show how its inheritance will evolve in the future. In 1945, an international conference was gathered in London to decide about the establishment of UNESCO, based on the former International Office of Intellectual Cooperation that had worked under the auspices of the League of Nations, between the two World Wars. In 1956, UNESCO decided to create the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property, now called ICCROM, followed by the establishment of the International Council on Monuments and Sites, ICOMOS, in 1965. In the following is given an overview of the evolving themes and the definitions offered on various types of heritage in international documents, charters, recommendations and conventions, adopted by UNESCO, as an intergovernmental organization, or by ICOMOS, as a non-governmental organization. Other organizations have contributed to the field, such as ICOM related to collections, and the Council of Europe within the European region. On the other hand, the task of ICCROM, has been principally to diffuse this doctrine through its training courses, educational programmes and thematic projects to professionals in the different parts of the world.

We can take note that there are a number of different types of documents that establish the framework of the international doctrine. Secondly, it is necessary to recall the difference between intergovernmental organizations (IGO), such as UNESCO and
Council of Europe (as well as ICCROM), and non-governmental organizations (NGO), such as ICOMOS. The IGOs address their Member States, while NGOs generally address individual professionals or associations. In the case of UNESCO and the Council of Europe, the documents can be ‘conventions’, which will be ratified by the States and to become legally valid in that particular state. The documents can also be international recommendations, declarations or proclamations, which need not be ratified, but remain recommendations to be taken into account, for example, when developing new legal instruments or norms. In the case of ICOMOS, the General Assembly can adopt specific documents, which can have different connotations. They are often called ‘charters’, such as the Venice Charter, which was produced by an international conference in 1964 and was adopted as the founding ethical document of ICOMOS in 1965. ICOMOS documents can also be simply called, for example, ‘documents’ or ‘guidelines’ depending on the character of the issues dealt with. In addition, there are documents adopted by ICOMOS National Committees, such as the Australian Burra Charter and the New Zealand Charter, which can be useful references in other places as well.

**Monuments:** The doctrinal documents of UNESCO start in 1954 with the adoption of the *Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, The Hague Convention*, already mentioned above. The scope of this convention is on a) movable and immovable property, b) buildings sheltering movable cultural property, such as museums, and c) centres containing large amounts of cultural property. The first category, movable and immovable property, remained a reference for several future recommendations: *Movable or immovable property of great importance to the cultural heritage of every people, such as monuments of architecture, art or history, whether religious or secular; archaeological sites; groups of buildings which, as a whole, are of historical or artistic interest.* The convention also refers to works of art; manuscripts, books and other objects of artistic, historical or archaeological interest; as well as scientific collections and archives. From this convention, we have the notion of ‘monuments, groups of buildings and sites’, which is later found in other documents, such as the 1972 *World Heritage Convention* and the associated international recommendation for protection at the national level, where ‘monuments’ are defined as: *architectural works, works of monumental sculpture and painting, including cave dwellings and inscriptions, and*
elements, groups of elements or structures of special value from the point of view of archaeology, history, art or science.

**Historic gardens** are closely associated to the concept of ‘monument’. Indeed, when ICOMOS adopted the so-called *Florence Charter on Historic Gardens*, in 1982, a historic garden was defined ‘an architectural and horticultural composition of interest to the public from the historical or artistic point of view’, and as such to be considered a monument. It is an architectural composition, whose constituents are horticultural and hence alive. ‘Thus its appearance is the reflection of a perpetual equilibrium between the cyclic movement of the seasons and of the development and decay of nature and the will of the artist and artificer seeking to keep it permanently unchanged.’

**Sites** are first of all conceptually related to archaeological heritage, one of the early concerns by UNESCO, resulting in a number of safeguarding missions to assist Member States. Several international campaigns focused on archaeological sites, such as the campaign, initiated in 1960, to safeguard the monuments along the Nile from flooding due to the construction of the Aswan Dam. As early as 1956, UNESCO adopted the *Recommendation on International Principles Applicable to Archaeological Excavations*. Archaeological excavations are here defined as ‘any research aimed at the discovery of objects’, which could refer to ‘monuments and movable or immovable objects of archaeological interest considered in the widest sense’.

Archaeological sites were also one of the main concerns of UNESCO when adopting the *Recommendation concerning the Preservation of Cultural Property Endangered by Public or Private Works*, in 1968, which was inspired by the Nile campaign. A more detailed definition of archaeological heritage is given by ICOMOS in 1990 in the *International Charter for Archaelogical Heritage Management*, where the archaeological heritage is given to constitute the basic record of past human activities. ‘It comprises all vestiges of human existence and consists of places relating to all manifestations of human activity, abandoned structures and remains of all kinds (including subterranean and underwater sites), together with all the portable cultural material associated with them’. Part of this heritage consists of architectural structures, and part is related to the living traditions of indigenous peoples. In the
On definitions of cultural heritage

conservation process, each site needs to be given proper consideration, involving professionals and, as appropriate, local communities.

Archaeological sites can also be under the water. Consequently, in 2000, UNESCO adopted the Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage, which offers the following definition: *Underwater cultural heritage* means all traces of human existence having a cultural, historical or archaeological character which have been partially or totally under water, periodically or continuously, for at least 100 years such as: (i) sites, structures, buildings, artefacts and human remains, together with their archaeological and natural context; (ii) vessels, aircraft, other vehicles or any part thereof, their cargo or other contents, together with their archaeological and natural context; and (iii) objects of prehistoric character.

**Groups of buildings** is a common definition starting with the Hague Convention of 1954. In 1972, the UNESCO Recommendation Concerning the Protection, at National Level, of the Cultural and Natural Heritage refers this notion to: ‘groups of separate or connected buildings which, because of their architecture, their homogeneity or their place in the landscape, are of special value from the point of view of history, art of science’. In 1975, the European Charter of the Architectural Heritage, by the Council of Europe, also refers to groups of buildings, noting: ‘Today it is recognized that entire groups of buildings, even if they do not include any example of outstanding merit, may have an atmosphere that gives them the quality of works of art, welding different periods and styles into a harmonious whole.’ The notion of ‘groups of buildings’ is still included in the definitions of cultural heritage in the Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe, adopted in Granada ten years later, in 1985.

**Historic Areas**: The Recommendation Concerning the Safeguarding and Contemporary Role of Historic Areas, adopted by UNESCO in Nairobi, in 1976, becomes a watershed in the definition of the built heritage. The concept of historic areas is taken in the broadest possible meaning, ranging from archaeological sites to urban and rural ensembles. Most importantly, such areas are no more seen only in reference to the built structures but in their integrity, including human activities (art. 3): ‘Every historic area and its surroundings should be considered in their totality as a coherent whole whose balance and specific nature depend on the fusion of the parts
of which it is composed and which include human activities as much as the buildings, the spatial organization and the surroundings. All valid elements, including human activities, however modest, thus have a significance in relation to the whole which must not be disregarded.' This recommendation is based on the experiences gathered during the same European Architectural Heritage Year, which produced the European Charter of Architectural Heritage and the Amsterdam Declaration in 1975. Yet, the UNESCO document becomes an opening to a new way of interpreting historic areas and it is followed by other recommendations by UNESCO, ICOMOS and the Council of Europe.

**Historic Centres:** In the aftermath of the Second World War, an increased awareness extended from monuments to their familiar surroundings, perceived as part of the heritage of the people. The Italian idea of ‘centro storico’, or ‘historic centre’, was initially identified with small hill towns that had retained their medieval fabric. L’Associazione Nazionale Centri Storico-Artistici (National Association of Historic and Artistic Centres, A.N.C.S.A.) was created in 1960 with the purpose to sustain the efforts of public administrations to safeguard existing urban settlements. From the initial recognition limited to the central area of an historic town, the notion of ‘historic centre’ is later extended to define any historic area that could be of interest from the conservation point of view. In 1987, the Brazilian National Committee of ICOMOS drafts a declaration as a result of the First Brazilian Seminar about the Preservation and Revitalization of Historic Centres. Here the participants declared: Urban historical sites may be considered as those spaces where manifold evidences of the city's cultural production concentrate. They are to be circumscribed rather in terms of their operational value as 'critical areas' than in opposition to the city's non-historical places, since the city in its totality is a historical entity.

**Historic Towns:** Always in 1987, the same year as the Brazilian declaration, ICOMOS adopts, in Washington, the Charter for the Conservation of Historic Towns and Urban Areas. The charter addresses the problems of historic urban areas, large and small, including cities, towns and historic centres or quarters, together with their natural and man-made environment. It is noted that, beyond their role as historical documents, these areas embody the values of traditional urban cultures. The charter aims at the preservation of the historic character of the areas and all those
material and spiritual elements that express this character. Already in 1982, ICOMOS established its International Committee on Historic Towns and Villages, CIVVIH, which was the initiator of the 1987 ICOMOS Washington charter.

In the World Heritage context there was also some initiative in the same direction, and in 1986 the World Heritage Committee decided that the heritage category of ‘groups of buildings’ should refer to ‘historic towns and town centres’. This definition was introduced in the 1987 version of the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention. Towns are here defined as a) those no more inhabited (i.e. archaeological areas), b) towns that are inhabited, and c) new towns of the twentieth century. Furthermore, the protected area could enclose a) the entire town with its traditional context, b) the historic centre that has remained surrounded with new development, and/or c) a specified section or area (such as an avenue) in the historic town.

**Modern built heritage:** The growing interest in modern built heritage led to the foundation, in 1988, of DoCoMoMo, a non-profit organization allied with ICOMOS whose full title is International Working Party for Documentation and Conservation of Buildings, Sites and Neighbourhoods of the Modern Movement. The interest in contemporary heritage is also specifically reflected in the 1991 Council of Europe Recommendation on the Protection of the 20th-Century Architectural Heritage, which notes that the great variety of buildings of the twentieth century reflect both traditional and modernist values, and merit being recognized as part of the built heritage.

**Historic Urban Landscape:** With the increasing number of historic cities on the UNESCO List, the World Heritage Committee has had many difficult problems concerning the introduction of new voluminous constructions into the existing fabric or in the surroundings of historic towns. An international conference organized in Vienna, in 2005, resulted in the Vienna Memorandum, which introduced the concept of ‘historic urban landscape’. This notion still needs to be properly defined, and the scope is to develop planning and management instruments for the control of the historic urban landscape even beyond specifically protected areas. Indeed, many of the problems are caused by the fact that important historic cities are facing developments outside the protected conservation areas. Typically, this is be due to high-rise buildings or
other structures, which are either out of scale or out of character in the context where they are proposed or built. The notion of historic urban landscape is proposed to be integrated into the 1976 UNESCO Recommendation concerning historic areas. The recommendation will certainly have to deal with rather complex issues, taking into account the dynamics of constantly changing urban areas. The point is to identify qualities that have been building up over time in a particular place, and thus recognizing continuity within change as one of the assets of historic urban landscapes.

**Landscape:** While the early recommendations were generally focused on ‘monuments’, the first opening towards larger areas came already in 1962 with the **Recommendation concerning the safeguarding of the beauty and character of landscapes and sites.** This recommendation was referred to: ‘natural, rural and urban landscapes and sites, whether natural or man-made, which have a cultural or aesthetic interest or form typical natural surroundings’. Indeed, even though this recommendation seems to have remained with little attention in the broader context, it nevertheless anticipated developments, resulting from the growing ecological interests in the 1970s.

The 1972 Recommendation concerning the protection of cultural heritage at the national level defines the notion of sites as: *topographical areas, the combined works of man and of nature, which are of special value by reason of their beauty or their interest from the archaeological, historical, ethnological or anthropological points of view.* This definition is nearly the same as in the World Heritage Convention of the same year, and later leads to the definition of ‘cultural landscapes’. In 2000, the Council of Europe adopted the **European Landscape Convention,** which also gives a definition of landscapes in similar lines to the 1972 Recommendation with the addition of ‘people’s perception’: *Landscape* means an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors.

**Cultural landscape:** As a concept, ‘cultural landscape’ has existed at least from the 19th century. More recently, the ICOMOS Canada **Charter for the Preservation of Quebec’s Heritage (Deschambault Declaration),** recognized cultural landscapes as part of the Canadian heritage. However, it was introduced into international vocabulary more specifically in the 1990s by the World Heritage Committee and the Council of Europe. The latter adopted, in 1995, the **Recommendation No. R (95)9 of**
THE COMMITTEE OF MINISTERS TO MEMBER STATES ON THE INTEGRATED CONSERVATION OF CULTURAL LANDSCAPE AREAS AS PART OF LANDSCAPE POLICIES, which refers to ‘cultural landscape areas’ as: specific topographically delimited parts of the landscape, formed by various combinations of human and natural agencies, which illustrate the evolution of human society, its settlement and character in time and space and which have acquired socially and culturally recognised values at various territorial levels, because of the presence of physical remains reflecting past land use and activities, skills or distinctive traditions, or depiction in literary and artistic works, or the fact that historic events took place there.

In 1992, UNESCO’s the World Heritage Committee decided to introduce ‘cultural landscapes’ as a new type of cultural heritage, referred to the category of ‘sites’. It was taken to represent combined works of nature and of man, which are illustrative of the evolution of human society and settlement over time, under the influence of the physical constraints and/or opportunities presented by their natural environment and of successive social, economic and cultural forces, both external and internal. In terms of the World Heritage categories, cultural landscapes can be: a) clearly defined landscapes, designed and created intentionally by man; b) organically evolved landscapes, either as a relict landscape, where evolution has stopped, or as continuing landscape; c) associative cultural landscape related to powerful religious, artistic or cultural associations.

Associative cultural landscapes are often referred to sacred mountains. In 2001, UNESCO and Japanese government organized a Thematic Expert Meeting on Asia-Pacific Sacred Mountains. The experts recognized that such places embody an exceptional spiritual relationship between people and nature. Sacred mountains are often centres of significant biological diversity, as well as testifying to the creative genius, socio-economic development and the imaginative and spiritual vitality of humanity. They are part of our collective identity. The experts proposed that such sites could be categorized: a. the mountain itself is considered sacred; b. the mountain has sacred associations; c. the mountain has sacred areas, places, objects; d. the mountain inspires sacred rituals and practices. Furthermore, the mountains can represent a great diversity of themes, such as: the mountain as a centre of the cosmos or the world, paradise; representing power, deity or deities, identity of a nation.
or a group of people; place of worship, where spirits or ancestors reside or pass through, or for seclusion or healing; source of inspiration, power or healing.

**Place:** While the built heritage was generally defined as ‘monuments and sites’, as in the 1964 Venice Charter, the Australian National Committee of ICOMOS considered that this definition was difficult to apply in the region of Australia and South-East Asia. Consequently, it was decided to prepare a regional version of the Venice Charter (as even proposed in the charter itself). The result was the BURRA CHARTER, first published in 1979, and later revised in 1981, 1988 and 1999. Here the notion of ‘monuments and sites’ is replaced by the notion ‘place’. In the 1999 version (art. 1.1), place is **Place** is taken to mean: *site, area, land, landscape, building or other work, group of buildings or other works, and may include components, contents, spaces and views defined. It is also noted that: The concept of place should be broadly interpreted. The elements described in Article 1.1 may include memorials, trees, gardens, parks, places of historical events, urban areas, towns, industrial places, archaeological sites and spiritual and religious places.* The Burra Charter also introduces the concept of cultural significance, which is taken to mean: *aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual value for past, present or future generations. Cultural significance is embodied in the place itself, its fabric, setting, use, associations, meanings, records, related places and related objects. Places may have a range of values for different individuals or groups.*

The Burra Charter can be seen to be complemented by the New Zealand **CHARTER FOR THE CONSERVATION OF PLACES OF CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUE**, adopted by the New Zealand National Committee of ICOMOS. This charter refers to the **indigenous heritage** of the Maori, and it offers the definition:

*The indigenous heritage of Maori and Moriori relates to family, local and tribal groups and associations. It is inseparable from identity and well-being and has particular cultural meanings. The Treaty of Waitangi is the historical basis for indigenous guardianship. It recognises the indigenous people as exercising responsibility for their treasures, monuments and sacred places. This interest extends beyond current legal ownership wherever such heritage exists. Particular knowledge of heritage values is entrusted to chosen guardians. The conservation of places of indigenous cultural heritage value therefore is conditional on decisions made in the indigenous community, and should proceed only in this context.*
Vernacular heritage: Closely related to cultural landscapes is the built heritage, which is found in villages and settlements, generally called vernacular. In 1999, ICOMOS adopted the Charter on the Built Vernacular Heritage, which gives the following definition: Vernacular building is the traditional and natural way by which communities house themselves. It is a continuing process including necessary changes and continuous adaptation as a response to social and environmental constraints. The survival of this tradition is threatened world-wide by the forces of economic, cultural and architectural homogenisation. How these forces can be met is a fundamental problem that must be addressed by communities and also by governments, planners, architects, conservationists and by a multidisciplinary group of specialists. Vernacular heritage is generally built in local materials, often in timber or in unbaked earth. In 1999, ICOMOS adopted the Principles for the Preservation of Historic Timber Structures, which refer to all types of buildings or constructions wholly or partially in timber that have cultural significance or that are parts of an historic area.

Folklore: In 1989, UNESCO adopted the Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore. Here this type of heritage is defined: Folklore (or traditional and popular culture) is the totality of tradition-based creations of a cultural community, expressed by a group or individuals and recognized as reflecting the expectations of a community in so far as they reflect its cultural and social identity; its standards and values are transmitted orally, by imitation or by other means. Its forms are, among others, language, literature, music, dance, games, mythology, rituals, customs, handicrafts, architecture and other arts.

Intangible cultural heritage: In Japan and South Korea, the definition of cultural heritage also refers to the intangible and folklore heritage. It is on this ground that UNESCO adopted, in 1997, the Proclamation of Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage. Following this, a list of such heritage has been established on the basis of proposals by UNESCO’s Member States. In 2001, a new definition of oral and intangible heritage was proposed by a group of experts, which proposed to the attention of the UNESCO Executive Board. This definition refers to people’s learned processes along with the knowledge, skills and creativity that inform and are developed by them, the products they create and the resources, spaces and other
aspects of social and natural context necessary to their sustainability: these processes provide living communities with a sense of continuity with previous generations and are important to cultural identity, as well as to the safeguarding of cultural diversity and creativity of humanity. An interesting example of intangible cultural heritage are the social-cultural traditions in South-East Asia, related to the animistic beliefs and rituals performed in places of cult, called ‘utaki’.

The next step for UNESCO has been the adoption of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, in 2003. The article 2 of the Convention provides the following definition:

The “intangible cultural heritage” means the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage. This intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity. For the purposes of this Convention, consideration will be given solely to such intangible cultural heritage as is compatible with existing international human rights instruments, as well as with the requirements of mutual respect among communities, groups and individuals, and of sustainable development.

The “intangible cultural heritage”, as defined in paragraph 1 above, is manifested inter alia in the following domains: (a) oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of the intangible cultural heritage; (b) performing arts; (c) social practices, rituals and festive events; (d) knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe; (e) traditional craftsmanship.

Some concluding Considerations on the Definitions

The association of values to specified things is the fundamental reason why certain places or objects are defined as heritage. Indeed, recognizing something as ‘monument’ is already a value judgement. We should however remember that the values need to be continuously redefined through social-cultural processes. They are
not automatically 'embodied' in an object. The above list of types of heritage provides a panorama of great variety, which is further enriched by the cultural diversity characteristic to each culture. Indeed, maintaining cultural diversity can be taken to be the real target of our conservation efforts. This was clearly one of the results of the expert meeting in Nara to discuss authenticity, in 1994, as is stated in The NARA DOCUMENT ON AUTHENTICITY (par. 5-6):

"The diversity of cultures and heritage in our world is an irreplaceable source of spiritual and intellectual richness for all humankind. The protection and enhancement of cultural and heritage diversity in our world should be actively promoted as an essential aspect of human development."

Cultural heritage diversity exists in time and space, and demands respect for other cultures and all aspects of their belief systems. In cases where cultural values appear to be in conflict, respect for cultural diversity demands acknowledgement of the legitimacy of the cultural values of all parties.

From this results that authenticity (truthfulness) needs to be defined in relation to the sources of information, which may vary from place to place and from culture to culture. In 2001, UNESCO adopted the UNIVERSAL DECLARATION ON CULTURAL DIVERSITY, which states: Culture takes diverse forms across time and space. This diversity is embodied in the uniqueness and plurality of the identities of the groups and societies making up humankind. As a source of exchange, innovation and creativity, cultural diversity is as necessary for humankind as biodiversity is for nature. In this sense, it is the common heritage of humanity and should be recognized and affirmed for the benefit of present and future generations.

Considering the recognition of the cultural diversity as one of the fundamental reference, it also means that any restoration must be based on the recognition of the specificity of each place, each monument, and each site. In this regard, the international doctrine can only provide a framework of ideas that need to be duly taken into account on the basis of the recognition of the significance, i.e. meaning and value of each place within its cultural-social context. It will be appropriate to conclude this brief essay with a reference to the so-called Faro Convention adopted by the Council of Europe in 2005: FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON THE VALUE OF CULTURAL HERITAGE FOR SOCIETY. In its Preface, it is stated:
Recognising the need to put people and human values at the centre of an enlarged and cross-disciplinary concept of cultural heritage;

Emphasising the value and potential of cultural heritage wisely used as a resource for sustainable development and quality of life in a constantly evolving society;

Recognising that every person has a right to engage with the cultural heritage of their choice, while respecting the rights and freedoms of others, as an aspect of the right freely to participate in cultural life enshrined in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and guaranteed by the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966);

Convinced of the need to involve everyone in society in the ongoing process of defining and managing cultural heritage; ...

Article 1 – Aims of the Convention; The Parties to this Convention agree to:

recognise that rights relating to cultural heritage are inherent in the right to participate in cultural life, as defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;

recognise individual and collective responsibility towards cultural heritage;

emphasise that the conservation of cultural heritage and its sustainable use have human development and quality of life as their goal;

take the necessary steps to apply the provisions of this Convention concerning: the role of cultural heritage in the construction of a peaceful and democratic society, and in the processes of sustainable development and the promotion of cultural diversity; greater synergy of competencies among all the public, institutional and private actors concerned.

Article 2 – Definitions; For the purposes of this Convention,

cultural heritage is a group of resources inherited from the past which people identify, independently of ownership, as a reflection and expression of their constantly evolving values, beliefs, knowledge and traditions. It includes all aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time;

a heritage community consists of people who value specific aspects of cultural heritage which they wish, within the framework of public action, to sustain and transmit to future generations.
The definitions of heritage resources that have been referred to above show the constantly evolving perceptions resulting in ever increasing diversity. Taking only the second half of the 20th century, we can note that the early definitions were associated with monuments and sites, which have since been specified in different typologies or categories of heritage. At the beginning of the 21st century, great attention has now been given to the intangible cultural heritage. Indeed, this refers to culture itself, the ways of life and inherited know-how. In the earlier times, such issues were considered more a subject of research by anthropologists; now they are recognized as heritage to be conserved.

Finally, the perception of something as heritage and the conservation of such resources are cultural problems. Therefore, conservation is fundamentally the result of learning processes in society. We can see that protection of places as heritage has existed for centuries. However, we can also note that modernity as it has evolved over the past two or three centuries has made a difference in our approach. In part, this difference is seen in the considerable joint international efforts to protect and preserve some resources practically in all parts of the world. Partly, the difference is also seen in our present-day culture, where the conservation of cultural heritage can be seen as integral element. For example, when the question is about modern-day restoration or reconstruction of a ‘monument’, it is based on a conscious analysis, a sort of deconstruction, of all the issues concerned. Therefore, modern restoration or reconstruction becomes a conscious effort to put in place an intellectual reference framework for the present-day society. At the same time, society is no more the local group of people, but it extends to the entire globalized world. Indeed, the conservation of the cultural heritage with all its different aspects is part of the knowledge of ourselves, a counterpoint in the otherwise global world society.

**References**


architettonico, Primo aggiornamento, Grandi Temi di Restauro (vol. IX), UTET, Scienze Tecniche, Milano


Soheil, Mehr-Azar, 2000, Persepolis, a Concept of Monument in the Achaemenid Empire, University of Rome, La Sapienza, Doctoral dissertation


The doctrinal documents that have been referred to in the article can mostly be found on the Internet in respective home pages:


ICOMOS: http://www.international.icomos.org/charters.htm

Council of Europe: http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/Resources/Texts/default_en.asp
Nota editorial

El autor hace una interesante reflexión sobre el concepto y definición de patrimonio cultural, y la evolución doctrinal en torno a este tema de gran importancia. Al referirse al periodo correspondiente ya a la segunda mitad del Siglo XX, afirma que se pueden distinguir dos nociones aparentemente contradictorias: tanto el reconocimiento de principios asumidos como universales, como la diversidad y especificidad de las diferentes culturas.

El artículo presenta la evolución de los conceptos de conservación, analizando los casos de los lugares sagrados y de los conjuntos y monumentos antiguos, para luego ver los diversos periodos históricos en relación con el tema del patrimonio cultural y su conservación. La Ilustración, los inicios de la protección estatal y las primeras medidas de carácter internacional, son estudiados en subtítulos especiales. Concluye con un valioso análisis del concepto de patrimonio en la doctrina internacional.

En las conclusiones, Jokilehto destaca la preservación de la diversidad cultural como uno de los grandes objetivos de los esfuerzos conservacionistas. Inclusive las labores de restauración deben basarse en el reconocimiento de la especificidad de cada lugar, cada monumento y cada sitio. Como reflexión final el autor postula que en una sociedad que no es más la del grupo local, el patrimonio es parte del conocimiento de nosotros mismos, un contrapeso frente a la sociedad globalizada.

---

Editorial note

We asked that authors submit an abstract with their article in an Icomos language other than the one in which their article is written. Some authors have been unable to do this. Therefore, as an exception, because of interest in an article and the importance of the authors who are cooperating in this ICOMOS-ICLAFI First Issue, the editors will add a short editorial note in Spanish to articles when an abstract was not submitted.

Nota editorial

Solicitamos a los autores el envío de un abstract junto con sus artículos principales, en un idioma oficial de ICOMOS distinto a aquél en el que el artículo esté escrito. Algunos autores no han podido hacerlo así. Por este motivo, y como excepción, dado el interés de los artículos y la importancia de los autores que están colaborando con este Primer Número del ICOMOS-ICLAFI e-Journal, los editores agregaran una breve nota editorial en español a aquellos artículos cuyos abstracts no se hayan recibido.