

## CONSIDERATIONS ON AUTHENTICITY AND INTEGRITY IN WORLD HERITAGE CONTEXT

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### **Abstract**

The scope of this paper is to examine the relationship of universality and relativity in the concept of truth and in value judgements in different cultural contexts. Reference is made to traditional and modern philosophies, as well as the international conservation doctrine. It is observed that while the sources of information may vary from one culture to another and over time, the notion of truth appears to have universal relativity. This is important in the notion of authenticity considering that it is fundamentally understood as being true to oneself. The paper further explores the verification of authenticity and the definition of integrity in different types of cultural heritage sites, exemplified in selected properties nominated for inclusion to the World Heritage List.

**Key words:** authenticity, integrity, World Heritage List, heritage values

### **1.0 Universality vs. Diversity**

The World Heritage List is based on the definition of the **outstanding universal value** (OUV). In defining cultural heritage, the World Heritage Convention notes that “monuments” and “groups of buildings” should have outstanding universal value (OUV) from the point of view of **history, art, or science**, while the “sites” are also seen from the **ethnological** or **anthropological** points of view. The *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention* (2005) indicate that:

*“Outstanding universal value means cultural and/or natural significance which is so exceptional as to transcend national boundaries and to be of common importance for present and future generations of all humanity.” (art. 49)*

Furthermore, there are ten criteria defining OUV in the Operational Guidelines (art. 77). The first six refer to cultural heritage that can represent: i) a masterpiece, ii) important interchange of values, iii) exceptional testimony to a civilisation, iv) a type of construction or site, v) traditional land-use, and/or vi) association with traditions or beliefs. The criteria from vii to x refer to natural heritage.

The above definition of OUV may require some further clarification especially in what is or what should be intended with the notions: ‘**exceptional**’, ‘**national boundaries**’, and ‘**common importance for all humanity**’. These notions should obviously not be taken literally considering that national boundaries can enclose extremely variable territories, they are subject to political changes over time, and they rarely coincide with the boundaries of culturally coherent regions. Furthermore, the exceptionality of a property does not mean that it should, for this reason alone, have outstanding universal value. Even the notion of ‘common importance to humanity’ may require fundamental thinking

and understanding what is seen as universally shared values. In fact, a clearer definition is provided in the report of the World Heritage strategy meeting in Amsterdam in 1998:

*“The requirement of outstanding universal value characterising cultural and natural heritage should be interpreted as an outstanding response to issues of universal nature common to or addressed by all human cultures. In relation to natural heritage, such issues are seen in bio-geographical diversity; in relation to culture in human creativity and resulting cultural diversity.” (v. Droste, et al. 1998, p. 221)*

So, it is more the issues or themes that are of universal nature and common to all humanity, while the heritage itself is defined as a response characterised by its creative diversity. This is clearly also indicated in the *UNESCO Declaration of the cultural diversity* where heritage is again seen as a result of the human **creative process**:

*‘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.’ (art. 1) ... ‘Creation draws on the roots of cultural tradition, but flourishes in contact with other cultures. For this reason, heritage in all its forms must be preserved, enhanced and handed on to future generations as a record of human experience and aspirations, so as to **foster creativity in all its diversity and to inspire genuine dialogue among cultures.**’ (art. 7)*

The ICOMOS report on the representation of the World Heritage List (The “Gap Report” presented to the World Heritage Committee in 2004) is built on the recognition of cultural diversity and the attempt to identify issues of universal nature, related to anthropological, historical, aesthetic and scientific views. The critical judgement for the identification of the outstanding universal value of a particular property should be seen in relation to two distinct issues, i.e. that:

- the adequacy (or extent) of the relevant “cultural region” or “area of human knowledge” fully justify representation on the World Heritage List;
- the “intrinsic quality” and cultural-historical genuineness of the nominated property meet the expected level of excellence.

The fundamental conditions for the qualification of cultural sites to the World Heritage List include the requirement to satisfy the notions of **authenticity** and **integrity**. The List is also subject to **heritage diversity**, and the trend in the past several years has been towards larger areas of nominated properties, particularly cultural landscapes or historic towns. This increasing attention to a more **holistic approach** in the definition of the sites thus necessarily emphasises the importance of the identification of the integrity of a site.

## 2.0 Philosophical issues

Over the centuries, **philosophers** have been discussing concepts such as **continuity and change**, and the notion of **truth**, all of them relevant also when touching the **notion of authenticity**. A well-known case is the debate about the ship of Theseus, as told by Plutarch (*Vita Thesei*, 22-23). The ship was kept by the Athenians as a memorial for a long time. Due to gradual replacement of rotten planks, the ship retained its original form but its material was entirely renewed. The question was then raised: was it still the ship of Theseus? In modern times, the issue has been posed as two alternative problems. In the example just given, we can think that the gradual renovation over time still provided a *spatio-temporal continuity* for the ship, thus retaining a certain identity. In another alternative, one could imagine that the materials that were removed would have been re-assembled elsewhere in another ship. What would then be the significance of this other

ship? Concerning historic structures, one can also propose an additional question on the difference between gradual renovation of an ancient monument (which is often the case with old buildings) compared with the reconstruction of a building or part of a building in a particular moment in time (e.g. Frauenkirche in Dresden).

In ancient Greece, the concept of *mimesis* played a central role in the perceptions of Plato and Aristotle regarding poetry, drama, painting, sculpture or music. Even architecture and town planning were referred to the same concept. *Mimesis* can be translated as: 'imitation' as well as 'representation'. Plato proposed the concept of *forms* or *ideas*, which were eternal, changeless and incorporeal. The purpose of the artist was to imitate or in fact represent these forms in our reality. Vitruvius, on the other hand, even speaks of architecture representing forms that could be found in nature. Through the philosophy of Plotinus, who lived in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD, these concepts were taken over by Renaissance artists, such as Raphael. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Bellori interpreted the artistic 'idea' leading the way towards the 'ideal'. He wrote: "*originata dalla natura supera l'origine e fassi originale dell'arte*" (originating from nature, overcomes its origin and becomes the origin of art). (Bellori, 1976: 14; see also Panofsky, 1968: 105) When discussing the issue of mimesis, even if often interpreted as imitation, it has not meant merely copying but rather a learning process imitating the ancients. It was a form of representation or re-representation of ideas and themes, a response that could guarantee continuity as well as elaborating and creating new of forms.

In a recent article, Dr. Seung-Jim Chung from Korea has claimed that the Venice Charter is too strongly based on European cultural values, and "thus not sufficiently universal to be unequivocally deployed in societies outside Europe and European based cultures". He argues that the European values emphasise mainly visual beauty, while East Asian societies determine their values in relation to the spiritual and naturalistic sensibilities. (2005: 68-69) It may well be true that Europeans have often given serious attention to aesthetics, but this is by no means their monopoly. We can take note, for example, that the Japanese aesthetics have been subject to much research (e.g. Marra, 1999), and in fact the Japanese and Chinese art philosophies have long had an important influence in the world, including European art. A western scholar having studied Japanese aesthetics, Bruno Deschênes, has concluded:

*"My understanding is that for Japanese, a good artist is one who knows how to structure the flow of time, which is expressed through his or her artistic and aesthetic grasp of ma [space, time], using jo-ha-kyû [the division and development of a play, or a musical piece, each segment progressively and dynamically flowing into each other]. The role of art lovers is to perceive, grasp and make sense of these aesthetic principles embedded in artistic expression."* (Aesthetics in Japanese Arts, Internet)

On the other hand, due to the global information flow of today, evaluating cultural heritage in relation to its spiritual and environmental values has become a widely diffused policy sustained by international doctrine, relevant to eastern as well as western world. At the same time, each culture has its own ways of obtaining information and of representing its values. This is part of the cultural diversity as declared by UNESCO: "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." (UNESCO, 2001, art. 1) At the same time, this does not mean that there would be nothing in common. On the contrary. Yet, it is necessary to accept that the different cultures may have different ways of expressing themselves about issues such as truth and authenticity.

In his doctoral dissertation, Dr. Mehdi Hodjat from Iran has analysed the approach to heritage and history as proposed in the Qur'an and in the Islamic societies. He mentions that while the concept of 'history' is generally translated as 'Tarikh', it not only refers to an epoch but also to fixed habits. (Hodjat, 1995: 25) However, this word is not used in the Qur'an, which instead explains the meaning of history with words: *Qasas*, *Hadith*, and *Nabaa*. *Qasas* means to follow up, to be in search of reality and to find it. *Hadith* refers to making a new statement, being creative and innovative. *Nabaa* means news that is free of lies, is sequential and has Divine as its reference. (idem, 26) These different meanings associated with the idea of history tend to refer to concepts that are generally related to the idea of authenticity in cultural heritage, i.e. truth free of deviation, as well as something new and creative. In fact, Hodjat concludes about these concepts:

*"To use words which give different meanings to history, proves that the interpretation of history by the Qur'an is not only to state past events for the sake of increasing our historical information. The Holy Qur'an describes an idea, which has hidden meanings, as well as an immediately apparent reality. In this way, the revealed history in the Qur'an is a truth free from deviation (Nabaa), not only in stating events but in their hidden substance; forming a new statement (Hadith) which does not look at subjects because they are new, but its interest is how to face and apply them; and is to be researched and perceived (Qasas), which leads mankind from a physical reality to a spiritual one." (idem, 26)*

Most histories of philosophy start with ancient Greece and end up with the European contemporary thought. What happened outside this region has been generally ignored apart from some references to ancient Orient. Yet, when we speak of the so-called Western philosophy, we might more correctly refer to it as our contemporary philosophy, considering that many of the ideas are now shared across the world. There is an increasing number of publications, where the specificity of various regions is discussed. For example, this is the case of African contemporary philosophy. While developing their own thinking, African philosophers have been faced with the particular problem of defining their cultural identity without losing the rationality and truth that characterise modern philosophy in general. At the same time, it has been recognised that African thinking merits being dealt with like any other views. (Teffo, L.J. et al. in Coetzee, 2002:164) It is also noted that Africa is a vast continent with many traditions that are still part of the local contemporary cultures. It is therefore natural to explore the commonalities and specificities in the various reflections.

It has been observed that African thought differs from the general European approach in its emphasis of the strong relationship with community and environment. Typical European dualisms such as those between the natural and the supernatural, or between matter and mind/spirit/soul, do not seem to appear in African metaphysics. (idem:165) "The essence of African metaphysics, then, is the search for meaning and ultimate reality in the complex relationships between the human person and his/her total environment." (idem: 165) For example, in a study of the concept of truth in the Akan language (a language group in Western Africa, including Ashanti), Kwasi Wiredu (in Coetzee, 2002:239ff) has emphasised the strong community involvement in the definition of what is truthful. Similar questions are emerging also in relation to the concept of rationality and memory, which would need to be viewed taking into account the multicultural context in modern world. Such issues are obviously relevant in trying to clarify policies in the context of the World Heritage Convention, which addresses the concept of universal value, as well as recognising cultural diversity as an essence of the heritage of humanity.

To make briefly a reference to 'modern' philosophy, we can recall that Martin Heidegger (1993: 143ff) speaks about two fundamental components in a work of art, i.e. the earth

(matter) and the world of significances (idea). He gives the example of a Greek temple enclosing the figure of the god, and states: "By means of the temple, the god is present in the temple. This presence of the god is in itself the extension and delimitation of the precinct as a holy precinct." (p. 167) The physical presence of the temple and the god's image in themselves do not yet assign the significance to the site, but it is the god's presence, the spiritual or the intangible dimension, when evoked, that gives the real meaning. The physical aspect of the temple Heidegger calls the earth, and he states: "In the things that arise, earth occurs essentially as the sheltering agent." The stone material represents the 'earth' aspect of the work, but it is not the 'world'. However, the temple sets up a 'world' that gives the meaning to the work. Heidegger further states that truth happens in the temple's standing where it is in its environment; standing there the temple shines in its beauty. (p. 181) "Beauty is one way in which truth essentially occurs as unconcealment." (p. 181) And, furthermore, Heidegger states: "The more essentially the work opens itself, the more luminous becomes the uniqueness of the fact that it is rather than is not. The more essentially this thrust comes into the open region, the more strange and solitary the work becomes." (p. 190-1) In other words, we could say that the more a work represents a creative and innovative contribution, the more truthful and the more authentic it is. The preservation of the work happens through knowing its truth, and it can occur at different degrees of scope, constancy and lucidity. (p. 193) Even when the work has lost its original functioning, it can still offer a remembrance of this, which contributes to establishing its meaning in the present. Conservation of a work therefore is a process requiring understanding and appreciation of the world of significances, not just limiting to the material.

We can take these ideas into the context of Cesare Brandi's *Theory of Restoration* (English translation in 2005). Brandi refers to the work of art as a whole or as 'oneness'. A work of art is the result of a creative process, where the artist 'creates' the physical reality of the work on the basis of the form given by the 'pure reality' in the artist's mind. The art aspect of the work remains 'intangible' but is there to be experienced in the physical reality of the work. Once created, such a work has an independent existence; however, its appreciation and therefore also its conservation depend on the recognition of its art significance every time the work is contemplated. The restoration of a work must be based on such recognition, taking note of its historic and aesthetic instances (understood almost as legal cases put forth on behalf of the work). Brandi's definition of restoration of a work of art states: "Restoration consists of the methodological moment in which the work of art is recognised, in its physical being, and in its dual aesthetic and historical nature, in view of its transmission to the future." (2005: 48) For Brandi, as well as for Heidegger - and for Alois Riegl for that matter, the art aspect of a work of art is in the present, i.e. in the mind of the person recognising it. This art aspect of the work of art is fundamentally intangible, and it can be experienced through critical observation and understanding of the spatial-material reality that it puts forth.

### **3.0 International framework**

All heritage of humanity has its intangible dimension, whether a work of art, a historic building, a historic town, or a cultural landscape. Japan is noted for being maybe the first country to have passed legal protection for intangible cultural heritage. Such protection is referred to: "art and skill employed in drama, music and applied arts, and other intangible cultural products, which possess a high historical and/or artistic value in and for this country". The same law also defines the concept of 'folk-cultural properties', consisting of: "manners and customs related to food, clothing and housing, to

occupations, religious faiths, festivals, etc., to folk-entertainments and clothes, implements, houses and other objects used therefor, which are indispensable for the understanding of changes in our people's modes of life". (Japanese *Law for Protection of Cultural Properties*, 1998, Chapter 1)

In 1998, UNESCO adopted the *Proclamation of Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity*, which established a List of such heritage. Referring to the Japanese law, we can note that the UNESCO list can include both intangible and folk cultural properties. The inscription should be based on the notion of outstanding value "from a historical, artistic, ethnological, sociological, anthropological, linguistic or literary point of view" (1998, Regulations, Criteria). Properties can qualify for inscription if they:

- have outstanding value as a masterpiece of the human creative genius;*
- have roots in the cultural tradition or cultural history of the community concerned;*
- have a role in affirming the cultural identity of the communities concerned;*
- have excellence in skills and technical qualities;*
- be a unique testimony of a living cultural tradition; or*
- risk disappearance due processes of change.*

The question of the relationship of tangible and intangible heritage has been recently taken as a topic of discussion so as to clarify the relationship of the two UNESCO conventions, the *World Heritage Convention*, 1972, which speaks about **monuments, groups of buildings** and **sites** (in terms of cultural heritage), and the *Convention for Safeguarding the Intangible Cultural Heritage*, 2003. This latter Convention emphasises the 'intangible' processes and functions, but includes also their physical attributes to the notion of the 'intangible cultural heritage':

*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.*

Taking note of the way the concept of cultural heritage has evolved in recent decades it is obvious that there are issues in these two conventions that overlap. While the World Heritage List would focus on a living historic town, such as Marrakech, it would certainly recognise that life goes on in the town and that this life and the social functions are essential elements in the definition of the universal value of the place. In such a case, the list of oral and intangible heritage instead focuses on the activities and processes that have traditionally been and continue taking place in a specified cultural space of the town, the principal market place of Marrakech. On the other hand, many of the practices recognised in the 1998 List are not necessarily associated with a particular space but can take place anywhere.

In 1994, in the context of the World Heritage Convention, Japan hosted in Nara an expert meeting on the **issue of authenticity**. Understanding truthfulness of information sources as a fundamental prerequisite for the definition of authenticity, the *Nara Document on Authenticity* (1994) makes special reference to cultural diversity as an irreplaceable source

of spiritual and intellectual richness and the need to judge cultural heritage within the cultural contexts to which it belongs:

*Conservation of cultural heritage in all its forms and historical periods is rooted in the values attributed to the heritage. Our ability to understand these values depends, in part, on the degree to which information sources about these values may be understood as credible or truthful. Knowledge and understanding of these sources of information, in relation to original and subsequent characteristics of the cultural heritage, and their meaning, is a requisite basis for assessing all aspects of authenticity. (par. 9)*

In 2004, another UNESCO expert meeting in Nara concerned the **integration of the approaches for safeguarding tangible and intangible cultural heritage**. The declaration resulting from this second meeting recognised the importance of the 1994 Nara document in emphasising the specific cultural context of a heritage resource when interpreting its authenticity. Nevertheless the declaration also stated that this term could not be applied in the same way when assessing intangible cultural heritage even though the tangible and intangible heritages were often interdependent. In fact, in the debate, some people defending the intangible heritage openly refused to consider the idea of authenticity as it had been defined in the 1994 *Nara Document*: “as the essential qualifying factor concerning values”. The claims related to ‘intangible cultural heritage’ were justified on the basis that this was **constantly being recreated** and could therefore not be seen in the light of historical authenticity, which was understood as ‘static’. It looks evident that there should be some difference in judging authenticity of a physical structure compared with a traditional practice. However, this does not mean that the notion of authenticity in itself should be changed.

It may be worth taking a look at the etymology of the concept of ‘tradition’, which derives from Latin (*traditio; tradere, trado*), giving up, giving over, delivery, surrender, handing down, such as religious doctrine. The *Oxford English Dictionary* gives to ‘tradition’ the following definition: “The action of transmitting or ‘handing down’, or fact of being handed down, from one to another, or from generation to generation; transmission of statements, beliefs, rules, customs, or the like, esp. by word of mouth or by practice without writing.” Another word of the same origin is ‘to betray’, referred to giving up important documents in the hands of an enemy by treachery or disloyalty’. While not claiming that ‘living tradition’ should be necessarily related to ‘betrayal’, one can still note that to be alive also means change. Each generation should re-generate the values inherited from the past, and re-interpret them reflecting the notion of cultural diversity. Sometimes such re-interpretation took place in new situations, therefore calling for change.

The notion of ‘culture’ itself derives from the concept of cultivation, i.e. raising of plants and animals, training of human mind and body. It is also associated with the concept of ‘cult’, i.e. worship. The notion of ‘culture’ has been given many definitions but we can understand it to mean: “the whole way of life, material, intellectual, emotional and spiritual, of a given people”. (Frances Berenson, in Brown, 1984: 43) Cultural inheritance therefore would concern all these different aspects of culture, traditionally handed over from generation to generation. Culture in itself involves both continuity and change, and due to the intrinsic human nature expressed in creativity, traditional handing down of know-how and skills would often mean some change while at the same time building up and keeping its cultural identity. In extreme cases, such change could lead to the falsification or even extinction of cultural traditions. It may thus not be by chance that tradition and betrayal have the same origin. The question is whether a tradition has kept the essence established through continuity in time, and what is the rate of change and the

limits tolerable without losing its values. Such concepts would necessarily need to be taken into account when discussing the issue of authenticity and truthfulness in relation to the intangible aspects of heritage.

#### 4.0 Authenticity

Since 1994, much has been written about authenticity. This notion has also become fashionable as a qualifying aspect of all types of commercial and tourist products, not necessarily reflecting genuine traditions. This may in fact be one of the reasons for the reluctance re authenticity by the people dealing with the 2003 UNESCO Convention on Intangible Heritage. Another reason may be the definition given for authenticity in the earlier version of the World Heritage *Operational Guidelines*. Before the recent revision, published in 2005, the '**test of authenticity**' was referred to four parameters: **design, material, workmanship and setting**. In fact, it was seen basically in reference to the tangible material of the heritage. As a result of the 1994 expert meetings on authenticity, first in Bergen and then in Nara, the revised *Operational Guidelines* have given a new definition for the '**conditions of authenticity**': "Depending on the type of cultural heritage, and its cultural context, properties may thus be understood to meet the conditions of authenticity if their cultural values (as recognized in the nomination criteria proposed) are truthfully and credibly expressed through a variety of attributes, including ..." There follows a list which, in addition to the previous parameters, now also includes: **traditions, techniques, language** and other forms of **intangible** heritage, as well as **spirit and feeling** or other issues (par. 82), showing a much broader recognition of the different aspects of culture and heritage.

Reflecting on the above discussion on philosophies, we can recall that etymologically the concept of 'being authentic' refers to being truthful, both in terms of standing alone as an autonomous human creation as well as being a true evidence of something. The concept of truth, of course, is one of the principal issues discussed in philosophy. We can find it in the various sacred texts, such as the Bible and the Qur'an; it is discussed in the ancient Asian philosophies, such as Taoism and Buddhism; it was an essential criterion for the ancient Achaemenid kings in their policies in the Persian Empire; it is present in African thought; it is still fundamental in modern philosophical thought. In terms of human creation, over the past three centuries, the Western thinking has proposed that the truth represented by human creation, i.e. cultural heritage, should be verified in the cultural context where it has been generated. The questions related to the verification of historical and cultural truth in the cultural context had already been discussed, for example, by Ibn Khaldun in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, and by G.B. Vico and J.G. Herder in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The theory of *mimesis* can also be seen to imply, not a simple copy, but the representation and creative interpretation of a particular idea or theme. In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, Friedrich Nietzsche saw that the only way for humans to generate truth and values was through a creative process, guided by the 'will to power'. This idea would not only be referred to works of art but to all human activity, where one takes his/her full responsibility in setting forth a creative contribution. Alois Riegl coined the concept of *Kunstwollen* to indicate the relationship of human creative activity with the relevant cultural context. *Kunstwollen* also referred to the regeneration of representational forms that contributed to what could then become a 'style'.

The first of the World Heritage criteria for the definition of the outstanding universal value (OUV) refers to a "masterpiece of human creative genius". To exemplify such **human creativity**, we can select some properties from the World Heritage List, in the history of architecture in the Middle East. In their royal ensembles, the Achaemenid kings



chose sacred symbols, such as the form of 'square' already present in ancient Egypt, on which to base the design of their representative buildings. An outstanding case is the Royal Terrace of Persepolis with the palaces built in the 6<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> centuries BC. A thousand years later, the Sassanians designed Takht-e Soleyman in northern Iran as the principal Zoroastrian sanctuary implementing similar elements. The design of this ensemble reflects a conscious re-representation (*mimesis*) of some of the forms already used by Achaemenids, such as the fire temple with its perfectly square plan. Other elements include the *aiwan* with its vast round arch, and the rectangular court built around the artesian lake. With the emergence of Islam, these forms became constituent elements in the design of mosque ensembles. Particular attention was then given to the ingenious design of the dome, and the connection of the square plan of the room with the circular dome. An example of this is the mausoleum of Oljaytu, built in 1302-12 in the city of Soltaniyeh, the capital of the Ilkhanid dynasty. Its particular structural feature was the innovative design of the double dome that later became characteristic in Islamic architecture. The next phase of development includes the Timurid architecture, where an important masterpiece is the Mausoleum of Khoja Ahmed Yasawi, built at the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> century in the city of Turkestan in Kazakhstan. This multipurpose ensemble was built by Persian masters and it became a prototype for design in the capital city of Samarqand. Yet another example in the same region is the Meidan ensemble in the Safavid capital of Isfahan, created in the 17<sup>th</sup> century as a highlight of the development of this type of architecture with a wealth of refined details and colours sustaining its spiritual, spatial, and environmental qualities. Here the emphasis in the test of authenticity should be on the creative aspect, but it obviously also requires verification of the relevant historical and cultural context. Referring to this concept of authenticity, in this sense, it seems useful to refer to the definition by Paul Philippot (art historian and the former Director of ICCROM): "*the authenticity of a work of art is in the internal unity of the mental process and of the material realization of the work*". The notion of "**authenticity by creation**" emerges as the creative and innovative quality in each of these examples.

The fourth criterion for OUV refers to: "a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history". This is the most frequently used criterion and it can have different functions. It can represent a type of construction that has become a prototype, or anyway a construction that is recognized as the most representative example of a particular typology. The examples mentioned above can also be referred to this criterion, and it can also be used for "groups of buildings", such as historic towns, and sites, such as designed gardens and cultural landscapes. However, here, the emphasis in the definition of authenticity is especially in the excellence of design, and the further development and perfection of a particular typology. When dealing with a vernacular type of site, authenticity would need to be verified not only in the constructions but also in the continuity of tradition, spirit and feeling, i.e. the more intangible qualities of the place.

The third criterion for OUV refers to: "testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization", and the criterion five to: "a traditional human settlement, land-use, or sea-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), or human interaction with the environment". Both these criteria denote **material evidence of the history** of a place. The test of authenticity should thus be made in reference to this evidence and what it signifies, i.e. verification of the truthfulness of the sources of information. For example, Bamiyan Valley, where the two large Buddha figures were destroyed by the Taleban regime, was a crossroads of civilizations over many centuries. This site extends several kilometres along the valley with hundreds of caves and other evidence of its rich history. Even though the spectacular, standing Buddha statues were destroyed, the valley can still be considered to

have retained its archaeological significance as a place of outstanding and exceptional testimony to cultural activities taking place for centuries as a result of inter-cultural communication. Another question is how much it is possible or even desirable to put the fallen fragments of the Buddha statues back to their place. Yet another question is whether or not it is desirable to build another Buddha, a modern one in a suitable place in this valley! It is obviously not possible to allow re-carving a new figure going 2-3 meters deeper in the same niche, where we still have the authentic testimony of the original statue. These questions require a critical examination of all the factors in order to reach a balanced judgement both in terms of the authenticity and integrity of the place.

In the case of Mostar, the 16<sup>th</sup>-century Old Bridge was destroyed as a political act. Now it has been rebuilt with the support of UNESCO on the original site. The importance of the bridge is seen even in the name of the locality, referring to 'most' that means bridge. After the destruction of the bridge, the original parts that remained in situ were kept, but the arch of the bridge was entirely rebuilt new. The historic town centre also suffered substantial destruction and has now been rebuilt. The World Heritage Committee inscribed the site on the basis of criterion six, emphasising the significance of the site as: "a symbol of reconciliation, international cooperation and of the coexistence of diverse cultural, ethnic and religious communities". Considering that much of the original bridge and of the buildings were destroyed, the site has certainly lost part of its authenticity. On the other hand, it still retains its significance as an archaeological testimony to its history, associated with a strong symbolic value. Therefore, the most appropriate criteria would be six for the symbolic value and three for the value as exceptional testimony to the interaction of different cultures in a frontier place. In fact, both these criteria can be confirmed to meet the test of authenticity.

Writing about the relationship of the tangible and intangible aspects of cultural heritage, Prof. Nobuo Ito has stated:

*"Intangible culture is the mother of all cultures. As etymology shows, culture is the human product moulded and matured in an inspired or cultivated brain. In this sense, all kinds of culture are, in the earliest stage, intangible, and, therefore, extremely private in nature. So, many intangible cultures are apt to disappear or change to another one."*

Man has sometimes been called 'language-animal', which refers to the importance of language not only as an instrument of communication, but also to its power to assign meanings to places and things. In African traditions, man has the power by giving name to an object to assign it particular force and qualities; man can also take away that quality by de-naming it and thus removing the meaning. In traditional belief, in Finland, knowing the name of a thing implied knowing its origin and therefore also having a power over it. It is symptomatic that many cultures have given anthropomorphic names to natural features, such as the nose of the peninsula, the arms of the river, thus implying the effort to take control. God's word is understood to have created the world and everything in it. Human creativity is obviously less powerful, but the recognition of the human creative diversity by UNESCO implies that we see this to have been characteristic in all cultures and in all times. We can see that such creativity cannot simply be a question of meeting certain practical purposes, but that there is human creative spirit that inspires one to be innovative in re-interpreting and re-representing certain universal themes while responding to specific needs. In his book on *Real Presences* (1991), George Steiner has analysed language and its significance to human society. It is obvious that language is fundamental in preserving our traditions and our knowledge making it available for successive generations. Steiner states (p. 56) that:

*“Language creates: by virtue of nomination, as in Adam’s naming of all forms and presences; by virtue of adjectival qualification, without which there can be no conceptualization of good or evil; it creates by means of predication, of chosen remembrance (all ‘history’ is lodged in the grammar of the past tense). Above all else, language is the generator and messenger of and out of tomorrow. ... I believe that this capability to say and unsay all, to construct and deconstruct space and time, to beget and speak counter-factuals ... makes man of man.”*

Steiner further notes that the traditional relationship that had always existed between the word and the world had been broken by the emergence of modernity, which “constitutes one of the very few genuine revolutions of spirit in Western history and which defines modernity itself”. (p. 93) This statement is also in line with what Nietzsche intended about the “death of God” and the risk of elimination of the higher values. For Steiner, the presence of ‘Logos’, i.e. the Word, also means the presence of God, the Sacred. “All *mimesis*, thematic variation, quotation, ascription of intended sense, derives from a postulate of creative presence.” (p. 101) In ancient time, language was seen to represent the intangible or invisible, a gift of gods. Writing made language visible, and it was thus a vehicle, a ritual act allowing access to the intangible. (Herrenschmidt, 1996) The Achaemenid king, Darius The Great, reworked the Mesopotamian cuneiform writing so as to meet his wish to use Old Persian language in monumental and public declarations. The difference from the earlier cuneiform writings was in its being based on alphabetic signs and diphthongs so as to eliminate the possibility of mistakes in reading the text. Such sacred texts were intended to be read out in public. The first important example in ancient Persia is the Bisotun monument, of which the text of great political significance was copied to various parts of the empire. In fact, Iran has nominated it for inclusion to the World Heritage List in 2006.

The Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor has treated the problems faced in modern world and particularly in present-day multicultural society in relation to cultural identity and the risk of losing the capacity to generate shared values. The problems are related to: a) over-emphasis of individualism, b) the disenchantment of the world due to instrumentalisation and excessive priority given to the most economical application of means to a given end, and c) the restriction of choices by the institutions and structures of the industrial-technological society. (1991: 1-12) In his thesis, Taylor refers to the **ethics of authenticity**, deriving from Descartes and the late 18<sup>th</sup> century thought and based especially on Romanticism emphasising individuality. “Being true to myself means being true to my own originality, and that is something only I can articulate and discover. In articulating it, I am also defining myself.” (p. 29) Taylor further claims that the general feature of human life is fundamentally dialogical in character. Therefore, language in a broad sense is vital for society. In modern society one feels the need for recognition of individuality probably because of fear of losing one’s identity. The worst enemy of authenticity is its association with social conformity (p. 63). So, while modernity on the one hand involves creation and originality, on the other hand it also requires openness to horizons of significance and a self-definition through dialogue. (p. 66)

Values and significances can only be built up in communication and dialogue with the others in society, thus forming cultural identity for a community. This was the case in traditional society and can be considered an important part of heritage particularly concerning traditional settlements and many types of cultural landscapes. We can here speak of traditional **social-cultural authenticity**, which when it exists will justify the continuation of traditional forms of life and traditional treatment of the built structures. Such characteristic is particularly relevant in cases, where the traditional form of society has survived intact to our days. For example, in the case of the historic town of Harar

Jugol, in Ethiopia, where the social organisation of this Muslim community has been traditionally based on neighbourhood associations and a strong, practical and spiritual relationship with the surrounding land, forming a social-environmental whole. In modern society, the tendency has rather been towards fragmentation and a decrease in dialogue. Recognising that the regeneration of values and meanings require dialogue, the problems can clearly be seen in the loss of common horizons for shared values, which should go beyond the over-emphasis of one's personal individuality and stress common responsibilities.

## 5.0 Integrity

Another key issue in the identification and definition of a heritage resource is certainly its **integrity**. The World Heritage *Operational Guidelines* (2005) require that a property nominated to the World Heritage List meets the conditions of integrity (par. 88):

*Integrity is a measure of the wholeness and intactness of the natural and/or cultural heritage and its attributes. Examining the conditions of integrity, therefore requires assessing the extent to which the property: a) includes all elements necessary to express its outstanding universal value; b) is of adequate size to ensure the complete representation of the features and processes which convey the property's significance; c) suffers from adverse effects of development and/or neglect.*

Integrity must necessarily be related to the qualities that are valued in a particular property. We can take **the example of Bam in Iran**, inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2004 after having been seriously damaged by the earthquake at the end of December 2003. This emergency nomination was first focused on the ancient citadel, perhaps the most visible and best known feature of the site. Subsequently, after contact with the authorities, it was decided to extend the boundaries of the nominated area and also include the ancient irrigation system, the underground *qanats*, which in themselves were an important archaeological evidence of this traditional technique, as well as a vital element in the development and survival of this settlement at the crossroads of trading routes in the desert environment of central Iran. Part of the *qanats* have been in use for more than two millennia and are the fundamental basis for the existence of this oasis. They need constant maintenance and consequently are also subject to gradual change. However, some areas have been preserved as an archaeological testimony from the earliest phases. The proper functioning of the *qanats* has required and continues to require a system of strict social coordination for regular maintenance and care. The significance and protection of the area should thus be defined on the basis of vital social functions and processes, including those related to management of water resources, farming and agricultural production, trading and production of goods, residential and defence functions.

Regarding the urban areas of Bam, we can recall that, since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the citadel had only been used for military purposes and was mostly in ruins, though partly restored over the past three decades. While the earthquake clearly caused much damage, especially in the restored parts of the fortification, it also revealed some historical phases of construction that had been hidden, thus increasing the archaeological interest of the site. One of the issues in discussion after the earthquake obviously will obviously be related to the limits of restoration and reconstruction in view of the presentation of the site without losing its historical authenticity and archaeological interest. Much of the modern town of Bam was destroyed in the earthquake, and that is where over 26,000 persons lost their lives. The modern area is not part of the nominated World Heritage core zone though it is included in the buffer zone. Now it is subject to new planning and

reconstruction. The example of Bam shows how the functional integrity of the place can enhance a better understanding and clearer definition of the outstanding universal value of a place.

Another case is the James Island in The Gambia, where the nominated area consisted of the colonial forts and trading places built to protect the entrance to the river, and to facilitate traffic on this first trading route into the inland of Africa. While the nomination only concerned the extant 'monuments' as relics of the past, the justification of the inscription needed to be based on a broader definition of the site. In fact, the significance of this site is fundamentally associated with The Gambia river as a cultural route, which has motivated all the various built structures so as to facilitate the exchange of commerce and goods. The history of this activity probably started with the Phoenicians and Romans, then continuing with the Arabs, and finally with the European colonists. Today, it is always the river that has been the basic reference for the modern political definition of the country as well as forming the framework of its current economy.

The definition of the integrity was fundamental for the World Heritage nomination of Assisi, the birth place of Saint Francis in central Italy. The original nomination consisted of the Basilica of San Francesco and the walled medieval city. Subsequently, the nomination was revised by adding several monuments outside the town, critical for the spiritual maturity of Saint Francis and for the foundation of the Franciscan order. Furthermore, we can recall that nature as God's creation was of particular significance for Saint Francis. Throughout his whole life, he spent much time in nature, as is well illustrated in Giotto's fresco celebrating his preaching to birds. Assisi was also important from pre-Roman times. In the centre of Assisi, there are remains of an important Umbrian temple, later used by the Romans. The cult processes on the site generated the establishment of a communication network. Later on, as a result of the Franciscan movement, Assisi became a pilgrimage place, and the new functions generated communication routes in the entire territory. At the same time, the farming system has remained practically intact until the 1960s, since when changes in the policies have made it vulnerable for change. Due to the far-sighted urban planning in the 1950s, the municipal area has however retained its overall traditional integrity until today.

Taking an overall look at these examples, we can see that, in each case, the significance of the World Heritage nomination was enhanced by an in-depth examination of the **social-functional integrity** of the site in the light of its values. In the case of Bam, the site was initially proposed as a monument but it was then redefined as a cultural landscape. As a result, its values were consolidated and extended. The core zone was defined so as to cover a large part of the most important *qanat* area, while the rest of the oasis, including the new town of Bam, was enclosed in the buffer zone. In the case of The Gambia, the river was the driving force being a major trade route, and the forts and trading places were a documentary evidence for the past functions and processes. The property was considered of outstanding universal value due to the way it provided exceptional testimony to crucial periods in the evolution of world trading and slave traffic. In this case, the boundaries of the nominated area were limited to the structural elements, but the buffer zone covered a long strip of land along the river, thus symbolically reinforcing the significance of the site as a cultural landscape. In the case of Assisi, the question was again about a cultural landscape, which has several different parameters. It is significant for having preserved traces of the communication network and the buildings as testimony to the social, spiritual and economic functions that defined its system of land use. Most importantly, the landscape represents the spiritual association of the life of Saint Francis and the relationship of the Franciscan movement with nature.

The **social-functional integrity** of a place is referred to the identification of the functions and processes on which its development over time has been based, such as those associated with interaction in society, spiritual responses, utilisation of natural resources, and movements of peoples. The spatial identification of the elements that document such functions and processes helps to define the **structural integrity** of the place, referring to what has survived from its evolution over time. These elements provide testimony to the creative response and continuity in building the structures and give sense to the spatial-environmental whole of the area. **Visual integrity**, instead, helps to define the aesthetic aspects represented by the area. It is on such dimensions of integrity that one can base the development of a system of management so as to guarantee that the associated values would not be undermined. In many cases, it is not enough to focus on the limited World Heritage area, but rather take into account a vaster territorial context. This was the case, for example, in the Valley of Noto, in Sicily, where the eight historic urban areas were integrated into a territorial management master plan. The purpose here was to place emphasis on the economic and functional aspects of the regional economy and relevant land use, which could not be suitably managed if only limited to the nominated World Heritage sites.

## 6.0 Relativity of values and identity

In a small booklet, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, now Pope Benedict XVI, has published a series of speeches dealing with values in contemporary Europe (2005). During his predecessor, John Paul II, Cardinal Ratzinger had the task of defending the doctrine of the Catholic Church. In many ways these speeches are related to doctrinal problems. He discusses the issue of individual freedom vs. shared values in society, and the fashionable question of relativism distinguishing present-day multicultural society. He summarises the evolution that has characterised European qualities and values, particularly those founded on Christianity, the dominating religion in Europe. Three issues emerge as the most essential. The first is the need to recognise human dignity and human right as absolute values that must be respected. In fact, he objects to clonation and genetic manipulation. The second issue deals with marriage and family. He considers the family, formed of a legal union of man and woman, as the core nucleus of society, which needs to be defended. Finally, he is concerned about respect for what is perceived as sacred and holy. Ratzinger maintains that freedom of opinion should not be interpreted so as to destroy other people's faith. In the same line, respecting other people's faith and beliefs should not lead to total relativism and annihilation of one's own values.

Pope Benedict XVI is an intellectual with deep cultural awareness, and he is seriously concerned about the trends that seem to go towards 'absolute relativism'. This trend was already feared by Nietzsche one century earlier, i.e. the annihilation of higher values and the abolition of human dignity. Historically, this tendency can be taken to the ethnocentrism that emerged with European colonialism, i.e. interpreting the values of other cultures in terms of one's own. Cultural relativism emerged, as a counter act, from the German Enlightenment and the development of anthropology in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Simplifying this view, all beliefs would be equally valid; truth itself would be relative to the situation, the context and the individual concerned. He is concerned about the tendency by cultural relativists to refuse that the values associated with Western culture could have universal meaning. In fact, cultural relativism has at times been confused with moral relativism and, taken to an extreme, it would mean that there are no universal moral standards and no values. Instead, while recognising that each culture will have its own dignity and value structure, we can claim that there are issues that can be taken as a

measuring stick against which specific qualities and characteristics of particular cultures are ponderable.

We can also observe that the **identity**, on which the values and the individual 'personality' of a particular culture are based, cannot be defined in isolation. Rather, identity is generally founded on the cross-fertilisation of different cultures and values. Therefore, for example, Western culture has certainly obtained its characteristics as a result of contacts and interactions between different cultures, such as those existing in Europe itself, but also with those in the Middle East and North Africa. European identity is thus the result of pondering and regeneration of the values over time. We can also note that even **science** has not been without cultural linkage. In his *Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, Thomas Kuhn has argued that science is not simply a logical outcome of rationality, not something objective outside value judgements. Rather, the question of understanding natural phenomena is necessarily related to human understanding, experienced in the light of new paradigms resulting from intellectual revolutions. Science therefore is not just rational, but it is also based on cultural parameters. This debate has also relevance in the World Heritage context and particularly in the identification of the outstanding universal value, implying a degree of absolute.

Taking the discussion back to cultural relativism, we may agree with the idea that each culture has its own characteristics and identity. Obviously the meanings of related issues, such as cultural heritage, need to be verified in relation to relevant cultural contexts. On the other hand, this does not mean that all values should be equal. The question is about identifying **universally valid issues** in relation to which the specific qualities can be weighed. It is in this light that we should see the **ICOMOS Gap report**, where the thematic framework is presented as an attempt to identify issues of universal validity for the evaluation of the nominations. Recognising the **creative diversity** of human mind, the question is to identify genuine/authentic examples of such creative and spiritual responses. Considering also the notion of **cultural diversity**, we can observe that different cultures can have generated comparable responses. It is therefore necessary to raise the issue of **representivity**, making sure that the **significant responses** to particular themes in the different cultures are adequately represented on the List. At the same time, it is not enough to select the most representative, but also to agree about the **minimum quality criteria** required for World Heritage properties, as well as making sure about integrity of the nominated areas. Critical judgement is required based on research and documentary evidence to decide about the quality, integrity and values of the cultural responses represented.

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