

World Heritage and the Concept of Environment – Ethical and Aesthetic Perspectives

ABSTRACT

The need for an integrative relation in the protection and preservation of heritage viewed through the concept of sustainable development has placed man, nature and culture through the concept of the environment in a comprehensive relationship in which each category of world heritage (both cultural and natural) is considered through the synthesis of material and immaterial values, whereby sustainable development represents a unifying paradigm of ethical and aesthetic approach in understanding the heritage science. The concept of environment is not just a scenography for one of the heritage categories, but it contains ethical and aesthetic values that classify it as a world heritage. This paper draws special attention to the complex relationships within the architectural heritage seen as equally material (physical, tangible) and immaterial (“living”, dynamic, untangible). The aesthetic experience of architecture is a key point of sustainable access to heritage. On the other hand, ethics opens up issues of goodwill and freedom, problems of duty and purpose, the relationship between morals and actions that we take in the environments. All of the above points to the necessity of re-examining the heritage policies, bearing in mind the distinct influences and consequences of the modern era.

KEYWORDS

World Heritage, the concept of environment, ethics and aesthetics of sustainability, tangible and intangible values

INTRODUCTION

The commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the adoption of the *Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972)*¹ is an occasion for a solemn review of the issue of world heritage preservation seen in the global context of contemporary challenges. The world has changed drastically since 1972, facing the consequences of increasingly intensive modernization, industrialization, urbanization and globalization.

Climate change, global warming and biodiversity loss, air, water and soil contamination, terrorism, wars and military conflicts, global health issues, poverty, access to food and hunger, children's poor access to healthcare, education and safety, human rights violation, migration, sexual harassment, corruption, etc. – countries cannot fight these global challenges individually, but it is necessary to join forces to achieve transnational goals, collaboration of international institutions, national governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), universities, local communities, enthusiasts and creative individuals is needed.

In addition to the general picture of today's world being very dark and pessimistic, humanity still manages to resist numerous challenges of the modern age, many battles are won rather than lost. In terms of protection and preservation of world heritage, great progress has been made during the 50 years of the Convention. We can talk about the constant evolution and improvement of approaches in the World Heritage domain, thanks to the *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*,² which are updated every two years in order to follow the challenges of the modern age and enable the updating of the implementation of the WH Convention.

Following the policies of UNESCO, everything we undertake today with heritage should be sustainable, smart and inclusive. In the general heritage policies, the *Policy for the Integration of a Sustainable Development Perspective Into the Processes of the World Heritage Convention*³ is particularly emphasized – a document that seeks to integrate a sustainable development perspective into the World Heritage Convention, ensuring policy coherence with the UN sustainable development policies and the 2030 Agenda.⁴ The main goals of the WH Convention, seen through identifying, protecting,

1 UNESCO, *Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972)*, Paris: UNESCO, <https://whc.unesco.org/archive/convention-en.pdf> (accessed June 2023). Hereinafter referred to as the *World Heritage Convention* or *WH Convention* or *Convention*.

2 UNESCO, *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention (2021)*, Paris: UNESCO, WHC.21/0. July 31, 2021, <https://whc.unesco.org/en/guidelines/> (accessed June 2023). Hereinafter referred to as the *Operational Guidelines (1977–2021 depending on the year of issue)*.

3 UNESCO, *Policy for the Integration of a Sustainable Development Perspective into the Processes of the World Heritage Convention (2015)*, Paris: UNESCO (WHC-15/20.GA/INF.13). This policy document was adopted by the General Assembly of the States Parties to the Convention at its 20 Session (Paris, 2015), by its Resolution 20 GA 13.

4 General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, October 21, 2015, Paris, <https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda> (accessed June 2023).

conserving, presenting and transmitting cultural and natural heritage properties of Outstanding Universal Value, contribute significantly to sustainable development and the well-being of people. This especially refers to the achievement of environmental sustainability and inclusive social, cultural and economic development in order to foster peace and security. The *2030 UN Agenda for Sustainable Development* recognizes the importance of the protection and safeguarding of the world's cultural and natural heritage within its 17 Sustainable Development Goals – where the achievement of inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities and human settlements is especially highlighted in Goal No. 11.⁵

The perpetual effort to integrate the sustainable development perspective into the framework of the WH Convention resulted in greater and more intense social mobility. Many stakeholders who are responsible for the implementation of the Convention have intensified their activities, especially when it comes to education, not only of experts, but of ordinary citizens (local community), which until today has resulted in a change of view on what we consider heritage. This is further discussed in this paper, especially regarding the concept of environment, which in the context of safeguarding heritage is not considered only from the position of heritage properties that have Outstanding Universal Value, but from the angle of ethical and aesthetic perspectives that advocate for the “democratization“ of the concept of world heritage.⁶

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK, RESEARCH METHODS AND MATERIALS

The theoretical framework is related to the consideration of today's very current and complex concept of environment, which unites the areas of natural, built and social environment (fig. 1). Environmental research methodology includes interdisciplinary and up-to-date approaches applied by many disciplines from ecology, biology, economics, sociology, politics to architecture and urban planning. The main goal of environmental research refers to looking at connections and relationships regarding the question: How nature works and how human activity affects the environment (both natural, built and social), which has an impact on the formation of sustainable environmental approaches and practices.

Although the study of environments is a very wide-ranging field,⁷ research into the complex role of the environment in the context of heritage science and World Heri-

5 *Ibid.* 14

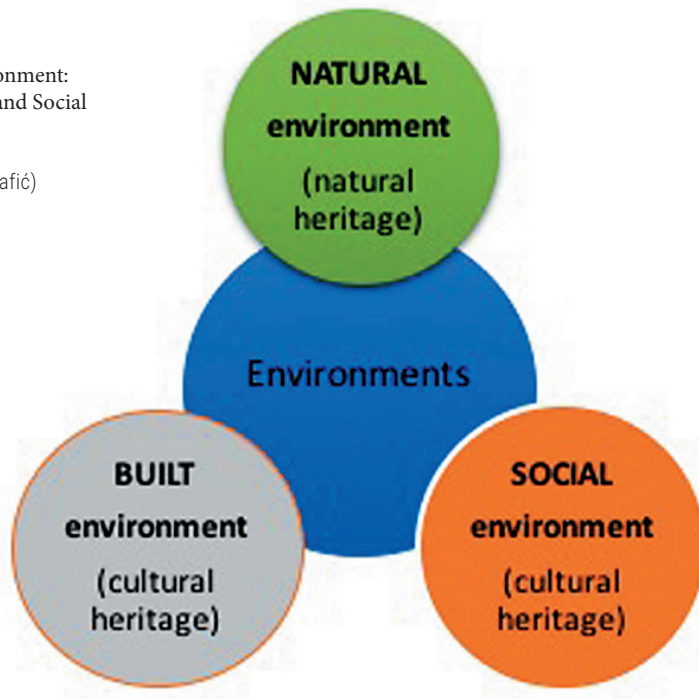
6 A. Pastor Pérez, D. Barreiro Martínez, E. Parga-Dans, P. Alonso González, “Democratising Heritage Values: A Methodological Review” *Sustainability* 2021, Volume 13, Issue 22, 12492. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su132212492> (accessed August 2023).

7 Environmental studies are mostly focused on the topics of air and water pollution, soil contamination, environmental health, changes in biotic and abiotic world, etc., and concern the natural environment, while topics related to the built and social environment are on the second place. https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/environmental-science/researchtopics?gad_source=1&gclid=Cj0KCQiAgqGrBhDtARIsAM5s0_ns4U0IOH0U4eUZagaIAFgrfXCxX8VhhHBB-pQtob6xyC9bUVY9spQaAijOEALw_wcB (accessed June 2023).

Fig. 1

Types of environment:
Natural, Built and Social
Environment

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tage policies⁸ represents a significant methodological approach that unites the entire heritage: cultural, natural and mixed (sites that contain elements of both natural and cultural significance) heritage, but also tangible and intangible heritage. The main task of the WH Convention is to define the type of natural, cultural or mixed sites which can be considered for inscription on the World Heritage List.⁹ The main criteria of the WH List are uniqueness and diversity. In order for a site to be inscribed on the WH List, it must have Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) and fulfill at least one of the ten selection criteria. The Criteria for selection are explained in the *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*, which is the main working tool on World Heritage besides the original text of the Convention.

Starting with the 1960s, the relocation of the Nubian Monuments from Abu Simbel to Philae, which were moved in their entirety to a nearby location due to the creation of the Aswan High Dam and Lake Nasser – was the main impetus for the reaction and drafting of the WH Convention document. In contrast to what was ongoing in the 70s at the time of the birth of the Convention, the view on heritage has changed in many ways. First of all, a big change happened in 1992, when the WH Convention, as the first international legal instrument, recognized and established ‘cultural landscapes’ as a new

8 UNESCO, *The World Heritage Policy Compendium* is a database of World Heritage policies. It is organized around the 5 Strategic Objectives of the Convention – “5 C’s”: Credibility, Conservation, Capacity Building, Communication and Communities. See: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/compendium/?action=about> (accessed June 2023); https://whc.unesco.org/en/compendium/?action=theme&id_theme=1,2,3,4,5,6 (accessed June 2023).

9 Hereinafter referred to as the WH List.

category of heritage,¹⁰ which eliminated the strict division into natural and cultural heritage. With the adoption of the *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage*¹¹ in 2003, the values of heritage that is not tangible, material and physical, but ‘living’, immaterial and dynamic, were highlighted. The ICH Convention pointed to the invaluable importance of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) that refers to the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge and know-how, transmitted from generation to generation within communities, created and transformed continuously by them, depending on the environment and their interaction with nature and history.¹² The concept of environment is recognized as a significant value which in many categories of heritage represents an essential bond that connects nature and culture, but also changes the entire relationship of ethical and aesthetic perspectives in the understanding of heritage.

The adoption of the ICH Convention significantly changed the view of heritage, which was paradigmatically viewed through the concept of ‘monument’ – seen as a tangible cultural asset that is movable and immovable (including movable heritage, such as: paintings, sculptures, furniture, etc. and immovable heritage like: historical buildings-architecture, monuments, archaeological sites, etc.). This view of the WH Convention as the most successful international instrument for the protection of heritage did not refer only to cultural heritage seen from the perspective of the monument paradigm, but to natural heritage which was seen as a “closed” concept according to which a certain property can be called natural heritage if it fulfills one of the established Selection Criteria and in whole or in part represents the Biosphere Reserves. Thus, the Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB Programme), which was launched by UNESCO in 1970, was a significant instrument of UNESCO’s policies, the views of which largely agreed with the views of the WH Convention, and with the help of the MAB Programme, the implementation of the WH Convention on Natural Heritage Sites that are included in the WH List was coordinated. Therefore, obtaining the status of the Biosphere Reserve was to a large extent an advantage when a property was to be included in the WH List.¹³ For example, in the same year 1987, Sian Ka’an in Mexico received the status of Biosphere Reserve and was inscribed on the WH List.¹⁴ In this way, Sian Ka’an as a “monument of nature” received dual protection.

The deviation from the observation of heritage through the paradigm of monuments, seen as monuments of culture or monuments of nature, was made precisely by the estab-

10 UNESCO, *Operational Guidelines* (1994), Paris: UNESCO, <https://whc.unesco.org/archive/opguide94.pdf> (accessed June 2023), Points 35–40 which designate inclusion of cultural landscapes in the WH List, 13–15.

11 UNESCO, *Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage* (2003), Paris: UNESCO, (Edition 2022), https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/2003_Convention_Basic_Texts-_2022_version-EN_.pdf (accessed June 2023). Hereinafter referred to as *ICH Convention*.

12 UNESCO, *Media Kit for 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage*, Sixth session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, November 22–29, 2011, Bali, Indonesia, <https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/15164-EN.pdf> (accessed June 2023).

13 UNESCO, *Technical Guidelines for Biosphere Reserves* (2022), <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000375692> (accessed June 2023).

14 Sian Ka’an (Mexico) – WH property based on natural criteria (vii) and (x). <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/410/> (accessed June 2023).

ishment of the category of cultural landscape, which improved the implementation of the WH Convention by establishing democratic ethical overlaps with the ICH Convention. The greatest contribution was seen in connecting ethical and aesthetic values through the concept of cultural landscapes,¹⁵ where the components of the human way of life and cultural expression permeated with the natural environment from which they are inseparable.

At almost the same time as the birth of cultural landscapes, the concept of 'sustainable development'¹⁶ became popular, especially since 1992, when the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) was held in Rio de Janeiro. From the 1990s to today, the concept of environment is a key element for research and recognition of the complex values of natural heritage sites, mixed heritage sites and cultural landscapes, which represent places where sustainable development practices are monitored and examined in an almost laboratory-like scientific manner. However, there are many environments in the world that are not on the WH List,¹⁷ although they possess aesthetic and ethical values seen through uniqueness and diversity. Different forms of environments (natural, urban, social – which includes, for example, the digital environment as one of today's most prominent forms of social environment) represent domains for further improvement and examination of manifestations of culture and nature that are in close and cause-and-effect relationships. Therefore, their interactions can be seen through different methodological approaches in researching the importance of the environment for future ways of implementation of the WH Convention and its Operational Guidelines.

THE CONCEPT OF ENVIRONMENT – THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CULTURE AND SUSTAINABILITY

Bearing in mind the previously expressed evolution of the perspective of understanding the concept of World Heritage, the architectural heritage that is considered in the context of the concept of environment in this paper is not only seen as a physical, material heritage that can be touched, physically destroyed, damaged and threatened,

15 UNESCO, Cultural Landscapes, <https://whc.unesco.org/en/culturallandscape/#1>, (accessed June 2023).

16 The term 'sustainability' was used for the first time in the modern sense of the word in 1983 by the United Nations Commission on Environment and Development, and in 1987 this Commission produced the Brundtland Report entitled "Our Common Future, in which 'sustainable development' was defined as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs in the future. At the UNCED Conference (United Nations Conference on Environment and Development) in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, known as the Earth Summit, several important documents and agreements were adopted, the most important of which are: the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, and Agenda 21, which institutionalized the strategy and goals of sustainable development. At the Rio+20 Conference (2012), a resolution known as "The Future We Want" was reached by member states. Among the key subjects agreed on were poverty eradication, energy, water and sanitation, health, and human settlement. In 2015, the UN General Assembly adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) or Global Goals for the period 2015–2030. These are 17 goals related to the world's global challenges such as health, poverty, hunger, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, economic development, education, peace and justice, etc.

17 The most recent example of a cultural landscape nominated for inscription on the WH List in 2022 is the Bač Cultural Landscape. <https://fub.rs/kulturni-predeo/> (accessed June 2023).

Fig. 2

Cultural heritage:
The Acropolis
of Athens and its
monuments – 1987
inscription on the
World Heritage List,
criteria (i), (ii), (iii),
(iv), (vi)

(<https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/404>)



Fig 3

Cultural Landscape:
Rio de Janeiro:
Carioca Landscapes
between the
Mountain and
the Sea – 2012
inscription on the
World Heritage List,
criteria (v), (vi)

(<https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1100/>)



but special attention is addressed to the intangible components of the architectural heritage (in the sense of separate buildings and the whole given in the form of urban environments) which carries within itself symbolic, historical, anthropological, ethical and aesthetic meanings that have essential significance for the community.

Architectural heritage represents the built environment, which is inextricably linked to the social environment. Although urban environments are viewed independently – separated from natural environments, let's keep in mind that cities were created by insert into nature through the ever-advancing process of urbanization. Therefore, the built environment constructs an important relationship with the natural environment, as well as with smaller parts of the natural environment (parks, forests, green areas, trees, greenery, green roof gardens) located within the city.

Ethics and aesthetics are philosophical disciplines, both stemming from man's anthropological relationship to the world, and therefore in terms of safeguarding World Heritage, ethics indicates moral values, standards and decision making, while aesthetics is focused on critical thinking about natural, artistic and cultural elements of heritage. Ethics and aesthetics both deal with issues of value, and when we consider the ethical and aesthetic perspectives of understanding world heritage, its preservation and protection, we are talking about axiology and the constant examination and re-examination of the value of heritage, as well as what we classify as heritage.

Shortly before Socrates, Protagoras, one of the leading sophists, in the 5th century BC, said: "Of all things the measure is man, of the things that are, that they are, and of the things that are not, that they are not."¹⁸ Protagoras' statement focuses on the concept of value – according to which our reality is a relative category that is presented to each person in a different way. This thesis of Protagoras can be seen today as a statement about the importance of tolerance, democracy and respect for other people's opinions, cultural expression of diversity and different views on the world. It is a statement that introduces subjectivism and relativism, and shows us that true human knowledge about nature and the truth in the world as a whole is not possible. However, this statement gives us an optimistic hope that man should be a responsible, reasonable and moral being who creates a socio-political and cultural reality in which he establishes good and fair value relations and systems. That is why people need laws, conventions, recommendations, principles and rules in order to make a consensus between individual and public interest – good and well-being.

The World Heritage Convention, as the most significant instrument for protection of cultural and natural heritage, views the entire world heritage through a dichotomous relationship between nature and culture,¹⁹ but the essence of the contemporary ethical perspective by which this convention is applied is not aimed at the separation of natural and cultural heritage, which is further defined by categories of heritage

18 Platon, *Protagora – Gorgija*, Beograd 1968; Platon, *Theaitet*, 36.

19 Article 1 and Article 2 of the WH Convention. UNESCO, *op. cit.* 2. <https://whc.unesco.org/archive/convention-en.pdf> (accessed July 2023).

Fig 4

Italy is the country with the most WH sites inscribed on the WH List (59 in total, of which 6 belong to natural heritage and 53 cultural heritage sites).

Scrovegni Chapel has been inscribed on the WH List as part of the serial site serial site “Padua’s fourteenth-century fresco cycles” – inscribed in 2021, criteria (ii)

(<https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1623>)



Fig 4

Venice and its Lagoon – 1987 inscription on the World Heritage List, criteria (i), (ii), (iii), (iv), (v), (vi)

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(where cultural heritage includes: monuments, groups of buildings, sites and cultural landscapes – as category that includes both cultural and natural features; and natural heritage includes: natural features of biological and physical formations, geological and physiographical formations and natural sites or precisely delineated natural areas), but the key to understanding the ethical essence of the WH Convention lies precisely in the understanding of unity and the need for integral protection, whereby views on culture and nature permeate and give a unique picture of a complete and comprehensive ethical and at the same time aesthetic effort to protect, interpret, popularize, and sustainably use the assets of nature and culture (fig. 2, 3).

Culture itself is seen in the complex interactions of the natural, built and social environment, for which we are all responsible and in charge in order to preserve the priceless values of the world heritage for future generations and the times that are ahead of us.²⁰ Nowadays, we are aware of the fact that the spheres of nature and culture intertwine with each other, although we live in a deeply technical world. Despite our claim that we have largely overcome, but also threatened nature, nature still remains the one that provides us with existential resources for life. Without the preservation of nature, there is no culture, and without the preservation and construction of cultural values, there is no sustainable action in the natural, built and social environment.

Today, there is still a disproportion in terms of theoretical considerations and the very application of inclusive and sustainable integration of culture within the framework of UNESCO's heritage policies. From the moment when the UN World Commission on Environment and Development adopted a report called "Our Common Future"²¹ in 1987, when the concept of Sustainable Development was defined primarily as an economic balance between the consumption and production of resources that will not harm the life and survival of future generations, the basic questions of sustainability were focused on the preservation and protection of the diversity of the natural environment and its resources, and only later in the third millennium did cultural issues begin to occupy an increasingly significant place in Sustainable Development policies.

The concept of sustainable development applied to the sphere of world heritage protection advocates an inclusive and integral approach that includes economic, technological, social, ecological and cultural components with the common idea of balanced consumption of the world's resources (whether it is the sustainability of natural and cultural resources, or access to basic resources in food, education, health, culture, reduction of poverty, violence, wars, etc.). The integration of the world policy of sustainable

20 UCLG, "Culture: Fourth Pillar of Sustainable Development", Committee on Culture for 2011–2013, https://www.agenda21culture.net/sites/default/files/files/documents/en/zz_culture4pillarsd_eng.pdf (accessed July 2023).

21 UN World Commission on Environment and Development, *Report on the World Commission on Environment and Development: Our Common Future* (1987), New York: United Nations – World Commission on Environment and Development, <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/5987our-common-future.pdf> (accessed July 2023).



Fig 4

Historic Center of Urbino –
1998 inscription on the World
Heritage List, criteria (i), (iv)

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Fig. 5

An urban environment in Rome
– The neighborhood around the
streets: Villa Balestra and Via
dei Monti Parioli, Via Antonio
Gramsci, Via Sebastiano Conca
and Via Pietro Paolo Rubens

(© I. Kuletin Čulafić)

development into the domain of world heritage care is, in a word, focused on the fight for a healthier, more ethical, more humane and more inclusive life.²²

Sustainable development represents one of the biggest issues nowadays, based on three spheres, that is, three pillars of sustainability: Environmental, Social and Economic. This three-pillar paradigm originates from the 1980s, when the theoretical concept of ‘sustainability’ was formed in a historical sense.²³ Three-pillar dimensions seen through: economic growth, social inclusion and environmental balance, place the area of culture in the social pillar, however, the matter is far more complex because in terms of heritage, culture appears and permeates all three environments: natural, built and social.²⁴

In the Sustainable Development policy, culture is seen as an element that shapes social development processes and people’s behavior patterns, while for cultural heritage policies, culture is the basis and driver of development seen through the “5C’s”. In both cases, culture is an important influencing factor that primarily forms the built (urban and architectural) environment and social environment, but also directly affects the natural environment. The cohesion of cultural elements in all three types of environment marks better opportunities for preserving the value of these environments, where people within the community participate in the promotion of creativity, useful and sustainable use of modern technologies, industry, business, with a significant emphasis on education – as one of the main factors in raising the general awareness of individuals and communities about the importance of the natural, urban and social environment for the entire future of the planet and people.

INTERDEPENDENCE OF ETHICAL AND AESTHETIC VALUES AND THE WORLD HERITAGE POLICIES

The WH Convention recognizes cultural heritage that has Outstanding Universal Value from the point of view of history, art and aesthetics, science, ethnology or anthropology, while the Outstanding Universal Value of natural heritage Convention looks at it from the point of view of aesthetic and natural beauty, science or conservation. However, we must be aware that when we talk about the totality, i.e. the totality of the works of history, science, art, ethnology and anthropology, then works of nature that reach different scales of aesthetic, scientific and conservation criteria – many works of nature and culture possess the stated values, but are not found on UNESCO’s WH List, which does not mean that UNESCO’s criteria

22 UNESCO, *Policy for the Integration of a Sustainable Development Perspective into the Processes of the World Heritage Convention* (2015), Paris: UNESCO, (WHC-15/20.GA/INF.13).

23 B. Purvis, Y. Mao, and D. Robinson, „Three pillars of sustainability: in search of conceptual origins“, *Sustainability Science* (2019) 14:681–695, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11625-018-0627-5> (accessed August 2023).

24 I. Kuletin Čulafić, Visions of Architecture in the Context of Environmental Aesthetics, in *Conference Proceedings of Second International Conference SmartArt: Art and Science Applied: Experience and Vision*, ed. Milan Prosen, Faculty of Applied Arts, Belgrade 2022, 87–105. <https://smartart-conference.rs/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/SmartArt-2021-2-086.pdf> (accessed August 2023).



Fig. 6 Built environment in Belgrade consisting of the following streets: Niška, Sredačka, Ljubostinjska, Požarevačka, Tomaša Ježa, Vojvode Dragomira and Mileševska (former Sava Kovačevića Street). Today's view of Ljubostinjska Street – on the right side is the building that was built on the site of the demolished "Sava Kovačević" Primary School



The building on the site of the former "Sava Kovačević" elementary school, corner of Ljubostinjska and Niška streets, Vračar, Belgrade, built during the 90s



Built environment in Sredačka Street, built during the 90s



The rest of a piece of green area where there used to be a memorial bust of the national hero, commander and participant of the National Liberation Struggle, Sava Kovačević

should be “loosened” in order to introduce democracy into UNESCO’s policies. On the other hand, we should think about “opening up” the concept of understanding world heritage, which can contribute to the improvement of education and research methodologies in the field of heritage.

Great attention in UNESCO’s policies is devoted to the values: tolerance, respect for cultural expressions of minority groups, democracy, freedom of expression for all inhabitants of the world, equality, openness, transparency, etc., and for this purpose, “5’C” – strategic objectives: Credibility, Conservation, Capacity-building, Communication and Communities, were created. These objectives of the WH Convention are exclusively concerned with monitoring the nominations on the WH List and ensuring the credibility and balanced WH List (fig. 4).

In addition, there are still many forms of heritage, primarily personal, intimate, but also collective heritage that is significant for individuals, smaller groups and communities. There are forms of heritage that are crucial to our daily lives, but which will never (and should not) be found on the WH List. However, those forms of heritage constitute a valuable view on heritage that uses methodological material and methods of researching the environment and atmosphere created by the interaction of nature, architecture and culture (fig. 5).

Here I will cite a personal example of the change in aesthetic experience during the perception of the environment, which arose as a result of the breakup of Yugoslavia in the 90s, bad practices and non-functioning policies for the protection and preservation of the urban and social environment, which was an important constituent of tangible and intangible heritage. I was born and grew up in Vračar in Belgrade, an area whose built environment has been drastically changed, aesthetically and ethically ruined and seriously damaged in the last thirty years. Not only did significant material elements that constitute my memories, as well as the memories of my neighbors, friends and residents of that area disappear in that environment, but that area itself lost numerous historical, artistic, aesthetic, social, emotional and anthropological characteristics (fig. 6).

Formerly, at the corner of Ljubostinjaska and Niška Streets, there was the “Sava Kovačević” Elementary School for pupils from grades 1–4. In front of the school, next to the main entrance, in a small park-like environment, there was a memorial bust of the national hero, commander and the National Liberation Struggle participant Sava Kovačević. Every new school year, on Republic Day on November 29, a new generation of first-grade students took the pioneer oath in front of the monument to Sava Kovačević, thus becoming pioneers. Generations and generations of pioneers in their sideboards probably still keep photos recorded during this solemn moment in an environment designated by historical, anthropological, sociological, ideological and aesthetic factors. In the 1990s, the aforementioned “Sava Kovačević” Elementary School was demolished, and along with it the monument to Sava Kovačević. A residential-business and fitness center was built on that site in the manner of horrible postmodern anti-aesthetic architecture, after the demolition of the school, pupils from grades 1–4 moved to the school building in Vojvode Dragomira Street, which

was intended only for grades 5–8 until then. Soon in 2002, the school changed its name, restoring the old name from before the Second World War, the same thing happened with the neighboring street, which stopped bearing the name of the national hero Sava Kovačević and returned to its former name of Mileševska. This testimony speaks of the memories that bind us to a certain urban and social environment, to a certain historical time and era of our existence. In this example, we see how the experience of the environment can include a small space bounded by the streets of one or several urban blocks. That environment have a high ethical-social value for community members that is related to the material, physical and aesthetic components of heritage, but especially to those intangible components of heritage that are easily perishable and at the same time related to the material built environment that has been transformed or that has disappeared.

This is where we come to the role of the concept of social environment, which is inextricably linked with built, i.e. urban environment. The communication links established by the members of a community are of great importance for the formation of a social environment. Social environment is intrinsically connected to the constitution of certain personal and general attitudes and to the formation of the concept of value itself. Values arise when a certain number of individual social attitudes are integrated into one more general attitude that is common to a larger number of social phenomena. By achieving this kind of integration, a value is formed that becomes a determinant for a wide range of individuals' behavior – and it is related to what individuals, groups, communities in the broader sense of society strive for and want to achieve, and these are often abstract ideas: good, justice, well-being, i.e. what is considered valuable, significant and desirable.²⁵ Therefore, differences in values represent a key aspect of the diversity of societies, communities and cultures.²⁶ It is important to point out that the values characterized by a certain social environment do not only represent differences between different societies (Asian, European, African – a position that is represented in most of UNESCO's heritage policies), but there are significant differences that can be identified even within one society, small group of people or community. That is why the addition of the fifth 'C' in the form of Community in 2007 was a very significant step in the opening of UNESCO's heritage policy in the implementation of the WH Convention, where the important role of the communities in everyday life, management, promotion and development of World Heritage was recognized. The local communities as bearers of a World Heritage property are recognized as key actors in the process of identification, management and sustainable development of a heritage property. For this reason, it is important to strengthen the involvement of local communities through strengthening the dialogue that can significantly contribute to decision-making and greater collaboration and mobility between the various stakeholders involved in the heritage preservation process.

25 N. Rot, *Osnovi socijalne psihologije*, Beograd 1994, 43.

26 The Council of Europe, *Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society* (2005), Faro: CoE; <https://rm.coe.int/1680083746> (accessed August 2023).

CONCLUSION

Nowadays, there is an increasingly present tendency to “democratize” and open up the concept of World Heritage, as what we can call heritage. The professional public is divided on this issue, while the prevailing opinion is that such a democratic view of heritage can seriously threaten and damage the credibility and value standards, the ethics of the profession and institutions dealing with heritage protection. First of all, UNESCO and its governing bodies do not approve of this “open” view of heritage, but rather protect the credibility of the World Heritage List, guided by the prescribed ten Selection Criteria for inclusion on the WH List according to which a certain heritage site must have Outstanding Universal Value and meet at least one out of ten selection criteria.²⁷ Therefore, the essential determinant of what we can call heritage can only be seen through Outstanding Universal Value and the mentioned ten Selection Criteria, while numerous forms of heritage (either cultural or natural, tangible or intangible) that are important and significant for the life of communities remain outside the ethical and aesthetic position of evaluation.

We can conclude that UNESCO’s policies favor “vertical” i.e. qualitative application of the WH Convention, which is defined by legal acts, recommendations and initiatives, while on the other hand there is a whole range of heritage that is not included in UNESCO’s evaluation, and can be characterized as a tendency for “horizontal” i.e. by quantitatively expanding the perspective on World Heritage. It is quite clear that the quantitative application of the WH Convention cannot cover all people and their communities, but it is useful to note that the democratization of heritage is a long-term process (Table 1) and has influenced the view of heritage to change over time since the introduction of the concept of “cultural landscapes” (1992),²⁸ adoption of the *Nara Document on Authenticity* (1994), ratification of the *Convention on the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage* (2001), ratification of the *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* (2003), establishment of “5Cs” – strategic objectives, establishing a framework for post trauma recovery and reconstruction – contrition of the *Warsaw Recommendation on Recovery and Reconstruction of Cultural Heritage recovery* (2018), until the global pandemic crisis that froze the world in 2019 and caused millions of deaths pointing to the fact that heritage can serve no one if people’s health is threatened.²⁹

The tendency for the democratization and universalization of cultural heritage leads us to think about how the concept of World Heritage has evolved towards a better and more humane view of heritage, which today includes above all the crucial goal of sustainability. The ethical perspective is always complex because it seeks to find a balanced path that includes different stakeholders and their points of view, which UNESCO in its world heritage development policies should constantly review, so that human society continues to develop in accordance with what was started in 1948 by

27 UNESCO Selection Criteria: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/criteria/> (accessed August 2023).

28 See the important initiatives given in table 1.

29 UNESCO, *World Heritage in the Face of Covid-19*, Paris: UNESCO, 2021.

signing the United Nations *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* – paying particular attention to Articles 22–27, which include economic, social and cultural rights, in order to achieve general healthcare, well-being and standards of good living, but also personal dignity and free development of individual personality.³⁰

Finally, we can conclude that nature and the natural environment constitute the greatest common heritage of the world, which stands in close interdependence with the built environment and social environment. Faced with the numerous challenges of today's age, we are becoming more and more aware of the value of these environments and their interpolations, interpenetrations and overlaps, which form the significant foundations on which we must base good heritage policies. Precisely because we live from those environments – the resources for our lives are within them, then we live in environments – there are our homes and friends, dear places that bear witness to shared and intimate social histories and connections. Environments are places of our memories, places that have special values for us (emotional, intellectual, historical, aesthetic, etc.),³¹ places we love and where our every day life takes place. Environments are places of history and culture, from which our life draws meaning, and within these environments we develop our identity and need for expression.

Table 1

Date	Main events and initiatives related to the evolution of the implementation of the World Heritage Convention
1972	Adoption of the <i>Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage</i>
1975	▪ Ratification of the <i>WH Convention</i>
1978	▪ First Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention (created to coordinate early additions to the WH List)
1992	▪ Cultural landscapes (the concept of 'cultural landscape' included by WH Committee as a category of world heritage that represent a "combined works of nature and man" designated in Article 1 of the WH Convention)
1994	▪ Adoption of the Global Strategy The Nara Document on Authenticity
1997	▪ Proclamation of Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity (UNESCO has launched programme concerning Proclamation of Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity, which has started the instrumentalization for establishing the concept of 'intangible heritage')
2002	▪ <i>Budapest Declaration On World Heritage</i> , (Enhance WH Program by promoting strategic objectives – "4 C's": Credibility, Conservation, Capacity-building and Communication)
2003	▪ Ratification of the <i>Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage</i>
2005	▪ <i>Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society</i> (Faro Convention)
2007	▪ The 'Community' was added as "5Cs"
2018	▪ <i>The Warsaw Recommendation on Recovery and Reconstruction of Cultural Heritage recovery</i>
2022	50 th Anniversary of the <i>WH Convention</i>

30 UN, Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Paris: UN <https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/2021/03/udhr.pdf> (accessed August 2023).

31 J. O'Neill, A. Holland, A. Light, *Environmental values*, London, New York 2008, 1.

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СВЕТСКА БАШТИНА И ПОЈАМ ОКРУЖЕЊА/ЖИВОТНЕ СРЕДИНЕ – ЕТИЧКЕ И ЕСТЕТСКЕ ПЕРСПЕКТИВЕ

Скуп који је одржан у децембру 2022. године на Архитектонском факултету Универзитета у Београду под називом „Образовни програми: Будућност светске културне и природне баштине. Знање-Комуникација-Презентација“ поводом обележавања педесет година од усвајања Конвенције о заштити светске културне и природне баштине (1972–2022), окупио је међународне стручњаке који се баве наслеђем и представљао је значајан подстицај за институције на Балкану у погледу прожимања искустава, сагледавања перспектива даље сарадње и унапређења деловања и пракси у свету који се суочава са бројним изазовима савременог доба. У том светлу овај рад разматра кључна питања везана за етичке и естетске погледе на концепт Светског наслеђа и примену Конвенције у условима савременог глобалног доба.

Једно од најактуелнијих питања данашњице тиче се постизања Одрживог развоја који дотиче све сфере савременог живота. Сталном свеprisутном популаризацијом и укључивањем парадигме одрживог развоја у политике очувања наслеђа, уочава се потреба да се трипартитна подела на три стуба одрживог развоја (економија, друштво и екологија односно животна средина/окружење) ојача наглашавањем улоге културе која би се додала као четврти чинилац значајан за одрживост данашњег глобалног друштва.

Рад се бави разматрањем концепта окружења тј. животне средине (енг. *environment*) која је кључна за развој људских заједница, односе међу људима и однос људи према живој и неживој природи. У раду се концепт окружења разматра кроз три врсте окружења: природно, изграђено и социјално, која се налазе у узајамној међуповезаности и представљају домене који су од кључне важности за постизање глобалног циља Одрживог развоја. Природно, изграђено и социјално окружење карактеришу нашу садашњост и будућност, а праћење и реаговање на промене које настају у тим окружењима је од изразитог значаја за нашу егзистенцију, друштво, економију, здравље и културу.

У раду су наглашене етичке и естетске перспективе преиспитивања појма Светског наслеђа, у контексту актуелних питања која предочавају проширење, демократизацију и тенденцију за универзализацијом концепта Светског наслеђа које се поред Унескових политика, може посматрати и на отворенији начин који је близак обичним људима – становницима заједница од којих највише зависи сама пракса очувања материјалног и нематеријалног наслеђа.

Нарушавање шума, река, језера, разних предела, али и историјских делова града има етичке, естетске и културне последице, пре свега зато што једно окружење поседује веома сложен и деликатан скуп вредности које су од кључне важности за појединца и заједницу. У питању су различите естетске, етичке, еколошке, историјске, културне, економске, друштвене, политичке вредности и слично, које карактеришу неко наслеђе (природно или/и културно, материјално и нематеријално) које у великом броју случајева неће бити препознато и вредновано кроз критеријуме Конвенције која наслеђе сагледава искључиво кроз Изванредну универзалну вредност и десет критеријума, чиме се неки облик наслеђа квалификује за упис на Листу светске баштине.

На крају долазимо до закључка да је окружење тј. животна средина у којој живимо, у ужем и ширем смислу (ниво кварта у којем живимо или ниво планете коју настањујемо), представља за нас највећу драгоценост и вредност, јер управо у контексту те микро или макро средине ми формирамо своју личност, социјалне везе са другим људима, везе са природом (биљкама, животињама и атмосферским климатским елементима), у тој средини ми привређујемо, развијамо се и усавршавамо се и као појединац и као заједница. Стога је важно вршити стално преиспитивање политика наслеђа у настојању да се осигура одрживији, здравији, инклузивнији и етичкији живот људи и наше планете.