

Protection of tangible
and intangible cultural heritage –
contemporary development directions

SCIENTIFIC EDITORS

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Introduction

Cultural heritage is a notion made of a broad catalogue of designates which are classified both as tangible and non-tangible heritage, and which is subject to continuous changes and transformations. In the contemporary digitalized world, there are, on the one hand, numerous possibilities which allow for a more effective protection and documentation of heritage as well as better knowledge about it and how to convey it from past to future generations. On the other hand, there are increasing risks to cultural heritage protection. Thus, cultural heritage, understood broadly and from various angles, including: legal, cultural, social, political, and economic – has become a subject of numerous academic dissertations written within different academic disciplines. However, a strict limitation to one specific discipline is not an appropriate approach when it comes to the analysis of cultural heritage. Such an approach does not allow for a holistic interpretation of complex and multi-faceted problems that characterize cultural heritage. Therefore, it is necessary to opt for an interdisciplinary approach, which allows us to better grasp the complexity of the problems which are related to the topic of cultural heritage. In the context of progressing globalization, it is also difficult to restrict the issue of cultural heritage to specific states, nations, regions or local communities. This, however, does not mean that the origin of their heritage should not be adequately acknowledged. Thus, it is recommended that at the international level, platforms of cooperation between the states, international organizations, non-governmental organizations are established to ensure protection of heritage of local, regional, national or state communities. Importantly, a part of their heritage, which reveals traits of universality, constitutes the world heritage, whose protection, preservation and conveyance to future generations is in the best interest of international heritage. Similarly, from the legal perspective, heritage is subject to protection both at the international, national and local levels.

Admittedly, interest in cultural heritage is noticeable not only at the institutional or scientific level, but also, and increasingly more often among the societies. This is evidenced by a large number of museums, which are visited by many people all over the world. In addition, there is a clear correlation between the development

of tourism and visits to historic sites and buildings, organization of numerous exhibitions, festivals, symposia, and cultural events, which are, more and more frequently, of international recognition. However, it is very risky to allow for an excessive commercialization of heritage and reducing it to a fast-moving commodity. Cultural heritage should also not be subjected to the needs of the contemporary world, which would lead to some excessive interferences, and consequently its transformation, or even worse, disappearance of its original form. Therefore, a certain balance needs to be found between the preservation of heritage in its intact form and its excessive transformation, adjustment to the needs of the contemporary world or commercialization.

The goal of this monographic publication is to present a wide spectrum of contemporary problems and challenges that are related to cultural heritage, as well as to point out to the directions for development of tangible and non-tangible cultural heritage through an interdisciplinary approach, as well as from an international, national, regional and local perspective.

The issues covered in this publication are of interdisciplinary nature. They focus on topics that are related to the current challenges and directions for development of cultural heritage, both tangible and non-tangible, both in the international, national, regional as well as local perspective. The tackled problems are both abstract and concrete. The publication provides analyses of the protection of cultural heritage and historic buildings, the principle of cultural heritage protection, the principle of common access to cultural heritage, the principle of integrity of cultural heritage, international cooperation and the policy of cultural resources protection, as well as tangible and non-tangible heritage. It analyses these phenomena from the perspective of law at the international, national, regional and local levels, also taking into consideration legal orders operating in various states, as well as preventive actions in the scope of cultural heritage protection. Theoretical analyses are supplemented by the analyses of specific case studies. Analyses of urban cultural heritage and its contemporary problems in the area of conservation are completed by case studies of a former medieval town of Skrzydlina, while the problems of heritage of universities is illustrated by the case study of the Jagiellonian University in Kraków. Lastly, protection which assumes preventive activities, is discussed on the example of a theatre.

The wide spectrum of the discussed issues, listed above, depicts the multidimensionality and interdisciplinary character of the problems of cultural heritage. Thus, it calls for a postulate to the academic community to carry out an interdisciplinary debate on the issues related to cultural heritage, and to the international, national, regional and local legislators to take into consideration the postulates of