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New Values of Cultural Heritage and the Need for a New Paradigm Regarding its Care

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Abstracts

Français English

Le concept de valeurs du patrimoine culturel est une idée vivante. Actuellement, «patrimoine culturel» est un terme plus large, qui inclut l'héritage naturel et artificiel. La prise en charge complexe du patrimoine culturel dans le domaine des arts visuels implique un ensemble de valeurs nouvelles, des histoires, des idées, des traditions, des symboles, des attitudes et des réalisations. La conservation et les activités muséales diverses ont un côté pratique fondamental, qui doit être réalisé en collaboration avec des réflexions théoriques. Le nouveau rôle du conservateur-restaurateur, agissant comme un "défenseur" des valeurs intrinsèques et le bien-être d'un objet donné dans le patrimoine matériel et / ou immatériel est affirmée comme celui d'un "chef d'orchestre" du processus de conservation. La valorisation joue un rôle crucial dans la reconnaissance, dans la prise de décisions stratégiques et dans les négociations complexes consacrées à l'entretien du patrimoine culturel, tâche très difficile dans la théorie ainsi que dans la pratique de la conservation. A présent, la protection et la gestion des ressources du patrimoine culturel forment une garantie de viabilité maximale à long terme, de préservation des valeurs et des fonctions pour des générations présentes et futures, et jouent un rôle important dans un système social durable.

The concept of cultural heritage values is a living idea. Currently, "cultural heritage" is a broader term, which includes natural and man-made legacy. Conservation and diverse museum activities have a fundamental practical side, which must be realised in conjunction with theoretical constructs. The complex care of cultural heritage in the field of visual arts involves a set of new values, stories, ideas, traditions, symbols, attitudes, and accomplishments. The new role of the conservator-restorer acting as an "advocate" of the intrinsic values and well-being of a given object in tangible and/or intangible heritage is affirmed as that of an "orchestrator" of conservation process. Valuation plays a crucial role in recognition, strategic decision-making, and in complex negotiations devoted to the care of cultural heritage, which can often be very difficult in theory and also in conservation practice. We now understand that the protection and management of cultural heritage resources are a way of ensuring their maximum possible vitality, values and functions to the benefit of current and future generations, attributing them an important role in a sustainable social system.

Index terms

Keywords : valeur, valorisation, patrimoine, conservation, prise de décision, decision making

Keywords: value, valuation, cultural heritage, conservation, criteria, decision making



Full text

Introduction

- 1 The multi-faceted term “cultural heritage” is close to the essence of the roots of humanity, even though its definition dates back only to the Enlightenment. However, it had been naturally expressed in all cultures over millennia, when it meant natural patrimony, the legacy of many generations.
- 2 The new philosophy of cultural heritage combines cultural and natural heritage, in line with the UNESCO Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, adopted in 1972 (UNESCO 1972). The concept is strictly associated with the universal understanding of heritage; its innovativeness rests in the continually developed concept of common preservation of the most precious sites of cultural and natural importance (Fig. 1).

Fig. 1 Parc dei Monti Lattari



Cultural heritage as culture and nature with complex values in Valle Dragone in regional Parc dei Monti Lattari, a picturesque valley with churches near Ravello in Costa Amalfiana, Italy.

Credits: © Iwona Szmelter

- 3 Visual art is widely believed to be a product of culture, as people have been expressing the significance of their thoughts, lives and their hopes through art from prehistory to the present day. The aim of this paper is to evaluate the theory and the development of ways to preserve the current broad spectrum of cultural heritage with a focus on the legacy of visual art. Contemporary public appreciation of cultural heritage is closely tied to the value of heritage, which results in a new appreciation, related to social, economic, environmental and scientific decisions, affecting both social roles and functions. New approaches to the care of visual arts, both material and non-material (tangible and intangible legacy), require some re-orientation regarding their theoretical aspects. Also needed is a formulation and revision of value and valuation, which takes into account new conditions, challenges and needs.

The transformation of cultural heritage values for conservation

- 4 The diversity found in the contemporary world is based on multi-faceted societies with their cultural richness. It is necessary to understand and implement solutions to foster the role of cultural heritage as a factor of cohesion in such diversified communities. Currently, the digital revolution, information and communication technology, tourism, and mass transportation are inducing rapid societal changes in an unprecedented way. Specialists are aware of the difficulties and responsibilities from the point of view of both history and the evolution of conservation

practice. The awareness results from the attitudes to the cultural heritage, which are embedded in Western civilisation. As Gillman has summed it up: “[I]t has become a convention, in the West at least, to label ‘art forms’ practices from which we seek the intrinsic value of aesthetic experience [...]. Expectations about practices and values in visual art, architecture, acting, music, dance, recitation and ritual develop over a long period of time, differing radically from culture to culture and, within cultures, often cross class and gender”(Gillman 2010).

- 5 Conservation theory is currently preoccupied with the question of personal and group identity – more than any other time in the history of conservation. Some elements of our identity are given, whether through biology or involuntary association, whereas others are freely chosen. Importantly, our roles are sources of not only meaning but also responsibilities. As Raz has framed the issues, groups too have an identity “defined by their culture, by their collective memory, and by their common responsibilities, and arising out of them”, yet collective identities “like individual characters, tend to be a mix of good, the bad, and the indifferent” (Raz 2001) (Fig. 2 and 3).

Fig. 2 Exposition of different values



Historical, collective memory value with co-existence of age value and historical context in the house where Christopher Columbus resided in Genova, Italy.

Credits: © Iwona Szmelter

Fig. 3 Example of historical value



Conservation of a historical inscription on the reverse side of a modern painting by Piotr Powtorowski.

Credits: © Iwona Szmelter

- 6 Real-life heritage is quite far from the interpretation of cultural heritage in the twenty-first century, in the context of globalisation and “money ethics”. Professional conservators particularly in recent times would like to facilitate understanding and appreciation of cultural heritage and foster public awareness and engagement in the need for its protection and conservation.
- 7 Some research focuses on the twofold meaning of cultural heritage. Tangible heritage: movable/immovable (the movable including libraries, archives, and objects; the immovable including archaeology, buildings, landscape and heritage sites). Intangible heritage: identity, memory and unique crafts, stories etc.

State of play in the visual art legacy; the cultural turning point

- 8 Visual art legacy plays a vital role in the processes of forming values and consolidating communities. The ancient civilisations of both the Middle East and Egypt had developed a system identified as memory, expressed by the canon of style of individual dynasties and entire eras. Ever since the Renaissance, ancient art has been the common “cultural heritage” that is universal and over-national, consequently all nations are its heirs. The phenomenon of visual art depends on freedom and “trans-culturality”, as befits the greatest achievements of human civilization and the human environment. In his book about *art Instinct*, Dutton has written about the human being and the peculiar human impulses and drives that underlie our culture – which seem to be eternal (Dutton 2009). It is a positive message. The art of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries is dichotomous; it is a field in which we find the classical disciplines as well as novel and atypical works, experiments and attempts at new means of expression. From the point of view of the requirement to pass this heritage on to future generations, the characteristic lack of any rules and respect for the technical principles of the construction of a stable and permanent work may generate disquiet. Clemence Greenberg argued that each art form has its own system for the judgment of aesthetic (Greenberg 1961: 101-8).
- 9 Conservators are critical thinkers (Fig. 4 and 5). In practice, they widely share a rational belief that any departure from traditional techniques in visual art results in a greater risk to long-term survival of the work of art. This belief has dominated western “high” culture for more than two hundred years, since the period of Romanticism and its characteristic cult of artistic freedom.

Fig. 4 *Portrait of Young Lady* by Juliusz Langer, 1874



Painting in need of conservation treatment.

Credits: © Iwona Szmelter

Fig. 5. *Portrait of Young Lady* by Juliusz Langer, 1874 (2)



Re-establishing the aesthetic expression of an artwork by retouching.

Credits: © Iwona Szmelter

- 10 Unfortunately, conservation practice was not modified in accordance with the needs of new art, for example, in the case of impressionist painting. Consequently, the legacy of the Impressionists has been significantly altered by the use of conservation methods popular at the time, such as the use of wax compounds, which alter the optical qualities and are clearly unsuitable for the preservation of the delicate and elusive expression of impressionist painting. As a result of the appearance of conceptual art, from the times of Marcel Duchamp and Dada, the philosophical aspect broadened the field of heritage care. Due to the introduction of kinetics, performance, and ready-made and ephemeral elements of art that accompanied them, modern artwork (including also new digital media) can easily be destroyed by the application of the wrong methods. The incorporation of all of those forms of expression makes the heritage of modern art a form of amalgam, which is perhaps an especially complex blend of tangible and intangible elements (Fig. 6).

Fig. 6 Example of historical-religious values



The Black Madonna, a medieval icon under the care of the Polish conservator and scientist Wojciech Kurpik, who adapted the icon into a cult object in the pilgrimage cloister in Czestochowa, Poland.

Credits: © Iwona Szmelter

Re-orientation in the philosophical and sociological background of preservation

- 11 We have observed a mental breakthrough in traditional knowledge about art and the care of the legacy of visual art. We stand before an alternative: do we accept the fact that art is free and follow it in its development, or should we defend the inherited artistic canon of “fine art”? In the experience of the author, academic centres and conservation institutions attempt to combine both possibilities. They defend the canon for the tangible heritage, but not through discriminating against modern art, and rather by investigating the possibilities of the coexistence of the two types of approaches. Thus, proper practice may stem from respecting the complexity of knowledge, holistic linking of art and knowledge, optimum linking of science and practice and the complementary treatment of tangible and intangible elements. A number of artists and art critics seek a solution through analysis of visual experience using modern humanistic texts of Walter Benjamin, Michel Foucault and Jacques Lacan. Experiences in the field of semiotics, post-structuralism, psychoanalysis, cultural studies have become a source of cognitive inspiration, rather than traditional aesthetic theories, rooted in idealism. Modern visual art cannot, however, be shut into the framework of specific theories. It is diversified, global in its variety and interdisciplinary with regard to its form. Intrinsically free, art can move between various worlds, rejecting dogmas and definitions. When we are concerned with the longevity of artwork, and with preservation of the legacy of man-made civilisation and with sustainable conservation, our thinking must be flexible, both classical and contemporary.
- 12 The twentieth century and its post-structuralist theory of the preservation of cultural artifacts was made up of components of various origins, for example, fundamental studies starting with nineteenth-century theories, twentieth-century theories in the spirit of historical relativism, by Alois Riegl and Max Dvořák, and Cesare Brandi’s aesthetic theory of restoration – are now a classic body of theory.
- 13 At the beginning of the twenty-first century, Salvador Muñoz Viñas and a number of other scholars compiled various texts while interpreting the economic issues of “sustainable conservation” and the functions of various stakeholders (Muñoz Viñas 2005). Current studies in information and knowledge processes address various topics, including a legal framework and the role of ethics, which are indeed very important. They are presented more extensively and discussed in greater detail in a recently published collection of texts on the complex care of visual art legacy including modern and contemporary art (Szmelter 2012a, 2012b).
- 14 The phenomenon of cultural heritage as a form of the natural human need to create art is an expression of the spiritual evolution and development of man. This requires us to broaden the activities of conservation to encompass many new tasks, introducing an interdisciplinary model

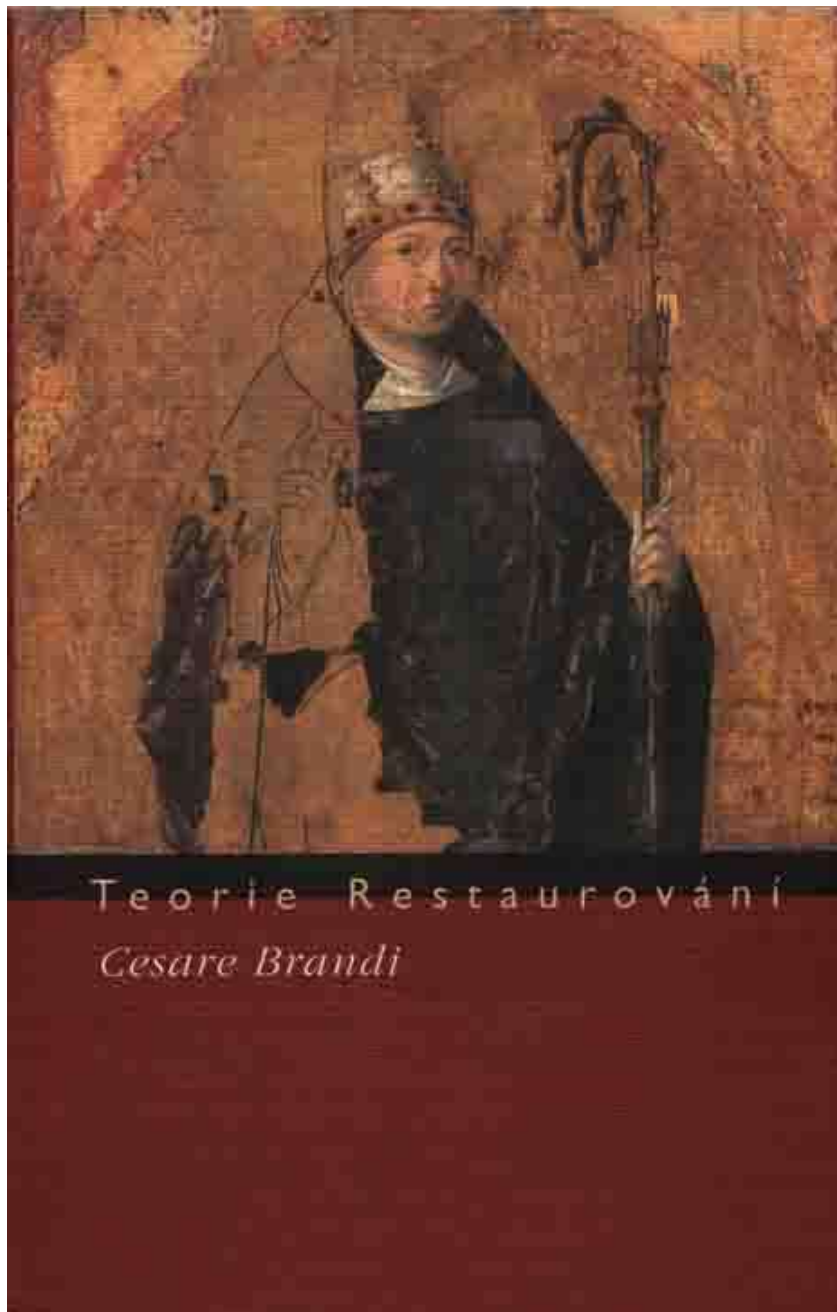
of visual art preservation, a diversion from the well-mapped paths of action and routine. Contemporary diversity and expansion of cultural heritage results in an expansion of the aims and methods of its preservation that extend beyond traditional principles formulated with a Eurocentric bias. The idea of preservation was significantly shaped during meetings and conferences. A turning point was the conference culminating in the Nara Document (ICOMOS 1994), which embraced a different idea of preservation in the Far East, where the message and idea of the work of art dominated over issues of original materiality. Owing to that event, the term “authenticity” came to be re-defined in the latter half of the twentieth century. This is analogical as applied to those modern art works, in which the dominant mode is conceptual.

- 15 The new character of cultural heritage and the complexity of the task do not absolve conservators from responsibility, as it is their duty to provide optimal care for these forms of art. Art care is founded on the *primum non nocere* principle and the respect for art’s plurality. Although preserving authenticity as a postulate relates to material, other concepts of authenticity have been introduced, such as authenticity of the image and of the idea, which safeguard authenticity. Considering that artistic expression also exists in strictly conceptual areas, the conservator must know how to preserve it for future generations. It should be emphasized that empathy and understanding of artwork are based on recognition and documentation of the specific nature of the work.

Value and valuation in the care /conservation of cultural heritage

- 16 The new way of examination of cultural heritage and artwork has to start from the analysis of its idea and form, defining its values: art-historical value (including the aesthetic situation), the context and conceptual dimension, and its socio-economical role.
- 17 The Austrian art historian Alois Riegl in his so-called “first modern theory” (Riegl 1982) distinguished between two kinds of monuments: intentional and unintentional and then divided values into the four main categories. According to Riegl, unintentional monuments can have three main values: (art) historical value, age-value, and use-value.
- 18 In Riegl’s theory, historical value started in the Renaissance with the development of official measures of preserving ancient buildings, for example with the role Raphael as conservator under Leo X. Age value starting from the seventeenth and lasting up to the twentieth centuries could be linked with the actual traces of age in artworks and buildings, such as decay, which resulted in picturesque aesthetics and genuineness. It contributed to the aura and authenticity of an object, and created a heritage context for nostalgia. As such, age value contradicts historical value. Both historical and age value are considered “commemorative values or values of the past”; Riegl contrasts these with the two “present-day values” of use-value and art-value. The context of a use value is derived from its utilitarian service to society. The followers of Riegl had interpreted use-value in the economic sense, but currently, Rieglian use-value seems to be much closer to the needs of a “reflective society” and social access regarding cultural heritage.
- 19 Finally, art value, in the eyes of the beholder considered the most important, is in the monument represented by *Kunswollen* (an artistic will or talent). Art-value is restricted to intentional works of art, and later many authors referred to this value as “aesthetic value”.
- 20 Six decades later, Cesare Brandi in his *Theory of Restoration* was of the opinion that the restoration of works of art consists of the identification and recognition of a piece of art in its physical form and in its twofold aesthetic and historical polarity – with a view to transmitting this to the future (Brandi 2006). In the light of Brandi thoughts, the aim of restoration is a critical act of interpretation of artwork. This is an act of interpretation, which is generated by the viewer’s perception of the object, and is close to phenomenological interpretation of art. In the opinion of the Polish philosopher Roman Ingarden, the structure of artistic values comprises an objective scale of the reception of a work of art, while the aesthetic values and experiences are in the subjective sphere (Ingarden 2005).
- 21 The recent re-discovery of the ideas of Brandi and Riegl are very popular and parallel the need for new multi-criteria analysis related to authenticity based on the provisions of the Venice Charter and admissibility of the full reconstruction. Both authors were unknown in the Anglo-Saxon countries for many years, because their texts were not available in translation; but now they are appreciated and popular in academic conservation centres in all regions (Fig. 7).

Fig.7 *Theory of Restoration*, a detail from the cover of the Czech translation



Detail from exhibition *Brandi and his thoughts* in Warsaw, 2007.

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- 22 The interpretation of the evolving notion of authenticity in conservation of cultural heritage changed in the late 1990s. Since then, the notion of authenticity has been the subject of an ongoing debate. The early ethical concept of authenticity, as indicted in the Venice Charter, laid a greater emphasis on the tangible quality of cultural heritage. This concept was challenged for inconsistency and causing practical problems in the conservation of the heritage of the Far East, modern and contemporary art, modern historic buildings, even some of the monuments on the World Heritage List, in all regions of the world; in particular those with irregular wet climate, perishable structures, such as wood constructions, tempera ornaments, etc. As a result, the notion of authenticity was revised following the adoption of the 1994 Nara Document on Authenticity (ICOMOS 1994), in which the new notion of authenticity is a mixture of tangible and intangible attributes, such as traditions, techniques, language, as well as spirit and emotions.

Proposed structure for valuation

- 23 The value and benefits of integrating interdisciplinary professions play a crucial role in generating knowledge about cultural heritage. We have observed that the theory of preservation and generally Social Sciences and Humanities have evolved to recognise the state of play of civilisation. Investigations within the fields of science and art can be instrumental in bringing societal values and scientific evaluations into closer convergence. The aim is to achieve social

access to cultural heritage, with better and sustainable functioning of societies and appreciation of art (Fig. 8).

Fig. 8 Example of cultural-historical and socio-economic values in ancient space



Exhibition in an Etruscan corridor in Perugia in every day-use by citizen of Perugia.

Credits: © Iwona Szmelter

- 24 Values and valuation in the care and conservation of cultural heritage, with a special focus on visual art legacy, are concerned with the critical investigation of both intellectual and practical approaches to key issues in the field of conservation. Cultural heritage as a whole and each monument have their own, individual array of values. Two general categories of values may be key factors in conservation, as listed below – with a few ‘mutual’ active fields for interactions including many sub-criteria. The proposed structure of valuation below is based on two main categories – cultural-historical values and socio-economic values (Szmelter 2012b) –here modified to current needs (Table 1).

Table 1. Cultural-historical values and contemporary socio-economic values based on current state of knowledge and introducing new terms

CULTURAL-HISTORICAL VALUES	CONTEMPORARY SOCIO-ECONOMIC VALUES
relative artistic value	educational value
aesthetic (visual appeal) and age value	economic value (heritage as source of social well)
historical value, including memorial value (memory of place important for the image of place; human memory)	functional value, use value (in the "Rieglian" "sense as document of past human activity – idea and performance; witness of historic events)
identity value (role of cultural heritage in the identity of society, both global and regional)	social value (cognisance, knowingness)
scientific value (heuristics in creative thought, discoveries and new theories)	social access value (as a platform for reflective society)
rarity value, uniqueness	political value, regional value
authenticity value (identity and veracity of the work)	operational value (usefulness of record to its creator or receiver in current operations – also called administrative value)
emotional value (provocation of empathy)	newness value (satisfies the natural human pleasure and curiosity about the new)
integrating value (fostering the reflective capacity of society, innovative participatory approaches)	situational value (influences on evaluations of tourism)
associative/symbolic value (cultural and political, sacral, spiritual value)	financial value "value of value"

creative value (the work of human creative genius – artistic or technical)	potential value for future exploitation and generation of value
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25 Why is this long list of values important? Value and valuation have rich intellectual and historical basis, particular as key factors in conservation projects, of recognition, diagnose and the goals of preservation of cultural heritage.

26 The role of valuation, taking into consideration current technological developments, depends – according to the vision of the Getty Research Institute – on the study of the threefold issue: "object, value, canon" with new and broader context the interpretation of object (Getty 2013) (Fig. 9).

Fig. 9 Scientific value and growing knowledge about the triptych *The Last Judgement*, attributed to Hans Memling, National Museum in Gdańsk



Digital composition of results of non-invasive research of the Apostles in the central panel. Examination with VIS, MNIR (2265 nm), upper right; X-ray, IRR (1200 nm), lower left; VIS, SMIRR X-ray IRR, lower right. Result of research project WKIRDS-CHARISMA-MoLaB (2010-2013).

Digital comp. Roman Stasiuk, © Archives WKIRDS-Warsaw

27 This interpretive process—and the terms themselves—must be examined in a new way. In a strategic decision-making process, researchers as well as stakeholders are engaged in research, diagnosis and transfer of practical solutions. For example, the diversity of cultural heritage was studied in 2012, using mills as the subject (Bazelmans et al. 2012). A team of researchers in the Cultural Heritage Agency in Amsterdam (RCE) formulated the value of mills heritage in the Netherlands, based on criteria that can be grouped into five issues: cultural historical values; architectural and art historical values; situational and ensemble values; integrity and recognisability; rarity.

28 The RCE researchers have developed a standard for assessment criteria, whereby the heritage values of a mill as a building can be clearly and unequivocally identified. The assessment is based on the above-mentioned five principle criteria, which are broken down into sub-criteria. The system of valorisation “rests on disciplines of art and history, spiritual, geographic, socio-economic, administrative, and technological developments also play a part, as do a building’s integrity and rarity” (Bazelmans et al. 2012).

29 The valuation and strategy of decision making in preservation is a type of research that depends not only on the team of conservators but also on co-operation with curators, scholars representing different traditions in science, heritage research areas and heritage conditions.

Translating valuation goals into tasks

30 The management of cultural heritage demands our engagement with several issues, including:

- remaining open to the new meaning of cultural heritage, wider than “monument”
- implementing the ideas; “thinking globally, acting locally”

- placing emphasis on local economic activity, such as developing rural tourism (well-organized and secure facilities for tourism that do not pose a threat to the substance of heritage)
- educating, disseminating knowledge in order to broaden the social base; promoting a new understanding of heritage (Fig. 10).

Fig. 10 The Château Grimaldi in Antibes, in southeast France



Based on the ancient acropolis of the Greek city of Antipolis, Roman castrum, and a residence of bishops in the Middle Ages, the castle houses a the modern art collection. Here, we have an example of many values: cultural-historical social-situational and touristic. The castle, amazing collection and surrounding nature has an additional value of memory. In 1946, it was the home for six months of Pablo Picasso and his family. Today, it houses The Pablo Picasso Museum.

Credits: © Iwona Szmelter

- 31 The implementation of these issues requires deliberate action that will produce diagnoses that meet the real needs of societies; they promote a broader worldview and are very dynamic in embracing current challenges of civilization.
- 32 The inclusion of these issues in the broader training of the conservator are essential to serve global as well as local and regional needs. The current problem is that the worldview of conservation students corresponds in reality to the world the year their teachers were born. It seems to be a groupthink tendency to have a conservative worldview in the conservation profession, one that does not participate in social dialog.

A broader role of conservator as an ‘orchestrator’ and ‘advocate’

- 33 Conservators should act in broader fields, as “orchestrators” in the field of new preservation strategies and decision making, especially because of the interdisciplinary nature of their work (Avrami et al. 2000). Research centres, such as the Getty Conservation Institute (GCI) in Los Angeles, and Faculty of Conservation and Restoration of Works of Art, Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw have put forward an interpretation of “sustainable conservation” and introduced the role of various stakeholders, including the new role of the conservator-restorer acting as an “advocate” for the intrinsic values and “well-being” of a given object with respect to its tangible and/or intangible heritage. Defining an outlook or attitude regarding the significance of the artwork – which will be decisive in determining whether a work of art is mortal or immortal – is of crucial importance. According to these new approaches, decisions regarding the care of a piece of art should not be confined to existing specialization profiles. Art historians, conservators, anthropologists and natural scientists should come to a decision based on interdisciplinary research. The elements of this process are, step-by-step: first and foremost, prevention (as in medicine, *primum non nocere*), recognition, identification, understanding, interpretation, diagnose. The interdisciplinary concept of preservation establishes a new role of curatorial conservation/restoration, arrangement and presentation of an artwork and its value.

An approach to authenticity

- 34 The questions of whether a work or object is original, to what degree it is authentic and how its values are expressed are crucial factors that can determine the conservation and/or restoration or even reconstruction of objects. This defines their status in a collection and the strategies of preservation, exhibition and storage. The basic question requires the conducting of studies and documentation. These will define what kind of work it is, whether it is stylistically homogeneous, whether it is a palimpsest and to what degree it communicates values, ideas and material (taking into account the bipolar nature of the work – in other words the structure and the record of an idea in the material, carrying information of the thought and intention of the author of the work).
- 35 One cannot arbitrarily apply traditional evaluations and deontology. Chris Caple observed that “objects, and functional objects in particular, are seen as real objects [...], created for a specific aim and based on a certain idea. Like a written source or a theoretical tract, all objects, and even functional items, are both a record of the concrete human condition as well as requiring interpretation in order to understand their function”(Caple 2000) (Fig. 11).

Fig. 11 The new role of educational value in the museum for contemporary art and a "reflective society"



Social access and participation of viewers in the large-scale installation *Ueberorgan* by Tim Hawkinson, in the hallway of the Getty Center Museum, Los Angeles, 2007.

Credits: © Iwona Szmelter

- 36 The preservation of atypical works, therefore, requires knowledge and erudition, analysis and awareness of their values and authenticity across the whole range of their meanings. An obvious challenge for collectors as well as people engaged in museum work is finding the answer to the question of the boundary of authenticity. It is easy to make mistakes in this area before the decision to acquire an object (Szmelter 2010).
- 37 It is enough to observe that in contemporary art there exist both the traditional forms of visual art as well as more modern forms. Their message and idea are tangled with their non-material character as performance art, digital art, and sometimes ephemeral and hybrid forms of art. This is not, however, a collection that can be treated freely and lightly dismissed.

Identity and “Identicity” in cultural heritage

- 38 Innovations derive from the continuing discussion on the ethics of conservation, concerning the values and functions of objects and the role of conservation practice in the preservation of a new scale of values of the work. This concerns above all the axiom of the correct recognition of these values and responsibility for the decision to acquire an object for the collections, and, where necessary, to refrain from its acquisition.
- 39 The definition of the boundaries of authenticity in the care of the cultural heritage is closely connected with the various concepts of authenticity, which have many levels both culturally and

chronologically. Depending on the epoch, and dominating tendencies and even tastes and fashions, there are various ways of understanding value and authenticity.

- 40 Apart from material authenticity, knowledge of the terms “authenticity of idea, preservation of the message and function” is also required in order to express the value and significance of the preserved heritage. A number of authors thinking in traditional terms have used the term “authenticity” when referring strictly to the material constitution of a work, and proposed “identity” as a term very suitable for the character of the contemporary cultural legacy. Unfortunately, identity is not included in the conservation normative frame. Kapelouzou proposed a new term – “identicity”, which “may be introduced in the place of “authenticity” as a concept including ‘authenticity’ as well as “identity” as criteria for decision making. “Identicity” includes artwork and heritage identities, defined in terms of ontology and in terms of the relative hierarchy of the heritage values attributed to a work of art respectively”(Kapelouzou 2010). This proposal applies to all works of art, classical and modern, as well as broader, cultural heritage. Decision-making strategy in conservation remains expert-based and must be optimal.

Indicators in a paradigm shift in heritage preservation: tolerance for and limits to changes

- 41 The broadening of the scope of tasks of conservation is necessary when we take into account the paradigm shift in the care of the heritage, including the incorporation of the material and non-material understanding of the heritage, social changes, globalization, the mutual interrelationships and influences of cultures, and even the current revolution in our civilization, which has been produced by the Internet. Similarly, the museum has a new social role. Apart from its traditional functions of storage, conservation, and providing access to objects, its modern role concerns communication with society, participation in sustainable development, as a mirror of customs, description of contexts, methods of work, etc. (Wharton 2005). The values and considerations that had previously dominated when works of art were being assessed (aesthetic, artistic and historical values, as well as issues of authenticity) were enriched by the addition of others, such as transmission of messages and interpretation of information and ideas.

- 42 The following conditions and indicators support a contemporary paradigm of valuation of the pluralistic cultural heritage:

- 43
- Comprehensive understanding. Culture and cultural heritage includes nature, landscape, buildings, artworks, artefacts, and accepting it in the practice of conservation of heritage resources, as both tangible and intangible heritage representations.
 - Ambiguity. Each piece of art has a variety of cultural values acquired gradually during the entire period of its existence, and even before the investment plan or specific social need. The study of this requires multi-disciplinary expert knowledge.
 - Interpretation and re-interpretation. Emotion, intuition and recognition of the roots of value are the processes of celebrating heritage values through their periodically deepened interpretation and reinterpretation – in situ and also in museums with the acquisition of new data and information.
 - Reassessment. This is a complex process, which goes beyond the twentieth-century doctrine of conservation.

- 44 The change in valuation has great significance for museums which exhibit classical and atypical works of art (not related to the Western classical art tradition), and also “functional objects”, such as Japanese kakemonos (a scroll painting). Documentation of performance art and happenings plays a new role allowing the complex preservation of total art (synthesis of art disciplines – *Gesamtkunstwerk* or variable/time-based media). The care of such cultural heritage is not only to conserve authentic matter, documents etc. as ‘historic fabric’, but also to preserve atypical monuments “in the full richness of their authenticity”, intangible and tangible. Value studies are concerned with the critical investigation of cultural heritage and the principles of its care (Fig. 12).

Fig. 12 Numerous different values of cultural heritage concentrated in The National Museum in Perugia



Values of original, historical wall paintings, architecture, plus digital access to the collection.

Credits: © Iwona Szmelter

Conclusions





- 45 Turning to new, broader horizons is a natural consequence of opening towards the holistic nature of heritage. A more "subjective" vision of heritage has been developed in the context of tradition and culture, an extended system of values, function, social role and meaning for identity of nations, groups. This corresponds to the diversity of resources of cultural heritage and the diversity of the sources of contemporary thought. In the context of current axiological shifts in a changing world, the concept of authenticity has become culturally diversified, in all richness of its material and ideas. Concluding with a resounding metaphor for the future, one can say that art is a mirror of the world and its values into which we have been looking for generations. The indicators proposed here may provide us with criteria for valuation in conservation process, for assessing the quality of cultural heritage, and make possible discussion with stakeholders and other groups in strategic decision-making process in the preservation of cultural heritage, which can often be very difficult in theory and also in conservation practice.





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