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Conserving the Past for Today: Politics of Georgian Government towards Cultural Heritage Protection in the context of Political Uncertainty

Abstract: The protection of cultural heritage does not only have social but political and economic consequences as well. While the contents of a national and personal identity are closely tied to inherited cultural heritage, this heritage, as far as material culture is concerned, requires political support often beyond the means of the countries concerned. International support is rendered by organizations such as UNESCO with its World Heritage List, which includes World Cultural treasures as well as Natural Monuments. Politically, cultural heritage can be either a cohesive force or a divisive one when exploited for political purposes directed towards political hegemony. Economically, the cost of preserving cultural heritage can be a lucrative source of income as a result of the global promotion of cultural tourism. By this research we can come to an idea that the State should facilitate the community empowerment through preservation and development of the cultural heritage – its organic environment, because without protection of the cultural environment and misusing the opportunities offered by it we cannot achieve the right, i.e. feasible, sustainable social and economic development of a country.

Key words: cultural heritage, Georgia, conservation, protection politics, education, European Union

Introduction

The issue of legal and physical protection of cultural heritage in a global, national, regional and local sense is gradually becoming an important field of knowledge and various legislative regulations and studies, both for professional researchers and for hobbyists striving to pick the matters up important for local communities. The myriad publications have been established on cultural heritage having to do with its different aspects, with varying chronological and territorial presentation – some of them cohesive, others continuous and synthesizing or contributory.

The authors of the present article have decided to point out, classify and characterise different dilemmas regarding the protection of Georgian cultural heritage. Therefore, the goal of the paper is not a characterization of fixed properties, movable and immovable classified as cultural heritage or of historical artefacts comprising the ingredients of the Georgian or regional structure – or the local structure, which is often the case of cultural identity. The reasoning applied by the authors deals with unsettled and ambiguous matters in the protection of Georgian cultural heritage.

The understanding of the lack of many legislative regulations, socio-political solutions and chemical technologies respecting to the preservation by reason of the future of

many cultural goods, both movable and immovable, can become inspiration for research and a reason for decision-makers to search for optimal solutions or to design smart programmes for universal regional education. Such was indeed the principal goal of the authors as they initiated their attempt to name and define in hierarchical significance a range of difficulties connected with the cultural, legal and physical protection of Georgian cultural heritage in its national and regional dimension, together with its diverse, colorful uniqueness.

An open issue is the search for methods and forms of universal education in the interest of popularisation of Georgian cultural heritage, both in the practical and theoretical aspects.

Eventually, there is a need to give some attention to several ways of researching concerning the protection of Georgian cultural heritage in terms of political and legal directives of the European Union as somehow it determines Georgian activities with regard to the protection of cultural remainings from the past.

To illustrate those complex issues, the authors conducted thorough archive and library research and went through dozens of theoretical and contributory publications, a variety of local programmes and descriptions of numerous initiatives to preserve lots of individual cultural goods. All of these documents contributed to the authors' understanding of the matters, but the authors themselves focused on asking following questions that have obvious answers yet: What does cultural heritage signify for Georgia and how it is administered by authorities? What political leverages they are using to fairly protect the cultural environment? Which European organs they cooperate with to work out conservation strategies on the occupied territories? The present work was created to expose many aspects of the protection process of Georgian cultural heritage that are still waiting for political and legislative solutions and support from the state or local governments' administration.

The paper concludes with contributions and suggestions for further research and policy challenges. Results of this study will help authorities and regional policy-makers understand how to leverage on conservation of cultural heritage – which has recently gained an increasing importance at different levels of the economy – for regional competitiveness.

Conceptual aspects related with Cultural Heritage

Cultural heritage is a value connecting us with the Past that gives us a strong fundament for the Present and shows us the way to the Future (Timothy, 2011). Cultural heritage has a lot of potential for the obtaining of socio-political assets. It also produces instruments for economic resources for all that. As a result, we observe its developing role in culture-oriented politics at different levels, with specifically important resonance apparent on the international level (Willems, 2010). In the 20th century the concept of the cultural heritage exceeded its earlier approved understanding of fine arts and beautiful artifacts and embodied everything expressing respective stages of human, social or national development. Today its particular quality is considered to be not only aesthetics but rather authenticity, genuineness (Rocca et al., 2013). Likely the central foundation

for its protection is conserving its genuineness that means unequivocal attitude toward its value requiring no exaggeration as its charm is in its straightforwardness. Preserving its genuine, truthful character is vital for the right development of the cultural heritage. The concept of 'heritage' is an interesting opening point for understanding authority structures and power politics, through which one should also analyze and perceive the ways in which 'heritage' is conceptualized and applied in today's globalized and fast changing world (Harvey, 2008).

Observers have found a few reasons why heritage is conserved and protected. These include resisting the issues of modernization, preserving common nostalgia, improving science and education, protecting artistic and esthetic values, upholding environmental diversity, and producing economic benefits (Henderson, 2001). As long as each of these is valuable in all parts of the world, the last case, economic benefits, is the principal motive for preserving the built and living past in developing countries. Cultural heritage is regarded in many places as an economic advantage upon which tourism has always been based. Notwithstanding motive, preservation and protection of the historic environment and living culture is crucial in today's fast modernizing world, and what is likely obvious about the harmful effects of mass tourism, along with heritage tourism, heritage protection turns into an urgent part of agenda (Poria et al., 2013).

The exclusive nature of Georgian arts and culture and authentic character of its heritage determines its needed immediate protection. It is an international image of the country and is vital for the development of the Georgian society. Engagement in cultural processes from the early childhood improves and encourages day-to-day human existence. Generally artists, with their innovative ideas have a positive influence on the lives of fellow humans. Culture is of a critical importance in providing conditions for health and social welfare, regional development, tourism and other key areas. In a civilized world, culture is the best instrument for safeguarding the values of a society and its democratization.

Unfortunately, in the developing world, where plenty of the earth's impressive heritages are situated, those goals of protection are simply said than done. A lot of challenges exist in developing regions, including Georgia, that often hinder preservation objectives. This paper identifies those challenges concerning Georgia from socio-political and historical perspectives. Considering the fact that not everything connected to heritage protection in the developing world is gloom and doom, the article also represents the opportunities that exist for Georgian cultural heritage and people living thereby.

Legal support for Georgian Heritage

This paper aims to provide an overview of legislation aspects of cultural heritage protection in the conservation efforts in Georgia since the collapse of the Soviet Union to the present government. From that times, as of 1990's, up to the current government, there have been two laws on the protection and preservation of cultural heritage in Georgia. It also analyses the influence of international conventions and charters towards the development of the legal aspects of the protection of cultural heritage of Georgia through literature review and collecting historical documents on conservation efforts in that country from various sources.

By the late 1990's, the Law of Georgia of 25 June 1999 on Cultural Heritage Protection was enacted after the Georgian Government accepted the UNESCO Convention 1972 in 1997. In May 2007, Georgian Government published Law No 4708 on Cultural Heritage Conservation. The Law was expected to be a fundamental base as well as the new perspective to protect and organize the cultural heritage in Georgia being better comprehended. Consequently, the constitutional instrument regulating cultural heritage protection is the Law of Georgia "On Cultural Heritage" which has replaced the previous law in 2007.

A few primary and secondary legal acts and regulations have a connection on the activity of this sector; for instance, the Law of Georgia on Cultural Heritage whose purpose is to protect the cultural heritage of Georgia and to regulate legal relations originating in this field; the Law of Georgia on Environmental Protection which regulates legal relations in the field of environmental protection and the use of natural resources between state bodies and natural and legal persons throughout Georgia, and provide a legal framework for resolving common global and regional issues in the field; the Law of Georgia on the Systems of protected Territories that involves among others – protection of bio-geographical units of Georgia on a long-term and guaranteed basis, ensuring, thus, a perpetual development of natural processes, creation of normal conditions for the field works in the areas which are valuable and unique for educational and scientific activities, encouragement of the activities aimed at preserving those areas, which are valuable for agricultural, industrial, as well as natural resources; Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society, (Council of Europe, 2005) which recognises that rights relating to cultural heritage are inherent in the right to participate in cultural life and emphasises that the conservation of cultural heritage and its sustainable use have human development and quality of life as their goal; Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (UNESCO, 2005) and Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (UNESCO, 1972).

The current law of Georgia on cultural heritage is apparently general and "enthusiastic", it concerns movable and immovable monuments, archaeological, tangible and intangible cultural heritage, however, because of the existing disadvantaged condition of organizational and legal practices it often lacks precision (Stige, 2012). The strong side of this law would be in featuring the comprehensive nature of the heritage environment and following the integral protection, which is attained through providing various protection zones. Additionally, the law is full of definitions and explanations, which reasonably have to be managed by secondary legislation (The Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection of Georgia, 2016) and particular regulations. However, having the fact that a lot of secondary legal and regulatory instruments are seemingly deficient the abovementioned feature of the law can be believed as its strength rather than its weakness. Currently there is a continuous work on the law on intangible heritage.

A number of recommendations have been proposed within the "Twinning Programme" of the EU¹ referring the need to develop regulatory procedures and regimes, which will stimulate further improvements of the Georgian law. The recommendations²

¹ Gap analysis of legal framework regulating cultural heritage and recommendations, 2013, Twinning Programme.

² Law of Georgia on Cultural Heritage, <https://matsne.gov.ge/en/document/download/21076/8/en/pdf>, August, 2018.

advocate to follow a regulation by the Minister of Culture and Monument Protection of Georgia involving the activities to be accomplished on archaeological monuments; to legislate on “professional activities in the field of cultural heritage,” concerning professional qualifications and competences; to pass a law regulating identification and management procedures of UNESCO World Cultural Heritage monuments and to revise the Law of Georgia on Cultural Heritage Management. The law was amended on the 21st November, 2008 and 25th December, 2013.³

As the authors deduce, making or introducing continual amendments to the law, which are mainly adjusted to focus on specific weak points, are generally provoked by the lack of declared national policy on heritage protection. The acting law supports for exceptions permitting public officials to make changes to regulation documents, which are not points for discussion and agreement of the stakeholders; for that reason, the development paper for certain region is made or changed without any massive research about the expected results or their professional evaluation (Tsintsabadze, 2013).

Contrary to the law on Cultural Heritage, the Law of Georgia on Protection of Environment and The Law of Georgia on the System of Protected Territories quite agree with international practices and laws of conservation. There is a need to well adjust environmental and heritage protection laws (Chachkhunashvili, 2013).

Empowerment, something often lacking in developing regions, indicates devolution of power from central authorities to individuals or communities. This practice, while relatively novel in much of the world, is assumed to support several principles of sustainable tourism development, including preserving ecological and cultural integrity, harmony, equity, and holistic growth. In the deepest sense, empowerment entails more than higher order governments simply allowing local communities and lower order administrators to be involved in the planning process or to benefit from tourism development. Rather, it indicates ownership of development programs and problems, including the consequences of wrong choices and mismanagement.

The Georgian government seems to be very slow though to anticipate the problems of conservation of cultural heritage from the legal perspective. Moreover, the Law No 4708 /2007 is still applying the old paradigms on cultural heritage conservation such as the heritage conservation still depends on the government, missing the concept of an active role of the community and integrated conservation. Therefore, for the future better protection of cultural heritage in Georgia, the government should revise the Law No. 4708 of 2007 and adopt a few recommendations issued by the UNESCO and ICOMOS into a regulation at the level of ministerial judgment addressing the legal gaps in the law.

Political instability and Heritage Protection on occupied territories of Georgia

The obligation to protect cultural heritage in the event of armed conflicts preceded the adoption of any regulations agreed upon by nations to preserve it. The prohibition against attacking a certain object, building or site in such circumstances originated from the commands of authorities, who were usually convinced by political or religious con-

³ Ibidem.

siderations. This phenomenon is found through many civilizations that have shaped human history.

Political instability manifests in a variety of ways. Among the most commonly noted in the heritage literature are war, coup d'état, although several others also exist, including natural disasters and their political ramifications, corruption, minor disputes, and changing government regimes. Wars and other political upheavals have been examined in the context of heritage and have been shown to affect it negatively in a variety of ways, including reducing arrivals of visitors and invoking negative perceptions of places (Sönmez, Sönmez, 2017). These events are also extremely destructive to historic places and heritage artifacts, especially when these are intentionally targeted for destruction by opposing forces (Spennemann, 1999), as was the case of historic region of Abkhazia during the 1990s war between Georgia and Russia and the now better-known case of the August Russo-Georgian war in 2008 – a tragic example when centennial churches and monuments were destroyed.

During the times of crisis, the status of heritage places often remains in question. Not only do historic assets suffer as targets, however, they also suffer from being considered dispensable items in the face of looming war or other conflict (Bevan, 2016). Thus, funds are necessarily diverted to other purposes and often when conflicts are over, new monuments are erected to replace the ones that existed before.

Although political conflict exists everywhere, the most notable examples as they pertain to heritage in the modern world have been identified in South Asia, South-Eastern Europe, Africa, and so on. According to Tarragüel (2012), in the wake of political changes in Georgia (1990s) from a state socialist system to a capitalist system, much damage was done to that country's heritage. Apparently hundreds of monuments of historic meaning were damaged via looting and wanton destruction to cultural properties, such as important municipal buildings, theaters, museums, and historic libraries.

Despite some political developments, many less-affluent countries, like Georgia, still suffer from centralized cultural heritage management and powerful elites, where administrations impose policies and plans without grassroots involvement (Torchinava, 2015). This has direct implications on how heritage should be preserved and managed, and for whom. Decentralization – a chief principle of sustainable development, results in increased confidence to regional and local heritage policies and heritage preservation initiatives. Graham (2016) argues that, in order for heritage management to succeed, regional community empowerment must exist in political, social, psychological, and economic forms. The role of NGOs is usually effective in involving local people and empowering them through various development and heritage-related projects (Graham et al., 2016). Further, the commitments of many governments, communities, and international agencies to heritage conservation can easily be jeopardized by political instability and conflict, which are, unfortunately, frequent occurrences in many developing regions.

Protection of Georgian cultural heritage located in the occupied territories is a subject of special concern for the Georgian government. According to the field experts (Calvi, 2012; Suruceanu, 2012), in order to preserve the movable and immovable cultural heritage monuments of Georgia located in occupied territories it is important to take effective measures to activate provisions stipulated in the UNESCO Hague Convention (1954) and its second protocol (1999); namely, the Government of Georgia should:

- actively work in UNESCO Committee for the protection of cultural values even in the event of armed conflict (Georgia is the member of the committee from 2013);
- conduct a wide international public awareness campaign about the cultural heritage condition located in the occupied territories;
- continue active negotiations with UNESCO and Council of Europe, use Geneva negotiations format in order to achieve assigning an international monitoring mission to study the status of the monuments located in the occupied territories;
- support the local non-governmental and civic initiatives dedicated to the mentioned issues.

In case of armed conflict or natural disasters in order to protect cultural heritage it is important to:

- set up a risk management team together with the Security Council or the Emergency Management Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and entrust it with a task to elaborate a risk management plan and take responsibility for its implementation (Suramelashvili, 2013). The plan should include the following aspects: mobilization and preparation of human resources, mobilization of the infrastructure necessary for protection of movable and immovable heritage, and etc.;
- designate additional aspects (ex.: evacuation of movable objects of cultural heritage) under the Decree of the President of Georgia about the national response plan to natural and man-made emergencies (Stige, 2012), with a view to ensure mechanisms and means for protection of immovable monuments.

In searching for measures of implementation the abovementioned recommendations the EU funded a project “War-free World Heritage Monuments” in 2010–2013, under which a model of preserving one of the main Georgian cities’ – Mtskheta’s world heritage monuments from the risks of war has been developed (Maisaia, 2013). Therefore, an important objective for the National Policy on heritage is developing clear conservation principles adherent to international standards and reflecting them in methodological rules for heritage sites of different typology. The Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection should be obliged to setting conservation regulations, assisting municipal and other public services, specialists, owners and other heritage stakeholders to protect and manage heritage in a proper way.

Despite the complexity of the relationship between heritage and politics, an understanding of at least some of the issues can help policy-makers and managers conserve and manage heritage more sustainably in the developing world. Creating public awareness through education may be a starting point that can empower communities and help them value and preserve their own unique heritage resources.

Heritage Management and Decentralization

In the context of cultural heritage management, preservation and enhancement serve as the main goals of public (and private) organizations involved in the management of cultural heritage. These goals, however, give rise to unsolved issues that remain open to interpretation (Barile, Saviano, 2014). A problem also exists regarding the choice between centralized and decentralized organizational models and between public and pri-

vate roles played in the management of cultural heritage. The evolution of governmental approaches, particularly the emergence of the enhancement view, has generated a significant amount of interest in cultural heritage. Many different categories of stakeholders have emerged, expressing and pursuing goals that are not always coming together.

In case of Georgia, the Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection of Georgia is an authority implementing the state heritage protection policy in the country. The Ministry has not possessed an officially declared view, mission or a so called “white paper,” nor any policy document upon which the heritage preservation strategy would be based (Helly, 2014). Only in 2014 the Ministry organized the group of experts who developed a cultural policy concept and they started working on the cultural policy that considers heritage protection issues as well.⁴

Moreover, there is the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia that has been built up on the basis of the existing complex monuments of national and international significance; it represents their totality and is their legal successor. The agency is delegated with the absolute authority of management and administration of cultural heritage, namely its duties include but are not limited to: heritage registration, activity planning, management of state procurement, monitoring, research, world heritage management, international relations, permit issuance and so on.

Although the agency was created on the basis of the existing national monuments, in fact it administers all registered heritage and manages vast majority of it, because there is no other infrastructure for the country’s immovable heritage (Sandell, 2014). Keeping in mind that the monuments located in Georgia’s regions (of local importance) do not have local management or administration units, the agency tries to take care of and monitor other monuments in the regions. Therefore, reorganization is necessary to empower regional and local heritage policies. As Kvaratskhelia (2009) notes, there is a need of a policy that will be closer to the municipal government including land management and etc. Municipal government should be in charge of preservation, management and development of cultural environment and undertake the key role in development process.

In order for delegation of authority, the reforms have to be planned carefully and introduced and implemented stage by stage. The government should elaborate quality regulations for planning and development, as well as create easily accessible and full-scale informational database, provide the necessary know-how and build up relevant infrastructures locally (Stige, 2012). In other words, empowerment entails more than higher order governments simply allowing local communities and lower order administrators to be involved in the planning process or to benefit from heritage development as shown in *Figure 1*.

Decentralized heritage management together with empowered regional and local institutions would become the mainstream of the national policy for cultural heritage since as it seems from studies,⁵ the Georgian heritage administration and management system does not ensure adequate management of heritage.

This approach, that will have the central governance role at the territory level to support the emergence of integral cultural values, will also bear a promoting and coordinating role that is responsible for the convergence of centrally defined strategic guidelines

⁴ Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection of Georgia, Culture Strategy 2025, 2016.

⁵ ICOMOS Georgia, National Policy of Cultural Heritage Sector of Georgia, 2014, Tbilisi.

with the processes for local implementation. It is essential that the regions, at whose level the institutional governing role connects the central and local government, do their tasks in the territory. Territories should definitely provide incentives by the various expressions of territorial context in the local cultural structure.

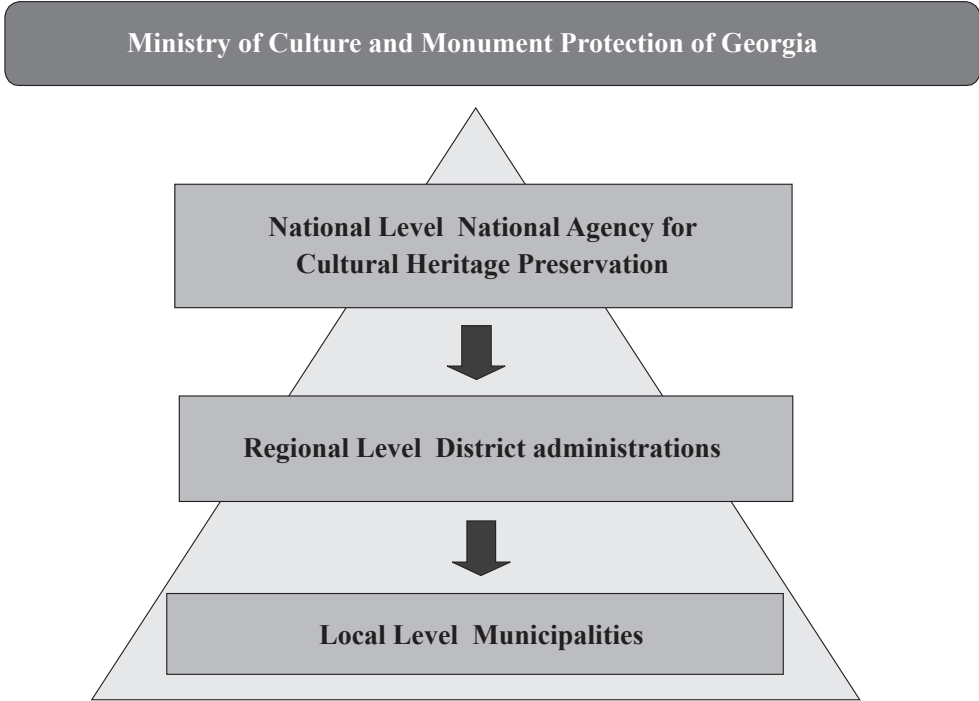


Figure 1. Decentralization of Heritage Management

Source: ICOMOS Georgia, 2014.

Education Factor on Cultural Heritage and Public Awareness

Cultural heritage is a group of resources inherited from the past which people identify, regardless of ownership, as a reflection and expression of their constantly evolving values, beliefs, knowledge and transitions. It includes all aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time (Council of Europe, 2005).

Cultural heritage, in general, should be regarded as a key area in today’s Knowledge Society, where the “key factors are knowledge and creativity” and where the most “valuable asset is investment in intangible human and social capital.”⁶ As a matter of fact, the relevance of education in the field of cultural heritage has already been underlined in 1998 by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe who, through the Rec-

⁶ European Department for Employment and Social Affairs, http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/knowledge_society/index_en.htm, August, 2018.

ommendation No. R (98) 5 to Member States, asserted that “*educational activities in the heritage field are an ideal way of giving meaning to the future by providing a better understanding of the past.*”⁷

One of the most serious challenges faced by the sector of cultural heritage in Georgia is the lack of qualified and professional staff. This is caused by the lack of higher education institutions and Vocational Education and Training (VET) colleges that would offer programmes in different disciplines of heritage conservation and management.

In accordance with the Culture Strategy of Georgia⁸ policymakers, cultural professionals, key stakeholders, representatives of other sectors and the general public fully acknowledge the importance of cultural heritage and its role to the country’s sustainable development and social well-being. As a Georgian field expert states, it is necessary to plan public communication strategy and create appropriate instruments for its implementation in order to raise public awareness regarding the innovative interpretation and representation of the role of culture and in order to develop necessary awareness raising programmes (Tsintsabadze, 2003).

Today, higher and vocational educational institutions in Georgia do not produce highly qualified professionals for culture and other related fields, do not create effective interdisciplinary programmes for students studying culture and other areas and do not develop academic research in collaboration with research institutions (Tevzadze et al., 2014). Consequently, it is needed to carry out the legislative reform of the system of cultural education, including arts education, and therefore, update legal and regulatory framework of higher and vocational education systems, taking the specificities of the sector into consideration.

The above-mentioned problems illustrate that professional programmes are fragmented and insufficient. The existing educational programmes are not fully developed so far, because of lack of specific researches and publications at national level. As the previously referred field expert (Tsintsabadze, 2003) continues that a solution in the given reality could be sought through international doctrines, however, most of those doctrines are not translated into Georgian. The number one priority in heritage protection field in terms of knowledge improvement and raising awareness about the heritage values is development of curricula on cultural heritage protection and management.

In order to effectively maintain Georgia’s diverse cultural heritage it is necessary to inform wider society and keep them aware of the heritage preservation issues. One of the functions of political, executive and professional institutions of cultural heritage should be dissemination of knowledge regarding the national heritage and inspiring interest toward it among the wider public. It will be useful to use different media to inform public regarding the benefits of heritage conservation and the threats facing the heritage.

To conclude we should never forget that both education and cultural heritage is about human beings. By its very nature we are a mixture of emotions and reasons. The role of

⁷ http://www.kultura.ejgv.euskadi.net/r46-4874/es/contenidos/informacion/manifiestos_patrimonio/es_8658/adjuntos/DOC56.pdf, August, 2018.

⁸ <http://www.georgianmuseums.ge/ckfinder/userfiles/files/kulturis-strategia-2025-bolo.pdf>, September, 2018.

heritage and education is to discover how to reach both. For that reason, we should never forget that behind each element of the cultural heritage there is a human being with his/her own existence and story. Generally speaking, that human being belongs to the past, and so do the objects he/she has produced; but it can also be skills or traditions one wants to pass on to future generations.

Internationalization of Georgian Culture and Heritage Protection

Georgia is an active participant of international cultural processes; it is a subject of interest for the rest of the world with its rich cultural heritage, vibrant cultural life and arts. The internationalization of the cultural sector will help the development of culture, increase the nation's export capacity and empower its image.

In 2014 Georgia signed an Association Agreement with EU, which also provides for cooperation in the area of cultural heritage (*Chapter 17*). According to the Agreement, Cooperation between the Parties will foster intercultural dialogue, including through the participation of the culture sector and civil society from the EU and Georgia (*Article 362*); the Parties shall concentrate their cooperation in a number of fields (*Article 363*):⁹

- cultural cooperation and cultural exchanges;
- mobility of art and artists and strengthening of the capacity of the cultural sector;
- intercultural dialogue;
- dialogue on cultural policy, and
- cooperation in international fora such as UNESCO and the Council of Europe, inter alia, in order to foster cultural diversity, and preserve and valorize cultural and historical heritage.

Georgia has joined the following international conventions so far in the area of culture:

- Council of Europe, Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (2005);
- European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (Revised, 1992);
- Council of Europe, Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe (1985);
- UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005);
- UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003);
- UNESCO Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972);
- UNESCO Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (1954).

⁹ https://cdn1-eeas.fpfis.tech.ec.europa.eu/cdn/farfuture/VjycjKJ-ii28659I8FYZ8Phir2Qqs0f2jZUoh4un5IE/mtime:1473773763/sites/eeas/files/association_agreement.pdf, September, 2018.

Based on several sources (Judy, 2008; The Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection of Georgia, 2016), due to some long-lasting problems related with implementation of the World Heritage Convention the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia has been working on a Georgian State Programme of World Heritage, established on a recommendation of UNESCO World Heritage Committee to develop a World Heritage National Programme. However, Georgia is still unable to overcome a complex of incompatibility of heritage and economics and to take into account the specific character and interests of the cultural heritage when devising economic policies; and ensure that these policies respect the integrity of the cultural heritage without compromising its inherent values (ICOMOS Georgia, 2014).

The European Commission and Georgia's partner countries support the development of the cultural sphere and its harmonization with European standards.¹⁰ In partnership with the Council of Europe some management development projects are being piloted in urban heritage as a social economic development facilitating factor. Moreover, the embassies of Georgia's partner countries have different cultural projects. For example, the British Council, Goethe Institute and other centres set the bar high for cultural projects quality in Georgia.

In Georgia the development of heritage sector depends on how much the programmes implemented in the frame of the above large-scale cooperation are integrated into the National Policy and strategic goals of Heritage Sector. It is vital that international organizations and partner countries would intensify their monitoring of outcomes of the assistance and cooperation provided in heritage sector as well as the compliance with international commitments.

The place of Georgian Heritage in the Cultural World

Georgia preserves the evidence in all areas of the human activity: in agriculture we can see the archaeological evidence indicating the origination of this practice, in particular, the earliest stages of husbandry and viticulture; in metallurgy there are unique monuments revealing that the secrets of mining were known here; in medicine Medea and the myth of Golden Fleece inevitably comes to one's mind, and also the sophisticated art of trepanation preserved in Khevsureti to our days and handcrafted medical tools kept in Barisakho museum. Observing lofty monuments of medieval Georgian architecture one will be enchanted by their creative upsurge and exquisite masonry. One can also easily find in Georgia reliable physical, oral, musical or written evidence pointing out developed engineering, scientific, educational practices. Despite its turbulent history the country not only has not stayed behind the global trends but also contributed to the human development.

Georgia's heritage is marked with the nation's creative gene and its continuity; intellectual, academic, industrial knowledge and talent; a prehistoric identity still unexplored, the richest culture of husbandry; traditional dwellings that are about to extinct; the warrior past making people to be proud of it: brilliant victories and tragic losses; the skill of

¹⁰ Faro convention, 2005, <https://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/rms/0900001680083746>, September, 2018.

accepting and digesting its conquerors' culture, which can be even called adaptability, even very indecent looking at times, but still the only way of self-defense and survival; and finally this is the Georgian language a denominator of the Georgians national and spiritual identity – all these make a precondition to the uniqueness of the Georgian cultural heritage.

And finally the diversity of the heritage, a live cultural environment is a fertile soil, where the most daring and the most innovative modern art can flourish, whether it be architecture or street art. This is the soil offering a limitless space to an artist, inspiring and setting high creative standards, refining taste, developing a broad outlook, and thus laying the bridge to creative latitude. The link of Cultural Heritage with other arts, however invisible it may be, is still deep and organic. This interaction creates a strong impulse, which needs to be exploited. There is no heritage without a broader context of socium and culture.

Being situated at the crossing point of Europe and Asia, inter-cultural communication represents an important source for the enforcement of Georgia's national identity. Such communication benefits in strengthening of trust and contacts between the Government and the society and stimulated dialogue, tolerance and mutual understanding. A capable cultural sector, with the result that cultural heritage is understood and protected and the capacity of arts and creativity is fully employed, can exercise an important influence on all areas of sustainable development. International recognition of Georgia's cultural heritage and artistic possibility and successful illustration of Georgia's creative industries on an international stage will effectively establish its role as a regional cultural centre and will demonstrate its place on the world's cultural map.

Conclusion

Cultural Heritage is an inexhaustible resource for Georgia's economic and social development; identification, protection, interpretation and usage of this valuable resource are necessary preconditions for the country's social and economic progress. Cultural Heritage is an essential part of the environmental policy without which the country's viability becomes questionable.

The State shall facilitate the community empowerment through preservation and development of the cultural heritage – its organic environment, because without protection of the cultural environment and misusing the opportunities offered by it we cannot achieve the right, i.e. viable, sustainable social and economic development of our country. This approach shall be clearly pronounced in our cultural heritage policies, legislation, management and administration systems, and clear delimitation of public agencies' competences.

The heritage protection quality and principles determined by its typological diversity have a vital importance. The diversity of the heritage is leading to diversification of the ways of its protection through creation of an evaluation system, which is built on appropriate values, and identification of its historic, social and cultural features. This diversity deserves to be appropriately studied and reflected in our legislation and conservation methodology, which demands the relevant reformatory process.

It is important to maintain balance between the rights and interests of the both, the state and the owner, whenever it there is an issue of protection or usage of the cultural heritage, and at the same time observe the community's title to this heritage. The government shall try to make the owners its allies in the heritage protection, and care for improvement of their conditions. This brings us to the necessity of facilitation of cooperation between public agencies and the owners. The public agencies shall set an example by stewardship and care of the cultural heritage properties being in the private ownership. This will be decisive for bringing this area under the rule of law.

Sharing the international experience, empowering and shaping out the community's role in cultural heritage management, restoring the volunteering institution and using it for daily stewardship and protection – these altogether will lay a viable road to the heritage protection, creating a culture of conservation.

Future research paths first of all may extend the proposed suggestions and test it in several different contexts when it comes to cultural heritage protection and management. We are referring to not just “traditional” tangible heritage, but even to intangible heritage. Furthermore, future research may detail the role played by the different kinds of local stakeholders in promotion and support, offering comprehensive strategies for better governing mechanisms, setting up institutions for collaborations, public-public and public-private partnerships and initiatives.

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Zachowanie przeszłości dla dziś: polityka rządu gruzińskiego wobec ochrony dziedzictwa kulturowego w kontekście niepewności politycznej

Streszczenie

Ochrona dziedzictwa kulturowego ma nie tylko konsekwencje społeczne, ale także polityczne i gospodarcze. Podczas gdy treść tożsamości narodowej i osobistej jest ściśle związana z odziedziczonym dziedzictwem kulturowym, dziedzictwo to, jeśli chodzi o kulturę materialną, wymaga wsparcia politycznego często poza środkami zainteresowanych krajów. Międzynarodowe wsparcie udzielane jest przez organizacje takie jak UNESCO z listą światowego dziedzictwa, która obejmuje światowe skarby kultury oraz pomniki przyrody. Politycznie dziedzictwo kulturowe może być zarówno spójne, jak i dzielące, gdy wykorzystywane jest do celów politycznych ukierunkowanych na polityczną hegemonię. Z ekonomicznego punktu widzenia koszt zachowania dziedzictwa kulturowego może być

intratnym źródłem dochodów w wyniku globalnej promocji turystyki kulturalnej. Dzięki tym badaniom możemy dojść do wniosku, że państwo powinno ułatwić wzmocnienie pozycji społeczności poprzez zachowanie i rozwój dziedzictwa kulturowego – jego środowiska organicznego, ponieważ bez ochrony środowiska kulturowego i niewłaściwego wykorzystania oferowanych przez niego możliwości nie możemy osiągnąć tego prawa, tzn. możliwy, trwały rozwój społeczny i gospodarczy kraju.

Słowa kluczowe: dziedzictwo kulturowe, Gruzja, konserwacja, polityka ochrony, edukacja, Unia Europejska