

## **CULTURAL HERITAGE IN STUDIES OF GEOGRAPHY AND TERRITORIAL PLANNING**

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### **INTRODUCTION**

The Geography and Territorial Planning Degree replaces, under the provisions of the European Higher Education Area and the recommendations of the “Libro Blanco: Título de Grado en Geografía y Ordenación del Territorio”, the Geography Bachelor’s Degree. This change not only affected its name, including territory and its planning, but it also developed into a regulation of its curricula, introducing new subjects that would train the future geographer in order to make him capable of confronting new challenges in their areas of work, where cultural heritage has become an additional option.

This has resulted in the need to assemble a training curriculum in this field, adapted to their studies and requirements, given that the geographer participates in processes linked to socioeconomic development, urban and territorial planning in which heritage is involved, both in its natural aspect, traditionally linked to their profession, and in its cultural aspect. Heritage, in any of its forms, is binding within the territory in which it is established and the people that live there. This is reason enough to make its consideration take part of the geographer’s training. We have worked on this aspect for three academic years with the students of the Geography and Territorial Planning Degree of the University of Murcia and which we present in this dissertation.

### **HYPOTHESIS**

The hypothesis that has framed the development of this article has been sustained by the demonstration of the interrelationship between the geography and the cultural heritage studies, to then continue to set the essential guidelines that the geographer must master in the field of cultural heritage, as well as to break down the main tools that may help them to act over it.

## **AIMS**

The aims of this dissertation fall within the framework of the following topics:

- To analyse the implications related to Geography and cultural heritage.
- To justify the incorporation of the cultural heritage subject in the studies in Geography.
- The development of a training program proposal adapted to the geographer's needs.
- To highlight future areas of work in the field of Geography.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The methodology used is supported by the empirical and analytical, taking as a basis the planning and completion of the training material for the “Cultural heritage” subject, taught in the first year of the Geography and Territorial Planning Degree, developed by the Doctors Palazón and Griñán within the framework of the Production of General Teaching Materials meeting for the 2014/2015 academic year, organised by the University of Murcia, which can be viewed here: <http://ocw.um.es/humanidades/patrimonio-cultural>. The same that meets the principles within the framework of the title's memory, which are also incorporated in the teaching guide of the subject.

## **EXTENSIVE SUMMARY**

The dissertation is drafted in two heading with subsections.

1. Cultural Heritage in the programme of the Geography and Territorial Planning studies: Within it, the regulations that originated from the inclusion of cultural heritage in the degree's study program are analysed. To that end, the observations within the framework of the “European Regional/Spatial Planning Charter” (Torremolinos, 1983), and of the aspects within the framework of the “Libro Blanco: Título de Grado en Geografía y Ordenación del Territorio”, related to cultural heritage are assumed. The relationship established between both issues and the need to have an impact on it, given that it is included in their future area of work, is set in both. Hereafter, the development of studies of Geography in the University of Murcia and the role played by the previously quoted regulations to include the subject of cultural heritage in their studies is drawn up.

2. The implications of cultural heritage in Geography: Here we start to focus on the attention on the heritage principles. To this end, we develop from something that may seem simple: its definition. Its origin dates back to the Latin word *patrimonium*, its root derives from the word *pater*, referring to that that is received from predecessors. In this case, it refers to a collective heritage comprised by a cultural component witnessed in the

remains that we have inherited from past civilisations and cultures (Ballart, Juan, 2010). If we analyse it from a more specific angle, it is comprised by movable and immovable property that the current society has inherited from its predecessors, to whom it has added relevant value because they represented the cultural identity of their ancestors and upon whom measures and actions destined to their conservation and legal protection are projected, in order to avoid its damage or loss, with the aim of them being transferred from generation to generation, to which the guides that its own time is generating and will be bequeathed are added (Palazón, Griñán, 2015). Before continuing, it is needed to specify about the elements comprised. We have indicated that it has an intangible or material substratum, that is to say, that it has a physical-spatial essence whereby two subtypes are encompassed: movable, with a series of characteristics that enable its transfer without this originating in the loss of its meaning (painting, sculpture, books, etc); and immovable, that due to its characteristics cannot be transferred, and when this is done, it loses part of its meaning for being linked to a given environment (cathedral, castle, landscape, courtyard, church, etc.). For its part, the immaterial or intangible is based on a non-physical support, even though it depends on tangible elements, and it takes the form of an ephemeral or temporal manifestation, as a *romería*<sup>1</sup>, a processional parade, a theatrical performance or singing, amongst other multiple elements.

These three substrates have an explicit link to territory, this being perhaps more obvious in the case of the immovable, as it is impossible to untie it from its environment, which ends taking an active part of itself, and otherwise, but it is true that the movable is developed to be located too in specific areas that can be either its continent, the properties that safeguard it, or the landscape or urban centres in which it is settled, this being the case of a sculpture. Landscape is a progression of cultural heritage, as inside itself, it is included in its cultural affection. The same happens with the immaterial, which always develops in spaces related to certain territorial, urban, rural or maritime areas, which constitute part of themselves, as without them it would not be possible to provide context of the action.

All these provisions help us to support the key principle that heritage, in any of its forms, is related to the territory in which it is set, is binding to itself; thus, this simple matter, which is one of its essences, marks any matter to develop, given that a minimum variation in its use or a slight modification in the space that comprises it can result in the loss of important aspects for its maintenance and interpretation. For this reasons, the geographer must know the implications of cultural heritage, to be able to act upon it in time of decision-making that may affect it.

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<sup>1</sup> Spanish typical religious pilgrimage.

Furthermore, it allows us to observe that the reality of heritage, which is not other than being in constant development, that is to say, it is continuously adding elements that are seen from its prism. In order to countersign this aspect, the provisions that allowed its frontiers to be in constant expansion are analysed, starting with the “Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict” (UNESCO, The Hague-1954) and the “Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage” (UNESCO, Paris.1972). In them we can find the issues that allowed that, from that moment, cultural heritage brought together identity elements of the villages, not just based on their artistic criteria, chronology or location in a specific country or continent, but it would also allow the inclusion under their substratum new heritage referents, and to observe them jointly, not in a biased way, amongst which we would find landscape, architectural and urban issues, aspects that occupy a physical space in territory, another reason to combine both disciplines. Moreover, they helped to consolidate heritage categories (monument, historical garden, historical site, archaeological site). These categories are linked to the principles of territorial planning and are part of the Geography substratum. With these contributions we can demonstrate how cultural heritage and territory bring together a common action line, not being unconnected issues, but there is a close relationship between both, given that the heritage referent must not be seen, nor be treated, in isolation; it must take account of the consideration established between its environment and itself. Even cultural affection is taking steps towards integral heritage, where cultural and natural heritage articulate in the same entity.

Hereafter, we list the tools we consider must provide the knowledge of cultural heritage in the university area of the Geography and Territorial Planning Degree. For that reason, we consider that the aim of this subject is, above all, to help the future graduate with a series of theoretical and practical skills that will allow them understand the connection between their specialisation and cultural heritage, as well as the possibilities that cultural heritage can have in their future working life.

- To work with the heritage concept: This aspect will allow us to discover what they know or believe they know about this subject, as the memory of the historic and monumental past of itself remains, where only art pieces and archaeology seem to have a place. After this they are taught about the different heritage typologies that exist, paying special attention to specific cases. It is this moment when they are ready to start being taught about concepts and examples of what heritage is. This is not done with the aim of specialising them in every of its aspects, but to provide arguments that help them understand what is being addressed and that help them in their future implementation.
- Institutions: The organization chart that governs cultural heritage can be difficult to bind together with several entities and organisms run by institutions and

administrative sections. However, to master this issue is of vital importance in order to know who is responsible for each action and how the decisions that will have an effect on cultural heritage are taken, where responsibilities are divided but coordinated, or at least that is what is expected. For this reason, the application of three geographical aspects (international, national, local-self), the centres, institutions, and organisms that act in order to promote the defence, protection, study, diffusion and conservation are pointed out, studying the measures they promote to accomplish their missions.

- Regulation and laws: Cultural heritage is based on the legitimisation of legal measures. Due to this, it has a specific legal section, but as its substratum is part of a more extensive everything, such as territory, every issue regarding urban planning affects it. Due to this, the main measures and provisions they must know are included, from heritage national and regional laws to the several regulations, recommendations and letters that are included in the principles of action of heritage.
- Concepts, use and possibilities of cultural heritage today: How cultural heritage is addressed in synthetic-cut subject that highlights its main actions cannot forget to include a section for the museums field, which have been diversifying their themes. Where the issues that affect museums with regard to their projection, organisation and core work areas are emphasised. With them, the heritage education values are highlighted, and a consideration regarding cultural tourism is done.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Multidisciplinarity and interdisciplinarity are aspects that are currently combined in the professional and training areas, where there is no place for a monographically focused issue, where the connection of interrelated measures predominates, having a common aim: to improve and reinforce the knowledge of an area and all of its underlying implications. This is what has happened to Geography with cultural heritage, where the initial disassociation there seemed to be between both has been undermined due to the connection between them as they both depend of the same essence: territory.

The entry of this subject in the study program enables the implementation of knowledge in aspects that bear witness to cultural heritage, as well as to show the progression in its evolution and to keep a record of the tools that must be known and applied in order to act upon it rigorously. It is clear that the four-monthly consideration of the study program in first year make it necessary to develop measures to draw the attention of new students, and to provide them with the knowledge of strategies and implementations that they do not master or which they have minimally encountered.

The return that all this can offer to the future graduate is substantial, as apart from broadening his knowledge, it provides them with a complement that allows them to link territory to man and his cultural referent, what allows the understanding of itself and makes them aware of the importance that such values have as they are evidence of the identity process that must not only be preserved, but must be bequeathed in the future. This is the reason why an action in the field of territorial planning must be taken into account.

Furthermore, the touristic implications that have been marked by cultural heritage since the progression of cultural tourism make it necessary to address it in a complete way in order to not delegitimise the value of the initial referent in favour of touristic attraction. Without losing sight that cultural heritage is an ally in any teaching area, given that its projection reached a wide variety of referents that can be applicable subjects for the explanation and application of any content; for this, they must be capable of recognising it.

To have an impact on these issues is something that only a subject like this can provide, based on respect towards heritage and the knowledge of actions that are projected upon itself, from various areas and with different tools. To be able to identify them and to be aware of their application is a skill of this discipline, amongst which it is able to transmit the value of cultural legacy that goes beyond its simple past, as it is a substratum with a present and future that must be known, respected and transmitted.