



FRAMEWORK CONVENTION
ON THE VALUE OF CULTURAL HERITAGE
FOR SOCIETY

LA CONVENTION-CADRE
SUR LA VALEUR DU PATRIMOINE CULTUREL
POUR LA SOCIÉTÉ



An example of a heritage communities' network: the Jaume I University Patrimoni project (Castellón)

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The concept of heritage has evolved from being considered a resource serving a process underpinned by collective identification, recognition and valuing of what is owned by the group. Concepts such as the symbolic awareness of heritage and symbolic ownership of heritage have broadened out approaches to the concept by incorporating questions that are "ideological, psychological, social, and so on, as well as purely historical" (Calaf, 2003. p. 130).

In the Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society of the Council of Europe – Faro Convention (Article 2b), people occupy the main place and offers the understanding about the "right to cultural heritage means: not only the right to benefit from the existing heritage, but also the right to take part in the selection of new cultural expressions aimed at belonging to the notion of cultural heritage" (Zagato, 2017. p.147). Faro Convention principles offer a new point of view of the cultural heritage concept and "cette originalité de forme n'est pas sans provoquer questionnements et débats, puisque la société

civile devient seule juge de ce qui fait ou non patrimoine" (the originality of this conception is not free from questioning or debate, since civil society becomes the sole arbiter of what does or does not constitute heritage) (Brianso, 2015. p. 24).

This wider concept of heritage, where people are a central, defining element, is also echoed by Dr Fontal, who offers a second, more relational viewpoint based on concepts such as identity, property, belonging and emotion, in which the relationship between heritage and people is the means for building values and connections (Fontal, 2013. p. 14).

From this perspective, Dr Fontal provides a sequence that advances from knowledge, understanding, promotion, symbolic appropriation, care and conservation, enjoyment and transmission of heritage (Fontal, 2013. p. 15). In turn, Dr Carmen Redondo examines 'identisation' as a process in which "the shared interpretation of an environment generates a society" (Redondo, 2012. p. 34). Redondo proposes a discursive

generative identity that in its gradual development “begins to make sense through narration, as a single, unique story” and refers to this process of identification as “a learning

process from inside to outside, where education is its substantial base” (Redondo, 2012. p. 34).

The Jaume I University Patrimoni project

The Patrimoni project is a collective process that aims to revitalise cultural heritage and citizen activity in rural areas. It is an initiative of the University Extension Programme (PEU) at the Jaume I University, Castelló, designed to raise public awareness of cultural heritage and its value and potential as a resource for society to cultivate citizens with a critical and responsible attitude to their heritage, and who are committed to saving, protecting, defending and promoting it. Through the PEU, the Patrimoni project offers rural specialists, associations and groups in the area a space for consultation and guidance on matters related to cultural heritage, and the awareness, interpretation and dissemination of this asset.

Patrimoni is structured around a network of heritage communities with real projects of proximity, interpretation and dissemination that have emerged in recent years in the territory with the support of the project.

Although each one has its own unique features, all share a common interest in learning about and promoting their cultural heritage, and understanding it as a resource for social, cultural and economic development in the territory.

Patrimoni is a laboratory for building cultural heritage projects in a participatory way, characterised by the voluntary involvement of the local group members, by the individuality of each action, the continuous remodelling and updating of the training, strategies, methods and ways of working and participating in the territory, by its horizontal structure both at a local level and in the programmes decided on and planned by all participants in the project groups, and by its use of a horizontal project evaluation model in which the proposals, criticisms, reflections and challenges are reached by consensus and serve to redefine and reassess the project.

The three pillars of the Patrimoni project: training, technical support and network structures

The Patrimoni project structure is therefore based on a repertoire of informal training and educational resources related to cultural heritage that are unfurled according to the needs of the local groups (bottom-up). The methodology Patrimoni applies is to empower the participant groups to define points of exchange and debate where they can learn, increase their knowledge, suggest initiatives and resolve problems related to cultural heritage, participation and group work.

Training is one of the underlying pillars of Patrimoni. This training is based on active participation of attendees and ranges from general to specific, offering all those interested the possibility to specialise over time in areas

related to cultural heritage.

In Patrimoni, training in the form of workshops and courses is only the starting point, followed by real projects to discover and raise awareness about heritage and the search for common spaces, both virtual and physical, among the groups where the project can be designed, planned, and evaluated based on the ethos of horizontal participation.

This technical support alongside the groups, called *Acompañamiento*, aims to help them develop their projects. The *Acompañamiento* is the second pillar and consists of an informal continuous training path, defined and agreed in meetings with the groups, and adapted and

modified according to their needs. With each scheduled meeting the group develops and takes shape. The theoretical content is adapted and based on each specific case, thus allowing depth and complexity to evolve in the projects. With this support the group updates its training itinerary and adapts it to the needs of its project.

The third pillar underlying the Patrimoni project is the creation, maintenance and strengthening of a wide range of network structures that enable training, exchange, debate and planning to be shared among the Patrimoni groups. Exchange, participation and training in the Patrimoni network are grounded on three resources: the Annual Meeting on Cultural Heritage Research, scheduled specialist visits, and the magazine *Memòria Viva* (living memory).

The Annual Meeting on Cultural Heritage Research arose from the demand by the groups for a space where they could undertake

joint training on matters of cultural heritage and management. One of the most important aspects of the annual meetings is the Assembly of the Patrimoni Groups, which is defined as a regular, continual and open forum for participation. At this annual Assembly of the Patrimoni Groups, the project's development is evaluated, the annual schedule of joint meetings and activities is set, and each group's current situation, its needs and its shortcomings are appraised so that other group members can give their opinions, contributions and constructive support.

The specialist visits are organised and planned jointly, and involve visits in the territory to find out more about specific aspects related to heritage or other matters. The annual cycle culminates with the publication of *Memòria Viva*, Patrimoni's magazine which compiles the articles and collaborations of the groups and in which, as with the presentations at the Annual Meeting, the evolution of the groups and their projects can be appreciated.

Some examples of Heritage Communities projects

Patrimoni currently comprises 12 groups that are developing local projects to raise awareness and promote their cultural heritage, but also, within the framework of the project, they are interacting with each other in search of common ground for reflection, analysis and permanent dialogue.

The Local Group of Viver (The Wine Festival)

In 2013, a group of neighbours in Viver, a small town in the province of Castellón, contacted the Patrimoni project of the Universitat Jaume I's University Extension Programme (PEU) to begin a project that would raise the profile of the town's viticulture heritage. Over a two-year period, the local Viver group built up an inventory of photographs, ethnographic objects and oral history accounts related to the local vineyards and wine, and documented many refrains and songs. As part of the project, dissemination activities were held to spread information about the value and importance of the viticulture heritage.

Two years later, the local Group of Viver met with staff at the local primary school with a proposal to organise an educational activity around this local heritage. The resulting wine festival took place on 22 and 23 October, 2015, with the participation of 120 children from Viver's infant and primary school. Through the wine festival, the Viver group working on revitalising the viticulture tradition had the opportunity to build links with the town's residents and familiarise them with a significant part of their cultural heritage.

The Museum of Cirat and the importance of the participation from the beginning

In 2016, the Las Salinas de Cirat Cultural Association (Castellón) began work on a plan to promote the village's ethnography museum. The Museum of Cirat is located in an old Moorish oven and most of its exhibits are donations from local residents. During our visit to the museum we saw that the oven walls were seriously affected by damp, which was compromising the integrity and conservation of both the collection and the building itself. Encouraged by the presence of the mayor of Cirat at the workshop, Las Salinas Cultural Association presented a proposal to the council for a participatory project to save the museum, and with specialist support from Patrimoni-PEU. The first of the planned tasks was to carry out a full inventory to update the original list of items in the collection the transfer of the collection from the museum to the council premises. All these actions are undertaken by the residents of the village, who are ultimately responsible for the protection, defence and diffusion of their cultural heritage. Simultaneously, a new museum project will be designed with the participation and involvement of the residents of Cirat.

The local Group of Costur and the importance of heritage education

Since 2013, La Fontanella Cultural Association of Costur, has been classifying and studying the village's natural and cultural heritage. In 2017, the Costur heritage study group is undertaking a project entitled "Toda piedra hace pared", literally, "every stone makes a wall", the main objective of which is to highlight the importance of stone in shaping the landscape. The group advocates the importance of reflecting on the cultural landscape, what it used to be and what remains; how it has changed in the last 50 years; how young people see and understand it; and what we can do to conserve it. The project "Toda piedra hace pared" began its activities in summer with talks, lectures, heritage education activities, workshops and visits to learn about life in the old farms around Costur.

"Territori Espadà" : Participation, horizontality, inclusion

In 2017, the 19 municipalities located inside the Sierra de Espadán Natural Park, with the specialist support of the Universitat Jaume I's Patrimoni project, have begun a horizontal, participatory process to define the cultural project of the villages inside the park. This project sprang from the need to define meeting spaces that bring together the various groups, associations and others with an interest in the natural park territory.

One of the initiatives put in place this year is the mini-meeting. These mini-meetings take place periodically in the villages located in the park. Two such meetings have been held in 2017, in Pavías, Algimia de Almonacid and Ayódar, and on these occasions participants identified the need for a network that would incorporate all those working at a local level to discover and share the assets of the Sierra de Espadán.

The request of the territory

Since 2006, the Patrimoni project of UJI's University Extension Programme has been working alongside local groups to combine experiences and collaborate in developing projects that arise in the territory. Within the Patrimoni-PEU framework, in the local groups we are reflecting on which aspects are essential to ensure our neighbours become familiar with, cherish, protect and promote our heritage. In sum, we are seeking to define the key aspects present in our local projects that can help to define and bring us closer to an optimum exchange and communication of our cultural heritage.

Patrimoni is a project that springs from the territory, from the demand of a whole range of local voluntary groups with their own cultural heritage projects. Patrimoni is defined not only as a project to work alongside cultural heritage initiatives in the region, but also as a horizontal space for the analysis, study and assessment of methodologies based on participation and the exchange and communication of cultural heritage; it is like a laboratory in which interactions lead to changes, to evolution; to new frameworks to work within and reassess a project that by its very nature is constantly alert to new ideas.

And at the heart of the endeavour is collaboration, working side by side, because the result is much more than the sum of its parts. And therefore, the final aim must be to establish the bases on which to introduce into each project activity a collaborative methodology to support the groups in addition to the process of building each local Patrimoni project; a methodology that serves as a springboard for the proposals, recommendations, tensions and conflicts that

are essential elements in the scaffolding, construction, and review of the path already trodden.

Patrimoni is a project that aims to develop a horizontal network of real participation around cultural heritage. This project, which was called for and is developed by people interested in their own heritage, has been shaped and moulded over more than 10 years into a complex work and research project, organised through groups in the territory that are responsible and critical of the reality that surrounds them.



"Patrimoni is a project that springs from the territory, from the demand of a whole range of local voluntary groups with their own cultural heritage projects"

These groups, working day to day at a local level, carry out their work increasingly in networks with other groups across the region. It is this network of heritage communities that has emerged within the Patrimoni projects that constitutes one of its paramount values, since it strengthens the horizontal, open and participatory nature of the project, and offers an excellent starting point for developing knowledge, interpretation and dissemination of cultural heritage that we understand as a resource for the development of the territory and as a driver of empowerment processes at the individual level, but above all at the group level.

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