



Theoretical-Practical Approaches to the Concept of Cultural Heritage in the Republic of Moldova

Viorica Ursu, Natalia Chiriac, Ina Bostan

Department of Engineering, Law and Real Estate Valuation, Technical University of Moldova, Chişinău, Republic of Moldova

Email: viorica.ursu@dp.utm.md, natalia.chiriac@dp.utm.md, ina.bostan@dp.utm.md

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Abstract

In one of our previous articles on the polysemantic analysis of the concept of heritage, it was stated that the term “patrimony” has several meanings. It is used in the legal, economic, and standard language with the general meaning of goods, be they material or immaterial: the common heritage of humanity, the national cultural heritage, etc. The cultural heritage of a state is a rich and diverse range of cultural and creative expressions, a legacy left by our ancestors to its descendants. The cultural heritage of a state is of particular importance, given that it enriches the life of every citizen, is the engine of the cultural and creative industries and plays a vital role in creating and consolidating social capital. It is also an essential resource for growth, employment and social cohesion, with the ability to stimulate urban and rural development as well as boost sustainable tourism. This study is dedicated to the analysis of the concept of the cultural heritage of the R.M., its component parts, and the distinctive features of each category of cultural heritage. Also, particular importance is attributed to the specific legislation for the protection of the cultural heritage, on whose provisions, but especially on whose observance the entire protection policy of a state depends.

Subject Areas

Law

Keywords

Cultural Heritage, Archaeological Heritage, Built Cultural Heritage, Mobile Cultural Heritage, Intangible Cultural Heritage, Audiovisual Cultural Heritage, Public Monuments

1. Introduction

The present research was based on the analysis of national legislation and indigenous doctrine on the concept of national cultural heritage, its parts, and its distinctive features.

In the legal literature, the issue of the protection of the national cultural heritage is not thoroughly studied. Although some of its aspects have become the subject of scientific research, circumstances in which we consider this study as extremely current and essential, both theoretically and practically. Most of the works, however, refer to general issues of protection of cultural heritage and cultural values.

Unfortunately, in the local doctrine, there is no monographic work to comprehensively analyze all aspects related to the components of the cultural heritage of the Republic of Moldova. However, we cannot fail to appreciate the study of local specialists in this field: Musteață Sergiu [1], Ghilaș Victor, Dolghi Adrian [2], Cavruc Valeriu, Postică Gheorghe [3] Coșovan V. [4], Ploșniță E. [5]. However, among the Romanian authors who have contributed significantly to the analysis of the protection of cultural heritage objects, we can mention I. Opreș [6], M. Duțu, A. Lazăr [7], etc. Furthermore, the topic focused on the preservation of cultural heritage has been the subject of research by several international researchers such as Forrest Craig [8], Prott [9], O'Keefe P.J. [10], Yusuf A.A. [11], Titchan [12], Loulanski [13], Blake [14], etc. All the authors mentioned it made significant contributions to developing the designated issues.

Three main research methods were utilized to support the proposed research: logical, analytical, and comparative.

The practical significance of the article lies in the comparative analysis of the legislation in the field by determining the strengths and shortcomings so that later through the analogical and comparative method, we can propose new changes in this field in the national legislation.

This paper's novelty and scientific originality are determined by the purpose and objectives derived from the approach to the problem, from the very nature of the research object. First of all, the research focuses on the investigation and identification of studies, specialized works and general and special normative acts in the field of national cultural heritage. In addition, the novelty comes from the inclusion in the analysis of its parts and the distinctive features of each category of cultural heritage, allowing a more in-depth examination of its features and characteristics.

2. The Notion and Components of the Cultural Heritage of the Republic of Moldova

A country's national heritage serves as the bridge between its past and present, an integral part of the culture of a nation ([4], p. 738).

Moldavia's cultural heritage represents a totality of cultural values and goods (material and intangible, movable and immovable) of local, national, and world

importance, established throughout history. Currently, there is a reconsideration of society's attitude towards cultural heritage, towards the diversity of artistic expressions in the Republic. Many valuable buildings, including monuments of history and culture in Bessarabia, were destroyed by military action during World War II. In the post-war period, the central authorities of the Moldovan SSR promoted a wide-ranging movement to protect and capitalize on cultural heritage to "educate the personality from an ideological-thematic point of view". At the end of the 1970s, about half of the churches that functioned on the territory of Bessarabia between the wars were destroyed. In the second half of the 1980s, about ten monumental buildings were demolished annually. In 1987, 350 historical and cultural monuments were lost forever, and 80 percent of the monumental buildings were in a state of disrepair. In the Republic of Moldova, measures were developed and applied to protect the cultural heritage after the proclamation of independence.

The national cultural heritage is the tool that materializes the cultural identity. It is a way to promote the values of a community abroad. It is the result of socio-cultural and politico-economic developments that contribute to the diversification of the universal culture. At the same time, the cultural heritage must be approached as a whole system that must be capitalized, and its preservation must be a constant, continuous, and concentrated concern ([4], p. 741).

The national cultural heritage is a comprehensive concept. The theoretical approaches of specialists treat the term in question as collective memory, cultural heritage, cultural goods, perennial values, social memory, and, more recently, mnemohistory ([15], p. 13).

The International Center for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM), in its work *Definition of Cultural Heritage. references to documents in history*, realized in 2005, presents no less than 60 definitions of cultural heritage, the oldest dating from 6 AD [16].

According to UNESCO, cultural heritage brings together "*the whole corpus of material signs, both artistic and symbolic, transmitted from the past to every culture and, therefore, to all humanity. As a constituent part of the affirmation and enrichment of cultural identities and a heritage belonging to the whole of humanity, the cultural heritage gives each place-specific characteristics. It is the depository of human experience*" ([17], p. 57).

"The totality of movable and immovable cultural goods that have a special value determined as such, and are representative of the history of a nation, having the virtue of designating it, constitute the national cultural heritage. A laborious and lengthy evaluation and legal sanction system attest to the quality of a good with special value. According to the Law, only after these can we talk about the existence of the national cultural heritage. Nevertheless, the cultural heritage has an open character, and it is constantly developing, adding discoveries in archaeological, historical, ethnographic, artistic, scientific, as well as contemporary artistic, scientific and technical creations" ([6], p. 22).

According to the author Ploșniță E., “Cultural heritage is the main testimony of a nation’s historical contribution to a universal civilization ([5], p. 10).”

The following features individualize the national cultural heritage [18]:

- It has a social character, which presupposes that it is made by society for society. Therefore, it is appreciated and enjoyed by the community.
- Its significance lies not only in the cultural manifestation itself, but also in its cultural heritage value. The knowledge and techniques that are transmitted through it are precious.
- It is both traditional and contemporary at the same time, presenting distinctive or specific features to a particular society.
- It is original and can change or recreate based on its characteristics, along with the pace of cultural evolution of the community. As a result, ancestral rites can be a living inheritance at any time.
- Cultural heritage has the didactic purpose of educating and teaching about the past of a community.
- It serves as an integrative element and helps strengthen cultural identity.
- It is representative, passed down from one generation to the next and is based on the social activity of that community.
- There is a risk of destroying a cultural legacy if there is no preservation of its cultural and historical significance over time.

3. The Definition of Cultural Heritage in International Conventions

The five UNESCO Conventions on Cultural Heritage adoption took almost fifty years, beginning with the adoption of the 1954 Hague Convention and culminating in the Fifth 2003 Convention on Intangible Cultural Heritage. Each Convention contains its definition of cultural heritage, although conceptually it has changed from “cultural property” to “cultural heritage” and then extended to include “intangible cultural heritage” ([8], p. 20).

The definition of cultural heritage in each Convention reflects the economic, social, and political context in which it was negotiated and shed light on several issues relevant to the cultural heritage at the time. However, there is no definition of cultural heritage in the Conventions that captures the idea or notion for all its purposes ([9], p. 2). But taken together, these definitions provide a conceptual basis for considering those values that underlie the idea of cultural heritage in its broadest sense.

Much of what is now cultural heritage has traditionally been treated in the case law as property. However, under the international war law, the cultural property has emerged as an object of protection, especially in protecting civilian property or institutions serving a public purpose.

During World War II, the unprecedented destruction and plundering of Europe’s cultural heritage called for immediate action. The notion of cultural heritage as the property was reflected in the adoption of the **Hague Convention**

from 1954 for the protection of cultural property in the event of armed conflict in the context of plundering of the Jewish property, especially the cultural property, given the Nazi elite's penchant for cultural objects, and the destruction of historic buildings in cities such as Bath, Cologne, and Osaka.

The Convention fulfills the obligations set out in UNESCO's constitutional mandate to "ensure the preservation and protection of the world heritage of works of art and monuments of history and science". As such, it has been defined to include movable property such as "works of art, manuscripts, books and other objects of artistic, historical or archaeological interest", as well as "scientific collections and important collections of books or archives or reproductions of the property defined above" ([8], p. 21).

The vast destruction of Europe's architecture has further led to the definition of cultural assets, including buildings, such as "monuments of architecture, art or history, whether religious or secular; archeological sites; groups of buildings that, as a whole, are of historical or artistic interest".

However, not all these goods were subject to the protection regime, but only those were considered to be of great importance for the cultural heritage of each people.

The Convention's purpose was the need to protect the physical integrity of these immovables and movables, for which the notion of cultural heritage as property served well enough.

Thus, according to this Convention, cultural goods are considered the following, whatever their origin or owner:

1) Movable or immovable goods, which are of great importance to the cultural heritage of peoples, such as architectural, artistic, historical, religious or secular monuments, archaeological sites, building groups, which, as a whole, represent a historical or artistic interest, works of art, manuscripts, books and other objects of artistic, historical or archaeological interest, as well as scientific collections and important collections of books, archives or reproductions of the goods defined above;

2) The buildings whose primary and practical purpose is to preserve or display movable cultural property as defined in paragraph 1, such as museums, extensive libraries, archives, and shelters intended to protect in the event of an armed conflict, movable cultural property as defined in paragraph [1];

3) Centers within which a considerable number of cultural assets are located, as defined in paragraphs [1] and [2], referred to as "monumental centers".

The 1954 Hague Convention was the first genuinely international convention to protect cultural heritage. Therefore this definition of "cultural property" was the first attempt to reach a global consensus on what should be covered. As this Convention aimed to protect "cultural property" that could be damaged at the time of war, the definition was naturally restricted to include only those objects that could be exposed to risk during these periods. Although it seems limited to cultural heritage in the sense of property, the Convention essentially protects the

values attributed to specific threatened properties. However, these are implicit and are achieved only through the physical protection of the property.

The destruction of cultural heritage during World War II; the growing awareness of the importance of cultural heritage in the lives of all peoples, especially those under colonial rule, and the direct threat to existing heritage through urban development and globalization have led to the formation of organizations dedicated to the protection of cultural heritage in its various forms. In particular, the founding of the International Council for Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) in 1965, as “an international gathering of architects and specialists in historic buildings”; has also played an important role in conceptualizing cultural heritage and developing several international protection regimes, including the 1972 World Heritage Convention and the 2001 Underwater Cultural Heritage Convention. In particular, given its special competence, ICOMOS has addressed only the protection of monuments and sites and provided their definitions. Notably, the monuments were described as “real estate properties,” including the buildings and furniture inside them, having an archaeological, architectural, historical, or ethnographic interest. “Sites” is defined as “a group of elements, whether natural or man-made or combinations of the two, which it is in the public interest to preserve”. Despite the circularity in determining the latter, these definitions continued to play an essential role in conceptualizing cultural heritage at the international level.

Similarly, the establishment of the International Council of Museums (ICOM) required a conscious effort to define the competence of ICOMOS in a way that ensured that it did not overlap with that of ICOM. As such, ICOMOS’s mission does not include “archaeological collections and other movable objects that are part of a museum collection”. Furthermore, although conceptualized as property, the forms of property were also distinguished only for the government.

Cultural property has also been the conceptual focus of several UNESCO’s recommendations, including the 1968 UNESCO’s recommendations on the Conservation of Cultural Property Endangered by Public or Private Works. It is defined in relatively narrow terms that the purpose of the Recommendation is to protect the cultural heritage, in particular the immovable cultural heritage that may be affected by construction operations. The name “property” is particularly evident in those conventions and recommendations whose purpose is to stop the flow of illicit cultural heritage. In the context of decolonization, the emergence of newly-independent states, and the concern for the return of cultural heritage to those states moved during the period of occupation and colonization and to stop the continuous flow of cultural objects from these states, the impetus for an international convention increased. The basis of this concern was the marketing of cultural heritage. The economic or market value of cultural objects exceeded any other matter. The states, which could consider their national importance more significant than their market value, wanted to create a regime that would protect such heritage from the art trade and antiques.

The aim *Convention of November 14, 1970, on the measures to prohibit and prevent the illicit import, export, and transfer of ownership of cultural property.*

In accordance with the meaning and purposes of this Convention, cultural goods are those religious or secular goods which are designated by each State as being of particular importance for archeology, prehistory, history, literature, art or science and which fall into the following categories: 1) rare collections and specimens of zoology, botany, mineralogy and anatomy; objects of paleontological interest; 2) goods relating to history, including the history of science and technology, military and social history, and the lives of national leaders, thinkers, scholars and artists, as well as the events of national importance; 3) objects obtained through archaeological research (authorized or clandestine) and archaeological discoveries; 4) elements from the dismantling of artistic or historical monuments and archaeological sites; 5) objects older than one hundred years, such as inscriptions, coins and engraved seals; 6) ethnological material; 7) goods of artistic interest, namely: a) pictures, paintings and drawings made entirely by hand on any medium and of any material (excluding industrial designs and manufactured articles, decorated by hand); b) original objects of monumental art; and sculptures, of any material, c) original engravings, prints and lithographs, d) original artistic packaging and moldings, of any material; 8) rare and incunabula manuscripts, books, documents and old publications of particular interest (historical, artistic, scientific, literary, etc.), singular or belonging to collections; 9) postage stamps, fiscal stamps and singular or in collections analogs; 10) archives, including photographic, phonographic and cinematographic archives, 11) pieces of furniture over one hundred years old and old musical instruments.

We note that the definition of cultural property in Article 1 of the Convention is “mixed nature” because it combines subjective and objective elements. First, each State must designate the property that it considers “specifically... to be important for archeology, prehistory, history, literature, art or science”. This criterion is followed by a list of categories, such as the products of archaeological excavations (including regular and clandestine excavations) or archaeological discoveries (letter c); or antiques more than one hundred years old, such as inscriptions, coins, and engraved seals (letter e); and over a hundred years old furniture and old musical instruments (letter k). Finally, subparagraph g refers to a general category of objects of artistic interest, such as paintings, drawings, and sculptures. Unfortunately, the text of the Convention does not provide any indication as to age or value that would limit this category.

Unfortunately, for a Convention that, in many respects, has avoided conceptualizing the cultural heritage as mere property, it uses the term cultural property to define the scope of its mission. First, it provides that cultural property is “*religious or secular property that is designated by each state as being of particular importance to archeology, prehistory, history, literature, art or science*”. It then lists several categories of cultural property “that could be important to one State and illegally excavated or exported to another state. This classification of

forms of cultural heritage has been the subject of much criticism, as it is too broad and vague. However, this is intended to mean that, although there is an exhaustive list of categories, it is up to each State to determine which objects it considers important and which can be included in the extended but exhaustive list. Therefore, it is so broad in terms of what could fall into each category but limited in the exhaustive nature of the categories. Thus, it only partially resembles the structure of the definition of cultural property in the 1954 Hague Convention, which is much more generally defined and exemplary. The reason for this difference in definition; according to O’Keefe, it is the fact that the protection of cultural heritage from the scourge of war as a principle that all states are negotiating in the negotiations of the 1954 Convention agreed and, as such, the object of the central protection regime does not necessarily require a demanding content. However, the 1970 Convention required a delicate balance between the importing and the exporting State. Thus a more precise and exhaustive definition was needed so that the scope of Convention could be accurately and definitively determined” ([10], p. 35).

Therefore, each Convention has adopted a definition that corresponds to its particular purpose. So are UNESCO’s recommendations. For example, the 1976 UNESCO recommendation on the International Exchange of Cultural Goods adopted a broad and somewhat vague definition of cultural goods. The aim is to ensure that as many objects as possible can be exchanged without hindrance. The 1978 recommendation for the Protection of Movable Cultural Property also used the term “cultural property”, which means all movable objects which are the expression and testimony of the human creation or the evolution of nature and which represent an archaeological, historical, artistic, scientific or technical value or interest.” Notably, while this definition emphasizes the ownership and actual appearance of objects subject to the protection recommendation, it recognizes that the importance assigned to the things to be protected is essential. That is, through the physical protection of the object, “the expression and testimony of human creation or the evolution of nature” must be preserved.

As is clear from the above, “cultural property” includes many cultural objects. The classification of these objects in the laws as “property” has the obligation of present generations to protect and safeguard such an asset ([11], p. 27). It also transcends the physical manifestations of culture to include the intangible elements, “as well as the people’s relationship with cultural objects”. Similarly, Titchan considers the use of the term “heritage”, rather than the term “property” as “a shift from the traditional focus of rights, including the property rights and the simultaneous emphasis on the commercial and monetary value, and the right to exploit, alienate and exclude from a political sovereign over his nation”, to a sense of duty to preserve and protect a “legacy” inherited from the past, whose value transcends the national borders ([12], p. 94).

Interestingly, although the World Heritage Convention uses the term heritage rather than property, the content of both the Convention and the operational guidelines uses the term “property” several times. However, the term describes

unique places—an actual physical site, landscape, or monument collectively called a property. With the introduction of the word “cultural inheritance”, the definition of objects and places to be protected has become broader and more conceptual than those of “cultural property”. Unfortunately, the inherent distinction between “inheritance” and “property” has not always been fully understood. The 1985 European Convention on Crimes relating to the Cultural Property contained a definition of “cultural property” by reference to “cultural heritage” in the preamble, suggesting that “cultural property” is a subdivision of “cultural heritage”.

Again, this reflects the central concern of this unique instrument, which is concerned with introducing criminal and administrative measures to prevent crimes against cultural property, the punishment of offenders, and the introduction of suitable measures for the return of cultural property. The conceptual difficulty of passing from the ownership to heritage is reflected in the negotiations that led to the 1995 UNIDROIT Convention and the final terms used in the Convention. This Convention was intended to operate in tandem with the 1970 Convention but addresses issues of private property that could not be discussed at the 1970 Convention.

The UNESCO’s activities in the field of cultural heritage have produced an astonishing classification of cultural heritage; including cultural heritage, cultural heritage sites, historic cities, cultural landscapes, underwater cultural heritage, mobile cultural heritage, natural sacred sites, documentary and digital heritage, film heritage, oral traditions, rites and beliefs, music and song, traditional medicine and traditional sports and games ([13], p. 209). In addition, the national and international trend in cultural heritage protection has demonstrated a movement towards broader definitions of culture to reflect a much wider role of heritage in society.

“From separate objects—architecture, archeology, and furniture—the heritage has expanded to landscapes, urban and rural areas, the historic environment” and intangible cultural heritage.

However, in all UNESCO conventions qualified, the definition of cultural property or cultural heritage is preceded by the phrase “for this convention” or something similar. Reflecting on the first three conventions adopted by UNESCO, Blake concludes that: “Where the difficulty lies is that all these are narrowly targeted answers to specific problems that do not provide a single, generally agreed definition of cultural heritage and do not recognize the deeper implications of the applied concepts. As a result, the Law of international cultural heritage has developed with uncertainty at its center on the exact nature of its object and based on a set of principles that are not always coherent” ([14], p. 85).

This would not be surprising given the ad hoc approach in adopting five conventions over almost fifty years. Although, however, the principles may be able to adapt, reinterpreted, and in the context of cross-fertilization between conventional regimes, they may prove to have more substance than Blake anticipates. In a sense, this paper, in the process of establishing the essential norms and con-

ventional structures of each of the five conventions, seeks to test the extent to which an international law on cultural heritage could have been developed based on a set of principles.

According to art. 1 of the *Convention on the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage* of 23.11.1972 are considered *cultural heritage* (Figure 1).

The definition in this international instrument must recognize that cultural properties have a value independent of territorial claims because their importance is universal and equal to all humanity. The recognition of the universal status of cultural heritage presents a statement in the sense that “everyone’s cultural heritage is everyone’s cultural heritage” [19].

The definition of world heritage contains many categories of tangible cultural heritage, the common feature being that they must have a “remarkable universal value” in terms of history, art, or science for monuments and groups of buildings and from the historical, aesthetic, ethnological or anthropological point of view for sites [20].

It has been observed that there is friction between the idea of remarkable, with the implication that an object must have exceptional qualities, which make it stand out from all other things, and the universal value, which it must also demonstrate ([21], p. 327-329).

Cultural heritage has the following components [22]:

1) *Tangible cultural heritage (material)*.

a) *movable heritage*.

b) *immovable heritage*.

- Archeological heritage;
- Built historical heritage.

2) *Intangible cultural heritage (intangible)*.

According to the Decision of the Republic of Moldova’s Government, no. 271 from 09.04.2014 on the approval of the Culture Development Strategy “Culture 2020” and the Action Plan on its implementation [23], the national *cultural heritage* of the Republic of Moldova *includes the following basic categories*:

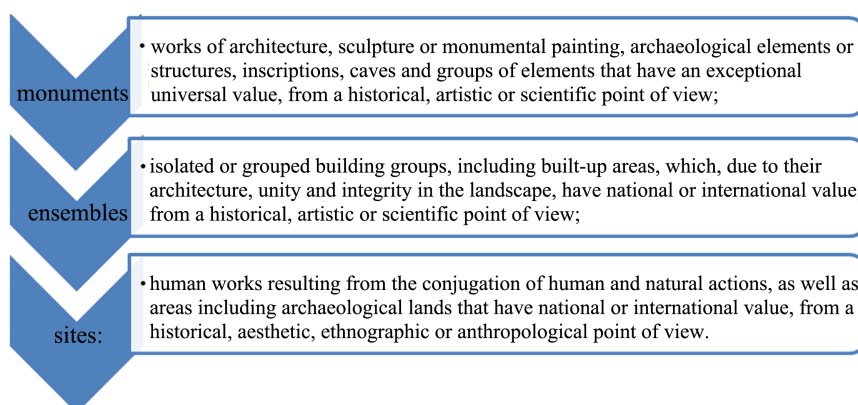


Figure 1. *Cultural heritage* according to art. 1 of the *Convention on the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage* of 23.11.1972.

archaeological heritage, built cultural heritage, movable cultural heritage, intangible cultural heritage, audiovisual cultural heritage and public, protected monuments.

4. Archeological Heritage of the Republic of Moldova

Archaeological heritage is defined as the totality of the material vestiges of human existence in the past, representing an essential treasure of cultural heritage, constituting a bridge between the present and the human past ([3], p. 39). As defined in the national and international legislation, archaeological heritage is the totality of relics and traces of human existence in the past, on the surface, in the soil, or underwater, which require the application of archaeological methods to be identified and studied. Consisting of various sites, ensembles, and landscapes, as well as movable property, objects or traces of human manifestations, together with the land in which they are discovered, the archaeological heritage is the only documentary evidence for prehistory, which is known to represent—a time—, over 95% of the entire history of humanity. Also, this valuable cultural heritage is an essential source for understanding a wide range of cultural, demographic, social, economic phenomena or processes developed during the evolution of human society in antiquity, the Middle Ages, and even in modern and contemporary times ([2], p. 9).

In the Republic of Moldova, the archaeological heritage is present in all country areas, near or in the space of contemporary localities, in agricultural, industrial, forestry, aquatic areas, etc. [23].

The archaeological heritage includes two major categories ([3], p. 39): immovable archaeological heritage and movable archaeological heritage.

1) The immovable archaeological heritage is defined as the totality of the material vestiges of the human existence of the past, associated with the natural landscapes. According to the data from the Archaeological Register we have today, the real archaeological heritage of the Republic of Moldova includes many over 9000 sites of different categories and types, of which 180 are resorts, about 2650—open settlements, 90—fortresses, or fortified settlements, 6—linear fortifications, 6100—mounds or burial mounds and 130—flat cemeteries ([2], p. 9). Archaeological sites are traces of habitat (resorts and settlements), exploitation of natural resources (extraction mines, etc.), craft production (workshops, etc.), defense (walls, waves, ditches, etc.), burial (isolated cemeteries or graves), worship (sanctuaries, temples, churches, etc.) ([3], p. 38-43).

a) **Resorts.** Resorts represent the first category of archeological sites, thus being named the places with traces of short human life dating from the Paleolithic and Mesolithic. The vast majority of resorts are under the open sky (open type), the oldest (about 650 - 200 thousand years), and archaeological sites with archaeological material attributed to the Lower Paleolithic being identified on the Lower Dniester, near Dubasari, Pohrebea, and Coşnita. The vast majority of open resorts have been identified in the basins of the Dniester, Prut, and Raut

rivers. They are of variable size, tiny (about 50 × 50 m). They have one, two, or more cultural-chronological horizons attributed to different periods of the Old Stone Age or Mesolithic. Archaeological excavations have investigated a relatively small number of resorts, of which we mention those from Trinca, Costești, Gordinești, Brînzeni (Mersâna point), Bobulești, Ciutulești, Rașcov, Cosăuți, Climăuții de Jos and others. Among the most important archaeological complexes, we note, first of all, the temporary “dwellings” (hut type), arranged of large limestone and animal bones covered with branches and animal skins; long-lasting “dwellings” consisting of large animal bones (mammoth, polar reindeer, etc.) and earth, with a deep base, some provided with fireplaces, discovered in the open resorts of Climăuții de Jos and Cosăuți.

A distinct group of resorts is those in caves or natural caves. Located mainly on the Prut and Middle Dniester, these monuments have been identified since the last century. At present, about ten caves with archeological relics from different periods of the Paleolithic are documented. Among them, the best researched archeological excavations, in which specialists from the sciences related to archeology also participated, are the caves from Duruitoarea Veche, Ofatinți, Brînzeni, Buzdujeni, Butești, and Trinca. The best known, but also with the oldest traces of human habitation, is the cave from Duruitoarea Veche. Being placed in a series of limestone cliffs on the steep bank of the river Ciuhur, a left tributary of the Prut, this cave stretches over 49 m and consists of three rooms, with three rooms area of 300 m². Reported in 1958 by the archaeologist Nicolae Chețaru, the cave was researched by various specialists between 1959 and 1965, discovering materials dated to the Lower Paleolithic (about 650 - 200 thousand years ago) ([3], p. 39-43).

b) **Open settlements.** Among the archeological objectives discovered on the territory of the Republic of Moldova, an important place is occupied by the open or “rural type” settlements, which are about 2650 in number, which constitutes more than 1/4 of the total sites identified so far. All open settlements have a common characteristic feature: they have a portion of land without artificial reinforcements (ditches, earth waves, or stone walls), on the surface of which there are remains of houses or household buildings, burnt clay, fragments of clay vessels, animal bones, household objects and other materials or traces of human habitation. At the same time, like other types of sites, open settlements differ from one epoch to another and from one archaeological culture to another by different specific features, easily noticed by specialists ([3], p. 39).

c) **Fortresses/fortified settlements.** Although not too numerous, an important category of existing archeological sites on the territory of the Republic of Moldova is made up of fortresses or fortifications, so far been identified about 90 such monuments have. Representing portions of land with traces of human habitation or real settlements surrounded by artificial and/or natural fortifications, fortresses or fortifications are characteristic only for certain epochs or historical periods, the oldest such sites being dated to the Eneolithic (V - IV mill. BC), and

the latest in the premodern era (XVII - XVIII centuries). The knowledge of the local toponymy contributed considerably to the detection of several prehistoric, ancient or medieval fortifications known today, proving that such place names are found, such as Cetate, Cetățuie, Șanț, Zamcă, Horodcă, Horodiște, Palanca, Brazda Turcului, Farfuria Turcească, and others, as a rule, they are the traces of some former fortified settlements, of some fortifications of old fortresses.

d) **Urban settlements.** A special place among the medieval archaeological sites on the territory of the Republic of Moldova is occupied by the urban settlements from Orheiul Vechi (Trebujeni, Orhei district), Costești (Ialoveni district), and Lăpușna (Hîncești district).

e) **Mounds.** The most numerous archaeological sites in the Prut-Dniester area and on the entire Eurasian continent are the mounds or burial mounds, so far on the territory of the Republic of Moldova being identified several about 6100 such archaeological monuments.

f) **Plane necropolis.** Another category of funerary sites is represented by flat necropolises, which are much fewer (about 130) than mounds but equally or even more important from a scientific point of view. Suppose most of the mounds on the territory of the Republic of Moldova are attributed to tribes and nomadic populations of Eastern origin. In that case, the flat cemeteries are attributed to different sedentary populations who lived here in different eras and historical periods. Still, the later medieval cemeteries overwhelmingly belong to local Christian communities.

Archaeological ensembles bring together related, mutually complementary sites, arranged relatively compactly and integrated into unitary natural landscapes (e.g., urban settlements surrounded by rural settlements and cemeteries, all integrated into a unitary natural landscape and connected by communication routes).

2) The movable archaeological heritage includes artifacts (portable objects created and/or used by man: tools, utensils, weapons, objects of worship, adornment, clothing, etc.) and ecofacts (portable vestiges of the natural environment associated with traces of origin anthropogenic: pollen, seeds, animal bones, snail shells, etc.) ([24], p. 16).

The immovable archeological heritage, together with the movable one, present an exceptional significance, not only for the reconstruction and knowledge of the prehistory of Moldova but also of the whole ancient epoch and the early and developed Middle Ages; given the fact that the protohistory of the Carpatho-Dniester area ended only in the second half of the XIVth century, since the first internal written documents, issued by the Moldavian princely chancellery ([2], p. 9).

The first significant achievement in the documentation and inventory of real archaeological heritage on the entire territory of the Republic of Moldova was the Archaeological Map of the MSSR. It included a series of seven volumes of archaeological repertoires, which were developed according to cultural-chronological criteria and published between 1973-1975. Another significant contribu-

tion to the registration of archeological sites was elaborating the Repertoire of monuments of history and culture of the MSSR. The northern area appeared in a limited edition in 1972. However, both series of repertoires also contain specific gaps. We notice the too brief description of the monuments and the lack of cartographic and topographic data, due to which the location of the archeological sites has often remained uncertain. However, the documentation and inventory of archeological sites, conducted in the 70s and 80s of the last century, played an essential role in understanding the geographical distribution and significance of the various constituent elements of the archaeological heritage of the Republic of Moldova. Also, at the same time, when the state investments in transport agricultural infrastructure, in that of communal utilities and territorial arrangements, in Chisinau, as everywhere in Europe, the preventive and salvage archeology appeared, thanks to which tens and hundreds of mounds or archeological sites dating from different historical epochs have been researched, anticipating their irreparable destruction ([2], p. 9).

During the last twenty years in Moldova, the state's system of administration and protection has neglected the national archaeological heritage. Under these conditions, the uncontrolled development of the land privatization process and new construction works have led to the irretrievable destruction of hundreds of archeological sites, the other hundreds of sites being subjected to permanent aggressions until now. The illicit activities of treasure hunters, with the use of metal detectors, which have extracted from cultural strata and traded hundreds of monetary treasures and thousands of movable archeological objects of priceless cultural and scientific value, have constituted financial damage of tens of millions of euros to the State [23] and has had a negative impact on the archeological sites during the last 15 years. At the same time, after the inventory and classification of the immovable archaeological heritage, following the stipulations of the Law on the protection of monuments (no. 1530-XII, of June 22, 1993), the archeological sites were to be included in the Register of monuments of the Republic of Moldova protected by the State. However, this document of significant importance for safeguarding the cultural heritage, approved by the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, was published in the Official Journal very late, only on February 2, 2010, without any update. Of the more than 7700 archeological sites listed in 1993, less than 5000 sites were included in the Monuments Register, of which about 3000 mounds, 1600 settlements, 120 Paleolithic resorts, 75 fortresses, and 50 necropolises dating from different historical epochs. Therefore, no more than 2000 archeological sites were taken from the state records, thus not ensuring adequate legal protection. Archaeological research has suffered due to chronic underfunding, lack of minimum facilities, and lack of staff in management, conservation, and restoration of archaeological heritage.

5. The Built Cultural Heritage of the Republic of Moldova

The immovable cultural heritage is a phrase that designates what, in generic

terms, is called historical monuments and includes historical monuments and historical ensembles and sites. The immovable cultural heritage is not limited to the built heritage, which excludes most archeological sites [25].

All these delimitations and definitions are established through a complete and coherent formulated body of norms, which considers the whole set of operations (research, evidence, conservation, restoration, enhancement) that make up the work of protecting the immovable cultural heritage. The framework law in the field (Law no. 1530 of 22-06-1993 on the protection of monuments [26] stipulates that the monuments located on the territory of the Republic of Moldova are part of the cultural heritage are under state protection. The responsibility for protecting these monuments rests with the specialized central public administration authorities, the local public administration authorities, and the owners/managers of the monuments.

The monuments are defined, in Law, as “objects or sets of objects of historical, artistic or scientific value, and represent the evidence of the evolution of civilizations on the territory of the Republic, as well as spiritual, political, economic and social development. Therefore, they are entered in the Register of monuments of the Republic of Moldova protected by the State (from now on referred to as the Register of Monuments)”.

According to art. 1, para. (3) of **Law 1530/1993**, the monuments that are part of the cultural heritage are considered:

- 1) Works of architecture, sculpture or monumental painting, archaeological elements or structures, inscriptions, caves, and groups of elements that have national or international value, from a historical, artistic, or scientific point of view;
- 2) Ensembles: groups of isolated or grouped constructions, including built-up areas, which, due to their architecture, unity, and integrity of the landscape, have national or international value, from a historical, artistic, or scientific point of view;
- 3) Sites: works created by man or works resulting from the conjugation of human and nature actions, as well as the areas that include archaeological lands that have national or international value, from a historical, aesthetic, ethnographic, or anthropological point of view.
- 4) Monuments that are part of the natural heritage are considered:
 - a) Physical and biological formations that have national or international value, from an aesthetic or scientific point of view;
 - b) The geological and physiographic formations and the areas constituting the habitat of the animal and vegetal species threatened with extinction, which have national or international value, from the scientific or conservation point of view;
 - c) Natural sites or natural areas with the national or international value from the point of view of science, conservation, or natural beauty.

The built cultural heritage is the most valuable component of the cultural heritage, both in terms of direct material value and the possibilities of inserting extra cultural elements. This type of heritage includes almost three thousand ob-

jects: separate buildings, architectural complexes, and built areas (houses and administrative buildings, urban and rural mansions, churches, monasteries, technical and industrial facilities, the historical center of Chisinau, etc.) that have been registered in the Register of monuments of the Republic of Moldova protected by the State. According to this Register, in the Republic of Moldova, 2913 built monuments are taken under the protection of the State [23].

Due to the lack of a functional monument protection system, the Republic of Moldova has suffered many losses, often irrecoverable, of the landmarks of immovable cultural heritage included in the Register of monuments of the Republic of Moldova protected by the State and in the registers of administrative-territorial units. Thus, only in Chişinau were destroyed over 10% of the protected buildings, the number of those affected by degrading interventions or intentionally left to ruin being much higher. Furthermore, the protection area of these buildings is ignored, especially important from adequate visualization and enhancement of monuments.

The methods of degradation and destruction of buildings with the status of protected monument practiced affecting, first of all, the characteristics that define their essence—the authenticity (the capacity of the object to represent the epoch in which it was created) and its integrity. Among the most common are: leaving the thing without essential maintenance until total degradation; total or partial demolition and erection of new buildings in their place; superstructure, respectively, modification of the original volume; total or partial replacement of carpentry, hardware, plaster, etc.

6. The Movable Cultural Heritage of the Republic of Moldova

The movable national cultural heritage represents the set of movable cultural goods, classified in the national cultural heritage with unique or exceptional historical, archeological, documentary, ethnographic, artistic, scientific, technical, literary, cinematographic, numismatic, philatelic, heraldic, bibliophile, cartographic, epigraphic, aesthetics, ethnological and anthropological value; representing the material testimonies of the evolution of the natural environment and the human relationship with this environment, of the human creative potential [27].

Depending on their significance or historical, archaeological, documentary, ethnographic, artistic, scientific, technical, literary, cinematographic, numismatic, philatelic, heraldic, bibliophile, cartographic, epigraphic, antiquity, uniqueness or rarity importance, the goods belonging to the movable are part of:

- Category A—“Treasure,” which includes cultural goods of exceptional value to humanity;
- Category B—“Fund,” which includes cultural goods of particular value for the Republic of Moldova. And the complete list of goods belonging to the movable national cultural heritage is presented in art. 4 of the Law on the protection of the movable national cultural heritage:

1) Archaeological and historical-documentary goods, such as:

- a) Archaeological pieces from terrestrial and underwater excavations or accidental discoveries, except for the samples of construction materials, of materials from sites, which constitute the archaeological evidence for specialized analyzes;
- b) Inscriptions, separate elements from the dismantling of historical monuments;
- c) Material and documentary testimonies regarding the political, economic, social, military, religious, scientific, artistic, sports, or other fields;
- d) Manuscripts, incunabula, rare books and old books, publications of different types, with autographs and ex-libris, periodicals;
- e) Documents and prints of social interest: archive documents, maps, and other cartographic materials;
- f) Objects with memorialist value;
- g) Objects and documents with numismatic, philatelic, heraldic value: coins, medals, decorations, badges, banknotes, seals, patents, postage stamps, flags, and banners;
- h) Epigraphic pieces;
- i) Photographs, photographic clichés, films, audio, and video recordings;
- j) Musical instruments;
- k) Military uniforms and accessories;
- l) Clothing.

2) Goods with artistic significance such as:

- a) Works of fine art: painting, sculpture, graphics, drawing, engraving, printing, and other similar ones;
- b) Works of decorative and applied art: furniture, tapestries, carpets, pieces of glass, ceramics, metal, wood, textiles and other materials, ornaments;
- c) Cult objects: icons, embroidery, Goldsmithing, furniture, and others;
- d) Design projects and prototypes;
- e) Primary materials of artistic, documentary, and animation films;
- f) Public monuments, artistic components exhibited outdoors;
- g) Postcards and illustrations;
- h) Decorative pieces for shows.

3) Goods with ethnographic significance, such as:

- a) Elements of popular architecture;
- b) Elements from technical installations;
- c) Household and household items;
- d) Work tools;
- e) Products of the home textile industry: carpets, wall hangings, towels, folk costumes, and other similar ones;
- f) Furniture;
- g) Props of customs;
- h) Objects of worship;
- i) Contemporary handicraft products.

4) Goods of scientific importance, such as:

- a) Rare specimens and collections of zoology, botany, mineralogy, petrology, paleontology, anthropology, speleology, anatomy;
- b) Hunting trophies.

5) Goods of technical importance, such as:

- a) Unique technical creations;
- b) Rarities, regardless of the brand;
- c) Prototypes of current devices, devices, and machines;
- d) Watchmaking;
- e) Achievements of the popular technique;
- f) Technical documents: projects, plans, sketches, patents for inventions;
- g) Means of transport and telecommunications;
- h) CD, CD-ROM, DVD molds.

6) Goods with memorial significance, such as:

- a) Memorial goods and objects;
- b) Documents and photographs from the personalities' life;
- c) Pieces related to events of national and international importance.

Moreover, art. 6 tells us that the goods with the status of movable national cultural heritage may be public property of the State, administrative-territorial units, public associations, except for the cases provided by the legislation in force and by the international treaties to which the Republic of Moldova is a party; they can be the property of religious denominations or the private property of individuals and legal entities under private law. The State also guarantees, following the Law, the property right of the natural and legal persons of its public and private Law over the goods with the status of movable national cultural patrimony that they own.

7. The Intangible Cultural Heritage of the Republic of Moldova

The intangible cultural heritage is “all the elements of authentic traditional creation, valuable from a historical and cultural perspective, passed down from generation to generation, expressed in literary, musical, choreographic or theatrical forms, as well as the set of practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, and skills, together with tools, objects, artifacts, specific clothing, accessories and cultural spaces associated with them, which communities, groups and, as the case may be, individuals recognize as an integral part of their cultural heritage [28]”.

The intangible cultural heritage of the Republic of Moldova is one of the pillars on which the country's culture and identity are based. This heritage, called by specialists “traditional culture” at the international level, has been recognized as part of the cultural heritage and has become the subject of cultural policies. The “Intangible cultural heritage” is closely linked to the material heritage and the preservation of traditional arts, knowledge, skills, traditional social and cul-

tural institutions and depends on preserving our identity in the conditions of globalization [29].

Thus, in the Republic of Moldova, some elements make up the intangible cultural heritage and require their recognition by the State. For this reason, the National Register of Intangible Cultural Heritage of the Republic of Moldova was created, representing a mandatory list of the elements that make up the intangible cultural heritage on the territory of the Republic of Moldova to safeguard them. The elaboration and approval of this Register are a way of adapting the national cultural policies to the UNESCO strategies and standards in preserving the intangible cultural heritage. This inventory [30] was established by Article 12, paragraph 1 of the UNESCO Convention on the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (Paris, October 17, 2003), ratified by the Republic of Moldova by Law no. 12-XVI from 10.02.2006; the provisions of Law No. 58, on the protection of the intangible cultural heritage of the Republic of Moldova, approved on March 29, 2012; Order of the Minister of Culture No. 238 from 09.12.2009. The Register constitutes a mechanism for implementing the legal norms to safeguard the intangible cultural heritage, promoted by the Culture Law no. 413-XIV from 27.05.1999, Museums Law no. 1596-XV from 27.12.2002, the Law regarding the popular artistic crafts no. 135-XV from 20.03.2003.

Thus, intangible cultural heritage elements represent distinct units, perceived by the heritage-bearing community and by researchers as cultural facts, having all the morphological components that ensure their functionality identity and the differentiation from other similar elements specific to traditional culture. The inventory of this heritage consists of the identification, documentation, definition, and hoarding treasure of its constitutive elements, which will stimulate the research, conservation, transmission, promotion, and valorization of this heritage's elements.

This Register has been drawn up in two volumes. The first volume bearing the "A" index includes the elements of the intangible cultural heritage that identify Moldovans/Romanians in the Republic of Moldova. The next book will have the index "B" and include the intangible cultural heritage elements that determine the other ethnic groups in the Republic of Moldova [30]. The register contains ten compartments, each representing several elements of a specific cultural expression (literary, musical, choreographic, etc.). In each compartment, the components were structured according to criteria that allowed the specifics of this wealth to be understood. In addition, the existing scientific experience in each field, the specialized literature, and the cultural realities of the communities carrying the intangible cultural heritage were taken into account [30].

An essential condition for including the elements in the Register, beyond the general and local name, their current functionality, and promoters, is the indication of their degree of viability in the communities. Different letter characters are used for this purpose. The viable elements are printed in plain characters, as are most of the accompanying texts. The parts in danger of extinction are printed in bold to be more easily visualized in the context of others, and those

that disappeared from the practice of communities and are only in the sporadic practice of folk or other bands, are printed in italics. Being presented in this way, the elements retain their place in their functional context, which is very important to respect the syncretic character of traditional culture. At the same time, in case of changing the condition of the viability of some elements (for example, as a result of the measures taken by the communities, some elements in danger of extinction could regain their viability), a new wording of the list, maybe written in other characters.

Several local characteristics of the elements are included in the Register so that the communities, the local public administration, the cultural operators, the representatives of the civil society can better monitor them. Each compartment has its code, and each item—a specific number. Thus, saying carols by a group of men has the inventory number A, II.2; II.12; V.4, which indicates that it appears in three list compartments. The decoration of the Easter eggs appears under the numbers A.V.25-27; VII.40; VIII.79. Inside the compartments, as necessary, there are details in brackets that refer to other compartments of the Register [30].

Thus, the National Register of Intangible Cultural Heritage includes: 1) traditions and expressions of the art of speech; 2) traditions and expressions of musical art or practice; 3) traditions, expressions of art or traditional choreographic practice; 4) traditional musical instruments; 5) holidays, customs and rituals; 6) knowledge, practices, and symbols about man, nature and the outer space; 7) knowledge of traditional food; 8) techniques and knowledge in traditional artistic crafts; 9) traditional institutions, kinship, forms of association.

The register is an open list that will be completed, updated, and drafted at all times, thus fueling the interest and responsibility of heritage communities, organizations, and institutions responsible for safeguarding it. Having this list available in the version we present, it will be possible to see much better what other elements are missing or not explained well enough. We rely mainly on the contribution of the heritage-bearing communities, which can check once again their local heritage, to put it in value, resorting to the necessary consultations with the elderly, with the opinion formers from the community. Likewise, the elements can be compared with neighboring communities to observe the similarities and differences [30].

The elements registered in the National Register of Intangible Cultural Heritage acquire the status of characteristics protected by the State and are limited to a particular regime that ensures this heritage's protection, transmission, and development. The state registration of the elements is accompanied by actions supporting the viability of the component, initiated and carried out by the local communities holding heritage, in collaboration with competent institutions in the field, non-governmental organizations, and other bodies interested in preserving the authenticity of traditional creation.

It is essential to understand that including intangible cultural heritage elements in the Register does not guarantee their protection. On the contrary, in-

cluding the features in the State, records is a way to increase their visibility, stimulate society's interest in this heritage, and include the potential concentrated in intangible cultural heritage in the social circuit. The intangible cultural heritage elements are viable as long as people make them circulate, consider them useful in the processes of identity, increase social cohesion, and revive the local economy [30].

However, on March 24, 2006, the Republic of Moldova was among those 130 countries worldwide that have ratified the Convention on the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of 2003 and have committed to developing a legislative framework, inventorying the intangible cultural heritage, and taking safeguard measures to be passed on to future generations.

The Convention, like all such instruments, contains general provisions on what and how to safeguard. However, at the level of the impact of the requirements of the Convention within the sovereign states, we can highlight two essential aspects of its provisions. Namely the obligation of states to document, preserve, sensitize the population at different levels on safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage, with the essential condition—"to identify and define the elements of intangible cultural heritage (...), with the participation of communities, groups, and known non-governmental organizations ([1], p. 302-305)". The last-mentioned provision of the Convention is related to another, the only one that obliges the States Parties to take specific concrete actions, namely to elaborate "one or more inventories of the intangible cultural heritage existing on its territory ([1], p. 305-306)" and to report on inventory in periodic reports. This is strictly related to the normative content. Implementing the 2003 Convention at the national level in many signatory states is different, with various difficulties, which due to the international cooperation can be shared, to improve. Nevertheless, the 2003 Convention is a normative success "because being a part of the United Nations, UNESCO's international appeal and its legitimacy are perhaps of the highest order in the current system of global administration ([31], p. 11)".

Thus, in the Republic of Moldova, the Law on the Protection of the Intangible Cultural Heritage was elaborated in 2012 [28]. At the same time, the Republic of Moldova, through the competent institutions, takes measures to safeguard this heritage so that the cultural managers, researchers, and communities, first of all, are aware of their heritage, document it, promote it, capitalize on the welfare of society and forward. Safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage means recognizing it in society and ensuring its viability in communities. Namely, the communities must be the beneficiaries of the safeguard measures, themselves participating actively in the inventory of this heritage [29].

The UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity was officially inaugurated in 2008 and currently brings together 549 elements from 127 countries [32].

Among the elements of the Republic of Moldova included in the **Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage UNESCO are:**

- 1) *The carol of men's horde* (2013) [33];

2) *Traditional techniques for making bark in Romania and the Republic of Moldova* (2016) [34];

3) *Cultural practices associated with March 1 (Martişor)* (2017) [35].

In the process of elaborating the file are *The art of shirts with embroidered top of the sleeves (altiţă)*—an element of cultural identity in Romania and the Republic of Moldova.

Thus, these aspects discussed above show us that the concept and the notion of cultural heritage are inextricably linked to a series of conventions, which were subsequently ratified by most states in the world. In this context, we refer to the Convention on the Protection of Cultural Values in the Event of Armed Conflict, approved in The Hague in 1954, the Recommendation on the Preservation of Landscapes and Localities (1962). However, the scope of decisions on the recognition of the value of cultural heritage dates back to 1970, when the UNESCO's Convention on Measures on the Prohibition and Prevention of Illegal Exports and the Private Transfer of Cultural Property was received in Paris on November 14, which was supplemented by several other documents, which were subsequently adopted. We refer to the UNESCO's Convention for the Preservation of the Cultural and Natural Heritage of 1972 to the Recommendation for the Preservation and Current Role of Historical Ensembles, approved in 1976; to the Recommendations on the participation and contribution of the popular masses in the cultural life of 1976; to the Recommendations regarding the preservation of the folklore treasure, approved in 1989, etc.

8. The Audiovisual Cultural Heritage of the Republic of Moldova

The Republic of Moldova also has an *audiovisual heritage*, concentrated at the “Moldova-film” studio, the National Public Audiovisual Institution “Teleraudio-Moldova”, and other cultural-scientific institutions. This heritage is precious and represents the history of our country in terms of documentation and, respectively, the creative potential in the fields of reference.

Although the Code of Audiovisual Media Services of the Republic of Moldova [36] does not contain the definition of audiovisual heritage, it uses this term in its content.

According to art. 31, public media service providers are in the service of the public, operate from the public contribution, are subject to general control, and have the mission to implement in practice several principles, one of which is *to promote the diversity of national, European and international cultural heritage*.

According to art, the public providers of media services have as object of activity, according to art. 33, para. (1), lit. 1) *keeping and archiving audiovisual recordings and documents of interest to the national heritage*.

One of the attributions of the public media service providers is *to contribute to the conservation of the cultural heritage through the development and digitization of the audiovisual archives, with the possibility of online access*.

The protection of the audiovisual heritage is on the verge of degradation, and in some cases, even on the verge of extinction. It is an urgent problem for the Republic of Moldova because the memory of our people, which must become the cultural heritage of our descendants, but at the same time investment for the future, is in danger. The protection of audiovisual heritage is important because it will help raise awareness of enhancing it. Furthermore, the digitization of audiovisual archives will serve as vital platforms for exchanging knowledge and memories between countries with common past or present. Last but not least, it will create some new legal mechanisms and normative acts to help protect this type of heritage.

9. The Monuments Protected by the State

The monuments protected by the State represent immovable works of monumental plastic art (spatial-volumetric compositions, statues, busts, commemorative plaques with sculptural relief, crosses), together with the land delimited for them, having a decorative, religious, or commemorative character, located in public spaces, on lands in the public domain of the State or of the administrative-territorial units [37].

Following the Regulation **on the National Register and Local Registers of Monuments protected by the State** [38] in the Republic of Moldova, there is a national database of monuments protected by the State that represent a system of centralized records of all public monuments in the country, including those with national protection status (category A) and those with local protection status (category B). The database is kept in electronic format and is managed and completed by the Ministry of Education, Research and Culture based on the National Register and the Local Registers.

The classification of the monuments protected by the State is done by registering these objects in the National Register or Local Registers, as the case may be. The procedure shall precede this entry in the National Register for assessing the things in question, carried out under the classification criteria laid down in this Regulation. All the classification criteria represent some qualitative and quantitative standards based on the significance and the cultural value of the immovable goods—monuments protected by the State. Thus, the monuments protected by the State are classified in category A based on the following criteria:

1) The criterion of the artistic and urban value of the monuments protected by the State is evaluated based on:

- a) *Plastics and artistic component;*
- b) *The relationship with the context (impact on) the built site (urban or rural) and/or natural, integration/belonging to an ensemble or built or natural site;*
- c) *The significance for a specific historical-geographical area;*
- d) *Representativeness for a historical epoch or the work of an author.*

The grades given for each of the proposed aspects are: *exceptional, very high, high, low.*

2) The criterion of the memorial-symbolic value of the monuments (except for the works of monumental plastic art with the strictly decorative character) is evaluated based on the following characteristics:

- a) *The connection of the monument with certain personalities, moments, and historical, cultural, political, or social places;*
- b) *The monument's presence in the memory of the local or national community.*

The grade based on this criterion is awarded in finding the presence at the examined work of at least one of the proposed characteristics.

3) The criterion of the antiquity of the monument is evaluated based on the following qualifications:

- a) *Exceptional*—a monument which is over 100 years since it was constructed;
- b) *Very high*—a monument which is from 100 to 70 years since it was constructed;
- c) *High*—a monument which is from 70 to 50 years since it was constructed;
- d) *Small*—a monument which is from 50 to 25 years since it was constructed;
- e) *Without qualifier*—a monument less than 25 years old since it was constructed.

However, the classification of the monument in category A can take place only in case of obtaining the qualification: *exceptional*, *very high* or *high* at criterion a); the presence of at least one of the two characteristics of criterion b), as well as in the case of obtaining the *exceptional* qualification, *very high* or *high* of criterion c).

In the case of non-meeting of the qualifications/characteristics listed in each of the three criteria, the monument remains inscribed/is inscribed in the classification category B.

For registration in the local Registers, the quality of classification criterion is held by fulfilling all the requirements/provisions of the legislation in the field of public monuments in force at the time of its construction/placing in a public space the respective monumental sculpture work.

10. Conclusions

Cultural heritage, far from still being fully defined and explained, has become very topical. As a result, the task of maintaining cultural values, which falls into the first level of cultural policies, has been taken over by the international community.

The cultural heritage of a country includes various components: natural, built and archaeological sites, museums, monuments, works of art, historic cities, literary, musical and audiovisual works, and the knowledge, practices and traditions of the citizens of that state.

Today, cultural heritage is not only a means to the new past but also an asset that helps us build our future.

Heritage values are becoming increasingly recognized in all parts of the world

not only as irreplaceable indicators of a nation's history or as part of the world's treasury but as a necessary and mandatory step in preparing future generations by nurturing a patriotic spirit and stimulating creativity and by cultivating a sense of responsibility in the direction of becoming historical.

A legal framework governs a culture that practical reforms have not accompanied. So far, the "preservation of heritage" has only taken place on paper without impacting actual protection or enhancement. There is no cohesive state policy, no strategic plan for heritage development, no management system of cultural heritage and specialists qualified to restore monuments, which led to the irreparable destruction of hundreds of monuments and relics ([39], p. 644).

The perspective research plan in the investigation of this topic aims to continue the study of the thorough analysis of the categories of cultural heritage, especially the immovable one, the identification and analysis of assets that are part of the World Heritage.

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One of the objectives of this research project is to harmonize the national regulatory framework for the protection of real estate of historical and architectural value with EU practices. As the architectural heritage is part of the national cultural heritage, we found it appropriate to analyze this aspect of the specific general. Therefore, this study examines national normative acts and the doctrine on the protection of cultural heritage, which will later lead to the analysis of the specific situation of the built heritage in the country. Finally, a monography will be compiled to summarize the research.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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