



INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE IN UNESCO'S CULTURAL STRATEGY

Muratova Saodat Abdurakhmanovna

Tashkent State Pedagogical University named after Nizami Teacher of the
Department of Performing Arts and Culture, Faculty of Music Culture

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Abstract: This article examines the role and place of the core concept of intangible cultural heritage in UNESCO's eight-year (2022-2029) strategy. The main importance of UNESCO's cultural strategy of traditionally separated types of heritage (tangible, intangible, underwater, world and digital) has been confirmed. It is discussed that a new, promising trend is identified in its development, which is to connect heritage with intercultural communication, which leads to the formation of a complex concept of "diversity of heritage".

Key words: intangible cultural heritage, cultural diversity, intercultural communication, UNESCO, UN.

Introduction:

In modern society, the topic of cultural memory and intangible heritage is in high demand. Research gives different explanations for this phenomenon, but globalization, the change of times when "something" close to man and everyone is "coming to an end" are recognized as the undisputed leaders. In the strategic documents of recent years, the cultural diversity of the country has been recognized as an element of the country's sustainable development.

Rapid changes in cultural demography, technology, education, and the effects of globalization and multiculturalism call for a reassessment of the processes that separate modern life from its heritage, namely, cultural alienation. In relation to this dilemma, the study of intangible cultural heritage and its contribution to the formation of contextual social and personal identity is considered relevant.

In the era of progressive globalization, the study of intangible cultural heritages remains an urgent issue. Globalization not only has the mobilizing potential for people's empowerment, but it also has the potential to foster conflict.

Protection, promotion and restoration of cultural heritage is one of the absolute priorities of UNESCO. In addition, there is a tendency to increase its importance in the regulatory documents issued by this international organization. The purpose of this article is, first of all, to identify the current trends in the development of this concept, implemented on the basis of the



materials of the UNESCO strategy for the eight-year period (2022-2029). In terms of subject matter and methodology, it is directly related to our previous article, which was one of the first publications in the local and global scientific literature devoted to the study of the main aspects of this new UNESCO program¹.

According to tradition, the first part of the new strategy is devoted to the review of UNESCO's tasks. *"As a specialized agency of the United Nations, UNESCO, in accordance with its constitution, seeks to promote peace, poverty eradication, sustainable development and intercultural dialogue through education, science, culture, communication and education"*². Please note that the above-mentioned points are included in the text of the strategy, as it repeats without changes the relevant part of the previous eight-year strategy, which ran from 2014 to 2021.

It should be noted that the reference to the UNESCO constitution adopted in 1945 is not entirely correct, because the initial ideas were slightly different from the current ones: *"the purpose of the organization is to ensure peace and security, education, science and through cultural cooperation to achieve justice, widespread respect for the rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all people in the world, regardless of race, sex, language or religion, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations"*³.

From the official point of view, such a conclusion is justified, first of all, because such complex concepts as sustainable development and intercultural dialogue were introduced into the lexicon of the UN and UNESCO much later, as a result of long and intense discussions. At the same time, in the text of the Constitution of 1945, provisions close to the content can be found. Thus, a little higher in its text, in the preamble of the Constitution, the duty to ensure the "general welfare of mankind" and a little lower, in the text of Section I:2, the need to achieve "mutual understanding among nations" is mentioned. Given this type of evidence, we can agree with the UNESCO community of experts who speak almost unanimously about the continuity of their mission statements, despite the inevitable interpolations and innovations.

¹ Spivak D.L. Intercultural dialogue in UNESCO new medium-term strategy // International Journal of Cultural Research, 2022, No. 1 (46), p.111-125. DOI: 10.52173/2079_1100_2022_1_111.

² Medium-term strategy 2022-2029. 41 C/4. Paris, UNESCO, 2022, p.11.

³ Constitution of the United Nations educational, scientific and cultural organization. – Url: <https://www.unesco.org/en/legal-affairs/constitution#article-i> (20.04.2023).



Continuing to get acquainted with the text of the first section dedicated to the development of specific aspects of the formation of UNESCO's tasks, we first notice all the links of mentioning the concept of intangible cultural heritage and, moreover, its constant connection with the concept of intercultural communication. Both the first and the second mean something new compared to the previous strategy text. It is known that the concept of intangible cultural heritage is developed in detail in the text of strategic goal 7 "protection, promotion and transmission of heritage", and in other sections it is found only episodically (mostly, in relation to it, tangible, intangible, water under and of course in the form of World Heritage concepts). As for communication, it is included in this strategic goal 7 through the concept of cultural diversity, but is not widely connected with heritage (first of all, because its development was given a special strategic goal 6, it approached the inclusive development of society and ethical principles).

We find a structurally comparable line of reasoning in the text of Article 31, placed at the end of Section I, which we are considering. Focusing on innovative actions needed to respond to crises arising in the context of "armed conflicts and unstable situations, natural disasters and threats, consequences of global climate change", UNESCO's strategy, among other tools, "inclusion and intercultural taking into account new information and gaps in communication activities... protection of cultural heritage against destruction, looting and illegal transfer". As you can see, UNESCO sees intercultural communication and reliance on cultural heritage as two adjacent and partly overlapping tasks.

The second part of the new strategy is devoted to the description of the strategic goals achieved by UNESCO during the eight-year period. The first thing we notice when looking at it is that the number of goals has been significantly reduced (in the old strategy (2014-2021) there were nine). Since the mission of UNESCO and the general goals of this international organization have not changed significantly, we will first talk about the regrouping of existing concepts. It is very important to understand the nature of theoretical changes in the field of intangible cultural heritage.

The strategic goal is dedicated to the comprehensive support of quality, inclusive, continuous education. As for this area, which traditionally occupies the first place in the list of UNESCO's target priorities, in the past it was not unusual to allocate specific dimensions related to heritage. At least that was the previous strategy: it focused on beginning to shift the role of the teacher from the role of "disseminator of knowledge" to the role of "coach in learning". The new strategy



emphasizes the importance of "world heritage sites, intangible heritage elements, memory of the world sites, biosphere reserves and UNESCO Global Geoparks" (II:40). All these objects are understood as "informal educational environment" given the role of "means of knowledge and integration of society" [6]. It should be recognized that the separation of this dimension at the intersection of the disciplines of education and heritage is very promising for the theory and practice of cultural policy.

Conclusion:

Based on the analysis of the main text of UNESCO's Medium-Term Strategy for the eight-year period (2022-2029), we consider it appropriate to highlight the following provisions:

- Intangible cultural heritage and basic concepts of intercultural communication continue to be of fundamental importance for the strategy of this international organization;
- Combining these two conceptual concepts within the framework of the complex concept of "diversity of heritage" is one of the main innovations included in the UNESCO strategy at this stage. More generally, it reflects a shift in cultural policy theory from a multicultural to an intercultural paradigm;

It should be very appropriate and constructive to include this innovation in the aspects of modern cultural studies, as well as to take it into account when correcting the state cultural policy.

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