

FROM THE RESTORATION OF HERITAGE TO RESTORATION AS HERITAGE

María Teresa Vicente Rabanaque¹, Pilar Roig Picazo¹, Beatriz Santamarina Campos² and Virginia Santamarina Campos¹

Instituto Universitario de Restauración del Patrimonio de la Universidad Politécnica de Valencia

¹Taller de pintura mural

²Universitat de València

CONTACT AUTHOR: María Teresa Vicente Rabanaque, tevira@bbaa.upv.es

ABSTRACT: *This article analyses the simultaneous process of the institutionalisation of heritage and of restoration, in the light of the main socio-historical and legislative changes that have occurred in the 20th and 21st centuries. These circumstances have determined the profile of today's restorer, which has had an extraordinary importance within the framework of the cultural heritage. Moreover, they have encouraged a series of changes in the heritage sector, such as the recognition of the ethnological heritage by legislation, the evolution towards immaterial or intangible assets, and the drawing up of inventories of traditional occupations. An understanding of these changes is essential if we are to appreciate the greater importance now given to the restorer as a professional. The confluence of all these factors allows us to construct our study around the figure of the restorer, in contrast to traditional research that concentrates on the object approached.*

KEYWORDS: restoration, cultural heritage, institutionalisation, ethnological heritage, immaterial assets, inventories of traditional occupations

INTRODUCTION

Historiography has traditionally paid little attention to those professionals entrusted with the conservation and restoration of works of art. It is perhaps for this reason that research carried out up to now on restoration has concentrated on the object in question and not on those undertaking the work on it.

This situation is now changing; more and more efforts are currently being made to recover the memory of those professionals who conserve and restore our heritage. In particular, this article is the fruit of a doctoral thesis that is being written at the Department of the Conservation and Restoration of Cultural Assets (*Conservación y Restauración de Bienes Culturales*, CRBC) of the Universidad Politécnica de Valencia with the title *History of Restoration - on the traditional study of the object to the subject as an object of study*¹. It proposes a new approach to the world of restoration, transferring the axis of the study of the object to that of active subjects and the various processes of meaning. The aim of this approach is to encourage knowledge of and respect for Spanish restorers, who after centuries of professional dedication have made it possible for us to enjoy today a shared cultural legacy.

In this sense, the shaping of the professional profile of the restorer is closely linked to the processes of the institutionalisation of heritage and restoration, which occur simultaneously.

Recent events concerning the cultural heritage are related to the changes that came about during the second half of the 18th century and the whole of the 19th century, which favoured the origin of restoring as a profession, the development of academies and museums, the gradual change from the private heritage to the public heritage, the shaping of Archaeology and Art History as disciplines, etcetera. All this led to heritage and restoration being considered in a different light.

In previous ages incipient forms of heritage activation could already be found, mainly in the form of collecting and the conservation and restoration of works of art. However, it was not until the 19th century that heritage was articulated to be subsequently developed throughout the 20th century (Santamarina, 2005). In the same way, the profile of the restorer began to emerge in the 19th century. But it is in the 20th century when the art of the modern restorer is truly encouraged and delimited; it is during this period when we can speak of the gestation of the process of the institutionalisation and standardisation of restoration and heritage.

ANALYSIS OF THE MAIN SOCIAL CHANGES OF THE 20th AND 21st CENTURIES

Broadly speaking it can be said that during the last three centuries a series of historical and socio-political events have occurred that have made possible the construction of the cultural heritage and the resulting need for preserving it for future generations to enjoy. This need is reflected in the birth of incipient international and national legislation concerning protection, which leads to a new appreciation of heritage. Let us examine briefly the circumstances that have encouraged this greater awareness of heritage.

The birth of the concept of heritage can be set in the 19th century with the appearance of the national states and their projection onto historical monuments. The arrival of early modernity caused a whole series of socio-cultural changes that also activated classical historical heritage. Its constitution allowed the linking of the past with the present, in such a way that the past was erected as a source of identity references. It was however during the first two thirds of the 20th century when heritage was developed and redefined as a cultural asset. In an international context, the first half of the century was profoundly affected by the devastating consequences of the two world wars and their desolate aftermath. In the case of Spain, the effects of

the civil war that divided the country between 1936 and 1939 were equally dramatic both for society and for the safeguarding of its heritage.

As far as restoration is concerned, the consequences of the various wars led to a reflection on the need for preserving and protecting the cultural heritage. After the First World War the *International Commission for Intellectual Cooperation* was founded as a part of the recently created *Society of Nations*. This commission was made up of the *Institute for International Cooperation* and the *International Museum Office*. For the first time the latter attempted to define heritage protection criteria in case of war so as to avoid pillaging and sacking. Its objectives were set down in the *Roerich Pact* (1935) but were not respected during the Second World War, which had fatal consequences for the world's heritage.

The most outstanding initiative promoted by the *International Museum Office*, however, was probably the organisation of the *Athens Charter* (1931), which meant the beginning of the standardisation of heritage and restoration with the drawing up of the *Carta de Restauro* (the seven main resolutions). This was the earliest international document to refer to the conservation and restoration of the cultural heritage (González-Varas, 2003; Santamarina, 2005).

These initial attempts at protection were interrupted by the Second World War. When it ended in 1945, the *United Nations* (UN) was born to replace the *Society of Nations*. A year later the UN created the *United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation* (UNESCO), which has played an essential role ever since in the preservation of the cultural heritage. The urgent reconstruction and defence of heritage, which had been seriously damaged during the war, was promoted by these international organisations.

In this context, heritage was erected as an efficient tool for the promotion of this recovery of the past and the preservation of an endangered cultural legacy. Although this process started in the 19th century related to early modernity, it was in fact during the whole of the 20th century when standardisation and institutionalisation occurred. Moreover, social changes led to the desire to look back on past ages from a current standpoint², in an attempt to recover the past as a mainstay for reconstructing the present and making it meaningful. The restoration of the past confers a feeling of belonging to a group and of being identified with a tradition.

It was with the advent of the second stage of modernity that an intense heritage awareness campaign was carried out, which has continued into the late 20th and early 21st centuries with the radicalisation of modernity. This has allowed its conception to gain meaning over time as its formula has become universal. It can be said on the one hand that a democratisation of culture has occurred, and on the other that public awareness of culture has increased. This transformation, which started in the second half of last century, led to heritage no longer being defined exclusively in tangible and material terms and its being thought of rather as a collective cultural legacy. However, the institutionalised appearance of an intangible and immaterial heritage, as we will see later, was not consolidated until advanced modernity was reached.

Let us briefly mention the changes that have led to this redefinition of heritage. In the late 20th century the term globalisation began to be used to refer to a long and complex historical process. It implies a series of social transformations that took place during the 20th century and intensified in the last third of this period from the 1980s onwards. As a result, some authors point out that a second process of the public awareness of culture will occur to coincide with late modernity. This would be the fruit of the ever increasing acceleration of globalisation.

The radicalisation of modernity is defined by the major socio-historical transformations: the intense acceleration of events, the

dissolution in time and space, the occurrence and multiplication of risks and dangers (both real and symbolic), the expansion of the media, the speed of the technological revolution, the development of means of transport and communication, the interconnection of practically all parts of the world³, etcetera. All this leads us to understand our modern society in terms of a spatial-temporal break-up, in which the feelings of immediacy, instantaneity, and fleetingness prevail (Hernández i Martí, 2005). To this must be added the ever greater threat of natural and social disasters, together with insufficient financial resources to maintain all the assets that make up our cultural heritage.

The confluence of all these factors has not only endangered the conservation of the cultural and natural heritage and required the urgent application of restoration processes; it has also caused the articulation of new forms of heritage activation. During the last two decades of the 20th century therefore, social alarm has grown in the face of the pressing need for the protection of the cultural and natural heritage. All this has recently led some authors to expand the traditional limits of the concept of restoration applied to *objets d'art*, extending this to include the overall need for "restoring the planet" (Moncada, 2006: 14).

However, these consequences of the risk generated by modern changes were already exposed by some restorers in the 1980s to coincide with the acceleration of globalisation, as is proved by the following declarations: "The idea of conserving our heritage is nothing new; what is new is that in recent years, owing to the speed at which it is being degraded as a consequence of the development of civilisation itself, man as the main destructive agent of heritage has become aware of the urgent need for preserving his past" (Buces, 1982: 36). In its turn the "acceleration in the present" experienced by the deterioration processes has been one of the main reasons for the involvement of the community in order to protect its cultural legacy (Fernández, 1986: 33).

At the same time, the dialectics between what is private and what is universal, what is homogeneous and what is heterogeneous, etcetera, have become more apparent; their confluence makes the understanding of modern cultural practice more difficult. New forms of contact have been incorporated that transcend frontiers and lead us to a link with what is external and to breaking away from what is close, within a process of homogenisation. This phenomenon incorporates an 'uprooting' or 'unanchoring' of social relations and allows us to speak of the process of 'deterritorialisation' (Hernández i Martí, 2005). Similarly, the predisposition for integrating our cultures within a network of world interconnections leads at the same time to the need for strengthening them within our local sphere. In this way the threat of losing tradition itself leads us towards an attempt at 'reterritorialisation' and at the reaffirmation of local identities and values, to prevent them from being eliminated or deteriorated by modernity and globalisation (Hernández i Martí, 2005). Moreover, a process of hybridisation or cultural symbiosis frequently occurs, the result of which is a merging of elements from the past with those of the present, with the desire to transmit our cultural heritage to future generations.

Globalisation consequently has important repercussions on the cultural heritage. Its influence on the sphere of heritage is shown above all in the drawing up of standards, declarations, conventions, and recommendations; in the holding of international congresses; and in the creation of specialised institutions that safeguard our heritage. The constitution of the category of *World Heritage Site*, as the highest level of recognition and protection of specific assets on a world level⁵, is a reflection of the new globalised heritage.

In its turn, the expansive development of heritage requires the integration of the various social sectors in the task of conserving a legacy that insists on standing out as a whole. This fact allows the understanding of the current predominant link between cultural

heritage and society. It also justifies the consequent need for facing, from the point of view of citizen awareness, the demands of the new social, political, and economic development that we are now witnessing.

Before ending this section nevertheless, to follow Agudo Torrico we can define cultural heritage as the “interpretation that any group makes of its history and present so as to define and express its cultural identity” (1999: 39). It therefore fulfils a group need; it serves to identify social groups and give them cohesion (Muñoz, 2003). According to this definition, heritage does not only aim to rescue the past, but also to achieve its interconnection with the present. In this last sense, it can be understood as something living and dynamic that is constantly being transformed. Along the same lines, Hernández i Martí points out that ‘making culture part of heritage’ implies “hybridising culture, mixing elements rescued from the past with elements generated in the present, maintaining a firm future vocation that becomes the necessary intergenerational transmission of the cultural heritage” (2005: 137). In this way, with the aid of heritage a bridge is established between the past, the present, and the future, which attempts to overcome the time division that characterises modernity, in which the succession of sharp accelerated changes breaks any kind of continuity. Moreover, cultural assets symbolise and perpetuate values of recognition that are considered to be pre-existent (Muñoz, 2003). The hope is that the continuity of these assets likewise guarantees the maintaining of the identity that has been constituted. This symbolic use that is made of heritage must of necessity count on the support and the legitimisation of the community, which implies the activation of a collective social identity. This fact justifies in its turn the need for transmitting heritage to future generations.

AN ANALYSIS OF THE MOST NOTABLE CHANGES IN LEGISLATION DURING THE 20th CENTURY

Once the main transformations characterising the 20th century from a socio-cultural perspective have been pointed out, let us now turn to the most relevant new developments of this century from a legislative point of view. In the first place we can emphasise their variety and importance; they range from the drawing up of various documents (which aim to define the intervention criteria of the restorer), to the creation of decrees and laws, commissions, or delegations to safeguard the cultural heritage. These changes likewise favour the implementation of the concept of *Cultural Assets* and *World Heritage Sites* (Bustinduy *et al*, 1990).

The first regulations relating to the conservation and protection of the Spanish heritage were drawn up in the early 20th century. These are the *Law on Archaeological Excavations* (1911) and the *Law on Historical and Artistic Monuments* of 1915. A decade later, in 1926, the decree-law on the *Protection and Conversation of Artistic Richness* was drawn up.

On both a national and international level, the real beginning of the process of the regulation of heritage was in the 1930s. The celebration of the *Athens Charter* in 1931 established the foundations of the criteria for the protection, conservation, and restoration of heritage. This was the first international document to emphasise the need for the preservation of the cultural legacy.

Its repercussions were soon felt within Spain, and on 9 December 1931 the Republican Constitution was approved, which in Article 45 recognised for the first time the right of a group that shares the same cultural characteristics and accepts the social ownership of heritage. Its advanced nature marked a true point of inflection in Spain as far as the protection of heritage was concerned.

As a result of the drawing up of this Constitution, shortly afterwards on 13 May 1933 the *Law on Artistic Treasures* was passed. With it a systematic and coherent legal standard began to be implemented

(Fernández, 1986), with the coming into effect of a progressive ruling that was maintained for over fifty years. This Law essentially distinguished the criterion of ‘cultural value’ as a factor of reference, and recognised the right to enjoy socially the legacy of the past, as reflected in the concept of a national heritage.

Among the multiple conventions and charters that subsequently arose on the international scene, the *Convention for the protection of cultural assets in the event of war* (The Hague, 1954) can be singled out. It mentions for the first time the term ‘Cultural Asset’,⁶ which has a clearly integrating component, as it aims to go beyond the limits established by the classical monumental definition. From then on, the definition and content of this new category was to be adjusted in the various international documents, with Italian rulings of the 1960s being of particular importance in the whole of this process. The work of the *Franceschini Commission* (1964-1967) was basic in the definition of cultural assets (like any material evidence with the value of civilisation), as it implicitly referred to immaterial assets and established a classification scheme for these cultural assets (Santamarina, 2005).

To return to Spain, one of the nearest current regulations for the preservation of the cultural heritage can be found in Article 46 of the 1978 Spanish Constitution. This obliges the authorities to conserve the heritage assets of the nation, without distinction of either legal system or ownership, and the promoting of their enrichment.

A few short years later, however, at the Restoration Congresses held in the 1980s complaints were raised of the lack of any policy favouring the maintenance of our cultural heritage. In 1982 therefore, among other aspects, the lack of inventories, the absence of a technical body of curators of cultural assets, and the need for the drawing up of legal regulations on conservation and restoration were emphasised (Buces, 1982).

In 1985 the Law on the Spanish Historical Heritage came into effect. Its elaboration was encouraged by the legal vacuum existing in Spain from 1933 to 1985 and by the international context. This law included important new developments compared with the previous ones. Essentially it established a hierarchy of the protection levels of assets; it differentiated between property and immovable assets and eliminated the requirement that an asset needed to be more than one hundred years old to be classed as part of our cultural heritage. It recognised the social dimension of heritage; and included the category of ‘Asset of Cultural Interest’ that implies a higher level of protection. On the other hand, the state law of 1985 established the standard or reference based on which the successive regional Spanish laws have subsequently been drawn up from 1990 onwards.

MAIN CHANGES JUSTIFYING THE IMPORTANCE CURRENTLY GIVEN TO THE KEEPER-RESTORER OF CULTURAL ASSETS

After having analysed the social and legislative changes that have determined the development of the Spanish restorer in accordance with the European profile, we will now highlight those factors that allow us to understand that it is now more than ever when the professional practice of restoration is acquiring its greatest cultural relevance. The changes that have taken place between the mid-20th century and the early 21st century have favoured the legal recognition of the ethnological heritage, the development of heritage towards the valuation of immaterial and intangible assets, and the elaboration of inventories of traditional occupations. These three facts are essential if we are to understand the shift that has occurred in the consideration of restoration; they justify the need to articulate this research around the professional subject, in contrast with traditional studies that have concentrated on the object under study. Let us now analyse each of them in greater detail.

Recognition of the ethnological heritage in legislation

In Spain the term 'ethnological' was first applied to heritage in a Decree of 1953, in which it was indicated that "the inventory of artistic treasures will include whatever buildings and movable property of artistic, archaeological, historical, ethnological, or folkloric interest exist in Spain with an age of not less than a century [...]". The term 'ethnological' has arisen in conjunction with 'folklore', which is its turn is related to 'traditional', in line with the earlier concepts of 'characteristic and picturesque'⁷ (García García, 1998). The origin of the idea of the ethnological heritage is therefore rather ambiguous.

It was not until the coming into effect of the Law on the Spanish Historical Heritage (1985) that the ethnological heritage was recognised in Spain as a new heritage category and that a definition of it was pronounced. It is in *Section VI of the ethnographical heritage*, to be precise, where it is specified that it will include "movable property and immovable assets and the knowledge and activities that are or have been a relevant expression of the traditional culture of the Spanish people in its material, social, and spiritual aspects". In this way the time limits were expanded towards the present, going beyond the previous restriction that only valued assets that were over a century old.

At the same time, the allusion to 'social' and 'spiritual' aspects now included the consideration of other kinds of assets that do not necessarily have to be material. It is not therefore essential for them to conform to standards of tangibility, rarity, antiquity, originality, or beauty, which have traditionally been characteristics of material assets.

However, the definition proposed by the Law of 1985 does maintain and make more explicit the relationship between what is 'ethnological' and what is 'traditional', which was sensed since the term 'ethnological' appeared for the first time. In this way, as has already been mentioned, the "knowledge and activities that are or have been a relevant expression of the traditional culture of the Spanish people" are highlighted. The novelty therefore lies in the fact that there is no reason why the expression of traditional culture should be relegated to the past; it may also refer to certain assets or values existing at the present time.

This meaning of ethnological heritage, understood as a series of "knowledge and activities" that have been maintained up to the present day, allows it to be linked to restoration. The profession of the restorer thus has had the benefit of several centuries of tradition and continues to be valid, constituting a nexus between the past and the present. In this sense it is related to the concept of tradition applied to the ethnological heritage defended by Agudo Torrico: "the notion of tradition implies reference to a past, but above all also to a present: what is more, its meaning originates precisely from its acceptance from the present as something that is living, dynamic, and capable of articulating and giving a cultural relevance to the contact nexuses between both time spaces [...]". In the case of the ethnological heritage, time is transformed into tradition and the time limits are extended, because of this same change of value that assumes its condition as a living past, up to the present. In other words, when we speak of the ethnological heritage we are referring to a living heritage that is in use, or at any rate that consists of the token remains of activities that have been transformed or abandoned as part of very recent memory" (Agudo, 1999: 42-43).

The current widening of the concept allows the inclusion in this category of "knowledge and techniques applied to the most diverse aspects of our productive activity and which are as important as the resultant artefacts themselves [...]. They share some essential common characteristics with other cultural assets: they constitute manifestations and evidence that are considered to be relevant and that identify a given group; they are part of a specific cultural code that differentiates them

from other groups, contributing to explaining and giving a meaning to their cultural features, values, and social behavioural [...]" (Agudo, 1999: 44).

To sum up, the profession of the restorer can be approached from these considerations, understanding restoration as a blending of knowledge and techniques that have been essential in the process of the institutionalisation of heritage, or in other words as a fundamental instrument that has made possible the recovery and maintenance of the cultural legacy. Likewise, restoration is identified with a specific professional profile that is represented by a large group of people; it has strived for all these years to delimit the characteristics, values, criteria, and attitudes so as to allow their definition and recognition within this context.

Development of heritage towards immaterial and intangible assets

The limits of the meaning of the term heritage have been widened on evolving "from the classical concept of a monument to that of a cultural asset; from tangible to intangible assets and to living evidence; and from an insular vision to the confluence between the natural heritage and the cultural heritage within the framework of society at risk" (Ariño, 2002: 131). This evolution in the consideration of the assets making up the cultural heritage justifies the shift that has recently occurred in the consideration of the profession of the restorer. In particular, the passage from material and tangible assets to immaterial and intangible ones prepares the way for going beyond the traditional objective, physical, and material study of restored works. In this context, it is becoming more interesting to transfer the object of study to the subjects and the institutions, practices, and discourses that have shaped this professional activity.

The recognition of immaterial and intangibles assets by legislation has occurred only a few short years ago at the start of the 21st century. Some previous rulings can however be highlighted, which in the second half of the 20th century called for the consideration of a series of cultural values that fall outside the category of material assets. In this sense Japan was the pioneer, drawing up in 1950 the programme *National living treasures*. It was dedicated to people who stand out for having mastered certain techniques or skills that are considered essential for the continuity of the traditional culture of the country (Urteaga, 2005). Japan's example was subsequently followed by Korea (1964), the Philippines (1973), the United States (1982), Thailand (1985), and France (1994).

In 1989 an event entitled *Recommendations on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture* took place in Paris; it implied the recognition of certain non material values within the cultural heritage of humanity. This led on the one hand to the expanding of the traditional limits of heritage, and on the other to the definitive overcoming of the primacy of the monumentalism and materialism that had prevailed up to that time in the consideration of heritage. However, the terms 'immateriality' and 'intangibility' to define those values had still not been specified. In 1996 the UNESCO established *Guidelines for the creation of a system of Living Human Treasures* (Ariño, 2002), which went further than the previous and more restrictive classification of the historical, artistic, and archaeological heritage.

The previous process was not culminated until the early 21st century with the recognition of *Masterpieces of the oral and intangible heritage of Humanity* (2001) by the UNESCO. Shortly afterwards, the *Convention for Safeguarding the Immaterial Cultural Heritage* (2003) was held in Paris; it understood immaterial culture to be an asset of the present that has remained alive on being transmitted from generation to generation and recreated by the various communities. It is considered to be precisely this validity that defines its essential characteristics (Urteaga, 2005: 8).

A year previously, the *Istanbul Declaration on Immaterial Heritage*⁸ (2002) was drawn up. The concepts of 'work cultures' and the 'collective memory' defined in it make it of special interest to this study. From the

start the Declaration mainly refers to three matters: firstly the relevance of multiple expressions of immaterial heritage is emphasised when cementing the cultural identity of peoples and regions. Secondly, it indicates the sense of belonging and continuity that this heritage generates within regions, being considered one of the main sources of cultural creation. Thirdly, the need for safeguarding and transmitting it is insisted upon, as from the effective participation of the various players or heritage agents.

Once again these characteristics can be transferred to the restoration sector, which can be included as part of the immaterial heritage due to its being considered a professional practice. Moreover, the part played by the restorer, as an agent activating heritage, justifies his/her contribution to the process of consolidating Spanish cultural identity and strengthening the feeling of belonging and continuity that unites each community. In this context, restoration plays an essential role in the preservation of heritage, making possible its transmission to future generations. This is the reason for the great importance of this professional practice within our cultural heritage.

Likewise, as has been mentioned, this Declaration includes two concepts that are considered an essential part of the intangible heritage: 'collective memory' and 'work cultures'⁹. Through them the possibility is raised of analysing local identity and the professional profile that characterises a given group.

The first term, memory, is understood from a social and consequently collective perspective, emphasising its capacity to confer identity on a group. Moreover, it maintains that collective memory is constructed socially as it is multiple and variable, transforming itself as it is updated by the different groups participating in it. Finally, it can be linked with the processes of identification when it is used as a tool allowing a society or group to have knowledge of itself, of its history, and its past, right up to its situation in the present. This identifying feature will be stronger in proportion to the time extension and social incidence that legitimates professional activity within a territory (Palenzuela, 2005).

As from all these considerations, it can be said that the historical memory of certain subjects helps to explain the development and professional definition of the restorer. This is even truer when we take into account the social repercussions that the figure of the restorer has traditionally caused within the field of heritage. In short, the activation of the memory of contemporary subjects linked to the world of restoration will also allow us to understand the development of the professional profile of the restorer right down to the present day.

The second concept, work cultures, can be understood not only from technical and objective parameters that allow the recording of the functionality of a certain task. This term also refers to the social framework within which work is carried out, to the arrangement that can be established from the production of the values, meanings, and perceptions in which work is the central argument. "This double material and conceptual centrality of work makes it a factor that generates culture, a work culture that is dialectically constructed from its material base (technical culture or 'know-how') and its conceptual component (socio-professional identity)" (Palenzuela, 2005: 97).

This leads us to consider that work cultures (in the special case of restoration that concerns us here) allow the structuring of collective identities and give meaning to the social practices carried out by the group sharing this specific work culture (Palenzuela, 1995). In this way, professional practice is not only conceived according to a specific time and space scenario, but also truly makes sense in the light of the social relations that are generated around it.

Drawing up inventories of traditional professions

It is possibly all these links that have been established between the ethnological heritage, immaterial culture, and work cultures that

have led to current proposals of measures to allow the conservation of certain professions. The first of these can be found in profession safeguarding plans (Limón, 1999). Although they are not recorded in legislation, these plans were issued in Japan (1975) and in France (1978).

Perhaps as a reminiscence of these, the *1988 Heritage Days* were recently celebrated in France, in which the so-called 'art professions', among which those related to the world of restoration had considerable influence, constituted the backbone of the event. Indeed, the Ministry of Culture and Communications supported the initiatives to safeguard and perpetuate these professions, as the minister Catherine Trautmann has affirmed:¹⁰ "These out-of-the-ordinary techniques, the talent for which is generally anonymous and discreet, deserve to be better known". Although heritage "may be known above all in the form of monuments, [...] our country also has a large number of artisans of the art professions, the expertise of whom truly constitutes an immaterial heritage".

Along the same lines and in a Spanish national context, Agudo Torrico has suggested the possibility of drawing up an inventory of traditional professions from an ethnological viewpoint (Agudo, 1999b). This inventory would not only be conceived as a compilation of historical interest, but also and above all as a testimony of our cultural heritage. Likewise, the latter would be able to be conserved within the current social framework and transmitted to future generations, given the lack of recognition that there has been historically for this kind of practice.

In short, the restoration process has several centuries of history behind it and has been able to change with the times in order to bring itself up to the present. It has also shaped a professional profile that defines and integrates a large group as from shared values that represent the expression of a community. The restorer, as the agent activating heritage, makes possible the maintenance and transmission of values that comprise the Spanish cultural identity. For all these reasons, the restorer's trade fits perfectly the previous definition of the ethnological heritage. This would justify, in the last analysis, the inclusion of the restorer's profession as part of cultural heritage on its own account, no longer merely as a reflection of the importance of the work in which he/she has taken part.

CONCLUSIONS

The figure of the restorer is essential if we are to understand the process of the institutionalisation of heritage, which occurs parallel to that of restoration. Both processes are encouraged by a series of socio-legislative circumstances to which we have already referred. The development of the profession of the restorer is therefore inseparable from the socio-cultural context of which it is a part. In this sense, Ruiz de Lacanal has emphasised that "restorers have been and are sons of the culture of their time, which has conferred them their profile, creating a new profession adapted to new demands" (1994: 113).

Only after analysing all these circumstances that have interwoven the origins and the development of the profession is it possible to understand the identifying marks of the restorer of today. His/her professional profile is linked, as has been pointed out, to the process of the institutionalisation of heritage and restoration.

For this reason, we will now synthesise how the changes explaining the development of the cultural heritage (Santamarina, 2005) also influence the shaping of the professional identity of the restorer, with it being possible to establish a series of parallels between both processes.

In the first place, a transition has occurred from a 'cultivated' and restrictive heritage to a much wider one. In the 20th century the concept of 'high culture' was abandoned in favour of an open and

negotiable concept that means that any aspect of cultural practice can be made a part of heritage. As Agudo Torrico (1999) recognises, we have passed from the old model of a restricted and elitist historical and artistic heritage, which attached greater importance to outstanding human creations, to a new open concept of the cultural heritage. This other concept assimilates certain cultural manifestations from the various groups over time, on considering that they reflect the ways of life, beliefs, practices, and values of the various professional subjects and social partners.

This evolution is also applicable to the professional profile of the restorer, who gradually begins to move away from the Court, abandoning his post as chamber painter at the service of art's former 'high culture' to start a career in the public administration. This has opened the way for new social partners and has led some authors to suggest the term 'democratic restoration', which includes the various interests and needs of a given group (Muñoz, 2003; Lasagabáster, 2004). Nowadays therefore, the study of restoration as a profession should not be restricted to a merely technical approach, as it is essential to consider also the processes of meaning, valuation, and symbology.

Secondly, there has been a change from the traditional established rural heritage to a modern, urban, and deterritorialised heritage. In this sense new criteria and 'objects' that can be considered heritage appear, to go further than the old assessment that exclusively considered historical-artistic and archaeological aspects. In the same way, there has been a change from the professional entrusted with the restoration of painting, sculpture, and architecture, to the need for conferring a greater degree of speciality, given the diversification of and increase in cultural assets making up heritage that consequently need to be preserved.

Thirdly, we have gone from the exclusive recognition of tangible and material assets to the consideration of intangible and immaterial resources. This extension of heritage categories justifies the rescuing of our own heritage, on transferring the importance of the object worked on to the person who does the work. This gives special importance to the traditions and professional practices that identify this professional group, which have been transmitted from generation to generation together with oral testimonies. The latter allow the past to be interpreted and reconstructed as from the activation of memory.

Nevertheless, it is currently being realised that the criterion of material objects is maintaining its hegemony when assessing the assets that make up heritage, despite the recognition of what is intangible. This can be seen, for instance, in the fact that the *World List of Immaterial and Oral Heritage* increases every two years rather than annually, as is the case with the *List of Material Heritage*, and also in the lesser representation of Western culture on this list of immaterial and oral assets in comparison with the predominance of monumental and material assets (Hernández i Martí, 2005).

Fourthly, there has been a change in the activation of heritage promoted by the 19th-century process of the construction of the nation-state, as we have moved on to the participation of a plurality of agents and interests (civil society, associations, companies, tourism, international organisations, experts entrusted with the various disciplines...).

In the restoration sector, the demand in the face of the increase in new social partners and disciplines has taken the form of interdisciplinary participation and a new approach, as the object of a restoration includes more aspects that should be taken into account. This involves different agents and specialists who try to find replies from different areas of knowledge. An example of this can be found in the *Site Handling Plans*, that are mainly developed from the 1980s onwards¹¹. In them it is no longer possible to understand the task of the restorer in isolation. Together with scientists and technicians in this discipline, the part played in this process by the public authorities and civil society

is also being considered. This leads us to attach importance to the community that holds the heritage or the object to be restored. It also promotes more and more the existence of social awareness regarding the conservation and restoration of cultural assets, one of the greatest expressions of which is to be found in the activation of numerous citizen associations that aim to maintain tradition and safeguard our heritage (Albert, 2005: 209).

Fifthly, heritage has suffered a double shift: as a development of the classic national heritage we now consider local and universal heritage. As has been pointed out, the dialectics that are characteristic of the globalisation process imply 'deterritorialisation' or linking with the outside and 'reterritorialisation', or the strengthening and reaffirming of local tradition. If this is applied to the restorer, the latter is no longer defined from an exclusively local and isolated perspective, but is linked to international trends. This international current lays down some general rules that are assimilated within the private scenario on which each professional works. This can be seen on analysing the criteria currently in force that govern the participation of the restorer, with the connections between the various professionals being evident on a world scale. There is therefore a tendency to establish general theories and presuppositions.

Finally it can be mentioned that we have gone from the consideration of static and non problematical heritage to one that is defined as from its social nature, in which not only heritage objects are of interest, but also the processes of the elaboration, circulation, and allocation of meanings. This has allowed exposure of the fact that the cultural heritage is defined as from the various techniques, institutions, practices, and discourses by means of dialogue and negotiation. In the same way, the modern restorer is not only concerned with conserving the material nature of the object worked on and preserving its physical qualities, but also safeguards other values, such as symbolic ones, and the social incidence of his/her work (Muñoz, 2003). Restoration has also begun to be understood as a dialogue between the various subjects. Both considerations today mean that an open and reflexive attitude to heritage and restoration is essential.

In short, various similarities can be established between the process of the institutionalisation of heritage and that of restoration. To begin with, both are processes that imply the existence of a selection. This selection is based on the allocation of various models or meanings that imply a certain way of interpreting and understanding the world¹². Heritage has implied the legitimisation of some aspects of cultural practice, in such a way that its consideration has reflected the allocation of a heritage value only to some cultural assets¹³ (Santamarina, 2005: 22). It is thus a case of a process of inequality that has been redefined with the passage of time. It can therefore be said that cultural heritage is based on criteria of arrangement and classification, of inclusion and exclusion, as from the hierarchy of certain values.

For its part, restoration has done nothing but benefit specific works based on a series of criteria and values. The fact that heritage and restoration are the fruit of a selection and hierarchical structuring process compels recognition of the importance in this process of the various subjects, institutions, and social partners that intervene within it.

The evolution of both processes cannot therefore be conceived in terms of neutrality or immobility, but is of necessity subject to a constant process of interests being transformed, depending on the criteria that predominate at each historical moment for the various social partners entrusted with defining heritage categories or restoration principles.

It is as well to remember that numerous authors have defined cultural heritage as a "social or socio-cultural construction" (Prats, 1998; García García, 1998; Ariño, 1999; Hernández, 2004; Santamarina, 2005) or a "historical construction" (Florescano (1993))¹⁴ that has a "symbolic nature", a "capacity for representing an identity symbolically" (Prats,

1997: 22). By the same token, restoration can be defined as from this double consideration: it is a social construction and works on a version of a claimed collective identity.

NOTES

¹ This doctoral thesis was part of the framework of the European Project *Archivio Storico dei Restauratori Europei – Rete Europea per lo studio e la documentazione delle vicende conservative del patrimonio culturale*, the CRBC Department of the Universidad Politécnica de Valencia being the only Spanish participant in the project (represented by Professor Pilar Roig Picazo). Since 2006 this initiative has been supported by the Ministry of Education and Science, which awarded a four-year research grant to support this doctoral thesis.

² Nevertheless, the first great time and space rupture that encouraged looking back to the past took place in the 19th century during the Romantic period when the national states were shaped.

³ More socio-economic changes should be mentioned, among them those having a direct effect on heritage, such as the expansive development of property speculation and the effect of tourism.

⁴ The origin of the declaration of World Heritage Sites lies in the *Convention on the Protection of Cultural and Natural World Heritage*, which was held in Paris in 1972.

⁵ In 1978 the UNESCO issued the World Heritage List, which has been expanded each year with the declaration of new assets and places as world heritage sites.

⁶ In Spain however, the concept of ‘cultural asset’ did not come into force until the advent of the Law on the Spanish Cultural Heritage of 1985.

⁷ These two concepts have been included in Spanish regulations since the drawing up of the Royal Decree-Law of the Presidency of the Government on 9 August 1926.

⁸ This was adopted by the III Culture Ministers’ Round Table called by the UNESCO.

⁹ These concepts are mentioned in section 1 of this Declaration.

¹⁰ This was during the inauguration of the *Third International Heritage Fair* (1998) that took place in the Carrousel of the Louvre.

¹¹ The first *Site Handling Plan* arose in 1978 in Germany. In legal terms however, it was promoted by the Australians O’Keefe and Prott during the 1980s (García Salgado and González de la Mota, 2002: 17).

¹² Any classification implies the establishment of arbitrary criteria.

¹³ On the contrary, as part of heritage we would include culture as a whole (made up by the entire system of values, beliefs, practices... shared by a community), instead of only considering certain assets within the ‘cultural heritage’.

¹⁴ “The heritage dimension is a social construction that does not involve any characteristic or intrinsic property of objects, but rather an attribution effected by the subjects (in this case, modern subjects)” (Ariño, 1999: 132).

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Versión española

TÍTULO: *De la restauración del patrimonio a la restauración como patrimonio*

RESUMEN: *Este artículo analiza el proceso simultáneo de institucionalización del patrimonio y de la restauración, a la luz de las principales transformaciones socio-históricas y legislativas que han tenido lugar en los siglos XX y XXI. Estas circunstancias han determinado el perfil del restaurador actual, que ha tenido una enorme trascendencia dentro del patrimonio cultural. Además, han alentado una serie de cambios en la esfera patrimonial, tales como el reconocimiento del patrimonio etnológico en la legislación, el desarrollo hacia los bienes inmateriales e intangibles y la redacción de inventarios de oficios tradicionales, que resultan fundamentales para entender la mayor repercusión que se confiere ahora al restaurador como sujeto profesional. La confluencia de todos estos factores permite articular nuestro estudio en torno a la figura del restaurador, frente a las investigaciones tradicionales que centraban su interés en el objeto intervenido.*

PALABRAS CLAVES: *restauración, patrimonio cultural, institucionalización, patrimonio etnológico, bienes inmateriales, inventarios de oficios tradicionales*