3.9 Cultural heritage of universities

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The university, as a public institution, is specifically included in the Andalusian Historical Heritage Law as it generates and contains cultural heritage. For this reason, public universities in Andalusia are inventorying their goods, thus detecting some lacks which are included throughout this text. By founding such lacks, it is possible to tackle them. Within these problems, this paper focuses on scientific-technical movable goods as they are the most complex typology.

After decades developing the concept “cultural heritage”, it could be generally defined as the trace left by social or collective groups of their existence, presence, and interrelationship with the environment, and countless readings and interpretations can arise from them as one of their richness, apart from being a sample of the many identities created by such groups in their historical processes (voice). In Spain, the legislation for cultural heritage makes society responsible for protecting and managing such trace with a view to be transmitted to future generations. Specifically, Andalusian society is the responsible for guaranteeing the protection, preservation, safeguarding and dissemination, promoting its enrichment and use as a social good and sustainable development factor, and ensuring its transmission to future generations (voice).

The university is part of the social organisation and the body of institutions of different nature and origin, whose heritage contributes to form the history of certain territories and social groups. In this sense, its heritage is quite relevant, as well as the application of concepts and principles defined by the legislation. Also, it is worth mentioning the sensitivity and assessment that the current legislation in Andalusia makes of the heritage goods of public nature. In convulsed times for the university organisation, it is of greater interest and need to influence the visibility of an own identity value, which could be one of the valid interpretations of this heritage. The Sixth Additional Provision (voice) of the Andalusian Historical Heritage Law mentions and therefore recognises the existence of a specific cultural heritage (the law uses the term “historical heritage”), thus creating an immediate protection mechanism by establishing a concrete legal protection:

Disposición adicional sexta. Inscripción y transmisión de determinados bienes.

- 1. Los bienes muebles del Patrimonio Histórico Andaluz en los términos del artículo 2 de esta Ley que se encuentren en posesión de la Administración de la Junta de Andalucía, las entidades locales y las universidades quedan inscritos en el Catálogo General del Patrimonio Histórico Andaluz como bienes incluidos en el Inventario General de Bienes Muebles del Patrimonio Histórico Español.
- 2. Los bienes inmuebles del Patrimonio Histórico Andaluz y los elementos de los mismos de piedra, yeso, madera, forja, fundición, cerámica, azulejería y vidrio en los términos del artículo 2 de esta Ley que se encuentren en posesión de la Administración de la Junta de Andalucía, las entidades locales y las universidades quedan inscritos en el Catálogo General del Patrimonio Histórico Andaluz como bienes de catalogación general.
Together with the goods of the Catholic Church, to which an attention is paid by the legal protection, the Law establishes that territorial and institutional administrations are recipients of protection policies. Following its mandate and under the auspices of the International University of Andalusia (Spanish initials: UNIA) and the autonomous administration in collaboration with the Andalusian Historical Heritage Institute (Spanish initials: IAPH), Andalusian public universities are fulfilling such Provision.

Thanks to detecting and knowing the set of goods forming the heritage, there are certain issues qualifying it and, in some way, determining its protection and management, highlighting the different origin of their goods and their varied typology.

From a general point of view, the university heritage is made up of different resources, both historical and contemporary:

1. Original heritage: In its many typologies, although traditionally related to historical-artistic goods. Generally, foundational properties or associated throughout the time with the academic activity, especially in universities with a broad historical tradition. Andalusian universities, such as in Seville and Granada, are the greatest heritage entity of this nature, as well as the ex novo immovable heritage of different chronologies.

2. Heritage acquired: Mainly movable heritage composed of objects included in history and required for carrying out the teaching, scientific, and cultural activity.

3. Cultural heritage created: Those resulting from teaching and scientific activities throughout the time, describing both activities.

4. Heritage donated: Objects given to university centres because of their teaching, scientific, and cultural activity. Contemporary art collections can be included, as well as private goods related to the university activity which complement the history of science in their many disciplines.

Typologies forming the cultural heritage of universities arise from such origins and are the sign of the part of the collective identity established in historical and geographical territories. The typology having the greatest impact, and not only within the institutional scope, is maybe the typology of historical-artistic nature as the social identification of art with heritage is still very intense. The accumulation of historical properties, generally given or reused in history, and their movable goods are a very important part of such heritage and obviously the efforts required for conservation are focused on them as they usually are goods with legal protection, whether of autonomous or municipal nature through General Urban Development Plans or Special Plans for Protection. I am referring to confiscated convents which turned into places for teaching, such as the Fine Arts Faculty in the University of Seville; nobility palaces, such as the Jabalquinto Palace in Baeza, which headquarters the International University of Andalucia (Spanish initials: UNIA) or the Rectorate of the University of Cadiz; barracks, such as the headquarter of the Faculty of Arts of the University of Cadiz, etc. and to the set of movable goods including and are still part of such heritage.

On the other hand, however, there is a legacy acquired and created which is based on movable heritage objects related to science, technology, and teaching products. This legacy has sometimes been forgotten (and not hidden) in glass cabinets, warehouses, and basements. This legacy is an excellent sample of the meaning of universities and their contribution to territories, but it is the most problematic regarding their protection and management.

Bibliographical and documentary heritage, which is traditionally valued and preserved correctly due to its
fundamental value for the university activity, is not here included. This typology has administrative infrastructures and technical staff in all the universities managing and disseminating it, although it is true that it is an activity focused on closed bibliographical and documentary collections in which other elements should be included, despite the difficulties taking place in this era of digital publishing.

**Current problems: scientific-technical heritage**

Following this scheme, the main problem is, in my opinion, this cultural heritage, maybe secondary until now, and whose advance in its conceptualisation facilitates to be included as a good in the respective protection catalogues (voice). Problems based on the poor social valuation determined by some factors are as follows:

1.- A deficient social visibility produced by the shortage of dissemination programmes, and therefore little exposed to social contemplation. They are generally goods exhibited as ornamental objects in glass cabinets placed in offices and university dependencies (thanks to which they have survived), and we always refer to movable historical typologies due to their age.

2.- The limited valuation of the professionals whose logic technical vision, focused on the effectiveness of instruments, reduces or even prevents a historical vision inherent to the scientific meaning or valuation.

3.- The quick obsolescence of instruments as the result of the rapid technological process, thus implying that administrative inventories are no longer available, so they are removed or abandoned.

4.- The problem of protecting and managing which implies the accumulation of heritage objects without a certain function, objective, or programming, thus leading to the lack of appreciation of their valuation which, although necessary, is finally a management problem (warehousing and conservation).

5.- Sometimes, the confused or badly defined ownership titles of such goods as private goods are not explicitly distinguished. Goods are placed in a university dependence, which becomes a place “to contain” such goods, and in that case, they should be included in the inventory by writing their true property and those which are property of the institution.

6.- The lack of specific administrative infrastructures, operational protocols, and means to protect such goods, relegating their safekeeping to the good will of faculties, departments, and people interested in caring them ([nota voice @ On the set of factors influencing the scientific-technical heritage, it is worth highlighting the article ROCA ROSELL, Antoni. Conservar (y actualizar) el patrimonio científico. [online]. Mètode, no. 25, 2000. Available: http://metode.cat/es/Revistas/Monografics/Colleccions-de-la-memoria/Conservar-i-fer-actual-el-patrimoni-cientific. Accessed: 15/03/2015]).
After presenting the problems of this specific set of university goods, as the result of the teaching and scientific activity, we should consider how to solve them by applying a protection and management structure appropriate to the current reflection on the principles of protection, conservation, and dissemination.

**Protection**

The first step is to register all goods exhaustively. It is a methodological question with the possible negative factors mentioned above (hiding, lack of information and valuation, etc.). The register should be created as an open and permanent process, as the Atalaya Programme in the Andalusian Public Universities is doing. Nowadays, at least some of them (it was already created in others) are making the inventory of their movable and immovable goods: a previous phase based on the location and visibility of the university cultural heritage. An inventory is being developed with the appropriate technical guarantees, and together with the coordination of UNIA and with the technical supervision of the Heritage Andalusian Institute, the physical existence of goods is being updated. This process is the first phase of the next level: the allocation of legal protection according to the Andalusian Historical Heritage Law.

So, the protection management should be divided into two phases:

1.- Knowledge inventory: Confirmation of the existence of goods, thus opening possible research processes, and therefore knowledge to objects. An exhaustive inventory with criteria of incorporation. This inventory should be associated with administrative inventories when it is necessary to fully controlling the objects. An inventory generated as an initial step to legal protection and as a creation of an essential documentary source to investigate the historical processes of the institution and its links to close and far environments. The concept “inventory”, which is close to or mixed with the idea of catalogue, should be an open process to update data, which implies the permanent incorporation of pieces, renewal of data, and the possibility and procedure for the expurgation. There are collections with a permanent flux of goods, such as contemporary art and obsolete scientific-technical objects, including donations and possible acquisitions. In this sense, the support and promotion of research works and their presence in teaching programmes should be required, thus meaning a notable impact on the visibility of goods.

2.- Selection of goods for legal protection: The second phase of this protection process should include the establishment of selection criteria to carry out the proposals of incorporation in the General Catalogue of Andalusian Historical Heritage. Criteria which undoubtedly will refer to the relevant law.

Although the Sixth Additional Provision immediately applies the protection of university goods, it would be necessary to specify the Inventory of University Goods included in the General Catalogue of Andalusian Historical Heritage, otherwise leading to very confused situations (voice).

3.- Register of goods in the General Catalogue of Andalusian Historical Heritage: Those selected goods would be part of the protection system with the respective legal implication.
Conservation / restoration

Given the situation described above, this typology of goods usually has very important damages requiring conservation or even restoration processes implying a high economic cost. From this point of view, adopting measures of preventive conservation as soon as possible will prevent some damages, thus avoiding or reducing expensive interventions. For example, the existence of stacks of polychromatic plaster pieces from the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century in shelves: those pieces were at the risk of impacts and scratches as the bracket is fragile. Modifying such environment under a preventive conservation programme would avoid future damages.

Dissemination

This section on management is the social objective of the process, with the implicit idea of democratisation and globalisation of cultural goods. The dissemination of the university heritage and its enhancement by providing society with its presence and meanings should be the final achievement of all management. By knowing the university heritage at different levels, the transmission of such signs of collective identity is facilitated by including and exchanging them with broader scopes of social identity. So, a programme on institutional identification of goods, their enhancement and accessibility should be part of such general vision of universities cultural heritage as owners /depositories of the heritage.

For this reason, apart from generating an identifying logo and the relevant sign for properties, an exhibition space is essential for the movable typology due to both the presence of properties in the immediate urban context and the weakness in the recognition as a heritage good generated by its use and operation.

AN EXHIBITION SPACE of permanent enhancement and accessible to the collection of movable goods, of contemporary painting, and of other typologies. Such space will have a double value: a cultural profitability facilitating the recovering of the historical process of the institution, as well as its importance and participation in the configuration of the social environment. A second value is based on the centralised control and protection of the goods protected by concentrating resources.

It should be an adaptable space which facilitates or shares not the idea of a permanent exhibition, but a continuing process of reinterpreting goods so that the good itself is not monopolised but society is able to appropriate new meanings in different contexts.

At the same time, it is necessary to adapt dissemination programmes to information and communication technologies (ICTs): a notable presence in social networks and similar websites boosting links with the target groups of such heritage (voice).

Establishment of COLLABORATION RELATIONS with institutions of similar collections. For example, the case of the University of Cadiz with the Spanish Navy Observatory in San Fernando and the Navantia Museum. Moreover, the FORMATION OF ITINERARIES where the heritage achieves a collective value and sense should be proposed and included.

COMMERCIALISATION: One of the aspects included by the current political and social model in the cultural heritage is the commercialisation, that is, obtaining economic performances due to the exploitation of heritage goods, and not only from an exhibition or dissemination point of view, but even as a background and as a
direct object of commercial activities which are sometimes far from the sense of such heritage. As those activities can be a vulnerability factor, regulating the heritage is required to avoid damages or even trivialities in its meaning. For this reason, rules regulating this characteristic should always be established with goals based on protecting goods in their material, historical, and social value, and never from a restrictive position:

Regulation on goods loan

Regulation on the image use

Regulation on the economic use and performance

**Today: the case of the University of Cadiz**

A short example, and due to the link of the author with the University of Cadiz, is mentioning that today this university is in the first phase of the knowledge inventory of heritage goods. Works started in the Faculty of Medicine by being considered as the seeds of the current University of Cadiz and, in this sense, with an accumulated heritage reflecting such process. As indicated at the beginning of this text, the inclusion criterion applied is very extensive so that, within the scope of movable goods (the most complex), various typologies of collections with a unitary sense are being included in the register. A total of 970 movable goods has been listed to date.

1.- Historical-artistic heritage objects composed by the collection of paintings and sculptures of relevant characters of the institution, including the huge portrait collection of Deans of the Faculty of Medicine.

2.- Scientific-technical and pedagogical heritage objects of historical nature, which are even being used. In this typology, different relevant collections can be defined, such as the collections of Auzoux, Emile Deyrolle, Losada, and González Velasco, all of them referring to anatomical models related to teaching, entomology and osteology. Also, different instruments with a chronological framework initiated in the second half of the 19th century are included.

3.- Donations

In addition, part of the inventory of the immovable goods of the university, which is made up of a list of forty properties, is carried out. So far, those of historical nature have been inventoried within a chronological framework starting in the 17th century.
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Images related to this chapter

Faculty of Medicine of the UCA. Pedro Virgili. 2/2 18th century.

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Faculty of Medicine of the UCA. Portrait of the Dean Leonardo Rodrigo Lavin. Manuel Godoy. 1926.
Faculty of Medicine of the UCA. Boxes collection related to the entomology. End of the 19th century.

Faculty of Medicine of the UCA. Electron transmission microscope. 1970.

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Faculty of Arts of the UCA. Initial project of the military engineer Ignacio Sala. 1732.

Faculty of Economics and Business of the UCA. Lucien Viraut. 1900.
For Reflection

The reflection on the problems of the university heritage should be focused on two of its greater weaknesses:

1.- The difficulty of including pieces in the register and its progressive extension. Implicit difficulty for every alive body or institution still generating activity and producing therefore heritage.

2.- And immediately connected with the previous point, the management of the high number of movable goods and their organisation to read their meanings adequately.

Documents

Historical-Artistic Heritage of the University of Seville. http://www.patrimonioartistico.us.es/index.jsp


National Museum of Science and Technology. It is not focused on the university cultural heritage but is very related to the scientific-technical typologies.

http://www.muncyt.es/


Cultural Heritage of the University of Zaragoza http://patrimoniocultural.unizar.es/

Cultural Heritage of the Complutense University of Madrid https://www.ucm.es/coleccioness

IAPH database. This link is mentioned as registers will be included in the Database of the Andalusian Historical Heritage Institute in the future. http://www.iaph.es/web/canales/conoce-el-patrimonio/base-de-datos-en-linea/
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References


**Patrimonio artístico y monumental de las Universidades andaluzas**. Miguel Rodríguez-Pantoja Márquez (dir.). Sevilla: Consejería de Educación y Ciencia, 1992. 207 pages. ISBN 84-8051-051-X.

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