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PROTECTION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE

HERITAGE AUTHENTICITY AS A SOURCE OF PERSONAL AND COLLECTIVE IDENTITY

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ABSTRACT: The pursuit of authenticity has been driving heritage discourse, stemming from the early efforts of heritage theory. My contribution provides a comprehensive view of heritage authenticity from an existential standpoint. I draw upon Martin Heidegger's *Dwelling, Building and Thinking*, which offers contrasting perspectives on human existence within time and place: caring and cultivating versus creating and destroying. From this contrast, it becomes evident that heritage embodies authenticity when it reinforces caring and cultivating shared values. With this, authentic caring allows heritage communities to endure and contributes to constructive development and adaptive changes while respecting the spirit of place.

Viewing heritage authenticity through psychological and philosophical lenses emphasises its significance in personal and collective identity formation. Understanding "the other" is essential in shaping our identities. This paradox is also evident in heritage and can be addressed by fostering a more inclusive approach that embraces and integrates the heritage of others. Such an approach challenges the conventional understanding of the interplay between heritage authenticity and identity. Heritage should empower individuals and communities to understand their purpose by recognising in heritage where they come from, who they are, and what they stand for.

Authenticity and identity depend on heritage values, memories, and knowledge. Through this relationship, a society becomes visible to itself and others. Building on Martin Heidegger and Alessandro Ferrara's understanding, the authentic identity expressed in heritage provides valuable insights into a society's identification process.

KEY WORDS: Heritage authenticity, shared values, collective memory, traditional knowledge, identity

1. Introduction

The history of heritage theories clearly shows the development of authenticity questions, starting with John Ruskin, William Morris, Camillo Boito, Georg Dehio and Alois Riegl, and culminating in the Nara Document on Authenticity[1]. In this process, heritage discourses have shifted from regarding authenticity as a "qualifying condition" defined by experts[2] to acknowledging that it should be negotiated with the local community and other stakeholders[3].

We must engage with theoretical concepts to examine fundamental questions about heritage existence, knowledge, values and meaning. First, we must clarify the provisional definition of heritage authenticity and identity. Suppose authenticity is a "qualifying condition" for demarcating what heritage is and what is not. In that case, authenticity's social function contributes to personal and collective identity because its aura gives heritage a particular symbolic potential. The definition of heritage and identity nexus is limited to the notion that heritage contributes to the general public's sense of belonging and identity.

Heritage theory responses to the question of interlinks between the concepts of heritage authenticity and identity are scarce. My step-by-step approach addresses the question of identity first because, compared to authenticity, it is less present in heritage discourse. Next, I elaborate on the concept of authenticity and outline the intersections between the two concepts.

2. Heritage and identity

Heritage phenomena consist of things, events, and activities people experience as meaningful, worth preserving, and continuing[4]. Things, events and activities manifest in the outer world and are embodied in time and space. But the question we want to elaborate on here is why people cherish heritage and, consequently, engage in preserving and cultivating it. To answer this question, we need to analyse the defining factors that give heritage such an appeal. Putting it differently, we must consider our perceptions, attitudes, motifs, and intentions constituting our human nature.

Philosophers in the late 18th century, such as Rousseau and Herder, insisted "on the value of individuals conducting themselves based on their own substantive beliefs, desires, emotions, and ideas"[5]. In the 20th century, psychology developed the concepts of personal identity more

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1 For a comprehensive review of the bibliography of the history of heritage theory, see Choay, 1992 (English translation 2001) and Munoz-Vinas, 2005 and 2023.

2 Stovel H. (2007). Effective use of authenticity and integrity as world heritage qualifying conditions. *City & Time* 2(3), (pp. 21-36).

3 Jones S. (2017). Wrestling with the Social Value of Heritage: Problems, dilemmas and opportunities. *Journal of Community Archaeology & Heritage* 4(1), (pp. 32, 37); Papmehl-Dufay L. (2020). Heritage value from below: A local community perspective on conservation, preservation and authenticity in SE Sweden. *Cadernos do Lepaarq* 17(34), (pp. 60-61).

4 The definition derives from and plays upon the Council of Europe, 2005, wording of Articles 2 and 3.

5 Kristinsson S. (2007). Authenticity, identity, and fidelity to self, [in:] Rønnow-Rasmussen T. et al. (Eds.) *Hommage à Wlodek: Philosophical Papers Dedicated to Wlodek Rabinowicz* (pp. 3-4). Lund: Department of Philosophy, Lund University. https://www.fil.lu.se/hommageawlodek/site/papper/KristinssonSigurdur.pdf.

in detail. We can sum up that the philosophical/psychological discourse reveals the following factors that shape our personal identity: personal experiences and emotions, the social and cultural context together with language, symbols and other means of communication[6]. The psychoanalytical view on personal identity formation defines motivations such as mirroring and needs for fulfilment[7].

Not to embark on a detailed psychological examination, I will focus on three defining mental factors we have previously elaborated on when researching the ontological implications of how heritage is interpreted: the triad of memory, knowledge, and values[8]. These factors are also worth considering when dealing with identity because they define the human condition at the personal and interpersonal levels. At the same time, they are not mechanically embodied in tangible and intangible heritage. The nature of intangible heritage is considered abstract or metaphysical[9], while mental factors as broader categories give a general tone and direction to tangible and intangible heritage, even if it is physically embodied.[10]

Memory is a mental process that primarily arises in persons as a result of their experiences, including testimonies of past events retrieved from the intimate social background. Memories are recollected when other experiences and events arise. Collective memory refers to a pool of memories shared by a particular group or community that need not be experienced exclusively by the present generation but primarily passed on from previous ones. Both personal and collective memories could be a source of knowledge and beliefs since they are a storehouse of what an individual or a group has learned in the past[11].

In heritage processes, a close relationship exists between heritage (in many languages, the preferred term is "monument"), memory and identity. Francoise Choay[12] puts it clearly:

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6 Keblusek L., Giles H., Maass A. (2017) Communication and group life: How language and symbols shape intergroup relations. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations* 20(5), (p. 634).

7 Ferrara A. (1998) *Reflective Authenticity: Rethinking the Project of Modernity.* London: Routledge, (p. 79).

8 Pirkovič J. (2023a), Model of heritage interpretation tailored to public co-participation. *Ars & Humanitas* 17(1), (pp. 251-270). https://journals.unilj.si/arshumanitas/article/view/16008.

9 Munoz-Vinas S. (2023). *A Theory of Cultural Heritage: Beyond the Intangible.* Kindle ed., London, New York: Routledge, (pp. 137-138).

10 William Logan and Heliane Silverman use the term "embodied heritage" as a synonym for intangible heritage "that is embodied in people rather than in inanimate objects" without giving a definition (Logan W. S. (2007). Closing Pandora's Box: Human Rights Conundrums in Cultural Heritage Protection, [in:] Silverman. H., Ruggles D.F. (Eds.) *Cultural Heritage and Human Rights,* (p. 33). New York: Springer; Silverman H. (2008). Embodied Heritage, Identity Politics, and Tourism. *Anthropology and Humanism* 30, (pp. 141–155)

11 Audi R. (2011). *Epistemology: A Contemporary Introduction to the Theory of Knowledge,* third Kindle ed. (p. 75). New York: Routledge.

12 Choay F. (1992). L'allégorie du patrimoine. Paris: Éditions du Seuil (English translation 2000. *The Invention of the Historical Monument,* (p. 6). Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press).

> *First, what is meant by the word monument? In French, the original meaning of the word is that of the Latin monumentum, itself derived from monere (to warn, to recall), which calls upon the faculty of memory. The affective nature of its purpose is essential…of stirring up, through emotions, a living memory… capable of directly contributing to the maintenance and preservation of the identity.*

Knowledge is another mental factor strongly contributing to the existence and understanding of heritage phenomena. We should consider the complementarity and the difference between academic and expert knowledge on the one hand and traditional and locally based knowledge and heritage-related skills on the other. Following the definition of the UNESCO Intangible Heritage Convention, Munoz-Vinas explains knowledge as a part of intangible heritage[13]. On top of knowledge, he considers rules of behaviour, such as language, rituals and worldview, and names this specific intangible heritage as "mindsets"[14].

I claim that traditional, practical and academic knowledge does not act at the same level as rules of behaviour, language, rituals, and worldview. The former set needs validation through practice or inquiry, while the latter do not. At the individual level, knowledge is gained through our day-to-day experience and the guidance of our parents, teachers, and peers. At the societal level, we are confronted, and we can gain knowledge not only from our immediate background but also from a reservoir of knowledge accumulated by past generations of teachers, prominent historical figures, scriptures and other sources of information, not to mention present scientific and expert sources. If we aim for a wholesome response to the demands of our lives, we need, on such bases, to build our identities. The same applies to heritage as a source of identity – knowledge, in general, is not heritage per se but is indispensable in forming and strengthening personal and collective identities.

"Heritage values" refer to the qualities attributed to heritage, giving it significance and meaning within a community's cultural capital. These values are embodied in the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, and skills individuals and communities cultivate concerning heritage. It is important to involve communities in determining heritage values and significance rather than relying solely on heritage professionals and authorities. We as experts need to respect the full spectrum of heritage values and valuation processes, as opposed to the traditional conservation approach, which prioritises academic, historical and artistic or, in the case of the UNESCO World Heritage criteria, the outstanding universal value.

Postmodern heritage theories have relativised values by assuming that values are unstable and cannot objectively guide heritage action. Munoz-Vinas summarises such a position in a formula for a non-axiological cultural heritage instead of the traditional, Europocentric, culturally colonialist one[15]. One risks throwing away the baby with the bathwater by abandoning axiological

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[13] UNESCO's 2003 Convention mentions knowledge as a general category – Art. 2.1 and lists knowledge concerning nature and the universe as a specific category, Art. 2.2.

[14] Munoz-Vinas S. (2023). *A Theory of Cultural Heritage: Beyond the Intangible*. Kindle ed., London, New York: Routledge, (pp. 52, 138).

[15] *Ibidem*, (pp. 13-14, 16-18).

considerations. I have already claimed that heritage theory should consider overcoming the gap between extrinsic and intrinsic values[16].

Robert Hartman's (1910-1973) theory of values helps bridge the gap. Hartman explains that there are three value dimensions, and each applies to a particular class of things: 1. Systemic values correspond to the concept of Value. 2. Classes of things are valued relevant to the actuality of the field of application (for example, heritage); here, extrinsic values apply. 3. With empirical things, intrinsic values are at the core[17]. His main message is that intrinsic values[18] have the full concreteness of all their meanings (derived from properties), extrinsic values have only the meaning of class properties, and systemic values have only the meaning contained in the definition of the concept "Value"[19]. Individual sciences and professions define extrinsic values, and instrumental values belong to the same category. Intrinsic values are primarily ethical; they are experienced and expressed by ordinary people. Intrinsic values are divided into public or shared values and individual ones. Intrinsic public values are the core of public interest[20].

When discussing the importance of intrinsic heritage values, we should consider the psychological understanding of intrinsic and extrinsic personal motivation. Intrinsic motivation reflects our proactive human nature's spontaneous curiosity, interest, and assimilative tendencies[21]. Extrinsic or instrumental motivation concerns external pressures, reward contingencies, or coercion. It is challenging to sustain external pressure if a sense of value and purpose does not guide it[22].

Laurajane Smith[23] defines the authorised heritage discourse as typically feeding from extrinsic, instrumental values, historical memory, and academic or expert knowledge. I propose that, in order to challenge and democratise the authorised heritage discourse, we should explore deeper layers of heritage's mental factors: shared intrinsic values, collective memory, and traditional knowledge. (Fig. 1).

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16 Pirkovič J. (2023b), Does archaeology deliver evidence about the past or co-create contemporary values? *Ars & Humanitas* 17(2), (pp. 59-77). https://journals.uni-lj.si/arshumanitas/article/view/18165/15362.

17 Hartman R. S. (1967). *The Structure of Value: Foundations of Scientific Axiology.* Carbondale, Oregon: Southern Illinois Press, (pp. 137–139).

18 Intrinsic does not mean values to be inherent.

19 *Ibidem*, (p. 122).

20 Bozeman B. (2007). *Public Values and Public Interest: Economic Individualism.* Washington DC: Georgetown University Press, (p. 143).

21 Ryan R. M., Deci E. L. (2019). Brick by brick: The origins, development, and future of self-determination theory, [in:] Elliot A. J. (Ed.), *Advances in Motivation Science*, (p. 9). Amsterdam (et al.): Elsevier Academic Press.

22 *Ibidem*, (pp. 15-16).

23 Smith L. (2006). *Uses of Heritage*. London, New York: Routledge, (p. 11).

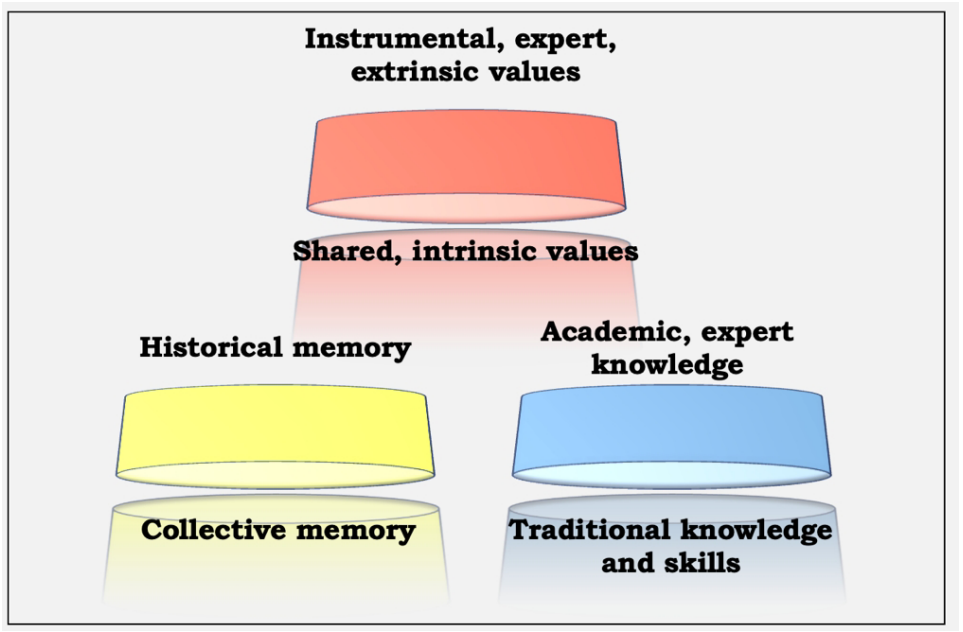

Fig. 1 Three mental factors affecting the attitude toward heritage

When speaking of personal identity development, Alessandro Ferrara, an Italian political philosopher, explains identity formation from a psychologic-dynamic perspective as a succession of:

> *(1) a motivational core constituted by needs for fulfilment and for mirroring, (2) a configuration of idealised goals, and (3) a set of talents and abilities which make the reaching of these goals and the satisfaction of these needs possible*[24].

By considering the role of heritage mental factors, we can bring together a dynamic process of individual identity development in line with reasoning similar to Ferrara's (Fig. 2).

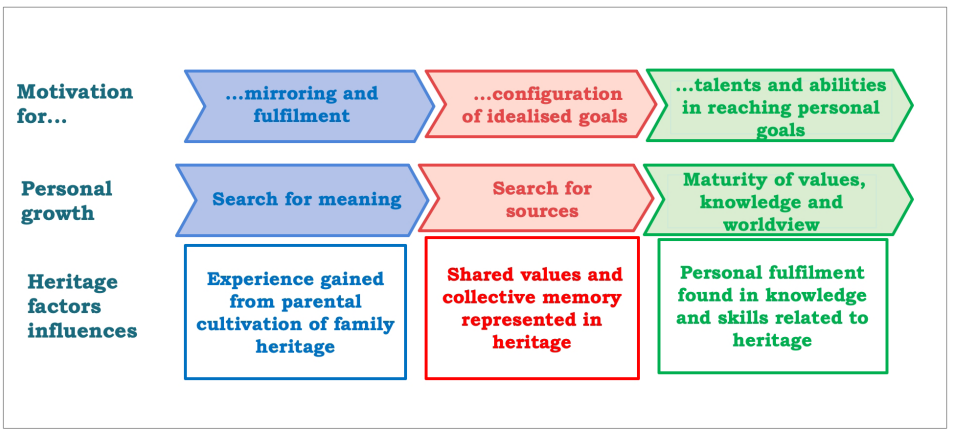

Fig. 2 Influence of heritage factors on personal identity growth

[24] Ferrara A. (1998). *Reflective Authenticity: Rethinking the Project of Modernity.* London: Routledge, (p. 79).

A simplified graphical representation of three heritage mental factors in a single set illustrates how these factors interlink in collective identity formation (Fig. 3).

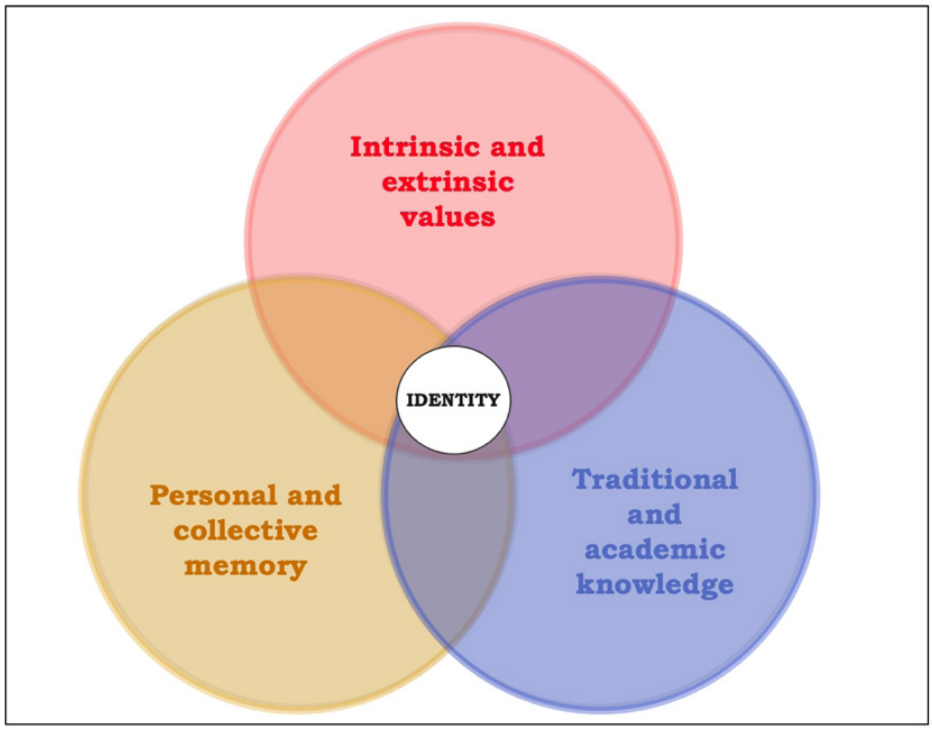

Fig. 3 Simplified collective identity paradigm

Community members cannot genuinely connect and share an identity without acknowledging their roots in collective memory, embracing shared values, and practising various forms of traditional knowledge and skills. The embodiment or concretisation of all these represents the tangible and intangible heritage they identify with.

3. Heritage and Authenticity

We start discussing this topic by asking whether there is an epistemic difference between the authenticity of persons and phenomena, considering that heritage belongs to the second category.

The definition of authenticity of phenomena refers to a phenomenon's characteristic of being "of undisputed origin or authorship" or of being faithful to an original or a reliable, accurate representation[25]. The authenticity of a person is more complicated. The cultural changes from the Enlightenment to the present related to personal authenticity have greatly influenced the modern quest for the authenticity of phenomena[26]. Personal authenticity has become closely connected

[25] Varga S., Guignon C. (2023). Authenticity, [in:] *The Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy.* https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2023/entries/authenticity/.

[26] Heynen H. (2006). Questioning Authenticity. *National Identities* 8(3), (pp. 287-288). https://doi.org/10.1080/14608940600842607.

to identity, where there is a tension between socio-political and cultural identity determinants and identity as a quality of having an authentic relation to oneself[27].

In his work, *The Ethics of Authenticity*, Charles Taylor describes the modern exaggeration of personal authenticity as the "culture of authenticity". As an opposite attitude, he portrays the aspiration towards a multicultural understanding of authenticity, which, at the social level, follows the recognition of cultural differences[28]. Taylor points out that we need the recognition of others to form our identities and (critically) engage with values we share with our neighbours, strangers, enemies and humanity in general.

The Western individualistic "culture of authenticity" is also reflected in marketing and tourism (emphasising "authentic" products and experiences)[29] and especially in psychology, where authenticity has been a central theme for over fifty years. It can positively affect individuals' sense of belonging, identity and psychological well-being.

From the philosophical point of view, Alessandro Ferrara has contributed significantly to our understanding of the connection between authenticity and identity at the personal and interpersonal levels. He defines authentic identity as "the ability to choose courses of action and assign priority to values in a way that results in an authentic, as opposed to a shallow or fragmented identity"[30]. Authentic identity implies the existence of an intersubjective perspective[31]. At a deeper level, both types of identity, when authentic, aim at achieving *eudaemonia*[32].

Heritage authenticity is, in a way, similar to the notion of genius loci or spirit of place. T*he ICOMOS Quebec Declaration* (2008) defines the spirit of place as an amalgam of tangible and intangible heritage without referring to authenticity[33]. Żmudzinska-Nowak and Wałek connect both kinds of heritage through the identity of the spirit of place. They claim that the spirit of place accumulates over time through people's experiences of the place and the construction of

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27 Varga S., Guignon C. (2023). Authenticity, [in:] *The Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy.* https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2023/entries/authenticity/.

28 Taylor C. (1991). *The Ethics of Authenticity*. Cambridge, Mass., London: Harvard University Press, (p. 51).

29 For a model of sustainable tourist consumption of cultural heritage, see: Kolar T., Kos Koklič M., Žabkar V. (2019) Managing sustainable consumption of cultural heritage: the key role of existential authenticity, [in:] Castelo A. et al. (Eds.) *Cultural heritage*, (pp. 71–84). London, New York: Routledge.

30 Ferrara A. (1998). *Reflective Authenticity: Rethinking the Project of Modernity.* London: Routledge, (p. 45).

31 *Ibidem*, (pp. 15-16).

32 Aristotelian *eudaimonia* means the highest human good or happiness. From a modern perspective, it also means well-being. Ferrara dedicates Chapters 5 and 6 to the eudaemonic fulfilment of personal and collective identities.

33 The spirit of place is defined as the tangible things (buildings, sites, landscapes, routes, objects) and the intangible ones, narratives, written documents, rituals, festivals, traditional knowledge, values, textures, colours, odours, etc.), that is to say, the physical and spiritual elements that give meaning, value, emotion and mystery to place. (ICOMOS (2008). *Quebec Declaration on the Preservation of the Spirit of Place.* https://www.icomos.org/images/DOCUMENTS/Charters/GA16_Quebec_Declaration_Final_EN.pdf., (p. 2).

collective memory. For them, "identity determines the authenticity and uniqueness of a place"[34]. Later, I will present an opposing argument: authenticity determines if heritage can be a source of identity.

Żmudzinska-Nowak and Wałek claim that authenticity is difficult to ascertain in urban landscapes. For architectural heritage, authenticity depends on the integrity of structures and values communicated through heritage[35]. We can add another notion that touches a similar vein and accentuates the public perception of heritage authenticity: the "aura of age", which is lost if a copy replaces the original[36].

In the last decades, Salvador Munoz-Vinas has dedicated much of his theoretical work to the postmodern criticism of heritage authenticity[37]. In his 2009 article and his latest book, he argues that heritage authenticity is ambiguous because it depends upon many personal beliefs and culturally motivated factors[38]. His elaboration shows that heritage cannot be considered authentic if some restoration works have been undertaken because the previous, delipidated or decayed condition should be regarded as authentic. From a logical point of view, his claim resembles Heraclitus's paradox of a river, which is not the same at each moment of its constant flow when one steps in twice, even if it bears the same name with which it is identified. Similarly, a person's identity evolves over a lifetime, even if everybody perceives that self-identity as constant[39]. It is a fact that heritage materiality changes constantly.

Furthermore, our perspective on heritage also shifts over time. Although Munoz-Vinas's criticism of heritage authenticity is logically consequent, he does not propose another concept. He only concludes he does not mean that "we should stop using the notion of authenticity, but rather that we should use it more carefully and with awareness of the actual meaning of the term: as an expression of taste or preference"[40].

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[34] Żmudzinska-Nowak M. Wałek M. (2024). Losing Genius Loci in Cultural Heritage Sites – Landscape of Defensive Castle Open-Air Museums of the Jurassic Belt, Poland. *Muzeológia a kultúrne dedičstvo* 12(3), (p. 46).

[35] *Ibidem*, (pp. 56-57).

[36] Papmehl-Dufay L. (2020). Heritage value from below: A local community perspective on conservation, preservation and authenticity in SE Sweden. *Cadernos do Lepaarq* 17(34), (p. 61).

[37] Munoz Vinas S. (2005). *Contemporary Theory of Conservation*. Amsterdam (etc.): Elsevier; Munoz Vinas S. (2009). Beyond Authenticity. *Art Conservation and Authenticities: Material, Concept, Context,* (pp. 33-38). London: Archetype; Munoz-Vinas S. (2023). *A Theory of Cultural Heritage: Beyond the Intangible.* Kindle ed., London, New York: Routledge.

[38] Munoz Vinas S. (2009). Beyond Authenticity. *Art Conservation and Authenticities: Material, Concept, Context,* (pp. 33-37). London: Archetype; Munoz-Vinas S. (2023). *A Theory of Cultural Heritage: Beyond the Intangible.* Kindle ed., London, New York: Routledge (pp. 113-117).

[39] Kahn C. H. (1979). *The Art and Thought of Heraclitus: An Edition of the Fragments with Translation and Commentary.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, (pp. 53, 168).

[40] *Ibidem*, (p. 125).

Now, we should consider whether integrity is a more appropriate qualifying condition than authenticity when defining and listing heritage. According to Herb Stovel[41], the dilemma is not the most appropriate. Instead, he proposes a new way of defining these two requirements:

> *[The] existing authenticity/integrity system could be replaced conceptually … by a system which looks at six sub-aspects of authenticity/integrity (wholeness, intactness, material genuineness, organisation of space and form, continuity of function, continuity of setting) for four cultural heritage typologies (archaeological sites, historic towns, architectural monuments and complexes, cultural landscapes)*[42].

His proposal is sensible since it builds on the different characteristics of tangible heritage types defined by experts. However, it does not contribute much to the conundrum of authenticity and integrity when considering their importance for heritage communities.

Finally, I should formulate the answer to the central question of our inquiry: What is the nature of authentic collective identity that heritage can express? Here, I can refer to Martin Heidegger's concept of existential authenticity[43].

Martin Heidegger's phenomenology is devoted to questions about the authenticity of phenomena that, among others, cover cultural representations. In searching for authentic Being, Heidegger, in his *Being and Time*, first examines the phenomenon of Being-in-the-World as a field where the question of Being can be addressed. In the second step of phenomenological analysis, he claims that we can search for the answer only when we are confronted with the certainty of annihilation, in other words, with our own death. Only through an existential projection towards death can Being recognise himself as an Authentic Being[44].

In his *Building, Dwelling, Thinking*, Heidegger distinguishes dwelling from building in the following way: "Dwelling is the manner in which mortals are on the earth". Hence, dwelling is to be understood as man's existence on earth. It refers to caring, protecting and cultivating. On the other hand, building means erecting edifices in specific places. "Both of these also mean 'remaining before the divinities' and include a 'belonging to men's being with one another'"[45]. In Heideggerian, this refers to the human community. He completes a fourfold representation of human lifeworld: the human community sheltered by the sky from above and the individuals as mortals supported by the earth from below. He concludes that building is authentic if it passes the test of authentic dwelling that comprises caring, protecting and cultivating: "Only if we are capable of dwelling, only then can we build"[46].

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41 Stovel H. (2007). Effective use of authenticity and integrity as world heritage qualifying conditions. *City & Time* 2(3), (pp. 21-36).

42 *Ibidem*, (p. 32).

43 See also Wang (Wang N. (1999). Rethinking Authenticity in Tourism Experience. *Annals of Tourism Research* 26(2), (pp. 349-370) explaining the importance of existential authenticity for visitors experiencing tourist attractions.

44 Heidegger M. (1962). *Being and Time. Cambridge*, USA, Oxford, UK: Blackwell, (pp. 304-311).

45 Heidegger M. (1997). Building, Dwelling, Thinking, [in:] Leach N. (Ed.) *Rethinking Architecture: A Reader in Cultural Theory* (pp. 96-98). London: Routledge.

46 *Ibidem,* (p. 103).

If we project Heidegger's fourfold representation of human existence to the holistic understanding of heritage authenticity, we produce a mind map outlining these existential aspects (Fig. 4).

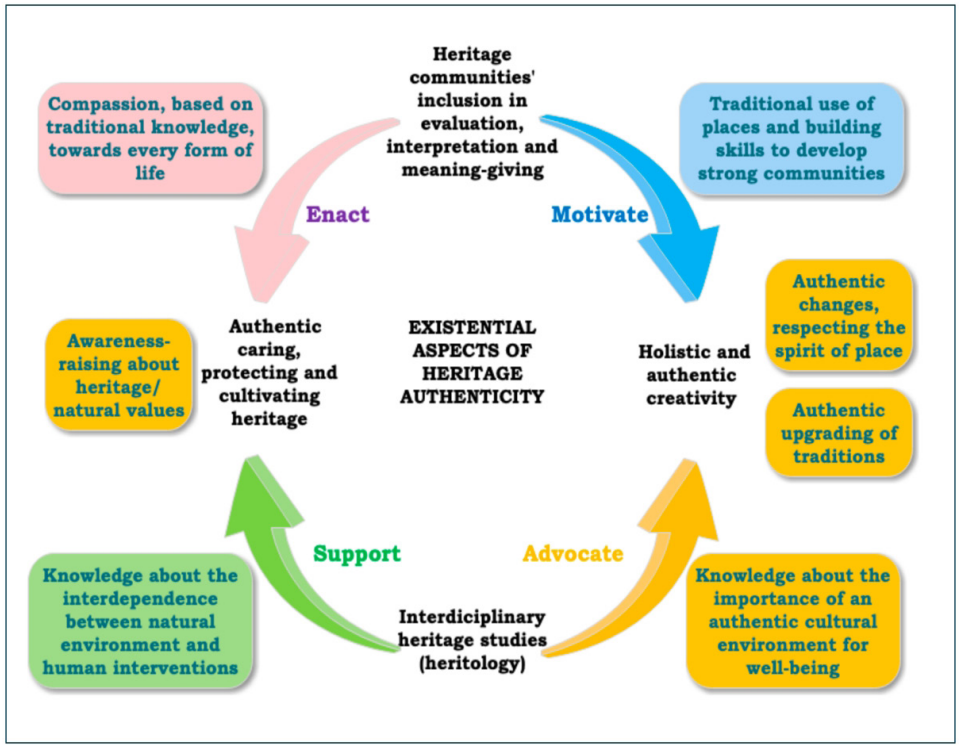

Fig. 4 Phenomenology of heritage authenticity inside human lifeworld

Factors influencing the degree of existential authenticity depend on the genuine inclusion of heritage communities in the heritage evaluation process, interpretation and meaning-giving. Heritage science delivers expert knowledge and methods to address pressing heritage issues. Heritage communities, on the other hand, contribute traditional knowledge and skills that have enriched our living environment[47]. In the era of modernity, building and new creativity have often been viewed as opposing forces to caring for heritage. However, an alternative perspective among experts on both sides has recently gained traction. Namely, that heritage is (or ought to be) a place of profound creativity. If building and caring for heritage are authentic, this could benefit our planet's future most.

[47] Heidegger claims there is an existential dichotomy between knowing the world of experts and being-in-the world of humans in general (Taminiaux J., Stevens J. (1977). Heidegger and Husserl's "Logical Investigations": In remembrance of Heidegger's last seminar (Zähringen, 1973). *Research in Phenomenology* 7, (p. 60).

Referring to Alessandro Ferrara's Reflective Authenticity, his main claim is that personal authenticity results from a coherent, vital, deep, and mature identity. He applies the same categories to interpersonal identity[48]. If we follow this line of reasoning in questioning heritage authenticity, collective identity and authenticity are also interlinked through the motivation of the heritage community to coherence, vitality, depth, and maturity. However, in this case, the relationship between the two concepts, collective identity and authenticity, is ordered in the opposite causal relationship compared to personal authentic identity. Here, the process depends on individual members' authentic attitudes and actions towards heritage to produce a coherent, vital, profound, and mature collective identity (Fig. 5).

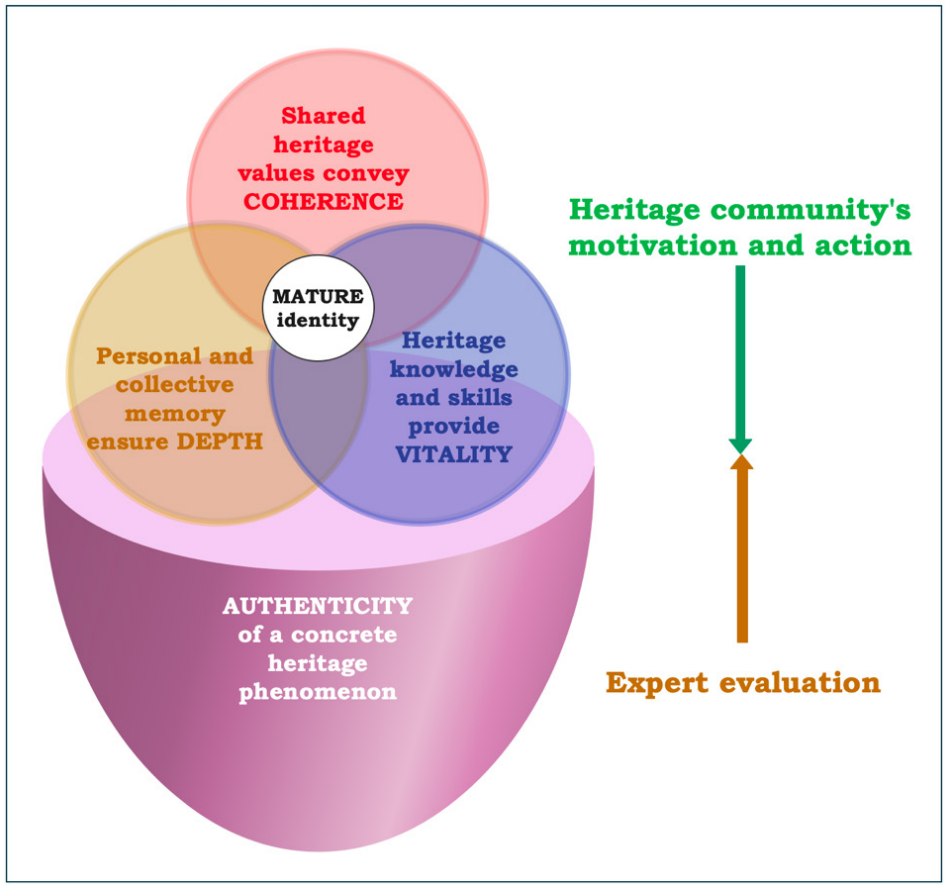

Fig. 5 Reflective heritage authenticity

[48] Ferrara A. (1998). *Reflective Authenticity: Rethinking the Project of Modernity.* London: Routledge, (pp. 106-108).

When a community shares heritage values, it fosters cohesion among its members by recognising and appreciating the common roots embedded in collective memory and traditional knowledge[49]. This, in turn, infuses authentic vitality into shared values and collective memory through the "joyful, spontaneous, and earnest participation"[50] of community members in heritage practices. Furthermore, these practices should also contribute to the community's economic and environmental sustainability. The depth of shared values and traditional knowledge is closely linked to collective memory, which "designates the awareness, on the part of the members of a group, of the central requisites for the maintenance and reproduction of their shared identity"[51]. This understanding is intricately tied to the respect that others have for the community's cultural distinctiveness. All three dimensions of authentic identity—coherence, vitality, and depth—based on Ferrara's framework of the collective authentication process converge in a mature collective identity that induces heritage authenticity. Conversely, experts are called to support the care, protection, and cultivation of all forms of heritage while advocating for authentic creativity.

4. Conclusion

In summary, we can affirm that heritage is foundational to a community's authentic identity. This, in turn, enhances the fulfilment of individual members and the community's overall well-being. The identification process evolves in parallel with the community actively participating in heritage activities and fostering authentic creativity. According to Alessandro Ferrara's elucidation, a community achieves a mature identity when its members share an authentically coherent, vital, and deep identity[52]. Tangible and intangible heritage maintains and reproduces shared identity. A shared, mature identity empowers a community to require no validation from neighbours or competing groups. Instead, it embraces a deeper understanding and appreciation of others' values, memories, and knowledge alongside other people's heritage and creative achievements.

Acknowledgements

No public or private funding sources have been obtained for this study.

[49] This is why the inseparability of natural, cultural, tangible, and intangible heritage needs to be acknowledged (ICOMOS (2024). *International Charter and Guidance on Sites with Intangible Cultural Heritage*. https://openarchive.icomos.org/id/eprint/3367/1/ICICH%20Charter%20EN-FR_final.pdf, Objective 1).

[50] Ferrara A. (1998). *Reflective Authenticity: Rethinking the Project of Modernity*. London: Routledge, (p. 118).

[51] *Ibidem*, (p. 121).

[52] *Ibidem*, (pp. 118-121).

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Choay F. (1992). *L'allégorie du patrimoine. Paris: Éditions du Seuil* (English translation 2000, *The Invention of the Historical Monument*. Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press).

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