Cultural landscape: a promising category

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Abstract

Cultural landscapes belong to a most promising world heritage category that has much evolved since 1992. Through the study of cultural landscapes characteristics and their conceptual affirmation over the time, the objective would be to find the best way to identify cultural landscapes typologies in order to undertake a further thorough review of either listed cultural landscapes or of the ones presenting similar values and which could have been listed as such, as well as of those figuring on the tentative lists. This could be achieved thanks to a semiotic analysis of the SOUV: the idea being in particular to test the TROPES software.

Keywords: Cultural landscape, typology, category, nature-culture, ICOMOS, semiologic analysis.

Introduction

A cultural landscape is rather difficult to conceive since the examples are so different. What do a vast rural area, an industrial landscape, a man designed garden or an archeological site have in common? Understanding this hybrid category, necessary complex, half-way between nature and culture rather than "mixed", is not easy for the public which, as some experts, remain committed to the traditional differentiation between cultural and natural heritage. Heritage properties, when they are listed as cultural landscapes, embody an interlinked and holistic character, mixing natural, cultural and intangible values, which is the very specificity of this new kind of heritage...

If, in France, the Val de Loire is a famous world heritage landscape, well known and understood to the public, the inscription of Causses Cévennes or Nord-Pas-de-Calais Mining Basin came as huge surprises and got an important impact. When Saint-Emilion and Champagne have been listed as cultural landscapes, "Climats de Bourgogne" had been proposed by the project promoters as a cultural property, but the World Heritage Committee, following the advice of ICOMOS, inscribed it as a cultural landscape. Does that mean that the concept is still rather loose and difficult to determine?

It is necessary to define this new UNESCO category, which appeared in 1992, and also to present its developments and its strengthening in the long run, since it has much evolved. We may wonder whether the success of this category, representing nowadays 95 properties, is due to a change in the very meaning and approach of various heritages. And another question arises: why some cultural landscape types are more successful than others?

The methodology we wanted to test was proposing a cluster analysis of all the listed cultural landscapes thanks to a semiologic analysis of the OUV (the Outstanding Universal Values justifying the world heritage listing), using in particular the TROPES software. The idea being to test the feasibility of a method allowing to highlight the key words which characterize the studied properties, by pointing out their recurrences or, on the other hand, their exceptionality. This semiologic analysis would enable to compare and enrich the official UNESCO cultural landscape categories analysis through a typology resulting from the TROPES method.

Our analysis could also enable us to compare this cultural landscape category with other natural or cultural properties in order to see in which way they differ or not.

Future research avenues raised by this communication include an analytical grid for the cultural landscapes selectable to fill the gaps on the UNESCO list. Methodologically, it would also enable us, on the basis of the studies carried out by ICOMOS and ICOMOS France[1], to analyze the tentative lists.

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[1] ICOMOS, internal surveys, 2002, 2005, 2014, 2015

1. Should the cultural landscape typology be revisited?

1.1 Official typology and criticism

UNESCO cultural landscapes mark an important turn in categories and types of spaces inscribed on the world heritage list. The emergence and the development of this new category started among experts at the beginning of the nineties. UNESCO Heritages definition is both political and societal. It also comes from a collective work of local field-specialists, managers, officials, as well as national authorities and experts. It is a response to changes, an adaptation to influences coming up from « labelled » or average territories, which adjusts themselves to collective memories.

The Cultural landscapes category[2] is divided into three sub-categories: « intentional », « organically evolved » and « associative »[3]. Even though gardens and parks enter the first, the more represented, prolific and diverse is the second one. In the inscription files, they refer more to the use value than to the aesthetic one (Roger's "artialisation" - Roger, 1997) or to the symbolic one (associative).

According to Peter J. Fowler, in his 2003 analysis, « cultural landscapes refer to rural landscapes and to unknown agricultural workers », stressing their living character… (Fowler, 2003). This point of view seems nowadays rather reductionist. It applied to a specific type of landscape, among the organically evolving cultural landscapes, which were, at the beginning, imagined as everyday landscapes, rural, agricultural and living. This expert's analysis also underlines that this new category, then very recent, still remained partly unclear or, as he wrote, "rather clumsy". The concept, at the time, was emerging and had not been stabilized. However, the objective of allying nature and culture in a holistic approach has been present since the beginning. The concept, and thus the category, has developed over the time, it has been enriched from a bottom-up reflection, through constant exchanges between theory and practice, and from local managers' and various stakeholders' experiences[4].

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[2] According to the UNESCO Operational Guidelines for the implementation of the WH Convention, "The term "cultural landscape" embraces a diversity of manifestations of the interaction between humankind and its natural environment" "Cultural landscapes are cultural properties and represent the "combined works of nature and of man" designated in Article 1 of the Convention. They are illustrative of the evolution of human society and settlement over time, under the influence of the physical constraints and/or opportunities presented by their natural environment and of successive social, economic and cultural forces, both external and internal." …

[3] UNESCO Operational Guidelines, 2015, Annex 3, p.77

If to-day we still work on the initial cultural landscapes categories and sub-categories, their typology has much diversified over time. Which ones have most developed? Which have remained on the sidelines?

1.2 State of play

Since, the doctrine has evolved thanks to constant theory enrichment through new inscription on the world heritage list, it is now time, 25 years after their launching, to assess the cultural landscapes situation… The map of World cultural landscapes shows the geographic imbalance, some areas being much underrepresented.
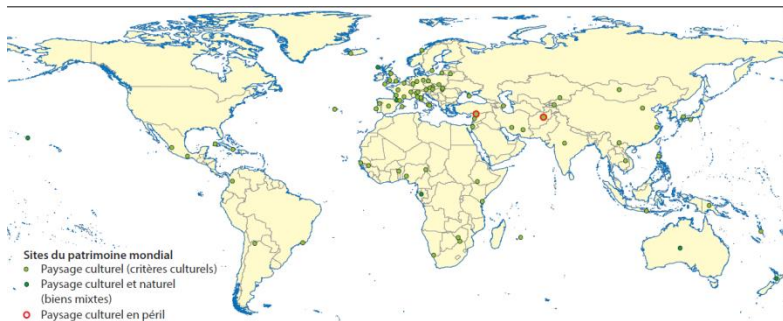

Figure 1: map of CL in the world (E. SALIN, source UNESCO, 2013)

Cultural landscapes criteria are diversified, with a strong predominance of criterion iv: "*to be an outstanding example of a type of/…/ landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history*" *(figure 2).* Most of the cultural landscapes are cultural properties, fewer are mixed. *(figure 3),* and, for the moment, among those, but for the Natural Tongariro Park (New Zealand) which allies criterion vi alone (associative criterion) with natural criteria, all the others mix several cultural and natural criteria.
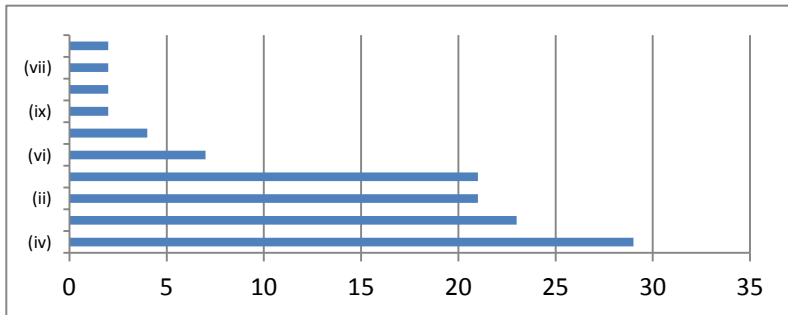

Figure 2: European cultural landscapes criteria (UNESCO, 2013)

Cultural landscapes are heterogeneously distributed since, as for Cultural properties, Europe is overrepresented (53%, in 2015). It is a paradox, since, at the origin, the cultural landscapes inventors had mostly in mind oral civilizations. One notices, however, that this trend is nowadays reversing towards a better balance in favor of cultural landscapes in Africa (13%), and above all, Asia-Pacific (23%).

Inscription dates are rather homogeneous, as well as the extent of the listed properties. Anyway, one may notice that their size tends to decrease, since it has been understood that the vaster they are, with a greater number of local authorities and stakeholders, the more difficult they become to manage. For instance, the Champagne inscription file, a serial property, initially concerned 6 main sites, largely distributed in the whole Champagne area, on 7910 ha and a Buffer Zone of 7200 ha; on the ICOMOS France expert's and State demand, it was drastically reduced to 3 sites, which were closer one to another and more representative as well as in a better state of preservation. Its size was thus reduced to 844 ha and 3448ha for the Buffer zone. Thus, the core area of the final property "Coteaux, Maisons et caves de Champagne" became just above 10% of the first proposal…

1.3 For a detailed typology of cultural landscapes (TROPES methodology)

We tested a software, namely the TROPES methodology, thinking it should enable us to point out the Cultural *landscapes main characteristics.*

The fact that the cultural landscapes notion is in constant enrichment and development has led us to the following tree structure, realized after Fowler's characteristics, enriched with two new ones (memory sites and underground landscapes)and the corresponding key-words allowing to create a tree structure for TROPES program. TROPES methodology: aims to build a complex arborescence with concepts (e.g.: rurality) and associated key-words Typology: vineyards and sub-typology, e.g. for pasture: meadows, mountain pastures, dry grasslands…

Table 1: Cultural landscapes characteristics Table

Fowler's characteristics	Synthesis	Key words
Signifiant aesthetic Quality	Esthetic	Esthetism, Beauty, architectural Quality
Generally large size building	Large territory	(Small) scale , extent, space,
Continuity (way of life/ land use)	Continuity (long term)	History, Geology
Breeding, Agriculture	Rurality	Terroirs, vineyards, olive trees, fields, pastures, dry meadows, meadows, forests, moors, wet-lands, fishing, food-processing…
Gardens and ornemental parks	Gardens and ornemental parcs	Intentional landscape (art), row trees, trees, ponds, fountains, promenades, lawns, flower-beds, flowers, ornaments, statues, rock-gardens, fabrics, bowers, alleys…
Industrial	Industrial	XIX / XX centuries, modern, concrete, studs, warehouses, factories, iron, steel, coal, mines, structures, railways, trains, train stations, bridges, infrastructures, mining village, heaps, cranes, headframes, lifts, tramway, ports, quays, dockyards, quarries, … …
Mountains	Mountain	Hills, summits, peaks, slopes, piedmont areas, valleys, gorges, stones, rocks
Significant residents	Local Communities	Inhabitants, autochtones, indigenous, local people, populations, communities, résidents,
Religiosity, sainthood, sacradness	Sacred	Spirit of the place, religiosity, sainthood, sacred, religion, churches, mosques, temples,
Important survival factor, physical and/or social	Resilience	Local identité, résilience, survival, subsistence economy
Towns or villages	Towns or villages	Urban, architecture, houses, buildings, palaces, housing, urban planning, street, avenues, squares, urban fabric, materials,

Predominent water	Water	Aquatic landscape, marshes, rivers, rice-fields, streams, waterways, river mouths, deltas, lakes, sea, sea side, river banks, islands, archipelagos, fish, valleys, cliffs, dunes, beaches, foreshore, erosion, river forests, mangroves, humid areas,
Memorial	Memory sites	War, cemetery, tombs, graves, monuments, dead, tranches, shoah, holocaust, atomic bomb, bombs, graves, contemplation, remembrance, memorial, mausoleum,
Underground	Underground landscapes	Caves, decorated caves, cellar, rock art, rupestrian churches, troglodyte housing, monolithic churches, mines necropolis, natural caves, rock shelters, caverns, tombs, hypogea, mushroom caves, cheese caves…
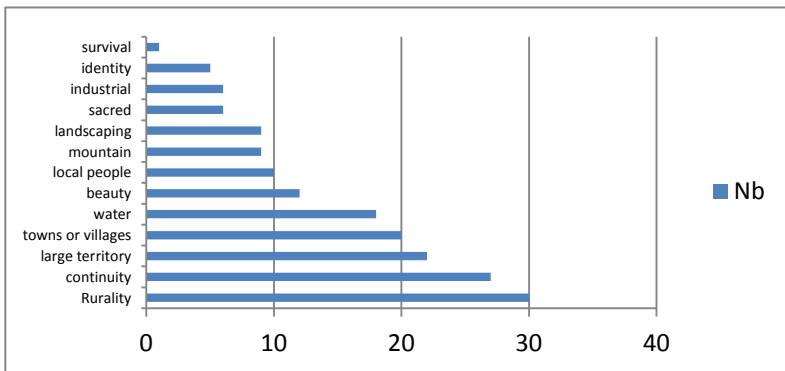
Figure 3: Concepts frequency in the 46 European cultural landscapes (TROPES analysis)

The following analysis concerns the European cultural landscapes. From the TROPES concepts analysis we may deduce various specificities:

- European landscapes are mostly rural. The term "rurality" appears in 30 landscapes, on 46
- They represent the long run, and can be understood through a geo-history stressing the continuity of landscape shapes, techniques…
- They concern wide territories: implying a change of scale regarding more classical cultural properties, apart from some urban areas (but the urban notion is also evolving towards Historic Urban Landscape…).
- The presence of water is here important

- Intentional landscapes, where aesthetics, gardens shaped by human, beauty and the emotion it arouses are put forward
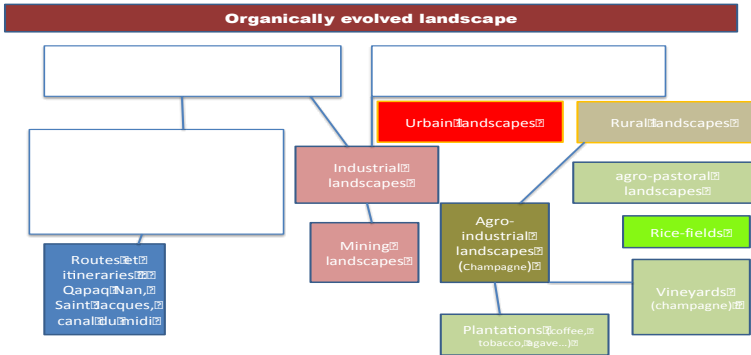
Organically evolved landscape

Urbain landscapes

Rural landscapes

Industrial landscapes

agro-pastoral landscapes

Agro-industrial landscapes (Champagne)

Rice-fields

Routes et itineraries : Qapaq Nan, Saint Jacques, canal du midi

Mining landscapes

Vineyards (champagne)

Plantations (coffee, tobacco, agave…)

Figure 4: Living cultural landscapes

While in 2003, Fowler noted that the intentional landscapes were rather present among the first listed cultural landscapes, it has to be said that it is not anymore the case, since, very soon, the prevailing category has become, by far, the "evolving and living landscapes", most of them being rural or complex, especially in Europe, whereas, the number of industrial landscapes, which were initially rather scarce, is also increasing.

One also may notice that the identity dimension, though linked to communities integration, is not much present. In Europe, the sacred dimension, corresponding to the concept their authors had first intended, seems scarcely put forward in the cultural landscapes OUV. UNESCO definition, though, defines their specific spiritual relationship with nature, as many examples attest, such as sacred mountains, places, and pilgrimage routes, sacred forests or woods, and, more generally, special links with nature, fauna and flora.

This spiritual link to nature and places may also appears through « the spirit of the place », a notion that many listed sites managers defend.

We may now detail living cultural landscapes, which are most represented on the list. Though we mention them, we won't take into account the Historic urban landscapes, a concept which has appeared in 1987 (historic Centers and Towns), with the 2005 "Vienna Memorandum" and was adopted the same year by the WHC, but which is considered by 2011 UNESCO guidelines as a distinct category.

2. Which kind of cultural landscapes is more promising?

2.1 Cultural landscapes in disguise

These are inscribed properties which are not recognized as cultural landscapes, but which are acting as such, or would do so if they were extended or their OUV revised.

The Giant's Causeway (North Ireland) could illustrate it: a natural property listed in 1983 that is acting to-day as a true cultural landscape, even though its category, for the moment, is not questioned. On the other hand, UNESCO experts have agreed that many cultural properties listed before 1995 could perfectly enter the cultural landscapes category, such as in France: Mont-Saint-Michel and its Bay (1979), Palace and Park of Versailles (1979), Palace and Park of Fontainebleau(1981), Route of Santiago de Compostella in France (1998)[5]. Some have been changed since the beginning: Tongariro National Park (New-Zealand, inscribed in 1990, revised in 1993), Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park (Australia, 1987/1994) St Kilda (RU, 1996/2004)…

The finding is based on the analysis of properties inscribed on the world heritage list during the first 5 years (1978 to 1983), compared with the last 5 years (2010-2015), in order to detect hidden or potential cultural landscapes, by defining which of them contain holistic characters.

Comparison of the first wave (1978-1983) of listed properties with the second wave (2005-2015) shows that about 1/3 of these sites, whatever their date of inscription[6], are in fact holistic properties, where cultural, natural and intangible elements are mingled.

Of the 135 more evident properties listed during the first 5 years, 30 could reveal themselves to be cultural landscapes. Mixed properties are those which correspond more closely to this definition, and then « complex heritages », often listed as cultural properties:

- Important archeological sites (such as Egyptian sites or the archeological site of Tikal in Yucatan, Mexico, a testimony of the Maya civilization)
- Mining landscapes as the Royal salt mines in Wieliczka and Bochnia (Poland)
- Natural property having played an important role in the story of sciences such as the Galapagos islands
- Potential associative landscape, as the Island of Gorée (Senegal)

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[5] Though, being able to be conceived and managed as a cultural landscape, this itinerary which is under revision for not having a SOUV and Buffer zone, is now considered as a "cultural route" which as is a new category

[6] About 22 % of the first period properties could be Cultural landscapes, and 27 % of the second wave ones.

- Clearly designed cultural landscape, as the Palace and Park of Versailles.
- Or the iconic example of Mont-Saint Michel and its Bay (1979), the OUV of which perfectly fits with the non-yet invented category of Cultural landscape.

The question of natural properties which could be, in fact, cultural landscapes is less evident. The case of Tongariro National Park, inscribed in 1990, then revised in 1993 to become a cultural landscape, only adding the associative criterion vi, remains an exception. Nevertheless, some natural properties have been transformed in cultural landscapes by adding several cultural criteria, such as the ones already mentioned of Uluru-kata Tjuta national Park in Australia (with the Ayers Rock monolith) and St Kilda. One may notice, besides, that for many native communities natural properties have often a cultural dimension too, through myths and faiths.

Similarly, the question arises of a natural property being requalified as a cultural landscape when it holds an important role in sciences history, such as the Galapagos, for instance.

Of 120 properties listed between 2011 and 2015, 27 have been inscribed, i-e 22%, showing the growing importance of the category. To this list one could have added the Inca itinerary Qhapaq Ñan (Andean routes web) inscribed in 2014. As a matter of fact, cultural routes, as well as canals, could be considered as cultural landscapes sub-categories, but they have been isolated as two distinct new categories by UNESCO.

It is more difficult to systematically analyze the SOUV[7] first wave of listed properties (1978-1982), since all the results of the 2010 compulsory retrospective Statements of OUV are not accessible yet. Anyway we may take the example of two first French listed properties, which were considered as iconic and inescapable, Versailles, (Park and Palace), and Fontainebleau, (Palace and Park).

Even though their retrospective SOUV, completed in 2012, are not yet public, it is rather easy to clearly define both landscape values. Versailles Buffer Zone, created in 2007, as a green screen, constituted by the Versailles Plain (a "classified site" in 2000, according to the French legislation). The case of Fontainebleau is rather similar, but the local authorities have requested to revise the limits and the content of the dossier, in order to include the surrounding hunting Royal forest, thus conferring it an important cultural landscape dimension.

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[7] SOUV Introduced by UNESO in 2007, the "Statement of Outstanding Universal Value" defines the characteristics and attributes of a property proposed on the world heritage list, justifies the chosen OUV criteria, authenticity and integrity, on the basis of a comparative analysis, objective and thorough. It must not have more than two pages.

The more recent SOUV allow to well identify the characteristics listed properties recognized as cultural landscapes.

We have tested the TROPES analysis on the SOUV of Hills, Caves and Houses of Champagne (2015, a recently listed French agro-industrial cultural landscape and a candidature file well known to one of the present authors) in order to have the main values emerging, but the result was unconvincing: not only it was difficult to exploit, but, above all, it totally misses what makes up the core of the OUV. It would be interesting to verify whether a word cloud wouldn't be, finally, more accurate, or else we'll have to elaborate a more hierarchical arborescence, distinguishing the concepts, the sub-concept, the attributes types and their sub-types, which would be a very long and complex work..

Figure 5; SOUV Tropes Analysis of the 33 last world cultural landscapes listed between 2011 and 2015

The previous graph presents the same analysis by the software TROPES of the last 33 SOUV recent cultural landscapes. With more data than in the example of Champagne, the results still appear relatively disappointing. Anyway, reading these graphs shows key-words associated to landscape (230 occurrences of this last word) in the 33 cultural landscapes SOUV; the most interesting elements are the most recurrent words, which may be classified by types, but it is not possible yet to distinguish between categories (e.g. landscape), sub-categories (e.g. associated landscape), values (sacred) or action (management or preservation) and attributes (rock, painting, rites), since here all the different levels are mixed, without any logical link.

2.2 Cultural landscapes on the World tentative list

This paper aims also to define basis for a more complete and prospective analysis of the world tentative list, correlated with the identify gaps of the present world cultural landscapes list. Our ambition would be to analyze the whole tentative list sites likely to be recognized as cultural landscapes and to classify them by categories and sub-categories, in order to try to identify those which could be listed in the future (defining, on the occasion, the proposed category changes)….

We may draw upon a 2015 ICOMOS France intern survey[8], established at the French National World Heritage Committee request, proposing a revision of the French tentative list in comparison with the world heritage lists and tentative lists on European and world levels.

Among the 1600 properties figuring on the tentative lists, one still notes a high proportion of cultural properties (66%), among which 13% mixed properties, which, for most of them, are potential landscapes. If the number of cultural landscapes is relatively low (46), mixed one are much more numerous (206).

But the first difficulty is the unreliability of the sources: according to UNESCO statistics, the 2014 European world heritage list totalized but 27 cultural landscapes, and no town; in fact, in France alone, one counted respectively 9 and 6 of them, when it is reported as having only 5 and none. On another hand, mixed and serial properties are counted several times, which distorts the results. And, when knowing that mixed properties could, for most of them, be listed as cultural landscapes, the amount, then, could become rather important: (27 + 66 = 93), i.e. a total of about 18 to 20%.

The French tentative list, (38 properties, one of the most important in Europe, but nowadays, some, in Asia, are much more important), contains 15 sites, among which 4 proposed as such, 2 mixed with cultural landscapes and natural sites, but it also counts 6 mixed, 3 natural sites and 1 cultural property, which, if maintained on the list, should become cultural landscapes, which means a total of 15 potential cultural landscapes, i.e. about 43% of the whole French tentative list.

The survey has also shown that the tentative list was obsolete, since some of the sites figuring on the list had been proposed a long time ago, and before the emergence of cultural

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[8] It is still an intern document, but the figures are coming from public sources (UNESCO)

landscapes category: so, ICOMOS has proposed to discard some properties, either for lacking of local support, or because their OUV was not convincing, didn't fit to the evolution of the convention, or their category was already overrepresented on the world heritage list, or, even the site having been already refused by either the French or the World Heritage Committee. On an other hand, some of the other sites categorization or SOUV have been proposed to be reviewed by the local authorities before proposing a final decision, whereas, in the meantime, a certain amount of new sites have been already examined by the French WH Committee in order to figure on the new tentative list. So one may imagine that, finally, the future French tentative list won't be much lesser than the present one, and when one knows that the number of accepted candidature by countries will tend to decrease, at least from 2 to 1 a year, and that preparing a dossier takes about ten years, the list will last for a very long time…

The listed properties analysis would also help identify the different categories and sub-categories which are either absent or underrepresented on the list: it is what ICOMOS France is aiming to do now, in order to fill the gaps. It also turns out, through this analysis, that the cultural landscapes category is developing on the world heritage list, and is much represented on the French tentative list, as well as on the world one, though its potentialities are not yet fully exploited by emerging countries.

Cultural landscapes category, and especially the evolving one, is definitely a promising category: first, it fits heritages interpreting evolution, and a more holistic vision of world heritage properties, allying cultural, natural and intangible aspects. On the other hand, it places man and nature in the very heart of these changes, taking into account the living character of territories particularly by involving local people and stressing their role on natural and cultural environment; it also deals with the long term and may concerns large territories, and, last but not least, it tends to a better balance between man and nature, in a global and interdisciplinary approach.

3. Cultural landscapes, an important step in the Convention evolution

In practice, one notices that when a property holds cultural landscape characteristics, though not being listed as such and without changing its OUV, its management tends to be more and more similar to those of cultural landscapes (Saint-Jacques). In the same way, some natural properties tend to integrate cultural and intangible aspects (Giants causeway). Therefore, one may wonder whether the next step in the Convention evolution wouldn't be a total integration between natural and cultural criteria. This development has been initiated in the 2005 Operational Guidelines, when cultural criteria 1 to 6, and natural criteria 1 to 4, have been merged into a single list of 10 criteria.

But it has stopped half-way: as a matter of fact, cultural criteria continue to be evaluated by ICOMOS, proponent of the cultural doctrine, while, IUCN supports the natural criteria and values, the only actual change having been Cultural landscapes creation, where, in theory, both organization work together... In practice, in many cultural landscapes with a high cultural content, ICOMOS is much more involved, and vice-versa. However, the distinction between cultural and natural criteria is ambiguous: thus, criterion vii *"to contain superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance"* considered as natural is undoubtedly cultural: evaluation of Beauty, is a cultural and non-scientific process, nevertheless it is UICN which is the advocate and evaluator in charge of this criterion… It may be explained by the fact that, for a long time, ICOMOS has suffered from a complex, linked to a technologically driven approach which has long prevailed during the past decades, and has been accused of "a lack of scientific objectivity" in its proposals: one may even find it among the local proposals, which hesitate to enhance the aesthetic value of their cultural landscapes: thus, Lavaux, which is certainly one of the most beautiful viticultural landscape in the world, has never mentioned this aspect in its dossier…

In the end, it becomes obvious that natural sites often hold, in various proportions, cultural values, and vice-versa: since the last few years, a true methodological rapprochement between both organizations is on the way, as well as a noticeable change in ICOMOS practices, which has been saluted by the World Heritage Committee, in Bonn.

The last step of the Convention evolution would be to recognize this « double nature » and that every dossier be actually jointly evaluated by both organizations, with, why not, a later on merger between them…

Conclusion

The TROPES analysis results have proved to be rather disappointing in terms of practical implementation, but for the main concepts recurrences, which could have been done through a word cloud program: one must particularly well know the files content to be able to make significant key-words and attributes emerging, according to the specificities of every dossiers. A more classical analysis, less technical and more intuitive, done by experts used to world heritage evaluating or who would perfectly know the Convention and its development, could certainly achieve better and more usable results, but it would take a very long time. Nevertheless, it may be possible to cross both approaches by creating a proper program, based on algorithms, adapted to world heritage, and, in particular, to cultural landscapes.

Nevertheless, by crossing and updating the various existing analysis, it should be possible to propose a list of eligible cultural landscapes on the world level.

Recognizing cultural landscapes and their success would have a triple effect:

• Widening heritage notion by integrating their natural, cultural and intangible aspects
• Influencing the management of natural and cultural properties
• Promoting a crossed influence between doctrine and management inside the territories

In conclusion, cultural landscapes have proved to be a particularly rich category, corresponding to UNESCO's doctrine evolution, embracing advances due to other new Conventions, such as the ones on cultural diversity or intangible heritage, and possibly premonitory of the World Heritage Convention future developments. It has been especially innovative in taking into account, since the files are now more and more initiated and promoted at local level, all the stakeholders' opinions, particularly local authorities, economic actors and inhabitants: those are, as a matter of fact, the actual day-to-day managers of the territories; they are those who make the sites evolve, so their involvement and understanding of the OUV is essential to the properties sustainability.

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