Geographical systematization of UNESCO World Heritage Sites

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Abstract. The article presents the results of inventory checking of objects of natural and cultural heritage of mankind. Preservation of cultural heritage has been noted as an important task during any period in history. The article specifies what objects can be considered cultural or natural heritage of mankind. We describe what advantages the status of world heritage site give to the site itself and to the country as a whole. The existence of the UNESCO World Heritage List allows one to identify a number of unresolved issues regarding the protection and preservation of cultural heritage in the countries. Despite the fact that the UNESCO World Heritage List is the object of scientific attention of many authors, the data presented in their publications are outdated and therefore unable to provide current coverage of the geographical structure of the World Heritage, as it is quite dynamic and changing every year. We analyzed researches on the chosen subject by domestic and foreign authors, finding that the main array of scientific publications for the query “UNESCO World Heritage” offers studies of the effects of UNESCO sites on tourist flows or the tourist brand of the region or country. At the same time, there is a range of scientific publications criticizing the very existence of the UNESCO World Heritage List, as well as the current criteria for nomination and inclusion of sites in the UNESCO World Heritage, uneven distribution of sites between developing and developed countries – geopolitical axis “North – South” and the lack of effective protection and conservation mechanisms in the UNESCO and even in the UN, even for places already included in the List of Sites. At the same time, there is a lack of geographical research on the distribution of the UNESCO World Heritage sites and complete absence of research on the territorial organization of intangible cultural heritage sites. A historiographical analysis of UNESCO World Heritage sites has been carried out, and the dynamics of changes in the number of sites has been analyzed. The article presents structural-territorial analysis of the distribution of objects: we determined absolute and relative indicators of the number of objects by macroregions and types, analyzed the typological ratio of objects within the regions, and identified the leading and outsider countries of each region. A cartographic model of the distribution of objects by the planet is presented. The expediency of regular monitoring of the current state of recreational and tourist resources of world importance and analysis of the tendency of deterioration or improvement of the related situation regarding non-compliance with the norms of protection and preservation of cultural and natural monuments is substantiated. We also analyzed the territorial distribution of the “Under threat” list, which includes 53 objects from 33 countries. The article contains our ideas about the prescriptive rather than the recommendatory nature of the remarks of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee, which could radically effect the elimination of all processes that threaten UNESCO sites. Territorial analysis of the distribution of intangible cultural heritage of mankind has been carried out.

Key words: UNESCO World Heritage, cultural sites, natural sites, mixed sites, «endangered» sites, intangible cultural heritage sites.

Географічна систематизація об’єктів епіску Світової спадщини ЮНЕСКО

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Анотація. У статті здійснено інвентаризацію об’єктів природної та культурної спадщини людства. Зазначено, що список Світової спадщини ЮНЕСКО як перелік важливих туристичних атракцій був об’єктом наукової уваги багатьох авторів, проте дані наведені в цих публікаціях, які застаріли і не можуть претендувати на актуальні висвітлення стану сучасної структури Світової спадщини, так як вона є досить динамічною і змінюється щороку. Здійснено оцінку дослідженої обіраних теми в науковій вітчизняній та іноземній літературі. Вказано на відмінність саме географічного дослідження розподілу системи об’єктів Світової спадщини ЮНЕСКО від відсутності будь-яких досліджень географічного розподілу об’єктів нематеріальної культурної спадщини людства. Проведено геоісторіографічний аналіз об’єктів Світової спадщини ЮНЕСКО, проаналізовано динаміку зміни кількості об’єктів. Подано структурно-територіальний аналіз розподілу об’єктів: установлено абсолютні та відносні показники кількості об’єктів за макрорегіонами та типами, проаналізовано типологічне співвідношення об’єктів в межах регіонів, визначено крайні-лідери та крайні-аутсайдери кожного регіону. Подано картографічну модель розподілу об’єктів території планети. Обґрунтовано доцільність регулярного моніторингу сучасного стану рекреаційно-туристичних ресурсів світового значення та аналізу тенденції погіршення або покращення ситуації, що з цим пов’язана, щодо невідповідності норм охорони і збереження пам’яток культури і природи. Проаналізовано територіальні розподіли списку «Під загрозою»,...
Introduction

Preserving cultural heritage is an important task in any period of history. The twentieth century has brought to humanity a lot of suffering, revolutions, and two world wars. Any military actions put cultural objects in danger. The modern world suffers lots of local conflicts, disputes between states, disappearances of peoples, nationalities and cultures, and one of relevant issues is terrorism. Therefore, the global community understands the necessity of protecting the cultural heritage. By creating the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) after World War II, the participating countries raised the issue of protecting cultural relics at the International level. In particular, in 1954, Convention «On Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict» was adopted (Konvenciya pro zaxy'st kul'turny'x cinnostej u vy'padku zbrojnogo konfliktu, 2002).

A highly significant achievement of UNESCO, in our opinion, is the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972) (Konvenciya pro oxoronu vsesvit'ny'oi kul'turnyi i pry'rodnoi spadshhy'ny'). Thanks to this international document, countries have opportunity to incorporate their heritage sites into the UNESCO World Heritage List.

The UNESCO World Heritage List – an important touristic resource – has been a subject of research of many authors. Researchers I. V. Smal (2010), V. I. Stafychuk and O. U. Malynovs'ka (2009), analyzed it in the context of global touristic-recreational resources. More substantially this problem was described in the report by O. O. Beidyk «Resources of the Global Tourism: Notion, Classification, Mapping», where the author describes the objects of UNESCO World Heritage as of 2005 and presents a cartographic model. Geographical systematization of the objects was attempted in 2011 by O. Y. Zarahovs'ky (2012). Geospatial distribution of the UNESCO World Heritage objects and their significance for tourism were analyzed by Arsenenko, Donchenko, Levada & Donets' (2018). However, the data given in those articles have already become outdated and cannot contend for relevant study of the current condition of the structure of the Global Heritage, since it is quite dynamic and changes annually. A timely the study was made by the Ukrainian geographers – «Geography of the Global Heritage (Touristic Attractions)», which provides data on all natural and cultural objects of the UNESCO World Heritage as specific touristic brands of the countries and regions (Bezuhlyi, Kostashchuk & Yavorska, 2021). Despite this fact, we should note that the geographical aspect of this system of objects of the UNESCO World Heritage, and, especially, the elements of the Representative List of Intangible Heritage of Mankind remain insufficiently studied.

Foreign articles are more specific regarding the UNESCO World Heritage: however, they mostly raise philosophic questions of existence of the List, and also analyze how influential and effective the World Heritage List is in attracting tourists. Particularly, Bruno S. Frey and Lasse Steiner mention that the UNESCO World Heritage List is useful in places where heritage relics are not being identified and inventorised, have no protection from bodies of power, are commercially not put into effect and also in places that lack national financial resources, political control and technical knowledge for preservation. Alternative market and national registers of monuments are more useful in places where cultural and natural monuments have been already popular, where markets operate well and where inclusion of an object to the List does not increase the possibility of its ruination by excessive tourism (Frey, Steiner, 2011).

A group of Swedish Researchers were simultaneously focusing on several problems related to monuments of world heritage in developing countries. The results of their researches demonstrate that inclusion of objects in the World Heritage list positively influences the touristic demand in developing countries and may be used as a tool of advertising. Secondly, this List draws attention to social-ecological problems related to protection of natural and cultural monuments in developing countries. At the same time, the article presents positions of critical and factual discussion around current procedures of proclamation and preservation of status of monument of World Heritage. The unjust distribution of objects across developing and developed countries was highlighted once again, as well as problems of negligence in protection of monuments in developing countries, for such counties have around 94 % of sites labeled «In Danger» (Hosseinia, Stefanieca, Hossenib, 2021).

In general, the existing approaches to identification of the World Heritage objects are widely criticized. Study «A new paradigm for the identification, nomination and inscription of properties on the World Heritage List» (Rao, 2010) was focused on current procedure of identification and itemization of objects of cultural and natural heritage according to the 1972 UNESCO Convention, analyzing its disadvantages and proposing a novel approach. The author stated that the existing process contradicts the actual intent of the Convention.
regarding identification and preservation of heritage with exceptional general value through the system of International work, and therefore does not promote effective implementation of a representative, balanced and accurate World Heritage List. The document promotes a new paradigm of overcoming assessed limitations, mainly by enhancing international partnership and providing the best technical knowledge prior and during identification, nomination and inscription of objects on the World Heritage List (Rao, 2010).

Therefore, as we see, the objects from the UNESCO World Heritage, which is a specific global inventory of natural and cultural heritage around the Globe, are objects of exceptional tourist interest. Thus, attempts of analyzing geographic distribution of objects of the UNESCO World Heritage (hereinafter UNESCO WH) are in demand.

The study was aimed at determining the peculiarities of geospatial distribution of the UNESCO World Heritage, objects «In Danger» and elements of the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Mankind.

Materials and methods

To study the current list of UNESCO World Heritage, we used the data from the official website of the UNESCO. The website of the organization allows us to group the objects according to regions and countries alphabetically, as well as year of inscription on the List. Also, the website contains a schematic map where types of each site are reflected. Furthermore, there is a possibility of obtaining the official list of objects in different formats, as well as statistics for objects of the UNESCO World Heritage, which presents infographics for the following topics: «Regions», «Number of objects by regions», «Number of objects by types and regions», «Years» – «Annual number of objects by regions», «Annual number of objects by types», «Annual number of objects by particular topics», «Annual number of objects by area»; «Annual number of objects from each year»; «Participating States» – «Number of objects for each participating country», «Number of States that have no object in the List» (UNESCO World Heritage List).

There are also data on objects in danger, divided territorially and thematically (UNESCO World Heritage List).

The difficulty lies in the fact that the geographic distribution used by the organization is significantly different from the one we propose. The organization structures the World Heritage objects and provides infographics for 5 macroregions: Africa, Arab Countries, Asia and the Pacific Ocean, Europe and North America, Latin America and the Caribbean’s (UNESCO World Heritage List). At the same time, we propose a more geographically traditional distribution of objects according to their locations in the territories of different parts of the World (the so-called geoscheme of the UN distribution). Thus, we structured the objects according to location in Europe, Asia, Africa, America and Australia (including the Pacific).

The official UNESCO website provides data on the intangible cultural heritage of mankind. We should note that this data is presented as a dynamic and interactive constellation of intangible cultural practices, though there is a possibility of finding data in online lists: objects of intangible heritage may be structured according to the years of their inclusion – from 2008 to 2021, or countries (there is a possibility of considering objects of two countries at the same time).

Results and analysis

According to the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, «cultural heritage» is:

- **Monuments** are «architectural works, works of monumental sculpture and painting, elements or structures of an archaeological nature, inscriptions, cave dwellings and combinations of features, which are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science»;

- **Groups of buildings** are «groups of separate or connected buildings which, because of their architecture, their homogeneity with or their place in the landscape, are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science»;

- **Notable sites** are «works of man or the combined works of nature and man, and areas including archaeological sites which are of outstanding universal value from the historical, aesthetic, ethnological or anthropological point of view.»

We should emphasize what the main goal of establishing the Organization is. Being an integral component of the UN, UNESCO promotes preservation of peace around the globe by spreading educational, cultural and scientific relationships between countries. One of the main directions of activity of the Organization is culture, including: protection of cultural heritage of mankind, spreading peace by intensifying cultural dialogue between peoples, encouraging popularization of cultures of their countries.

Obtaining status of object of World Heritage gives a country where it is located many advantages, in particular guarantee of protection from the Global Community, development of touristic orientations, and financial aid.

Unsolved issues of preserving cultural heritages are seen in many countries. Insufficient financing of objects, government’s negligence toward protection of monuments, non-adherence to the positions of the
UNESCO Conventions, and the tendency of states to protect culture mainly at the level of volunteer measures impede the creation of effective protection systems for cultural heritage. Co-work with the United Nations Organization in aspects of education, science and culture helps finding solutions needed in the sphere of preserving cultural heritage. Meetings at conferences, forums, round tables, discussions of relevant tasks, approval of particular solutions, incorporation of the main provisions of the UNESCO Conventions into a country’s legislation need to be expanded by particular actions, decisive changes in the work of the main cultural institutions, involvement of the broadest circle of stakeholders, bringing up of youth with awareness of necessity and importance of preserving cultural heritage of the country.

When involved in the work of the UNESCO, each country makes its contribution to the protection of cultural heritage, and therefore helps achieve the main goal of the Organization – protection of peace around the globe.

Therefore, it should be noted that the work of UNESCO in the sphere of the protection of cultural heritage is characterized by harmonious combination of theoretic legal help in regulation of issues of protection of unique monuments and specific practical measures. This work is based on development and adoption of legal acts oriented toward regulation of the respective component of sociocultural relations. Based on legal regulations, numerous practical measures are performed, taking into account multifaceted protection of memorials of tangible and intangible cultures. An important constituent of such measures is organizing numerous international conferences, seminars and meetings.

The term «protection» itself is characterized by content and objects (this and specifically protection, preservation, popularization and development of cultural heritage). Also, clearly notable is presence and general efficiency of international management mechanisms in the sphere of protection of cultural heritage. First of all, it should contain general legal, organizational and communicative means of management.

**Historicographic analysis.** In general, the UNESCO WHL contains 1,120 objects in the territories of 167 member states of the UNESCO. The Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage was adopted by the UNESCO in 1972 (came into force in 1975) during Session XVII in Paris. Before 1992, the Convention had been ratified by 123 country members of the UN, and by 2014 by 191 member states. As of 2021, only Liechtenstein, Nauru, Somalia, South Sudan, East Timor and Tuvalu are not members of the Convention. We should note that Israel and the US announced in 2017 that they were leaving the Organization, though the objects in those countries which we mention in our study are included in the UNESCO World Heritage List.

The first object to be inscribed on the UNESCO WHL was the City of Quito, which in 1978 was declared by World Heritage the UNESCO. The same year, another 11 objects were proclaimed UNESCO World Heritage. Other than the indicated city, the oldest sites of the UNESCO WH are Aachen Cathedral,, the Galápagos Islands, Historic Centre of Kraków, Island of Gorée, L’Anse aux Meadows National Historic Site, Mesa Verde National Park, Nahanni National Park, Rock-Hewn Churches, Lalibela, Simien National Park, Wieliczka and Bochnia Royal Salt Mines, Yellowstone National Park (UNESCO World Heritage List). The number of objects has been increasing every year – distribution of the objects placed on the UNESCO WHL according to year and annual change in their number can be seen in Fig. 1 and 2.
As we see, change in the number of objects that have annually been inscribed on the World Heritage List has no clear dynamics. We can only state the following tendencies: a) straight linear trend demonstrates negative dynamics – averaged from almost 30 at the beginning to 25 currently; b) there are distinguished two especially successful periods of expansion of the WH list – from 1979 to 1988 (36 on average for the period, with the absolute peak throughout the existence of the Heritage List occurring in this period – 61 objects in 2000); c) it is noteworthy that the extremely low parameters occurred right after notably successful periods – 1989 (7 objects), 2002 (9 objects); d) since 2003, number of objects annually declared by the UNESCO is estimated within ±23 objects. In Fig. 2, we see that it took 4 years for the WHL to include the first hundred objects, and another four years to double this number. In 1996, the List overcame the symbolic total of 500 objects, and reached 1,000 after 18 more years (UNESCO World Heritage List).

![Graph showing change in number of objects in the UNESCO World Heritage List](image)

**Fig. 2.** Change in the number of objects in the UNESCO World Heritage List

**Structural analysis.** In order to make the process of selecting objects for the UNESCO WHL objective, the organization determined the following criteria for evaluation, namely:

- **Cultural criteria:** *Criterion I.* The object is a masterpiece of human creative genius; *Criterion II.* The object indicates an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, in terms of developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design; *Criterion III.* The object bears a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared. *Criterion IV.* The object is an outstanding example of a type of a building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history; *Criterion V.* The object is an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, land-use, or sea-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), or human interaction with the environment especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change; *Criterion VI.* The object is directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance. (The Committee considers that this criterion should preferably be used in conjunction with other criteria);

- **Natural Criteria:** *Criterion VII –* The object contains superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance; *Criterion VIII –* The object has outstanding examples representing major stages of earth’s history, including the record of life, significant on-going geological processes in the development of landforms, or significant geomorphic or physiographic features; *Criterion IX –* The object is an outstanding example representing significant on-going ecological and biological processes in the evolution and development of terrestrial, fresh water, coastal and marine ecosystems and communities of plants and animals; *Criterion X –* The object contains the most important and significant natural habitats for in-situ conservation of biological diversity, including those containing threatened species of Outstanding Universal Value from the point of view of science or conservation. (The Criteria for selection)

Taking into account such a distribution, 77.5%, or 869 objects are objects of cultural heritage (Fig. 3). The number of natural objects is relatively low, only 213 objects (19.0%) (UNESCO World Heritage List). Number of objects of mixed type is the lowest – 39, that is 3.5% of overall objects of the UNESCO WHL.

**Territorial distribution of the objects** across the globe is rather uneven – ranging 500 objects in Europe to less than 50 in Australia and Oceania – Fig. 4.
Let us try to perform a structural-territorial analysis of UNESCO WH objects.

Most objects of the UNESCO WHL are concentrated in Europe – 38 % (Table 1., Fig. 7.) of the overall number of objects. In other words, 426 objects are concentrated in territories of 42 member states of UNESCO (World Heritage List by Region). The leading country by the number of the UNESCO WH objects is Italy (55 objects is the highest parameter not only in Europe, but around the World, though since 2020 Italy has shared its leadership in this status with China). Spain (48), Germany (47) and France (45) are respectively 2nd, 3rd and 4th in Europe and in the World. The UK is 5th in the macroregion with 32 objects, being in the TOP-10 global leader countries according to the objects of the WH. There are no objects in Monaco, whereas Liechtenstein does not participate in the Convention at all. Moreover, Europe is the leader by the number of transborder objects – 23 of 39. One of the 426 UNESCO WH objects in Europe is classified among the “red” reserve – objects “In Danger”, and was removed from the List in 2021.

Table 1. Geographic distribution of UNESCO World Heritage objects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>№</th>
<th>Name of region</th>
<th>Number of states, quantity</th>
<th>Number of UNESCO World Heritage objects</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>%</th>
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<td>Cultural type</td>
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<td>30</td>
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<tr>
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<td>43</td>
<td>Mixed type</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>31</td>
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<td>5</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 3. Distribution of World Heritage objects according to types, number (UNESCO World Heritage List).

Fig. 4. Geographical distribution of World Heritage objects, number (UNESCO World Heritage List).

Fig. 5. Leading countries in the Heritage List, number (UNESCO World Heritage List).
In Europe, cultural objects traditionally dominate – 380 monuments (or 89% of all objects in Europe, and 40% of all cultural objects around the world), significantly fewer objects of natural and mixed types are listed – 39 (9%) and 7 (2%) respectively. We should note that this exceptional prevalence of cultural monuments – 89-9-2 – over other types is characteristic only for the European macroregion. At the same time, percentage ratio of natural objects to the overall number of heritage is the lowest among all the structures of objects according to types in other regions of the world – less than 10% (UNESCO World Heritage List; World Heritage List by Region).

![Fig. 6. Types of World Heritage in regions of the world, number (UNESCO World Heritage List).](image)

**Asian region** has significantly fewer objects than Europe, concentrating 342 (30% of the List) monuments of World Heritage, 4/5 of which – 271 (78.6%) – are cultural objects, while the number of natural objects is much lower – 61 (18.5%), as well as the number of mixed-type objects – 10 (2.9%) (Fig. 7.). Despite those facts, the region is the global leader by the absolute number of natural objects. Obvious leaders in this macroregion are China (55), India (38 objects and 5th in the world), Russia (29), Iran (24) and Japan (23). The Asian Five is included completely in the TOP-15 of the World leaders and have 1st, 5th, 8th, 10th and 11th places respectively. At the same time, five countries have no objects incorporated into the UNESCO WHL: Bhutan, Brunei, Kuwait, Maldives and East Timor (UNESCO World Heritage List; World Heritage List by Region).

**American Region** is represented by 30 countries with 185 objects of the UNESCO WHL, having almost less than half the number of objects in the Asian Region (Fig. 7). The share of the region only accounts for 17.2% of overall monuments. Traditionally, cultural resources prevail over other types – 119 objects, the number of natural relics is twice as low – 56, and only 10 objects of mixed type. The ratio of the types in the region is 64%, 31%, 5%. Leaders of the region are Mexico (34), USA (24), Brazil (22), Canada (20), and Peru (12). Bahamas, Grenada, Guyana, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago are still unrepresented in the List (UNESCO World Heritage List).

According to the number of UNESCO objects, **African Region** is the fourth, concentrating 137 objects of the World Heritage, including 90 historical-cultural, 40 natural and 6 mixed-type (Fig. 7). Share of UNESCO objects located in the African macroregion is 8.5% of the overall number. Dysbalance between historical-cultural and natural objects in Africa is not that noticeable as in macroregions considered above. This is explained by higher number of virgin natural complexes across the continent. The highest number of objects is in the territories of RSA (10), Morocco and Ethiopia (9 each), Tunisia (8), Algeria, Egypt, Kenya, Senegal, Tanzania (7 in each). The African macroregion comprises the greatest number of countries that are not included in the World Heritage List: Burundi, the Comoros, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Eswatini, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Rwanda, São Tomé and Príncipe, Príncipe, Sierra Leone, South Sudan (UNESCO World Heritage List).

**Australia and Asia Pacific** have the lowest number of objects – less than 3%, or 31 objects (Fig. 7.). At the same time, it is an integral region where the number of natural monuments is higher than such of historical-cultural: 16 against 9. The number of mixed-typed objects – 6 – is also quite significant, especially in percentage proportion – almost 20% of all objects of the region. The region’s leader is clearly Australia – 20 monuments. In the territory of New Zealand, there are 3 objects, and all the other countries have 1 object each inscribed on the List, while the Cook Islands, Niue, Samoa and Tonga have no objects (UNESCO World Heritage List).
Despite the fact that throughout the history of the World Heritage List, only three objects have been removed from it, there is always a threat of losing UNESCO status.

**List of heritage “In Danger”** reflects the modern state of the globally significant recreation-touristic resources and analyzes tendencies of deterioration or improvement of the situation related to it. According to the results of the 43rd Session of the Committee of UNESCO World Heritage (July 10, 2019), 53 objects in 33 countries across the globe were placed in the “In Danger” category (List of World Heritage in Danger).

The Middle East region countries concentrates the largest number of objects that may be included in the World Heritage “In Danger“ List. Historical-cultural monuments dominate in the region, of which 21 are in danger. In this region, there is the largest number of globally valuable man-made objects that may lose the status of UNESCO heritage. The main reason for that is unstable military-political situation in many Asian countries – Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, and others. Also, we should take into account the economic underdevelopment in this region (List of World Heritage in Danger).
The next UNESCO endangered object-abundant region is Africa. The continent concentrates the highest number of endangered natural UNESCO objects – 12. There are considerably fewer historical-cultural objects with such a status – 4. Such an unsatisfactory situation has developed due to a number of reasons, including social-economic underdevelopment of many countries of the region. The Central African Republic, Ivory Coast, Ethiopia, Niger are some of the world’s poorest countries (List of World Heritage in Danger).

By number of objects included in the UNESCO List of World Heritage in Danger, the next regions are Asia-Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean. In those regions, historical-cultural monuments prevail, including 4 in danger and 2 natural objects that may be removed from the World Heritage List if the governments of those regions take no serious measures to improve their work in this sphere (List of World Heritage in Danger).

The lowest degree of danger is in Europe (3 historical-cultural and 1 natural) and North America (only 1 natural object in the US). This is explained by efficient policy of protecting and preserving recreational-touristic resources in highly developed countries like Canada, US and countries in Europe. Mass flows of tourists (large profits from the touristic sphere), high level of social-economic development, the stable political situation and perfect legal and regulatory framework – all are factors that form solid ground for the safe existence and expansion of structure of objects of the World Heritage of Europe and North America (List of World Heritage in Danger).

Therefore, we may state that the general current situation with recreation-touristic resources of the World Heritage (UNESCO Objects) is positive rather than negative. Out of all objects in the List, the ones that are «In Danger» account for only 4.7%. It should be noted and emphasized that only 3 objects have been removed from the List throughout its history (42 years) (List of World Heritage in Danger). That means, the list is only seen to have positive dynamics.

Over the recent decades, the notion of «Cultural Heritage» has been brought up at the international level more often than earlier. The Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, adopted by the UNESCO in 1972, considered the natural and man-made objects of cultural, historical or ecological values. However, essence of the term «Cultural Heritage» constitutes not only objects of tangible culture. Taking into account this fact, in the 1990s, the concept of «Intangible cultural heritage» was proposed, which was an analogue of the World Heritage List, which mainly focusses on tangible culture.

Based on the indicated developments in 2003, the UNESCO approved the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (hereinafter – 2003 Convention). In the 2003 Convention, the term «intangible cultural heritage» means customs, forms of demonstration and expression, knowledge and skills, as well as tools, items, artifacts and cultural spaces related to them, that communities, groups and individuals in some cases recognize as a part of their cultural heritage (Konvenciya pro oxoronu nematerial’noyi kul’turnoi spadshhy’ny’).

Any object should have exceptional value, representing: either a high degree of concentration of intangible cultural heritage or notable value or reflection of peoples’ cultures or customs, representing exceptional significance from historical, artistic, ethnological, sociological, anthropological, linguistic or literature perspectives.

Cultural phenomena or forms of expression should also correspond to the five following criteria:

- Clearly demonstrate that they are rooted in cultural tradition or history of culture of respective community;
- Manifest itself as a way of establishment of cultural individuality of corresponding peoples and cultural communities, reveal its meaning as a source of inspiration and stimulus for international exchange, and also its role in communication of peoples and communities in modern cultural and public life of the communities to which they belong;
- Demonstrate high skills and performing techniques;
- Constitute its value as a unique evidence of live cultural tradition;
- Clearly indicate that they are in danger of extinction either due to absence of costs for their protection and preservation or due to processes of rapid changes, urbanization or influence of new culture (Konvenciya pro oxoronu nematerial’noyi kul’turnoi spadshhy’ny’).

As of 2021, under the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of UNESCO, there were 584 objects in 131 countries of the world, united in dynamic semantic-typological constellation. The idea of such an interpretation of data about intangible cultural heritage of humankind belongs to the Secretariat of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, which had considered that the traditional lists of elements, which have been being adopted year after year, country after country, did not meet the actual cultural contents of heritage. Therefore, in 2016, the Section of Intangible Cultural Heritage inspired discussion about how to unite the elements that are related to such topics, how to share different methods, how elements may be interconnected using conceptions/ideas, and, charted a map based on contents/values (semantics), and not geographical distribution. Thus, using web-semantics and graphic visualization, a broader conceptual and
visual navigation was created using about 500 elements included in the lists of 2003 UNESCO Convention. It analyzes various elements in different spheres, topics, geography and ecosystems and allows for visualization of deep interconnections between them. Visualizations are constantly developing, including new elements, and indexation is being improved. In general, those elements are related to almost 1,000 notions, and 15,000 interrelations have been made between elements, concepts, countries and regions (Browse the Lists of Intangible Cultural Heritage and the Register of good safeguarding practices).

The highest number of objects of intangible UNESCO cultural heritage is in Asia – 214 objects in 56 countries of the world. In the territory of the region, there are nine leader countries of the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of mankind: China (42 elements, 1st in the region and the world), Japan (23 elements and 3rd position in the world), South Korea (21, 4th position), Turkey (20 objects, shares the 5th position with Spain) (Browse the Lists of Intangible Cultural Heritage and the Register of good safeguarding practices).

The Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Mankind comprises 166 elements of culture of European countries, which is one third of the overall intangible cultural heritage list. Leaders of the region are France (23), Spain (20), Croatia (17), Belgium (14) and Italy (14) (Browse the Lists of Intangible Cultural Heritage and the Register of good safeguarding practices).

African countries are represented by 82 elements, another 80 represent the American macroregion (Browse the Lists of Intangible Cultural Heritage and the Register of good safeguarding practices).

Countries of Oceania contributed 3 elements of intangible cultures to the Representative List.

![Fig. 9. Geographical distribution of elements of Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Mankind](image)

![Fig. 10. Leader states of the Intangible Heritage Representative List](image)

Cossack songs were inscribed on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage that needs urgent protection (2016) (Browse the Lists of Intangible Cultural Heritage and the Register of good safeguarding practices).

However, this is far from being the entire potential of our country. Traditions of pottery, pysanka and painting, hopak, art of playing the trembita – these and lots of others are symbols and visiting cards of Ukraine, forms of representing its culture the world should know about. Therefore, efforts are needed for Ukraine’s objects to occupy their deserved position among masterpieces of World Intangible Cultural Heritage.

Ukraine joined the Convention in 2008 – the Law of Ukraine «On Ukraine Joining the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage» as at 06.03.2008 № 132 (Konvenciya pro oxoronu nematerial’noyi kul’turoyi spadshhy’ny’; Zakon Ukrayiny Pro pry’yednannya Ukrayiny’ do Konvenciyi pro oxoronu nematerial’noyi kul’turoyi spadshhy’ny’, 2008). As of 2021, there were 3 objects of intangible cultural heritage in Ukraine. In the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Mankind, the following elements of the Ukrainian Culture were included: Petrykivka painting as a phenomenon of Ukrainian Ornamental Art (2013) and Tradition of Kosiv painted ceramics (2019). Also, Dnipropetrovschina
Conclusions

Scientific research we carried out allows for drawing the following conclusions:

1. Objects of World Heritage are distributed in unevenly among the macroregions. Most natural and cultural objects of World Heritage, and also elements of intangible heritage of mankind are in the territories of developed countries of Europe and Japan. Developing countries, represented in the UNESCO World Heritage List and Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage, are much poorer in objects. This raises the question that this disproportion should be solved. The Antarctic macroregion does not appear in the List at all. Therefore, nomination of objects in this region for the List should be discussed.

2. The typological structure of objects of the World Heritage needs to be balanced. Uniqueness of natural diversity should be balanced with currently dominating amount of objects of cultural heritage. This balance could be achieved by more active inclusion of objects of countries of Asia Pacific and Antarctic.

3. The World Heritage Committee should reconsider its responsibilities and opportunities for neutralizing all processes that pose threat to the UNESCO objects. Perhaps, the issues of noncompliance with norms of protection and preservation of monuments of culture and nature, as well as urgent issues of development of efficient mechanism of penalties for member states of the UNESCO regarding irrational use of the World List objects should be regulated by orders rather than recommendations.

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References


