



How Cameroonian Cultural Heritage is Rich but Neglected: A Critical Analysis of the Roles and Responsibilities of Various Stakeholders

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ABSTRACT

Heritage is what a country inherits from its past, both in material and immaterial forms, such as artistic creations, ancient civilizations, monuments, and natural reserves. In architecture, heritage shows the human achievements that mark a period, a culture, or an event, and help pass on history and identity to future generations. It is an important way of expressing the history and identity of a people. Cameroon has a rich and diverse heritage, including archaeological (the Shum Laka site that is over 30,000 years old), architectural, intangible, and cultural landscapes that are spread across different regions. Two of these sites are recognized as World Heritage by UNESCO: the Dja Faunal Reserve (DFR) and the Sangha Trinational. To preserve this valuable legacy, it is essential to start with a thorough identification of the Cameroonian heritage catalog. This study should evaluate the current condition of each site, monument, artistic and architectural work, and define appropriate measures to increase their visibility and value. This involves finding accurate methods for conservation, restoration, and maintenance that ensure proper valorization and transmission to future generations. Then, it will be important to think of ways to raise awareness and appreciation of Cameroonian heritage among communities and populations to encourage better valorization. The goal of valorizing this heritage is to make the historical narrative available and thus promote Cameroonian culture, both locally and globally.

1. Introduction

Cameroon's cultural heritage preservation is anchored in Law No. 2013/003 of 18 April 2013, which is a testament to the country's commitment to maintaining and enhancing its cultural legacy. This law is designed to raise awareness and ensure the protection, improvement, and transmission of

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cultural heritage, in harmony with the public good and sustainable development principles. Cultural heritage, as outlined in this legislation, includes not only physical structures but also a broad array of tangible and intangible elements that capture the essence of human history and cultural evolution. This encompasses a variety of expressions, styles, and practices that hold significant heritage value.

Cultural heritage is indeed a pivotal aspect of a nation's cultural fabric, comprising both material and spiritual assets that contribute to the nation's distinct identity. It represents a wealth of material and spiritual values that define the unique cultural identity of each community. This heritage is protected by national laws and international conventions, which aim to safeguard and carry forward the cultural achievements that have been handed down across generations. It stands as a symbol of the enduring accomplishments of a people, and its preservation is a shared duty of both national authorities and the international community, ensuring that this rich legacy continues to be celebrated and honored for years to come.

Cameroon's cultural heritage is indeed a treasure trove of both tangible and intangible assets, reflecting the country's rich history and diverse cultural expressions. From the intricate Ndop textiles to the grandeur of the National Museum of Cameroon and the majestic palaces scattered across the Grassfield and Northern regions, these elements are a testament to the nation's identity and legacy.

Despite this wealth, the preservation and promotion of Cameroon's cultural heritage face significant challenges. The country, often described as "Africa in miniature", boasts a variety of cultural facets seen across the continent. Yet, when compared to other African nations like Senegal, Burkina Faso, and Egypt, just to name a few, it becomes evident that Cameroon's cultural assets have not been valued or leveraged to their full potential due to various constraints.

What are the components of Cameroon's heritage? What are the Challenges of Protection and Presentation? What Proposals for the future? These are the different questions we answered to in this article, making use of different research methodology needed for an objective result that we think will help in the future for the Valorization of the Cameroonian cultural heritage.

2. Research Methodology

The investigation into Cameroon's cultural heritage preservation required a comprehensive, multi-methodological approach to understand the political and legal frameworks for its valorization. Adhering to scientific principles of objectivity and consistency, the study delved into the socio-political and cultural phenomena that shape Cameroon's heritage. This thorough approach facilitated an exploration of the heritage components, the challenges in protection and presentation, and the development of future strategies to elevate Cameroon's heritage on an international scale.

An interdisciplinary perspective was essential, incorporating knowledge from various fields such as social science, international relations, law, economics, history, architecture, and cultural studies. This broad view informed the application of specific research methods, with a focus on institutional and systemic approaches that position Cameroon as a vital player in the protection of both African and global heritage. The structural-functional approach provided insights into the organizational characteristics of Cameroonian stakeholders by evaluating their primary functions.

Comparative analysis and modeling were employed to identify exemplary African state policies in cultural heritage valorization and preservation, which could serve as references for Cameroonian entities. Statistical methods were used to determine quantitative indicators, like the number of sites recognized by UNESCO and those listed as national heritage, showcasing the effective work of local authorities in partnership with international bodies such as UNESCO and ICOMOS, amongst others.

3. Results

3.1. Components of Cameroon's Heritage

Cameroon, cradled in the central expanse of Africa, is frequently hailed as an encapsulation of the entire continent. The recent slogan “All of Africa in one country” beautifully encapsulates this sentiment. This designation celebrates Cameroon's varied vegetation and the sweeping vistas that traverse from the northern savannas to the southern rainforests and from the eastern highlands to the western plains. It also honours the country's vast ethnic mosaic, comprising over 200 distinct ethnic groups, which enriches its cultural landscape.

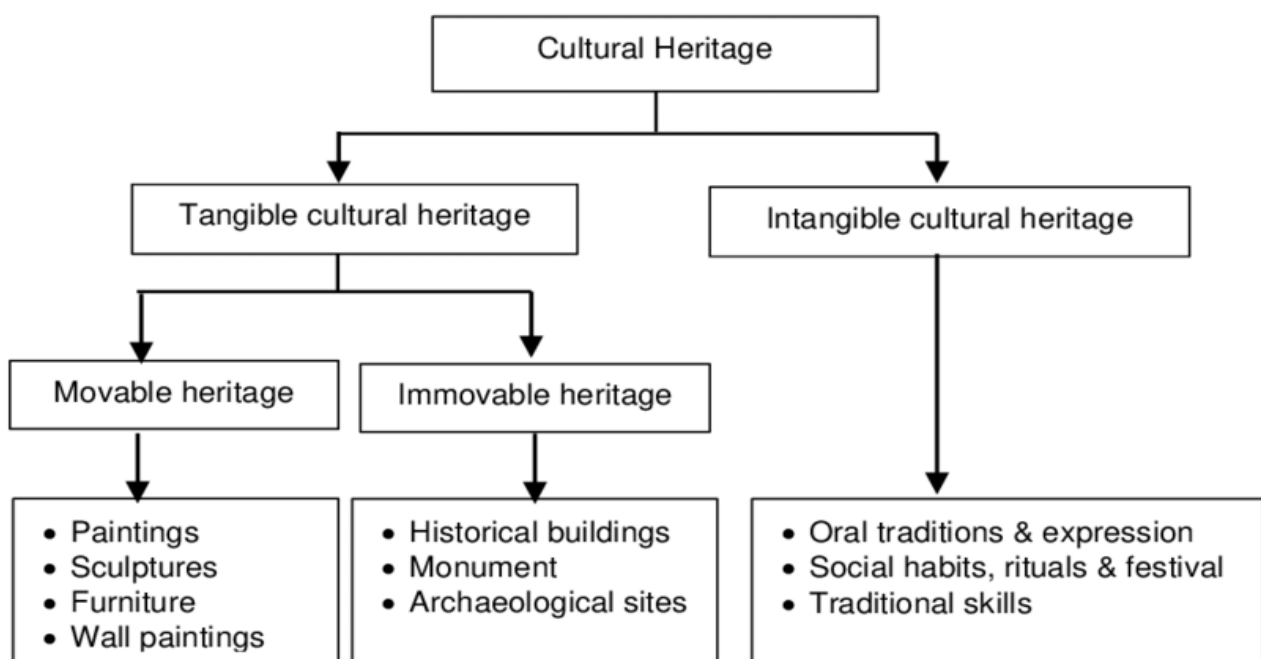


Figure 01: Cultural Heritage Classification from UNESCO

3.1.1. Natural Heritage

The Dja Faunal Reserve is a cornerstone of Cameroon's ecological and cultural identity, renowned for its vast biodiversity and steadfast conservation initiatives. Established in 1950, it forms a crucial segment of the Congo Basin's dense, humid forests. As one of the largest and most meticulously protected rainforests in Africa, it boasts an untouched area that comprises 90% of its expanse. The Dja River nearly encircles the reserve, creating a natural perimeter and enhancing its ecological significance. The reserve is distinguished by its rich variety of life, including a plethora of primates and other species, some of which, like the western lowland gorilla, chimpanzee, and forest elephant, are globally endangered. In addition to its environmental importance, the Dja Faunal Reserve is culturally significant, with the Baka Pygmies maintaining their traditional lifestyle within its confines. Recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1987, the Dja Faunal Reserve exemplifies Cameroon's dedication to safeguarding both its natural wonders and cultural richness, serving as a haven for countless species and a vibrant cultural tableau.



Image 01: Dja Faunal Reserve, Cameroon

Source: <https://www.editions2015.com/cameroon/index.php/les-sites-touristiques/reserve-du-dja/>



Image 02: Cameroon rainforest

Source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:La_Lob%C3%A9_dans_la_for%C3%AAt_%C3%A9quatoriale_-_Cameroun.JPG (Author: PRA)

The Sangha Trinational is a majestic realm of ecological diversity, cradled in the northwestern reaches of the Congo Basin at the confluence of Cameroon, the Central African Republic and the Congo. This vast region is made up of three adjoining national parks that together cover a remarkable 750,000 hectares. The vastness of this area is largely untouched by human activity, supporting a rich variety of humid tropical forest ecosystems.

A kaleidoscope of plant and animal life thrives in this verdant sanctuary. The region is home to the majestic Nile crocodiles and the formidable Goliath tigerfish, a top predator in its habitat. The forest clearings provide a nurturing environment for a variety of herbaceous plants and are crucial to the survival of large populations of forest elephants. It is also a refuge for the critically endangered western lowland gorilla and the endangered chimpanzee. The ecological integrity of the Sangha Trinational has been instrumental in preserving natural processes on a large scale, supporting immense biodiversity. It serves as a refuge for many endangered species, making it an invaluable living archive of Earth's evolutionary history and a vital stronghold for conservation efforts. The recognition of this forest as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2012 underlines its global importance and the commitment to its conservation.

The Shum Laka Rock Shelter is a site of great archaeological and cultural importance. Located 15 km as the crow flies from the city of Bamenda, this 1200 m² rock shelter is situated at an altitude of 1500 m on a high mountain. Situated in the Grassfields region, known as the cradle of the Bantu languages, it bears witness to human activity dating back 32,000 years. The site has yielded 18 skeletons dating from 3,000 to 8,000 years before present, indicating continuous human occupation from the Stone Age to the Metal Age. The current savannah environment contrasts with the past forest environment suggested by the species identified in the samples. Various burial practices have been observed, including cremation and individual or collective burials. The site is under the guardianship of the Mbu-Baforchu community and is revered as a sacred place, ensuring its preservation. The Shum Laka Rock Shelter is a unique repository of human history and cultural evolution in Central Africa, offering invaluable insights into the region's past. It was nominated for World Heritage status by Cameroon's Ministry of Arts and Culture on 02 February 2018.

By comparison, the Iho Eleru site in south-western Nigeria, also known as Ewu Eleru, contains artefacts from the Later Stone Age and has yielded a skeleton dating to around 13,000 years ago. Although significant, it does not have the same depth of temporal strata as Shum Laka. In the wider context of Central African archaeology, while there are other important sites throughout the region, including in Congo and Chad, none exhibit the wide chronological range and transition from stone to

metal use observed at Shum Laka. This makes Shum Laka a key reference point for understanding prehistoric human occupation and technological development in Africa.



Image 03: The Shum Laka Cave has been occupied by human populations for millennia.

Source: Olivier Testa



Image 04: The Shum Laka rock shelter in Cameroon, home to an ancient population that bears little genetic resemblance to most people who live in the region today.

Source : Pierre de Maret.

3.1.2. Architectural heritage

According to M. Pei, “*Life is Architecture and Architecture is the Mirror of Life.*” Architectural heritage refers to the buildings, monuments and sites that have significant historical, cultural or aesthetic value. It encompasses a wide range of structures, from ancient ruins to modernist buildings, that represent the architectural achievements and cultural traditions of a society. The preservation of architectural heritage is crucial to preserving the cultural identity of a place and providing insight into its history and development. Organisations such as UNESCO play a vital role in this effort by designating World Heritage Sites and promoting the conservation of these important assets. UNESCO World Heritage Sites are landmarks or areas that are legally protected because of their cultural, historical, scientific or other significance. These sites are preserved because of their outstanding universal value and their ability to tell the story of a place through its built environment. In addition, the concept of architectural heritage conservation has evolved over time. It now encompasses not only the protection of individual buildings, but also the holistic conservation of urban landscapes and the integration of sustainable development practices. “*Architecture should speak of its time and place, but yearn for timelessness*”.²

3.1.2.1. Traditional Architectural Heritage in Cameroon

Cameroon's architectural heritage is indeed a rich tapestry that reflects the country's diverse cultural history. The Royal Palaces of the Grassfields, exhibited at the 1931 International Colonial Exhibition, are a prime example of Cameroon's traditional architecture. Known for their intricate designs, these palaces have become a symbol of the nation's cultural heritage. The Mosgoum huts, also known as Musgum mud huts, are another unique architectural feature of Cameroon and Chad. Their distinctive conical shapes, made from local materials such as mud and thatch, are not only visually striking but also ingeniously designed to insulate against the heat. The "Route des Chefferie" exhibition at the Musée du Quai Branly in 2022 has further highlighted the architectural and cultural

² Frank Gehry

wonders of Cameroon, drawing global attention to the country's built heritage. Such exhibitions play a crucial role in preserving and promoting the understanding of Cameroon's architectural history. It's clear that *“the traditional architecture of Cameroon is a testament to the ingenuity and cultural richness of its people. Each structure tells a story of the community’s history, values, and connection to the environment.”*³



Image 05 : Cameroon art and architecture

Source : Mahaman Hamman (Architect)



Image : Moungoulo Baka

Source : Edith Mipo



Image 06: Hill architecture of the North Cameroon (Souce: Edith Mipo)

The huts of the Grassfield Royal Palaces are emblematic elements of Cameroon's cultural and architectural heritage. These majestic structures, often referred to as Grande Case, are at the heart of traditional chiefdoms in the West and North West regions of the country. They embody the political and spiritual power of the communities and reflect a royal civilisation that has endured for centuries. Each conical-roofed hut is an architectural complex that covers several acres and includes various political and sociological institutions, such as meeting places for councils and secret societies, royal cemeteries and sometimes royal courts. These huts are also associated with wooded areas, which play a crucial role in nature conservation and the practice of traditional rites. The huts of the Grassfield Royal Palaces are emblematic elements of Cameroon's cultural and architectural heritage. These majestic structures, often referred to as Grande Case, are at the heart of traditional chiefdoms in the West and North West regions of the country. They embody the political and spiritual power of the communities and reflect a royal civilisation that has endured for centuries.

The contributions of Dominique Malaquais and Jean-Paul Notué have been instrumental in bringing the architecture of the Bamileke peoples to the forefront of scholarly and public attention. Malaquais's research explores the dual role of architecture in both establishing and challenging

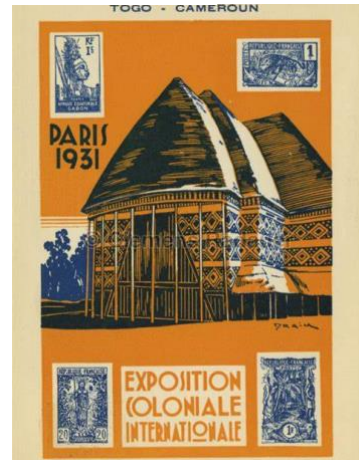
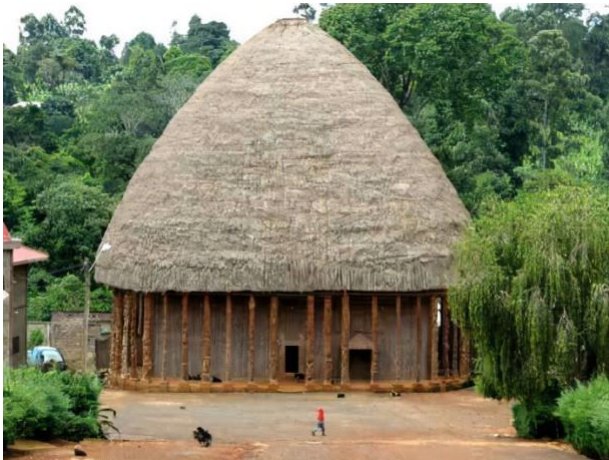
³ Mohamadou Guidado, « Saré » et urbanisme : Traditions et pratiques architecturales peul à l'épreuve de la modernité. Le cas de Ngaoundéré (Cameroun)

political power. His work provides insights into how the Bamileke used architecture and topography to navigate and rise within social hierarchies, particularly within Christian institutions. Jean-Paul Notué, known for his book 'Kings and Sculptors of West Cameroon: The Panther and the Tarantula', sheds light on the traditional art and architecture of the peoples of West Cameroon, including the Bamileke. His work, along with that of Malaquais, enriches our understanding of the multifaceted nature of Bamileke architecture and underscores its importance to the region's cultural identity and heritage. Together, their scholarship contributes to a deeper appreciation of the visible and invisible aspects of Bamileke architecture, revealing its intricate connection to community development and identity.



Image 07: The huts of the Bandjoun Royal Palace

Source: Internet (29/04/2024)



Musgum mud huts, also known as “*Musgum dwelling units*” or “*Cases Obus*”, are traditional domestic structures built by the Musgum people of the Far North Region of Cameroon. These unique architectural forms are characterized by their beehive-like shape and are constructed using locally available materials such as mud, thatch and water, with minimal use of tools. In terms of architectural significance, the huts come in a variety of shapes, including tall domed or conical structures, some with a reverse V-shape, and others decorated with geometric designs. They are an example of earth architecture, specifically a variant of cob construction. The construction technique is similar to that of mud coil pottery, where layers of mud are laid down in a spiral and each layer is allowed to dry before the next is added. This method results in a coiled arch shape, which is an ideal mathematical form for carrying maximum weight with minimum material. The exterior geometric patterns not only add to the aesthetic appeal, but also provide a foothold for maintenance and structural integrity. These huts are an important part of the cultural heritage of the Musgum people, reflecting their history and traditional building practices. Although their popularity has declined due to modernization, there has been a resurgence of appreciation for their historical and cultural value. In order to preserve these structures for future generations, it is important to include them in heritage proposals. This could include documenting their construction techniques, promoting them as tourist

attractions, and educating both locals and visitors about their significance. The Musgum mud huts are not only a testament to the ingenuity of traditional architecture, but also a crucial element of Cameroon's cultural identity that deserves recognition and preservation.



Image 10 and 11: Musgum mud huts Source (Internet 23/04/2024)

3.1.2.2. Colonial Architectural Heritage

Colonial architecture in Cameroon is rich and varied, reflecting the different periods of colonial history. Colonial houses in Cameroon date from the German colonial period (1884-1919) and the French and British periods (1919-1960). In Yaoundé, the capital, there are several houses from the German era, including the building that now houses the regional delegation of the Centre for Arts and Culture and the Palace of Charles Atangana, built between 1911 and 1913. The former presidential palace, built by the French administration in 1932, is also a significant example. The German Hospital in Douala, built between 1891 and 1896, was enlarged by the French in 1930. It is currently used by the Ministry of Arts and Culture as a police station, the headquarters of associations and private accommodation. The Douala Cathedral, completed in 1936, is an example of French colonial architecture. It is accompanied by the St. John Bosco school complex. In Dakar, the railway station is another example of preserved colonial architecture. Although less visible, colonial bridges are also part of the architectural heritage. They were built to facilitate travel and communication between the different regions of Cameroon. Although less visible, colonial bridges are also part of the architectural heritage. They were built to facilitate travel and communication between the different regions of Cameroon.

Although for some Cameroonians it is not a question of preserving what is part of a sad and bitter past, it is important to make them understand that this is an integral part of our history. *“The appearance, significance, and value of colonial architecture were heavily influenced by the political, economic, social, and cultural conditions prevalent in Europe or America at the time. Therefore, it is crucial to consider these contexts when evaluating this heritage to ensure an objective assessment.”*⁴ Preserving this heritage is essential to understanding the country's history and culture. Some buildings have been rehabilitated and turned into cultural venues, while others have sadly been abandoned. It is important to recognize their enduring value and contribution to Cameroon's identity.

⁴ Pauline K. M. van Roosmalen, *Appropriation et mise en valeur du patrimoine*. Available on line at : https://www.pkmvr.nl/documents/Pabois_Toulier_2006_Le_positionnement_de_l_heritage_colonial_bati.pdf



Image 12 : National Museum Yaoundé built by the French colonial masters

Source : Edith Mipo (2020)



Image 13: Bamoun Palace built by the German. Source (Internet)



Image 14: The house of Major Hans Dominik, the First mud brick house in the town of Yaoundé

3.1.2.3. Post-Colonial Architectural Heritage in Cameroon

After gaining independence, Cameroon experienced a transition in architectural styles that included a blend of traditional Cameroonian designs with European influences left over from colonial times. In cities such as Douala, which was a major port during the colonial era, you can find a mixture of German, British and French architectural styles. These styles can be seen in imposing government buildings, churches and homes that incorporate local techniques and materials.

Maroua, another Cameroonian city, also shows the evolution of architecture from the colonial period to the present. Colonialism introduced new materials such as concrete and corrugated iron, which were used alongside traditional materials to create a unique architectural landscape, particularly visible in administrative buildings and settler dwellings.

The post-colonial state and nation-building in Cameroon have also been influenced by its colonial past, with efforts to unify the country while respecting its multinational and multicultural identity. This has had an impact on architecture, as the built environment often reflects the political and cultural dynamics of a nation. After independence, Cameroon, like many other African countries, opted for revolutionary architecture. It was a period during which "gigantism" was born in Africa and monuments were built in several countries, such as the reunification monument in Cameroon. These buildings are now part of our built heritage and we should take an interest in their preservation and transmission.



Image 15: Maroua airport. Source (Edith Mipo, january 2024)



Image 16: Garoua City Hall (Source: Edith Mipo, January 2024)



Image 17 : Reunification monument ; (Source : internet)



Image18: Yaoundé Congress Centre; Source: internet)

3.2. Traditional Crafts

Traditional handicrafts are a rich and varied expression of the cultural heritage of a region or country. Characterised by authenticity, creativity and know-how passed down from generation to generation, they are an integral part of Cameroon's cultural heritage. Local artisans master traditional techniques to create unique and often symbolic objects that reflect the customs, beliefs and values of Cameroonian society. Whether wood carving, pottery, weaving, blacksmithing or other forms of

craftsmanship, these works are valued for their aesthetics and their contribution to the economic development of local communities.

Cameroonian handicrafts also play an important role in national identity and are a major tourist attraction, allowing visitors to discover the richness and diversity of Cameroonian crafts and traditions. To preserve this cultural heritage, it is essential to support artisans and promote their skills. Initiatives such as ANOR (Agency for Standards and Quality) are working to assess the quality of craft products and develop production standards to make products competitive on the global market.

Traditional crafts in Cameroon are not only a pillar of the local economy, but also a means of preserving and celebrating the country's cultural identity. However, the ancestral know-how is gradually disappearing. In the case of indigo dyeing, it is sad to note that more than 80% of the wells in the North of Cameroon are now closed. Looms are being dismantled every year, as is the case with almost all crafts. This is a wake-up call! The government, and especially the ministries in charge of these sectors, must take decisive action to stop this decadence.



Image 19 : a weaver in Poli (Source: Edith Mipo, January 2024)



Image 20: A dyeing well in Garoua. The only one that is functioning now. (Source: Edith Mipo,

3.3. Appropriation of Cultural Heritage by Cameroonians

The appropriation of cultural heritage by Cameroonians is a complex issue, especially in the context of the crises that have affected the country. According to recent reports, there has been significant damage to Cameroon's cultural heritage as a result of various crises. For example, the Bafut Royal Palace and several museums in the North West and South West regions have suffered visible cracks, leaks and even desecration. In addition, conflicts have affected intangible expressions of cultural heritage, threatening the viability and transmission of practices and know-how essential for maintaining cultural diversity and social cohesion.

Efforts are being made to protect and preserve cultural heritage in the face of crises and disasters. Emergency assessments and interventions are being carried out at cultural heritage sites, museums and collections at risk, particularly in the Far North region. These activities aim to document, monitor and secure cultural property, as well as prepare local communities to mitigate damage and enhance the protection of their heritage.

The situation underscores the importance of safeguarding both tangible and intangible cultural heritage to ensure its transmission to future generations and to preserve the rich cultural tapestry that defines Cameroon's identity. It's a reminder of the need for continued support and cooperation between communities, local authorities and international organisations such as UNESCO to address these challenges.

Our cultural heritage is neglected because the average citizen does not feel concerned about it. Many people do not understand the need to protect our rich heritage. For this reason, it is essential to emphasise the awareness of the population in the process of patrimonialization. If people are not involved in the process, they will not feel involved in the issue. It's true that without a sense of personal connection or understanding of the value of heritage, it's challenging to foster a culture of preservation among the general populace. There are many strategies that could be employed to enhance the involvement and concern of citizens in Cameroon.

To foster a deep appreciation for cultural heritage from a young age, we should integrate it into school curricula. Additionally, organizing public lectures, workshops, and exhibitions on heritage conservation is crucial. Developing community-based programs that involve citizens in restoring and maintaining local heritage sites can further this cause. Encouraging local storytelling and cultural events that celebrate and disseminate heritage knowledge can also be a powerful tool for community engagement. Media platforms should be utilized to highlight the significance of cultural heritage and ongoing preservation efforts. Creating documentaries and features that showcase the beauty and history of Cameroon's heritage sites is essential. Implementing incentive schemes for communities actively participating in heritage conservation, and recognizing and rewarding individuals and groups making significant contributions, can motivate further involvement.

To achieve these goals, it is important to involve citizens in decision-making processes related to heritage sites in their communities and establish local heritage committees to oversee and guide conservation efforts. By fostering a sense of ownership and pride in cultural heritage, and making the preservation process inclusive and participatory, there's a greater chance that the average citizen will feel connected to and concerned about their rich heritage.

3.4. Scarcity of public resources makes protection and enhancement difficult to implement

Cultural heritage protection and enhancement requires a number of elements that must be brought together to achieve the desired objectives. In order to achieve efficacy in the enhancement of cultural heritage, whether tangible or intangible, it is imperative to possess the requisite resources, including but not limited to human, financial, physical, and technical resources.

As far as human resources are concerned, it is important to have trained volunteers and community members who can assist in conservation efforts in order to achieve the goal of preservation. It is imperative for the preservation of heritage to involve qualified professionals such as conservators, historians, and archaeologists. Their expertise ensures that conservation efforts are carried out with the greatest care and best practices. Moreover, trained volunteers and community members play a crucial role in supporting and actively participating in conservation projects. Regarding the financial resources, there exist numerous sources of funding for conservation projects, research, and education initiatives. Bodies such as the European Commission offer funding opportunities through calls for proposals for projects related to the circular economy, biodiversity, climate change, and the transition to clean energy. Private foundations, such as the Rufford Foundation, provide funds for conservation programmes and pilot projects around the world. There exist numerous additional structures that may assist in the preservation of cultural heritage. In the preservation of cultural heritage, the selection of materials and tools holds paramount importance in ensuring that restoration and conservation efforts are efficient and respectful of the original structures. In the realm of heritage preservation, cutting-edge technologies play a pivotal role in the processes of documentation, analysis, and restoration. 3D digital technologies are commonly used to create detailed visualisations and models of heritage sites. Augmented reality and virtual reality (VR) can bring intangible heritage to life and enhance the visitor experience. Digital restoration is the use of digital tools to restore damaged artefacts or reconstruct missing parts of heritage sites. The

eArchiving Initiative supports the long-term preservation of digitalised information and digitised objects, ensuring their accessibility over time. These are some of the tools that professionals need in Cameroon to improve their work.

3.5. Proposals for the Future of Cultural Heritage in Cameroon

Cameroon ratified the 1982 UNESCO World Heritage Convention for the protection of cultural and natural properties, and in April 2008 the 2003 UNESCO Convention on the Protection of Cultural and Natural Heritage for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage. Nonetheless, there is a dearth of specific provisions that define the categories of cultural heritage that ought to be preserved. In this circumstance, the future of cultural heritage in Cameroon holds significant significance, given the rich and diverse history of the nation. There is a need for stakeholders to work together to develop different strategies for a better future. If concrete actions are not taken today, what benefits will the future generation derive from them?

To safeguard and promote Cameroon's rich cultural heritage, we must take certain steps. A Cultural Heritage Inventory allows us to create a comprehensive inventory of Cameroon's cultural heritage, categorizing it into tangible, intangible, and natural heritage. It's important to keep this list fresh and accessible to everyone. The Legislative Framework Enhancement is charged with crafting and enforcing specific legal guidelines that specify the types of cultural heritage that must be safeguarded. Sanctions should be included for destruction or unauthorized alteration of heritage sites. Community engagement and education is a means to involve local communities in the preservation process through educational and awareness programs. Highlight the centrality of cultural heritage in national identity and its potential for boosting tourism and economic development. We can use technology to document and preserve cultural heritage. Digital preservation, 3D modeling of historic spots, and augmented reality experiences could help make heritage more accessible. Sustainable tourism that respects and preserves cultural heritage should be promoted. Encourage responsible visitor behavior and invest in infrastructure that supports heritage conservation to encourage responsible visitor behavior. Learning from other countries and international organizations to preserve heritage is going to be used. Participating in cultural exchanges and collaborating on conservation initiatives is another possibility. Grants and private donations can be used to secure funding for cultural heritage projects. Support ongoing preservation efforts with a national heritage fund. Supporting indigenous arts, celebrations, and dialects helps preserve our intangible heritage. Platforms for the transmission of this heritage to younger generations should be created. Academic research on the cultural heritage of Cameroon should be encouraged.

These proposals seek to create a multifaceted approach to preserving Cameroon's rich cultural legacy for future generations. By taking decisive steps now, we can ensure that the Cameroonian cultural legacy will continue to inspire admiration and knowledge for generations to come.

4. Conclusions

This scientific work sheds light on an important reality: Cameroon often referred to as Africa in miniature because of its cultural and geographical diversity has an invaluable cultural heritage. However, there is a significant gap between the country's heritage potential and the current level of valuation of this heritage. To bridge this gap, it is essential to recognize the intrinsic value of Cameroon's tangible and intangible cultural heritage and to take concrete measures to preserve and promote it.

The creation of a comprehensive catalogue of the cultural heritage is a fundamental step in its preservation and enhancement. Such an initiative would not only document and classify heritage

elements, but also prioritize conservation actions. Raising awareness and educating the masses about the importance of conservation would be beneficial for lasting results. Human, financial, technical and material resources are a key aspect for the feasibility of certain actions at different scales. The possible solutions for the promotion and conservation of Cameroon's rich tangible and intangible heritage are many and varied, and must be implemented in a cordial manner according to the level of intervention of the various actors.

By taking steps to enhance its cultural heritage, Cameroon can not only preserve its history and identity for future generations, but also stimulate economic and social development through tourism and education. It is a challenge that requires the commitment of all actors in society, from government authorities to local communities, international organizations and individuals themselves. For future research, we recommend focusing on the impact of schools on heritage in Cameroon. Additionally, it would be beneficial to learn from other African countries that are currently exemplary in the valorization of cultural heritage.

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