

Daniela Angelina Jelinčić and Marko Raič

Institute for Development and International Relations, Zagreb, Croatia

e-mail: daniela@irmo.hr

(Green) Sustainability of Cultural Heritage: Towards a New Concept

The sustainability of cultural heritage is an extremely complex issue, as it encompasses the three pillars of sustainability (economic, environmental, and social), with a pronounced focus on cultural sustainability. The tangible and intangible character of cultural heritage makes the issue even more complex. The importance of heritage is hardly recognized by the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030, but the necessity for sustainable management of cultural heritage is crucially seen in practice. Heritage interventions have been abundantly funded from different EU sources (Jelinčić and Tišma, 2020), but often fail to prove their sustainability, leading to the usual practice of “when the project is over, everything is over” (Steckiewicz, 2017: 34). The current EU focus on environmental sustainability is shyly applied to cultural heritage. While the existing literature on the topic mainly addresses green interventions on tangible heritage, this conceptual paper proposes new holistic models and perspectives on cultural heritage greening reflecting a two-way process: 1. sustainable preservation of cultural heritage as a response to the negative impacts of climate change (reactive), and 2. contribution of cultural heritage to preventing or reducing the consequences of climate change (proactive), accompanied by illustrative examples.

Keywords: sustainability, cultural heritage, cultural sustainability