

# Urban Restoration, Cultural Heritage and International Cooperation

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**Abstract** International cooperation in the field of cultural heritage is facing not only the weakness of local institutions responsible for his protection, but also the role that politics assigns them in creating a “national identity” and in the economic development of each nation. This role regards specifically architecture: Under the sight of everyone, Architecture constitutes a geographical reference point and often represent a symbol of national or local identity or of a specific power or religion. These symbols are important points of reference for those who mean to propose a certain view of the history of a Nation or, more importantly, for those who intend to oppose to it, even using force. For these reasons, built cultural heritage can be differently interpreted as to the diverse cultures, political interests, and personal knowledge: the concept of “heritage” is essentially a “relative” one, even when it claims to be universal, as UNESCO teaches us. Thus, opinions on what should be preserved and how to do so often appear to be in sharp contrast, both within a country and between operators from different cultural backgrounds. It can be argued that the intervention on cultural heritage not only raises issues of technical or aesthetic nature, but also, and often, “ethical” ones. It’s a matter of reflection over values that move the behaviours of individuals or social groups and particularly, regarding what they consider right or wrong, as well as the concept of responsibility towards others, posterity and the natural environment.

The specificity of urban restoration does not consist as much in a matter of scale (urban restoration = planning of historical centres; architectural restoration = project at building-scale) rather than in a methodological issue. In fact, urban restoration is about dealing the problem of safeguard and preservation of architectural and landscape heritage through an investigation and design methodology able to face the historic reality of a place as a whole. This can be achieved starting from the structure of relationships that each element—valuable as heritage—set in it, being it natural or manmade, has, had or would establish with the others and its environ-

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ment. In other words, urban restoration is the discipline that faces the theme of the role of cultural heritage nowadays, within the context of contemporary cities and future development. About the safeguarding issues related to historical centres, it is habit referring to the century-old debate that has seen an enlargement of the concept of monument, from isolated buildings to their environment, social and physical context. The origins of this discussion are set in the thesis of Quatremère de Quincy, who opposed the transfer to Paris of Italian masterpieces following Napoleonic conquests.<sup>1</sup>

Camillo Sitte's well-known book of, *City Planning According to Artistic Principles*, published in 1889,<sup>2</sup> represented another decisive step. The volume attributes different significance to the evaluation of historical city, as complex and indivisible work composed by different authors, in which monumental buildings create an essential bond with the widespread built context in which they were, and are, set.

Lastly, Alois Riegl<sup>3</sup> enounces that all that is recognizable as manmade acquires a potential documental value. Therefore, it becomes accountable for safeguard, independently of any judgement of value over it. Thus, it is a radical but consequential position that has been deepened in recent years by a reflection of historians over the concept of monument and document. This consideration led to the identification of the two factors of the matter, and consequently flanked to the investigation of great events from the past a new attention for "long-standing realities", as defined by Fernand Braudel, intended as "half-forgotten story of men and enduring realities, which were immensely important but made so little noise".<sup>4</sup>

An attention for historical and natural pre-existence intended as resources—a heritage with economic significance and social utility—has made designers more sensitive towards their work within the pre-existence. Thus, it poses issues not only related to the history of monuments as architecture and witness of material culture, but also in terms of technical works and objects of use. Safeguarding and restoration (in terms of re-instauraton) matters have been sided by the ones of preservation and reuse, causing conflicts.

Nowadays the practice of safeguarding, preservation and reuse of built heritage tends to extend to the whole heritage from the past, intended as a sum of significant monuments/documents, not only in their individuality but also in the complexity both of their interactions and of the social and cultural context that created them, preserving or modifying the heritage itself. In individuating the heritage to be preserved and in the definition of intervention choices over it, the relationship (the

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<sup>1</sup>Antoine Chrysostome Quatremère de Quincy, Edouard Pommier, *Lettres à Miranda. Sur le déplacement des monuments de l'art de l'Italie*, 1796, English translation: Quatremère de Quincy, Edouard Pommier, *Letters to Miranda and Canova on the Abduction of Antiquities from Rome and Athens*, Los Angeles, Getty Research Institute, 2012.

<sup>2</sup>Sitte (1965).

<sup>3</sup>Riegl (1982).

<sup>4</sup>Braudel (1967).

past, present and future one) between each heritage and the society has a whole acquires a determining importance. Thus, cultural and landscape heritage become recognizable since they preserve, or acquire in time through collective memory, social utility. In other words, nowadays every preservation project is essentially attributable to an urban/territorial issue: what to preserve in the built city, how to safeguard it, how to integrate it in the needed transformation works that new requirements set in time, how to use or re-use heritage inherited from the past. All these actions cannot disregard the role that nowadays we attribute to pre-existence, as memory of the past as well cultural and economic resource of the present that has to be conveyed to the future.

That being so, these are resources since they represent the result of human activity, which has incorporated in them investments, work, meanings: physical, productive and mental energies. “The human is the trace that man leaves in things, it is the work, whether it is a famous masterpiece or the anonymous product of one particular epoch. It is the continuous dissemination of works and objects and signs that makes a civilization the habitat of our species, its second nature. If we deny this sphere of signs that surrounds us with its thick dust-cloud, man cannot survive. And again: every man is man-plus-things, he is a man in as much as he recognizes himself in a number of things, he recognizes the human that has been in things, the self that has taken shape in things.”<sup>5</sup>

In this sense, the heritage we inherited from the past must be first intended as a system, since it is product and expression of a social organization (original, present and—as far as predictable—future) that is complex for its own nature and organized in a system of parts strictly related one to the other. Thus, the territory must be envisioned as a continuum of heritage and not as a mere container of them: these are not isolated and singular monuments, but a whole environment. Thus, it might have fractures and unpleasant intrusions, but no interruption in history time, which regularly flows and in which present is always the result of the past and the starting point for the future.

Therefore, urban restoration can be defined as the discipline that faces safeguarding, preservation and re-use issues of historical, architectural and landscape heritage as a system (complex formal structure) resulting from the continuous action of man and nature over territory.

Only such an approach is in fact able to put at proper level the issue of safeguarding collective memory of a human society in relation to its environment and its physical and historical context: the problem of recognizing a spatial and environmental organization in everyday life; bringing in the recognition of its meaning, that is a non-extinction of man from the places of his own life.

This is a particularly important issue in these years, more than two centuries away from the rise of the industrial revolution that accelerated the process of transformation of the territory, changing populations and people so seriously that the problem has been placed of the relationship between individual history and its

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<sup>5</sup>Calvino (2013).

establishment; whether it be the original one—which is under an increasingly rapid transformation—or a newer, where it is increasingly difficult to reconstruct the cultural and historical coordinates of reference for those coming to live in from different faraway places.

There is a need for historical recognition of places and identities, which is linked to being the man-plus-things man introduced by Calvino. This requirement for identity is now endangered by the speed of social, cultural and even spatial transformations we are subjected to: “In the years before the Great War... it was not yet a matter of indifference whether a man lived or died. When someone was expunged from the list of living, someone else did not immediately step up to take his place, but a gap was left to show where he had been, and those who knew the man who had died or disappeared, well or even less well, fell silent whenever they saw the gap. When a fire happened to consume a particular dwelling in a row of dwellings, the site of the conflagration remained for a long time afterwards. For masons and bricklayers worked slowly and thoughtfully, and when they walked past the ruins, neighbours and passers-by alike recalled the form and the walls of the house that had once stood there. That’s how it was then! Everything that grew took long to grow; and everything that ended took a long to be forgotten. Everything that existed left behind traces of itself, and people then lived by their memories, just as we nowadays live by our capacity to forget, quickly and comprehensively.”<sup>6</sup> Roth’s words, nostalgically dedicated to the last years of the Habsburgic Empire, remind us with great lucidity that too many times today the environmental reality of our cities appears to us as a sum of relics of the past casually dispersed in the imperfect reality of the present. We are no longer able to attribute meaning to these evidences as they are no longer decoded: the modes of use have changed, some basic reference elements disappeared, the original inhabitants are emigrated or extinct, interrupting tradition.

Therefore, the problems of safeguarding the architectural and environmental heritage cannot be properly addressed without the aim of explaining their real meaning, their social utility, having the awareness that these values tend to be less and less readable in the absence of a policy tending to use history as a resource to build the future.

The statement of “cultural heritage”, being the individuation of a particular object or system of objects, is to be regarded as the heritage of the culture of a society. Therefore, it is an eminently political act, not only because this task is commonly assigned to the State and its peripheral or decentralized organizations, but also because the utility of this heritage is collective, and the way of their fruition is social.

In this sense, it is indispensable for this statement to be socially shared: safeguarding the “social memory” of a community cannot exclude the inhabitants of the places involved. If the protection and preservation of a limited number of objects

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<sup>6</sup>Roth (1933).

recognized as exceptional can be entrusted to specialists, to centralized institutions and, at last, to authoritarian ones capable of acting against the common opinion in the name of higher interests, yet it is clear that conservation and proper use of a whole territorial reality intended in its entirety as a historical value can only go through the conviction of a large majority on the opportunity and on the meaning of such operation.

That is why working on the “boundaries” of the concept of monument is of great importance nowadays: a set of objects and areas that only recently the official culture tended to recognize as meaningful and which are the majority of the system of signs that history left over the territory. Furthermore, and not more important, some partial visions tend to underestimate this heritage. Conventionally smaller but widespread cultural heritage that characterize our everyday life as indispensable for a proper understanding of the major monumental objects.

Working on the boundaries means, therefore, to develop a study methodology for the identification and discovery of what can be intended as cultural heritage, like an ancient centre, or a historical landscape. At the same time, it means to point out the recent reasons for their abandonment, misuse and degradation; to assess the social, economic and technical potential of the benefits that such heritage can still offer; to develop a practice of territorial planning and architectural design that does not intend these objects as something to be treated separately from the rest of the territory, in a kind of “reserve” where economic and social laws are different from the rest of the world. Indeed. They are essential components of a comprehensive human intervention project on the environment of its own existence.

This means setting up the territorial reality so that its historical events appear to be resources for creating the future, not as constraint to development; teaching to live in museums, ancient centres, parks. Or better, to claim that everything is a park, a museum, an old centre, rather than just visiting once a year few places considered to be exceptional as “something else” compared to our daily lives, and consumed (and worn out) as one of the many products of our waste society, in a sort of purifying collective rite.

The above mentioned are valuable not only in the contexts of the “evolved” countries in the field of safeguarding, but specially in countries that have only recently faced the problems of a national cultural heritage policy. The ongoing globalization processes require a reflection on what role should be assigned to them in this context of rapid transformations where Countries in transition<sup>7</sup> are involved, especially those that look their investments for cultural heritage as an accelerated economic development opportunity. These phenomena are not different from those which have in the past occurred in the most developed nations: the difference relies

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<sup>7</sup>The *Encyclopedia of Information Science and Technology* (Khosrow-Pour, Mehdi (ed.), Information Science Reference, Hershey, U.S.A., 2015) defines Countries in Transition “A third world country that is in a transition process based on more liberal, market-friendly structures and associated features of liberal democracy”.

in the much faster speed than what had happened before; moreover, in a particularly weak and unprepared institutional and political context.

In these Countries it is also very common to consider archaeological, architectural and historical-artistic heritage an essential resource for development. This happens primarily when international tourism is encouraged: these Countries are often newly formed nations (or have recently rejected colonial or authoritarian regimes) owing cultural, landscape and environmental resources of great relevance, now easily accessible from all over the world both because of the greater opening up of borders and the substantial reduction in air transportation costs.

Along with healthcare and public education, the theme of cultural and environmental heritage is one of the most suitable to international cooperation, especially because of the great stimulus that UNESCO has put in place with the “World Heritage” policy.<sup>8</sup> The aim is to help preserve the cultural heritage of a country, to allow access to it by international tourism, to increase employment opportunities in local population; it appears to be an almost obvious co-operation policy and, apparently, also “politically correct”.

A large number of “donor” countries are investing in cooperation policies in this area, with great satisfaction from the countries where they are proposing to cooperate, who are recipients of resources they might not otherwise have.

What practice is normally followed? It identifies a heritage or site of great historical-artistic relevance (on a global level); archaeological or architectural investigations are carried out and then the degradation phenomena in progress is evaluated. Furthermore, restoration projects are being realized and funded; the project intervenes in training local staff, in order to ensure sustainability over time for the actions envisaged; it cooperates with the preparation of a management plan for the concerned area; it assists local technicians and politicians in the recognizing procedure for the World Heritage site; tourism infrastructure (visitor center/museum, access infrastructure, office and management tools) are established. Finally, authorities cut the tape and return home happy to have done their duty as a good citizens of the world.

But is everything really so simple and, as it has just been said, obvious? Instead, experiencing just few cases in the field is enough to realize that things are not going exactly the way they would have expected. Why? Because cultural heritage is a delicate subject that involves social, religious and political issues, legal issues and economic interests of great complexity. Most likely, disregarding them would lead to failure, if not to endangering the heritage that is intended to be protected.

International cooperation projects in the field of cultural heritage are facing not only the weakness of local institutions responsible for their protection, but also the role that politics assigns them in creating a “national identity” and in the economic development of each nation.

This role regards specifically architecture: if on a theoretical point-of-view the general criteria for the conservation of artistic historical interest heritage are

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<sup>8</sup>cfr.: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/conventiontext/> and <http://whc.unesco.org/en/guidelines/>.

essentially the same, whether it be related to movable or not property, however there are some specificities that are peculiar to architectural heritage.

Architecture, as Vitruvio says, must satisfy not only *venustas* (beauty) but also *utilitas* (utility) and *firmitas* (steadiness): it is impossible to observe architecture preservation in an exclusively conservative or “museographic” perspective. Original use, its confirmation or change requires the involvement of not only cultural but also economic, political, social, and even religious interests, which is impossible to disregard. Adapting to nowadays indispensable safety and performance standards also means to deal with the need to operate through compromises between conservation and use needs.

On the other hand, the size and costs of projects related to the built heritage are much higher than those for many other objects: in a limited economic resources environment, preservation works often compete with others, of social, infrastructural, and political interest, which for many reasons tend to require a priority. The process of conservation must therefore mediate between diametrically opposing forces: the requirements of modernizing a country against those of the preservation of historical heritage.

Architecture is also much more visible and constitutes a geographical reference point, likewise a historical and cultural one. Under the sight of everyone, Architecture often represent a symbol of national or local identity or of a specific power. These symbols, especially when referring to political or religious aspects, are important points of reference for those who mean to propose a certain view of the history of a Nation or, more importantly, for those who intend to oppose to it, even using force.

For these reasons, built cultural heritage can be differently interpreted as to the diverse cultures, political interests, and personal knowledge: the concept of “heritage” is essentially a “relative” one, even when it claims to be universal, as UNESCO teaches us.

Thus, opinions on what should be preserved and how to do so often appear to be in sharp contrast, both within a country and between operators from different cultural backgrounds. This especially occurs when a certain social group attributes to its history, and to the opportunity to found over it, the ideological reasons for its independence, if not of its own domain over a particular territory and a particular population.

Since history is often written by winners, it is obvious for them to tend to work out a selection of historical facts concerning them, to justify their behaviors in the past, in the present, and in the construction of the future. Physical heritage, especially architecture, is the material support of this policy: in policies for Cultural Heritage it is easy to make intervention choices depending on them.

It cannot be left out of consideration that the recognition of a heritage value is an eminently political act. Thus safeguard, preservation and restoration practices or transformation actions (and even destruction ones) are the consequences of a certain vision and sustaining ideology. Moreover, things can become complicated by the fact that, following the vicissitudes of European colonialism, the borders of the

present nations often do not coincide with ethnic, religious or linguistic boundaries at all.

Obviously, these considerations especially affect the built heritage with monumental programmatically intents: that are, the ones which are designed to celebrate a character, a religion, a dominant ethnicity to inherit its memory to the future. It is natural that, with a change of regime or the emergence of new social classes, these heritage values tend to be overturned, especially if these transformations occurred through violent conflicts. Following the collapse of a government, the symbols of the bent power are removed or even destroyed, regardless of their historical or artistic value or, perhaps, precisely because of their value.

Frequently, as evidenced by the chronicles of our times, it is precisely the cultural heritage to be the military target of programmed destruction—if not even publicized—as a result of political, religious or ethnic conflicts. The events of the Balkan and Middle East wars are on the agenda of the chronicles, and ethnic and religious fanaticism is continuing due to specifically planned destructions.

In regards of worship buildings, it is important to note that following the fall of regimes that impede religious practices it is easy to find an understandable spirit of revenge from religiously oppressed communities. Thus, the creation of new buildings for worship, competing among different religions, and interventions of adaptation or “improvement” of historical ones are made, based on functional or representative needs that rarely respect the historical values of buildings. This often happens outside State control, and even with the tacit consent of the new political power. “Churches” become a State in the State and do not respect regulatory limits or controls. Thus, it occurs especially in intervening over ancient buildings in degradation state: for these, for worship and decoration reasons, a restitution of the “Original splendor” or “modernization” is requested.

Regarding “minor heritage”—the one that from an observer’s perspective has acquired an historical-documental value of ethnographic interest—there is the rise of other issues in emerging countries. This heritage is often considered as witness of poverty by local population, of underdevelopment and of an era that must be removed favoring modernity. The last is seen as more appreciable in the perspective of building performance.

As has always been the case, even in Europe, the recognition of heritage values of ancient urban fabric or traditional rural construction takes place after few generations from the one who abandoned these areas in search of a better life. Modernization is one of the most severe threats in terms of protection of the popular classes built heritage, since good hygienic and health standards often come with the status-symbol and social ascent factors, which are strongly influential once the appropriate resources have been acquired.

Above all, in rapidly emerging countries, international cooperation activities pose problems of behavior, which are not easy to solve having to mediate between the different cultures both of the countries that carry on the co-operation, and within the countries that are subjected to international aid. It can be argued that the intervention on cultural heritage not only raises issues of technical or aesthetic

nature, but also, and often, “ethical” ones. It is a matter of reflection over values that move the behaviors of individuals or social groups and particularly, regarding what they consider right or wrong, as well as the concept of responsibility towards others, posterity and the natural environment.

It is well known that every professional activity, at least in theoretical terms, poses the problem of social responsibility in acting also for public interest. This requires explicit engagement by the members of a profession to postpone their personal interests to the public one, but also to take into account the legitimate interests of the clients, employers and workers.

The basic principles of a profession include in general: moral integrity, objectivity, competence and care in carrying out work and, where necessary, confidentiality. These principles increase the possibility of a conflict between the values of a profession and those of the client and the general society in which the professional works (Mansfield 2008).

In the case of architecture professions, ethical problems are in part different in nature than those encountered in other disciplines for several reasons: first, architecture is an art form that, necessarily, involves mediation problems between the individual interests of the client and the legitimate interests of the society regarding the quality of a project and its implementation. The task of the architect is to know how to mediate between the needs of the client and the needs of the community, generally governed by laws and regulations; but this leaves wide margins for interpretation.

In the case of interventions in heritage contexts, the architect’s ethics requires that he does not use selective criteria depending on his/her own political or religious beliefs, but to strictly adhere to the conservation of what is entrusted to him/her or what emerges during the research.

If the affected building or site is considered a historical “document”, any newly-conceived work could alter the document forever, despite the sincere efforts that could be made to reduce this impact. Each form of intervention has effects on the authenticity and integrity of the building and therefore poses particular important problems not only from a technical but also an ethical point of view. The motto “*Primum non nocere*” (First do not harm) by Hippocrates can also be extended to all restoration interventions that aim to pass on to future generations the originality of the work being performed.

This involves a specific ethical behavioral approach to monuments: preserving their authenticity and integrity, avoiding invasive and irreversible interventions. This can be preferably achieved using non-destructive diagnostic techniques and working methods, and already tested materials.

These activities are clearly indicated in the international conservation charters, which are taught to students in all the schools of Architecture and Conservation of Cultural Heritage in the world and which are expressly required by UNESCO for listing a particular site as World Heritage (UNESCO 2008).

These actions are easy to understand from the theoretical side, but problematic to be implemented in the practical one. This is due since on the one hand buildings are subjected to a set of norms and standards, defined to guarantee safety and efficiency,

not always easy to meet in terms of conservation. On the other hand, the needs of the client (limited time, cost savings, search for economic or political convenience, etc.) impose ongoing compromises, which are not always acceptable from a deontological point of view.

It should be noted that the concept of authenticity in the theory and practice of preservation originates from a multi-century debate essentially carried out in Europe: it is not always understood and shared in the rest of the non-Western world today. There are several reasons why this should happen: the main one probably depends on the fact that the industrial revolution in the West for nearly two centuries has created awareness of the irreducible fracture between the modalities of ancient and contemporary production.

Materials, working techniques and costs have radically changed from the past and every attempt to artificially replicate the ancient production mode (as it was tried on several occasions) has become in our eyes a fake or pale imitation rather than a scientifically founded reconstruction. However, in less developed countries, traditional construction techniques and maintenance processes have been preserved in major extent, and the negative effects of the introduction of materials and work of industrial origin in preservation could not become evident yet.

It should also be noted that the value of antiquity referred by Alois Riegl is the value of the traces of time, which can be recognized in the patina, in the imperfections and incompleteness of the buildings and which we now consider as a mark of authenticity of the buildings. It has always been in contrast to the value of novelty, generally appreciated by the non-experts and, in particular, by the less educated clergymen, attentive to the decoration of the worship buildings rather than the marks of their antiquities.

The continuous maintenance works required for buildings in countries with difficult climate conditions and easily perishable materials—that are commonly used in construction in these countries—makes it unavoidable to develop a habit of a regular maintenance of buildings. Generally, it is essentially done by replacing and integrating the lacking parts, rather than through sophisticated conservation interventions.

If it is then considered that contributing to the renewal of worship buildings is regarded by many religious practices as an honorable activity in respect of the divinity, it is then possible to comprehend how really difficult it is to be understood while carrying a rigorously conservative operating practice.

Without using philosophical subjects and references to the different concept of history that characterizes the Western thought than the Eastern, it is beyond doubt that a concept of preservation that is strictly focused on conservation of the authenticity of the original work might face perplexity, if not opposition apart of the Western World.

It should be noted, however, that similar attitudes are not lacking in Europe, especially among non-professionals of the field.

If less noble but more pressing demands arise, such as those linked to making a monument more understandable (or even spectacular) in order to make it better

understood by travelers organized in international tourism circuits, it is then clear that the expertise of a rigorously conservative intervention also appears to be a barrier in selling a tourist product facing international competition. To tourists, the ruin is little photogenic and the difficulty of understanding its meaning would take too long. When international organizations happened to make critical remarks regarding interventions that did not meet the operational standards accepted by the scientific community in a specific site, it was replied that it was not an issue. The site was deemed anyway able to recall great numbers of visitors, even not taking into account the quality of the restorations made or, in limit situations, just because of non-careful interventions (Dallen and Boyd 2003).

These issues deserve a further insight. The international culture of preservation is strongly marked by the European approach, which imposes a long series of activities preliminary to the intervention: diagnostic studies, accurate surveys, historical-documentary research. These activities need time and, consequently, significant costs: monitoring decay phenomena involves at least 18 months of detection, modern laser-scanner and non-destructive diagnostic techniques require the use of expensive equipment and specialized technicians, chemical-physical analysis of materials and degradation phenomena involves the use of laboratories rarely present in developing countries.

These facts collide with the scarcity of resources available and with the need to make the investment for restoration as quickly as possible.

Methodological precautions tend to be considered as sophistication proposed by technicians most concerned with scientific publication of the studies carried out rather than the conservation works themselves. The international co-operator is likely to be welcome when brings founding and set aside when he is “being difficult”.

It is not intended to give all the reasons to the first mentioned one and all the wrongdoings to local technicians and politicians. It is necessary to realize that in some countries it is needed to adapt usual methods to the working context, which does not always have the necessary tools and materials, and even less, the skills involved in them. As often happens, even in these cases, better acts against of good.

Lastly, a problem that seems obvious to those who work in this field: archaeological research, preservation, site enhancement (signage, visitor centres, etc.) should not be limited to *una tantum* operations, but involve continuous maintenance. This regards both the control of the weed vegetation and the effects of the meteorological phenomena, as well as the functioning of the scientific tools and media that are intended to be used for the enhancement of a site.

Since it is difficult to have success and “fame” for hanon-careful interventionsing built a shelter for a newly excavated archaeological area or for having removed the vegetation from a wall that has been invaded by it, these works are then rarely performed. The responsibilities of such behavior must be equally shared between those who intervene, who must always foresee sustainability (even economic) over time of their own works, and by those who will be in charge of the site after the completion of the intervention, who have to carefully program maintenance of buildings and tools, which often is not easily accomplished, more due to neglect than for lack of resources.

Often, international cultural non-careful interventions operation activities are come along with training actions: ex-cathedra lessons, laboratory activities, excavation and conservation training on situ that represent an important opportunity for professional upgrading of local technicians. These are indispensable activities, but must be conceived for the specific reality of the places where the project is operating. First, it's necessary to overcome a certain degree of reluctance to accept, by local technicians, innovative practices compared to those normally used by them. It is important not to underestimate the traditional techniques of the local craftsmen, since they are often more effective than the ones imported or even the only possible to apply in a given economic environment.

In such cases the self-esteem of a local technician must never be damaged by offering intervention methods out of his reach or simply "fashionable" in European countries. It's necessary to overcome the new criteria of intervention in time: it is not enough to teach once and for all a certain practice, its application must be followed over the years, as new local technicians are able to function properly (and correcting the practice if teachings are ineffective or problematic to apply).

This is the hardest part, since almost always cooperation projects have a beginning and, above all, an end, beyond which there are no more resources to go back to the place or to improve the learning of what it was meant to teach.

The theme of sustainability over time in training actions should be well-represented when defining the timeline of interventions, reserving a small part of the resources available for continuing education and for a number of years and for travel and stay expenses associated with it.

The discussion so far has referred to the issues of the protection and preservation of a single monument or a well-defined site of historical interest. However, it must be considered that monumental heritage is rarely isolated from the territorial context where it has arisen, especially in developing countries, where there is often a strong combination of archaeological-monumental interest and inhabited areas. This bond, developed over time due to subsequent stratification, tends today to be considered by local governments as a problem rather than as a resource, often without reason: recent settlements overlay with ancient ones by altering their legibility and sometimes physically compromising their structure.

Cases are not uncommon where, with a drastic decision, the population has been removed from the sites object of tourism promotion interventions. The population that has inhabited areas of monumental interest (sometimes even for ages) is then removed, making the reasons for the conservation and enhancement of the sites prevail.

We do not want to go into the matter of what destiny families and activities expelled have met, although there would be much to be said about this. However, it should be noted that in this way questionable processes have been often developed. First, archaeological or monumental "reserves" have been built apart from the context of their territory, often fenced so as to prevent unwanted access (and to impose a ticket to the visitors). Moreover, buildings or agricultural structures of historical or ethnographic important values were removed; these could have been at

least in part preserved to contribute in enriching the interest even to distracted visitors.

Finally, the opportunity to use preservation and enhancement efforts to support the upgrading of nearby settlements has also been lost. In the worst case, the monumental areas have been reduced to protected tourist reserves, offering an image of sites completely falsified by the exclusion of everyday life that animated those sites before.

Even worse is the fact that, with the displacement of the originally settled population, the opportunity to involve local community in safeguarding the heritage that is to be enhanced is lost. In fact, a widespread resentment suggests opposition to conservation and restoration interventions: there are not uncommon cases of opposition by the locals to the listing of a site within the World Heritage List, since it is feared that this will end up producing constraints and obligations, or even loss of home or place of work.

These issues have long been present in the international debate on the protection of historic centers and agricultural areas of historical or natural interest inhabited by local populations. The concept of “integrated conservation” was introduced for the first time in an official document in the so-called Declaration of Amsterdam, signed by the Council of Europe Member States with the official headline of the “European Heritage Conservation Convention” (1975).<sup>9</sup> On the basis of this Convention, the protection of architectural heritage must evolve from isolationist interventions to become part of a specific economic, social, cultural and urban development policy.

This widening of the approach introduced the themes of heritage conservation within the overall debate on sustainable development. The notion of sustainability becomes ever more pervasive in many aspects of contemporary society, challenging the current and necessary use of natural and man-made resources with the needs of future generations and, more generally, the maintenance of cultural resources and the natural balance of the planet’s environmental equilibrium. From this point of view, especially in emerging countries, the maintenance of traditional land-management procedures and, in particular, of agriculture (including forestry, sheep-farming, fisheries, etc.) can play a decisive role. Traditional farmers are defined as “land maintainers” and can develop important activities to ensure the natural balance of a territory, even urban, once provided that their role is acknowledged even economically.

Indeed, it is necessary to counteract a policy of short-term exploitation of the natural and cultural resources of a territory, which takes place without attention to the long-term effects that these policies may trigger.

Occasions for a more flexible visit are not missing: these activities can involve the local population, even those who are not engaged in tourism services but who cannot compete in terms of economic resources, capability to appear on international markets and entrepreneurial culture.

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<sup>9</sup><http://www.icomos.org/en/charters-and-texts/179-articles-en-francais/ressources/charters-and-standards/169-the-declaration-of-amsterdam>.

NGOs are often involved in this field and various international cooperation initiatives are finalized in enhancing them. These experiences are to be developed by small groups spread over the territory, difficult to organize and above all to manage, thus requiring longer times.

There is a “grey area” in tourist offer that must be taken into account: it is the one implemented by that portion of local population which has sufficient resources to invest in small business activities: food services, hosting in campsites or private houses, small local transportation activities etc.

These are initiatives can often be successful in the short term but set at risk the same resources they intend to exploit to attract tourists. They are individual initiatives, mainly due to the severe competition in this area and to the inability to cooperate locally: for Countries out of collectivist regimes talking about cooperatives is like “evoking the devil”.

These activities distract young people from agriculture and craftsmanship, resulting in the abandonment of those lands and activities that are a major attraction for less hasty visitors (e.g. Asian rice paddies, tree cultivation in desert oasis or traditional tools craft). Frequently newly unplanned buildings endanger the landscape: the resources that once attracted visitors are compromised in a short time due to the abandonment of traditional activities, crops and damaged settlements.

Paradoxically the increase in tourism without any effective control and policy is likely to compromise the very cause of tourism attraction. The affirmation of “liberal” economic policies after decades or centuries of strongly repressive regimes certainly stimulates the economies of transition countries with by a clear message from local power (“*enrichissez vous*”), which in this way builds a strong and widespread consensus (Dallen and Nyaupane 2009).

However, while Western liberalism has over centuries created government control on the excesses coming from a total freedom of action, these institutions are still weak in emerging countries. Furthermore, a policy that allows mediating between interests of individuals and those of the community, especially in the medium to long term, is lacking. Liberalism in economy also produced a building one: constructive models derived from countries that are very influential from the political and cultural point of view—close and far—have replaced traditional architecture. Construction technicians find greater economic benefits in working for the private industry rather than in public employment, rules and regulations are seen as unacceptable impositions and constraints imposed on protected areas (parks, archaeological sites, cultural landscapes, etc.): they are read as impositions rather than as potential resources. A lack of knowledge of alternative sustainable tourism models compared to those of intensive exploitation of areas of major recourse hampers the introduction of model experiences that could be a benchmark for similar initiatives in other contexts.

Is this a hopeless situation? No, but it is necessary to understand that a good landscape is the effect of good governance. This can only be achieved by following a country political and administrative institutions through political-social development to reach the economical one, thus respecting the self-determination of population and democracy.

The Western world can offer the story of its mistakes and achievements, to cooperate with the best forces in each country, by accompanying the necessary reforms, in the awareness local people will be in charge of their own path to sustainable development. Meanwhile, it would be important to Western world to be in charge in providing examples of how things might work and express a fairer demand of goods, services and tourism more respectable to population rights, cultural heritage and the natural environment.<sup>10</sup> Being aware of the difficulties involved is already a beginning, but only a small part of the journey to be accomplished.

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<sup>10</sup>See Giambruno ad Gabaglio’s paper in this volume.