

ARCHITECTURE HERITAGE and DESIGN

Carmine Gambardella

XVI INTERNATIONAL FORUM

Le Vie dei
Mercanti



WORLD HERITAGE and KNOWLEDGE

Representation | Restoration | Redesign | Resilience



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**WORLD HERITAGE and KNOWLEDGE
Representation, Restoration, Redesign, Resilience**

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Scholars has been invited to submit researches on theoretical and methodological aspects related to Smart Design, Planning and Technologies, and show real applications and experiences carried out on this themes. Based on blind peer review, abstracts has been accepted, conditionally accepted, or rejected. Authors of accepted and conditionally accepted papers has been invited to submit full papers. These has been again peer-reviewed and selected for the oral session and publication, or only for the publication in the conference proceedings.

Conference report

300 abstracts and 650 authors from 36 countries:

Albania, Australia, Benin, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brasil, Bulgaria, California, Chile, China, Cipro, Cuba, Egypt, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kosovo, Malta, Massachusetts, Michigan, Montserrat, New Jersey, New York, New Zealand, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Slovakia, Spain, Switzerland, Texas, Tunisia, Turkey, United Kingdom.

160 papers published after double blind review by the International Scientific Committee

Preface

In the present era, technologies are becoming increasingly important in helping and supporting man in research, knowledge and production activities, almost as if they were smart prostheses. With the theme of the XVI Forum “World Heritage and Knowledge”, I propose to the International Scientific Community to debate and establish a comparison of knowledge carriers to communicate methodologies of good practices adopted and experiences in the use in the protection, conservation and safeguarding of cultural heritage and landscape as well as in the design of the “new, ”that, adopting in the building processes and building construction Innovative Building Modelling, can realise a non-contemporaneity of what has the same date (Giulio Carlo Argan) respectful of the values of the pre-existing, legitimate because it participated ex ante and monitored becoming all its ethical, aesthetic and performance connotations.

With the Internet of things, for example, sensors that are used to produce data autonomously that widen the processes of knowledge on all levels, from the territory with its infrastructures, to the environment, to the artefacts entering into the body itself of their physicality, or, in the case of the new, building the project as a prediction throughout physical consistency.

Nevertheless, the use of new technologies allows for economies of scale, both temporal and economical, not only for the surveying and representation of the built and the territory in the analysis phase but above all for the management of the resulting data that makes the design activity of the restoration of the historical heritage and landscape or of the newly constructed in a single process no longer divided into steps but also unitary in concrete constructions and the realisation of the works, in the intermediate checks, in the testing, in the monitoring and in the programmed maintenance.

In conclusion, it is indispensable for the scientific community to highlight how technologies, without a responsible attitude that commit man’s choices and knowledge in dealing with and planning appropriate responses to the issues and needs of the collective, can create a deception that unfortunately materialises with the subtle persuasion of uncontrolled astonishment that overwhelms the imagination.

Carmine Gambardella

President and Founder of the Forum



Strategy to re-active an urban landscape

Valeria Scavone

Researcher in Urban Planning

Department of Architecture, University of Palermo

Palermo (Italy)

valeria.scavone@unipa.it

Abstract

To reactivate an urban landscape, through a complex system of relationships, needs a goal: trigger a course of identification based on cultural heritage like an “ID card” [16]. To do this without losing the historical common memory [32], culture doesn’t have to be only for the “elite” but has to begin the raw nerve of the development.

When Kevin Lynch wrote about *wayfinding*, it was not for tourists but for inhabitants whom daily live in that place: the field of “orientation” [31] was essential for him like it was for Camillo Sitte. This theorist of urban planning (not fully understood) said that “the space and the city are important if they are active” and Wieczorek [33] explains that “active” means the rule of the spectator in the perception process.

Recently, the experience of study, design and realization of *Wayfinding Agrigento*, has a aim: a local sustainable development that causes Agrigento to be a creative city, to re-start from its own identity, from its abandoned places, from its neglected architectures, from the difficult orography that characterizes its urban pattern. This project guides urban users throughout Girgenti (the historical center of Agrigento), into a slow rhythm of life, to stand out to the urban patterned identity, in a social progress of discovering and rediscovering of the historical heritage.

The suggested paths are connected with a website that can also analyze city users’ movements in the historical center to plan services and public urban “gears” for the community.

Girgenti starts to begin a real living organism that communicates and interacts with its urban users, reacts and dialogues with them, produces knowledge and triggers its regeneration.

Keywords: urban landscape, public space, cultural heritage, regeneration, wayfinding

1. Cultural heritage, city and public space

Cultural heritage belongs to the “community”, because it’s the result of a group of people who live in a territory and it’s the “Identity Card” of the community itself [16]. We all need to have a relationship with this genetic heritage, material and immaterial [29] [30], knowing that it isn’t a rigid data, but it “renews continuously its meanings and it begins in a new from following development trend of a society” [32].

And if this “heredity - cultural heritage” must be considered “a set of resources inherited from the past that populations identify, regardless of who owns the property, as a reflection and expression of their values, beliefs, knowledge and traditions, in constant evolution” [15] and if the “community” is “a group of people who values specific aspects of cultural heritage, and who, in the framework of public action,

wish to support them and pass them on to future generations", it is important to make these objectives operational.

Among these, the Convention [15] reiterates that it's essential: to recognize that "the right to cultural heritage" is inherent in the right of participation in the cultural life (as defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights); to recognize an individual and collective responsibility towards the cultural heritage; to stress that the preservation of cultural heritage, and its sustainable use, have as its objectives human development and quality of life.

To take the necessary measures in order to implement the provisions of the Convention concerning:

- the role of cultural heritage in the construction of a peaceful and democratic society, in the process of sustainable development and in the promotion of cultural diversity;

- greater synergy of competences among all public, institutional and private actors that are involved.

The "identity of a region, like the existence of a *milieu*, is the enduring result of a long process of coevolution among the community and the environment" [22] and in the world of atopy [8], in which we live, is really important the 'history'. This is that sense of places matching their historical depth, memory and identity value. Recognizing the common origins allows us to identify the necessary references to activate virtuous circles of development, also in the socio-cultural spheres.

The 'history' is kept and remembered only between the city's borders, in its *forma urbis* and in its historical monuments. This *forma urbis*, with its strong iconic influence, designs the city with its intellectual activities or cultural services. Roland Barthes (1974) defines the city as the place where all the values of the civilization are "gathered", in fact also Amin and Thrift [3] write that cities are full of "footprints", one of the more suitable urban metaphors.

In the well-known couple *urbs/civitas*; *urbs* regards the physical settlement made of walls, streets, squares, buildings. While the other one – *civitas* – means the community of citizens with the same rights and duties to respond aims and conflicts of contemporary age. Therefore, cities must now return to being a *civitas*, understood as a community of "united citizens" that are self-governing.

Since "the city in its history is the continuing experiment of shape contradictions" [6], it should stop to re-read itself, the criteria and principles that underlie the definition of *urban planning* as a science, which occurred upon the second industrial revolution following a long debate and practical experimentation. A long process in which Patrick Geddes (1915) emerges with his admonition: "the city is a one whole and living organism" to be treated with a multidisciplinary approach, studying themes such as economy, history, sociology and landscape .

But what's crucial in the city is the existence of physical places that guarantee "social order" [17], therefore "public open spaces" and not longer "spaces for public use". This because, for example, the "excess of shopping and leisure centers in the suburbs kills life in the urban centers" [19].

Already the Leipzig Charter on Sustainable European Cities [18] exhorted to enhance the role of public space with physical quality and not just virtual, as modernity forces us to imagine. Public spaces often became unsuitable to be "a meeting place and a debate of private suffering and public issues" [5].

If spaces for collective life have conventionally represented the center of the city, with the *ágora* as a place for the development of political life, the industrial revolution changed this situation. So the central role of the space for 'public use' has moved to coffee shops, parks and theatres, while over time, streets and squares became places to experiment the new individual mobility, the driveway.

Nowadays, we are conscious that the quality of public spaces is the main benchmark by which the social cohesion of a community is measured and it can contribute to improving the quality of life [20]. Is necessary to reflect about this fact that implies more pedestrian areas and slow roads.

The theme, confronted in the project presented in this paper, has the following goal: restore dignity to the entire historical settlement and "slow down" the use of urban landscape. Slowing down the urban historic landscape that will be revitalized, experienced and perceived by inhabitants - or not - thanks to their re-appropriation with a "public" key of the roadway, hoping that "the sense of the public" is recovered [13].

2. Urban landscape: from Sitte to Lynch

The new urban planning in the recycling age [12] must decrease land consumption and reduce the ecological footprint. However, to make this happen, it is essential to understand the interactions of the urban ecosystems "with the social systems". The role of the social systems is to support significantly the economic recovery and "can find an effective response to the creative recovery of urban materials" [12]. This role goes beyond the simple safeguarding. Is about proposing policies of active interventions on the urban abandoned areas and promote material as symbolic actions on the city.

If planning a city implies what just mentioned and to restore historical centres requires us to preserve and protect all of cultural stratifications of civilization with the re-use architectural heritage, here is the relevance actuality of the Sitte. Sitte's work [14] is probably the first western theoretical survey that

analyzes problems related to urban landscape design with a "visual" approach: studying open spaces and the "ways in which soil irregularities can produce attractive effects" [9]. The problem of the visual content in the urban space occupies a position will make him a point of reference, years later, for Giulio Carlo Argan with his "aesthetic value of the city" and on "city as a visual space" [2].

In 1889 [27], with "Der Städtebau nach seinen Künstlerischen Grundsätzen" (Art of building the cities) by Sitte, a new interest in the urban form was born and spread throughout Europe. In its wake, comparisons are made with the cities of the past that, by the end of the century, appear more suited to individual needs and to collective needs: the quality of the spaces and the diversity of architectural solutions create, in fact, a far more fascinating scenario than that offered by the monotonous "chess boards" of the expansion areas [34].

Giovanni Astengo [4] emphasizes that the "slow process of recovery of urban space through the rediscovery of its constituent elements and the identification of methods and principles for a renewed and coherent spatial reconstruction begins with the analysis conducted by Camillo Sitte on the compositional criteria of urban public spaces" and writes about the devastating role played on cities and public spaces by the advent of mobility for people in the nineteenth century, when cities change and adapt to the needs of railway, tram and car. He points out that Sitte was well aware of the need to curb this phenomenon. This process, in fact, still makes today's cities uninhabitable and inaccessible. Sitte directs his attention to the system of public spaces "which (...) represent the privileged field of art in that part of the city which, for the values it is invested with, is able to represent everything" [9].

In fact, already Leon Battista Alberti, in the *De Re Aedificatoria*, invited to make sure that the streets inside the city should not pass in a straight line, but bend in wide curves, like loops of a river, several times on one side and the other. It almost seems that, with these words, Alberti anticipates the idea that the "beauty of the city" is linked to the dynamic - perceptive - experience of its spaces. Wieczorek writes [33], "space and the city are important (...) only to the extent that they are active" and 'active' refers to the role played by the viewer in the process of perception: a problem, that of the subjectivity of experience, widely debated at the time of Sitte.

Certainly the work of Sitte will condition that of Kevin Lynch [21] and Lewis Mumford [23]; this last one - in particular - with "The culture of the cities", operates a study of the urban form from a sociological point of view. These two scientists, in turn, influenced Argan [2] downstream with his reflections on the art of the city and his conviction of urban planning as a humanistic science.

Subsequently, Kevin Lynch - echoing Camillo Sitte - underlines, "in the evident chaos of the modern city, the importance of orientation defined as a fundamental factor of the urban quality planning [31], inviting - as already indicated by Sitte - to design "a modern version of the small traditional town with its squares, towers, identifiable monuments and (...) simple to remember" [31].

3. Strategies for Agrigento

3.1 Wayfinding

The word "wayfinding" has been used for the first time, in the context of architecture, to refer to the user experience of orientation and choosing a path within the built environment. Kevin A. Lynch used this word in his book "The Image of the City" [21] to define "a consistent use and organization of definite sensory cues from the external environment".

Wayfinding is therefore the way in which it is possible to organize the built space, to help, to support or to direct the orientation.

It refers to people's experience of orientation and facilitates the identification of a particular route to go through the urban landscape, helping tourists and city users to successfully get to their destination. But not only, wayfinding also educates people on boundaries, and the key features of the urban environment as a "teaching tool"; cognitive maps are defined as mental representations or overall spatial image and layout of settings [1].

3.2 A project for Agrigento

The case study is a middle city in the south of Italy. Famous in the world for its archaeological area, UNESCO site since 1997, Agrigento (245,32 Km²) is a fragmented, scattered and complex city [26], grown influenced by many elements: the articulated orography, the archaeological area and the sea. It's historical center, recently re-named Girgenti, full of irregular buildings realized after the Second World War, has many problems of depopulating as also shown in Tab.1. There are many abandoned places, neglected architectures and monuments (Fig. 1). Just in the last few years there's only a awakening of accommodation services: a loss of identity.

| Year | Total | Historic city (Girgenti) | % |
|------------|--------|--------------------------|-------|
| 31/12/2010 | 55.550 | 8.219 | 14,80 |
| 31/12/2015 | 58.329 | 7.435 | 12,75 |

Tab.1: Percent of the inhabitants of Girgenti (historic center of Agrigento) as compared to total (data by the Municipality of Agrigento)

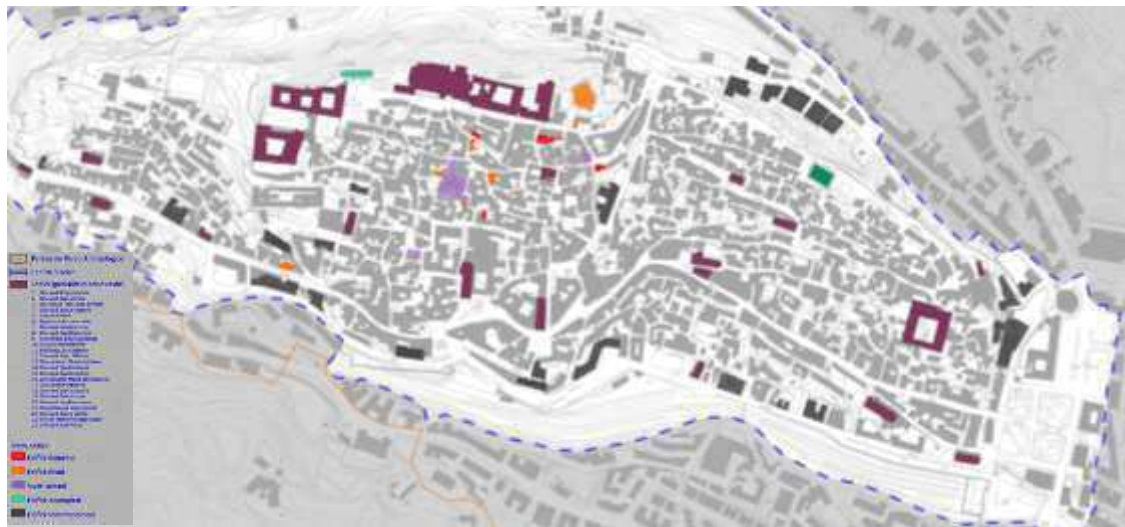


Fig. 1: Girgenti. Elaborated by L. Vitellaro (Graduate thesis in Architecture, University of Palermo)

Girgenti needs some strategies for its sustainable local development that causes the city to be creative, to restart from its identity, from the difficult orography that characterizes its urban pattern; it's necessary to transform it in a more livable city and recently, the experience of study, design and realization of *Wayfinding Agrigento* has had this goal.

This project "Wayfinding Agrigento", realized in 2017 by an Association¹, consists in the planning and implementation of a system that allows a better use, knowledge and enhancement of the urban fabric and the historical/artistic emergencies of Girgenti, historic center of the city of Agrigento.

The idea aims to trigger the recovery of the identity by the inhabitants and also acts as a lever to stimulate cultural tourism, activating a self-sustainable economic activity. A strategy of re-activating the historical fabric of Girgenti, that re-starts from its abandoned spaces, from its disused architecture, from it's complex orography, from it's urban fabric.

The project consisted in identifying and designing of thematic itineraries (Fig. 2) that allow citizens, tourists and patrons to choose pedestrian routes that lead them to know, visit and appreciate the historical fabric of the City.

Inhabitants, tourists and city users, in this way, can "live" the streets and the squares, open public spaces.

Itineraries defined through mapping routes and sites, captions and indications signals - on the one hand - and the use of multimedia technology (QR codes that connect to the database on a website) - on the other.

Panels placed in strategic locations in the city allow the user to have:

- an intuitive guide to follow with the three suggested itineraries and the relative travel times, added to the following thematic routes;
- scientific information in graphical and didactic formats on the sites/points of interest;
- easy access (via smartphone) to a database that can be implemented with historical / architectural / landscape and current information on each route, individual sites.

To guide the re-discovering of the historic urban fabric, have been defined two distinguishing paths, that crossing each others made a third one, dedicated to Pirandello's places.

¹ The project has realized (2017) from Lions Club Agrigento Host (President Avv. G. Ilardo) to celebrate the first Centenario of the Lions International Club Foundation. Wayfinding has been approved and has been had the support from different local Institutions: the Municipality of Agrigento, the University of Palermo (Agrigento site), the Archaeological Park of the Valles of the Temples and others. The project has been realized by a team of architects: S. Augello, S. Gueli e J.B. Reyes (with the scientific coordination of Valeria Scavone).

1 - The "long" route allows how to go into the alleys of the historical city to appreciate its architectural and landscape qualities, but also sounds and smells, in order to revitalize parts of the less frequented historical fabric.

It is expected to last for about two hours (walking distance, round trip, considering a walk of about 3Km/h in consideration of the orographic trend) to which will be added the time dedicated to stop at each site.

2 - The "short" route provides for a smoother and faster walk that highlights the historical-architectural heritage but also panoramic views. Expected to last for about half an hour (of walking distance, round trip, considering a pace of about 5 Km/h.), which will be added to the time spent in each site.

3 - The "Pirandello" path, finally, marked with red symbols, allows instead, in about an hour to know the places narrated by Luigi Pirandello in his written production.

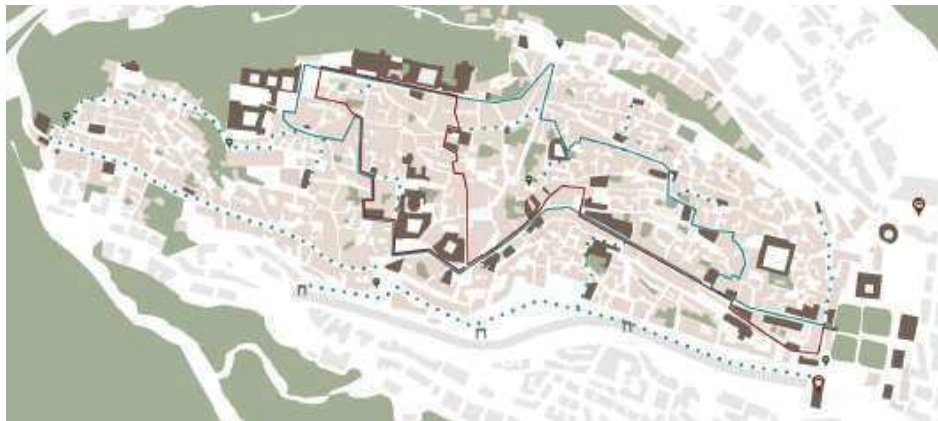


Fig. 2: Wayfinding. Elaborated by S. Augello, S. Gueli, J. B. Reyes (Wayfinding Agrigento team)

The paths suggested are connected with a web site that can also (through Google Analytics) analyze the city users movements, in the historical center, to plan services and public urban "gears" for the community.

The project, as planned, can be easily implemented and improved in the future on the basis of specific needs by the city users (tourists and inhabitants).

4. Effects and prospects

Even if Italy is still awaiting the ratification of the Convention on the value of the cultural heritage for the Council of Europe society (signed in Faro in 2005), it is believed that the process of shared and participatory valorisation hoped for is already coming true. And initiatives like Wayfinding Agrigento - based on the synergy between private institutions and associations that consider the role of cultural heritage as a priority to promote sustainable development that leads to an increase in the quality of life in the cities – should bear fruit in the long term, especially for the new generations, to whom it will the task of managing the planned transformations of cities and territories that lead to "processes of economic, political, social and cultural development and planning of land use" [5] based on cultural heritage.

The concrete application of the article n.5, according to which "anyone alone or collectively has the right to contribute to the enrichment of cultural heritage", has been achieved with the promotion of the bass of an association that wanted to make a process of identification, study, interpretation, protection, conservation and presentation of cultural heritage. Citizens become protagonists of "actions to improve access to cultural heritage, in particular for young people and disadvantaged people, in order to raise awareness of its value, on the need to conserve and preserve it and on the benefits that can derive from it" (article n.12).

In the hope of generating a "cultural dividend" [11] of the conservation and valorisation policies of the archaeological, architectural, historical-artistic and landscape heritage, similar project initiatives indicate the path to follow: through partnerships between the private sector and civil society, activating the widest range of funding for new policies, urban planning, projects and cultural infrastructures. Because culture doesn't has to be only for an *elite*, but for all. It has to begin a raw nerve of development. In fact, when Kevin Lynch wrote about *wayfinding* that it was not for tourists but for inhabitants, who daily lives in that place.

To nourish the new alliance between Heritage and Creativity [11] it is necessary an urban, human and territorial environment capable of triggering the new actions able to strengthen the cultural armor. The existence of a rooted cultural structure and a creative ecosystem are necessary conditions to start a process of culture-based renaissance for a territory of its community. This community, for example, could also (in synergy with this project) activate the Storytelling process: in many parts of China, storytelling is commonly used to pass on knowledge and share collective memory [24].

Such kind of approach could renew the attention to the ordinary and the marginalized, while this process could begin a common journey using a participatory public process.

Town planning must find "its own public role, emerging from the condition of simple accompaniment of the trajectories drawn by the market and economic forces". To do so it must not "be alone" instead must building "new alliances" with different disciplines [28]. Looking for an intermediate language to build a dialogue among the knowledges, but such alliances must also concern with the community that is formed by individual citizens and the world of Associations.

It is believed that small and timely actions, such as those proposed, can cure the redemption of a community's cultural identity and trigger the revitalization not only of the affected area but of the area surrounding it, in a beneficial and pervasive effect.

This experience of re-activation of a historic urban landscape and its community, Wayfinding Agrigento, can become replicable in other contexts to produce and distribute the cultural dividend. Territorial planning, urban planning and urban policies must have the capacity to transform the numerous "islands of excellence" of the Sicilian cultural and landscape armor. Starting from the awareness of the identity value of cultural heritage, we consider that the urban landscape can become "connective tissue, a unifying thread of the various elements of cultural heritage" [32]. A thread that triggers a process of "collective" rebirth in order to protect and conserve the *genius loci*, concretizing "the essence in ever-new historical contexts" [25].

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