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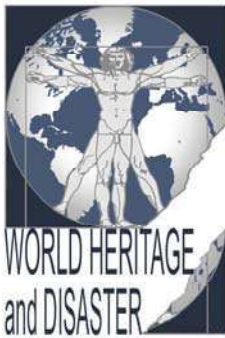


WORLD HERITAGE
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Knowledge, Culture and Representation

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The promotion of the historical, cultural, and landscape heritage - Active citizenship.

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Abstract (ID 206)

In Italy, the management of the historic, artistic, cultural and landscape heritage and the issues related to its conservation and sustainability are an increasingly urgent issue to discuss, especially in light of the economic crisis of recent years. The policy, in the past, has focused mainly on large restorations, neglecting investments in conservation, an improved accessibility to the heritage, the dissemination of good practices for the protection and maintenance of the same, the enhancement of the landscape. Moreover, to make matters worse, the continuous risk of deterioration, caused by environmental conditions of the context in which the assets are located, and the lack of appropriate forms of prevention of natural disasters, make the situation even more critical. This study, through the literature and comparison of certain urban realities - Italian and European - aims to present a path towards active citizenship, in which underutilized public spaces and abandoned buildings are transformed, redeveloped and requalified. Virtuous examples of planning, protection, and enhancement achieved through collaboration among the different social actors, public and private, where the application of good management practices, conservation and development of the historic, cultural and landscape heritage has produced well-being to the community and has increased the economic development and tourism to the city.

Keywords: citizenship, participation, historical heritage, accessibility.

1. Introduction

The urban and territorial policies of the last decades and the global financial crisis have caused considerable social, political, economic and cultural changes in urban centers. These changes have prompted the city to rethink territorial functions, developing new synergies between public and private, to rearrange living space according to the current demands of the citizens. Today, in fact, urban planning meets the new needs of the community through the application of participatory planning models, more open and expanded - *urban local governance* - which begins from the bottom [1].

A planning that, focusing attention on citizens, adapts to the changes of the city, gives new environmental and social quality to degraded areas and peripheries, recovers abandoned public spaces, limits urban sprawl, reduces the environmental impact, respects the landscape and the surrounding territory, and develops the economy [2, 3, 4]. In summary, it deals with the implementation of participatory democratic models where, through dialogue and consultation with stakeholders, civic culture is integrated with political and expert knowledge, where collaboration between administration and communities permits a switch from "deciding" to that of "doing" [5, 6, 7, 8, 9]. The population thus becomes an active part in local planning and is considered the bearer of skills, resources as well as needs. In this scenario, it is essential to raise awareness of the citizens, as the principal users of assets, towards the construction of a sense of legality, towards the development of an ethics of responsibility for the historical, artistic, cultural, and landscape heritage, towards the promotion of active pathways of citizenship for the improvement of their living environment. Principles of fundamental importance for the construction of a different future for our cities through which the consumption of soil is halted and quality and identity are returned to urban centers. The secret is to see the city with different eyes, to use more efficient and environmentally sustainable transport

systems, to rethink the management of urban centers and peripheries, to invest financial resources for the protection and enhancement of these assets, as indicated since 1948 by article 9 of our Constitution, and subsequently explained by Legal Decree no. 83 of 31/05/2014 and by Law No. 104 of 29/04/2014 [10]. Unfortunately, however, some studies show that Italy, compared to other European countries, is one of the last in the ranking of investment in the protection and enhancement of cultural heritage and cultural activities [11, 12, 13] (Fig. 1). A limitation of the right to the beauty and history of this country, for the citizens of today and for future generations.

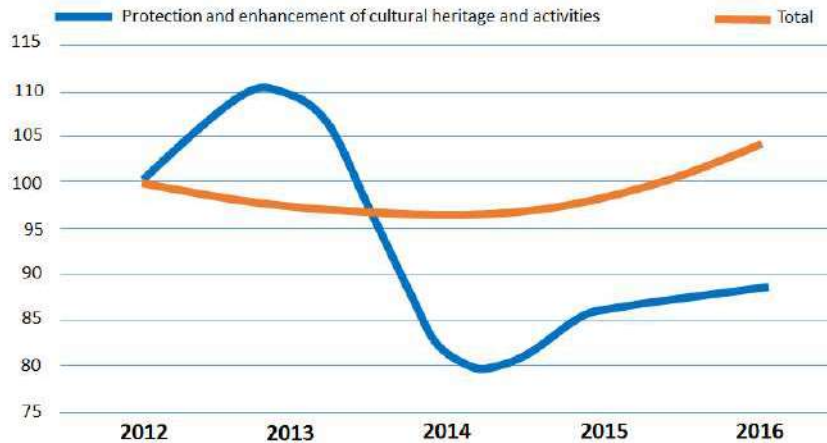


Fig. 1: ISTAT 2016. Total expenditure of the central government for the mission of protection and enhancement of heritage and cultural and landscape activities. Years 2012-2016. Numbers Based Indexes 2012=100.

2. Material and immaterial heritage regenerated

The examples illustrated below describe active citizenship pathways undertaken in regions and countries with different histories, traditions, practices and customs, but with a common goal: improving the quality of life of citizens (Fig. 2). Cities with different urban renewal projects undertaken thanks to civic leadership, the foresight of administrators sensitive to the issue, the efforts of cultural associations and individuals who, in their small way, are trying to improve urban spaces in which they live. Our attention starts from the study of two European cities, Barcelona and Berlin, symbol of innovation and change, then moves to Italy in Turin, continues to Ferrara, moves from Brindisi to reach the extreme south of Sicily with the city of Favara.



Fig. 2: The locations of Barcelona, Berlin, Turin, Ferrara, Brindisi, Favara.

2.1 Barcelona - New opportunities for development and urban planning in social vocation

At the end of the last century, some European cities, as a result of major events such as the World's Fair, the Olympic Games, or the reuse of brownfield sites, have changed their urban structure through urban regeneration interventions to boost the development of tourism and the economy. In this scenario, the grand metropolis Barcelona, the capital of Catalonia, was one of the European cities that, more than others, has been able to use the opportunity to redevelop its urban fabric with many actions, becoming a true world-renowned *brand*. Its development, in the period between the fall of the

dictatorship of Francisco Franco and the beginning of the 21st century, was marked by work for the 1992 Olympic Games, which took place right inside the city. The so-called “*Barcelona model*” [14, 15] - characterized by moments of comparison with residents and participatory democracy - has fostered a series of urban fabric renewal initiatives and has successfully carried out projects for transforming public spaces and the road system [16]. Above all, we refer to the project named *Superilla*, formed by grouping blocks into limited traffic zones. The goal is to improve the quality of life of people through the configuration of new living spaces for residents, where the streets are dedicated to pedestrians. In fact, the idea of macro blocks, dates back to 1987 with the work of Salvador Rueda - Director of the Agency of Urban Ecology for the city – which then materialized in 1993 with interventions carried out in the area of El Born. After this followed the works built in 2005 in the small Gràcia district, called *the neighborhood with soul*, characterized by the extravagant and colorful artistic buildings. And still, in 2016, in the Poblenou zone we should also mention the redevelopment of the old city street Carrer de Pere IV. On this street we face degraded and dilapidated buildings of industrial heritage as well as new construction promoted by the urban plan of 2000, the result of real estate speculation. Today, Barcelona has 8 *Superilles*, characterized by a new way of enjoying the spaces and streets. The idea, in fact, is to drive traffic - both public and private - outside the perimeter of the blocks, while the interior is intended for pedestrians, residents and bicycles. An opportunity to incentivize sustainable mobility, productivity, increase staging areas for passersby, and green space [1]. Inside the blocks cars drive on a single lane at a speed of 10 km per hour, with the aim of reducing to a minimum vehicle traffic. The parking spaces in the vicinity of the crossings have been eliminated, freeing about 2,000 square meters for the exclusive use of pedestrians. The internal roads of the *Superilles*, which are less noisy, more *green* and more aesthetically pleasing, become more accessible places to users allowing them to better know and appreciate the heritage present (Fig. 3).



Fig. 3: Barcelona – Examples of urban development.

2.2 Berlin – From degradation to refunctionalization

Berlin is one of the European capitals that best preserves the traces of our contemporary history. Despite the shadows of a cumbersome past, it has generated, from the 90s onwards, a surprising revival thanks to the creative impulse of an enterprising population that was able to adapt to change [17, 18, 19, 20]. Thus, among the degraded areas of now abandoned factories and the buildings left behind by the inhabitants of East Berlin after 1989, have arisen workshops of artists, cultural centers, self-managed public spaces or those managed by individuals, with the intent to redevelop entire areas of the city. In this regard we would like to call attention to three relevant examples. The first, in the Mitte district, is the Tacheles art house (closed since 2012 and today no longer usable), reference point for the underground scene in Berlin with study rooms and laboratories in its interior that welcomed artists and tourists [21, 22, 23]. The second, in the Marzahn district, is the Alte Börse project: a vast abandoned area, originally destined for the storage of livestock, then the site of prisons and barracks during the Soviet occupation, it was redeveloped thanks to the sensitivity of an individual who invested economically in the place to create an artistic and cultural hub, a reference point for the people of the neighborhood. The third example concerns the redevelopment of an old disused railway station in central Gleisdreieck Park, which involves “*filling in*” the area left by the old railroad tracks. Gleisdreieck, in fact, means “*triangle of tracks*” in German, and was the largest and most famous railway crossing in Berlin, where trains coming from the north-south met those coming from the east-west line. With the construction of the Wall and the subsequent division of the city, the layover was gradually abandoned and decommissioned. Since the late 90s however, the area became the object of public and private interests so that, around it, new commercial and residential complexes were built.

Since 2011, as a result of the redevelopment work carried out by the LOIDL design team the Park has become a fascinating place that combines past and present, ideal for relaxing, spending free time and playing with children on the lawns. A large area to be walked on foot, by bike or on the elevated metro lines that pass above and allow you to admire the scenery [24, 25, 26] (Fig. 4).



Fig. 4: Berlin - Examples of urban development.

2.3 Turin and the Network of Neighborhood Houses

Over the past decade in Turin common spaces and social and cultural labs were opened where one can meet people and develop activities. Places where collective thoughts and feelings are expressed, that start experiences of participation, involvement and self-organization. These spaces called *Casa del Quartiere* (Neighborhood Houses) [27, 28] were born at the end of the Nineties, from the programming proposals and implementation of innovative urban policies and the stimulation of the European institutions that have pushed the city to adopt new approaches. It deals with public use areas that exceed sectoral policies and work with citizens to put centers and peripheries into communication. Turin collects these stimuli and in May 2007, in a peripheral suburb of the city, Cascina Roccafranca, the first *Neighborhood House* was born. In the following years, new experiences developed that affected other areas of the city, called the *Network of neighborhood houses* with different paths and stories but with a common basis [29, 30]. The locations became spaces for citizenship and were redeveloped through collaboration between public institutions, banks, social enterprises, associations and citizens. The *Network of neighborhood houses* include: public bathrooms of via Agliè, Barrito, Neighborhood houses of San Salvatio, Vallette, Casa nel Parco, Hub Cecchi Point, +SpazioQuattro, and Cascina Roccafranca. The latter was opened after a major renovation carried out with funding from the European Urban2 Program. The project is the result of a participatory planning process that involved associations, workers and citizens of the area, returning to the neighborhood a space of 2,500 square meters within which citizens can meet, develop activities and projects, and socialize. It is an innovative civic center, meeting place to foster the development of meaningful relationships between people, designed to make citizens protagonists, where the most significant values are those of participation and acceptance. The Cascina Roccafranca is an atypical foundation that holds together the municipal administration of Turin and 46 different associations, responds to the needs and interests of different age groups, offering both simple opportunities to spend free time, and real opportunities to actively participate in the social life of the neighborhood. The foundation allows the sharing of ideas and projects and to feel part of the community. Ultimately it is a typical example of active citizenship (Fig. 5).



Fig. 5: Turin - Examples of urban development.

2.4 Ferrara – Democratic paths of knowledge

Ferrara is a lovely city of art and culture, a Unesco heritage site since 1995, and an example of a city that has retained its historical and artistic beauty over time, despite the bombing during the Second World War. Today, following the path of reconstruction and economic recovery, it can boast a high quality of life thanks to a lively environment rich in cultural activities, art exhibits, a fine concert season, sporting events, the Buskers Festival – an International festival of street musicians - and the oldest Palio in Italy. It is a city that has managed to bring together public and private resources through participatory dialogue. Among the major redevelopment interventions we should mention is the Covered Market of Santo Stefano, between via Boccacanalè and piazza Cortevècchia: a place full of untapped potential, collective heritage of the city, fascinating architectural container, and an ideal site for the development of creative cultural enterprises and a prized productive sector [31, 32]. It was a recovery based on the experience gained by following the examples of Bologna (the Middle Market) or in Milan. Inside the Covered Market is a focus on the enhancement of existing business activities through the organization of cultural events. Other examples of active citizenship include the synergistic action between the public administration and private entities, composed of the complex of former Enel buildings (transformed into commercial and reception uses as well as to residential and office spaces), the reutilization of the former Ristori cinema (transformed into a residential and commercial complex with the inclusion of a space for public events), the redevelopment of piazza Cortevècchia, once the site of the fish market, now used as a parking lot. Interventions that follow the pattern of the Urban Center [33, 34, 35], aimed at an encounter with residents to help them live together with different functionality and smooth out conflicts (Fig. 6).



Fig. 6: Ferrara - Covered Market - Examples of urban development.

2.5 San Vito dei Normanni (Brindisi) - Idea incubator and social space

In the heart of Puglia in San Vito dei Normanni, a town of fifteen thousand inhabitants in the province of Brindisi, an old winery – Dentice di Frasso – fallen into disuse and abandoned for decades, has been transformed into a new public space for meeting, creativity and social innovation [36]. The center, run by a group of local businesses and associations, is a place of social innovation where ideas, tools, difficulties and skills can all be shared. The spaces are dedicated to offices, laboratories, classrooms, rehearsal rooms, exhibition galleries, and performance spaces. It is a modular space, a place so flexible that it can be, at the same time, a space for concerts and a fitness facility, a research laboratory and an art gallery. In fact, on the inside, we also find a play center for young children, a carpentry shop, a music school, a photography collective, a library, a bar, a radio, as well as XLive, and outdoor space for concerts and parties (Fig.7).



Fig. 7: San Vito dei Normanni - Brindisi - Examples of urban development.

The redevelopment of the site began in 2010 following a regional competition where funds were allocated for the recovery of the old winery (a place full of weeds and a three thousand square meter building with vaulted ceilings and a fifteen thousand square meter park) that the municipality used as vehicle storage for the collection of urban solid waste. Due to the sensitivity of citizens, associations and enterprises, a construction site was opened that involved the territory and transformed the entire area. They created a workshop animated by a community of architects, designers, builders, craftsmen and enthusiasts who produce, in relation to projects and activities, temporary re-functioning and low cost solutions inspired by practices of local recycling of materials and the use of local knowledge and

DIY culture [37]. Thus a real community was built: a participatory workshop and urban democracy where meeting each other becomes a professional and economic opportunity. Among the future goals of the Center is the creation of a line of interior design, a world music academy, and a theater and rehearsal room.

2.6 Favara – A museological path between ancient *dammusi*

In one of the most southern parts of Sicily we find Favara, a town in the province of Agrigento, about 10 km from the Valley of the Temples, a Unesco heritage site. The city, of Arab origin, rich in history and architectural heritage of great value, with a particularly rundown urban fabric, has in recent years undergone a major transformation, as well as an increased presence of visitors and tourists from all over the world. A small portion of its historic center, partly inhabited, called the Bentivegna courtyard, characterized by seven small courtyards one inside the other, has undergone a radical change through the urban regeneration project implemented by Farm Cultural Park (contemporary cultural and touristic center) that has changed both the look and the identity. The small housing stock, consisting of *dammusi* and *case terrane*, has been transformed into contemporary art galleries and a residence for artists from around the world. The project began in 2010 by the investment of a private citizen with the goal of enhancing a site of historic interest and strengthening the tourist circuit through contemporary art and the languages of design and modern architecture [38]. Originally planned to restore some dilapidated housing, some residential buildings were converted into exhibition halls and a museum itinerary that is usable both indoors and outdoors was created. The exhibition halls, in fact, alternate and blend with houses still in use, allowing residents to truly participate in the cultural renaissance of the neighborhood. The spaces are available to the inhabitants as well as visitors. Farm is a workshop, a construction site for social innovation, an area where a community of citizens and creatives process problems firsthand and develop intervention strategies, trying to maximize resources, to reuse, regenerate, re-interpret, revitalize, and nurture. Thanks to the Farm, other business activities have arisen in adjacent areas, generating a real social, cultural, and economic renewal process. A rebirth entrusted to the specificities of the territory, its interweaving of nature and history, and the richness of flavors and traditions (Fig.8).



Fig. 8: Favara - Examples of urban development.

3. Conclusions

Urban space is not characterized only by physical locations, by properties and by streets, but by the close relationship that exists between those who live it in everyday life, who think about it and who design it as a space to improve and regenerate. A condition that affects not only urban planners and architects but also those movements of active citizenship which may affect the governance of public

affairs, especially when the ruling class and local policy has proved inadequate. To regenerate an area and enhance its heritage means to discover the potential and its resources, reinterpret them with innovative and lasting experiences that involve all sectors of society [39, 40, 41]. To rebuild the social and economic fabric of urban centers should start from present goods, from the history of the city, from the relationship with the authorities. The question of the relationship between public and private is, in fact, a decisive point, especially at this moment with the structural crisis we are experiencing. Concern for families forced to flee their homes is joined by a concern for the collapse of dilapidated buildings, caused by lack of maintenance and the securing of unsafe buildings for lack of funds. So to redevelop, we have to put the different actors in the area together with stakeholders, to foster a greater civic sense among citizens, to attract public and private funding, to create economic conditions, to bring international experience together with the national and local into a network [42, 43, 44]. We are aware that the cultural, historical and landscape heritage of cities and territories, is the extraordinary material and immaterial heritage of Italian history: a great asset to be safeguarded, protected and passed on to future generations; and, in their own way, the urban realities described in this paper are trying to do just that.

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