OLIMPIA NIGLIO

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Cultural Heritage
New Perspectives

Cultural Diplomacy & Heritage *is an interdisciplinary scientific project that aims to promote the exchange, mutual connection and understanding of academic research, ideas, projects, and many other aspects of culture that characterize individual nations and their communities.*

Culture is the most important factor for peace and stability of the world and constitutes the set of values that give meaning to the community and therefore culture includes all aspects through which a nation dialogues with other cultures. The word "heritage" defines the heritage of knowledge that opens cultural dialogues and therefore diplomatic projects. The word "heritage," first of all, encourages the importance of enhancing the "human heritage".

But the culture of a nation includes everything: diplomacy, legislation, art, heritage, education, political choices, industrial development, communication, security, financial and economic development, relations with citizens, development policies.

In this complex system, Cultural Diplomacy represents an exchange in several directions through which a community takes over its soul, hence its own heritage which creates a system of dialogue and participation fundamental to development and sustainability of nations.

Culture in all its manifestations becomes an essential instrument of the identity of a people and represents the material and intangible heritage fundamental to constructively address the objectives of globalization and contemporary.

Cultural Diplomacy & Heritage *aims to create a network of intercultural connection, between East and West, where the heritage of individual nations becomes opportunities for knowledge, sharing and comparison for the development of individual communities.*

Cultural Diplomacy & Heritage *welcomes scientific and interdisciplinary proposals aimed at building this significant sharing of knowledge for an inclusive and participatory future. All those research proposals that will analyze specific issue interconnecting different disciplines will be welcome.*

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Introduction
Why New Perspectives?

In recent decades there has been a marked increase in scientific research into the different expressions of cultural heritage and the transformation and destruction of this. Much research has highlighted how cultural heritage embodies the ethical values of individuals and defines the identities of communities.

Veysel Apaydin, in an interesting book published in 2020, affirms as the research in these last years:

> has also highlighted how the elimination of individual and group memory is an important underlying cause of cultural heritage destruction. The destruction of cultural memory through destruction of the material culture of the past and present has been used to oppress individuals, groups, and communities in order to maintain power. This has been a common tool in many undemocratic nation-states that aim to establish hegemony over minority groups; it is frequently seen during conflicts between ethnic and religious groups, during genocides, sectarian conflict and in wartime. In many parts of the world, cultural heritage has also been destroyed or transformed through large-scale construction projects such as dams, railways, etc., in order to develop resources and create profit. In the post capitalist-era heritage, and therefore memory, has become a selling point and nostalgia something to be consumed, which further contributes to vanishing heritage and memory (Apaydin 2020).

Precisely post-capitalism has commodified cultural heritage: everything is measured according to the number of visitors and tickets sold. Museums are no longer interesting for the works of art they contain; the archaeological sites are not relevant to the history they have handed down; theaters are no longer places to listen to music.

Cultural heritage has been diminished in relation to its meaning and values. International laws and recommendations have also not been enough to clarify all the content preserved in our heritage.

Many actions have favored the missing of the historical memory and of the contents of the cultural heritage.

In the last Encyclical Letter *Fratelli tutti* of the Holy Father Francis (October 3, 2020) to points 13 and 14 affirms:

13. As a result, there is a growing loss of the sense of history, which leads to even further breakup. A kind of "deconstructionism", whereby human freedom claims to create everything starting from zero, is making headway in today's culture. The one thing it leaves in its wake is the drive to limitless consumption and expressions of empty individualism. Concern about this led me to offer the young some advice. "If someone tells young people to ignore their history, to reject the experiences of their elders, to look down on the past and to look forward to a future that he himself holds out, doesn't it then become easy to draw them along so that they only do what he tells them? He needs the young to be shallow, uprooted and distrustful, so that they can trust only in his promises and act according to his plans. That is how various ideologies operate: they destroy (or deconstruct) all differences so that they can reign unopposed. To do so, however, they need young people who have no use for history, who spurn the spiritual and human riches inherited from past generations and are ignorant of everything that came before them".

14. These are the new forms of cultural colonization. Let us not forget that "peoples that abandon their tradition and, either from a

craze to mimic others or to foment violence, or from unpardonable negligence or apathy, allow others to rob their very soul, end up losing not only their spiritual identity but also their moral consistency and, in the end, their intellectual, economic and political independence". One effective way to weaken historical consciousness, critical thinking, the struggle for justice and the processes of integration is to empty great words of their meaning or to manipulate them. Nowadays, what do certain words like democracy, freedom, justice or unity really mean? They have been bent and shaped to serve as tools for domination, as meaningless tags that can be used to justify any action.

These concerns are the manifestation of actions that have been taking place on the territories for many decades through wars, cultural neo-colonialism, commercialization of heritage, and the removal of people from their identity values.

In many countries, school curricula do not include any discipline aimed at studying the history of local culture. Cultural heritage is considered only an instrument at the service of tourism and therefore of foreign visitors and not of citizens.

This separation between local communities and political interests has led to heavy identity losses. Academic and institutional elitism has also fostered further rifts between communities and cultural policies no longer in favor of the people's education but in favor of the economy.

In past years we have seen the building of many walls, realized for different reasons: political, economic, cultural, and all these walls, tangible and intangible, have contributed to reduce educational programs and favorite the loss of the cultural values.

In 1982 the Declaration on Cultural Policies in Mexico City has declared that it is "culture" that gives man the ability to reflect upon himself. It is culture that makes us specifically human, rational beings, endowed with critical judgment and a sense of moral commitment. It is through culture that we discern values and make choices. It is through culture that man expresses

himself, becomes aware of himself, recognizes his incomplete-
ness, questions his own achievements, seeks untiringly for new
meanings, and creates works through which he transcends his
limitations. Without culture we cannot build the future of the
countries and a better world, because without culture we can-
not foster "ecological citizenship" (Duxbury, Kangas, De Beuke-
laer 2017). The challenge for cultural policy is to help forge and
guide actions along co-existing and overlapping strategic paths
towards sustainable development. Today this concept of "eco-
logical citizenship" is fundamental and helps us to reflect on the
cultural value of the world's life.

Observing the world and the different cultures we under-
stand that this is a strategic exercise to appreciate the impor-
tance of new perspectives for the cultural heritage. The pandem-
ic situation has been an interesting opportunity to regenerate
these perspectives and to put the community at the center of the
decisions.

Cultural heritage has been created by people and it has been
created for people.

The contribution to cultural heritage is important and the
community has a role particularly important: from the creation
to the management. Communities contain capacities and assets
that outlast political or professional structures and complement
specialist knowledge and skills. A people-centered approach har-
nesses these capacities in order to offer long-term conservation
and co-management for the good of the heritage and for the good
of the community. In this context, people-centered approaches
do not consider heritage as simply an isolated entity that re-
quires resources for its conservation and management. Instead,
heritage is seen as having the potential to play an active role
in communities and bring benefits to people, thereby demon-
strating that heritage is meaningful to society, as well as gaining
society's support for its on-going use and protection. Engaging
communities is about strengthening their ability to participate
meaningfully in the process of making conservation and man-

agement decisions for themselves and their heritage. Communities can be communities of place (those who live within or near to heritage), communities of interest (those who feel a connection to or are interested in heritage), or communities of practice (those who work with heritage).

Another strand of people-centered approaches to conservation is the *Living Heritage Approach* where living heritage is characterized by the ongoing use of heritage by its associated community for the purpose for which it was originally created. Living heritage is strongly linked to a community and is therefore subject to a continuous process of evolution, as change is embraced as part of the living nature of the heritage place. This maintains continuity of community connections (as expressed both in terms of tangible and intangible heritage) and those connected communities take responsibility to maintain their heritage by traditional or established means. Furthermore, such heritage is linked to or has relevance to the contemporary life of the community who endeavor to draw various benefits from it (Court, Wijesuriya 2015).

For all these reasons, through different academic experiences realized in the world and thank dialogue with scholars of different countries, this book aims to analyze the people-centered approaches and the culture of the sites. This research project has focused on cultural values, hearing people and scholars of different cultures, to elaborate on new perspectives on cultural heritage. Thanks to the specific formulation of international academic courses, between America, Asia, and Europe, it has been possible to reflect on the experiences and resource people have also being pooled to improve the understanding of future challenges and opportunities of the cultural heritage.

So, important social changes in these last years have allowed us to analyze new paradigms of the Cultural Heritage and to open new perspectives. Professor Wolfgang Welschthe, a German philosopher, affirms that the separatist idea of cultures has been surpassed through cultures' external networking. In fact, the cultures today are extremely interconnected with each other. Lifestyles no

longer end at the borders of national cultures, but go beyond these, are found in the same way in other cultures. The way of life for the community is no longer Italian or Japanese, but rather European or Global. The new forms of entanglement are a consequence of migratory processes, as well as of worldwide material and immaterial communications systems and economic interdependencies and dependencies (Carroll 2004).

Consequently, the same basic problems or the progress of the knowledge today appear also in cultures or in studying areas once considered being fundamentally different: for example, the human rights, ecology, education, economy, law, ethics, etc.; these are only some of the topic that today we must analyze among the paradigms of the Cultural Heritage.

This book aims some reflections born from international seminars and that have had an important role in the reformulation of new perspectives for the definition of the Cultural Heritage. In fact, the new conceptions of the culture are not just descriptive or abstract concepts, but operative concepts. So, the understanding of these new perspectives is an active and important factor in our cultural life for a correct transcultural approach and so for a constructive dialogue with humanity.

References

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Carroll J. (2004), *Art at the Limits of Perception: The Aesthetic Theory of Wolfgang Welsch*, Peter Lang AG, Bern.

Court S., Wijesuriya G. (2015), *People-Centred Approaches to the Conservation of Cultural Heritage: Living Heritage*, ICCROM, Rome.

Duxbury N., Kangas A. and De Beukelaer C. (2017), "Cultural policies for sustainable development: four strategic paths", in *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, 23(2), 214-230.

Key notes and International Seminars realized between April and December 2020.

1. Italy, Università del Salento, Lecce (April 2020)
2. Italy, Accademia di Belle Arti di Venezia (April 2020)
3. Colombia, Universidad Nacional de Colombia (April 2020);
4. Peru, Factor Cultura, Icomos Peru (April 2020)
5. Peru, Ministero della Cultura, Lima (May 2020)
6. Peru, Factor Cultura, Icomos Peru (May 2020)
7. Japan, Otemon Gakuin University (June 2020)
8. Italy, Università Kore di Enna (June 2020)
9. Mexico, Universidad Nacional Autonma de México (June 2020)
10. Chile, Universidad del Chile (June 2020)
11. Colombia, Universidad de Ibagué (July 2020)
12. Italy, Università di Camerino (July 2020)
13. Peru, Factor Cultura, Icomos Peru (July 2020)
14. Peru, *Reconnecting with your culture* (July 2020)
15. Colombia, Pontificia Universidad Javeriana (August 2020)
16. Colombia, Universidad de Bogotà Jorge Tadeo Lozano (August 2000)
17. Mexico, Universidad Nacional Autonma de México (August 2020)
18. Chile, Scuola Italiana Arturo dell'Oro (August 2020)
19. Colombia, Secretaria de Cultura, Fusagasugá (September 2020)
20. Colombia, Universidad Catolica de Pereira (September 2020)
21. Colombia, Universidad de Ibagué (September 2020)
22. Colombia, Universidad La Salle (September 2020)
23. Peru, Ministero della Cultura, Lima (September 2020)
24. Colombia, Universidad de Bogotà Jorge Tadeo Lozano (September 2000)
25. Colombia, Pontificia Universidad Javeriana de Bogotá (September 2020)
26. Colombia, Sociedad Colombiana de Arquitectos (September 2020)
27. Ecuador, Instituto Nacional Patrimonio Cultural (September 2020)
28. India, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi (September 2020)
29. Italy, Università di Pavia (September 2020)
30. France, ICOMOS – UNESCO (September 2020)
31. Italy, Politecnico di Milano (September 2020)
32. Japan, Otemon Gakuin University (September 2020)
33. Italy, *Istituto Valorizzazione Abbazie storiche Toscana*, Montepulciano (October 2020)
34. Italy, *Italian Smart Community*, Torino, Museo dell'Automobile (October 2020)
35. Panama, Istituto Don Bosco, Arraiján (October 2020)
36. Chile, Casa Montessori Cerro Alegre (October 2020)

37. Colombia, Universidad de Bogotà Jorge Tadeo Lozano (October 2020)
38. Venezuela, *Reconnecting with your culture* (October 2020)
39. Colombia, Pontificia Universidad Javeriana de Bogotá (October 2020)
40. Argentina, World Cities Day (October 2020)
41. Canada, ICOMOS America (November 2020)
42. Argentina, Red Argentina del Paisaje Buenos Aires (November 2020)
43. Italy, Università di Ferrara (November 2020)
44. Spain, Universitat Politècnica de València (November 2020)
45. Italy, International Meeting Cultural Routes, Lucca (November 2020)
46. Egypt, German University in Cairo (November 2020)
47. Italy, Ordine degli Architetti P.P.C. della Provincia di Rimini (November 2020)
48. Colombia, Universidad del Atlántico (December 2020)
49. Italy, Fondazione Grimaldi, Napoli (December 2020)
50. Egypt, German University in Cairo (December 2020)