3RD INTERNATIONAL LECTURES CYCLE DAY

VISUALISING AND DEFENDING VALUES IN ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE CHANGES

DECEMBER 5th, 2024

REGISTRATION
ZOOM LINK >>

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Scientific Chairs

Dr. Raffaella De Marco [University of Pavia, Italy]

Ph.D., Engineer, Architect, Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellow Researcher at the University of Pavia. Her research specialisation deals with digital documentation strategies and Information Systems on Cultural Heritage, for valorisation and promotion of Heritage and Endangered sites by Virtual Heritage means.

PD. Dr. Izabella Parowicz [European University Viadrina, Germany]

Assistant Professor (PhD), she works at the Chair of Heritage Studies at European University Viadrina in Frankfurt (Oder), Germany, where she coordinates the Master's program "Strategies for European Cultural Heritage." A two-time MSCA Fellow (University of Malta and European University Viadrina), her research focuses on the management and marketing of cultural heritage, as well as intangible heritage.

3rd event of the International Lectures Cycle
"Visualizing and Defending Values in Architectural Heritage Changes"

Scientific Chairs: Dr. Raffaella De Marco, PD Dr. Izabella Parowicz
Organizing Secretariat: Arch. Rola Abu-Hilal

The cycle of lectures intends to address issues on the cultural, social, economic, and archaeological values associated with Architectural Heritage, in particular highlighting the application of digital technologies, from documentation to 3D representation, and the opportunities for dissemination and interaction through narrative digital environments. The study theme defines a dynamic framework for in-depth studies and reflections on Cultural Heritage, where history and community contribute to writing a changing vision between memory and actuality. In this way, the value and significance of Architectural Heritage can be consciously directed towards its understanding, sharing and protection by the civil society.

The third event, organised and moderated by Dr. Raffaella De Marco from the University of Pavia (Italy) and PD Dr. Izabella Parowicz from European University Viadrina (Germany), is organised on 3 panels: "Spirituality", "Conditionality", "Aesthetics", and features international professors and researchers from Italy, Portugal, Poland, Malta, Cyprus and Iraq. Among the presented research, international projects, research activities and innovative actions between academic and professional sectors for the valorisation and interdisciplinary address of Architectural Heritage protection.

For more information about MOEBHIOS project and the lecture cycle:

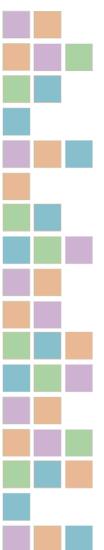moebhioshorizonmsc.
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Program

CEST Time (Rome zone)

Openings

   09:00   Greetings and Introduction

Panel 1
SPIRITUALITY: Bonding religious values within heritage

09:30   **Reframing religious heritage values under secular transition:**
       learning from Portugal's inner landscapes
       Dr. Rolando Volzone
       Institute of Medieval Studies, NOVA University of Lisbon (Portugal)

10:00   **Tangible and intangible religious heritage through the lens of UNESCO: an analysis**
       on the role of architectural techniques in world heritage nomination processes
       Dr. Clizia Franceschini
       University of Bologna (Italy)

10:30   Roundtable with Moderators

11:00   Break

Panel 2
CONDITIONALITY: Challenging and adapting heritage under risk

11:30 **Digital Reconstruction of Built Heritage: Intellectual Property Issues**
Prof. Dr. Piotr Stec
University of Opole (Poland)

12:00 **Combating Illicit Traffic of Cultural Goods in the Digital Era**
Dr. Valentina Vassallo
The Cyprus Institute (Cyprus)

12:30 Roundtable with Moderators

13:00 Break

Panel 3
AESTHETICS: Explaining heritage relations within visual appearance

14:30 **Insights from Valletta**
Dr. Jevon Vella
Institute for the Creative Arts of the Malta College for Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST) (Malta)

15:00 **Fast survey documentation and digital duplicates of fragile contexts: strategies for managing heritage at risk in the inner areas**
Dr. Silvia La Placa
University of Pavia (Italy)

15:30 **GIS and Terrestrial Photogrammetry as methods to tell the story of Al-Tahrir Square in Baghdad, Iraq**
Arch. Fatimah Al-Muqdadi
Mierath lab for Iraqi heritage (Iraq)

16:00 Roundtable with Moderators

16:30 **Closing Remarks**

PANEL 1

SPIRITUALITY: Bonding religious values within heritage

Dr. Rolando Volzone

Institute of Medieval Studies, NOVA University of Lisbon (Portugal)

Reframing religious heritage values under secular transition: learning from Portugal's inner landscapes

For centuries, places of worship have been integral to territorial development, influencing social, economic, ecological, and cultural values. However, the secularization, which has been progressing in Europe since the 19th century, has led to a low rate of utilization and the redundancy (or abandonment) of various religious places.

The communication will debate the dynamics of Christian built religious heritage, focusing on the inner landscape of Alentejo region (southern Portugal). This territory has accommodated a great number of religious built structures. However, more than 30% is currently unused.

To what extent secular transition affects the perceived and tangible values of religious heritage? How the related impacts can be visualized in order to support heritage practices and decision-making processes?

First, the case studies are identified and characterized. Second, the data will be integrated with an analysis of public policies. Finally, the focus will shift to the village of Torrão, the setting of the international project transHERITAGE. In this context, initial efforts have been made to identify the heritage community and gather data on the social, cultural, and symbolic values of religious heritage.

This serves as a testing ground for the creation of an open, online, and continuously updated observatory of Portuguese religious heritage, emphasizing the interconnectedness of religious buildings, communities, and territories. This dynamic platform will facilitate the mapping, analysis, and visualization of actions and decisions, highlighting their potential to generate socio-economic and cultural ripple effects in the future.

Dr. Clizia Franceschini

University of Bologna (Italy)

Tangible and intangible heritage through the lens of UNESCO: an analysis on the role of architectural techniques in world heritage nomination processes

What is the significance and role of religious architectural techniques in their relationship to intangible, tangible heritage and their understanding through the lens of UNESCO?

To answer these questions, it is necessary to look at the subject of architectural construction techniques from the perspective of two different conventions for the protection of cultural heritage. The UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of 2003 values the intangible parts of a culture in conjunction with their representative embodiment in the tangible products of art and architecture and thus raises the problem of the instrumentalization of intangible heritage in comparison to tangible heritage.

On the other side, the 1972 UNESCO Convention for the protection of cultural and natural heritage enhances the role of architectural construction techniques as outstanding examples of architectural ensembles capable of being associated with (religious) living traditions, beliefs, and lyfestiles. In both cases, architectural construction techniques show the inextricable link between material and immaterial heritage. However, the role of architectural construction techniques needs to be better analysed through a re-reading of some UNESCO nomination processes (Old Town of Timbuktu, Four Medieval Monasteries in Kosovo and Metohija, Monasteries of Haghpat and Sanahin, Al-Ibrahimi Mosque and the Old Town of Hebron, Old City of Jerusalem, Temple of Preah Vihear). These are useful instances to shed new light on the use of architectural construction techniques as tools for the enhancement of specific identity, cultural, political and religious traits in global cultural heritage selection processes.

PANEL 2

CONDITIONALITY: Challenging and adapting heritage under risk

Prof. Dr. Piotr Stec

University of Opole (Poland)

Digital Reconstruction of Built Heritage: Intellectual Property Issues

Traditionally, reconstructions of built heritage have been treated as non-creative work, or at least not protected by intellectual property laws. However this traditional approach is more than twenty years old, and needs to be re-examined.

With digital tools used nowadays for heritage reconstruction and with the new ways of presenting the reconstructed buildings and sites, new problems emerge. One is the ownership and more generally – the legal status of datasets used for reconstruction, another one – copryright protection of visual representations of reconstructed objects, in particular these that combine the original structures with, for instance, visual effects created with laser or digital technology.

Finally, digitally reconstructed build heritage can be used in non-traditional contexts; for instance, for marketing purposes, or even as part of digital worlds paysage. This leads us to an uncharted area of law, where both the copyright protection and applicable law can be moot.

Dr. Valentina Vassallo

The Cyprus Institute (Cyprus)

Combating Illicit Traffic of Cultural Goods in the Digital Era

Preservation and conservation of Cultural Heritage are constantly at the centre of the research debate. In recent years, the discussion has largely focused on heritage at risk, both due to anthropogenic and natural causes.

Looting and illicit trafficking of cultural goods is one of the several human-induced hazards affecting the integrity of our cultural patrimony. Indeed, criminal activities frequently target Cultural Heritage sites and artefacts to gain economic profit from their immense value through their illegal trade. Illicit excavations, looting of known or unknown sites and theft from museums or private collections are some of the illegal activities perpetrated against Cultural Heritage. In particular, conflict zones, abandoned or non-protected areas are witness to intense looting activities, theft and illicit trade of Cultural Heritage.

Especially in those areas, the political and social instability or the lack of control facilitates the looting of archaeological sites and the consequent displacement of cultural goods. The situation has been exacerbated in recent years since illegal activities have also been facilitated by the availability of digital and technological tools. Such a change in dynamics has impelled the professionals involved in the Illicit Trafficking Combat (ITC) to fight with the same weapons as the perpetrators and to tackle the problem with effective, multidisciplinary, and technological solutions.

For this reason, within the interdisciplinary research activities of the Andreas Pittas Art Characterization Laboratories (APAC Labs) of the Cyprus Institute, several solutions have been developed and applied to contribute to the fight against illicit trafficking of cultural goods. A series of case studies will be presented, highlighting the development and application of digital, analytical and semantic technologies and the results obtained.

PANEL 3

AESTHETICS: Explaining heritage relations within visual appearance

Dr. Jevon Vella

Institute for the Creative Arts of the Malta College for Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST) (Malta)

Insights from Valletta

Over the past decade, the city has undergone substantial architectural and urban transformations, many driven by its designation as the European Capital of Culture in 2018 (V18). These changes have ignited debates about reconciling the socio-economic growth brought about by these urban regeneration projects, with the cultural and archaeological values of a historical city, thereby maintaining integrity and functionality.

This presentation examines these complexities, focusing on key regeneration projects such as the Parliament Building, the revitalization of the Grandmasters' Palace, the Manoel Theatre, MUZA, and St. John's Co-Cathedral, and the rehabilitation of the Triton Fountain. These projects are evaluated within the framework of seminal ICOMOS charters, such as the Venice Charter (1964), and the Valletta Principles (2011). It examines the extent to which these principles have informed Valletta's approach to heritage management, assessing how well recent projects align with the goal of safeguarding architectural heritage in historic urban landscapes. Focus will be given to the interplay between preserving historic identity and accommodating contemporary needs, emphasizing the tensions and opportunities inherent in managing a dynamic, living heritage site.

The result is a sustainable heritage management framework aligned with global best practices while fostering local identity and practical utility. This comprehensive approach advocates for strategies that respect international conservation principles, ensuring that heritage preservation coexists harmoniously with urban development.

Dr. Silvia La Placa

University of Pavia (Italy)

Fast survey documentation and digital duplicates of fragile contexts: strategies for managing heritage at risk in the inner areas

This presentation explores the initial tests conducted as part of the PRIN 2022 project "GO-IN! diGital platfOrm for INner areas. Interactive virtual platforms for the enhancement of fragile contexts and their cultural heritage". The project focuses on the use of interactive digital platforms to enhance and preserve fragile contexts and their cultural heritage. These methods were applied to the built environment of Stigliano (MT), a small historic center in Basilicata, as part of a pilot study.

Specifically, the presentation discusses the documentation process with fast survey techniques aimed at building metrically reliable 3D models. Field acquisition campaigns were conducted using mobile laser scanners (Blk2Go instrument) and in quote photogrammetric techniques (DJI drones). The datasets obtained were processed individually and then integrated with each other to build a comprehensive database of the survey area. The creation of this duplicate required multiple verifications and validations to obtain a duplicate of urban extent but capable of representing Stigliano's heritage at the architectural level.

This reality-based 3D model of the area is then semantized to be visualized and explored in a 3D geographic information system (GIS) or serve as the basis for a web-based virtual platform. By integrating different types of data, such as historical, architectural, and environmental information, into a unified digital system, the project provides a comprehensive tool for cultural heritage preservation, combining advanced technologies with an interdisciplinary approach to support the long-term sustainability of fragile communities and their cultural assets.

Arch. Fatimah Al-Muqdadi

Mierath lab for Iraqi heritage (Iraq)

GIS and Terrestrial Photogrammetry as methods to tell the story of Al-Tahrir Square in Baghdad, Iraq

At the intersection of traditional and modern heritage in Baghdad, lies Al-Tahrir square. With a central location connecting Baghdad's two sides (Karkh and Rusafah), it plays an irreplaceable role in the everyday life of many Iraqi people. The square hosts three iconic Iraqi artworks: the peace march mural, the mother statue, and most importantly, Al-Tahrir monument.

Hence, Iraqi people often used it as the central urban space to protest in Iraq following 2003. People of various backgrounds, classes, races, and religions gathered to demand better lives which often resulted in systematic militarization of the square to suppress the Iraqi people's right to their own city.

Much of the scientific literature of Al-Tahrir focused on the political aspects of the space, but little attention was placed on documenting and analysing the multi-layered relationships of the space. How can 3D heritage technologies aid in bridging the gap between the people and their beloved square?

This research was initiated to tell Al-Tahrir square's comprehensive social and urban story through 3D surveys, HIBM, and interactive digital experiences. The study aims at enhancing the Iraqi people's sense of identity and belonging to Al-Tahrir through digital reconstruction and storytelling.