Communicating the historic City
Museum or civitas?

Emma Mandelli

Florence Palazzo Coppini, March 3-4, 2016
Workshop
International Sub-Committee - CIVIHI Mediterranean Cities Italian Scientific Committee of Historic Towns (Italian ICOMOS - CIVIHI)
OPEN AIR MUSEUM CITY?

The definition of *museum* needs to find a different understanding

*Historical cities*
- Are not places to be *looked at*, like a collection of antiquities
- Should be *visited and viewed* in all the splendour of their beauty

**CLEVER CITY**

*A CITY THAT IS FUNCTIONAL, SUSTAINABLE, ETHICALLY LIVED IN AND VISITED BY ACCEPTABLE NUMBERS OF TOURISTS*
A CITY IS A LIVING BEING
it carries all the stratifications and all the memories of its history.

The signs of its cultural heritage: the monuments and emerging elements, the genuine life in its streets and the traditions form a strong optic and sensitive contact of a historical place to visit:

They represent its original outline as well as the appropriate semiological image.
FLORENCE - A CLEVER CITY OR AN OPEN AIR MUSEUM?

CITY
IMAGE
MODELS
COMMUNICATION
VALUES
KNOWLEDGE
CULTURE
LANGUAGES
DIALOGUING
CITY
EXAMPLES
The primary communication

The image is what spreads

As well as “representation”:
which is to re-present past or far away objects.

In its image, the historic city holds the most evident means of mediated communication, reflecting the effect it has on the world stage.
IMAGE/FIGURATION OF FLORENCE ALONG THE CENTURIES

But not

THE IMAGE OF FLORENCE AS CIVITAS

XIV CENTURY

XIX CENTURY

XXI CENTURY
Transformation of the image

- ALTERATION AND DISGREGATION of the city and landscape’s reference points in order to adjust them to the needs of the tourist market (in a commercially driven economy)

Result

- Segregation of the monuments, the sequence of associations is altered
- Distance between objects
In the market and politically driven transformations, the city is a mere representation. The market/image of the city has taken the place of reality with negative effects that separate the historical-contextual aspects from the others.

The market/image of the city has taken the place of reality with negative effects that separate the historical-contextual aspects from the others. Birth of “impermeable” cultures.
Tourism is not a primary necessity but rather an existing phenomenon.

Balanced and respectful meeting in terms of numbers, time and quality between the Local Community and the Visitors and an ethical relationship between economy and culture.

The Responsible Community must take on integrated politics spreading the correct image and transmit a number of rich contents, avoiding the commercial transformation into a touristic image.
GLOBALISATION AND MODELS

Eco-museums, Social Museums and smart technologies, Smart City Territory, Pro-active involvement of the cities and minor communities, Cultural Districts

Three common aspects:

A. Outline homogeneous realities and turn them into permeable containers
B. Involvement of the territories and union of the material and non-material heritage
C. Designed awareness directed to the community, not just to the visitors
IN VolvEmEnt STRATegIeS: But what about the communication?

Eco-museums,
In their philosophy and practical application, they have shown the fundamental characteristics to govern and COMMUNICATE in the city and its landscape

_Eco-museums are «the museum of time and space in a territory»_ (Georges Henri Rivère’s definition dating back to the Seventies)

LIFE BEYOND TOURISM
A Philosophy a best Practice - the worldwide network - the asset places.
Heritage involved objects need to find efficient broadcasting channels in order to be accepted, and these need to be built in a proper language and culture, in a “humane” manner and have to be witnessed throughout the senses so to create a dual experience, both psychological and physical, which is indeed the background of personal awareness.
COMMUNICATING HERITAGE

DATA and INFORMATION

CONSCIENCE

LANGUAGE

COMMUNICATION
FRUITION OF HERITAGE

The public usage and public fruition of the heritage, in their artistic-historical and social meanings is an enlightened concept adopted by the French Revolution to spread the culture.

The meaning of fruition and usage has seen various interpretations and has been abused in time.

Today

Easy holiday-tourism or mass visits with “pre-cooked” information
To Contrast the idea

that beautiful is only what is presented to us with slogans aimed at creating an consumistic interest
Theories on communication have functioned in the transmission of knowledge and education, because they represented a cultural model belonging to the scholastic education, to the family and a defined area of the social extraction.

With technologies

The relation in communication has become a two way exchange between sender and receiver with a wider broadcasting (globalising), often not controlled at the source, that has been generating ambiguities.
DATA AND INFORMATION

In XIX century society the absence of usable and available data.

Now An exaggerated quantity of data

For the experts in communication Who are working in the field of technology it is important to pass from data to information

In our case, the use of information is paramount as well as that of technology to get hold of the necessary results and recover a dialogue with the city.
COMMUNICATION - EDUCATION

The citizen
Should first of all receive a broader knowledge of his own cultural heritage, which has to be delivered on various levels using the proper educational and public channels

The visitor
Should be aware of the fact that he is participating to the life of a given context and such awareness cannot be exclusively dependent on the personal sensitivity or personality, but should rather be conveyed towards mutual understanding and sharing
IMAGES AND SYMBOLS

Drawing has been a great iconic means of communication that man has used to dialogue with the people and the city.

Today there is a great difference depending on the fact that photos, maps, etc. are available “online”. Drawings are easily reproducible. Cities are mapped and can be navigated. It seems that everything is available in real-time.
TARGET: DIALOGUING CITIES
A *dialoguing city* is a city that is able to interact with the organic and inorganic structures and artefacts. It uses technology as a sharing platform to connect the different subjects and objects.

To understand the aspect of a dialoguing city, we need to abandon the paradigm of hyper technology as a base. Such a city is not necessarily based on technology but, *as it has historically proven to be so far, it based on a society.*

OUTOCOMES: a society based on information, communication, network
DIGITAL LANGUAGE
New technologies, due to their connecting possibilities, can link information to infinite other information, which relates to the social environment that has generated such information.

OUTOCOMES
This social network leads to represent a cultural object without isolating it from its context, thus turning its nature into solitaire whiteness of a story.
The city walls of Massa Marittima (GR), Tuscany.

When the Region entrusted our group of experts to take on this integrated survey, a pilot project for many aspects, it intended to restore the valour and the vitality of the town, throughout the knowledge and visibility of a yet very strong identity symbol such as the city walls.

Project Culture 2000.

The Smart history model in the Cinque Terre, Liguria.

The study of the Cinque Terre in Liguria (2005), with the cooperation of international scholars from five different countries, was intended to find innovative systems to satisfy both the researchers needs as well as the visitors preset in loco – which proved hard and not always possible.