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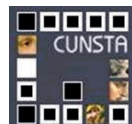
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The role of cultural heritage in the green and digital transition

Mara Cerquetti*, Eleonora
Cutrini**

Abstract

The second edition of the *Rethinking Culture and Creativity* (RCC 2022) workshop was held online on 10 and 11 November 2022. The event, hosted by the Department of Education, Cultural Heritage and Tourism of the University of Macerata (Italy), focused on *The Role of Cultural Heritage in the Green and Digital Transition* and aimed to be a space for discussing the role of cultural heritage in sustainable territorial development in the digital era.

La seconda edizione del workshop *Rethinking Culture and Creativity* (RCC 2022) si è svolta online il 10 e 11 novembre 2022. L'evento, ospitato dal Dipartimento di Scienze della formazione, beni culturali e turismo dell'Università di Macerata (Italia), si è focalizzato sul tema del patrimonio culturale nella transizione verde e digitale (*The Role of Cultural Heritage in the Green and Digital Transition*) con l'obiettivo di fornire uno spazio di discussione sul ruolo del patrimonio culturale nello sviluppo territoriale sostenibile nell'era digitale.

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Rethinking Culture and Creativity is a pluriennial programme launched in 2020 by Professor Luciana Lazzeretti (University of Florence) in cooperation with Tiziana Cuccia (University of Catania), Pier Luigi Sacco (“Gabriele D’Annunzio” University of Chieti-Pescara) and Ludovico Solima (“Luigi Vanvitelli” University of Campania). The series of annual international workshops aims to create a network of scholars in topics related to the economics and management of culture and creativity and to contribute to the current debate and emerging issues on the cultural and creative economy.

The second edition of the *Rethinking Culture and Creativity* (RCC 2022) workshop was held online on 10 and 11 November 2022. The event was hosted by the Department of Education, Cultural Heritage and Tourism of the University of Macerata (Italy) and jointly organised with the University of Catania, the University of Florence, and “Luigi Vanvitelli” University of Campania. RCC 2022 focused on *The Role of Cultural Heritage in the Green and Digital Transition* and aimed to be a space for discussing the role of cultural heritage in sustainable territorial development in the digital era.

1. *Cultural and creative sectors for a resilient recovery*

Culture and creativity are often associated with accelerating human development and building more inclusive societies both in high-income countries and in the developing world. In Italy, the National Research Plan (PNR) 2021-2027 has devoted one of the six research and innovation areas to Humanities, Creativity, Social Transformation and Inclusive Society. Moreover, decision-makers at various institutional levels are increasingly putting culture and creativity at the centre of regional development and local community welfare strategies.

Back in 1993, in his *Crescita Economica: le insidie delle cifre* [Economic Growth: the pitfalls of numbers]¹, Giorgio Fuà invited economists to reflect on the importance of the environment, landscape and culture as essential features of a broader value system on which to base new metrics of a country’s well-being beyond GDP. In today’s post-industrial society, cultural and creative industries (CCIs) are important not only as sources of job creation and income generation but also for their contribution to the quality of life of local communities.

The 2022 OECD report *The Culture Fix: Creative people, places and industries* suggested that CCIs can be a driver of a post-pandemic resilience for cities and regions, despite workers, firms and organisations in these sectors being among the worst hit by the Covid-19 crisis and despite the fact that the

¹ Fuà 1993.

recovery will be uneven across cultural and creative sub-sectors. The report provides evidence of how cultural and creative sectors can generate skilled and qualified jobs along with the knock-on effect of creating additional jobs in other traditional business sectors.

Even though CCIs tend to agglomerate in cities and capital regions, stimulating their urban regeneration, they are even more important in old industrial cities and in inland or peripheral areas. In these areas, the development of linkages between the CCIs and other economic sectors is fundamental to promoting sustainable growth and innovation. Universities can play a crucial role in this process by facilitating and enabling such networks.

In the broader context of the current great transformations, such as the so-called Twin Transition (Green and Digital Transition), the RCC 2022 workshop organised at the University of Macerata aimed to reflect on the specific role of cultural heritage and the innovation paths it can trigger for territorial development. These transformations are even more important when contextualised in the succession of crises and events that have punctuated the history of the last 30 years, from the fall of the Berlin Wall to the acceleration of globalisation, from the explosion of international terrorism to the 2008 financial crisis, and from the Covid-19 pandemic to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, which has caused new problems related to energy supply and has aggravated the climate emergency.

In the last 30 years, we have become accustomed to permanent instability and, as argued by Lazzaretto², we agree that culture and creativity can be powerful antidotes to such uncertainty.

2. The contribution of RCC 2022

Over the last decades, the economic literature on cultural heritage has been devoted to investigating its role in local development, economic growth and innovation. Tangible and intangible cultural heritage has been studied as a source for the regeneration of products, sectors and places and a fundamental ingredient for the transformation of the economic structure of cities and regions.

However, the relationship between culture and the economy is approaching a new phase, one that is based on closer ties between culture, creativity and technological innovation. We are beginning a new era in which cultural institutions and organisations should address the challenges that have emerged from the spread of digital technology and the need to adopt practices for environmental, economic and social sustainability. This rapid revolution has led cultural insti-

² Lazzaretto 2021.

tutions to rethink their role in the contemporary economic context. Production systems have changed, and new intangible added value is generated from a symbolic value and identity, of which creativity, technology transfer, and tangible and intangible heritage are crucial components. The combination of cultural heritage and new technologies stimulates a new ecosystem for innovation that is capable of creating value and different types of entrepreneurship in different sectors, such as tourism. The Twin Transition calls for a response to a new demand for cultural content from local and digital communities and social networks. Cultural institutions like museums have to meet this demand.

In light of these considerations, the RCC 2022 workshop animated the discussion around two main questions: how might the green and digital transition affect the management of tangible and intangible heritage? What are the new challenges for cultural industries after the shock caused by the Covid-19 pandemic?

To answer the questions targeted by the call for papers launched at the beginning of 2022³, the RCC 2022 workshop accepted theoretical and empirical papers from academics and young scholars in various disciplines, e.g. economics, management, law, museum studies, archaeology, etc. A total of 70 speakers from six countries (Italy, Austria, Greece, Hungary, Israel and Portugal) actively participated in the two-day workshop, including presenters, chairs, and organisers, and almost 100 people attended the event.

A total amount of 43 presentations organised into nine sessions (three slots of three parallel sessions)⁴ tackled the following topics: cultural policies, governance and sustainable development; cultural heritage and heritage communities; cultural tourism in an era of uncertainty; cultural and creative industries, green transition and digital transformation; the role of universities and public authorities; museums and digital innovations; food systems, heritage marketing and local development; digitalisation of cultural heritage; culture-led urban regeneration.

A book session (in Italian) was also hosted during the workshop to present two recent books on creative economy and cultural management: *L'ascesa della società algoritmica ed il ruolo strategico della cultura* [The rise of the algorithmic society and the strategic role of culture] by Luciana Lazzeretti⁵, and *Le parole del museo. Un percorso tra management, tecnologie digitali e sostenibilità* [The words of the museum. A journey between management, digital technologies and sustainability] by Ludovico Solima⁶. Professor Ilde Rizzo (University of Catania) led the debate by inviting the authors to discuss wheth-

³ <https://sfbc.unimc.it/ricerca/Workshop_Rethinking_Culture_and_Creativity_MAGGIO2022.pdf>, 30.07.2023.

⁴ <<https://sites.google.com/view/cultureandcreativity2022/programme?authuser=0>>, 30.07.2023.

⁵ Lazzeretti 2021.

⁶ Solima 2022.

er the digital revolution is a useful tool for sustainability and how culture can help us face the digital transformation. Specifically, Professor Izzo asked about the necessary “side conditions” that public policies should include.

3. *Structure of the thematic section*

This issue of «*Il capitale culturale. Studies on the Value of Cultural Heritage*» hosts a selection of seven papers presented during the RCC 2022 workshop and offering some of the key topics and issues discussed in the current debate in cultural economics and management.

The first paper, by Paola Beccherle and Luciana Lazzeretti (*The role of digital technologies for culture-driven local development in Europe: A policy review*), discusses how digital technologies have transformed the ways cultural heritage is produced, preserved and used, through a qualitative investigation of European policies conducted with the support of NVivo 14. The research results highlight how EU policies support the application of digital technologies in three main areas: the enhancement of the local tourist experience, preservation of local cultural heritage, and participation in cultural heritage.

Considering cultural heritage as a key factor for local development, Andrea Longhi, Erica Meneghin and Giovanna Segre study the values of cultural heritage acknowledged in non-urban areas. In their *Cultural heritage in non-urban areas: identifying and understanding values*, the authors create a taxonomy of six values derived from an interdisciplinary literature review to interpret cultural heritage-driven projects and provide a deeper understanding of the role of cultural heritage for local communities. The findings contribute to a comprehensive description of cultural heritage’s role in rural and mountain areas and offer a holistic perspective on the interaction among heritage values, new knowledge, projects, and local development.

Inclusive development & civic wealth in UNESCO sites. A pilot project to regenerate the Stables of the Duke Federico da Montefeltro in Urbino, by Selena Aureli, Mara Del Baldo and Paola Demartini, focuses on the role of local administrations in urban regeneration initiatives. The paper discusses a project known as the “Relaunch of the DATA space” – the stables of Federico da Montefeltro, Duke of Urbino (Italy) – through the theoretical lens of civic wealth creation. The research adopts a qualitative approach to reconstruct the processes put in place, the premises and factors intended to engage the collaboration of local communities and the outcomes generated. The research findings highlight that rediscovering and reusing cultural heritage may be the glue that fosters networking and the community’s well-being. However, as civic wealth creation requires a convergence of the expectations of key stakeholders, the

case study reveals that collaboration among stakeholders strongly necessitates the support of the local administration acting as a facilitator/orchestrator and pursuing balance among different visions and needs over time.

Next, Stefania Oliva and Martin Piber investigate social value as a key objective for museums by analysing how best to account for and communicate its key dimensions. In their *Striving for relevance: The social value of museums*, they contribute to filling research gaps by discussing the Natural History Museum Vienna (NHM) case study, featured as an institution that pays particular attention to biodiversity issues and environmental concerns. The study relies on interviews with staff members, a document analysis and participant observation from 2017 to 2023. The approach enables to map the social activities of the museum, analyse the interactions with key stakeholders, and understand the relevant categories of social value as well as its communication and impact.

The role of grassroots and collaborative initiatives is also crucial for Enrico Bertacchini and Iolanda Pensa. In their *Exploring collaborative digital heritage communities: A quantitative assessment of Wiki Loves Monuments in Italy*, the authors study the Wiki Loves Monuments (WLM) contest in Italy, one of the largest and most widespread collaborative projects to document cultural heritage through open access tools. By using quantitative and qualitative evidence collected from ten editions of the initiative, the paper investigates the contribution of collaborative digital communities in producing and sharing knowledge about cultural heritage on the Internet. In particular, their findings point out systematic differences in the rate at which monuments are documented across regions and types of municipalities, as well as distinct patterns in the WLM community's contribution and reuse of images in Wikimedia projects. The analysis adds insights into the opportunities and challenges that collaborative projects through open access and reuse of digital content can offer for enhancing cultural heritage.

Shifting to the role of networks, Silvia Baiocco, Paola M.A. Paniccia and Caesar A. Atuire provide empirical evidence about how sustainable heritage tourism paths can be developed in Ghana by focusing on the relationship between 20 guesthouses and various other local and multi-local actors. *Managing local heritage in low- and middle-income countries through small accommodation firms: The case of Ghana* presents a co-evolutionary analysis conducted with emphasis on the dialectical nature of this relationship and following a mixed method. Findings from the analysis highlight eight interconnected key factors: five inhibitors and three enablers that are able to influence the development of (un)sustainable heritage tourism paths. In this dynamic, applying the principle of subsidiarity, coupled with capacity building, can help the various multilevel actors co-adapt effectively. Consequently, the study suggests conceiving heritage tourism paths as co-evolutionary processes generated, and recognised as virtuous, by all actors involved. The research contributes to un-

derstanding the socio-economic and environmental dynamics underlying sustainable heritage tourism development in Africa, helping decision-makers and policy-makers to exploit the huge sustainable potential of heritage tourism.

The last paper – *Outsourcing corporate heritage marketing in the omnichannel context: a process perspective of a small winery* – proposes a case study methodology to explain how small firms develop consistent corporate heritage marketing initiatives in the omnichannel context. Pier Franco Luigi Fraboni, Andrea Sabatini and Valerio Temperini point to the pandemic crisis and the disruptive impact of digitalisation that have led firms to undertake the omnichannel continuum to meet new customers’ needs for a seamless purchasing experience. Small firms which usually lack human and financial resources are signing up to the omnichannel paradigm through outsourcing. As a result, when recognising the importance of corporate heritage marketing (CHM) in their overall marketing strategies, they face challenges when it comes to maintaining the consistency of CHM initiatives across their partners’ channels. The findings suggest that small firms should open their CHM process to omnichannel partners to develop consistent CHM initiatives across partner channels.

At the end of this issue, as a *Classic*, we republish two chapters from the abovementioned *Crescita Economica: le insidie delle cifre* by Giorgio Fuà. Thirty years ago, the author warned us about the limitations of metrics that are still widely adopted to measure economic growth, arguing that the growth we study is the growth of “commodified” assets, of market values – not that of the values of civil coexistence, or culture, or health, or others. By quoting the Italian poet Giacomo Leopardi, he pointed out that economic growth is a distinct concept from “the magnificent and progressive fates”. His seminal contribution was in line with the Amartya Sen’s capability approach and the corresponding human development index introduced by the United Nations in the 1990s to evaluate national well-being⁷. He decisively fuelled and somehow anticipated the debate on the limitations of GDP that attracted international organisations and academic research interest with a beyond-GDP research programme that is still underway⁸.

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⁷ UNDP 1990 and 2010.

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