

Forever Young

Celebrating 50 Years of the World Heritage Convention



edited by

Elisa Baroncini, Bert Demarsin, Ana Gemma López Martín,
Raquel Regueiro Dubra, Ruxandra-Iulia Stoica

with the collaboration of Manuel Ganarin and Alessandra Quarta

Volume II

6

Un'anima per il diritto: andare più in alto

Collana diretta da Geraldina Boni



Mucchi Editore

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L'orizzonte meramente tecnicistico su cui ogni tipo di riflessione sembra oggi rischiare di appiattirsi non solo non cancella quegli interrogativi fondamentali che si confermano ineludibili per ciascuna disciplina in cui si ramifica il pensiero giuridico: ma li rivela, anzi, in tutta la loro impellenza. È dunque a tale necessità che facciamo riferimento nel cogliere e sottolineare il bisogno che si avverte di 'un'anima per il diritto', ispirandoci in modo particolare a quegli ammonimenti che Aleksandr Solženicyŋ rivolgeva a studiosi e accademici dell'Università di Harvard nel 1978 e che, a distanza di decenni, mantengono intatta la loro validità. Muovendo dalla domanda «se mi chiedessero: vorrebbe proporre al suo paese, quale modello, l'Occidente così com'è oggi?, dovrei rispondere con franchezza: no, non potrei raccomandare la vostra società come ideale per la trasformazione della nostra. Data la ricchezza di crescita spirituale che in questo secolo il nostro paese ha acquistato nella sofferenza, il sistema occidentale, nel suo attuale stato di esaurimento spirituale, non presenta per noi alcuna attrattiva» – dichiarazione che si riempie di significato alla luce della vicenda personale, tanto dolorosa quanto nota, di colui che l'ha pronunciata –, l'intellettuale russo individuava infatti con profetica lucidità i sintomi e le cause di tale declino. In questo senso, ad interpellarci in modo precipuo in quanto giuristi è soprattutto l'osservazione secondo cui «in conformità ai propri obiettivi la società occidentale ha scelto la forma d'esistenza che le era più comoda e che io definirei giuridica: una 'forma d'esistenza' che tuttavia è stata assunta come fondamento esclusivo e per ciò stesso privata dell'anelito a una dimensione superiore capace di giustificarla. Con l'inevitabile, correlata conseguenza che «l'autolimitazione liberamente accettata è una cosa che non si vede quasi mai: tutti praticano per contro l'autoespansione, condotta fino all'estrema capienza delle leggi, fino a che le cornici giuridiche cominciano a scricchiolare». Sono queste le premesse da cui scaturisce quel complesso di valutazioni che trova la sua sintesi più efficace nella seguente affermazione, dalla quale intendiamo a nostra volta prendere idealmente le mosse: «No, la società non può restare in un abisso senza leggi come da noi, ma è anche derisoria la proposta di collocarsi, come qui da voi, sulla superficie tirata a specchio di un giuridismo senz'anima». Se è tale monito a costituire il principio ispiratore della presente collana di studi, quest'ultima trova nella stessa fonte anche la stella polare da seguire per cercare risposte. Essa, rinvenibile in tutti i passaggi più pregnanti del discorso, si scolpisce icasticamente nell'esortazione – che facciamo nostra – con cui si chiude: «E nessuno, sulla Terra, ha altra via d'uscita che questa: andare più in alto».

* La traduzione italiana citata è tratta da ALEKSANDR SOLŽENICYN, *Discorso alla Harvard University, Cambridge (MA) 8 giugno 1978*, in Id., *Il respiro della coscienza. Saggi e interventi sulla vera libertà 1967-1974. Con il discorso all'Università di Harvard del 1978*, a cura di SERGIO RAPETTI, Jaca Book, Milano, 2015, pp. 219-236.

Un'anima per il diritto: andare più in alto

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Section III

Cultural Heritage and the 1972 UNESCO Convention in Europe and its State Contracting Parties

UMBERTO LAVORATA

CITIZENS' PARTICIPATION AND
CULTURAL URBAN HERITAGE IN THE
WORLD HERITAGE CONVENTION (1972):
THE CASE OF BOLOGNA, IN ITALY*

Abstract: The notion of 'urban heritage' will be crucial to face the challenges linked to the protection and modification of urban areas, named «groups of buildings» in Article 1 of the World Heritage Convention (WHC, 1972). The city of Bologna can be considered a pioneer in participatory governance concerning heritage, and the European ROCK Project – Regeneration and Optimization of Cultural Heritage in Creative and Knowledge Cities constitutes a clear example of it. Nevertheless, the concept of citizens' participation, even if it is mentioned in Article 10 para. 2 of the WHC (1972), may have more relevance therein. In general, urban heritage has to deal with the contradictory paradox between local communities, engaged in the protection of place identity and societal heritage values, and economic interests, linked to the exploitation of the touristic potential which historical urban areas offer.

Nonetheless, there are a lot of ambiguities that impact directly on urban heritage and its fruition: Bologna's heritage is characterized by dynamic changes, for instance, in the fruition spaces which have a certain historical and social value such as the Porticoes (inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2021). According to the UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape (2011), modern urban conservation policies must take into account all levels of government, including public and private stakeholders (Chapter III), to better deal with urban growth which assumes the role of transformer agent in the historic urban areas. The historic urban landscape (HUL) approach may have a positive impact in managing and mitigating such impacts (Chapter II), useful to rediscover the hidden treasures of a city through direct observation of spaces, to better understand perceptions and (new) urban practices.

It could provide an important example of a co-creative type of cultural heritage governance, characterized by a real contribution toward the implementation of the UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape (2011), also in accordance with SDGs 8, 11, and 17.

In 2022, the WHC celebrates its 50th anniversary: therefore, the main aim is to demonstrate how WHC is still a fundamental international instrument useful to

* Double-blind peer reviewed content.

activate and re-activate social, political, and environmental dynamics also at a local scale.

The paper states the opportunity that the ROCK Project represents by activating a bottom-up implementation of actions able to set off a virtuous cycle, and it gives its contribution to the World Heritage Convention (1972) on promoting urban regeneration and sustainable development in historic urban contexts.

Introduction

This paper focuses on citizens' participation in Bologna's urban cultural heritage, looking at the European ROCK Project – Regeneration and Optimization of Cultural Heritage in Creative and Knowledge Cities (grant agreement n. 730280)¹ that took place between 2018 (the European Year of Cultural Heritage) and 2020. The ROCK Project has followed three different phases during the three years: development of laboratories and community workshops (2018); co-design process with an expert team (2019); up-scaling of the experimentation area (2020).

The summarized analysis of the Project serves as a starting point to analyze some features of the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, known also as the World Heritage Convention (WHC), adopted on November 17, 1972². WHC formally has taken effect in 1975 upon ratification by the first 20 States Parties, while in 1978 the Operational Guidelines were established.

Before starting the discussion, and without delving deeper, it could be useful to get an overview of the UNESCO system, where the 'E' stands for Education, a pillar of humanity. The World Heritage Centre was established in 1992 to act as the Secretariat, ensur-

¹ EUROPEAN COMMISSION, (2017-2020) *Regeneration and Optimisation of Cultural heritage in creative and Knowledge cities*. Available at <https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/730280>.

² UNESCO, *Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage* (known as *World Heritage Convention*), Paris, 16 November 1972, Available at <https://whc.unesco.org/archive/convention-en.pdf>.

ing the day-to-day management of the 1972 World Heritage Convention (WHC), and organizing the annual sessions of the World Heritage Committee (the «Intergovernmental Committee for the Protection of the Cultural and Natural Heritage of Outstanding Universal Value», Article 8, 1972 WHC), and its Bureau. Along with the Advisory Bodies (i.e. International Union for Conservation of Nature, IUCN; International Council on Monuments and Sites, ICOMOS; International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property, ICCROM)³, the World Heritage Centre organizes international assistance from the World Heritage Fund, coordinating the reporting on the condition of sites and the emergency action when a site is threatened. Its mission is also linked to the update of the World Heritage List and database. Following Article 8 of the WHC (1972), the Committee was made up of 21 States Parties, and nowadays it is the fundamental body for the implementation of the WHC self.

In 2022, the WHC celebrates 50 years: on that occasion, through the analysis of the ROCK Project, it could be worthwhile to analyze the relationships between the Italian city of Bologna and WHC, or the UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape (2011), taking into account that Bologna has strengthened its importance into the urban cultural heritage management thanks to the inscription on the World Heritage List of the Porticoes in 2021.

The main aim is to demonstrate how World Heritage Convention (1972) is still a fundamental international instrument useful to activate and re-activate social, political, and environmental dynamics also at a local scale.

In this way, the contribution is structured by combining existing literature on citizens' participation and cultural heritage, considering the possible interactions with WHC (1972): in the first paragraph, a short analysis of the ROCK Project in Bologna will

³ *World Heritage Convention* (WHC), Article 8 (see also <https://whc.unesco.org/en/advisorybodies/>).

be presented, looking at the different stages and features of the project, given some characteristics of WHC (1972); the second paragraph will present some issues from the socio-ecological and practical point of view, by examining some peculiarities emerged from the Bologna's urban regeneration project (e.g. Green Office); in the third paragraph, the central role of the local communities in the protection/valorization of the cultural heritage will be analyzed, taking into consideration the WHC (1972) and some other international instruments (e.g. 2011 UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape, 2003 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage). The fourth paragraph will focus on the issue of sustainable development, by analyzing the idea of 'circularity', linked to the SDGs, in Bologna's experience as well. In the fifth paragraph, a reflection on the relationship between technology and cultural heritage will be proposed, and then, in the last paragraph, some conclusions will be summarized.

1. *The ROCK Project: analysis of the urban regeneration project in Bologna*

The ROCK Project – Regeneration and Optimization of Cultural Heritage in Creative and Knowledge Cities was a project funded by the European Union⁴ to promote urban regeneration and sustainable development in the historical centers, promoting sustainable use of urban cultural heritage. However, the concept of urban regeneration is quite debated: for instance, Zinzani and Proto (2020) highlight the conflict between the notion of 'politics', related to a technocratic point of view, and the concept of 'political' in the context of the contemporary city. Through the analysis of

⁴ Under Horizon 2020 Funding Programme (see also <https://whc.unesco.org/en/canopy/bologna/>, or https://ec.europa.eu/info/research-and-innovation/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-2020_en).

two urban grassroots socio-political movements active in Bologna, i.e. the social-activist collective *Làbas*, and the socio-environmental movement *Rigenerazione NO Speculazione*, the geographers Zinzani and Proto bring out how the two political spaces have been able to define policies from a bottom-up scale, making also new participatory spaces⁵.

Nevertheless, Article 1 of the WHC (1972) offers a definition of cultural heritage that can be read in terms of monuments (e.g. architectural works, sculptures, paintings, etc.), groups of buildings (e.g. urban areas), and sites (e.g. works of man or the combined works of nature and man, archeological sites).

The ROCK Project was developed under the Work Programme 2016-2017 Climate action, environment, resource efficiency and raw materials, Cultural heritage for sustainable growth, where cultural heritage was considered «as a driver for sustainable growth of urban and rural areas, as a factor of production and competitiveness and a means for introducing socially and environmentally innovative solutions»⁶.

The Project essentially saw the historic city centers as living laboratories⁷, where cultural heritage is capable to activate or re-activate the process of regeneration, sustainable development, and economic growth. Although the Preamble of WHC (1972) does not explicitly refer to regeneration and sustainability, it starts as follows: «*Noting* that the cultural heritage and the natural heritage are in-

⁵ A. ZINZANI, M. PROTO, *L'emergere del Political nei processi di rigenerazione urbana a Bologna: movimenti e spazi di dissenso*, in *Geotema*, 2020, Supplemento, p. 45 ss.

⁶ EUROPEAN COMMISSION, *Decision C(2017)2468 of 24 April 2017*, p. 73 ss. (available at the following link: https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/wp/2016_2017/main/h2020-wp1617-climate_en.pdf).

⁷ A. BOERI, D. LONGO, V. GIANFRATE, B. TURILLAZZI, R. ROVERSI, M. MAS-SARI, *Centri storici inclusivi: l'esperienza del progetto europeo ROCK a Bologna = Inclusive Historical Centres: the Experience of the EU ROCK Project in Bologna*, in *L'accessibilità nel patrimonio architettonico: approcci ed esperienze tra tecnologia e restauro = Accessibility in architectural heritage: Approaches and experiences between technology and restoration*, Antefirma Edizioni srl, Conegliano (TV), 2021, p. 118 ss.

creasingly threatened with destruction not only by the traditional causes of decay, but also by changing social and economic conditions which aggravate the situation with even more formidable phenomena of damage or destruction»⁸. Thus, it starts defining cultural and natural heritage united by the same critical scenario, but at the same time combining opportunities and changes due to a coordinated and integrated vision around this topic, which is crucial from the local, national or international scale («collective protection of the cultural and natural heritage of outstanding universal value⁹, organized on a permanent basis and in accordance with modern scientific methods»)¹⁰.

As will be seen in the next paragraphs, the life cycle of the WHC (1972) is characterized over the years by a constant revision of the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention (the last version is dated 2019). Thus, according to Article 8 (WHC, 1972), the Intergovernmental Committee for the Protection of the Cultural and Natural Heritage of Outstanding Universal Value, called the World Heritage Committee, is the intergovernmental body useful for dealing with changing technical and political needs of world heritage conservation and management.

The ROCK Project involved ten different cities across the EU, through a different focus of interest: Bologna, in the Emilia-Romagna Region, was one of the three «replicator cities»¹¹ (along with

⁸ WHC, *Preamble*.

⁹ «Outstanding Universal Value means cultural and/or natural significance which is so exceptional as to transcend national boundaries and to be of common importance for present and future generations of all humanity. As such, the permanent protection of this heritage is of the highest importance to the international community as a whole. The Committee defines the criteria for the inscription of properties on the World Heritage List» (*Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*; Paragraph 49, WHC 19/01 – 10 July 2019).

¹⁰ WHC, *Preamble*.

¹¹ At the beginning, seven cities have been involved in the ROCK Project («7 Role Model cities»), i.e. Athens, Cluj-Napoca, Eindhoven, Liverpool, Lyon, Turin, and Vilnius. Then, looking at the specific needs of the historic city centers,

Lisbon, and Skopje), where inclusiveness and accessibility in the public spaces of the city center and university area (Via Zamboni) constituted the main focus, within a shared view of environmental sustainability, social and economic processes.

The Project took place in Bologna between 2018, the European Year of Cultural Heritage, and 2020, carrying out a participatory approach, involving 57 local actors and five groups of disability experts.

Within this framework, Bologna's heritage is considered an essential tool in managing circular and holistic approaches to regeneration, and this is extremely important in dealing with some future issues.

The program was structured into three stages: 1) in 2018, the development of laboratories and community, or participative workshops (e.g. U-Lab) took place within the university area, involving different public spaces, with a distinctive focus on sustainability, accessibility, and, collaboration. The participative workshops created the conditions to implement the project, by identifying the requirements for a more accessible university heritage and looking for a shift from ideas to actions; 2) The second stage (2019) was characterized by a co-design process with an expert team, including participatory mapping and tests, and developing inclusive guidelines and paths in the university area (e.g. inclusive guided tours); 3) The last stage (2020) was based on the previous experiences, extending the model to the whole of Bologna's center, and following a participatory co-creation process (e.g. the app BOforAll was developed and spread).

In general, the actions were divided into local actions, transversal actions, and piloting actions. The local actions were related to organizational and technological innovation, looking at Bologna's hidden treasures, cultural heritage production (unconven-

the approach has been tested in the three «replicator cities», i.e. Bologna, Lisbon, and Skopje.

See <https://rockproject.eu/about>.

tional use), the Sustainable District, and Bologna Living Lab. Concerning the last one, Living Lab approach was applied in U-Lab, which provided «an iterative process of research and action, which works on viable solutions based on community needs and on urban accessibility through the co-creation of shared services, both oriented towards changing behaviours and modifying space layout»¹².

The transversal actions referred to the environmental sustainability; as written above, one of the most important peculiarities of the ROCK Project was the circularity and the holistic approach to the cultural urban heritage, to improve citizens' well-being, involve citizens in co-designing solutions, and contribute to the resilience of local communities to climate change. In this sense, through the implementation of educational programs (e.g. Living Labs), site-specific and ethnography-based art interventions in public spaces have been launched. This kind of social innovation was accompanied by innovative training solutions, characterized by the direct participation of citizens, such as eco-innovation workshops, ROCK roadshows, and ROCK coffee talks¹³.

Considering all these aspects, what were/are the benefits and advantages for Bologna's territory? First of all, the Project methodology has contributed to developing an integrated and interdisciplinary approach toward sustainable use of cultural heritage, assuming the interdependence between environmental, economic, and social issues. By engaging several stakeholders (e.g. university, and non-institutional actors), and reducing the distance between urban actors, the participatory process seems to have contributed to a mutual exchange of skills.

¹² A. BOERI, D. LONGO, S. ORLANDI, R. ROVERSI, G. TURCI, *Temporary transformations to access and experience sustainable city public spaces*, in *WIT Transactions on Ecology and the Environment*, 2020, 249, p. 44 ss.

¹³ See <https://rockproject.eu/actions>.

2. *The Project and its socio-ecological dynamics*

According to the SDG 11 («Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable») ¹⁴, 156 countries have developed national urban policies, but only half are in the implementation stage: in Europe and Northern America, but also in Latin America, Eastern and South-Eastern Asia, at least three-quarters of national urban policies are under implementation, while other geographical contexts such as Northern Africa are far behind.

Within this framework, the city of Bologna, and the other urban contexts involved, through the example of the ROCK Project, could provide a key model to achieve SDG 11, where citizens are the main protagonists of change. The EU H2020 ROCK Project followed a circular research-action-research, reaching

«an activation that exploits the experimentation of small-scale, reversible, temporary and low-cost interventions, aimed at collectively re-designing quality urban spaces, exploring alternative forms of relationship between separate systems, as well as granting the opportunity for exchange of knowledge between a plurality of actors involved. Starting from the recognition of the potential of existing resources, these approaches aim to consolidate and enhance the value of disused places and to draw out new models of collaboration between administrators, citizens, the world of research, economic and cultural operators, while at the same time attracting new resources and partnerships» ¹⁵.

The ROCK approach was essentially a bottom-up approach, mainly characterized by the involvement of stakeholders and urban agents in the co-production of knowledge, with the aim of transforming the university area (Via Zamboni) into a Sustainable Cultural and Creative District (Zamboni SCCD), directly linked to

¹⁴ <https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal11>.

¹⁵ R. ROVERSI, D. LONGO, M. MASSARI, S. ORLANDI, B. TURILLAZZI, *Il patrimonio culturale come attivatore di dinamiche urbane circolari*, in *Techne*, 2021, 22, p. 222 ss.

the SDG 11, and where the sustainable initiatives (e.g. green mobility, living labs) should be read in relationship with the great cultural domain: in short, the central idea of this approach was to increase pedestrian flows and slow mobility, maybe with new cultural routes, and to enhance porticoes as a unique spatial feature of the urban area (e.g. the aim of Strade Aperte initiative, a deliberate and bottom-up approach, was to promote new forms and uses of public spaces by placing the persons at the center of such issues)¹⁶.

In this respect, it is important to consider Leoni's point of view about cultural heritage: «we need to replace the idea of CH as a brake on city transformation with the idea that CH is an ongoing creative process extended to intangible values, an agent for the transformation of the cities. This can happen if we take remembrance and innovation not as conflicting actions but as a dual combined action of CH co-creation and co-production»¹⁷. According to Leoni (2020), cultural heritage must be placed at the core of urban policies «as the template for any political action in a logic of social economy that means consider culture as every city stakeholder's sustained action to create value and common good out of the ordinary affairs of a city»¹⁸. In this way, culture is not merely a policy among others, but a key to understanding the territorial processes of a certain city, such as Bologna.

Considering the Living Lab approach, through the presence of Fondazione Innovazione Urbana (FIU)¹⁹, it allowed the regenera-

¹⁶ <https://stradeapertebologna.wordpress.com/#:~:text=%E2%80%9CStrade%20Aperte%20a%20Bologna%E2%80%9D%20%C3%A8,cambiamen-to%20urbano%2C%20ambientale%20e%20sociale.>

¹⁷ G. LEONI, *Cultural Heritage as a Common*, in *Cultural Heritage Leading Urban Futures. Actions and Innovations from ROCK PROJECT*, edited by G. LEONI, A. BOERI, D. LONGO, V. GIANFRATE, S.O.M. BOULANGER, M. MASSARI, R. ROVERSI, TU Delft Open Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment, Delft, 2020, p. 26.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*.

¹⁹ The Foundation for Urban Innovations (Fondazione Innovazione Urbana, in Italian) is a non-profit private legal entity founded by the City and University of Bologna. It is a lab for analysis, communication, development, and co-produce-

tion process of Piazza Scaravilli (co-design and self-building workshop, in June 2019) and Piazza Rossini (co-design and self-building workshop, in September 2019), in the heart of the university area (see Fig. 1).



Fig. 1: Points of interest in Bologna's historical center
Source: Autonomous processing of the author

Concerning Piazza Rossini, from an urban space characterized by cementation and heatwaves, thanks to the work of different stakeholders like associations, and institutions, but also thanks to the engagement of the students, it is now a permanent green space for sociality and events²⁰. From the beginning of July 2020, Piazza Rossini's installation is open to the public, and the Municipality of Bologna, in collaboration with FIU, as part of the summer activities 2020, promoted a series of open and cultural activities (e.g. guided tours in the university area, theatre readings) named Take Care of U – Encounters and Stories on the meadow²¹.

Nevertheless, in these two squares, two modular installations made of wood and plant elements had the goal of helping people to

tion focused on urban transformations (see also www.fondazioneinnovazioneurbana.it/en/).

²⁰ <https://cultureincrisis.org/projects/from-a-parking-lot-to-a-green-space-for-sociality-a-new-life-for-piazza-rossini>.

²¹ <https://bologna.rockproject.eu/take-care-of-uf>.

reflect and re-think urban cultural spaces, more sustainably. Thanks to the actions developed in the university area (after BOforAll and inclusive guidebooks), three accessible maps were installed in Piazza della Mercanzia, close to the Bologna's towers: these maps are characterized by the description of cultural urban heritage in Braille, using the Incisoria Vicentina technique, creating maps with antibacterial, antiviral and self-cleaning treatment²². This is another device that increases the accessibility and inclusiveness in the historical center of Bologna, resulting from the U-Lab and the collaboration between several stakeholders, such as the University and Municipality of Bologna, the Istituto dei Ciechi Francesco Cavazza, Fondazione Gualandi a Favore dei Sordi, etc.

Furthermore, the Project took into account the enhancement of both tangible (e.g. open spaces like squares) and intangible (e.g. community, social and cultural elements) heritage as resources of Bologna's context, «to trigger new relationships between territory, citizens, stakeholders and creative processes»²³, where the main objective was «the acknowledgment of the place's potential by proposing concrete, operational actions, easily achievable in the short time, but capable of triggering imaginaries and strategies of opening, transformation and re-appropriation of the spaces, even in the long term»²⁴. Finally, a sense of re-appropriation, responsibility, and care of cultural heritage and public spaces seems to have emerged, and a proof of this could be seen, for instance, in the Piazza Rossini's permanent installation, without which there would have been an antiseptic parking for cars.

²² <https://bologna.rockproject.eu/tre-nuove-mappe-tattili-installate-nel-centro-a-bologna/>.

²³ *Il patrimonio culturale come attivatore di dinamiche urbane circolari*, cit.

²⁴ *Ibidem*.

2.1. *The Green Office in the ROCK Project*

The first Green Office was established at Maastricht University in 2010, with the students placed at the core of participation processes for the transition toward sustainability, intending to work on different sustainability initiatives and projects²⁵, promoting for instance low carbon initiatives.

In the case of Bologna, it looks like a sustainability hub managed by the students at the University of Bologna and its citizens, and this is crucial for developing co-projected culture and sustainable initiatives, in the ROCK context as well. Furthermore, Bologna's Green Office is characterized by an innovative nature due to the desire to get out of the core university context (e.g. Piazza della Mercanzia), with the figure of the student as a 'connector' between different actors, and using a bottom-up process for starting a transition toward sustainable use of cultural heritage, and creating also a better dialogue between people and the whole territory.

The Green Office model is based on collaborative governance, with the mission to institutionalize sustainability in higher education, by integrating sustainability within the following domains: 1) education, which empowers global citizens to lead for sustainability; 2) research, that contributes to sustainability transitions; 3) community, that engages students and staff to act toward sustainability; 4) operations, to achieve a positive social and environmental footprint. The strategy is articulated following an operational framework of actions: research (sustainability report, academic papers, etc.); programs (e.g. Living Lab); projects (e.g. business cases, project proposals); events (workshops and public events, networking).

Anyway, the main protagonist of Bologna's Green Office is the student²⁶ who can help directly to spread good practices within

²⁵ <https://www.greenofficemovement.org/vision/>.

²⁶ The University of Bologna's Green Office is conceived as a space for discussion and project design, characterized by the meeting between students, profes-

Bologna's area, through research, traineeship, and actions on the ground. This concept was realized in the above-mentioned Living Lab of sustainability (e.g. Terracini in Transizione)²⁷, a multidisciplinary and transdisciplinary team based on the 'transition thinking' approach²⁸, related to the adaptation and mitigation processes. Compared to Northern European universities, the University of Bologna shows a multi-campus structure, with several departments spread across the city, and in other cities of the Emilia-Romagna region (i.e. Rimini, Ravenna, Forlì, Cesena), even though the main core is placed in the historical center of Bologna. Thus, within this framework, the Green Office could be seen as an interlinking way, able to activate co-created and co-managed sustainability actions, making a wide university sphere of action, while respecting the general Green Office indications (e.g. facilitate exchange and cooperation, create a critical mass with other students, academics, and with actors beyond the campus).

In short, the mission sees the sustainability following a bottom-up approach, with a university vision toward 2030, starting from an investigation process (Bologna and ROCK Project), elaborating a pilot model (i.e. Green Office ROCK) and a model definition (i.e. Green Office Bologna model), reaching dissemination (Green Office in Italy and the whole Southern Europe).

The interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary ways of dealing with such challenges can create a 'contamination' process of the territory, thanks to the collaboration with associations and companies, creating 'symbiotic' paths, and improving the sustainability of the University of Bologna, through both internal and external policies.

sors, and University administrative technicians (see <https://site.unibo.it/multicampus-sostenibile/en/green-office>).

²⁷ A site of the Department of Civil, Chemical, Environmental, and Materials Engineering is located in Via Terracini (Bologna, Italy); see also <https://site.unibo.it/multicampus-sostenibile/en/promoting-sustainability/terracini-in-transition>.

²⁸ F. CAPPELLARO, A. LANDI, C. BOTTONE, *Verso una transizione socio-tecnica: esperienze di contaminazione tra il movimento Transition Towns e la Scuola di Ingegneria e Architettura dell'Università di Bologna*, in *La città e le sfide ambientali globali*, edited by M. CASTRIGNANÒ, A. LANDI, Franco Angeli, Milano, 2016.

According to A. Bonoli (2020), «the great mobility and dispersal of the members of university community, whether they are students or staff, could be a way to create a knowhow that people involved will replicate in non-university communities. In short, it is a capillary diffusion of sustainability purposes, which is an innovative University-city integrated model»²⁹. Through the analysis of the ROCK Project, and the related Green Office tool, there is the awareness that cultural urban heritage must be understood sustainably, and the program mentioned is indeed containing several sustainable topics such as the waste management, air quality improvement, greenhouse gases reduction, sustainable mobility promotion, and so forth³⁰.

All the elements mentioned up to now should be considered obviously in a long-term vision (the French word of sustainability, *durable*, is more significative in this sense), strengthening the engagement of alumni as change-makers in companies, NGOs, municipalities, and civil society, ensuring continuity to useful contents of shared governance to tackle future and present challenges.

3. *Local communities: beyond World Heritage Convention (1972)?*

Considering environmental, social, and cultural challenges that States have to face in the foreseeable future, local communities, both from rural and urban areas, play a key role in the protection of place identity and cultural heritage.

As written in the second paragraph, Bologna's local community is not only composed of inhabitants, but by the whole users (e.g. students, professors, university staff, etc.), making it a living environment, multidisciplinary, distinguished by interchange and con-

²⁹ R. FALANGA, A. BONOLI, *Sustainability and Cultural Heritage*, in *Cultural Heritage Leading Urban Futures. Actions and Innovations from ROCK PROJECT*, cit., p. 89.

³⁰ *Ibidem*.

tamination. The first international document dedicated to historic urban areas and their conservation is the Charter for the Conservation of Historic Towns and Urban Areas (1987), known as the Washington Charter, where «cities are seen in relation to their surrounding environment, and attention is given to social values and participation»³¹. At the same time, promoting a multidisciplinary approach to conservation of the historic urban cities and considering environmental issues, the Washington Charter focuses on citizen participation («In order to encourage their participation and involvement, a general information programme should be set up for all residents, beginning with children of school age»³² – Article 15).

Nonetheless, the local community is the core element of the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) approach (UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscapes, 2011), taking into account that territory is a highly complex living subject³³. The HUL Recommendation (2011), already in the *Introduction*, recognizes the urban heritage as a fundamental resource linked to the liveability of urban areas, looking at its intangible components as well:

«Urban heritage, including its tangible and intangible components, constitutes a key resource in enhancing the liveability of urban areas, and fosters economic development and social cohesion in a changing global environment. As the future of humanity hinges on the effective planning and management of resources, conservation has become a strategy to achieve a balance between urban growth and quality of life on a sustainable basis»³⁴.

³¹ F. BANDARIN, R. VAN OERS, *The Historic Urban Landscape: Managing Heritage in an Urban Century*, Wiley-Blackwell, Chichester, 2012, p. 48.

³² INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON MONUMENTS AND SITES, *Charter for the Conservation of Historic Towns and Urban Areas*, Washington, DC, October 1987. Available at www.icomos.org/charters/towns_e.pdf.

³³ A. MAGNAGHI, *Il progetto locale. Verso la coscienza di luogo*, Bollati Borinighieri Editore, Torino, 2000.

³⁴ UNESCO, *Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscapes*, Paris, 10 November 2011, available at <https://whc.unesco.org/uploads/activities/documents/activity-638-98.pdf>.

Although the importance of community participation in cultural heritage dynamics is present in both WHC (1972) and HUL Recommendation (2011), the broad theme of sustainability does not appear in the WHC (1972)³⁵. Before facing this issue, let's see how the topic of participation, obviously not only from a local scale, is tackled in the two international documents.

In the *Preamble* of WHC (1972), there is the reference to the international community «as a whole to participate in the protection of the cultural and natural heritage of outstanding universal value, by the granting of collective assistance».

At the same time, Article 5 of the WHC (1972) proposes an integrated vision of cultural heritage, according to which each State has «to adopt a general policy which aims to give the cultural and natural heritage a function in the life of the community and to integrate the protection of that heritage into comprehensive planning programmes» (a), and «to set up within its territories, where such services do not exist, one or more services for the protection, conservation and presentation of the cultural and natural heritage with an appropriate staff and possessing the means to discharge their functions» (b). Furthermore, the scientific research for managing cultural heritage is mentioned in Article 5 of the WHC (1972). Therefore, also Article 6, para. 1 (WHC, 1972) mentions the international community «as a whole to co-operate».

It is important to remark that on the 30th Anniversary of WHC, the five 'Cs' were adopted: Credibility, Conservation, Capacity Building, Communication, and Communities³⁶. According to L. Meskell (2013), «these five issues continue to be both imperative and unresolved a decade on»³⁷.

³⁵ The very concept of sustainability has been developed from 1972 on, with a worldwide recognized definition only in 1987 (*Brundtland Report*)

³⁶ In the *Budapest Declaration on World Heritage* (2002) there were originally 4 key Strategic Objectives (4 'Cs'): the issue of Communities was added later, in 2007 (<https://whc.unesco.org/en/next50/>).

³⁷ L. MESKELL, *UNESCO's World Heritage Convention at 40: Challenging the Economic and Political Order of International Heritage Conservation*, in *Current Anthropology*, 54, 2013, 4, p. 492

In this context, the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003)³⁸ plays a crucial role in relation to the issue of participation and local communities³⁹. If the World Heritage List was criticized to be 'Eurocentric', because of the dominance of European sites, new programmes and conventions emerged over the years to bridge the gap. In the 2003 Convention, «intangible cultural heritage, as clearly evident in the Convention, should foster the development of the identity of the people who represent this heritage. The aim was to enable sustainable development and, more important, to empower local and regional populations to assume responsibility for their own developmental processes»⁴⁰. The 2003 Convention became very popular across countries, and the «Eurocentrism» mentioned about WHC (1972) was gradually replaced by a certain «Asiacentrism»⁴¹, and this is evident looking at the UNESCO data: between 2008 and 2013, in 98 countries, 327 expressions of intangible cultural heritage were inscribed in the three lists (Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safe guarding and Register for programmes, projects, and activities that best reflect the principles and objectives of the Convention), with 46 elements attributed to Africa, 132 to Asia (including Australia), 48 to Latin America, and 109 to Europe and the United States⁴². As M.-T. Albert and B. Ringbeck (2015) note,

³⁸ UNESCO, *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage*, Paris, 17 October 2003, available at <https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/01852-EN.pdf>.

³⁹ «The 'intangible cultural heritage' means the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage [...]» (Article 2, *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage*, 2003). Among 195 UNESCO Member States, 160 have signed the Convention and 129 have ratified it.

⁴⁰ M.-T. ALBERT, B. RINGBECK, *40 Years World Heritage Convention: Popularizing the Protection of Cultural and Natural Heritage*, De Gruyter, Inc., Berlin/Boston, 2015, p. 154.

⁴¹ *Ibidem*.

⁴² *Ibidem*.

«It is remarkable that when compared with the World Heritage Convention, the very countries seeking to safeguard intangible cultural heritage are those that are still under-represented on the World Heritage List, except for China, France, India, Japan and Spain. The question can thus be asked whether the Eurocentric nature of the World Heritage Convention is being replaced by a certain Asiacentrism in terms of intangible heritage (China 38 elements, Japan 22, Republic of Korea 16, India 10)»⁴³.

However, the discourse of participation is at the base of intangible cultural heritage, and it is clearly stated in the 2003 Convention as well: «Within the framework of its safeguarding activities of the intangible cultural heritage, each State Party shall endeavour to ensure the widest possible participation of communities, groups and, where appropriate, individuals that create, maintain and transmit such heritage, and to involve them actively in its management»⁴⁴.

Among these international instruments, like HUL Recommendation (2011) and the 2003 Convention, the World Heritage Convention (1972) primacy must be considered, and it is pointed out in the 2003 Convention, as well, in Article 3:

«Nothing in this Convention may be interpreted as: (a) altering the status or diminishing the level of protection under the 1972 Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage of World Heritage properties with which an item of the intangible cultural heritage is directly associated; or (b) affecting the rights and obligations of States Parties deriving from any international instrument relating to intellectual property rights or to the use of biological and ecological resources to which they are parties»⁴⁵.

Going back to the HUL approach, the 2011 UNESCO Recommendation recognizes the importance of a systemic approach,

⁴³ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁴ *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage*, Article 15, Participation of communities, groups and individuals.

⁴⁵ *Ivi*, Article 3.

in which urban and peri-urban areas, along with rural areas, are integrated into an «urban rural continuum»⁴⁶, and this is achievable through a series of tools that ensure the implementation of such dynamics. Chapter IV of the 2011 UNESCO Recommendation identifies four different types of these tools: 1) civic engagement tools (that «should involve a diverse cross-section of stakeholders», facilitating the intercultural dialogue by learning from communities); 2) knowledge and planning tools («these tools would include documentation and mapping of cultural and natural characteristics. Heritage, social and environmental impact assessments should be used to support and facilitate decision-making processes within a framework of sustainable development»); 3) regulatory systems (reflecting local conditions and including legislative and regulatory measures for the conservation and management of tangible and intangible urban heritage); 4) financial tools (government and global funds from international agencies, but also those employed to foster private investment at the local level, looking also at non-traditional channels, e.g. micro-credit)⁴⁷.

The Bologna's ROCK Project approach seemed to be in line with the HUL approach because of its way of interpreting urban (or rural) areas as 'laboratories', stimulating local creativity toward an innovative way of taking advantage of the tangible and intangible heritage, of discovering the true soul of the territory taking into account sustainability in its whole significance. In this context, the Paragraph 17 of the 2011 UNESCO Recommendation deserves to be mentioned:

«Urban growth is transforming the essence of many historic urban areas. Global processes have a deep impact on the values attributed by

⁴⁶ M. ANGRISANO, P. FRANCO BIANCAMANO, M. BOSONE, P. CARONE, G. DALDANISE, F. DE ROSA, A. FRANCIOSA, A. GRAVAGNUOLO, S. IODICE, F. NOCCA, A. ONESTI, S. PANARO, S. RAGOZINO, V. SANNICANDRO, L. FUSCO GIRARD, *Towards operationalizing UNESCO Recommendations on "Historic Urban Landscape": a position paper*, in *Aestimum*, 2016, 69, p. 167 ss.

⁴⁷ <https://whc.unesco.org/uploads/activities/documents/activity-638-98.pdf>.

communities to urban areas and their settings, and on the perceptions and realities of their inhabitants and users. On the one hand, urbanization provides economic, social and cultural opportunities that can enhance the quality of life and traditional character of urban areas; on the other hand, the unmanaged changes in urban density and growth can undermine the sense of place, the integrity of the urban fabric, and the identity of communities. Some historic urban areas are losing their functionality, traditional role and populations. The historic urban landscape approach may assist in managing and mitigating such impacts»⁴⁸.

Citizens' participation in such challenges brings into play the notion of creativity, emphasized in the 2011 Recommendation. According to M. Angrisano *et al.* (2016), creativity is characterized by two meanings, since it identifies both the capacity to create new ideas (useful for society) and the capacity to combine existing ideas in a new way⁴⁹. Then again, Bologna ROCK seemed to have contributed to the implementation of the HUL approach in four different ways: 1) establishing a methodology for the urban regeneration of historic centers; 2) recognizing culture and creativity as key resources in enhancing the liveability of urban areas and fostering sustainable social and economic development; 3) seeking to establish a methodology based on research, peer-to-peer learning, and experimentation, as well as extensive community engagement and mapping; 4) aiming to develop a comprehensive and integrated approach for the management of historic urban centers⁵⁰.

This issue calls into question Faro Convention (2005)⁵¹, as well: in particular, Article 12 (Access to cultural heritage and democratic

⁴⁸ *Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscapes*, Paragraph 17.

⁴⁹ *Towards operationalizing UNESCO Recommendations on "Historic Urban Landscape": a position paper*, cit.

⁵⁰ <https://whc.unesco.org/en/canopy/bolognal>.

⁵¹ COUNCIL OF EUROPE, *Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society*, Faro, 27.X.2005. Available at <https://rm.coe.int/1680083746>.

participation) can be seen as something very close to the Bologna's ROCK Project and its peculiarities aforementioned.

Indeed, the so-called «heritage community»⁵² could be considered as a «relational dimension to stimulate creativity and to activate a consensual regenerative process. In fact, the heritage community is built on the ability to self-organize in an original way their resources/capacity in the management of the landscape»⁵³. Faro Convention (2005), Article 12, encourages citizen participation, starting from the process of identification of cultural heritage, to its study, interpretation, protection, conservation, and presentation. On the other side, the same Article encourages public reflection and debate on the opportunities and challenges offered by cultural heritage, recognizing the role of voluntary organizations as partners in activities and as constructive critics of cultural heritage policies.

Considering these assumptions, cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible, could be seen as a driver of sustainable growth⁵⁴, capable to promote circular processes, as will be seen in the next paragraph.

Nonetheless, the international instruments mentioned up to now are just some of the instruments available to manage, promote, and protect cultural heritage, but at this time, all these instruments must be considered as a whole (obviously starting from WHC, 1972), as required by contemporary challenges.

4. *Circular processes concerning cultural heritage: the experience of Bologna*

The *Basic Texts of the 1972 World Heritage Convention* (2021) state that «since the adoption of the Convention in 1972, the inter-

⁵² *Ibidem.*

⁵³ *Towards operationalizing UNESCO Recommendations on "Historic Urban Landscape": a position paper*, cit.

⁵⁴ *Ibidem.*

national community has embraced the concept of “sustainable development”⁵⁵. Although the word ‘sustainability’ is not explicitly present in the WHC (1972), States Parties are encouraged to follow the WHC principles and the relevant policies adopted by the World Heritage Committee, the General Assembly of States Parties to the Convention, and the UNESCO Governing Bodies, such as the Policy Document for the Integration of a Sustainable Development Perspective into the Processes of the WHC and the UNESCO policy on engaging with indigenous peoples, or the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development⁵⁶.

«World Heritage properties may sustain biological and cultural diversity and provide ecosystem services and other benefits, which may contribute to environmental and cultural sustainability. Properties may support a variety of ongoing and proposed uses that are ecologically and culturally sustainable and which may enhance the quality of life and well-being of communities concerned. The State Party and its partners must ensure their use is equitable and fully respects the Outstanding Universal Value of the property. For some properties, human use would not be appropriate. Legislation, policies and strategies affecting World Heritage properties should ensure the protection of the Outstanding Universal Value, support the wider conservation of natural and cultural heritage, and promote and encourage the effective, inclusive and equitable participation of the communities, indigenous peoples and other stakeholders concerned with the property as necessary conditions to its sustainable protection, conservation, management and presentation»⁵⁷.

⁵⁵ UNESCO, *Basic Texts of the 1972 World Heritage Convention*, UNESCO World Heritage Centre, Paris, December 2021, available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/basictexts/>.

⁵⁶ UNESCO, *Policy Document for the Integration of a Sustainable Development Perspective into the Processes of the World Heritage Convention*, Paris, 2015. Available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/sustainabledevelopment/>.

⁵⁷ *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*, Decision 43 COM 11A.

The Bologna's regenerative process, as shortly demonstrated, has probably created a circular virtuous process, requiring a collaborative and cooperative behavior, allowing «synergies, symbiosis and hybridization processes between different components / institutions / actors», still mentioning M. Angrisano *et al.* (2016)⁵⁸. The idea of circularity was contained in the Bologna's example under the form of a participative multi-level partnership governance: in this case, the results obtained with ROCK Project were supported by specialized and innovative skills, intercepting all the cultures of the city, and redefining themselves «by supporting processes of empowerment in a circular process»⁵⁹, ultimately generating a circular virtuous cycle, a veritable mutual exchange between the specialized knowledge and the «ordinary» citizens' skills⁶⁰.

As already mentioned in the second paragraph, the ROCK Project followed a circular research-action-research that, as G. Leoni *et al.* (2020) argue, «represents a dynamic way to create new paths of knowledge to rethink the evolution of historical centers and prepare them for future challenges»⁶¹. A circular process like this is able to enhance both the capacity of citizens in activating bottom-up territorial processes and the resilience of the involved communities to respond to future challenges.

⁵⁸ *Towards operationalizing UNESCO Recommendations on "Historic Urban Landscape": a position paper*, cit.

⁵⁹ G. LEONI, A. BOERI, D. LONGO, S.O.M. BOULANGER, V. GIANFRATE, M. MASSARI, R. ROVERSI, *Introduction*, in *Cultural Heritage Leading Urban Futures. Actions and Innovations from ROCK PROJECT*, cit., p. 12.

⁶⁰ *Ibidem.*

⁶¹ *Ibidem.*

4.1. *Contribution of the ROCK Project toward the implementation of the SDGs*⁶²

Looking at Bologna ROCK, the circularity notion could be seen in relationship with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Project seems to have concretely contributed to the enhancing of some specific SDGs: 1) the above-mentioned SDG 11 («Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable») could be considered in relation to the targets 11.3 («enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanization and capacity for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management»), and 11.4 («Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage»); 2) SDG 8 («Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all»), promoting development-oriented policies that support productive activities, looking at culture and creativity as key resources for social and economic development (target 8.3); SDG 17 («Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development»), promoting public, public-private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships (target 17.17).

Thus, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) should be read in relation to the uppermost World Heritage Convention (1972). As Richard Engelhardt (retired Regional Advisor for Culture in Asia and the Pacific) argued, the WHC «carries in itself the spirit and promise of sustainability, [...] in its insistence that culture and nature from a single, closed continuum of the planet's resources, the integrated stewardship of which is essential to successful long-term sustainable development – and indeed to the future of life on the Earth as we know it»⁶³. This statement is particularly eloquent

⁶² Please note: such impacts were potential and indicative, and based on the available information and data (see <https://whc.unesco.org/en/canopy/bologna/>).

⁶³ <https://whc.unesco.org/en/sustainabledevelopment/>.

and encloses the real holistic nature for which World Heritage Convention (1972) was originally conceived.

Moreover, the Policy Document for the Integration of a Sustainable Development Perspective into the Processes of the World Heritage Convention (adopted by the General Assembly of States Parties to the World Heritage Convention at its 20th session, UNESCO 2015), starts as follows:

«Recognising that the 1972 Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage is an integral part of UNESCO's overarching mandate to foster equitable sustainable development and to promote peace and security, and with a view to ensuring policy coherence with the UN sustainable development agenda as enshrined in the document "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", existing international humanitarian standards and other multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), States Parties should «ensure an appropriate and equitable balance between conservation, sustainability and development, so that World Heritage properties can be protected through appropriate activities contributing to the social and economic development and the quality of life of our communities»⁶⁴.

The adoption of this Policy Document on World Heritage and Sustainable Development provides an important shift in the implementation of the WHC (1972), with effective integration of sustainable development. Within the Chapter II (General Provisions) of the Policy Document, sustainability is conceived in its original view, i.e. through a long-term perspective:

«Sustainability, broadly defined, is inherent to the spirit of the World Heritage Convention. It should serve as a fundamental principle for

⁶⁴ *Policy Document for the Integration of a Sustainable Development Perspective into the Processes of the World Heritage Convention*, Chapter I, para. 1 (see also UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, 21 October 2015, A/RES/70/1, Available at www.refworld.org/docid/57b6e3e44.html).

all aspects of development and for all societies. In the context of the World Heritage Convention, this means applying a long-term perspective to all processes of decision-making within World Heritage properties, with a view to fostering intergenerational equity, justice, and a world fit for present and future generations»⁶⁵.

Furthermore, the Policy Document (UNESCO, 2015) takes up Article 5 of the WHC (1972), remarking the importance of inclusive social development, characterized by «full inclusion, respect and equity of all stakeholders, including local and concerned communities and indigenous peoples»⁶⁶.

Nevertheless, the concept of sustainability, which entered the Operational Guidelines in 1994 regarding the «sustainable use» of cultural landscapes (Para. 38)⁶⁷, is now a principal notion that should be at the base of the protection of cultural (urban) heritage.

The ROCK Project in Bologna allowed to point out a new way of dealing with cultural urban heritage, developing topics such as sustainability, access, and innovative territorial processes, linked to SDGs and other international instruments available. About Bologna, according to C. Cullen and C. Sabbioni (2020), «participative access and innovative partnerships contribute to showing how cultural heritage can be a driving force to achieving urban sustainability and act as an enabler of urban transformation»⁶⁸.

Then, the relationship between UN SDGs and cultural heritage (considering WHC 1972, as well) represents a real key for local and global development, for the protection of an Earth which is under threat.

⁶⁵ *Ivi*, Chapter II, Para. 7.

⁶⁶ *Ivi*, Chapter III, Para. 17.

⁶⁷ UNESCO, *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*, Paris, February 1994. Available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/guidelines/>, and <https://whc.unesco.org/archive/lopguide94.pdf>.

⁶⁸ C. CULLEN, C. SABBIONI, *The Role of Cultural Heritage in Urban Sustainability*, in *Cultural Heritage Leading Urban Futures. Actions and Innovations from ROCK PROJECT*, cit., p. 237.

5. *Technology vs Cultural Heritage: which combination?*

Nowadays technologies (e.g. smartphones, computers) represent a key driver for producing relationships and linkages between people and other topics like cultural heritage, often enhancing the creation of new cultural and social values⁶⁹. The 2011 UNESCO Recommendation states the fundamental role of technology in such patterns, as something linked to communication and citizens' participation:

«Encourage the use of information and communication technology to document, understand and present the complex layering of urban areas and their constituent components. The collection and analysis of this data is an essential part of the knowledge of urban areas. To communicate with all sectors of society, it is particularly important to reach out to youth and all under-represented groups in order to encourage their participation»⁷⁰.

Technology is very present in the HUL approach under different forms: e.g. connecting knowledge and values, which are local and, at the same time, global; supporting the interventions of landscape transformation, becoming the mean for integration, which values diversity and catalyzes them into opportunities; reconnecting new and old assets; transforming intangible capital into tangible one; supporting the symbiosis between conservation and economic development⁷¹.

In general, the success of the ROCK Project, not only in Bologna's case, was directly linked to the use of technology, conceived as «a mediator and enabler of these new experiences by redefining the

⁶⁹ *Towards operationalizing UNESCO Recommendations on "Historic Urban Landscape": a position paper*, cit.

⁷⁰ *Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscapes*, Chapter V, Para. 27.

⁷¹ *Towards operationalizing UNESCO Recommendations on "Historic Urban Landscape": a position paper*, cit.

ways in which citizens experience spaces and life in cities, contributing so to strengthen the sense of belonging»⁷².

However, concerning Bologna's case, the research-action-research approach was also based on the use of the Internet (e.g. BO-forAll), mapping and understanding the context (e.g. digital cartographies)⁷³, engaging the local key player in the participated experience, testing co-designed solutions and monitoring, analyzing the outcomes and impacts. For instance, the monitoring phase was not merely based on a quantitative method, but it also considered other components such as behaviors, with people that became maybe the most important part of the action research method. In short, the monitoring part of ROCK was based on real-time sensors (used in several 'smart cities'), combined with a set of technologies⁷⁴. Thus, among its actions, ROCK Bologna included several devices, i.e. a multiparameter tool detecting environmental data (e.g. wind speed, air pollution), a large crowd monitoring tool, that allowed to measure the presence and movements of people within the involved area, an indoor monitoring tool in the university library, detecting environmental data, software-based simulation of outdoor comfort⁷⁵. All these elements allowed a multilevel monitoring approach, to confirm the ever-increasing importance gained by technologies within an urban cultural heritage. As well as testing the efficiency of greening strategies implemented by the ROCK Project in Piazza Scaravilli (already mentioned in the second paragraph), the University of Bologna analyzed the effects of the interventions through

⁷² I. MACIEJEWSKA, A. ROJA, *ROCK Innovation: a brief overview*, in *Cultural Heritage Leading Urban Futures*, cit., p. 156.

⁷³ Using geolocation technology, the stakeholders involved have collected a set of data on both the physical and cultural accessibility of the university area (see the video www.youtube.com/watch?v=U52bXCH-u2s).

⁷⁴ E. ANTONINI, J. GASPARI, S.O.M. BOULANGER, *Technologies in the Research-Action-Research Perspective*, in *Cultural Heritage Leading Urban Futures. Actions and Innovations from ROCK PROJECT*, cit.

⁷⁵ *Ibidem*.

simulations performed with ENVI-met software⁷⁶, and through data collection from environmental sensors placed in the same area: the analysis of data demonstrated how even a small greening intervention can contribute significantly to the heat island mitigation⁷⁷.

On the other side, social media, blogs, and social networks represented a good tool for reaching citizens, but also other stakeholders, to involve them in such issues. For instance, Piazza Rossini's installation was supported by several citizens, local associations, and social entrepreneurial activities (e.g. Kilowatt, Dynamo), and it was widely commented on social networks⁷⁸.

The prominence of technologies and digital platforms was confirmed by the COVID-19 pandemic: indeed, the ROCK Open Knowledge Week Cultural Heritage leading urban futures (27-30 October 2020)⁷⁹ was the conference that marked the closure of the ROCK Project, and it was online only, engaging policymakers, urban researchers, cultural actors, and so forth, across Europe.

The online meeting offered a program of 20 sessions, engaging more than 50 speakers, and hundreds of participants over the four days. As stated by C. Garzillo *et al.* (2020), it was in line with the ROCK objectives, providing a logical conference structure focusing on Accessibility (the sign language interpretation throughout the entire online meeting was in line with the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020, providing the framework for empowering people with disabilities to fully participate in leisure and cultural fruition), Sustainability (linked, as well, to the digital format of the conference, reducing CO2 emissions and helping to reduce waste),

⁷⁶ With the support of interactive modules, it is possible to specify surface types and building materials, as well as vegetation on walls and roofs, to scientifically analyze the impacts of design measures on the local environment and help mitigate factors such as urban heat stress (www.envi-met.com/).

⁷⁷ A. BOERI, D. LONGO, S. ORLANDI, R. ROVERSI, G. TURCI, *Temporary transformations to access and experience sustainable city public spaces*, cit.

⁷⁸ *Ibidem.*

⁷⁹ <https://rockproject.eu/ROCK-open-knowledge-week>.

and Collaborations (the meeting organizers introduced multiple participation options, e.g. ROCKnROLL Networking)⁸⁰.

Moreover, the digital platform for the ROCK Open Knowledge Week was set up by engaging several actors (e.g. ICLEI – *Local Governments for Sustainability*), creating also a micro-site, used to disseminate the Conference Programme and much more.

The correct use of technologies helps to have positive impacts on society, also from a sustainability point of view: indeed, the metrics of the ROCK Open Knowledge Week marked a successful event (794 registrations from 66 countries), with 458 active participants; moreover, the ROCK event significantly contributed to reducing air travel, by saving 169.268,89 kg CO₂, which is equivalent to planting 208.97 trees⁸¹.

Looking at the ROCK Project, technologies and digital platforms can play a greater role in disseminating experiences of culture and new ways of fruition: thanks to digitalization each citizen can actively participate in cultural heritage management and protection, considering the potential environmental impacts linked to the in-person visit or the carelessness of the institutions.

Assuming that the WHC (1972) does not mention technological and digital issues linked to cultural heritage, because of the historical moment (e.g. the World Wide Web system – WWW – was developed in the first '90s)⁸², the importance of digital instruments for the promotion and protection of cultural heritage is remarked in subsequent international documents, that must be read in relationship with the WHC (1972), which is ultimately the fundamental international instrument related to cultural heritage.

⁸⁰ C. GARZILLO, S. XYDIA, A. IZULAIN ALEJOS, *Shifting from a physical event to a virtual conference: The ROCK Open Knowledge Week*, in *Cultural Heritage Leading Urban Futures. Actions and Innovations from ROCK PROJECT*, cit.

⁸¹ *Ibidem*.

⁸² https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/innovazione-tecnologica_%28Enciclopedia-del-Novecento%29/.

6. *Conclusions*

The exponential growth of urbanization has several impacts on the protection of cultural heritage, both tangible (monuments, objects, buildings) and intangible, such as social practices, festive events, and oral traditions. Within this framework, the World Heritage Convention (1972) has currently a predominant role in leading cities toward a real sense of responsibility and sustainability, involving at the same time local communities. Obviously, in the current era, WHC (1972) must be read in relationship with the other international instruments mentioned in this paper, notwithstanding it is conceived to do some considerations about this topic, without claiming to be exhaustive. Indeed, through the analysis, though not exhaustive, of the European ROCK Project – Regeneration and Optimization of Cultural Heritage in Creative and Knowledge Cities, particularly considering the city of Bologna, the relationship between citizen and cultural heritage emerges, taking into account just some international instruments, starting from the WHC (1972).

Local communities, composed of inhabitants and city users, are able to take care of urban cultural heritage: according to the SDG 11, the ROCK Project in Bologna has designed new forms of interactions between citizens, making a positive contribution toward sustainable development, with the capacity to make (and raise awareness in this regard) urban city center as an inclusive, participative, and resilient space. At the same time, the protagonism of the local communities, like the Bolognese one, is strengthened through a real process of citizen empowerment.

The Bologna example stands against the processes of deterritorialization, decontextualization, and degradation, encouraging the build-up of aware and informed local communities, which are able to tackle the carelessness of local spaces.

In this way, the first five decades of the World Heritage Convention must lead us to reflect on a new way of fruition of cultural urban heritage, helping us to re-think cultural urban heritage in a more inclusive and sustainable way.

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5. BEATRICE SERRA, *Intimum, privatum, secretum. Sul concetto di riservatezza nel diritto canonico*, 2022.
6. *Forever Young. Celebrating 50 Years of the World Heritage Convention*, 2 Voll., edited by ELISA BARONCINI, BERT DEMARSIN, ANA GEMMA LÓPEZ MARTÍN, RAQUEL REGUEIRO DUBRA, RUXANDRA-IULIA STOICA, 2023.

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This open access publication gathers young and senior scholars of the Una Europa Universities to celebrate the first fifty years of the UNESCO 1972 World Heritage Convention (WHC). Financed as a Seed Funding Grant of the Una Europa Alliance, the WHC@50 project offers an interdisciplinary analysis of the WHC, the jewel of the UNESCO Conventions. By introducing the (r)evolutionary concept of World Heritage and involving the International Community as a whole in the preservation, valorization and transmission to future generations of cultural and natural sites and landscapes of outstanding universal value, the WHC is indeed one of the major treaty instruments of our age. We therefore hope, through the final results of the WHC@50 research cooperation activity, to contribute to the dissemination of the WHC knowledge, attracting the attention of academics, politicians, experts, officials and civil society, and contributing to the debate for strengthening the 1972 UNESCO Convention, suggesting solutions to overcome the problematic aspects of its implementation and activities.

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