EDITORIAL

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Since the 21st Century, the studies and documents dedicated to heritage have increasingly highlighted the inescapable role played by populations, communities, inhabitants, users – and therefore also on the relationship between scholars and people– in the definition and conservation of heritage. In particular, over time, the notion of heritage has grown, gradually blurring the line between tangible and intangible aspects and emphasizing the significance of people's active involvement. At the same time, the awareness of the importance of intangible dimensions of heritage has risen. It must be understood not in opposition to its physical manifestations –immanent witnesses of historical, aesthetic, cultural, use values, etc.– but to develop an inclusive, complex,

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and interconnected dialogue, where the ontological reality maintains a critical role in the multidirectional relationship with its epiphanies.

The concept of heritage takes on the nature of a 'discourse', that is an act of participatory communication, according to a path of 'heritage making', where the visual paradigm has a consubstantial role with the verbal one. Laurajane Smith, in her book *Uses of Heritage* (2006) proposes the idea that cultural heritage is not simply "a thing" but rather referable to a cultural and social process, related to the act of "remembering", where remembering acts as a vehicle to define ways of understanding and involving ourselves with what surrounds us, therefore not only with the past, but with the present. It follows that all kinds of heritage are first and foremost intangible, but not in the sense of wanting to deny the physical dimension, but rather to resize the tangible aspect that in the past has enjoyed privileged forms of self-evidence.

As highlighted by Smith (2006), cultural heritage refers to a cultural and social process, related to the act of remembering where remembering, acts as a vehicle to define ways of understanding and engaging with what surrounds us, therefore not only with the past, but with the present. It follows that for Smith all heritage is first and foremost intangible, but not in the sense of wanting to deny their physical dimension, but rather in the sense of including the tangible dimension –which has traditionally enjoyed privileged forms of self-evidence– in processes of negotiation of social meaning and practices associated with the definition of the shared meaning of the social and cultural context, to

involve all the actors involved. In this sense, sites, places, and findings have an innate weight in terms of significance that makes them the object of appreciation and attention, where the physical aspect comes to be the embodiment of more complex cultural and social manifestations, which give them value and meaning.

There is the idea that cultural heritage is the basis for building and negotiating a series of identity visions, values and social and cultural meanings in the present. We come to have an idea of heritage as a 'discourse', referring not only to the confrontation on concepts that underlie the definition and understanding of the specific cultural asset, but also, and above all, to a discourse understood as an effective and daily social practice, to involve the shared feeling, thinking and acting of people, in particular the identity of society itself.

This is an attitude that sees the relationship with cultural heritage centred on the concept of discourse and participatory process, where the role of the relationship between history and memory is central: on the one hand, history as a system of critically scientifically and historiographically understood studies, on the other hand, the individual and collective significance of the community's memory, so that the sense of individuality and identity derives from the intertwining of history and memory, but also the idea of authenticity understood as praxis and the daily relationship of the inhabitants of the place with the heritage itself (Smith, 2006, pp. 35-40). In this way, heritage comes to be configured as a cultural process related to the act of 'remembering', an activity to develop ways of understanding and

engaging with the present. It follows that heritage requires an experience, indeed it is itself configured as an experience, where memory, remembering and performance play a central role. Remembering is not to be understood only as a reminder of the past, but as an embodied and participatory act to involve all the actors and the goods themselves, so as to develop new memories. In particular, memory has an intimate relationship with the present, and so collective memory can be constituted as a foundation for a sense of identity and connection with a place and/or a tradition: in fact, collective memory, first-hand or transmitted, feeds a sense of belonging based on eminently social processes. This social approach, based on performance and collective memory, highlights the importance of objects and findings, rituals, sites and places, whose materiality can take on an important symbolic role for the definition of values and identities, first and foremost local. These bodily and material aspects lead Smith's cultural reasoning back to the initial assumption, according to which the dimension of the intangible does not exclude the tangible but includes it. Thus the importance of the place, where the ontological physical dimension induces a sense of positioning in the intangible system of social relations from which the system of meanings and therefore of heritage springs (p. 78). Giannachi (2016) underlines how remembering is a creative act that leads to a definition of personal and collective identity, to define itself as real social memories and that in particular find in ritual —and in places and finds— foundations for narrative paths. Thus, history comes to refer both to facts of the past and to their narration in a mechanism

interrelated to socio-mnemonic mechanisms. Nora (1989) highlights how history, as a representation of the past, poses problems of reconstruction and incompleteness of what is no longer, and how memory is an aspect of present life, constantly evolving, also according to a dialectic of remembering/forgetting.

The themes of memory and remembering, of creating meanings, experiences and collective memories recalls questions of a general nature to the imagination and the imaginary, individual but above all social. Dallari (2023) says that "Social imagination", that is the involvement of the individual imagination in a collective experience, is of particular importance. This concept, which varies according to different cultural contexts and historical periods, is essential to allow a community to represent itself and define its identity, the distribution of social roles and responsibilities, shared beliefs, moral sense, ideal aspirations and all those informal references that help individuals to judge their fellow human beings. to feel part of a group, to develop one's self-esteem and to guide social and relational behaviors. Social imagination also allows individuals to perceive themselves as part of a larger whole. This emotional participation represents an aspect of what we call collective imagination. If a cinematographic or musical experience is experienced as aesthetically relevant, it is internalized, memorized and contributes to forming that heritage of images and symbols known as the imaginary (pp. 69-70). Returning to focus on cultural heritage, the mechanism of remembering and involvement develop an imaginary and therefore a signification starting from the correlation between the physicality

of experience, places and objects, and people's memories, so as to develop new emotions, new memories, new social relationships. Dallani adds that the memories on which these processes of ethical and aesthetic reinterpretation act therefore arise from a collaboration between reality and imagination, between truth and reworking, between memory and nostalgia. Imagination, in this sense, is not only a capacity that we activate voluntarily, but represents an essential part of our identity, the thread that unites our experiences, gives outline and fullness to the inner resonances of lived experiences, and transforms them into a narrative that builds and renews us day after day (pp. 92-93).

The *Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society*, aka *Faro Convention* (Council of Europe, 2005) focuses on 'community', highlighting how cultural heritage consists of "a group of resources inherited from the past which people identify, independently of ownership, as a reflection and expression of their constantly evolving values, beliefs, knowledge and traditions. It includes all aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time"; and define "Heritage Community" as "people who value specific aspects of cultural heritage which they wish, within the framework of public action, to sustain and transmit to future generations" (p. 2). Central to this is the concept of sustainability as process that match the needs of the present with the future ones, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

This concept originates in an evident educational idea where heritage education –according to an inclusive idea of heritage as described so far– becomes a principle and tool

for an overall education for citizenship. In fact, since the end of the nineties, the European Council has paid particular attention to the issue of Heritage Education: the *Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers to member States on the European Cultural Heritage Strategy for the 21st Century* (Council of Europe, 2018) states that "In accordance with the Faro Framework Convention, the recognition of heritage is conceived as a shared responsibility: heritage is no longer limited to those elements officially recognised as such by the national authorities –the protected heritage– but now includes those elements regarded as heritage by the local population and local authorities. This development prompts new, more participatory and more collaborative management approaches" (p. 8). The cultural heritage encompasses all material and intangible traces of human action and it is important a heritage-based pedagogy that includes active teaching methods, cross-curricular proposals, partnerships between the educational and cultural sectors, and the use of the widest variety of modes of communication and expression.

Tim Coperland, in his *European democratic citizenship, heritage education and identity* (2006) for the Council of Europe, traces a parallel between citizenship and cultural heritage, outlining three dimensions of heritage education: education about heritage, education through heritage, education for heritage. The experts come to take on the role of facilitators, and the overall approach is oriented towards the concept of "memory" of the local population.

This general process is also favoured by the practices introduced into everyday life by Digitality, and in this sense

the ICT renews phenomena of 'pictorial turn'. Certainly, the notion of heritage originates from the passage through time of the asset, that is its being in time, and therefore the concepts of 'history' and 'memory' have an essential role, and they pose related questions regarding the visualisation of the present and the past. The so-called 'information revolution' is succeeded by a new digital revolution: first the search engine Google, and today the Artificial Intelligence show how the approach to data has changed, because actions are no longer listing, cataloguing, remembering, computing, but the act of 'searching' is at the centre of the discourse, in a sphere where data and information are matters delegated to the network (Carpo, 2017).

In addition, with ICT and the spread of smartphones, the system of interconnections has also extended to envelop the objects that surround us (IoT and Smart Objects). The condition is the one described by the *The Onlife Manifesto, Being Human in a Hyperconnected Era* which refers to an everyday life where ICT marries reality through a hyperconnection that correlates reality and digital in a single dimension (Floridi, 2015).

The general picture described so far takes on even more evidence with social media, where there is a transition from mass consumption to daily and continuous mass production. Jenkins (2006) talks about "convergent culture", resuming and renewing the concept of "collective intelligence" (Lévy, 1994), arising in relation to three concepts of media convergence, participatory culture, and collective intelligence. The convergence culture is made possible by digital communication and based on participation and sys-

tems of common interest, no longer necessarily referring to institutional centres or specific territories and societies. The term 'participatory culture' goes beyond the traditional concepts of media producers versus passive spectators –the so called 'prosumers'–, even if some actors may exert more weight than others. Last but not least, 'convergence' refers to the flow of content across multiple platforms in relation to the participatory behaviour of users and the media industry. "I will argue here against the idea that convergence should be understood primarily as a technological process bringing together multiple media functions within the same device. Instead, convergence represents a cultural shift as consumers are encouraged to seek out new information and make connections among dispersed media content" (Jenkins, 2006, p. 3).

At the same time, over the years what could generally be called an 'iconic' or 'visual' turning point has been developed, to suggest the possibility of being able to outline a set of sciences, which we could call "visual sciences". These have their field of application in images and in their cultural context. Thus, if Mitchell, with his *Iconology* has already outlined the birth of a science of images (Mitchell, 1986), Gary Bertoline in *Visual Science: An Emerging Discipline* (1998) proposes the rise of a "Visual Science": also expressly mentioning the "Being Digital" di Negroponte (1995), in relation to the emergence of computer graphics, the consequent transformations in the way we think, behave and work, and the transition from a culture based on oral and written communication to a visual one, he foreshadows the birth of a new discipline: "Converging technologies, such as computer

graphics, information technology, and the web, are contributing to a renaissance in graphics. This renaissance in graphics is coupled with the emerging re-thinking of the role of visualization in basic human intelligence. Converging Technologies, a renaissance in graphics, and better understanding of the role of visualization in human cognition are the catalyst for an emerging discipline called *visual science*" (Bertoline, 1998, p. 182). He describes a context that is that of the iconic (or pictorial) turn, where it is normal to express oneself through graphics rather than expressing information in textual form, and underlines how this is favoured by computer graphics, information technologies and the web.

In general, there is a context where the theme of the 'visual' –a deliberately general, all-encompassing expression of eminently cultural value, and of broad epistemological value– has become a full part of the scientific and cultural debate and is perceived by scholars as a reference topic in disciplinary reflections. Among these, archaeology, whose practice has always found a necessary and natural reference in drawing, for the documentation of sites, remains, excavations and finds, but also for the interpretation, reconstruction and communication of the same. Opgenhaffen (2021), also quoting Mitchell's "visual turn", traces a brief history of archaeology reinterpreted in a visual key and expressly speaks of *Archeology as a Visual Discipline*, but he specifies that by this expression he does not mean archaeological visualization as an integrated part of the general discipline of archaeology and not a new discipline, or a sub-discipline. It highlights how visualization in archaeology is a method of

understanding rather than a simple mode of representation of remains, at the same time related to an interpretative act ('creative turn') that doubles the destructive activities of excavation into creative practices. At the same time, the author also highlights how visualization practices, by concretely describing the finds through the visual and referring to them the reconstructions of the past, can favour a 'material turn', aimed at the concreteness of the objects.

Another field that has visualization at the centre of disciplinary interests and activities is that of the so-called 'graphic expression', whose afferents find in 'drawing', therefore in the production of images –of different types and nature– the common field of investigation. These are scholars largely trained in the field of architecture, but who operate in a structured and inter-collaborative way in the fields of engineering, design, cultural heritage, academia, and not least education. These experiences bring out 'drawing' as a common and disciplinary interpretative key to this work in different cultural frameworks and in very different degree courses. Representation not only as a technical-productive issue, but as an all-encompassing sphere of vision, thought and action, a science simultaneously referred to design, surveying, visual communication, and education. In Italy, over the years, reflection on the role of drawing (and designers) has been developed in cycles of meetings and seminars, and at the same time put to the practical test with interdisciplinary applications and initiatives, according to an inclusive and culturally transdisciplinary perspective. The different scholars offer different approaches to the topic –semioticians, aestheticians, art and representation historians,

experts of visual communication and pedagogy, experts in cultural studies, experts in digitization and modelling, etc.—where the coagulating element is a meaningful common cultural interest rather than the search for a shared method (Luigini, & Panciroli, 2019).

In this context, Vito Cardone (2016; 2017), recalling Bertoline, proposes the definition of "Visual Sciences" (using the plural), concept taken up and developed by Enrico Cicalò (2020) who talks about "Graphic Sciences". In contrast to Bertoline, who prefers the adjective 'visual', Cicalò prefers the term 'graphics' to highlight the role played by the production of images in this field of study. In fact Cicalò believes that the expressions "Visual Science" of Bertoline, "Image Science" of Mitchell, and his "Graphic Sciences" as all equally valid, and on the whole referable to the same field of investigation as the "production, perception, visualization, reading and interpretation of images. Although they represent different approaches and disciplinary traditions, they are often used as synonymous. [...] terms so different in meaning are so interconnected and [...] it is impossible to investigate one of them without considering the others. Visual Science, Image Science and Graphic Science, are often used as synonymous despite the fact that the words they are composed of have profoundly different meanings" (p. 4). Cicalò identifies the following key words, reflecting the main interests of the conference participants: graphic thinking and learning; drawing, geometry and history of representation; digital modeling, virtual and augmented reality, gaming; graphic languages, writing and lettering; graphic communication and digital media; data visualization and infographic (p. 8).

In recent years there have been many conferences on technologies for cultural heritage survey and digitization, but this conference aims to focus on the visual dimension of the discourse on heritage: not 'heritage imaging' but rather 'imagin heritage' and 'imaging heritage', focusing attention on the role of physical and mental images of heritage, themselves heritage, which have as their object the heritage in any way intended. It is a theme that embraces multiple fields, and the aim of the conference is to encourage co-disciplinary confrontation, exchange, and dialogue. The main topics are (but not limited to): Visual Heritage, Heritage Graphical Studies, Participatory Heritage, Heritage Education, Public Heritage, Heritage Interpretation, Heritage Visual Storytelling, Heritage & Museum, Heritage & Archive, Digital Heritage, Heritage Extended Reality, Phygital Heritage. This issue of *img journal* titled *Imagin(g) Heritage* originates from the experiences carried out by an interdisciplinary group of scholars from 2017 (http://www.img-network.it/), focused on studies dedicated to the field of images, imagination and imaginary. Now these studies are specifically referred to a specific topic: the Cultural Heritage. This has already been the focal of a conference held in L'Aquila in 2023 (Brusaporci et al., 2023), and the papers in this issue of the journal further develop the reflections. Focusing on the papers presented in this issue of *img journal*, Serge Noiret in *Public History and Heritage among Communities: Participation and Knowledge Sharing* explains how Public History can enhance the transdisciplinary approach to the study and management of cultural heritage, with reference to the framework of the Council of Europe's *Faro Convention*

that underscores the importance of actively involving local communities in participatory practices.

Pilar Chias Navarro, with her *Graphic Studies on the Built Heritage, a Critical Review: Technical Advances VS Traditional*, reviews the best practices in surveying theories and methodologies, underlying the importance of a critical and responsible use of technologies, where traditional and archival graphic information sources can support the digital approaches.

In *Re-Imagining the Unconscious Heritage: From Trauma to Project, Ethics and Aesthetics of Afterwardsness*, Chiara Agagiu starts from the Lacanian theory and the philosophy of education to present a concept of heritage that rise from the idea of subjectivation, identifications and symbolizations.

In *Unveiling the Art-Science Tapestry: Optical Methods in Cultural Heritage Conservation and Restoration*, Dario Ambrosini, Annamaria Ciccozzi, Tullio de Rubeis, and Domenica Paoletti, show how visual scientific methodologies and techniques can change the way we engage with and imagine of art and artworks.

In *From Archives of Lost Architecture to AR. Canonica's Farmhouses from the XIX Century to the Present Day*, Cecilia Maria Bolognesi and Deida Bassorizzi reconstruct a rural complex taking into account both the physical aspects and the intangible traces of heritage, where VR and AR are intended as tools for heritage storytelling.

In *The Discovery of Abandoned Villages in Abruzzo. Exploring the Potential of Drawing as a Research Method*, Giovanni Caffio underlines the importance of architectural drawing and visualization in the study of cultural and material heritage of minor villages, and to develop projects of sus-

tainable revitalization, rooted on the identitarian aspects of these communities.

Enrico Cicalò and Michele Valentino in *Representing and Visualizing Archaeology. The Contribution of Graphic Sciences to Research in Archaeology* discuss the role of images and graphic sciences in the archaeological field, where visualization represent both a practice to document the material remains and to reconstruct and understand the past.

Alessandra De Nicola and Franca Zuccoli present the paper *Working with cultural heritage. Achieving active participation by means of collective drawing and design activities* where explore how the intentional design process can engage the individual with cultural heritage.

In *Urbino Explored in a Multimedia Travel Notebook*, Elena Ippoliti and Flavia Camagni highlight the importance of engaging in cultural heritage communication, with AR integrated experiences on multiple spatial and temporal levels.

In *Theater Directors and Graphic Designers' Interpretations of Chinese Narratives in Teater Koma Posters*, Saut Irianto Manik analyses the role of posters as a media for visual communication, according to the idea that poster interpretation favours the study of symbolic language and messages.

In *Expanded' Experiences of Knowledge of Cultural Heritage: The Castle of Roccarainola, A Case Study*, Ornella Zerlenga, Margherita Cicala and Riccardo Miele show the use of photogrammetry to realise virtual itineraries to study small urban centres, understand their historical and cultural values, and re-valorise them.

The title *Imagin(g) Heritage* highlights that heritage representation is primarily a cultural issue, where "imaging" —

whether traditional and/or digital, assuming that nowadays the discourses cannot be totally distinguished– combines 'imagination' and 'imagery'. In the same way and at the same time the idea of heritage itself develops through a discourse between the blurred dimensions of the tangible and the intangible, in the sphere of history, memory and remembering. Thus heritage becomes the protagonist, in a game of trilateration between scholars, population, and heritage itself, where heritage is an active subject and no longer just the object of representation (Brusaporci, 2023).

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