

## COOPERATING FOR CULTURAL HERITAGE CONSERVATION

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Many courses of anthropology, ethnology and archaeology in Italian Universities have set up long term research project in many countries of the world addressing the conservation and valorization of the cultural patrimony jointly with local partners in Africa, Asia, Europe and Oceania. The idea of putting up this panel stemmed from an urgent need to highlight the role universities can play in carrying out activities of cultural cooperation; these are similar but different from activities of cooperation to development. The latter are mainly driven by the desire to address specific problems for their solution while the former stems from a shared interest in investigating aspects of tangible and intangible cultural patrimony within a country.

The experience of participating to long term Ethnological Missions in Malawi and Mozambique (MEIMM) as well as to activities of cooperation for development suggest to highlight a number of differences whose added value should be considered carefully. The long term relations set up among researchers and academics in the countries of the research usually are long lasting good and exponentially durable relations of intellectual interchange among the partners. Research is usually an activity that entails personal passion for the personnel involved and it creates communication among the researchers of the different countries that lasts beyond financial limits. The long term cultural relations between the actors involved could also be considered an added value in the relations between countries whose outcomes of soft diplomacy<sup>1</sup> could be viewed as an important added value of a financial investment in these cultural activities.

The boundary line between development cooperation and cultural cooperation is often overlooked. Cultural cooperation holds its own specificity that should be preserved and valued. Cultural cooperation involves universities and research centres engaging project focused in the field of ethnology, ethnography, archaeology, and history. In Italy there is a specific tradition within this domain: the ethnological and archaeological missions promoted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Similarly, the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs support scientific cooperation through the CORUS (Cooperation pour la recherche universitaire et scientifique) Programme. In both cases, cultural cooperation works for the study, the protection, and the value of local cultural heritages.

The panel compared different international experiences, in particularly French and Italian initiatives, in the field of cultural cooperation for local heritages conservation. Cultural heritage and the processes of identification of such heritages have arisen as a key field study in human and social sciences. They also represent a main sector within development policies in the “Global South”. There is a growing awareness about critical issues related to risk managements as threat to cultural heritages, both at the level of single sites and at regional level. Universities and research centres play a role in terms of training, management, knowledge transfer and dissemination among different stakeholders (local communities, public institutions in charge of cultural policies). The main goal of the panel has been to encourage critical thinking within academic and scientific research on the process of identification and protection of cultural heritages in the “Global South” and beyond it. The panel addressed the need of improving the knowledge and develop the skills of the people working in the field of cultural heritage, as well as of the local communities, in terms of protection mechanisms, heritage conservation and management. The overlapping of scientific and political interests within this field might offers a potential in terms of funding; it might also bring material benefits to local actors, universities and research groups. By addressing different case studies, and the experiences of three of the several Italian Ethnological Missions in Ghana (MEIG started in 1954 by V. L. Grotanelli and followed from 1989 by a second phase directed M. Pavanello), Mozambique & Malawi (MEIMM started in 2007 and directed by F. Declich), and the Equatorial Africa (MEIAFE) started in 1979 by F. Remotti and directed by C. Pennacini since 2004), the panel took into account the plurality of actors involved in the projects, as well as the processes of negotiation that shape the different phases of the projects. More broadly the panel addressed also the conflicts and the political implications related to cultural heritage conservation projects. Only some papers discussed in the panel are published here. Yet, some of the question addressed were the following, from tackled from an inter-disciplinary approach:

- how to build scientific knowledge on cultural heritage taking into account the complex issues of identity, memory, and claims over land;
- how to protect the cultural heritage and how to transform it in an opportunity for economic empowerment of local communities;
- how to create and strengthen cooperation networks between universities and research centres belonging to the Global North and the Global South;
- how to support research teams working on cultural heritage and how to contribute to the training of human resources in the Global South;
- how to strengthen research networks at regional and international level.

<sup>1</sup> Castles, Steven and Miller, Mark, 2012, *L'era delle migrazioni*, Editore Odoja, Bologna.

**CULTURAL COOPERATION BY WAY OF ETHNOGRAPHY:  
A UGANDAN CASE STUDY (CORUS PROJECT)**

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**ABSTRACT**

The paper moves from my experience as Italian anthropologist doing research both for the CORUS (cultural cooperation project) and for the Italian Cooperation (development cooperation). The aim of the article is to highlight some specificities of the ethnographic approach in matters of dialogue and cooperation between actors from different backgrounds. For this purpose the article draws upon the case study of Buddo Naggalabi, explored in the framework of CORUS Project. Some methodological and ethical aspects of fieldwork will be emphasized to suggest that ethnography is an ideal tool, particularly appropriate on the micro-level, to engage participants and scholars in broader frameworks of cultural cooperation.

This paper draws upon a research I carried out in Uganda for the CORUS Project<sup>1</sup>, to which I took part as a member of the “Missione Etnologica Italiana in Africa Equatoriale”<sup>2</sup> in 2008-2010, and which dealt with sacred sites and heritagization in East Africa. Other authors in my panel have introduced both the project and the Missione, therefore I will not talk about them in more detail. I will instead move from a personal experience in Uganda, which made me confront with the concept of “cooperation” from the perspective of an Italian, anthropologist, with multiple loyalties (to “my” ethnographic field and to the Italian Cooperation which was temporarily hiring me). After sketching out this background, I will describe the site of my CORUS ethnographic research in more details, in order to give an example of the kind of knowledge that fieldwork can provide us with. I will use this case study to suggest that such knowledge makes ethnography a proper example of “cooperation” - “cultural” cooperation, of course, with little to envy to “development cooperation”.

**PREAMBLE – SOME REFLEXIVITY ON MY ITALIAN BACKGROUND AND ON “COOPERATION” IN UGANDA**

As I was doing research in Uganda for my university studies, the Italian Cooperation (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) hired me to write a publication about the Italian presence in the country. I had two months to reconstruct the history of the interaction between the two countries, and to explore the contemporary context. The work was going to become a publication [1] which, as I discovered in the review process, had to follow implicit guidelines impressed by the commissioning institution. Research was enjoyable and inspiring as only fieldwork can be, while the writing up became a subtle (and I suppose, sometimes unconscious) negotiation around the narrative that should emerge from the book.

As a number of reviews and interpolations went on, the chronological organization I had chosen for the book – explorers, missionaries, development workers, business community – acquired more and more an ideological meaning. Italian governmental and non-governmental cooperation for development is well established in Uganda, and stakeholders wanted the publication to give relevance to its history. The order of chapters thus acquired a sort of teleological flavour, where everything before the establishment of “cooperation for development” seemed to prepare the ground for it, while everything after it could not but benefitting from it.

Therefore, I had an occasion to reflect upon the meaning of “cooperation” from an unusual perspective. Was it consistent to read the first travels of Italian explorers in the region as a prodrome of a future of “cooperation”? Was the Catholic mission a “cooperation” effort? The travel memoirs from 1890s-1910s that I was reading were unsurprisingly rich in colonial time stereotypes, fear and horror for the *difference* experienced in the field and paternalistic empathy for the poor “little blacks” (in the words of Comboni), which did not really resound with modern cooperation’s vocabulary. Was Italian food-import really “cooperation” with the Ugandan partners? Uganda was described by businessmen as the land of opportunities, where a booming economy was giving concrete chances of success, also (although not only) because of loose regulations and cheap labour. What was the *fil rouge* between the 19<sup>th</sup> century Italian explorers in the Great Lakes Region and the 21<sup>st</sup> century NGO officers on white pick-ups in Karamoja (where Italian efforts are nowadays focused)?

<sup>1</sup> “Approche socio-historique de sites sacrés naturels et enjeux contemporains autour de la préservation de ce patrimoine (Kenya, Madagascar, Ouganda)”, funded by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and IRD (Institut de Recherche pour le Développement).

<sup>2</sup> “Italian Mission in Equatorial Africa”, founded by Prof. F. Remotti and presently directed by Prof. C. Pennacini.

If I had to find a common denominator, this was represented by the fascination of interviewees with a specific narrative on Italians, in which hard work, joyfulness and passion for “bella vita” (“good life”) were naturalized as Italian genetic fingerprints. Such characteristics, in turn, were thought of as the reason why “cooperation” worked so well, smoothly and “naturally” with Ugandans. When racist comments made me hesitant, the interviewees would quickly add a paternalistic comment on how Ugandans were, after all, funny - funny like Italians, always cracking a joke or forgiving wrongdoings. This narration is neither new nor rare: already in 1959, a speaker at the III Congress on economic and trading relations with the African continent observed that “our workers have left in Africa a memory of lively sympathy for their humanity, hard work and generous spirit” [2]. A development worker in Karamoja, referring to the missionaries’ experience, told me that “Italians are more inclined to create bonds with other cultures”, while a presenter of the Italian Festival held in Kampala in March 2012 opened the show by reminding the audience that “the relation between Ugandans and Italians have always been of friendship, never of colonialism”. As the anthropologist Favero [3] has brightly explained, the *topos* of “Italians, good people” has marked the Italian identity construction process in the last 50 years at least. It has probably been reinforced by the peculiar characteristics of the Italian “scramble for Africa”, a “demographic imperialism” with minor (in quantity, although not in quality) impact than other nations [3]. This narrative, in my view, encourages a “cooperation” talk in which other expats communities are not as much soaked as Italians.

Since I was there as a member of the Missione, which works in Rwanda, Congo and Uganda – here within an agreement with Makerere University - I insisted to include in the publication a chapter on Italian scientists and researchers in Uganda. If something like food-import could be displayed as a step in that ideal line of evolution along a “cooperation” paradigm, I felt even more authorized to consider students exchanges, cultural agreements and the collaborations between university departments or museums as a relevant aspect of our mutual cooperation.

In more or less the same period, the Italian Cooperation funded a TV program, “Brothers in Cooperation”<sup>3</sup>, aimed at portraying the Italian presence in Uganda in 10 episodes. Creative and eye-catching, the program was an interesting channel through which the narration of the “good Italian” was reconfirmed. Live interviews from the studios of WBS TV were combined with pictures of the works realized countrywide: hospitals, cultivated fields, schools, but also trading enterprises and financial partnership with local entrepreneurs dominated the scene. Invited to present the work of the Missione on behalf of the other members (which were in Italy at that time), I sat in the studios with Prof. Nannyonga Tamusuzza and Prof. Ndoleriire, from Makerere University. It was a wonderful occasion to reflect upon my and our positionality in Uganda: while “development cooperation” programs are publicized by the media and openly supported and echoed by the expats communities, social researchers that produce knowledge and encourage respectful, peaceful and creative human relationships usually carry out their fieldwork far from the public attention. Through WBS we finally had a chance to explain to a diverse audience what anthropologists are and do, and the value of the “immaterial bridges between cultures” that they build. We had no picture of hospitals built or school developed to show, but we talked about the marvels of intercultural sharing and affinity that only field research offers. At the end of the day, it seemed that we had legitimately gained our little place amongst the “brothers in cooperation” (although my colleagues are mainly women and sisterhood is way more relevant to our work).

This sudden visibility through a cooperation-related program made me realize something very simple, yet significant: devoting time to the diffusion and restitution of knowledge improves the interaction with the general public and with the institutions, something we should not dismiss, especially in time of cuts to funding to cooperation in general, and cultural cooperation in particular. However, we should pursue that without betraying the nature of our discipline. The rapport that anthropologists build with participants, the intimacy and durability of networks they establish in the field, the knowledge they produce are as precious as building schools, but represent an endeavour of different nature and as such it should be valued .

In this paper I want to sketch out some reflections that the above narrated anecdotes triggered in me. I do not want to pursue this reasoning in a theoretical way, but to articulate it with the research carried out for the CORUS Project. If ethnographic fieldwork shares something with development interventions, it is that both represent an “encounter” [5], and the encounter always “takes place”, with a fitting expression [6], somewhere. Therefore, I am proposing here to see an example of ethnography “taking place” in Buddo Naggalabi; to explore how the anthropological approach can build knowledge, on the micro level; and I suggest that such knowledge legitimately fits, on the macro level, in broad projects of “cultural cooperation” as CORUS. By reflecting on ethnography’s specificities I do not want to discredit the cooperation-for-development initiatives, but to propose that our endeavour is equally pertinent to the “cooperation” discourse and did deserve that little chapter in the publication on Italians in Uganda.

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<sup>3</sup> Directed by Marco Ballerini and Sarah Nsigaye.



Fig. 1 - Damaged signpost welcoming tourists to Buddo Naggalabi.

### ETHNOGRAPHY “TAKING PLACE” - BUDDO NAGGALABI, A “MORAL” PLACE

Buddo Naggalabi hill is located about 15 km south west of Kampala, central Uganda. Upon arrival on the site, the visitor first passes along the gates of King’s College Buddo, an excellent college established by the Church Missionary Society in 1906 for the education of the ruling elite and royal families in the Uganda Protectorate. On the top of such illustrious hill, the *kabaka*, kings of Buganda<sup>4</sup>, are enthroned, given the regalia and introduced to the world. A number of natural spots on the hill are named after salient episodes of one of the origin myths of Buganda: in the myth, the first king Kintu kills the tyrant-snake Bemba and takes power as a *primus inter pares* among the Ganda clans. Taboos and rules apply to such spots.

My research, explained elsewhere more in detail [7], dealt with the powerful “official” narration surrounding this site, which portrays it as a sacred place for the Baganda due to its close interconnection with royalty, main *raison d’être* of this society. Crucial to the vicissitudes of the kingdom, Buddo seemingly condenses meanings of centrality (geographical and symbolical), authenticity and continuity. The latter materialises in the reiteration of the coronation rite from king to king, but also in the path which connects the named spots mentioned above: every visitor’s walk, by the act of moving along spatial directions under the guide of the locals, revives and re-enacts the memory which sprouts from myth, spot after spot.

Anthropological literature is particularly appropriate to understand how different societies attribute meaning to space and place; the connection between place and mythological knowledge is pointed out already by Malinowski [8], and it is still a focus of interest. If, as Tilley notes, “naming and identification of particular topographic features... is crucial for the establishment and maintenance of their identity” [9: 18], the act of moving around in the landscape, “encountering” such features, becomes a way to tell stories about the place and the people emplaced there. The individual and collective memories which are bound to that very geography are given temporal depth. The concept of “spatial stories” [10], upon which Tilley draws, is useful to understand how a surface as Buddo’s hilltop can be seen not just as a space, but as a combination of places, through which a narration on the clans and the society of Baganda is carried out. As Augé aptly notes: “strangely, it is a set of breaks and discontinuities in space”, exactly our named spots on the hill, “that expresses continuity in time” [11: 60]. Obviously, such interpretation of the hill is particularly fitting in the context of heritagization plans (the path can quickly become a ready-made tour for visitors): hence, the relevance of Buddo for the CORUS Project on heritagization of sacred sites in East Africa.

However, walking along a path is not only narrating a story: “geographical features of the landscape act as mnemonic pegs on which *moral* teachings hang” [9: 33, italics mine]. When places scattered in an “existential space” are attributed meaning, individuals and groups anchor their identity discourse on the ground and the place itself becomes charged of morality. After some years from my fieldwork in Buddo and more research on the Baganda’s identity claims in the Ugandan context, I feel all the importance of such observation for understanding the issues at

<sup>4</sup> Buganda is a (neo)traditional kingdom in central Uganda. People from here are called Baganda (sing. muganda), and speak the Luganda language. I will use “Ganda” as an adjective throughout the paper, according to the British literature fashion.

stake on that little hill.

In Buddo, the “atmosphere of the place” [12] is striking. The rural setting, silent and afar from any urban sound (the only exception being the radios working also in case of power outage) is particularly prone to romanticization; countryside, here as elsewhere, is charged with meanings in contrast with the city, and as a “locus of *moral* purity and wholeness” [13: 152, *Italics mine*]. In the place where royalty comes to being, a proper moral behaviour is required; morality is heightened by the presence of sacred spots, protected by rules and taboos, and by a hierarchy of culturally specialized people, whose head is represented by a clan chief with functions of traditional healer. He and his clan men (from the *mamba* clan) regulate the access and the use of the land on the hill, which is mostly property of the king. Their position has been enhanced by the cultural revival ensued in Buganda after the restoration of the traditional institution in 1993, that has revived old cultural traditions and dictated the criteria to define a “good muganda”. “Cultural brokers”, “tradition bearer” [14] (people who actively commit to the reactivation of traditional knowledge and to its transmission) and elders capitalize on the revival: they have become the gatekeepers of the Ganda identity, repository of authenticity and morality. In this way they can negotiate powerful roles within the administration of the kingdom, or within the arena of their own clans or villages. In Buddo they protect the place, synecdoche of the kingdom as an institution and its people, from strangers. Events like the fire which unknown people set to one of the sacred houses in 2012 are seen as bewildering wounds to the security of Buganda, a further deterioration to the custom and traditions of a once united kingdom.

Moral meanings are aptly explored by ethnographic fieldwork. As Lambek claims, “fieldwork is an intensely moral activity in the Aristotelian sense” [15: 32]: coherently with the position of many scholars of anthropology of morality in the last decade, morality here is not a set of rules, but an “ethical practice” which provides us with the chance of a “meaningful engagement with the others” [15: 33]. Navigating a place soaked with morality, through participant observation and sharing, the ethnographer can also more easily acknowledge (or foresee) how this can trigger absolutistic claims of belonging. When fear of the “immoral” Other is felt by self-asserting “moral” first-comers, autochthony discourse is activated, with little if any historical contextualization [16]. In Buddo, the origin myth gives pre-eminence to the *mamba* clan that dwells on the hill, and seems to provide it with an exclusive right to the land. However, research can also help to understand that even the harshest and most essentialistic discourse on rooting and belonging has a constructed nature and reflects to partisan needs and interests, contextually elaborated.

## ONE SITE, MANY INTERESTS: SUBJECTIVITY, RELATION AND CONFLICTS AROUND THE PLACE

As I said, the official narrative on the site insisted on Buddo as a crucial, shared heritage for the whole kingdom. However, when between 1999 and 2003 a project of heritagization attempted to transform the site into a touristic attraction, a Pandora’s vase opened and revealed a number of tensions and conflicts within and around it. I detail such tensions better elsewhere [7]. Here it will be enough to say that these conflicts can productively be interpreted as sprouting from the divergent meanings that the place has been given by the actors and from the heterogeneous relations between them. For the inhabitant of Buddo (clan *mamba*) the hill represented an “existential place” where every rock reminded of ancestors’ deeds and reconfirmed emplacedness and belonging. Some were eager to develop the site and to open it to visitors, but had their own peculiar vision of how this was to be done: sacred space was not supposed to be invaded by people, and being a relational space of interaction between the living and the dead it was not supposed to be “frozen” within fences or labelled by generic touristic signposts. For the officer of the Buganda Ministry of Tourism, the interpretation had minor phenomenological importance: Buddo was conceived as an asset capable to generate income. Several “ethnically defined entrepreneurs, community leaders and cultural brokers” [14: 8] started interacting in new ways, some of them seeing that “it paid to be native” [14: 6], and unwilling to step back in the management of the site. People from the national museum and from urban institutions, however, claimed expertise and cultural knowledge on the site as much, if not more, than the locals. The museum’s officers, on their part, eager to apply UNESCO directives on intangible heritage, brought expert craftsmen, architects and professionals to the site; workshops with the local people were intended to teach the basis of tourist reception.

The confrontation between these actors - all Baganda, but with different statuses – showed how the morality, sacredness and even the taboos in Buddo were in reality contextual and negotiable constructions. As anthropological literature shows, indeed, moral discourse on place is not stated once and for all: it ideally unfolds at its best in the relationship between locals and outsiders, but it can also be articulated to serve different aims, tackling different levels of social relationship, even *within* one place, within one community [17]. None of the several perspectives really won, and the place was left to itself, shabbier than before.

Each of the above positionalities in relation to the site engaged differently with it. As Thilley maintains, “there is no space that is not relational” [9: 17]. Subjects engage with space differently, through “embodiment” [12]; space, and the navigation into a place, trigger different sensibilities and attitudes. Since I was interested in the consequences of heritagization, the relation between tourists and Buddo was an interesting aspect. The tourist in a site has to be reminded of other experiences, of other places, activating memories and resonating with higher values and ideals, in order to feel the “atmosphere of the place” [12: 45]. However, the tourists’ comments that I gathered were often negative: the place was dilapidated and disorganized, and for some “not authentic enough”; they could not get the “sense of place” that Crouch defines as a “suitable mood or ambiance related to that [tourist] attraction” [12: 365].

One place, many interpretations and relations: hence, the conflicts and negotiations that I encountered in my research. When a selected “stewardship” is called to manage precious resources [18], conflict seems inevitable. Sites undergoing heritagization processes “are destined to be sites of controversy, as different groups embracing different narratives seek to assert symbolic (or economic) ownership of them” [19: 434].

Ethnography, through the continuative interaction and the accurate construction of rapport with informants, brings us closer to the concrete power relations between actors that have different rights to the place, a real “system of domination” [9] which restricts and regulates access. While the development workers I interviewed for the Italian Cooperation often described with surprise the “skirmishes” among the interventions’ receivers, anthropologists take the power relation in the field as an essential part of their research. They know how to avoid culturalist stereotypes pretending that a place is inhabited by a uniform and united people [11][13] and they bring the duality power/place to the forefront in their analysis. Nobody, let alone myself, could access all the corners on the hill: rules and taboos applied to Buddo’s sacred houses, the shrines, the *kabaka*’s land on the hill, and different people had different rights of movement on the site. Place and power were closely interconnected there as elsewhere, and one of the duties of the anthropologist is exactly to extricate this nexus. Projects of cultural cooperation like CORUS cannot but encourage a reflection upon these themes, and prove how ethnography is a privileged tool to approach them.

## ETHNOGRAPHIC FIELDWORK AND CULTURAL COOPERATION

This case study inspires a number of observations on the potentiality of ethnographic fieldwork in the framework of cultural cooperation programmes. There is, I feel, continuous need not so much to justify our presence as social researchers or cultural practitioners among the “VIPs” of cooperation, as probably to remind ourselves and the general public of the specificities that we are called to bring on the ground as a “plus”.

First, critical anthropology can deconstruct taken-for-granted concepts as “heritage”, culture or tradition, investigating the historical and cultural context that produced them [20]. This effort implies a responsibility towards the people we interview and the public we target: “our [of the anthropologists] writings challenging or reifying particular narratives associated with [heritage] sites have the potential to be read not only by local stakeholders but also by visiting tourists and representatives from granting agencies” [19: 434]. Reflexivity around this issue represents a duty, but also a great strength of our discipline.

Despite the effort to demystify essentialistic concepts, researchers also have clear that emic categories have very real consequences in terms of inclusion and exclusion. Therefore, the second point I want to underline here is that the ethnographic stance gives the researcher a privileged view on conflict. As Buddo case study shows, certain fields like heritage become more easily arenas of conflicting relationships. “How do we situate ourselves in these frequently contentious sites? ... What role, if any, are we to play in the articulation and negotiation of various stakeholders’ claims surrounding heritage sites?” [19: 434]. Ethnography gives room to these questions and avoids simplifications.

The attitude of the ethnographer towards issues of conflict can be inspired by different approaches: it could be one of “applied”, or “action”, or even a “public interest” anthropologist, all of them requiring active involvement of the researcher as practitioner or vocal advocate of local’s claims. As external observer, the researcher can learn of “disparities in power across involved groups” and he might act to “readdress imbalance in the debate”, or have a voice in the “planning, management, and conflict resolution” [18: 368]. I have not had the chance to participate to the (failed) attempt of heritagization process in Buddo, but I had to deal with its consequences. I chose a lower profile: my informants were frustrated for the divergent interests competing around the site, and I tried to communicate their discontent to the higher levels of the hierarchy, when possible. I thus mainly concentrated on “[mapping] out the regimes of power connected to [the] site” [19: 434], and tried to act as a mediator, but I could not act upon the process of heritagization which had occurred much earlier.

The result of this very modest role is that instead of helping the people on the ground to learn something about heritagization, I was the one who learnt more about the place. My normative knowledge about Ganda custom and society was insinuated by doubts, cracks on the surface, which made more evident the multidimensional dynamics of power in that society. This small community, claiming to be the caretaker of such an emblem of Buganda’s unity, was torn by tensions. Power layers unfolded before me, something that I have tried to interpret here also through the lens of place and space.

As Lambek points out, it can be “demoralizing” to realise how little we know, when we are in the field. There we adopt an attitude of “perpetual student” [15], and the participants often have the right to the last word. And here comes a third peculiar aspect of ethnography: the anthropologist at work *learns* from the people with whom he or she studies, and has rarely, if ever, the intention to teach. This makes a cooperation based on cultural research quite different from a development intervention, where expertise from the “developed” world has to be taught in form of “transfer of knowledge/technology” (although there has been a reevaluation of local knowledge in the last decades, also thanks to anthropology [21]). One should however not romanticize ethnography as a democratic, egalitarian, naive enterprise: power relations are at work also between the researcher and the research field, and reflexivity is again necessary to avoid rhetorical statements.

As a fourth and final point, I have already mentioned above that ethnographic fieldwork represents a “moral” activity, an ethical enterprise with a focus on *praxis* and bodily dispositions. If the ethnographers, in the “hermeneutics

of fieldwork” [15], gets to know the others and engages with them, such engagement is a holistic activity: with his/her body, the ethnographer navigates space that the participants navigate and tries to take part into the process of attribution of meaning that they consciously or unconsciously perform in everyday life. Even speech is ethical practice [22]: while speaking, the ethnographer creates conditions which are bounding in the exchange with others. Moreover, as Paul Stoller loves to remind (cf. his speech at Vega Day in Stockholm, April 2013), anthropology seeks for an “existential convergence” with the participants. Ethnography, the “bedrock of anthropology”, “sometimes enables readers to understand the wisdom of others, which, in turn, can open their being to an increasingly complex and interconnected world” [23: 156].

All this may sound too reflexive and even intimate, when we are talking of “cultural cooperation” between big institutions. However, I am convinced that the success of such a peculiar kind of cooperation lies exactly in what happens on the ground. Moreover, we are called upon a serious consideration of the consequences that such potentialities have for us. Among the heterogeneous actors and practitioners of development, we are certainly better equipped to engage local participants and scholars in our research. We can do it through the diffusion and restitution of knowledge, but we also have the duty to support their active involvement in the research designs. As I have said above, fieldwork cannot be romanticized as an egalitarian enterprise: availability of funds, facilities, documents, marks a difference between scholars from the “North” and from the “South” that cannot be naively underestimated.

The “good” anthropology, as Susan R. Whytes has said in a speech at SANT conference, Uppsala, in April 2013, is “one whose engagement ‘ramifies’ along different trajectories”. Scholar with participants, scholars among themselves in the field, “North” with “South”: anthropology must create connections deemed to remain in time, and has to do so also by involving scholars from other background in the conceptualization of the research. In this sense, “cooperation”, I suggest, might be just another label for such engagement, and for the multidimensional relations which anthropology builds. Ethnography, for the aims of this paper, is the smallest in a series of nesting dolls – where the biggest represents the huge administrative and institutional framework of cooperation projects like the Missione or CORUS.

## CONCLUSIONS

Back to the first setting of this paper, governmental and non-governmental cooperation for development remains the Italian success story in Uganda. Cultural cooperation, overshadowed by her bigger sisters, is cheaper yet more affected by budget cuts and receives less public recognition. However, agreements between Italian and Ugandan universities are still on-going<sup>5</sup>, and the Missione represents an important actor on this scene.

As long as the results of cultural cooperation are measured against the standard of development interventions, the lack of public and institutional confidence in what we do will affect our working conditions. The risk I see from my personal experience on the ground is the fragmentation of research - each researcher seeking funds and support on his or her own, at the expenses of a broader coherence with other researches carried out on the same ground. Another risk is the lack of material support for the scholars from the “South”, which are deemed to be excluded by the elaboration of the research questions and run the risk of being “dragged” into our projects only after all is said and done. These are the risks that must convince us to disclose our skills to the broader public and to the institutions, asking for the recognition of our role and for the support of a real engagement with our “Southern” colleagues.

This is why frameworks like Missione Etnologica Italiana in Africa Equatoriale and broad international projects like CORUS are important: they should create the conditions to channel energies towards the achievement of congruent research designs, to support a concrete exchange and engagement between researchers, and to legitimize anthropological knowledge as a tool for cultural cooperation.

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## THE ITALIAN ETHNOLOGICAL MISSION TO GHANA AND CULTURAL COOPERATION: HERITAGE-MAKING PROCESSES IN THE NZEMA AREA (SOUTH-WEST GHANA)<sup>1</sup>

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### ABSTRACT

In the last fifteen years the Italian Ethnological Mission to Ghana (IEMG), established in 1956, has been supporting cultural cooperation projects aiming to the valorisation of natural and cultural heritage of the Nzema area (South-West Ghana). The long-term relationships between IEMG anthropologists and local actors have led representatives of Ghanaian communities and institutions to ask for a restitution of knowledge gathered throughout the years by researchers.

In order to meet these requests, in mid-1990s IEMG opened the way to the international cooperation in the area, and promoted development projects focused on micro-credit. However, the restitution of ethnographic knowledge has mostly been achieved through the cultural cooperation project *Fort Apollonia and the Nzemas. Community-based Management of Natural and Cultural Heritage, Western Region* (2008-2011). Managed by COSPE NGO (Cooperation for the Development of Emerging Countries) in collaboration with IEMG and many Ghanaian institutional actors, this project culminated in in 2010 in the establishment of a museum-cultural centre. Today, the *Fort Apollonia Museum of Nzema Culture and History* plays a leading role in the safeguarding and valorisation of local heritage, as it is testified by its recent participation to a project – founded by the British Library and Sapienza University of Rome – concerning the conservation and digitization of archival documents belonging to Nzema traditional authorities. This project is part of a wider program aiming to the establishment of a digital archive including the documents related to Nzema chieftaincy as well as the research materials produced by IEMG scholars, currently being catalogued and digitized at Sapienza University of Rome.

This paper will illustrate the main features of the ongoing ethnographic restitution process, focusing on synergetic interactions among anthropologists, local actors and NGOs. Thus, the authors will discuss how an academic Mission, within a specific area, can trigger development processes and then contribute to the shifting of development cooperation into cultural cooperation. Finally, they will point out the results of this multifaceted relation among academia, Ghanaian interlocutors and development operators, in terms of local empowerment.

### THE ITALIAN ETHNOLOGICAL MISSION TO GHANA AND ITS LONG-TERM RELATION WITH ETHNOGRAPHIC FIELD

In 1956, Vinigi Grottanelli, holder of the first chair of Ethnology in Italy, established the Italian Ethnological Mission to Ghana (IEMG), a multidisciplinary team of scholars carrying out its linguistic, historical and ethnological surveys in the Nzema area<sup>2</sup>, South-West Ghana. IEMG developed in two significant research phases, characterized by different methodological and epistemological perspectives, as well as by different relations with the fieldwork. The first IEMG research period (1956-1975) distinguished itself for a scientific approach enhancing the “authentic” and the “traditional” with the aim of obtaining a holistic and organic representation of the various components of society, «before the brutal impact of modernization could radically transform them» (Grottanelli, 1978, p. XIII, authors’ translation). Among the investigated topics, the classical themes of Africanist ethnography were extensively examined: the individual’s life cycle, with its rites of passage; magic and witchcraft; traditional medical practices; otherworldly entities and ancestors (Cerulli, 1963; Grottanelli, 1977, 1978; Lanternari, 1972; Signorini, 1978). Interactions among local people and colonial authorities, as well as slavery and any other process of cultural change, were at the same time

<sup>1</sup> The paragraph “The Italian Ethnological Mission to Ghana and its long-term relation with ethnographic field” has been written by Elisa Vasconi; “From development cooperation to cultural cooperation” has been written by Mariaclaudia Cristofano; “Fort Apollonia today” has been written by Stefano Maltese.

<sup>2</sup> We refer here to the wider coastal region, with the Ankobra (Siane) Estuary as a western border and the Tano (Tanoë) River and the lagoons separating Ghana from Ivory Coast (Eby and Tano-Ehy lagoons) as an eastern border. This territory, which is part of the wider Akan lands, covers two traditional areas (Western Nzema Traditional Area, with Beyin as capital, and Eastern Nzema Traditional Area, with Atuabo as capital) and roughly matches two regional district assemblies (namely Jomoro District Assembly and Ellembelle District Assembly).

neglected.

This phase ended with the publication of a comprehensive two-volumes monograph on Nzema society edited by Grottanelli (1977, 1978), including most of the researches of the so called “classical Nzema ethnography” (Pavanello, 1997-1998). The conclusion of this first period was marked also by Ghanaian political situation, characterized by coups leading to a military regime established in 1981 by Jerry John Rawlings, making anthropological surveys difficult to be arranged in a poor and marginal region as the Nzema area.

A second season officially started in 1989, when Mariano Pavanello succeeded to Grottanelli in the scientific direction of the Mission. In this period several scholars travelled to the area with the intention of examining issues left in the background by their predecessors. Their new approach did not mean to enhance an authentic and reified context, instead they tried to interpret the contemporary Nzema society taking into consideration the relations among the Nzemas, neighboring populations and Europeans. Distancing from what currently would be called an essentialist perspective, with the Nzemas portrayed as bounded and unchanging, a people without history, the second phase of IEMG has adopted a diachronic perspective, focusing on processes of transformation, cultural dynamism, negotiations of identities and sociopolitical order of the area. Pavanello’s studies on local economy and oral traditions (2000, 2007), as well as Valsecchi’s historical studies (2002), investigated the cultural interactions that characterised this territory at least since the arrival of Portuguese, presenting a different vision of history based on contact and relationships (Aria, Cristofano and Maltese, 2014, forthcoming). Thus, IEMG scholars deeply immersed themselves in Nzema society in order to cast an in-depth look on sensitive themes such as the relation with ancestors, local history, land tenure system and the creative dimensions of tradition.

In this framework Pavanello built deep relations with traditional rulers, in doing so achieving a near-chiefly status himself as well as the access to the most hidden levels of historical knowledge. Among them, a preeminent role has been played by Annor Adjaye III, *ɔmanhene* (Paramount Chief) of the *Western Nzema Traditional Area*, promoter together with Pavanello of development and valorisation projects throughout the territory. He paradigmatically embodied a new traditional authority model, in line with the extraordinary revival process properly suggested by the term “le retour des rois” (Perrot and Fauvelle-Aymar, 2003), and expressed in Ghana’s 1992 constitutional reforms<sup>3</sup>. The *ɔmanhene* has always seemed to contradict the stereotypical idea of traditional chief: he achieved academic qualifications and advanced his career in the ranks of the civil service. Moreover, the Paramount Chief has shown the ability to master the language of development, as well as to convincingly relate with anthropological knowledge. An evidence of this new relation with IEMG researchers is provided by his two journeys in Italy arranged by Pavanello: the first in May 1996, as a guest of honour of an international conference on Akan studies in Urbino; the second in June 1997, aiming to involve Italian local governments into decentralized cooperation programs to be developed in the Nzema area. At the same time, at the end of 1990s, Annor Adjaye III shifted his attention on the ethnographic studies carried out in his area throughout the years. As Pavanello pointed out: «he was starting to consider anthropological fieldworks as an extractive activity to be done in accordance with a permit, and which expect a compensation» (Pavanello, 2007, p. 135, authors’ translation). Thus, the Paramount Chief confronted the Italian scholars with the unavoidable issue of ethnographic restitution, that is the way to share the outcomes of IEMG activities with local communities.

Emphasizing the importance of the Italian scholars’ long-time relationship with the Nzema area since the time of Grottanelli, Annor Adjaye III reminded anthropologists of their duties to make the outcomes of their research available to the Nzema people, and stimulated them to undertake some kind of activities in order to provide a fair compensation to the local communities in return for their cooperation over the years (Pavanello, 2007). The restitution and development rhetoric fielded by the *ɔmanhene* in his interactions with the Italian academics become a key aspect of Annor Adjaye III’s political legitimization in front of governmental authorities, local chiefs and population.

In order to meet the requests of the most authoritative local chief, Pavanello was «forced to think about the stake of anthropological research» (Pavanello, 2007, p. 135, authors’ translation). Thus, he decided to promote new development programs introducing the Italian NGO COSPE (*Cooperation for the development of emerging countries*) and the Tuscan Municipality of Peccioli, where he resides. The first project, started in 1998, led to the creation of a mechanical workshop school in Bawhia (Jomoro District), carried out in collaboration with Ghanaian national and traditional authorities. This intervention opened the way to further decentralized cooperation programs, and marked the turn of Pavanello’s role from researcher to development promoter (Pavanello, 2007). This was followed by a second and more extended project founded by European Commission, entitled *Small and Micro Enterprises Support System* (SMESS). It aimed at sustaining micro-credit and encouraging the creation of a local network of entrepreneurs and artisans. Lasted almost ten years, the SMESS triggered the establishment of several associations and trained more than 2500 Nzema artisans – tailors, carpenters, mechanics, oil producers, etc. – in enterprise, budget and credits management.

At the beginning of 2000s, the completion of these programs and the experience and knowledge gained by development operators, led to a wider and different project, far from economic and development issues characterising

<sup>3</sup> Concluding the legislative reform process started in the late 1960s, the new 1992 Constitution recognized the traditional chieftaincy’s prerogatives but also established limits on the scope of their authority. Specifically, traditional chiefs were granted a status of autonomous institutional entities, but were at the same time forbidden to run in governmental elections. In this new context, chiefs reaffirmed the sacredness and the relevance of their role by staging ritual performances, and they also displayed great skill in gaining consensus outside the political arena, not least in their openness to new opportunities offered by international cooperation.

the previous interventions. The project *Fort Apollonia and the Nzemas. Community-based Management of Natural and Cultural Heritage, Western Ghana* was approved and funded in 2005 by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It represented a turning point within the development cooperation in the Nzema area, in which the IEMG anthropologists have played an outstanding role.

## FROM DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION TO CULTURAL COOPERATION

Throughout its history, IEMG has not only distinguished itself for scientific works and peculiar relations with fieldwork, but also for its special link with a symbolic site both for Europeans and Nzemas: Fort Apollonia. It is a British stronghold built at the end of the Eighteenth Century at Beyin, capital of Western Nzema Traditional Area.

In 1968 Kwame Nkrumah, the first President of independent Ghana, promoted its restoration to enhance the Nzema area – his place of origin – and contrast its backwardness and marginality, at that time seeming to be inevitable. He also accorded to IEMG anthropologists the permit of housing in the castle during their surveys: therefore Fort Apollonia became their residence. The situation started to change in 1998, when *Ghana Museums and Monuments Board* (GMMB) – the governmental body in charge for the administration of both national museums and historical buildings – granted the anthropologists exclusive use of the fort. In return, GMMB asked them to work out a strategy to turn Fort Apollonia into something useful for local population. Soon after, Pavanello encouraged Italian scholars to leave the fort and spread out into the territory, as himself did in 2002 moving into a raffia-hut in Old-Kabenlasuazo, a coastal village not far from Beyin (Aria, Cristofano and Maltese, 2012).

In this changing scenario, thanks to the joint efforts of different actors, both Ghanaians and Europeans, *Fort Apollonia and the Nzemas* started. This project, managed by COSPE from 2008 to 2011, was strongly supported by Italian anthropologists in order to meet the above mentioned restitution claims. It was also the outcome of national and international cooperation programs, which in mid-1990s were making of cultural and natural heritage valorisation a central feature of their actions. These are indeed the years of heritage policies promoted by international organizations like UNESCO, which find their achievement in an increased number of development projects aiming to actively involve local communities. In tune with the described new directions of international cooperation, also the Nzema area benefitted from valorisation programs. At the end of 1990s the NGO *Ghana Wildlife Society* (GWS) settled in Beyin to promote actions of eco-touristic requalification and conservation of the area<sup>4</sup>. Thus, anthropologists and COSPE included the already started GWS interventions within *Fort Apollonia and the Nzemas* project.

Therefore, in *Fort Apollonia project* conservation and valorisation of local cultural and natural heritage were identified as two key-elements for the human development of the Nzema people and for the improvement of their living conditions in an eco-compatible and self-sustainable way. The project aimed to carry out this complex purpose through three main objectives: 1) strengthening of possibilities and capabilities for the safeguarding and valorisation of local natural and cultural heritage; 2) improvement of entrepreneurial skills and chances for local people, with particular reference to economical activities related to the enhancement of local resources. 3) making local people aware of the importance of conservation and sustainable use of ecosystems and natural renewable sources. Each objective included different actions combining development of the area with the safeguarding of cultural and natural heritage<sup>5</sup>.

Among them, the setting up of the *Fort Apollonia Museums of Nzema Culture and History* has played a central role. The museum-cultural centre was inaugurated on October 30<sup>th</sup> 2010 within the newly restored Fort Apollonia, to the presence of local population and representatives of the institutions involved within the project (Fig. 1).

*Fort Apollonia and the Nzemas* has gathered different actors: on the European side IEMG, responsible for the design and the implementation of museum exhibitions; Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as main founder of the project; and COSPE, managing funds and interventions. On the Ghanaian side: GWS; representatives of traditional rule (*Western Nzema Traditional Council* and *Eastern Nzema Traditional Council*); decentralized governmental institutions (*Jomoro District Assembly* and *Ellembelle District Assembly*); GMMB; and other institutions dealing with the valorization of national cultural heritage (*National Commission on Culture*) and touristic promotion of the territory (*Ghana Tourist Board*).

In this framework, anthropologists have not only played the role of observers, instead they have become active agents of a collaborative heritage-making process. As young IEMG probationers who had focused their studies on heritage and museums, at the end of 2008 indeed COSPE employed two of us<sup>6</sup> to develop a museum proposal including

<sup>4</sup> The first important project carried out in the Nzema area by GWS is the ACID project (*Amanzule Conservation and Integrated Development project*). It aimed to the conservation of Amanzule lagoon ecosystem and to the «enhancement of its scenic beauty, ecological integrity, eco-tourism potential, and the economic well-being of the local community» (Abban, et al., 2009). It reinterpreted the Nzema area as a natural heritage and opened the way to the eco-touristic development of the area.

<sup>5</sup> Concerning point 1), the action focused on: the restoration of Fort Apollonia and the setting up of a museum-cultural centre within the stronghold; the support of local communities in the management of the museum; the identification of touristic trails which, starting from the museum, could lead to the discovery of the Nzema area. The essential purpose of the action described at point 2) was to make Nzema cultural and natural heritage an income-generating resource for the communities. Through production and selling of handicrafts, access to credit and training of local entrepreneurs, the project aimed to develop employment opportunities for local people. In accordance with point 3), the project aimed both to spread a new ecological awareness and to enhance hygienic conditions through the setting up of local sanitary infrastructures.

<sup>6</sup> The authors of this essay have played different roles in the process of cultural valorisation started in the frame of the *Fort Apollonia and the Nzemas* project. Since 2009, Mariaclaudia Cristofano and Stefano Maltese curated the museum project and set up its exhibits. Elisa Vasconi has collaborated

a number of key-topics to be developed in the exhibition, with the idea to submit such a proposal to the Project Management Committee (PMC) for close examination and approval. After negotiations and exchanges among us, local representatives and the PMC, these subjects came to include: the Nzema system of kinship and its seven clans; the hierarchy of traditional power; the *Kundum* festival; historical narratives of the area; the relationship between the human population and local ecosystems; and traditional medicine<sup>7</sup>.

Notwithstanding, at the beginning of the project the character of the museum to set up was not unambiguous. The actors taking part to its realization were wondering if Fort Apollonia should become an eco-museum, a historical and ethnographic museum, a gallery filled with showcases displaying objects, a cultural centre, a strategic tool for the economic growth of the area, a place mostly visited by tourists or local people. Another important issue was related to the method to be adopted to implement the exhibition. The development project charged us with “translating” into museum exhibits the knowledge gathered throughout the time by IEMG anthropologists. We were conscious that this task threatened to result in reifying and exoticising representations, marginalising local people’s agency, even if it was in accordance with the cultural restitution programme at the basis of the project. Thus, we tried to join the anthropological knowledge, with a kind of museum able to relate with the contemporary Nzema, through a reflexive operation of mediation and intentional contamination among different imaginations and languages. Our approach was informed by studies of heritage-making processes (e.g. Handler, 1988; Herzfeld, 1997; Lowenthal, 1998; Palumbo, 2003) and by the perspectives of museum anthropology (e.g. Karp and Lavine, 1991; Karp, Mullen Kreamer and Lavine, 1992; Clemente and Rossi, 1999; Karp, et. al, 2006; Padiglione, 2008). We aimed to avoid essentialising and classifying ideas of museum and cultural heritage, to connect “an anthropology *within* museums with an anthropology *of* museums” (Padiglione, 2008, p. 92), taking into account the intellectual and political contexts in which the heritage-building processes take place. In order to do so, we were encouraged to continuously shift from the role of museum designers to that of critical ethnographer and vice versa, which was the only way to reflexively analyse the representations that we ourselves had a hand in producing.

The two methodologies adopted gave us the opportunity to show in *Fort Apollonia Museum* a plurality of views on Nzema society, avoiding the knowledge and the academic authority of the anthropologists to prevail. Thus, in the participatory spirit of museum anthropology, both the outline and the setting up of the exhibition were carried out through a series of workshops involving different actors. Throughout the process, constant collaborations were taking place among us as anthropologists, with the *Nzema Art and Crafts Association* (a regional craft association), and other Ghanaian individuals who played a role in the development of the museum thanks to their skills or position in the community.

The setting up of *Fort Apollonia Museum* represents the outcome of continuous negotiations among different actors’ representations. It has revealed conflicts and problems usually characterizing the establishment of a museum as an institution (Clifford, 1997), as well as the carrying out of a development project (Oliver de Sardan, 1995). However, *Fort Apollonia and the Nzemas* project has also promoted the museum as a new cultural institution strongly rooted in the Nzema area, today representing a point of reference for local communities, drawing the attention of national and international tourism, and promoting cultural cooperation programs.

## FORT APOLLONIA TODAY

Since its inauguration, the Fort Apollonia Museum has been acquiring relevance at local, national and – thanks to the projects recently undertaken – also international levels.

In 2012 a Scientific Committee including the major Ghanaian scholars has been instituted, with the support of the IEMG. Besides the promotion of the institution in the academic and institutional scenario, the Committee’s main objective is to facilitate the engagement of the Museum in new research projects. The political consequences of this operation have been so relevant to expedite the process for the employment of the museum staff by GMMB, which started immediately after the end of the *Fort Apollonia and the Nzemas* project and has been recently finalized. Since July 2011, the three professionals selected and trained by COSPE and the anthropologists have indeed been working for free, despite the fact that the official employment dates from December 2012. Although the staff employment looks as an important achievement, its instability has been delaying so far the activities of the Museum, such as educational programs for the schools and tourist promotion of the area.

Nevertheless, the Museum has been able to gain an important role in raising awareness about cultural and environmental issues, by organizing locally-based activities for the schools children, as well as by hosting summer schools for Italian students in cultural anthropology. Such a commitment gradually led the Museum to stand as a leading agency in several projects aimed at implementing cultural activities throughout the territory.

By the way, the implementation of some kinds of cultural cooperation with more defined objectives seemed particularly appropriate in order to intervene where the *Fort Apollonia and the Nzemas* project could not, as, for instance, in the sensitive matter concerning the history of the area. During the months in which the Museum exhibition was developed, and even earlier, the issue of local history had proved to be one of the most relevant and conflicting, no

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to the setting up of the traditional medicine room as a medical anthropologist expert of the area.

<sup>7</sup> On the patrimonialisation of traditional medicine in Fort Apollonia see Cristofano, Maltese and Vasconi, 2013.

matter of the actors with which it was discussed within the project framework. All the partners agreed on the idea of dedicating a significant space in the exhibition to the issue, but the great conflicts among different oral traditions, strongly catalyzed by the lack of a documentary historiography based on archival materials, very soon proved to be a too big obstacle to be passed in the few weeks available to finalize the exhibition. However, some previous events could suggest a solution. In 2002 Pavanello had started, though he couldn't complete it, the re-organization of the Western Nzema Traditional Council historical archive, stored at the Paramount Chief's private residence. From then on, the *omanhene* often demanded the completion of that project, asserting the importance of archival material for the preservation of the historical memory in his area. Moreover, at the initial stage of the research which shaped the exhibition of the Fort Apollonia Museum, many traditional rulers expressed the idea that the Museum had to become the place where they could entrust the documents belonging to them. According to this idea, Fort Apollonia should have become something halfway between a museum and an archive, in which the documentary heritage scattered in the various villages of the area could have been preserved for future generations.

In this frame, a concrete opportunity to follow up the requests coming from the chiefs as well as to enable the Museum to play as a propulsive agent in the valorization of local history was provided by a cultural cooperation project aimed at safeguarding and digitizing endangered archival material. In February 2012 the Fort Apollonia Museum, supported by the IEMG, applied for funds to the British Library in the frame of the Endangered Archives Programme ([www.eap.bl.uk](http://www.eap.bl.uk)), as implementing agency of a ten-months pilot project named *Safeguarding Nzema History: Documents on Nzema Land in Ghanaian National and Local Archives*. Ended on the 30<sup>th</sup> of June 2013, the action had among its main objectives the securing, sorting and digitization of the documents kept in the archives of Western and Eastern Nzema Traditional Councils. This includes records that are relevant both for outlining the relations between written documents and oral sources, and for reconsidering the historical dynamics the area went through in the last two centuries. The European partners in this project were the British Library, the Department of History, Cultures, Religions of Sapienza University of Rome, the Centre for Research and Services DIGILAB of Sapienza and the Italian Ministry of Cultural Assets – Archives Directorate General. On the Ghanaian side, besides the Fort Apollonia Museum, the Western and Eastern Nzema Traditional Council Archives have been involved as beneficiaries of the action, while PRAAD (Public Records and Archives Administration Department, Accra central branch and Sekondi regional branch) and the Information Studies Department of the University of Ghana contributed by providing training and technical support.

The project *Safeguarding Nzema History* represents the first phase of a wider and more complex action of re-organization and digitization of the archival materials in possession of the Paramount Chiefs of the Nzema traditional areas. The museum staff and the anthropologists of the IEMG have recently applied to the same Programme for a major project aimed at completing the digitization of the materials in the Western and Eastern Nzema Traditional Council Archives and also at broadening the action in the Nzema-Evaloe traditional areas, namely Upper and Lower Axim, Edwira, Apateim and Nsein. The final objective, strongly backed up also by the hierarchy of the local traditional rule, is to establish a digital platform capable to host both the interactive exhibition of the Fort Apollonia Museum and the digitized records of Nzema chieftaincy. The IEMG is actively cooperating with local interlocutors to design such a platform, and is facilitating its development by providing technical know-how and mobilizing financial resources available both in Ghana and Italy.

As part of its restitution program the Mission is also engaged in a project aimed at cataloguing and digitizing the materials produced by its scholars, which will be eventually uploaded on the internet and made available for research purposes. Sapienza University of Rome is currently funding the digitization of selected pictures, slides, audio and video recordings, papers and books; such materials will become part of Sapienza Digital Library, the digital archival system of the University, and will be made accessible through the portal dedicated to the Fort Apollonia Museum.

By promoting cultural cooperation programs that are in tune with local interlocutors' claims for restitution and self-representation, the IEMG may actually be considered as one of the agents active in the shared heritage-making processes that are taking place in the Nzema area (Aria, Cristofano, Maltese, 2014 forthcoming). In a scenario characterized by a long-time relationship with its fieldwork, the Mission is currently trying to further its scientific vocation by promoting cooperation projects able to trigger original developments in the research activities. By doing so, it is committed in building upon and even fostering the ethnographic relationship between the Nzemas and the Italian anthropologists, whose peculiarity lies in its long duration as well as in the fruitful interaction established over the years with a network of Ghanaian local and national institutions.



**Fig. 1** - Fort Apollonia Museum of Nzema Culture and History, Beyin, Jomoro District, Western Region, Ghana.

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## THE PROMOTION OF HERITAGE INSIDE THE POLITICS OF TOURISM DEVELOPMENT OF MOZAMBIQUE. THE ROLE OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

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### ABSTRACT

The development politics that Mozambique is promoting has started improving the economic growth of the country but is still struggling to improve the living conditions of the local population, together with empowerment and capacity building.

Tourism may be a significant tool to help the country improve both aspects: increasing the GNP and creating real well-being; in fact, in the first decade of the XXI century, the Government has implemented a policy aimed at helping the development of tourism, the *Plano estrategico para o desenvolvimento do turismo*. This Plan identifies several institutional weaknesses such as a shortage of infrastructures and of financial tools to sustain local and international investors, and also a lack of skilled human resources; and it aims at increasing the tourist accommodation capacity, the tourist infrastructures and the human resources by the year 2015.

Thanks to its natural and cultural heritage, and to its climate and biodiversity, Mozambique could promote a wide range of tourist products, supported by public and private investments and by the creation of cooperation partnerships with other Countries and Ngos.

The Country has since long started several programs of international cooperation, but the experience in the field of tourism is quite recent and is now focusing on the realization of several programs promoted by the *Plano Estrategico*, such as the construction of infrastructures and the creation of capacity building initiatives.

This paper analyses the governmental policies aimed at the promotion of tourism and focuses on several case studies to highlight how much the international cooperation is contributing to the development of the sector, supporting the local communities in realizing the tourist policies promoted by the *Plano*. Despite an evaluation of such experiences is still impossible due to their being still *in fieri*, we will try to observe them with a critical eye, focusing in particular on the role played by the Ngos and other international institutions working in the country in training, creating capacity building and obtaining empowerment for the local population, but aiming also at the preservation of the local natural and cultural heritage.

### TOURISM AND DEVELOPMENT: THE ROLE OF THE INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

WTO figures highlight how international tourist arrivals have shown a continuous growth from 1950 (25 million) to 2012, when 1.035 billion tourists have been moving around the world, generating a revenue of US\$ 1,075 billion. Asia and the Pacific recorded the strongest growth with a 7% increase in arrivals, followed by Africa (+6%) and the Americas (+5%), while Europe, the most visited region in the world, recorded only a 3% growth. For the future, WTO estimates that the international tourist arrivals will increase to 1.8 billion by 2013, with a growth of 4.4% in emerging destination [1].

As for Africa, the continent reached a total of 52 million tourists in 2012, accounting for US\$ 34 billion international tourist receipts, while Subsaharan destinations recorded a global 5% increase, with South Africa, the largest destination in the subregion, accounting for a 10% growth in 2012, that is to say over 9 million arrivals. Other destinations with strong growth were Cameroon (+35%), Tanzania (+24%), Sierra Leone (+14%), Madagascar (+14%), Cape Verde (+13%) and the Seychelles (+7%) [1].

Tourism is nowadays recognized as a key feature for local development, especially to those countries with poor economies where it can bring large direct revenues, employment and satellite revenues.

These very countries, however, lack money and skilled human resources and they rely on the aid coming from international cooperation to sustain the development of the sector [2]; moreover, tourism may also create negative impacts, such as a general growth in the cost of life, social inequalities in the access to the revenues it brings, pollution and commodification of the local culture.

These drawbacks may impact both on the local population and on the environment: even if tourism is capable of diversifying the local economies, of bringing infrastructures to people in remote areas (and with them the access to social services such as hospitals, schools, markets, etc.) and of creating job opportunities, with its infrastructures and cultural contamination it may often lead to a change or to the destruction of the local natural and cultural environment.

Moreover, through tourism the local communities may lose control on their territory, the local resources and on how to use them, and on the number of tourist they are willing to welcome [3;4]. Without such control the population loses the faculty of choosing how to use its territory [5] and in the end this may to a loss of its identity, considering that nowadays the preservation of people is strictly connected to the preservation of their spaces [4].

As Lozato-Jotard [4] puts it, consuming images, dreams, time and places, tourism may threaten the very survival of the cultural landscapes it uses. As said, a major risk is that the local communities lose the control of their territory: the global tourist market, in fact, is strongly controlled by global economic agents, much stronger than the local stakeholders who often cannot oppose to the investments made on their territory [6]. However, as Lozato-Jotard [4] urges us to remember, the control on the territory is the only way that a community has to maintain the control on its history and tradition: once the control is lost, the community has no more the right to decide what to sell of the multiple resources they possessed and they can thus be exposed to a complete commodification of their cultural and natural environment.

This is the reason why the participation of local people and stakeholders to local development has been recognized as vital to the success of every project aimed at improving the living conditions of the resident population: participation should allow the satisfaction of the majority's interests, while promoting the process of sharing the benefits deriving from tourism and thus granting an improvement of the living conditions of the resident population [7].

Participation, together with capacity building, are key factors that the international cooperation has started promoting after the Millennium Development Declaration, that emphasized the role of (public-private) partnership, territorial integration, political dialogue and capacity building in helping human development. After this Declaration, in fact, the concept of need, that often has driven the actions of international cooperation subjects, has acquired a new, wider dimension: it is no longer connected exclusively to emergency situations, rather it has to focus on a wider conception of poverty, and work on the causes rather than on the effects. This has meant that international cooperation is no longer restricted to emergency actions such as bringing food or medicines in the places of a human crisis, but it has become more and more an action of investing money in training public workers, entrepreneurs and citizens in general. Much of this work has to do also with another key element of international cooperation: technology transfer. This may include the introduction of new agricultural techniques, the creation of communication and transport infrastructures, but also a general informatization of the target community, through a private action or more often through a public-private partnership, in the form of an international cooperation agreement [8].

## **A SHORT HISTORY OF TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN MOZAMBIQUE**

Before independence Mozambique was considered a very important tourist destination in Africa insomuch as in 1973 it received 400,000 tourist arrivals, mainly from South Africa, Zimbabwe and Portugal. Obviously, during the independence war years and the civil war this flow collapsed, with great loss for the Government's treasury.

Only after the 1992 peace agreement Mozambique involved again in tourism and several accommodation infrastructures (mainly campsites and self catering) were constructed in Maputo and in the nearby area, such as Ponta de Ouro, Bilene e Inhambane. At the same time national parks and natural areas were developed and made accessible for tourists reception, such as the Bazaruto and Quirimbas archipelagos and the areas of Nacala and Pemba.

With 2,770 Km of coasts, a tropical climate with an average temperature of 23° in the North and 26° in the South, a great diversity both natural and cultural, the Country has enormous potentials for the development of tourism. The Northern region is known as "the tourism jewel" due to the presence of the Quirimba archipelago, the lake Nyassa and Ilha de Moçambique; the Centre offers both the coastal resources of Beira and the wilderness of the Gorongosa National Park, while the Southern region orbits around Maputo and the nearby coastal areas, where 50% of the total tourist infrastructures and 65% of the Country beds are located [9].

At present, the Country has been recognized only one World Heritage Site, Ilha de Moçambique, but has submitted four more sites to the tentative list, places of both natural and cultural value. In general, both the built and natural heritage have suffered greatly during the independence and civil war years, but the government is trying to restore it, recognizing its potential role in helping the development of the Country, in improving the living condition of the population and in strengthening the national pride for its culture and history.

WTO has estimated that in 2004 (the last available data) has received 470,000 tourists [10], with an income of 95 million dollars [11]. The figures show a growing trend but in 2007 the tourist arrivals in Mozambique reached only 1% of the total arrivals in the African continent. In the same year, the tourism share in Mozambique GNP was only 3.2% [12], and this because the majority of the tourist flows in the country were composed by domestic tourists (42% of the total) or by people coming from the nearby Countries, using their own cars and often sleeping at parents' houses or in low-costs accommodations. Moreover, the average stay is only 2.3 days and the average expenditure only 250\$, nearly half of the continent's figure (404\$) [13].

Mozambique rates only 119<sup>th</sup> in the world tourist rank compiled by the World Economic Forum in 2007 (on 124 countries), behind Tanzania, Gambia and Zambia. Among the weaknesses that affect negatively the County we may count the still strong presence of malaria, the unskilled human resources and the bad management of the cultural and natural resources [13], but also the lack of economic subsidies to encourage foreign and local entrepreneurs to invest in the country.

## MOZAMBIQUE TOURIST DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Tourism is rightly considered by Mozambique as a vital lever for development, both in respect to the revenues that it grants to the State's treasury, and to the social benefits that it is capable of bringing to the local population, emphasizing its role in poverty reduction. This is the reason why in 2004 the Country has promulgated a tourist policy called the *Plano estratégico para o desenvolvimento do turismo em Moçambique* (Strategic plan for the development of tourism in Mozambique), for the years 2004-2013 [14]. Tourism, moreover, is recognized as a tool to impact actively on the development of the whole country, due to its role in stimulating satellite activities, and thus reaching a wide range of economic sectors and impacting a large portion of the population. The Plano establishes the goal of reaching 4 million visitors by 2025, by becoming a dynamic and the most exotic tourist destination in Africa, mainly improving the promotion in the rich markets of Europe and North America:

«Até ao ano de 2025 Moçambique será o destino turístico mais vibrante, dinâmico e exótico de África, famoso pelas suas praias e atracções litorais tropicais, produtos de eco-turismo excelentes e pela sua cultura intrigante, que dá boas-vindas a mais de 4 milhões de turistas por ano. As áreas de conservação constituem uma parte integrante do turismo e os seus benefícios darão um contributo significativo para o PIB, trazendo riqueza e prosperidade para as comunidades do País» [14: 50].

The main goal of the *Plano* is to get to develop Mozambique as a global tourist destination, while contributing to the creation of employment, economic growth and poverty reduction. Tourism, though, has to become an instrument to help the conservation of the national biodiversity and the cultural values, promoting the national pride. Mozambique wants to promote the development of a sustainable tourism sector, dedicated not only to an economical growth but also to the well being of its population. Such plan is to be implemented through several actions:

- Integrate tourism in the general politics of the Country
- Plan and coordinate the development of the markets, of the products and of the tourist infrastructures
- Establish an institutional frame of planning and control tools
- Recognize the active role of the private sector
- Create consciousness on the importance of tourism and on the national natural and cultural heritage
- Train the human resource
- Promote the involvement of the local communities in the tourist development programmes [14]

The main challenges the Country has to face lie in the need to create an integrated national tourist system based on a diversified use of the national resources and on a set of public and private investments in tourist infrastructures, capable of increasing the total value of the tourist expenditures in the country: this can be achieved only by reducing the leakages effect and by developing the tourist and economic skills of the local communities involved in tourism [13]. Very important is also to secure the ownership of the resources that the local communities are managing in a tourist way, quite a critical issue in a country when only recently such right has been recognized, through the intervention of a foreign Ngo implementing a project that has mapped 45,018 urban land parcels and prepared titles for the right of use and benefit of land, known in Mozambique as a DUAT, or *direito de uso e aproveitamento da terra* [15]. Moreover, in 2003, the issue of ownership has been recognised by the OECD's Development Assistance Committee as one of the key features for the future implementation of every international cooperation project, in order to stimulate a bottom-up approach to local development [8]. Concerning the implementation of tourist initiatives, without such right a tourist activity will not be secured and is quite probable to fail.

This tourist promotion policy, starting from the Government, aims at reaching all the tourist stakeholders who work in the different areas, supporting investments aimed at improving the transports and the accommodation infrastructures and at diversifying the tourist offer. This is the only way the country can position itself in the global tourist market. Moreover, these actions have to be integrated with a greater environmental consciousness aimed at sustainably exploit the natural resources, both the coasts and the wilderness in the interior of the country, in order to avoid the environment depletion that would decrease the potential tourist attractivity, but also a worsening of the living condition of the local population, reducing their access to food resources [9].

The *Plano Estratégico para o desenvolvimento do turismo em Moçambique* focuses mainly on the development of ecotourism, maritime tourism, cultural tourism and the observation of flora and fauna, and it establishes three main areas where the efforts of the Government will concentrate:

- Priority areas for the tourist investment (APITs)
- Conservation areas (AC) and transfrontier conservation areas (ACTFs)
- Tourist routes

Among these, the areas destined to attract greater tourist investments are conservation and transfrontier areas, where the observation of flora and fauna is the main tourist attraction, but several projects have also involved some cultural areas, such as the islands of Ibo and Ilha de Moçambique. Concerning the natural heritage, since the beginning

of the XXI century they have been involved in a great programme to increase the population of wild animals, decreased during the civil war years, but they have also been characterized by the construction of transport and accommodation infrastructures [12].

To sustain the tourist development of these areas, the Plano has established three different forms of action, destined to the three areas [16] [17]:

- in the APITIs (regions of Gaza, Inhambane, Maputo, Nampula, Zambezia) the project Ancora do Turismo is developed: these initiatives are realized in collaboration with the International Finance Corporation in order to stimulate the growth of tourism through local initiatives aimed at constructing infrastructures and accommodation, and to remove the administrative barriers that constrain private investments in the sector. It is estimated that they will be able to attract 1.2 million dollars in the country and to create 26,000 new employments, plus 5,000 more once the infrastructures will be operating [18].
- At the moment only 4 projects have been realised: Reserva Especial de Maputo, Reserva de Gilé e Ilhas Primeiras (Zambesia), Distrito de Inhassoro (Inhambane), Distrito de Mossuril (Nampula).
- In the AC/ACTFs (regions of Gaza, Inhambane, Maputo, Manica, Niassa, Sofala, Tete) the Planos do turismo are developed: these receive much of the international attention, not only for their conservative value, but also for the role that transfrontier conservation areas in particular may play in stimulating peace keeping at a regional level.
- In the northern regions (Cabo Delgado, Nampula, Niassa) the Project Arco Norte is developed: it is a three-year project that has been implemented with the collaboration of USAID, (and financed with 5.5 million \$) to attract tourists and investors and to promote the conservation of nature [19].
- At the moment only 3 projects have been started: Cabo Delgado (Ibo and Pemba), Nampula (Ilha de Moçambique) and Nyassa (Lake Nyassa, Chuanga) [12].

### **Cooperating to the conservation of the cultural and natural heritage in Mozambique: a case study**

As an example of successful international cooperation, the case of the African Safari Lodge Foundation will be here presented. During the 3<sup>rd</sup> Conference of World Parks, held in Durban in 2003, the importance of protecting the rights of the local communities involved in tourist development programmes was once more recognized and Mozambique decided to support it by starting a cooperation with the African Safari Lodge Foundation (ASLF), a South African association that was already working in South Africa and Namibia [20]. Two years later the Foundation started working in Mozambique too, promoting the development of tourist activities in areas included in the regions recognized as priority by the *Plano Estratégico*, and with a participative approach.

In all the countries where ASFL works, it has promoted the implementation of participation, capacity-building and empowerment, the key features of international cooperation as recognized in literature. Its strategy, in fact, has always included two different kind of actions: collaboration on one side and training on the other. As for collaboration, ASLF aimed at helping the members of the local communities participate actively to the new tourist business, and creating a discussion forum on the theme of conservation, tourism and social development, in order to involve in the process all the possible stakeholders; finally ASLF means to work to establish an active partnership among the private sector and the communities involved. Training, on the other side, is meant to strengthen the skills of the local communities members to set legal tourist activities and to better understand this industry, in order to improve the quality they would be able to offer, and to become competitive in the global market in order to attract not only more tourists, but also more investments [20].

The work of ASLF in Mozambique has started with several pilot projects, where the two set of actions have been carried out in parallel [21]. The pilot projects are aimed at setting a standard for tourism development in Mozambique, helping “develop positive lessons from them and then disseminate these to those tourism companies, operators and NGOs who want to also play a positive role in terms of promoting development and poverty alleviation in the country” [22]. The first of these six pilot projects is Ibo Island: set in the Quirimbas Archipelago, in the Cabo Delgado province, the island has been included in the Unesco tentative list, for its natural and cultural heritage. It is also included in the Quirimbas Naional Park, that comprises 11 of the 32 islands of the Archipelago and is renowned not only for its outstanding natural landscape, but also for its historical past: colonized by the Portuguese, it became a trading port where the slaves were traded. The project was realized with the collaboration of the Ngo Technoserve, that works in several countries around the world to “develop business solutions to poverty by linking people to information, capital and markets” [23] and has been working in Mozambique for several years. Together they cooperated with the local Ibo Safari Lodge to encourage the development of tourism-related businesses on the island and, with the help of the Aga Khan Foundation, they succeeded in involving the island’s silversmiths in creating silver jewels and objects to be sold worldwide. Nowadays ASLF is not involved in the management of the programme any more but the Ibo Island Lodge Foundation continues raising money through tourisms but also through international fund raising for the community, to be invested in education and training in entrepreneurship [21, 20].

The second pilot project is Manda Wilderness, on Lake Nyassa, in the Niassa Province. The project includes a lodge, the Nkwichi Lodge, built several years ago by a group of private individuals to introduce tourism as “a force to stimulate conservation and community development” [21]. ASLF has also supported the creation of a Charity registered

in the United Kingdom, that helps raising money for the project, and of the Manda Wilderness Community Conservation Area, that protects 120,000 hectares of land, while working with several villages of the area, to improve their health and education and to support the creation of small tourism-related businesses. Moreover, in 2005 these villages constituted an Association, the Umoji Association, in order to be involved in the project and to advocate for property right (DUAT) on the land the project is run on: it is generally recognized that only with a proper ownership of the land the community will be able to attract more investors. Presently the projects has produced nearly sixty employments [20; 21].

Covane Community Lodge is the third pilot project, near Massingir in the province of Gaza, on the very outskirts of the Limpopo National Park. The construction of the lodge was promoted by a Swiss Ngo, and later left to the management of a Mozambican Ngo. A new lodge is actually being constructed and ASLF has helped the community getting a grant from the Ford Foundation and the World Bank, while negotiating the opening of a new partnership with Transfrontier Park Destination, a local tour operator that will market the lodge internationally. Not only ASLF has stimulated the opening of this collaboration, but it has also worked to train the local population to become better acquainted with tourism and its industry [21; 22].

The fourth pilot project is Chemucane Lodge, constructed inside the Maputo Special Reserve, south of Maputo, where elephants may be observed but also coastal resources are present to entertain the tourists. ASLF vision for Chemucane is to create an exclusive, environmentally sensitive eco-tourism development based on community ownership of the tourism concession [21]. In fact, the Government has recognized to the Ahi Zameni Chemucane Association (AZC), an association of local people, a 50-year license to manage the project on the territory; moreover the association has obtained a loan by the World Bank to construct a lodge at Ponta Chemucane, in joint venture with the Bell Foundation [24]. ASLF has also started a training programme for the local population, in order to help them acquire more skills in the management of a tourist activity.

The fifth pilot project is in Ilha de Moçambique, in the province of Nampula. This project focusses on cultural tourism with ASLF helping the realization of a community development plan aimed at refurbishing 100 historical building in the island and in the nearby area, to start tourist activities managed by the local community. The case of Ilha de Moçambique is quite interesting, first of all because it is the Country's only Unesco World Heritage Site and secondly because here the international cooperation has been working for a long time to sustain the preservation of the historical buildings but also to support education, health, promotion of traditional economic activities such as fishing, and training in the field of tourism, entrepreneurship but also in the learning of the English language, to help the tourist entrepreneurs become more skilled. Unesco is one of the major international boards that has been operating on the island since 1991, the year of its inscription in the WHS List, and its presence has incentivized the intervention of other international Ngos and donors, such as the already mentioned Technoserve, that is promoting the realization of a Community Foundation in charge of the management of the tourist activities promoted by the ASLF project [21]; but also the Japanese Funds-in-Trust, the Union of Lusophone Capital Cities (UCCLA) and the IPAD (Portuguese Institute for Aid and Development), as well as by the Netherlands Funds-in-Trust and Flanders Funds-in-Trust, involved in the rehabilitation of the São Sebastian Forte [25].

The sixth and last pilot project was started in Gorongosa National Park, in the province of Sofala. The Park was opened due to a public-private partnership between the Government of Mozambique and the Gorongosa Restoration Project, a US non-profit organization that helped protecting the wilderness and reintroducing part of the wildlife damaged after the civil war [27]. ASLF has started a wide programme aimed at promoting a sustainable management of the park, in collaboration with Technoserve and the Carr Foundation, that is helping the communities living in the Park's Buffer Zone define their boundaries in order to apply for the DUAT, the property right on the land where new tourist activities will be started. The agreement with the local communities includes training in the field of tourism but also in agriculture techniques aimed at producing higher yields but with a lower impact on the environment. Moreover, a plan to attract international donors and investors to restore the mountain's endangered forests has been promoted, that has allowed the implementation of a reforestation programme. Finally, Technoserve has promoted the establishment of a dry fruit factory that buys the fruit from the local communities [21].

As we have seen, tourism is only one of the multiple activities that international cooperation has been able to implement in the Country: it has promoted education, health improvement and capacity building, in the form of training in the field of entrepreneurship, tourism and agriculture. It has also advocated for greater empowerment for the local communities, and perhaps this is the greater success of the case here presented, because with the support of ASLF and its partners not only the communities have seen an empowerment in their living conditions, but they have also been supported in their struggle to obtain land rights: in 1997 the country has passed a new legislation allowing local communities to secure formal rights to their ancestral land.

## CONCLUSIONS

Mozambique has great potentials for the development of tourism connected to its natural and cultural heritage, however it is constrained by several weaknesses that the Government is trying to handle with a wide spectrum of initiatives. As seen, international cooperation is a vital tool to help the Government in its quest for a better tourist industry that will grant larger incomes, but also improved living conditions for the local population.

We have here discussed the case of international cooperation aimed at the development of sustainable tourist areas, implemented by a South African foundation, that works in several countries in the sub region and whose main objectives are advocacy, capacity building, empowerment, transfer of land rights. All these are implemented through a bottom-up, participative process, that includes the local stakeholders and general citizens in all the phases. All the projects promoted by ASLF are aimed at establishing tourism businesses owned by local communities but operated with private partners, allowing the local residents and their communities obtain not only an employment but also new skills and new rights [21].

These goals are obtained through advocacy and through the establishment of partnerships with other international cooperation subjects – other Ngos, Foundations, international agencies – that contribute to the realization of the primary goal of eradicating poverty. The results, up to now, seem to be quite positive.

However, despite the good practices described, a final judgment of their results is still impossible due to their very short history, but the improvement in the local communities living conditions will have to take into consideration not only the elimination of poverty, but also the creation of trained and skilled people that will work in tourism activities, and a real empowerment of the communities involved in the development programmes: only this will enable the local communities become active members on the territorial development.

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## SPERIMENTAZIONE DI MODELLI PER IL RAFFORZAMENTO DELLE ISTITUZIONI ALLE QUALI È AFFIDATA LA CONSERVAZIONE DEL PATRIMONIO CULTURALE: CASI DI STUDIO IN CINA E IN EL SALVADOR

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### ABSTRACT

Nella parte introduttiva di questo contributo, allo scopo di evidenziare le origini delle strategie di intervento settoriali adottate oggi, si ripercorrono le tappe principali che precedono la nascita della Cooperazione Italiana allo Sviluppo.

Infatti l'ambito specifico della conservazione del patrimonio culturale aveva registrato già a partire dagli anni '50, una intensa attività di scambio a livello internazionale e di vera e propria cooperazione con paesi in via di sviluppo.

Sono poi analizzati modelli settoriali di *capacity building* particolarmente efficaci e adattabili ad altre realtà geografiche e culturali, sperimentati nella Repubblica Popolare Cinese e in El Salvador. L'azione italiana in Cina ha avuto inizio nel 1988 ed è proseguita senza interruzione per venticinque anni. La creazione di centri di formazione di livello regionale prima, e successivamente di livello nazionale, ha prodotto un cambiamento profondo nell'intero paese del livello professionale degli specialisti che si occupano della conservazione del patrimonio culturale tangibile.

L'America Centrale e in particolare El Salvador rappresentano una seconda area geografica particolarmente adatta alla sperimentazione di modelli di intervento caratterizzati da evidenti collegamenti con problematiche sociali.

Tra le attività condotte in El Salvador nel quadriennio 2009-2013 dalla Cooperazione Italiana attraverso l'Istituto Italo-Latino Americano, assieme all'Università Roma Tre, alle università centroamericane e alle istituzioni nazionali competenti per i diversi settori di intervento, particolarmente rilevante è stata la realizzazione del *Seminario. Centroamericano sobre la conservación y la valorización del patrimonio cultural - CULT 2011* che ha prodotto la *Declaración de San Salvador para la potenciación de la conservación y de la tutela del patrimonio cultural Centroamericano y del turismo sostenible*, punto di partenza per una azione di sviluppo organica e condivisa a livello regionale.

### LE ORIGINI DELL'IMPEGNO ITALIANO PER LA CONSERVAZIONE DEL PATRIMONIO CULTURALE MATERIALE NEI PAESI IN VIA DI SVILUPPO.

L'attenzione che da molti decenni è rivolta all'Italia come paese di riferimento per la conservazione del patrimonio culturale trova un evidente collegamento con la ininterrotta sequenza di contributi sul piano normativo e metodologico che costituiscono una delle più ricche vicende nazionali nel campo della tutela del patrimonio culturale. Particolarmente interessante è la precoce tendenza alla collaborazione internazionale che si riscontra in questo settore e che rappresenta una chiave di lettura dell'impegno settoriale della Cooperazione Italiana allo Sviluppo fin dal momento della sua creazione.

L'azione all'estero degli specialisti italiani nel campo del restauro, quasi sempre limitata fino agli anni '40 del Novecento al restauro dei monumenti archeologici e storici con la mediazione delle missioni archeologiche attive nel Mediterraneo, si estende successivamente alla pittura e alla scultura grazie all'impegno di Cesare Brandi, noto storico dell'arte e fondatore nel 1941 dell'Istituto Centrale del Restauro. L'azione di Brandi si colloca in quel clima di cooperazione intellettuale che si era generato dopo la fine della Prima Guerra Mondiale. Lo storico dell'arte italiano assume un ruolo di primo piano nel dibattito internazionale sulla pulitura dei dipinti e sulla conservazione delle patine, scaturito nel 1947 dalla mostra *An exhibition of Cleaned Pictures* presso la National Gallery di Londra, stabilisce una forte relazione con l'UNESCO fin dal momento della sua creazione e successivamente con l'ICCROM a Roma.

Nonostante la scarsità delle risorse finanziarie e le numerose richieste di intervento sul territorio nazionale a cui l'Istituto appena rimesso in funzione dopo la fine del conflitto bellico deve far fronte con un organico assai ridotto, l'impegno all'estero voluto da Brandi è in continua crescita e rappresenterà un campo di attività fondamentale nei decenni successivi.

Aumenta la presenza di studenti e di stagisti stranieri ammessi a frequentare i corsi triennali nell'istituto romano e pertanto si crea in breve tempo una efficiente rete di collegamenti internazionali. Si costituisce una vera e propria *task force* per l'attività al di fuori dell'Italia. Molti degli interventi di successo effettuati all'estero riguarderanno la pittura murale, ambito per il quale veniva riconosciuto all'istituto romano un vero primato.

Per la realizzazione della strategia internazionale di Brandi saranno determinanti i rapporti di collaborazione con l'archeologo Doro Levi, fondatore e primo direttore della Scuola Archeologica Italiana ad Atene. Altra importante sinergia, avviata nel 1954, è quella con l'orientalista e storico delle religioni Giuseppe Tucci, primo presidente dell'Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente (ISMEO) e attivo con missioni di studio in molte parti dell'Asia.

Nel 1954 Brandi e Tucci, consapevoli della necessità di migliorare urgentemente il livello degli interventi da eseguire all'estero, ipotizzano la creazione di gruppi di specialisti in grado di operare in ambiti geografici e culturali extraeuropei, ai quali viene attribuita una denominazione quasi dannunziana: le "Squadre di Restauratori Volanti" che dovevano essere formate da restauratori adeguatamente preparati attraverso un programma che comprendeva la conoscenza della lingua inglese, della storia dell'arte e della storia delle tecniche artistiche con specifico riferimento ai luoghi che sarebbero stati oggetto di intervento.

L'impegno internazionale dei restauratori di Brandi prosegue con cantieri e interventi in molte parti del mondo e nel 1958 all'Istituto Centrale del Restauro viene dedicata un'intera sala in occasione dell'Esposizione Universale di Bruxelles. Nei decenni successivi gli "ambasciatori" del restauro italiano nel mondo saranno Paolo e Laura Mora.

Nel momento in cui viene creata la Cooperazione Italiana allo Sviluppo attraverso la Legge n. 49 del 26/2/1987, l'Italia possiede istituzioni e specialisti noti all'estero e pronti a realizzare cantieri, corsi di formazione e ad esportare, con opportuni adattamenti alle diverse situazioni locali, il modello di centro di organico e interdisciplinare che era stato appunto inventato alla fine degli anni '30 da Cesare Brandi assieme ad un altro notissimo storico dell'arte: Giulio Carlo Argan.

A partire dalla fine degli anni '80 il campo specifico del restauro e della conservazione, come segmento del più ampio intervento sul patrimonio culturale nei paesi in via di sviluppo, assume una importanza sempre maggiore per la Cooperazione Italiana allo Sviluppo e si registrerà un coinvolgimento sempre maggiore del Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali, delle Università, degli enti di ricerca e di istituzioni scientifiche come l'Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente (ISMEO), mutato poi nel successivo Istituto per l'Africa e l'Oriente e recentemente soppresso, e di organismi internazionali come l'ICCROM e l'Istituto Italo-Latino Americano.

## **SINTESI DELL'AZIONE DELLA COOPERAZIONE ITALIANA ALLO SVILUPPO NEL SETTORE DEL PATRIMONIO CULTURALE.**

Si ritiene utile tentare una sintesi dell'azione settoriale condotta dalla Cooperazione Italiana utilizzando dati provenienti da fonti ufficiali.

Durante i ventisei anni dalla promulgazione delle legge 49/1987 che istituiva la Cooperazione Italiana allo Sviluppo, si è registrata una complessa attività anche nel delicato settore della tutela e della conservazione del Patrimonio Culturale. Nel 1999, in occasione della Conferenza di Firenze "Culture Counts" organizzata dalla World Bank in collaborazione con l'UNESCO, erano state pubblicate dettagliate sintesi dei primi dodici anni di azione settoriale. Uno studio curato da Fabrizio Ago contiene una analisi approfondita delle strategie adottate in quella prima fase. Si riportano poi le schede relative a 52 iniziative per un impegno complessivo di Euro 30.871.000. Si sottolinea che 21 di quei progetti avevano riguardato la formazione delle professioni collegate al restauro e alla conservazione del patrimonio tangibile per un impegno complessivo di Euro 13.624.000. Tra questi particolare interesse rivestono 3 centri-scuole di restauro e conservazione (Cina, Territori Palestinesi, Giordania), 3 corsi di livello universitario post laurea (Algeria, Tunisia), corsi nei settori del restauro dei manoscritti (Egitto), dei dipinti murali (Siria), degli edifici architettonici.

Tredici anni dopo, nel 2012, la Scuola S. Anna di Pisa elaborava su incarico della Direzione Generale per la Cooperazione allo Sviluppo, le "Linee Guida della Cooperazione Italiana su Patrimonio Culturale e Sviluppo. Ben 47 pagine del documento contengono in forma di tabella la sintesi dell'attività nel settore in questione e relativa al periodo 2000-2012. Sono state censite in totale 249 iniziative con un impegno economico complessivo pari a Euro 117.404.405.

Per l'Africa sono state indicate 17 iniziative in 10 paesi (Angola, Camerun, Eritrea, Etiopia, Ghana, Mauritania, Mozambico, Repubblica Democratica del Congo, Senegal, Sud Africa), a cui si aggiungono 8 iniziative di livello regionale o continentale, con un impegno complessivo pari a Euro 15.807.767.

Per il Nord Africa e Medio Oriente sono menzionati 96 interventi in 13 paesi (Algeria, Egitto, Giordania, Iran, Iraq, Libano, Libia, Marocco, Siria, Territori Palestinesi, Tunisia, Yemen, Israele), a cui si aggiungono 2 iniziative di carattere regionale, per un impegno complessivi pari a Euro 48.879.031.

Per l'America Latina e Caraibi nel documento si indicano 39 iniziative in 13 paesi (Argentina, Bolivia, Brasile, Cile, Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Paraguay, Perù, Repubblica Dominicana, Uruguay) a cui si aggiungono 20 iniziative di livello regionale continentale, per un impegno complessivo pari a Euro 11.382.861.

Per l'Asia e il Pacifico, si registrano 19 iniziative in 7 paesi (Afghanistan, Cambogia, Cina, India, Laos, Pakistan, Vietnam) per un impegno complessivo pari a Euro 20.471.513.

Per l'Europa si indicano 26 iniziative in 10 paesi (Albania, Armenia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Georgia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Serbia, Slovenia, Jugoslavia, Balcani) per un impegno complessivo pari a Euro 12.468.927. Si aggiungono 2 iniziative di livello regionale, 18 iniziative realizzate in Italia, 4 iniziative di livello globale affidate all'UNESCO per un valore complessivo pari a Euro 8.394.306.

La formazione nel campo specifico del restauro riguarda 7 iniziative realizzate in Africa e Medio Oriente, 29 iniziative in Nord Africa e Medio Oriente, 22 iniziative in America Latina e Caraibi, 6 in Asia e Pacifico e 9 in Europa.

Resoconti come quelli pubblicati nel 1999 o come l'ultimo in ordine di tempo allegato alle Linee Guida a cui si è fatto cenno sono particolarmente utili. Si suggerisce la necessità di una verifica attenta delle informazioni poiché alcuni dati economici derivanti da documenti non conclusivi della singola iniziativa, possono aver subito variazioni e ciò può rendere inesatto il computo complessivo.

## I CASI DI STUDIO

### Gli interventi in Iraq per la protezione del patrimonio Culturale dal 2003 a al 2013 dopo la fine dei conflitti

L'azione italiana a sostegno del patrimonio culturale iracheno rappresenta un evidente esempio di organicità e di buona impostazione strategica di una azione di lunga durata in un paese.

La collaborazione tra Italia e Iraq nel settore del Patrimonio Culturale inizia nel 1969, quando Giorgio Gullini, uno dei più autorevoli archeologi italiani, fonda a Baghdad l'Istituto Italo-Iracheno di Scienze Archeologiche e il Centro Italo-Iracheno per il Restauro dei Monumenti, costola del Centro Ricerche Archeologiche e Scavi di Torino. Da quel momento, fino alla fine degli anni '80, il centro torinese ha realizzato campagne di scavo e interventi nel campo del restauro dei monumenti di enorme rilevanza. Si ricorda l'attività di ricerca svolta nei siti di Seleucia e Choche, Tell Yelkhi, Tell Hassan, Nimrud, Hatra, Kifrin, Babilonia; le campagne di studio e rilievo architettonico e fotogrammetrico e le attività di progettazione, restauro e conservazione condotte a Seleucia, Aqarquf, Ctesifonte, Hatra, Ukhaidir, Anah, Mossul.

A partire dalla prima guerra del Golfo, nel 1991, era stata avviata un'azione sinergica tra il Ministero degli Affari Esteri, il Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali e l'Arma dei Carabinieri, al fine di fornire alle autorità irachene un importante supporto tecnico e metodologico per la protezione del patrimonio culturale mesopotamico.

Nel 2003, con la II<sup>a</sup> guerra del Golfo, ha inizio il periodo di maggiore rischio per il patrimonio culturale del paese e da quel momento l'Italia intensifica la sua azione di sostegno attraverso piani organici di intervento in settori diversi tra i quali anche il patrimonio culturale. I fenomeni di saccheggio e di trafugamento dai musei mettono a repentaglio quel patrimonio. Il nostro Comando Carabinieri per la Tutela del Patrimonio Culturale ha realizzato pertanto un censimento dei beni trafugati dall'Iraq a partire dal 1990 e ha identificato finora ben 2969 oggetti.

Attraverso un'azione sinergica e il sostegno finanziario di alcune direzioni generali del Ministero degli Affari Esteri (DGAP (ex DGMM) – *Task Force Iraq* e DGCS – *Task Force Iraq*) vengono avviate dal 2003 al 2013 17 iniziative, con un impegno di spesa complessivo di € 10.357.831,95, articolate in 4 aree di intervento. Nella sua globalità l'intervento italiano di assistenza all'Iraq nel decennio considerato ammonta a 3,2 miliardi di euro (doni, crediti di aiuto e cancellazione del debito) per un numero totale di 124 iniziative.

Rilevante è stato l'aiuto alla risistemazione del sistema museale iracheno, a Baghdad, Nassiriya, Diwania e Najaf. Di grande rilievo è stata l'azione condotta nel Kurdistan per la cittadella di Erbil e le altre iniziative condotte nella stessa Regione.

Di particolare importanza risulta l'azione condotta nella conservazione e nel restauro. Già tra il 2003 e il 2004 venne effettuato il primo intervento di ammodernamento del laboratorio di restauro del Museo Nazionale di Baghdad. Il nuovo laboratorio venne inaugurato nel marzo 2004 e in quel momento furono avviati i primi corsi di formazione condotti da esperti dell'Istituto Superiore per la Conservazione e il Restauro, sospesi poi a metà del 2004, quando le condizioni di sicurezza nel paese non consentirono di prolungare la presenza degli specialisti italiani. La formazione venne proseguita ad Amman in Giordania, dove gli allievi iracheni, guidati dagli esperti italiani, eseguirono interventi su circa 1500 manufatti sequestrati dalla dogana giordana e contrabbandati dall'Iraq.

Successivamente le tappe più significative dell'azione di rafforzamento del settore della conservazione e del restauro sono state le seguenti:

- riallestimento del laboratorio di restauro del Museo di Baghdad (2004).
- Riapertura della Sala Assira del Museo di Baghdad (2007).
- Progettazione del recupero di tre musei provinciali di Nassiria, Diwania e Najaf (2010).
- Corsi di formazione sul restauro degli avori antichi del Museo di Baghdad (2010).
- A partire dal 2011, ulteriore rafforzamento delle dotazioni tecnico-scientifiche del Museo Nazionale di Baghdad e avvio di corsi di formazione a Nassiriya in un laboratorio allestito all'interno della ex base militare italiana di Mittica e per la parte pratica direttamente sul sito archeologico di Ur. Attivazione di un cantiere-scuola nel cosiddetto E-Nun-Mah, parte del tempio chiamato Ekishnugal, "Tempio in cui non entra la luce", dedicato al dio Luna Nannar, costruito da Ur-Namma fra il XXII e il XXI sec. a.C. e restaurato fino all'epoca di Ciro il Grande nel VI sec. a.C.
- Realizzazione a Mosul di corsi sul restauro di libri e manoscritti antichi, avori e metalli archeologici.
- Attivazione a Erbil, capitale del Kurdistan iracheno, in un centro di formazione e di intervento sui materiali archeologici realizzato dal governo americano nel 2008 (Iraqi Institute for the Conservation of Antiquities and Heritage) e consegnato al governo iracheno il 31 dicembre 2010, di corsi trimestrali sul restauro di libri e dei

manoscritti antichi, avori archeologici e metalli archeologici. Avvio parallelo, a cura dell'Università di Roma La Sapienza, di corsi sulla lingua e la filologia sumera.

- Restauro della seconda Sala Assira nel Museo di Baghdad, condotto dal Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali attraverso una convenzione con il Centro Ricerche Archeologiche e Scavi di Torino.

### Venti anni di costante attività di cooperazione con la Cina

Fu proprio il particolare impegno italiano all'estero e il prestigio conquistato dagli specialisti italiani a spingere alla fine degli anni '80 la Repubblica Popolare Cinese a richiedere l'aiuto dell'Italia per favorire il processo di modernizzazione del restauro e della conservazione del Patrimonio Culturale.

La Direzione Generale per la Cooperazione allo Sviluppo del Ministero degli Affari Esteri italiano a partire da quel momento ha sostenuto senza interruzioni numerose iniziative in Cina in questo campo.

Tra il 1995 e il 1998 a Xi'an venne creato il Centro per la Conservazione e il Restauro del Patrimonio Storico-culturale, competente per le cinque province del nord-ovest del paese (Shaanxi, Gansu, Ningxia, Xinjiang e Qinghai) e nell'ambito di quel progetto, nell'arco di due anni di costante impegno italiano, venne formato il primo gruppo di 20 restauratori che possiamo definire moderni nell'impostazione metodologica e che provenivano da tutte le province del nord-ovest della Cina.

Le attività formative in Cina vennero sostenute da 49 docenti italiani provenienti da istituzioni e università dell'intero paese. Il corso biennale di restauro era impostato seguendo il modello interdisciplinare messo a punto presso l'Istituto Centrale del Restauro italiano e prevedeva insegnamenti di discipline storiche, scientifiche e specifiche del restauro.

Il Centro di Restauro di Xi'an divenne rapidamente un'istituzione di riferimento ed i restauratori che erano stati formati intrapresero una intensa attività professionale, ricoprendo ruoli importanti nelle istituzioni a cui appartenevano ed attivando essi stessi iniziative di formazione.

Le autorità della State Administration of Cultural Heritage di Beijing nel 1998 richiesero pertanto all'Italia di proseguire l'azione di sostegno nella formazione dei restauratori attraverso un'intervento di potenziamento delle capacità formative del China National Institute of Cultural Property (CNICP).

Si trattava di un'occasione davvero speciale, attraverso la quale venivano coronati gli sforzi di anni ed anni di lavoro che un numerosissimo gruppo di specialisti dei due paesi avevano portato avanti con coraggio e determinazione. Il Centro veniva inaugurato il 9 febbraio del 2004 ed in breve tempo diventava il polo centrale di riferimento del settore per l'intera Cina (Figg. 1-3). Anche questa iniziativa veniva affidata all'IsIAO che si avvaleva degli specialisti provenienti dall'Istituto Centrale per il Restauro e da numerose università italiane.

Rispetto ad altre possibili strategie formative si scelse di innalzare il livello professionale di operatori già in servizio presso musei e istituti di ricerca attivi nel comparto dei Beni Culturali, dipendenti dalla State Administration of Cultural Heritage centrale o dagli uffici periferici dislocati nelle diverse province della Repubblica Popolare Cinese. In tal modo è stato assicurato un effetto tangibile in un territorio di così grande vastità ed è stato innescato un fenomeno di sviluppo a catena nell'ambito della generale modernizzazione del settore.

La principale conquista conseguita dai nuovi restauratori cinesi formati grazie al sostegno italiano fu aver capito che il restauro non è un'operazione meccanica ma al contrario rappresenta un momento metodologico che richiede un'analisi critica attenta.

Dal 2003 al 2010 sono stati formati nel Centro di Pechino oltre 700 allievi, di cui oltre 80 stranieri, I giovani cinesi che sono stati formati oggi sono divenuti affermati specialisti attivi nei musei dell'intero paese e costituiscono un autentico network del restauro (Tav. 1).

### El Salvador e la Regione Centroamericana

In America Centrale sono state recentemente realizzate due iniziative di valore metodologico: l'avvio di un processo di rafforzamento nel settore del restauro del patrimonio materiale a livello di paese (in El Salvador, elevata priorità per la Cooperazione Italiana), e l'innescamento di un processo di sviluppo dell'intero settore del patrimonio a livello regionale.

### Creazione del Centro de Capacitación para la restauración, conservación y promoción del patrimonio cultural en El Salvador

Negli anni 2009-2012 in El Salvador è stato creato il *Centro de capacitación para la restauración, conservación y promoción del patrimonio cultural*, cofinanziato dalla Cooperazione Italiana allo Sviluppo e realizzato dall'ILA con l'apporto della Secretaría de Cultura de la Presidencia, della Alcaldía di Izalco e della Universidad El Salvador.

Il Centro è oggi l'infrastruttura specialistica più moderna e attrezzata dell'intera regione centroamericana e El Salvador è divenuto il paese di riferimento per quanto riguarda la conservazione e il restauro.

Il centro è composto di due sezioni: la prima specializzata nel restauro di manufatti archeologici in ceramica (Museo Nazionale di Antropologia "David J. Guzmán"); la seconda, specializzata nella conservazione delle sculture policrome, è installata in un nuovo padiglione realizzato con il contributo economico della Municipalità di Izalco

all'interno dell'area occupata dalla *Casa de los Barrientos* (Figg. 4-5).

Nel 2009, presso la Scuola di Architettura dell'Università di El Salvador, sono stati organizzati due corsi di specializzazione nei settori del restauro urbano e del restauro architettonico. Negli anni 2011 e 2012 sono stati formati 18 specialisti in restauro e conservazione di manufatti archeologici e di opere d'arte in legno policromo. Elemento determinante per il raggiungimento del risultato atteso è stato lo studio approfondito del contesto e delle istituzioni che ha consentito la identificazione delle risorse umane da utilizzare all'interno di un sistema organizzato e ciò ha consentito di ridurre notevolmente l'apporto degli esperti espatriati.

### **Il Seminario Centroamericano sobre la valorización y la conservación del patrimonio cultural CULT 2011 verso azioni di sviluppo a livello regionale**

Il tema del dialogo interculturale sta diventando sempre più un elemento qualificante e determinante all'interno dei rapporti diplomatici bilaterali e multilaterali.

Tale fenomeno è diventato un nodo centrale nelle agende politiche nazionali e internazionali ad ogni livello di estensione geografica, dal locale al globale.

L'evoluzione dei sistemi sociali da una parte e delle strutture produttive e dei servizi dall'altra rende necessario ripensare la cultura non solo come valore in sé, ma come fattore integrante dei processi di sviluppo economico e sociale.

La crisi economica globale attuale induce a ripensare le strategie di sviluppo settoriale che ciascun paese adotta e rende indispensabile la messa a punto di piani di crescita condivisi tra i diversi paesi che formano regioni geografiche caratterizzate da vicende storiche fortemente connesse e da netti legami in generale sul piano culturale.

Ciò è particolarmente riferibile alla Regione Centroamericana, fortemente caratterizzata da una ricchezza di esperienze storiche fondamentali e di differenti interazioni socio-culturali, e attualmente al centro di dinamiche sociali e politiche in costante fermento.

Il Centroamerica appare pertanto come un "laboratorio" ideale per la sperimentazione di interventi atti a stimolare processi di crescita di carattere regionale che conducono ad una necessaria ottimizzazione delle risorse e potenziano l'integrazione tra i singoli paesi con effetti moltiplicatori sul piano sociale ed economico.

Questo era l'obiettivo del Seminario *Centroamericano sobre la valorización y la conservación del patrimonio cultural CULT 2011* che si è tenuto in Antigua (Guatemala) e a San Salvador (El Salvador) dal 9 al 13 del mese di maggio 2011. Il Seminario, promosso dalla Cooperazione Italiana allo Sviluppo, è stato realizzato dall'Istituto Italo-Latino Americano.

Le delegazioni dei paesi partecipanti e dei paesi osservatori erano composte da esperti e da funzionari che rappresentavano le principali istituzioni settoriali. Italia e Cuba hanno svolto il ruolo di paesi osservatori.

A ciascuno dei sei paesi centroamericani è stato affidato il coordinamento di una delle seguenti sessioni tematiche:

- recupero e riqualificazione dei centri storici (coordinamento: Guatemala);
- valorizzazione e turismo sostenibile (coordinamento: Nicaragua);
- i rischi: calamità naturali e fattori antropici (coordinamento: Panama);
- restauro, conservazione e rafforzamento istituzionale (coordinamento: El Salvador);
- sviluppo dei musei e dei siti archeologici (coordinamento: Costa Rica);
- catalogazione e lotta al traffico illecito (coordinamento: Honduras).

La *Declaración de San Salvador para la potenciación de la conservación y de la tutela del patrimonio cultural centroamericano y del turismo sostenible*, siglata al termine del Seminario, contiene gli elementi che caratterizzano il quadro specifico a livello regionale e le linee strategiche da seguire.

### **RIFLESSIONI CONCLUSIVE SULLE INIZIATIVE DI COOPERAZIONE COLLEGATE CON LA CONSERVAZIONE E IL RESTAURO DEL PATRIMONIO CULTURALE TANGIBILE**

La formazione dei restauratori, *punto focale e caratterizzante* della strategia italiana più recente, deve essere collegata a componenti più ampie di *sostegno istituzionale*, deve essere cioè indirizzata a rendere autonome le istituzioni del Paese beneficiario, privilegiando la modalità della *formazione di formatori* e gli aspetti organizzativi/gestionali delle strutture di riferimento.

Le esperienze condotte su campo e l'osservazione attenta dell'intera strategia adottata dall'Italia in questo delicato settore, consentono di sottolineare alcuni elementi fondamentali e imprescindibili che condizionano il successo di questa speciale categoria di iniziative.

- a. Realizzazione, durante la fase di identificazione e di formulazione del progetto, di una indagine accurata, non limitata al presente, ma estesa alla storia recente del paese beneficiario e che consideri:
  - il quadro istituzionale settoriale;
  - il quadro legislativo;
  - la consistenza del patrimonio culturale sul territorio;

- le istituzioni a cui è affidata la gestione del patrimonio culturale, sia a livello centrale, sia a livello periferico;
- il livello professionale e scientifico degli operatori.

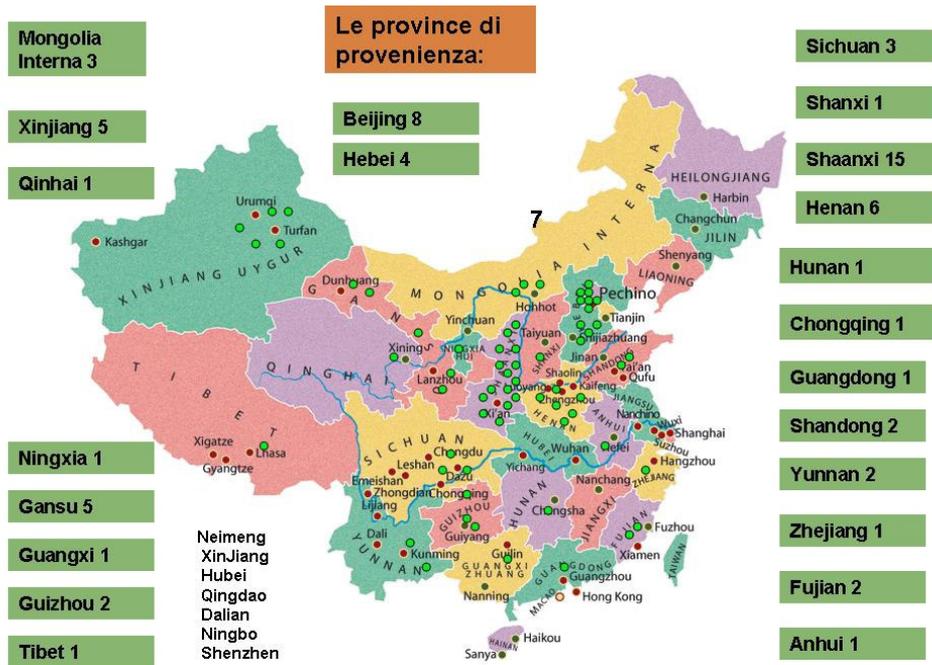
Tale analisi permette di evidenziare le criticità che caratterizzano il contesto settoriale generale che sarà oggetto dell'intervento e rendono possibile la definizione degli obiettivi specifici e della strategia di intervento.

- b. Definizione della strategia generale e del piano operativo congiuntamente con la controparte al fine di favorire il processo di appropriazione e di condivisione.
- c. Definizione attenta delle componenti tecnologiche (attrezzature e apparecchiature di laboratorio) . Dovrebbero essere evitate iniziative che prevedono la fornitura di attrezzature senza o con scarsa attività di formazione.
- d. Co-gestione dell'iniziativa per tutto la sua durata.
- e. Durata dell'intervento. La durata standard dei progetti è di 1, 2 o al massimo 3 anni. Affinché possano crearsi le condizioni per una appropriazione completa e il raggiungimento di una autonomia da parte del beneficiario sono necessari tempi ben più lunghi e fasi successive, caratterizzate da un impegno sempre più ridotto del paese donatore.

Riflessione conclusiva: le iniziative di cooperazione in tempo di crisi economica devono essere attentamente progettate con speciale cura verso l'ottimizzazione delle risorse.

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**Fig. 1** - Provenienza dei 67 allievi che hanno partecipato al primo corso del Sino-Italian Conservation Training Center – 2004.



**Fig. 2** - Sino-Italian Conservation Training Center di Pechino. Conservazione e restauro di manufatti metallici. Esercitazione in laboratorio.



**Fig. 3** - Sino-Italian Conservation Training Center di Pechino. Restauro degli apparati decorativi dell'architettura. Cantiere didattico.

Summary of training activities carried out at the Sino-Italian Conservation Training Center

Categories of courses	Courses	Students /sub-total	Students /total
Courses held as part of the programme funded by the Italian Development Cooperation	Courses held in 2004	67	190
	Courses held in 2007	62	
	Training course for Cultural Heritage conservation technicians from the Palace Museum, Forbidden City, Beijing	15	
	Specialization course for the application of laser technology in restoration work	14	
	Specialization course for the reintegration of lacunae in wall paintings	14	
	Science and Conservation. Chemistry and physics methodologies as applied in restoration and conservation interventions.	18	
Sino-Japan Cooperation Cultural Heritage Conservation and Restoration Training Course for technicians along the Silk Road	Courses held between 2006-2010	102	102
South-South Cooperation	Courses for African, Asian and Middle Eastern countries	83	83
Courses realized by SACH and funded by the Chinese government	Conservation of metals	24	81
	Conservation of wall paintings	14	
	Conservation of paper	14	
	Conservation of stone materials	15	
	Conservation of textiles	14	
On-site conservation courses	2007	44	186
	2008	48	
	2009	49	
	2010	45	
Courses on the restoration of buildings and monuments	2004-2005	36	36
Course Preventive Conservation: Reducing Risks to Collections, organized in collaboration with ICCROM	2009	20	20
<b>Total number of students who followed training courses between 2004 - 2010</b>			<b>698</b>

Tab. 1 - Sintesi delle attività didattiche condotte dal Sino-Italian Conservation Training Center tra il 2004 e il 2009.



Fig. 4 - Centro de capacitación para la restauración, conservación y promoción del patrimonio cultural di El Salvador. Ejercitacione nel laboratorio di restauro archeologico.



Fig. 5 - Centro de capacitación para la restauración, conservación y promoción del patrimonio cultural di El Salvador. Ejercitacione nel laboratorio di restauro della scultura policroma.