

# QUALITY MANAGEMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE: PROBLEMS AND BEST PRACTICES

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Davide Delfino**

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# Foreword to the XVII UISPP Congress Proceedings Series Edition

Luiz OOSTERBEEK  
Secretary-General

UISPP has a long history, starting with the old International Association of Anthropology and Archaeology, back in 1865, until the foundation of UISPP itself in Bern, in 1931, and its growing relevance after WWII, from the 1950's. We also became members of the International Council of Philosophy and Human Sciences, associate of UNESCO, in 1955.

In its XIVth world congress in 2001, in Liège, UISPP started a reorganization process that was deepened in the congresses of Lisbon (2006) and Florianópolis (2011), leading to its current structure, solidly anchored in more than twenty-five international scientific commissions, each coordinating a major cluster of research within six major chapters: Historiography, methods and theories; Culture, economy and environments; Archaeology of specific environments; Art and culture; Technology and economy; Archaeology and societies.

The XVIIth world congress of 2014, in Burgos, with the strong support of Fundación Atapuerca and other institutions, involved over 1700 papers from almost 60 countries of all continents. The proceedings, edited in this series but also as special issues of specialized scientific journals, will remain as the most important outcome of the congress.

Research faces growing threats all over the planet, due to lack of funding, repressive behavior and other constraints. UISPP moves ahead in this context with a strictly scientific programme, focused on the origins and evolution of humans, without conceding any room to short term agendas that are not root in the interest of knowledge.

In the long run, which is the terrain of knowledge and science, not much will remain from the contextual political constraints, as severe or dramatic as they may be, but the new advances into understanding the human past and its cultural diversity will last, this being a relevant contribution for contemporary and future societies.

This is what UISPP is for, and this is also why we are currently engaged in contributing for the relaunching of Human Sciences in their relations with social and natural sciences, namely collaborating with the International Year of Global Understanding, in 2016, and with the World Conference of the Humanities, in 2017.

The next two congresses of UISPP, in Melbourn (2017) and in Geneva (2020), will confirm this route.

# Introduction

Maurizio QUAGLIUOLO and Davide DELFINO

From Lascaux to Shanidar caves, from Malta temples to Stonenge (and the ‘new’ one...), from Serra da Capivara to Foz Coa park, from Australia to North Africa’s Rock Art, from Pechino to Isernia excavations, from the Musée de l’Homme in Paris to the Museum of Civilization in Québec, from Çatal Hüyük to the Varna village, from the Rift Valley to the Grand Canyon, most problems have to be fronted in a **common perspective**. But which perspective? Is it possible to have a common point of view on different values, different sites, different methodologies? The Scientific Commission for the Quality Management of Prehistoric and Protohistoric Sites, Monuments and Museums© set up at UISPP by initiative of the author (UISPP-PPCHM) is aimed to examine these issues and propose solutions acceptable to all those who want to contribute to common understanding of our past history.

**The only certainty in fact is our Past. It is undoubted that it happened, it is undoubted that its consequences are in place today, it is undoubted that it is affecting persons, social groups or larger structures in some ways also when it is disregarded.**

The help of specialists from different Countries and the exchange of opinions with other colleagues from other fields and/or organizations is then needed in order to:

- discuss the reasons and possibilities for preservation and use of Sites, Monuments and Museums;
- let the management of Rock Art Sites and Parks, Prehistoric excavations, Museums and Interpretations Centres and related structures open to the public to be made according to criteria agreed at an International level, both in normal and critical conditions;
- enhance standards in preserving, communicating and using Sites, Monuments and Museums;
- involve the public and diffuse awareness;
- analyse tourism benefits and risks at these destinations;
- introduce new opportunities for jobs and training;
- develop networks on these topics in connection with other specialized Organizations.

This session was aimed to know: what is your experience? Which problems would you like to address? Which solutions?

Maurizio QUAGLIUOLO with the paper *Quality Management at World Heritage sites: challenges*, presents a global perspective about Quality and Management of Heritage and talks about the role of the Culture in a social perspective. Showing what are the priorities in improving the awareness and use of Cultural Heritage, it suggests a positive profiting of that in meliorating cultural and political network between peoples.

José António GONZALEZ ZARANDONA with the paper *Landscape destruction and heritage mismanagement in Murujuga (Western Australia)* shows the case study of the Murujuga petroglyphs area (West Australia), one of the largest places in the world with concentration of rock art, partially destroyed by iron mining works. The surviving part is presently not interested by a rescue and valorisation project; author highlights the social importance of petroglyphs to the indigenous community and its intangible value for the world heritage enrichment and preservation.

Cinta BELLMUT with the paper *Media strategies observed in the Portuguese press to save Vila Nova de Foz Côa engravings. A case study on socialization of the archaeological heritage*, presents a consideration about the social factor and the role of social communication in the rescue and

valorisation of Rock Art in Côa Valley (Portugal); the action of the archaeologists in disclosing the finds to the people and the high interest arisen in the newspapers that contributed to the global awareness at rescuing rock art in Côa Valley are particularly highlighted.

Davide DELFINO, Dragos GHEORGHIU and Livia STEFAN with the paper *Archaeological research and applied arts for Public Archaeology in a Final Bronze Age hilltop walled station of Castelo Velho da Zimbreira (Mação-Portugal)* present periodic activities for the valorisation of a protohistoric monument that has not such a monumentality, but is important to the survival of the spirit of a peripheral small territory in inland Portugal. Public Archaeology has been carried out by multiple activities, involving several people of different types and using various factors of attraction based on scientific data coming from the excavations, putting the monument in special relation with the surrounding landscape.

Dragos GHEORGHIU and Livia STEFAN with the paper *Virtual palimpsests: augmented reality and the use of mobile devices to visualise the archaeological record*, present a very useful tool for archaeologists to read a multilayer context at archaeological sites using augmented reality, Google Maps and mobile devices. The case study of Vadastra (Romania) shows this virtual palimpsest applied to the multilayer archaeological reality of Calcolithic and Iron Age structures and goods, as well as its potential successful application in a wider range of contexts in the future.

Patrick BRINGMANS with the paper *Conservation, Preservation and Site Management at the Neanderthal Sites at Veldwezelt-Hezerwater, Belgium* shows a very successful connection among field investigation, public archaeology and valorisation of a prehistoric settlement intervention project, in a special research context of ancient Neanderthal's occupation of the territory, related behavior and strategy for raw materials management; the success of Public Archaeology along some years, on the initiative by the researchers' team earned the interest of the Flemish Government, that decided to fund a project to develop it permanently.

Roberto ÁVILA with the paper *The scientific value of replicas through the analytic experience of Magdalenian portable art*, highlights the potentiality of mobile Upper Paleolithic art replicas for education, valorisation, preservation and study of the context. The author presents a replica of mobile Magdalenian art from Dordogne (France) and calls attention to the importance of the replica in relation to the fragility of the original, for using in teaching and research activities.





# Quality Management at World Heritage sites: challenges

Maurizio QUAGLIUOLO  
President of the UISPP-PPCHM committee,  
Secretary-General of HERITY International

Well. Let's speak about Quality. Let's speak about Management. Let's speak about Culture. At present, this article could stop here.

Why?

**Because nowadays, the common perspective which appears to have been shared for a long time up today according to the "Universal Value" on which the 1972 UNESCO Convention is based, seems to be no more effective.**

In a more realistic way, we should ask ourselves if it is possible today to have a common point of view on different values, different sites, different approaches. It's time to examine issues related to the perception of the importance (or not) of a cultural relict before dealing with jobs related to archaeology and research, norms and laws, best practices and recognition of professionalism, history and restoration, conservation and communication, awareness and teaching, services and management, which proposals of improvement are acceptable **only** to those who share a common vision about the main subject of our efforts: the common understanding of our past history as a driver for future development.

If there is no agreement on this understanding, there is no Cultural Heritage to study, preserve, communicate and enjoy. *Global understanding* is a chimera without dialogue. Dialogue is not agreement, simply a good disposition to discuss. It seems that today this good disposition is not completely diffused.

The only certainty in fact is our Past. It is undoubted that it happened, it is undoubted that its consequences are in place today, it is undoubted that it is affecting persons, social groups or larger structures in some ways also where it is disregarded.

But when we speak about knowledge, conservation, transmission, economic development in connection with the Cultural Heritage as a **common** goal with the emphasis that is given today by UNESCO, ICCROM, specialized agencies at UN, EU (-which EU? We could say-) or non-governmental international organizations such as ICOMOS, ICOM, Europa Nostra or Private Funds devoted to cultural heritage protection and diffusion, we should at first ask ourselves if anyone of the actors (or *stakeholders*) agrees on:

*Which value?*

*Why preserve?*

*How to communicate the message(s) -if any is recognized-?*

*Should we have services at the site (if visited!)?*

I already wrote in other essays about the Mostar bridge, about the Buddha statues in Afghanistan etc. and their relation with the historical conquerors dealing with different civilizations, destroying symbols and killing people in ancient times. As archaeologists and Historians we should know these facts very well. This is why I prefer to scandalize someone or all of you saying that the cruelty against people (and their life at first!!) and the disruption of the material symbols of their past are **not justifiable**, I repeat **not justifiable**, but quite easy to understand in the present last frontier which is

the ISIS fury. Rather than be silent. Rather than claim aloud for help against the barbarian of these destructions from the quite chairs of the top level management (sometimes forgetting about further contemporary crimes not so “mediatic”).

**The point is: who will win? Who will be in a majority or in a position of force to superimpose his/her values or defend those that the Past gave us?**

***Outstanding Value: which will be the benchmark to define it?***

Only History will be able to witness the end of the conflict(s). But we can contribute in a positive way. We can save human life at first, as a value. The lack of value of (some) human lives is in fact at the basis of easy violence. Violence against Cultural Heritage is the way to give value to what could be not perceived as a value until it is destroyed. Unify killing of people at a Cultural site is the proof of it. At the same time is the proof of the lack of force of the message/ideology of the persons/groups who perpetrate the crime. Otherwise, they should not need such a show.

In such a situation, the main challenge and the most urgent task is to re-think (eventually re-confirming, but only after a wide-shared discussion, not only among specialists) the classification of Cultural Heritage according to the social **perception** of its message in different cultures and situations (not necessary critical). In this context also the behaviour of aggressive economy rather than different (geographical) thinkings, should be considered.

Differently, how can we propose World Heritage lists on a consensus basis? How to justify the conservation of cultural remains (and related expenses)? Why implement sophisticated tools with the help of new technologies to communicate a message that may be not understood? Why to invest resources for services if tourism is no more a need or possible?

These considerations are at the basis of the HERITY<sup>1</sup> approach, mainly related to the individuation of social consensus (or not) and the individual perception of the value of a cultural asset. Conservation, Communication and Services are necessarily affected by the first point. Also in “developed” Countries, the “enemy” is the doubt that it is worth to save cultural heritage instead of different options (e.g., building infrastructures). **Then, what to say in economies where people has no possibility to eat, to drink safe water, to live?**

A possible answer should be that, since pre-history, human beings are characterized by reasoning and acting according to their thoughts, which can be compared only with past experiences, not with future ones. So, having **the possibility to reason about our culture(s) at a global scale, eventually for changing it, should be considered among primary human rights**. This is possible only if we are put in the condition to know past events and their remains.

Please, contribute. If you trust your role.

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<sup>1</sup>HERITY (from *Heritage* and *Quality*), International Organization for Quality Management at Cultural Sites which releases the HGES certification related to Value, Conservation, Communication and Services at a museum, archaeological site, library, archive or monument, was created exactly to fit the specific needs of Cultural Heritage care and valorization, with a special accent on social participation and consideration of local professionalities.