Values and effects of local identity preservation: A taxonomic approach

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VALUES AND EFFECTS OF LOCAL IDENTITIY PRESERVATION
A TAXONOMIC APPROACH

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Abstract

This paper is positioned at the crossroads of three scientific disciplines: economics, planning and cultural heritage preservation. It aims to present a general framework for local identity analysis and historic environment preservation within the context of a more comprehensive urban ecological planning paradigm. Based on the notion of sustainable development, a taxonomic approach is designed with a view to the creation of an evaluation framework that addresses historic entity, public and private values, public and private action strategies, and impacts on various relevant social groups. Due attention is given to three sources of value: the intrinsic values of cultural goods, the potential of cultural goods for local or regional development, and the needs and the willingness of the local community concerned.
1. Basic considerations

This paper will address the issue of local identity. This has been a much-debated concept in recent years, and many efforts have been made to agree upon a common definition. For the purpose of this study, it is useful to refer to the following definitions:

- The first comes from the historic field; it considers ‘local identity’ as an evolutionary concept, changing from formal and aesthetic towards social and cultural considerations of heritage. Local identity is then strictly connected to the historic environment, which represents a long-term evolutionary significance and allows its recovery and valorization. Meanwhile, a great concern is emerging for the values of human communities and the need to preserve cultural diversity.

- The second is derived from the modern urban and regional planning field and considers local identity conservation as its main goal. And, in doing so, it directs an effective means of sustainable city and territory development. To highlight the importance of protecting and valorizing the identity of places and communities obliges decision-makers limited by the perennial problem of financial resources and the complexity of certain decisions to establish priorities and methods for cultural goods recovery within the context of global actions for territory development and human evolution.

Values, effects, impacts and benefits which will be treated below refer to our prior concerns. They do not only refer to the ‘tout court’ preservation of cultural and environmental goods, but above all concern the potential of the historic environment, in directing sustainable cultural, social, environmental and economic development processes (see also Figure 1). This paper deals with integrated urban planning or ecological planning as a suggestion for new ways of reaching a balance between conservation and transformation; that is, to support territorial evolution and technical and economic growth, by considering the actual needs of the environment and humanity.

2. Local identity and historic environment: conceptual framework

2.1. From local identity knowledge to sustainable development

A development process has to strongly draw from local resources and be attentive to environment preservation and traditional technologic rehabilitation in many sectors. This applies to advanced regions, but especially to peripheral areas of the western world. The prospects of actions towards sustainable development and integrated conservation appear to be the only ways to lead local communities to a balanced evolution, by overcoming imported technological systems (which usually paid no attention to the local resources).

"A new concept of sustainability, in the development process, has to be based on globalism". A significant phase in the ecological approach to regional planning is the definition of the element set: which constitutes an overall cultural system. The cultural system
refers to the natural (physical environment, biological environment, e.g.) and to the human ecosystem (historical built heritage, old settlements, demo-ethno-anthropological goods, e.g.);
Fig. 1. The evolution of the 'cultural' goods' concept during the present century

The artistic unit
The landscape as monumental unit
The unit and its context
The territory with its historical-cultural aspects
The evolutionary context with its natural and anthropic components

'CONSIDERATION OF VARIOUS HISTORIC-CULTURAL COMPONENTS IN THE CONCEPT EVOLUTION'

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Components</th>
<th>Monument perspective</th>
<th>Historic Landscape perspective</th>
<th>Cultural Goods perspective</th>
<th>Historical Environment perspective</th>
<th>Local Identity perspective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Natural environment (morphological or biological units)</td>
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<td>XXX</td>
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<td>X x</td>
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<tr>
<td>Natural environment (context)</td>
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<td>Archaeology</td>
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<td>Ancient cities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Historic architecture</td>
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<tr>
<td>Landscape</td>
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<td>Alt</td>
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<td>Material culture</td>
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<td>Demo-ethno-anthropology</td>
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<td>Traditional technologies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rural settlements</td>
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<td>XXX</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agrarian structures</td>
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<tr>
<td>Historic infrastructures</td>
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<td>XXX</td>
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<tr>
<td>Industrial and rural archaeology</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>XXX</td>
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<tr>
<td>Old agrarian techniques</td>
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<td>XXX</td>
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<td>XXX</td>
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</table>

For each perspective: from great (XXX) to low/no importance (-), with regard to popular interest and scientific research in the field.
their preservation/activation takes an important role in the process of regional and urban planning. The pre-eminent factors in the recent process of physical planning for less developed regional areas include the following:

- the natural resources inside or near urban areas;
- the historically-built heritage and the unrepeatable environments in the old cities;
- the technological traditions in local communities, regarding energy saving and soil conservation, and greater equilibrium in the built environment.

The first element concerns open spaces in urban and metropolitan areas: green zones, urban empty zones and cultivated spaces. The second factor refers to the recovery of historic settlement environments; they are the material testimony of past eras, and they have the characteristics of irreproducibility. The third factor considers old technologies in new ways to best use local resources, and cope with economic, social and environmental problems.

These are the central aspects, but the definition problem of local identity is becoming more complex as it becomes critical to current development processes and efforts to make a transition from a conservationist to integrated planning logic (to conjoin physical and historic-cultural resource preservation with the needs for human community development).

Figure 2 proposes a model with various phases, from the definition and analysis of local identity, to the processes of valorization for sustainable territorial development. We need to define the basic concept of local identity and distinguish the current necessary conditions in the selected areas, and decide on which spatial level to operate in order to achieve our goals. Next, we need to discern within the local identity debate between ‘strong’ areas to protect, and weak parts to leave to the mercy of uncontrolled exploitation. The goal is to direct regional areas to continuous and balanced processes of conservation and transformation.

Subsequently it becomes necessary to identify the territorial system components and assign a role and "weight" (relative priority) for each one related to local identity valorization. The final phases of our modeling process concern strategies and objectives for eco-development; social participation and proper involvement by historic heritage as determinants for integrated planning.

Ecological approaches to territory and human settlement transformation are steadily increasing. Projects and case studies reveal attempts to integrate the sustainable use of environmental resources, to recover historic-social and cultural values, and to address needs for economic improvement. The proposed strategies differ at each territorial level: national, regional, and local, and incorporate a variety of human concerns according to the expected benefits from the implementation of ecological planning actions.

This study classifies the current policy orientations and strategies fundamental to the approach of territorial phenomena analysis and economic/eco-planning. We also point out primary objectives and benefits (for the complete framework, see Figure 3). These aspects are defined according to the following spheres: cultural, social and anthropological, economic, environmental.
Fig. 2. Local Identity: from identification to activation for territorial development

Local Identity: Concept Foundation

Requirements of territory (knowledge):
- emerging problems
- needs of inhabitants
- scarcity and exploitation of resources
- role in wider context

Levels of territory:
- local
- sub-regional
- regional
- national
- international
- global

Overcoming spatial limits and hierarchies

Components of territorial system:
- historical
- cultural
- environmental
- economic
- social
- anthropological

Priorities for territorial components

Eco-development strategies:
- "oriented" knowledge
- social participation
- interdisciplinarity/integration
- activation/actualization

Goals level for local development:
- sectoral
- inter-sectoral
- general
Fig. 3. Orientations, objectives, benefits, in the process of local identity recovery and ecological planning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural Sphere</th>
<th>Pre-eminent Objectives</th>
<th>Benefits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Orientations/Strategies</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Formulate strategies of long-term research on territories and cities according to public institutions (from national to the local level).</td>
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<td>Return to traditional use of natural resources.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Protect habitat and species; they are particularly sensitivity to human impact.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Protect marginalized cultures.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Formulate specific strategies for each territorial and urban area in relation to local communities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Consider the concept of ‘constant renewal’ as the key for planning processes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recovery of ‘environmental wisdom’ of local communities, in terms of resource use modalities, aesthetic sensibilities, building modalities, traditional technologies.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Enjoyment of intrinsic values of unrepeatable environments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protect and valorize landscapes, complexes, and units of historic-cultural interest.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Scientific development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase knowledge of territory, and the dynamics of evolution.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Protect environmental diversity.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social and Anthropological Sphere</th>
<th>Pre-eminent Objectives</th>
<th>Benefits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Orientations/Strategies</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Social participation in directing national policies.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Protect social communities or minorities; they are particularly sensitive to human impact.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Formulate strategies to capillary diffuse environmental education.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Limit the service sectors of cities.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Valorize the diversity in human communities.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Increase quality of life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reinforce the ‘capacity to do’ autonomously of local communities.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Positive evolution in human relationships.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social participation in urban and regional planning.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Reduction of crime.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To be continued
### Economical Sphere

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Orientations/Strategies</strong></th>
<th><strong>Pre-eminent Objectives</strong></th>
<th><strong>Benefits</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improve industrial production, in accordance with attitudes, life styles, and potential of local population and resources.</td>
<td>Direct <strong>economic benefits</strong> to local communities.</td>
<td>Recreational and educational use of natural and anthropological eco-systems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incentive (monetary, fiscal, etc.) to <strong>reduce</strong> pollution emission, avoid further environmental damages, and improve environmental quality.</td>
<td><strong>Encourage</strong> local communities towards technical autonomy.</td>
<td>Historie-environmental valorization <strong>can</strong> increase employment in the tourism sector.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivate population to <strong>restore</strong> private historic buildings.</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Definition</strong> of ecological and sustainable systems for resource exploitation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Environmental Sphere

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Orientations/Strategies</strong></th>
<th><strong>Pre-eminent Objectives</strong></th>
<th><strong>Benefits</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Protect</strong> natural and anthropized ecosystems, which are important for biological reasons and for scientific research.</td>
<td>Assure sustainable use of natural resources, especially for strongly altered areas.</td>
<td>Greater equilibrium between human activity and bi-ecological sphere.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoid a large gap between protected areas other areas open to uncontrolled transformation and exploitation.</td>
<td>Limit city growth and land consumption; re-establish physical borders in relation to contemporary urban settlements.</td>
<td>Increase of human space quality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Propose</strong> renewable energy sources to counteract the polluting ones.</td>
<td><strong>Oppose</strong> a strictly metropolitan system by returning functions and values to historic relationships between cities inside regional areas.</td>
<td>Evolution of land use modalities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Predispose defense of territory from natural disaster.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Protect</strong> particular habitats, threatened animal and vegetable species, and important resources for medicine.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Give back <strong>significance</strong> and vitality to old urban spaces through physical restoration of historic artifacts and their socio-economic promotion.</td>
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</table>
The proposed classification is indicative because of the difficulty of placing criteria and orientations in only one sphere. In effect, the most recent strategy for the sustainable development of depressed areas is the pursuit of integration to achieve effective and efficient intersectoral equilibrium. The specific aim of the classification framework is to urge greater systematic reflection on methodology in the planning process for these kinds of areas.

Actually, greater attention is given to cultural aspects, as a distinctive element of places and human communities; these aspects are coming to the forefront of socio-economic development strategies. Habitats and cultures that are particularly sensitive to human impact are the basic conditions for all methodological and operative approaches to protect environmental diversity. Nevertheless, the convictions originating from strong local specific conditions and/or the necessity to resume traditional ways of using local resources are the answers to environmental sustainability problems.

From a cultural point of view, two aspects assume an important role in the process of integrated/ecological planning for urban areas:

- preservation of considerable historic environments for the intrinsic values, and economic potential;
- knowledge and recovery of ‘environmental wisdom’ of each human community, with reference to ancient technologies, formal expression, land and natural resources use.

The improvement of local population capacity to act autonomously, and the limits to the increase in the service sector in urban areas, refer to the social sphere, which includes the determination of public policies for environmental education do underline the values of human and cultural diversity in each community. However, the first goal of ecological planning strategies is social/participation in local and national policy design. In many cases pursuing this objective is the key element to formulating methodologies and tools for eco-planning.

Three different typologies dealing with the fundamental problems of local identity and sustainable development involve the environmental sphere:

- conservation of historic and natural values of environment, by paying close attention to rarity;
- reduction of obsolescence causes and the uncontrolled exploitation of resources, by improving territory protection systems;
- search for equilibrium between man and nature by considering: (1) perennial countering preservation with transformation actions (2) willingness to reduce the difference between greater areas to protect, and other territorial parts to abandon or leave to absolute exploitation.

Another important aspect is connected to the limit of urban expansion, and the valorization of historical networks of human settlements upon certain territories, in order to restrain population concentration.

Orientations and strategies concerning the economic sphere are directed both to increase local technical capacity - by using local resources - and to motivate environmental quality improvement and obsolescence reduction. The most important objective is the policy intention to address positive economic impacts to local communities.
The benefits derived from these sustainable development strategies refer to four major typological classes:

- **Benefits from sustainable use of resources:** they concern recreational and scientific utilization;
- **Existence benefits:** they refer to intrinsic, intangible, or unrepeatable values of goods;
- **Social benefits:** they refer to the improvement of the quality of life and social behavior, and also to the increase of the cultural and educational level and the reduction of crime;
- **Environmental benefits:** they concern all implications for the bio-ecological sphere, anthropic space quality, and land use modalities.

These kinds of effects and benefits can result from policies for historic environment preservation as well as local identity valorization, and the efficient processes of integrated development.

2.2. **Historic environment field. Characters and current problems**

In a complete analysis of regional resources, it is important to include the existence, significance, social and economic functions of the cultural and environmental heritage, which also helps to determine local identity.

This concept reflects a specific notion of cultural goods, with an anthropological interpretation. "Substantially inclined to consider culture the significance that the reality assumes in every individual because of the interaction with the environment in which he lives; a sort of subjective tendency to react to reality, that it constitutes into the members of every human group during its becoming".

Cultural heritage is then understood in the dual aspect of community behavior and as a result of the products of its activity. The cultural testimonies are the whole of physical and man-made structures, in that they contribute to the definition of a region's identity. Cultural heritage is not the sum of separate elements, but rather an organic context of spatial and a-spatial realities, which define the nature of a geographical area, the understanding of its physical structure (natural landscape and human landscape) and its historic uniqueness.

For many references, the meaning of the historical environment includes a diverse heritage, which encompasses tools and works of art or crafts, buildings and cities, agricultural areas and landscapes, uses, customs, traditions, language, music, poetry, and the productions of the formal and popular culture of a geographical area. The relation between conservation policy for the historical environment and the regional economic planning discipline is that the latter, in its analysis and management of regions, does not leave out of consideration the region’s cultural identity. From such considerations arises the possibility of more exact historic and scientific planning.

Research on cultural goods has revealed the importance of knowing the relationships within a region, such as the connections between physical structures and the social, economic and cultural organization, and exploitation of regional resources. A good preservation plan cannot disregard these factors; it has to concern itself with proper planning processes, which encourage essential elements for social and economic development.
In effect, every initiative for the conservation-restoration of cultural and environmental heritage is unlike material for a museum, but is rather similar to ‘live’ material in that it cannot disregard the pursuit of a more general territorial policy, such as a regional policy stating goals and functions of historic environment preservation within contemporary society, and to plan and manage protection which is, for all practical purposes, essentially public.

If a conservation policy of local identity - and the historical environment that characterized it - pursues its safekeeping and bequest to the future, then a regional (or urban) economic policy can include this bequest in a conception of regional development consistent with history. The image of the past can therefore become aligned with the range of thoughtful choices for the future. The problem of our time is one of reconciling ourselves with our past: to draw from the past the meaning of a positive stimulus for new action. The difficulty here is ultimately the integration of a cultural goods policy with a territorial and economic policy”.

Moreover, if we consider cultural and environmental goods as potential resources which, like others, contribute to economic planning and regional development processes, then it is not possible to entirely segregate their tools from those commonly appointed to the whole regional planning.

The unification of regional planning tools still is an unresolved subject, especially in regard to the methods and purposes of protecting, restoring, and valorizing the historic environment. Regional and urban planning processes need to be modified by introducing changes into the content of plans, and by promulgating regulations, both on a national and regional level, which are better attuned to the specific characteristics of local situations.

In the past several years, all methods of assessing the value of regional territory: its identity, its natural and human environment, its historic-cultural structures, and understanding their relationships, have changed profoundly.

Nowadays a more complex and comprehensive system is replacing the old one. The old methodology was based on comparing sub-regions with a strong propulsive capacity and socio-economic and political power, with other, economically, socially and culturally weak sub-regions. The new system attempts to integrate all segments of the region, which have the potential to transform and grow.

"The sensation that it derives from, is about a territory kept in a continuous process of transformation, reorganization, reuse in its every part, urban and not, historic or more recent". In other words, the old hierarchical system identified many regional situations both from a socio-economic and a spatial point of view. This was the key to their understanding and know-how about directing planning activities. Currently every area of a region tries to put forth its unique role in the development process and an efficient policy of regional and economic planning has to incorporate this new condition by using new tools to guarantee equilibrium and integration.

This change of approach towards regional and economic processes also requires changes in the parameters and the problems of preservation. On the one hand, since conservation is no longer limited to specific parts of a region, it has to draw from the broad spectrum of transformation processes of all aspects of the environment; these are not easily definable through the typical categories of analysis. On the other hand, the actual concept of
conservation has **changed** on the basis of the new and differing concept of cultural goods, in terms not only of **historic-artistic** value, but also as products of history, and carriers of information. "Then the problem is no longer to preserve and restore the elements where the 'artistic' value resides, but to identify-know-understand and conserve all of the information that the document, not only a producer of culture but also a place where different human activities have been made and will be performed, incorporates in its physical materiality"\(^{14}\).

The stratification of various environmental types (social, economic, building, cultural, etc.) assumes great importance in the conservation problems of the environment (buildings and otherwise), and it also contributes to the determination of the physical regional order. This concept of **historic** environment that includes the meaning of **time**, history and origin, allows the acquisition of new levels of interaction potential with the transformation, breaking the notable comparison between areas with different roles in the general territorial context\(^{15}\). This points out the need for new tools and regulations that serve an 'integrated planning', and the conviction that local identity and **historic** heritage can play a fundamental role in leading to a more diffuse economic and social development.

In connection, this paper offers systematically some reflections on the main problems, needs and potential aspects that actually characterize the **historic** environmental field and are the key to the definition and direction of all actions.

It is important to confirm that our goal here is to point out the fundamental role of cultural goods and their preservation, to concretely direct sustainable development processes, but also to contribute to the design of tools and methodologies able to understand intrinsic characters and socio-economic values of **historic** heritage (for the purpose of its activation).

Fundamental problems of the sector - with particular reference to the culturally built heritage - refer to the attributes of **historic** goods and to social perceptions:

- the great variety of cultural goods, in terms of typology, age, feasibility, aesthetic characteristics and consequently the difficulty in defining modes of intervention to achieve equilibrium, as well as in identifying the cultural and socio-economie perspectives that integrated actions can offer to the territory;
- the obsolescence situation of artifacts, in connection with various aspects\(^{16}\), such as the effective use of goods or modes of use (which are variable over time). It is practical to emphasize the obsolescence resulting from overuse, which especially is related to the problems of tourism due to **historic** heritage. Furthermore, there is functional and positional obsolescence, which stems from a decrease in demand or the complete abandonment of a given product for different logistic conditions;
- the lack of interdisciplinary knowledge of **historic** heritage and local identity, which need structured research to reveal the potential of cultural goods for sustainable socio-economic development;
- the low level of popular sensitivity to the values of **historic** environment and its character as an important economic resource for regions and human communities. This factor is linked with education in environmental protection problems - which is still neglected by public institutions - and with poor communication among experts in the field, institutions, and others, and the consequential diffidence and rejection of **historic** things\(^{17}\);
the lack of financial resources for research, and especially for conservation and valorization, which causes problems in making priority decisions;

- the strong speculative power of business interest that often sees the historic heritage as an obstacle for territorial resource exploitation, especially in regard to modes of land-use. Despite increased awareness about the conflict between historic preservation and growth, the sector requires particular operative instruments and conceptual reflections. These necessities are defined as follows:
  - greater effective integration between historic-cultural heritage and territory, so that goods are not considered merely worthy of respect but instead become more determinant resources for regional development. In this sense, it is important to pay greater attention to the range of elements comprising local identity, rather than to single monuments;
  - a strong connection between physical restoration of ancient artifacts and obsolescence causes to better understand the role of heritage in the process of regional and urban planning, and to address preservation actions;
  - the capacity to emphasize the perspectives of conservation as a means of tourism by indicating the effects and possible impacts of the recovery of local identity within regional areas and human communities;
  - the design of tools of knowledge/analysis, valuation, conservation/planning for local identity and historic environment, or the provision of integrated methodologies to respond (at various detail levels) to the demand of heritage for development.

The valorization and recovery of local identity by means of historic environment conservation could contribute to:
- understanding the value and consistency of available local resources (human, environmental, etc.) in order to clearly direct sustainable development;
- solving social tensions by attempting to integrate, protect and valorize cultural diversity;
- increasing the physical quality of places by giving greater importance to beauty for psychological well-being;
- preserving local resources, e.g. through the application of traditional technologies and improving the quality level of natural environment.

2.3. Economics of the historic environment

The need for ‘operative tools’ is apparent from the gap between theoretical convictions and concrete realization of interventions (still evident in spite of disciplinary and interdisciplinary progress). Affirming the status of conservation within the sustainable development process, the design of ‘new tools’ helps to address urgent necessities as well as interdisciplinary integration by:

1. ‘giving people a voice’; by promoting social participation in the planning process;
   conducting efficient diffusion of information and working on modes for concrete use of people’s opinions;
2. understanding the values of local identity by valorizing the resources of historic environment to the real sustainable evolution of territory and cities;
3. designing, analysing, and valuing different alternatives for ‘integrated planning’ actions to find solutions that reach a balance between conservation and transformation in the processes of sustainable development;
4. receiving and integrating points of view and opinions of various social groups and actors, which are involved in the effects and impacts of interventions;
5. adequately using the opinions of experts in relevant disciplinary fields.

These economic tools have to define the strategies for local identity conservation and restoration as actions of socio-economic development by also involving sectors of services, commerce and so on. In effect, the ancient heritage not only has inherent and historic-cultural values, but also values in other participating fields. In plans involving restoration and preservation, it is important to consider and estimate everything that may determine effects and benefits, including all cultural, environmental, social, and economic factors. In accordance with this, one needs to consider economic aspects in terms of costs and benefits. Historic heritage has aesthetic and cultural value as well as economic value, in terms of uniqueness, scarcity and irreproducibility. If this heritage is preserved, benefits can flow, thus encouraging the growth of positive externalities. If, on the contrary, intervention policies involve transformation, cultural goods can lose many of the fundamental characteristics, which have determined their value, so that intervention then becomes a producer of negative externalities. The above discussion refers to the criterion of the Social complex value, which reflects the comprehensive value of resources by extending to multiplicity and diversity.

Today the role of economic valuation is clearly defined: it is more than determining the value of outcomes; it has become a tool of ‘social and cultural planning’, with the capacity to define effects and impacts of various types. Then, this tool not only supports choosing among alternative actions (which is necessary because of limited availability of financial and human resources), but also lends support to the fields of conservation and restoration, in the choice of intervention directions and methods.

The economic approach to decide the value of historic-cultural goods and effects that can flow from local identity valorization activities, involves a series of objections, particularly disbelief among experts in the historic and planning sectors, that is possible to quantify intangible, cultural, and artistic factors.

It is equally difficult to objectively estimate the value of the historic environment either in monetary terms or in other units of measurement. We can admit that it is an ‘economic good’ of a particular kind, because it has the characteristics of usefulness, it has use-ability and has limited availability, and it provides human survival as its primary utility. There is a relation between historic goods and man, the importance of which has to be expressed by an informed and interested community, who desire cultural continuity by means of tradition. It may therefore be easier to evaluate the implications of historic environment conservation in terms of the value of opportunities that have to be renounced in order to preserve the environment itself (for example, in terms of the value to be derived from the best alternative use of the site where the cultural goods are located), or on the contrary, in terms of the willingness of people to pay in order to preserve the historic heritage.
There is a substantial difference between choosing whether conservation is achieved by simply maintaining conditions as they are, or if conservation is a means of rehabilitation or restoration. This difference is surely one of the main philosophical problems of the conservation discipline; the dissimilarities are also found in the economic sphere, both in intervention costs and benefits (especially), because they have different weights, roles, and descriptions. The appraisal methods can potentially become tools to ameliorate the difficulties of evaluating economic value and contribute to the decision processes. They must also have the capacity to analyse interventions with different characteristics and complexities, and with a variety of purposes, so as to allow for a comparison among the defined alternatives (see also Figure 4).

In conclusion, a reflection upon the character of historic preservation as a ‘productive activity’ reveals that the utility of this concept is connected to a more complete definition and determination of flowing effects. The recovery intervention - with particular reference to the built heritage - is able to promote economic advantages with respect to:

- conservation as a transformative action of components of the historic environment into new elements, which provide greater utility without losing their intrinsic and inherent characters. A ‘plus-value’ in the goods emerges, in connection with the actual necessities of public and private fruition;
- integration of historic goods in contemporary life and the processes of sustainable development. In this way, it is possible to observe the adaptation of the original functions into new ones, nearer to the social and economic request. Thus, the plus-value gains from public effects and benefits of conservation: from plus-value to social value.

3. ‘Integrated planning’: Methodologies and tools for territory analysis, planning, and evaluation

3.1. General outline.

Here we elaborate on the relationships among the fields of Historic Preservation, Regional Planning, and Economy, within the theme of local identity valorization, to indicate that the tools to design have to make reference to these fields, and represent a mode for their integration.

‘Integrated planning’, intends to define an action modality that is able to consider the multitude of territorial factors, and is the ultimate manifestation of the various interdisciplinary components.

‘Integrated planning’ answers the needs of a sustainable development program by being dedicated to local identity recovery (with its modus operandi in considering historic preservation as fundamental to social and economic growth). It is substantially the search for the maximum equilibrium for the territory and its human communities. Equilibrium is sought after the following levels:

1. spatial level, between protecting certain areas for their evident great values, and leaving other areas to uncontrolled manipulation and degradation;
2. temporal level, for a correct and articulated program with short-term and long-term objectives;
Fig. 4. The role of historic environment in local identity preservation

**Historic Environment Field, Characters and Problems**

**About attributes:**
- Great typological variety
- Overuse and functional/locational obsolescence
- Consistency of monetary needs vs limit of disposable financial resources

**About social perception:**
- Lack of interdisciplinary knowledge
- Lack of popular sensitivity and low level of understanding between experts and public
- Speculation

**Potential**
- Conservation as a complex process can help to understand local (human and natural) resources, to direct with efficacy towards sustainable development of regional and sub-regional areas
- Conservation can help resolve social tensions by valuing diversity and pursuing integration
- Conservation can help build beautiful places in which to live (the importance of ‘beauty’ in the quality of life)
- Conservation can urge resource savings and improvement of environment quality by recovering traditional technologies

**Needs**
- Greater integration between cultural goods and territory by connecting actual life (and activities) to the past (the past as a resource) in the vision of ‘local identity’
- To see besides the perspective of restoration for especially tourism
- To better understand the cause of obsolescence, to address with the efficacy the conservation actions
- Define operative tools for territorial analysis, valuation, and conservation/planning

**To reach operative tools.**

The design of new tools within the process of territorial planning, for valuing local identity in regional areas —according to interdisciplinary integration— has to attend to the following:
- Support social participation by making adequate information available
- Understand local identity and historic environment values
- Analyse and assess project alternatives to ‘integrated planning’ and sustainable development
- Integrate the points of view of different actors
- Utilize in the best way the opinions of experts in various fields
3. **Environmental level**, between resource utilization for necessities of life and the **needs** to restrain exploitation to the point of irreparable **loss**; but **also** equilibrium between a **conservative** approach to territory and urban **areas** and the transformative approach.

4. **Economic level**, between the **fundamental** aspects of private and social costs and benefits, which **can** flow from conservation actions in regional **areas**; but **also**, equilibrium in the externalties between the various social groups;

5. **Technological level**, between the **needs** of the continuous **and** often irresponsible **socio-economic** development during the actual period, and the **collective will** to review and substitute the existent **technologies** if necessary.

The clear integration between planner, preservationist, and **economist** expresses itself in the necessity to **find** common tools for sustainable development, and equilibrium in the **main** aspects of private and social costs and **effects**. This **makes** evident the **importance** of particular techniques of valuation, which are able to consider the varieties of costs and **effects** for conservation and new utilization of cultural goods.

3.2. **Role of economic valuation for regional planning and local identity conservation.**

The need for tools that **can** help direct conservation and activation interventions, to **identify** priorities, and to **define** the **effects** on the region for these types of operations, is evident.

In view of this, the **process** of valuation assumes particular **importance**; it is fundamental at different levels: from decision **making**, to planning, to implementation, to **managing**.

However, it is important to specify that the **fields** of urban and regional planning and environmental economics **already** have developed appraisal methods, techniques and applications, which have become regulations in some countries. In the field of **historic-cultural heritage**, however, research is at an early stage, although a few isolated studies have been **carried out**. Analyses of interventions on restoration and reuse are associated with **proposals** of cultural goods valuation, but **much** needs to be done in researching and systematizing of results, and in establishing methodological definitions.

Finally, it **needs** to be stressed that the **main** problem in the evaluation of **historic heritage preservation projects**, which involve **effects** and benefits, has to be quantified in monetary terms. It is towards this topic, in particular, that research efforts are **directed**. This research distinguishes the various types of **values/effects** of conservation, the best existing valuation techniques for the measurement of **benefits**, and determines the **effects** that are **often** considered ‘immeasurable’, especially for the type of goods they are derived from.

On the basis of theoretical and practical studies and reference to the fundamental **needs** of the field, we **can** now define the **main** goals of using valuation systems for local identity preservation and **valorization**.

- Valuation regards the **historic environment** as an ‘unrenewable’ resource. It measures the level at which this resource **can** be used.
- Valuation **can** then attain a ‘decisional’ role related to the character and quality of the **historic environment** by choosing and **defining** the object, purposes, priorities, and solutions of alternative hypotheses.
It enables the definition and quantification of costs, values, and effects of activities on the historic environment, with regard to conservation, restoration, and transformation.\textsuperscript{21} In the context of an overall project analysis, valuation systems help "to redress the balance between quantifiable and non-quantifiable effects"; they can also narrow "the field remaining for 'pure' judgement"\textsuperscript{22} with reference to certain benefits.

It helps define the role of the 'decision' about local identity conservation, within the more general economic system (valuation systems can offer directions of economic performance).

With valuation, government policies can create greater power to direct historic heritage use by more efficacy. This provides the means of fixing the quantification of taxes, charges, and subsidies for interventions in the historic environment.

Finally, it enhances the role of 'conservation' in the process of regional planning.

There are critics of appraisal projects with the more developed field of public goods and environmental valuation. By transposing this criticism to the field of local identity and historic heritage preservation, it is possible to identify a few objections in regard to the use of valuation techniques for costs and benefits in cultural goods preservation. They are:

- In countries where historic-cultural heritage is important and has a significant presence, there is always strong resistance (especially from experts in the specific historic and preservative disciplines) against using economic tools to make decisions about interventions to protect and perpetuate cultural goods. The task is very important in specific regional situations to integrate economic valuation in choices for historic environment preservation with inputs from scientific disciplines.

- The experience in many western countries reveals that economic appraisal is often used incorrectly to justify public projects. Manipulation of the valuation methods is always possible, but this does not reduce the utility and technical value of tools, such as 'decision' criteria if their use is correct and honest.

- In the field of the historic-cultural heritage, and in the natural environment one, there are several essentially unquantifiable aspects; any attempt to attach a monetary value on these aspects is evidently strange to many. However, one can argue that most of these factors are only apparently non-quantifiable, as various valuation efforts have demonstrated. Contemporary literature in this field shows that the valuation techniques have incorporated interesting methodologies for the study and analysis of intangible effects in historic heritage preservation\textsuperscript{24}.

- In the sector of local identity conservation, valuation is in its early stages. The techniques have their origin in applications for public goods or environmental economics. Although there are remarkable analogies between these sectors and the historic-cultural sector, the transfer of valuation methods surely cannot be automatic. Methodological and technical efforts to attain this transfer are required.

- The current techniques were defined in developed countries; one objection to this lies in the difficulty of adapting these methods to less developed societies, including developing countries and backward territorial areas within developed countries.
In order for valuation to render satisfactory results, technical and economic data are required. This is very difficult to obtain in developing as well as developed countries, especially for certain sectors. This largely is due to the complexity and variety of their components and the lack of knowledge. This is especially true in the historic environment sector.

3.3. Objectives, indicators, strategies. A proposal for an operative methodological framework

For the purpose of this paper, we propose a methodological framework taken from the historic environment and applied to ecological development processes. The general structure – which shows relations and connections – is illustrated in Figure 5.

First, there is the definition of local identity and the historic environment components, where there are several classifications in the disciplinary field, which substantially refer to two factors:

- the nature of cultural goods: tangible and intangible
- the typology (archaeology, architecture, demo-ethno-anthropology, etc.)

Our methodological proposal is a functional approach to the design of actions for local identity valorization, and is based on three fundamental categories: artifacts, socio-cultural components, and the natural and anthropologic environment. The values of historic heritage are considered on the basis of present situations (emerging actual use value). Effects and impacts flowing from conservation are indicated for actions on single goods (emerging existence values) and within the territorial context (global actions, regional plans, total economic values to be considered).

Certain factors lead us to a more unified theory of integrated conservation: social perception of the main problems of the historic-cultural heritage; the role of goods in different parts of the territory; the goals of preservation actions, in conjunction with the necessity to pursue the ‘equilibrium’ in the development process.

As a fundamental step towards sustainable development, conservation must have precise goals, indicators, modes, and strategies. The goals reflect the willingness to preserve and improve: to preserve from the main causes of obsolescence (which is not only physical); to improve towards greater environmental quality, cultural evolution, and overall economic growth. The indicators and modalities refer to the environmental, cultural, social, and economical spheres. For each sphere we indicate only the main elements representing the urgency for a better future, which are impossible to ignore in the planning process. The strategies consist of three main approaches: restoration of the historic heritage to hand down to future generations; preservation of cultural goods and related recreational services improvement to enjoy people from outside the area; integrated conservation for a global economic growth of regional areas. In this last mentioned case, the concerns are about:

- greater preservation, the pursuit of sustainable development through land use savings, and environment quality improvement;
- greater transformation, the pursuit of sustainable development by using local resources.

The proposed methodology also considers input from other fields, in the form of concrete integrated actions:

- Tourism services, for the recreational use of monuments;
Fig. 5. Recovery of local identity in the sustainable development process. Towards a methodological framework of analysis and evaluation

**Local Identity and historic environment**

**Components**
- Artifacts (real estate): Settlement, complex, unit.
- Artifacts (movables): 'high' at 'popular' at.
- Social/cultural aspects: Use, traditions, activities, technologies; contextual areas and elements of biological or morphological interest; Anthropized environment: Rural settlements, agricultural use.

**Fundamental factors:**
- Social perception;
- Characters of different parts of the territory;
- Goal of actions to equilibrium in the development process.

**Objectives**
- To preserve
  - Physical, functional, locational, environmental, economic
  - For beautiful places to live;
  - For social and economic development;
  - To increase cultural level of people.
- To improve

**Indicators and modalities**
- Environmental:
  - Preserve unsurpassed human environment;
  - Land use;
  - Local resources savings;
  - Quality improvement.
- Cultural:
  - Recovery of local identity;
  - Recovery of old technologies;
  - Development of local culture;
  - Protection of cultural diversities.
- Social:
  - Understanding, solving social tensions;
  - Improved levels of social relationships;
  - Protecting minorities;
  - Improvement of education.
- Economic:
  - Level of unemployment;
  - Level changing in production;
  - Efforts in technological development;
  - Infrastructures, public services quality.

**Values in the present situation**

**Effects from restoration actions on single artifacts**

**Effects from global actions on territory (regional plans)**

**Values/effects:**
- Direct, Indirect, Potential use;
- Existence value;
- Social, Psychological, Environmental, on local economy effects.

**Impacts:**
- About physical nature;
- On social community;

**Integrated conservation**

**Related actions (in other fields)**

**Impulses on regional planning**

**Strategies**
- Philological restoration of cultural goods;
- Preservation of historic heritage, recreational services, infrastructures;
- Integrated conservation (use of heritage to the social and economic development of the local area): by more preservation, by more transformation.

**Sustainable development**

1. Expert opinion;
2. Public desire.

**Valuation:**
- Methodologies
- Techniques.
• **Nature** preservation, by considering the modalities of land use in connection with a minimization of new buildings;
• Transport, about **aspects such as old cities and the needs of moving inside**;
• **Agriculture**, to rehabilitate traditional modes of production;
• Industry, to develop the technological research towards less environmental damages.  
The role of *valuation* is underlined to assess strategies and actions, but **also to address** them by considering expert as well as public opinion.
References


Ministero per i Beni Culturali e Ambientali (1987). Memorabilia: il futuro della memoria (Beni ambientali, architettonici, archeologici, artistici e storici in Italia), Laterza, Bari.


historical-cultural components, by considering their potential within the actual processes of socio-economic development of regional areas.


For theories and processes of sustainable development, see Giaoutzi and Nijkamp, 1993; Mitlin and Satterthwaite, 1996; Pugh, 1996; and Nas and Veenma, 1998.

For a general outline, in consideration of different disciplinary approaches, see Emiliani, 1974; Padovani, 1987; and Winpenny; 1991.

A useful reference (given the necessary adaptations to our specific field) about why valuation and the importance of appraisal for the environment matters, are Kneese, 1985; Winpenny, 1991; Bingham et al., 1995; and Bockstael et al., 1995.

To document both the physical planning approach and the socio-economic one with the attention to environment protection see recent studies: Jacobs, 1993; Daclon, 1995; Larkham, 1996; O’Riordan and Voisey, 1997; Fusco-Girard and Nijkamp, 1997; Cicerchia 1998; Nijkamp, Bal, and Medda, 1998; and Gerlagh, 1999.

1 See McNeely and Keeton, 1995. Other recent contributions about local and cultural identity are: Lucas, 1992; Hall and du Gay, 1996; Beall, 1997; and Wilson and Donnan, 1998. See figure 1 which tries to illustrate the steps towards the actual concept of local identity and the role of the various components, by considering their potential within the actual processes of socio-economic development of regional areas.

2 To document both the physical planning approach and the socio-economic one with the attention to environment protection see recent studies: Jacobs, 1993; Daclon, 1995; Larkham, 1996; O’Riordan and Voisey, 1997; Fusco-Girard and Nijkamp, 1997; Cicerchia 1998; Nijkamp, Bal, and Medda, 1998; and Gerlagh, 1999.


4 Compare Trevisiol, 1995. For theories and processes of sustainable development, see Giaoutzi and Nijkamp, 1993; Mitlin and Satterthwaite, 1996; Pugh, 1996; and Nas and Veenma, 1998.

5 Figure 2 is rivisted from Mignolli, 1995.2.


7 This is true for European countries and for the USA, where studies and activities for historic preservation in regional planning are continuously growing. See Birch and Douglass (1984).

8 This is true for European countries and for the USA, where studies and activities for historic preservation in regional planning are continuously growing. See Birch and Douglass (1984).


10 This is a very contemporary subject, particularly in Europe. where studies are in progress. It is important to note the remarkable interdisciplinarity of this field, where various perspectives combine with interesting results; see many contributions in Lee, 1992.

11 Many complete references apply to the Italian situation, where the studies in this field have no counterpart in practical applications. Compare Emiliani, 1974; Calvani, 1987; and Negri-Arnoldi, 1988.

12 It is important to note a time lag in incorporating planning tools as well as environmental planning in the definition of economic and territorial models. See Fusco Girard, 1987; Nijkamp, 1989; OECD, 1997; and O’Riordan and Voisey, 1997.

13 Padovani, 1987. Many references on this matter are in several works of various authors, in Ministero per i Beni Culturali ed Ambientali, 1987.


15 For a general outline, in consideration of different disciplinary approaches, see Emiliani, 1974; Padovani, 1987; Lichfield, 1988; Nijkamp, 1989; and Winpenny; 1991.

16 This refers to two aspects: the modality of the scientific world, which is intent on knowledge production to use exclusively in its own sphere (therefore having few possibilities to impact on territory and social communities); and the action modalities of institutions (in some countries of the western world), which pay more attention to repressing action than to prevent damage and risk to the historic environment.

17 It is important to mention here the double nature of costs and benefits, the social and the private; from the comparison between these two typologies, there flow many problems and obstacles for the conservation process, so the search for equilibrium is one of the main goals in the determination of intervention ways.


19 A useful reference (given the necessary adaptations to our specific field) about why valuation and the importance of appraisal for the environment matters, are Kneese, 1985; Winpenny, 1991; Bingham et al., 1995; and Bockstael et al., 1995.

20 One could also discuss problems and characteristics of historic-cultural heritage actions, but this exceeds the scope of this paper. However, it is important to say that if the historic environment contains the stratification of all events (of which each has ‘transformed’ the previous situation) overtime, it is right that the current age also leaves its distinguishing mark (in this sense the “transformation”), provided that it respects for existing realities and values of the environment.


22 Winpenny, 1999.1.

24 The approach of historic preservation is different if cultural goods are in central areas or in peripheral areas. In periphery they can assume a key role for improvement processes of life quality, for depressed places in the western world.