Preface

The Representation of *Memoria Artificiosa*: a Criterion for Reconstruction

During the preparation of the international meeting **Heritage, Place, Design: Putting Tradition into Practice**, developed by INTBAU, a charity which works under the patronage of its founder HRH the Prince of Wales, there have been events of great clamour that have had a significant impact on public opinion: the destruction of the triumphal arch of Palmira (5 October 2015), construction of which dates back to Roman times about 2,000 years ago; and the seismic events in Italy that catastrophically affected many communities in Abruzzo, Lazio, Marche and Umbria (24 August 2016—January 2017).

These two man-made and natural events, which have been widely reported in international news and which remain topical today, have "marked" the cultural battle relevant to the technical and scientific initiatives presented in this volume. The recent visit of HRH The Prince of Wales to Amatrice, a place symbolising the devastation caused by earthquakes, and HRH's engagement with an INTBAU Italy-assembled group during an event at the British School in Rome, are giving recognition that will ultimately help efforts to overcome the emergency phase of reconstruction.

If buildings and cities provide a portrait of the human condition, scholars and citizens, according to their skills and expectations, have to invest resources so that this heritage can remain alive not only for daily life, but also in memory, in rituals and in oral traditions.

Cultural heritage in general consists of the products and processes of a culture that are preserved and passed on through the generations. International organisations such as UNESCO call us to safeguard all our heritage and living traditions, even those that do not express themselves tangibly through artefacts or buildings, but which are instead performed in gestures, image formation and social perceptions. There are also other processes taking place that, according to the principle of drowsiness, slowly but progressively settle down and are embedded into social

structures where people live together, and which affect the behaviours of individuals and communities: new technologies, lack of heritage skills, material consumption of resources, segregation and gentrification.

The consequences of planning for the last 70 years are obvious and have been scientifically described. Urban projects have often lost any reference to human scale, and machines have dominated the city and the intelligent skills of craftspeople. Social models have declined through the relentless pursuit to "live for the present", and have increased the shift away from knowledge, design cultures and artistic and craft skills as if the creation of a place, a space or a building can be an arbitrary act and independent of any cultural intent.

According to the 2003 *Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage*, intangible cultural heritage (ICH)—or living heritage—is the mainspring of humanity's cultural diversity and its maintenance is a guarantee for continuing creativity. It is defined as follows:

Intangible Cultural Heritage means the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage. This intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity [1].

A few months after the seismic events in Italy, the INTBAU network urges an adequate response to the demands of the people: "to interpret and represent a collective need, to transform memories, testimonies and signs into knowledge". Recalling past catastrophes, experts have noted that it is necessary to "have access to all the available knowledge, which will in turn generate new knowledge, which ultimately results in increased competence, professionalism and awareness on seismic risk reduction" [2].

The built environment is a real and shared symbol of belonging. It becomes evident when, after catastrophic events, the contours and profiles of landmark buildings such as bell towers are lost, some part of shared identity is also lost. In the Italian context, the bell tower is the simulacrum of our sense of belonging, and is also associated with the term *campanilismo*, *parochialism* in English, *esprit de clocher* in French, and in Spanish with the idiomatic expression *politica de campanario*.

It is therefore necessary to provide opportunities to share examples that can be proposed for restoring and reconstructing the physical and, through it, the human condition, investigating the representation and enhancement of cultural heritage and historical urban landscapes, as defined by UNESCO, as well as place-making methodologies and strategic design that support the traditions of inherent to a place [3].

Umberto Eco reminds us that memory is "a faculty by which both individuals and communities base their identity (amnesiac no longer knows who he is)". Nowadays, technological systems are replacing the part of our mind that needs to practice and process memories through material expressions, rituals and symbolic

recognition. This is the season to get out of amnesia, which in medical literature is described as a disturbance of long-term memory, linked to the inability to remember events.

Johannes Spangerberg in his *Libellus Artificiosae Memoriae*, among the causes that lead to forgetfulness, indicated the corruption or diminution of faculties through old age and illnesses. Techniques for memorisation cannot counteract this decline, but could offer practical expedients to prevent or reduce corruption, or so-called forgetfulness of past species [4].

The art of memory is a practice that, following a precise system of rules, is aimed at the preservation and the fruition of information for the benefit of civilisation and citizens. This practice seems to be no longer useful whereas in the past there was nothing to rely on but an ability to store a huge amount of data (names, concepts and arguments) and consequently to develop memory techniques. Latin sources, including the *De oratore* by Cicerone and the anonymous *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, report that memory was one of the five parts in which rhetoric was divided—formed as a whole by *inventio, dispositio, elocutio, memoria and pronuntiatio*—and allowed the orator to remember his own speech by associating the various parts with a series of "places" and "images" imprinted in the mind. Frances Yates writes that the solution to remembering was to organise memory spatially: a large house or city divided into a series of architectural environments—palaces, rooms, gardens and vestibules—where to place, with imagination, what had to be recalled. The exercise consisted in retracing such rooms mentally and then finding what needed to be recalled in the different places where memory had been subdivided. This practice allowed to call a *locus* and to associate and place *imagines*, easy-to-remember pictures that had to address the memory of "things" (*res*) and "words" (*verba*).

The unknown extensor of *Rhetorica ad Herennium* took care of distinguishing between two kinds of memory, a natural one, to be considered as an innate faculty and an artificial one, to be strengthened and consolidated through education. Images allowed us to remember arguments and concepts, the real subject of the discourse, while *imagines verborum* were used to remember every single word: that is the language with which to communicate the subject. These were both a kind of artificial memory, or *memoria artificiosa*: *memoria rerum* and *memoria verborum*. A rule, often used to support speech, was to leave an imprint in the mind through an image of extraordinary beauty or ugliness (*imagines agentes*), a way to cause indelible emotion in memory [5].

The diffusion of the printed book subsequently enabled more effective storage and preservation of knowledge, while between the Renaissance and Baroque periods, the art of memory became representations of universal knowledge, virtual *encyclopedias* or "theatres of the world". The contribution of Giordano Bruno, who in the *Ars reminiscendi* re-proposed the "rules" of memory, greatly expanded the number of usable *loci*, suggesting 30 systems for the formation of *imagines*. These episodes bring the art of memory into a role of world vision tool, no longer as a simple practical tool but also as *imago mundi*.

These concepts make evident the importance of knowledge, its interiorisation and the forms in which it is represented. His teaching makes it necessary to propose practices that may preserve the memory of places, their tangible and intangible characters, from oblivion. By overcoming technicalities, it is possible to re-establish a cultural role in the formation of *imagines* through multidisciplinary approaches that support a deep knowledge and the regeneration of places and their economies [6].

Organization of the Book

The 2017 INTBAU Annual Event represents a valuable exchange and updating of research and best practices for place-making, cultural landscape preservation and community development. *Politecnico di Milano* and the *Soprintendenza Archeologia, Belle Arti e Paesaggio per la città metropolitana di Milano* are partnering this initiative through a technical, scientific and cultural framework that has allowed a remarkable cultural impact as evidenced by the approximately 200 papers sent to the Scientific Committee, of which 165 have been revised and admitted to the conference.

With contributions from leading experts, including university researchers, professionals and policy-makers, the INTBAU network ensures the transmission and dissemination of universal principles and contemporary applications to address the challenges for the protection and enhancement of the built heritage, an "act of civilization" in response to the gestures that daily show the limits of humanity. The INTBAU conference aims to foster an international exchange of research, case studies and best practices.

The *Unione Italiana del Disegno*, the leading Italian scientific society of drawing, has made a very notable contribution with about half of the scientific papers relating to research on the documentation of heritage and places and the representation of intangible heritage and cultural landscapes whose maintenance today is the most important challenge. Critical to the presentation of case studies and current practice will be the use of drawing as a tool for investigation, design and to promote research on new core knowledge in the field, and on applications of this knowledge that are contributing to our understanding of the evolution of traditional and historical knowledge.

The *Agenzia Italiana per la Cooperazione allo Sviluppo*, the principal governmental partner, goes beyond the conventional value of patronage and brings extraordinary support by increasing the social and international impact of the event.

The writings of Vito Cardone, Antonella Ranaldi, Robert Adam and Harriet Wennberg guide the debate on the sense of knowledge of heritage through research and professional work: a heritage that must be indissolubly linked to the practice of tradition and the creation of places. The concept of heritage cannot remain just an anomaly in the passive exercise of remembering, since an integral part of the cultural identity of any society is the places in which it resides.

INTBAU's recent World Congress focused on the impacts of rapid urbanisation, urging timely action to ensure that the cities of tomorrow, which are likely to be bigger and more global, are better places for everyone to live, which also retain their own distinct identities.

The introductory section of the volume provides the general guidelines for how global intelligence can support local development, putting tradition into practice.

In this early part, there are contributions by Rossella Salerno, which focus on the new potential of digitisation in regenerating cultural heritage in a European perspective; by Michael W. Mehaffy, on the New Urban Agenda at a time dominated by new knowledge; by Alireza Sagharchi, on how to imbue architectural practice with tradition; and by Gabriele Tagliaventi, on the importance of places and reconstruction in the "organic" form, as evidenced by numerous examples and historical cycles.

Contributions, which have been selected through peer review, are organised into 10 parts with reference to the various themes and diverse focus areas: reconstruction, knowledge through design, site identity and design tools, New Urban Agenda and international cooperation.

The first application therefore concerns (re)building for the future and how to reconstruct after a disaster. This part presents examples of best practice for the reconstruction of settlements affected by disasters, focusing on recent earthquakes in Italy. How can an area's built heritage support regeneration and reconstruction efforts? How can buildings be made safer and more resilient? How can communities be involved in rebuilding? And, how can the process of reconstruction protect local identity?

The conference addresses the role of education and learning and how to develop our heritage and knowledge of the complexity of places by using tools and techniques for representation, documentation and communication. The third focus is on the application of the most appropriate design tools to respect and develop local identity, to take advantage of the cultural context that the territorial system expresses, and to suggest how place identity can inform new design that will build community.

Professional practice in different landscape contexts presents the material representation of regional cultures and traditions that have developed in relation to geographical and climatic conditions and the availability of local resources.

The concluding part offers further reflections on the renewal of knowledge, while the final focus contributes to a cultural policy for the implementation of the "New Urban Agenda" and how to build collaborative schemes to address global challenges. This section examines international cooperation projects for sustainable urban development as well as systems, services for place-making and social inclusion strategies. One case study is the plan for refugee processing centres in European countries by Richard Economakis and another, presented by Anna Mazzolini, examines the relationships between the new socio-economic class and the informal sector as well as inspecting what impact the urban needs of expanding middle classes in Africa could have on informal settlements [7].

The scientific result of the conference on the one hand shares established practices and on the other hand opens up to new challenges and the creation of a large international network. These are the images of architectures and the people living in it, the images of environments and products that transform architecture into something of collective value. Recent traumatic global phenomena, natural and environmental emergencies and the consideration that some geographic areas, such as Italy, are geologically fragile have interrupted a natural evolution of centres and sites that appeared to be indestructible. The earthquake represents an end point for the homogeneous and constant "evolution" of these centres: older structures are weakened through a lack of maintenance, and some new structures are weakly constructed, resulting in an area that is extremely vulnerable to seismic activity [8].

It was (re-)discovered that such "crib-towns" were first overwhelmed, then they became places of second homes or simply "internal areas", i.e. non-recipients of investments by the institutions.

The maintenance of memory and cultural identity must therefore be sustained in an organic, conscious, economically articulated way that is respectful of traditions.

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INTBAU Charter

The International Network for Traditional Building, Architecture & Urbanism is an active network of individuals and institutions dedicated to the creation of humane and harmonious buildings and places which respect local traditions. Traditions allow us to recognise the lessons of history, enrich our lives and offer our inheritance to the future. Local, regional and national traditions provide the opportunity for communities to retain their individuality with the advance of globalisation. Through tradition we can preserve our sense of identity and counteract social alienation. People must have the freedom to maintain their traditions. Traditional buildings and places maintain a balance with nature and society that has been developed over many generations. They enhance our quality of life and are a proper reflection of modern society. Traditional buildings and places can offer a profound modernity beyond novelty and look forward to a better future. INTBAU brings together those who design, make, maintain, study or enjoy traditional building, architecture and places. We will gain strength, significance and scholarship by association, action and the dissemination of our principles.

Agreed by the INTBAU Steering Committee October 2001

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