

ICOMOS THEOPHILOS ISC CONFERENCE



“AUTHENTICITY FROM A EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVE: 30 YEARS OF THE NARA DOCUMENT ON AUTHENTICITY”

MULTI-PURPOSE CULTURAL VENUE “ISLAHANE”, THESSALONIKI
NOVEMBER 28 - 29, 2024

CONFERENCE ABSTRACTS

Thursday, 28 November 2024 [Day 1]

10.30-11.30: Session I

Dimitrios Zygomalas / Greece

Employee of the Hellenic Ministry of Culture since 2007; Deputy Director and Head of Department in the Service of Modern Monuments and Technical Works of Central Macedonia since 2018.

Authenticity: A Very Greek Word in a Complex European Setting

Background: A focal point in modern conservation terminology, authenticity comes from the ancient Greek word *authentikós*. Initially linked to a person of authority, the latter had a spectacular development in later years, culminating with its association with the qualities of genuine and valid in modern times. Based on these, it entered the conservation agenda, through the Venice Charter, in 1964, received added attention, through the Nara Document, in 1994, and since then, has generated multiple debates among conservation specialists, the present conference being their latest forum. Yet while a wide consensus on a definition and method of assessment of authenticity pends, other key players in the European setting, namely national authorities, public groupings, and individual owners endorse, and in many cases, assume action in an opposite direction, which contradicts the priorities set by the conservation community. Considering the practical impact of these attitudes, the overall issue needs to be urgently addressed.

Objectives: The proposed paper aims to conduct the required discussion, and in its wake, produce proposals for the necessary reconciliation.

Scope and method: To achieve this goal, the paper will initially address the development of the term “authenticity”, from ancient to modern times, and its current standing in the conservation agenda. From there on, it will examine and evaluate the contradicting mentalities and actions of the aforementioned players, with reference to characteristic examples throughout Europe. The material for this task will be provided through extensive bibliographic and archival research.

Main findings and implications: The proposed review and analysis will provide a clear picture of a vital issue for the eventual validity of authenticity as a principal parameter in conservation in Europe, complemented with suggestions for necessary future action.

Shirley Cefai / Malta

Senior Lecturer, Department of Conservation and Built Heritage, Faculty for the Built Environment, University of Malta. PhD from the University of York and succeeded in obtaining a PhD in conservation (2013).

Memory, Material and Materiality

Decisions taken in conservation projects are guided by conservation theory, ethics, and international guidelines. The main aim in any intervention is to transmit cultural heritage to future generations. This is done so as to protect society’s cultural identity as well as their memory of their past and present. However, the question is, how can the past be transmitted to the future authentically. In the Japanese language, the translation for the word authenticity does not exist and the closest meaning of the word is truthfulness. To be truthful to the past we need to make sure to convey the key layers of history that help understand the development of that heritage. This can be achieved by attributing values to the various characteristics and layers of the heritage in question,

and any decision taken will be based on the prioritization of these values. Another important aspect is that memory is kept alive for current society and future generations.

The material used in a conservation intervention, and its characteristics will impact its perception; how the memory of the heritage is protected and conveyed to the future. The UNESCO Operational Guidelines, 2023 allocate a number of attributes that recognize the cultural heritage as authentic, namely: “form and design; materials and substance; use and function; traditions, techniques and management systems; location and setting; language, and other forms of intangible heritage; spirit and feeling; and other internal and external factors.” (UNESCO, 2023) The argument of this article is focused on emphasizing the importance of the materiality of the material used in a conservation intervention. The material will influence the way individuals will interact with the cultural heritage and hence will impact positively or negatively on the memory of the individuals.

Adrian Crăciunescu / Romania

Architect. Chairman of the Commission for Solving the Contestations in the field of Historic Monuments. Former General Director for Cultural Heritage in the Romanian Ministry of Culture, former member of the Romanian National Commission for Historic Monuments.

Authenticity Between Pure Theory and Practical Application

The theory on authenticity can generate disputes depending to the geographical and cultural space of those who define this concept. It seems, however, that this ideological dispute tends to remain an abstraction ignoring some pragmatic elements placed at the root of the cultural misunderstandings mentioned.

First - linguistic component, in the context of the present prevalence of the English language over the French language (in which Venice Charter was conceived). A significant difference appears between the nuances of the word “Reconstruction” depending on the language that uses it, even if it seems to have the same meaning, using the same spelling.

Second - the analysis criteria applied to the cultural models of today and not to those that were valid at the time when the heritage elements evaluated were conceived. In a correct system of reference, only the social and moral rules of that historical moment can apply to it, and not that of contemporary society.

Third - distinct character of the built heritage compared to the mobile or immaterial one. Alois Riegl spotted it over a century ago – the character given by the use-value. A painting has a treasure value directly reflected by its authenticity, as proof of the unquestionable connection between the material object and its author. A construction has the value mainly determined by its use capacity, likely to return the construction and maintenance costs. Therefore, the permanent economic need for its transformation during decades of existence is a given. So, the abstract theory of authenticity applicable to cultural heritage has different consequences depending on the nature of it. Why else would we consider that falsifying a painting can lead to a criminal conviction of the forger while no architect was ever been convicted for falsifying the built heritage through its reconstruction?

In this context, we could be more on the same page if we would use more the word “genuine” and less the “authentic” one.

12.15-13.45: Session II

Claudine Houbart / Belgium

Architect and art historian. Professor in the Faculty of Architecture at the University of Liège where she runs the DIVA laboratory (Documentation, Interpretation, Valorization of heritage). Her research focuses on heritage theories and practices, mainly in the second half of the twentieth century.

European vs non-European Visions of Authenticity: Myth or Reality?

The drafting of the Nara Document on Authenticity thirty years ago marked a pivotal moment in acknowledging and formalizing the cultural diversity of interpretations surrounding the concept of authenticity—a term that had seemed self-evident to the European authors of the 1964 Venice Charter. By emphasizing the credibility of information sources, the Nara Document facilitated a shift away from the presumed dichotomy between a dominant European perspective, focused on materiality, and other global perspectives prioritizing the continuity of traditions, processes, and practices. But did such a binary opposition truly exist?

An analysis of the various contributions presented at the Nara conference in November 1994, along with those from the preparatory workshop in Bergen nine months earlier, reveals a more complex and nuanced landscape.

With fewer than 50 participants, these events offered a diversity of views on authenticity that cannot be reduced to simple polarities—a variety reflected in the openness of the final document.

Moreover, an examination of the archives documenting the drafting process unveils significant challenges in producing parallel French and English versions of the text, entrusted to Raymond Lemaire and Herb Stovel, respectively. Here, differing worldviews—divided by geography and generational perspectives—came into conflict, preventing consensus.

By revisiting these sources, this contribution seeks to challenge preconceived notions about this important chapter in heritage history, which, according to event coordinator K.E. Larsen, was marked by the emergence of a postmodern perspective characterized by the recognition of cultural relativism.

Jelka Pirkovič / Slovenia

Jelka Pirkovič, PhD, Assistant Professor at the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Heritage of Slovenia and the Ministry of Culture of Slovenia. She was involved in drafting the Faro Framework Convention and the European Cultural Heritage Strategy for the 21st Century.

Heritage Authenticity as a Source of Personal and Collective Identity

The pursuit of authenticity has been driving heritage discourse for years, stemming from the early efforts of heritage theory. My contribution provides a comprehensive view of heritage authenticity from an existentialist standpoint. I draw upon Martin Heidegger's *Dwelling, Building and Thinking*, which offers contrasting perspectives on human existence within time and place: caring and cultivating versus creating and destroying. From this contrast, it becomes evident that both tangible and intangible heritages embody authenticity when they reinforce caring and cultivating shared values. With this, authentic caring allows heritage to endure and contributes to constructive development and adaptive changes while respecting the spirit of place.

Viewing heritage authenticity through psychological and philosophical lenses emphasises its significance in personal and collective identity formation. Understanding “the other” is essential in shaping our identities. This paradox is also evident in heritage and can be addressed by fostering a more inclusive approach that embraces and integrates the heritage of others. Such an approach challenges the conventional understanding of the interplay between heritage authenticity and identity. Heritage should empower individuals and communities to understand their purpose by recognising in heritage where they come from, who they are, and what they stand for.

My presentation elucidates authenticity and identity as a relationship between heritage values, memories, and knowledge. Through this relationship, a society becomes visible to itself and others. Building on Alessandro Ferrara's *Reflective Authenticity*, the authentic identity expressed in heritage provides valuable insights into a society's coherence, vitality, depth, and maturity.

Therefore, I advocate for an integrated approach to authenticity and identity that respects expert knowledge and community participation in heritage evaluation, interpretation, and meaning-giving. This approach has the capacity to enhance heritage authenticity, which, in turn, contributes to communities' well-being and enriches individuals' sense of belonging.

Harald Keijer / Sweden

Council Architect for a Swedish city listed as a World Heritage Site, tackling architectural conservation issues on a broader scale on a daily basis.

Problems of Authenticity

The significance of authenticity in conservation theory is immense and cannot be overstated. Yet, its practical application to the fabric of monuments and sites can be problematic, occasionally leading to adverse effects on their cultural value.

I wish to highlight two critical points:

The Venice Charter states: “The process of restoration ... must stop at the point where conjecture begins, and in this case moreover any extra work which is indispensable must be distinct from the architectural composition and must bear a contemporary stamp.”

A primary critique arises: How do we define contemporary architecture? It evolves over time and might even align with the style of the object at hand, making it challenging to differentiate new work. The statement was made in the pinnacle of modernism and is perhaps no longer valid.

A second, more intricate critique stems from another Charter quote: "The valid contributions of all periods to the building of a monument must be respected, ...".

Over time, respecting every alteration and historical layer equally becomes problematic, potentially diminishing the monument's overall value. The cultural significance of the site should be perceived holistically, not merely as a sum of historical strata.

What is essential here is the narrative of the monument or site. The question of identity and which story a monument is representing. It cannot represent all at once.

Understanding the use of authenticity as a method is easier when dealing with an unaltered object not repurposed for new functions. However, even then, new nearby developments could compromise the site's character. The concern manifests at all scales, from small interior elements to entire buildings and even urban areas.

My question is: Isn't it justifiable to adapt new architecture to the existing one, to strengthen the character of the cultural heritage rather than diminish it?

Li Xie / China

Senior Specialist of World Heritage and Scientific Programs, and Associate Researcher at ICOMOS CHINA, where she is also Deputy Director of the Secretariat. MA in World Heritage Studies from BTU Cottbus, Germany. Since 2007 she has provided technical support for China National Administration of Cultural Heritage.

From Venice to Nara and Beyond: The Integrity of Authenticity in Cultural Heritage Conservation

Authenticity and integrity are central to assessing the OUV of World Heritage sites and for cultural heritage conservation in general. However, they have often been viewed as independent of each other. The paper first explores the evolution of the two concepts in the world heritage system, and arguing that they are not merely complementary but deeply interrelated.

The Venice Charter (1964) emphasized material authenticity in physical structures. And the Nara Document (1994) expanded the concept to encompass the broader historical, cultural and social contexts, moving towards a more integral understanding. Initially, "integrity" in World Heritage system applied only to natural properties, referring to the wholeness of an ecosystem. It was later adapted for cultural heritage, where integrity ensures the conservation of a cultural site as a cohesive cultural system, where the the complex dynamics and inter-relationships that sustain a healthy system must be understood and identified as truthfully as possible.

The author also tries to revisit the philosophical or ethical meanings of these two terms, both emphasizing the importance of staying true to one's values and integrating them into a consistent whole. Like Yin and Yang, time and space, material and spiritual, authenticity and integrity are not to be understood and operated separately, but to stay true in a consistent way, an authenticity in integrity and vice versa.

By linking philosophical theories, the evolving heritage concepts, with the often rigid and disconnected understanding of the two terms, this paper advocates for a continuous integration of the two as a more inter-connected approach both in theory and in practice, to ensure the completeness and consistency of authenticity, for an integrated conservation of a full spectrum of cultural heritage values.

15.15-16.45: Session III

Ioannis Poullos / Greece

PhD in heritage management, tourism and sustainable development at UCL. Associate Professor at the Centre for Heritage Management, Amrut Mody School of Management of Ahmedabad University; consultant to ICCROM.

Moving Beyond Authenticity: Perspectives from Business Strategy Theory

The paper examines the concept of authenticity as an element of conservation theory.

The paper starts by briefly outlining the development of the concept (from the Venice Charter to the Nara Document of Authenticity and until the present date) and its contribution to the conservation discipline. The paper, then, reviews the concept, highlighting its weaknesses: e.g. the attachment to the fabric, the leading power of conservation experts and the lacking involvement of local communities in the conservation process. It is argued that, despite the associated achievements, authenticity does not help conservation theory and

practice move beyond its inherent assumptions and substantially evolve in line with the changes in the broader society. Afterwards, the paper provides solutions towards challenging the concept, benefiting from perspectives from innovative business strategy theory. To this end, alternative conservation principles and tools are also suggested.

This is a theoretical paper, with brief references to a wide range of examples of sites across the world.

The aim of the paper is to contribute towards moving beyond the concept of authenticity and towards alternative conservation principles and tools.

Tina Wik / Sweden

Architect and specialist in wooden architecture. Professor in Architectural Conservation at the Royal Institute of Art, Stockholm.

Effects on the Authenticity of our Wooden Built Heritage due to Adaptions Related to Climate Change

Rising average annual temperature and increased precipitation will in many countries, and especially in the northern Europe lead to a warmer and wetter climate, extended growing seasons, shift of climatic zones to the north causing spread of pests and invasive species and thus, increasing mold and rot fungi. Already today, the connections are clear between these climate effects and the challenge that cultural historic environments face. The negative impact will increase with the predicted future climate changes. This presentation will deal with how problems related to humidity and climate change are identified and how possible solutions affect the authenticity.

In Sweden, wood is a commonly used material, our traditional buildings are to a large extent built in wood and wood is sensitive to, besides fires, to humidity and pests. This means that the traditional methods for construction, especially the foundations are not protecting the wooden construction as before due to climate change.

The wooden building tradition is strongest in the north of Sweden where the effects of climate change are strongest. The threat is greatest on buildings that are not heated during winter. This is the case for many heritage buildings, including a two World Heritage objects Luleå Church Town and The Decorated Farm Houses of Hälsingland. Cold winters used to protect them, but the warmer winter temperatures and downpours with increased amount of water have caused serious problems that required actions.

The question is how can we deal with this threat with minimal effect on the authenticity of the buildings and their heritage value?

Nilüfer Baturayoğlu Yöney & Yıldız Salman / Turkey

NBY: Professor of architectural history and preservation, University of Central Florida. PhD in Architectural Preservation from the Istanbul Technical University Faculty of Architecture (2008); member of docomomo and ISC20C.

YS: Assistant professor in architectural conservation, Istanbul Technical University.

The Authenticity of Recent Reconstructions of 20th Century Heritage in Turkey

Although 20th century architectural heritage was already recognized in the 1980s with research, literature and advocacy developing in the 21st century, so far there is limited consensus on what constitutes this heritage and how it should/could be preserved. Heritage status and authenticity are essentially semiotic constructs and open to discussion among the experts and the general public. The Venice Charter recognized monuments as “works of art” and “historical evidence” 60 years ago; we now talk about cultural heritage as a much broader resource. The Nara Document defined authenticity in a wider context and recognized both tangible and intangible attributes 30 years ago; the recognition of 20th century heritage widened this concept. In Turkey, sometimes even the most basic concepts of architectural preservation become points of discussion among the experts, policy and decision-makers and the public. One such concept is reconstruction, defined as “rebuilding according to original characteristics” and considered an act of preservation, its theoretical and physical authenticity being the contested paradigms. This approach, becoming more widely applied in Turkey due to rapid urban regeneration, utilizes the inadequacies of 20th century architecture in the face of contemporary building requirements as an excuse: Rather than repairing and strengthening reinforced concrete structures, they are rebuilt, an act that destroys early technologies and materials. This paper aims to discuss and evaluate such recent cases from Turkey in terms of authenticity both theoretically and physically, questioning how we understand and give meaning to architectural heritage and how we preserve it and considering the gap between

conservation theory and implementations. On the one hand, we are likely to lose authentic everyday examples of 20th century architecture, except for a few iconic buildings, and on the other, we might have nothing at all if all buildings are demolished and rebuilt.

Eleni-Eva Toumbakari / Greece

PhD in Engineering (KULeuven). At the Hellenic Ministry of Culture since 2001, first at the Acropolis Restoration Service (2000-2007), then at the Directorate for Restoration of Ancient Monuments and since 2024 at the Ephorate of Antiquities of W.Attica. <https://www.linkedin.com/in/eleni-eva-toumbakari-88489324/>

Authenticity in Anastylis and Definition of the Extent of New Material through Structural Considerations

The concept of anastylosis is present in the doctrinal texts since the Athens Charter of 1931 and has been defined in the Venice Charter as “the reassembling of existing but dismembered parts”. In both Charters the use of new material is considered unavoidable but should be “the least possible”. Consequently, only when new additions fall within certain limits, the criterion of authenticity is satisfied. However, definition of limits is an open subject. Moreover, the Nara document, in its valuable effort to include different cultural viewpoints, paved the way to consider various “sources of information”, and not only materiality, as attributes of authenticity. These facts could explain the divergence observed between principles and practice.

The presentation will focus on the specific case of ancient dry stack monuments, which are common in the broader Mediterranean. The first interventions on ancient monuments will be reminded and it will subsequently be shown that concern about structural issues was present in the thoughts of earlier restorers, even if done in an empirical way. However, until recently, the lack of theoretical tools for structural analysis dedicated to the dry-stack system left stability issues – and therefore addition of new material - to subjective judgment.

With the use of selected examples, it will be shown that, if structural analysis is integrated from the onset of the anastylosis project (and not as a tool for the ex-post control of predetermined forms, as is usually the case), it can provide rational information to assist decision-making by reducing uncertainties concerning the determination of “the least possible” new material.

In this way, the issue of materiality in the aforementioned specific cultural context and for the dry stack system of construction, gains its initial importance without, however, compromising the possibility, through proper justification, of considering additional authenticity attributes.

Friday, 29 November 2024 [Day 2]

10.00-11.45: Session IV

Bianca Gioia Marino / Italy

Architect, PhD in Heritage Conservation (KULeuven). IcoFort ICOMOS. <https://www.docenti.unina.it/bianca.marino>

From the Tangible to the Intangible and Back? On the Aspects of Authenticity in the European Context Starting from the Italian One

Considering these 30-year recurrences (1964-1994-2024) the path seems clear: from the international Venetian document where the dimension of authenticity is lowered into 'things' and in the article defining 'restoration' reference is made to authentic documents, that is, to something tangible if not properly material about the monument. With the Nara meeting the concept is relativized by bringing into play multiculturalism and the different meanings. A varied panorama emerges, but a specific state of the art can be assumed from the reflections that the Italian context stimulates with the organization of numerous opportunities for debate; a debate, marked for example by the Italian-Belgian confrontation between R. Di Stefano and R. Lemaire, from which emerged the difficulties of a global theory and the wish for the drafting of a “universal” document with “indications reflecting local specificities”. Fostered by globalization, meanwhile, the importance of the intangible dimension of heritage increases and, at the same time, there is a broadening of the debate to the non-European context. With the increase of social and cultural aspects in the definition of authenticity, the margin between the tangible and intangible dimensions of heritage problematizes its preservation, sometimes even sanctioning reconstructive interventions with an obvious contradiction to material authenticity. If today it appears to be a fluid concept, in reality it can be a tool that guarantees conservation and its project a path of methodology with a high critical-hermeneutical rate for the approach to preexistence. The proposal intends to draw a retrospective outline with the aim of understanding what the connotations of this legacy are today and, above all, what might

be the current scenarios of a European position, which, starting from a universal approach to authenticity, might envisage complementary visions, of balance between the two dimensions, tangible and intangible, polarized today

Seyda Guvenc Duran & Diren Çakılcı / Turkey

SGD: Architect, Masters in Architectural Conservation and Environmental Heritage from İstanbul Technical University.

DÇ: Associate Professor, Akdeniz University.

Evaluation of Authenticity in Conservation in the Context of Historicity: Case Studies from Southern Anatolia

Authenticity in architectural conservation is a tricky idea, especially when working with buildings that have changed significantly over time. This study looks at striking a balance between honoring the historical elements that have shaped historic monuments' current form and maintaining their original character. This study critically assesses the restoration techniques applied to three historically significant school buildings in Southern Anatolia, an area rich in cultural diversity. It pays special attention to the Nara Document on Authenticity.

The conflict between preserving historical authenticity and making adjustments to fit the changing story of these locations is brought to light by an examination of the restoration techniques used on these educational buildings. In this study, Senirkent Secondary Education School (1932) in Isparta district, Isparta Secondary School (1860) located in the center of Isparta and Antalya Primary School (1917) located in the center of Antalya will be evaluated. The last two examples are used differently than the original function.

The study blends academic understanding with real-world application. By fusing theoretical understanding with real-world examples, the study shows how judgments about preservation affect people's views of authenticity and historicity. Archival materials and structural proof from the Ottoman and Republic eras are used to evaluate originality.

The chosen case studies, which are educational institutions from the early Republican and late Ottoman periods, offer a variety of viewpoints on the conservation process. These illustrations show how slight or significant alterations impact how authenticity is interpreted. Rather than attempting to return structures to their idealized original states, the study promotes a more nuanced approach to conservation that embraces the historical layers.

This study suggests reevaluating authenticity in the context of living heritage by going over the tenets of the Nara Document on Authenticity and the Venice Charter again. The results emphasize the value of a comprehensive strategy that recognizes the dynamic interplay between the past and present and promotes conservation methods that respect cultural diversity and both tangible and intangible heritage.

Ayesha Shah / Pakistan

Architect; Masters in Historic Building Conservation, University of Portsmouth, UK; PhD candidate University of Moratuwa, Sri Lanka ('Authenticity of Heritage in urban development'). Teaches at the Department of Architecture and Interior Design, University of Bahrain since 2012.

Authenticity in Context: Bridging Quantitative Metrics with Conservation Practice

The significance of authenticity has long been regarded as a valuable criterion for assessing heritage. While the Venice Charter presents a paradigm for international conservation policies aimed at general heritage protection, the Nara Document advances this by emphasizing the importance of authenticity with respect to context-oriented concerns. In both frameworks, the assessment of authenticity remains a qualitative matter. Current practices reveal a gap in the development of a quantitative assessment system, which could provide measurable metrics to evaluate the level of authenticity with contextual objectivity.

This paper proposes a comprehensive mechanism for assessing the authenticity of heritage buildings, offering a more nuanced and flexible framework through quantitative metrics. The assessment incorporates both physical and non-physical aspects of authenticity, including public perception. By critically analyzing case examples from two different contexts, and evaluators from each, the paper evaluates the proposed framework's ability to assess and quantify the degree of authenticity present in heritage structures. The selected buildings are used for pilot testing to validate the assessment parameters.

The findings presented in this paper demonstrate the importance and practicality of a quantitative assessment approach, offering conservation experts a structured way to assess architectural elements and the impact of

alterations. This approach provides valuable insights into retaining, re-engaging, and enhancing authenticity in heritage conservation practices.

Gaia Vannucci & Carlo Francini / Italy

GV: Architect and Research Fellow at the Department of Architecture of the University of Florence, specializing in conservation of architectural and landscape heritage. Her main research interests are related to conservation, management and enhancement of World Heritage sites.

CF: Art historian; Site manager of the UNESCO World Heritage site "Historic Centre of Florence" and the responsible of the Florence World Heritage office of the Municipality of Florence' Co-director of the Heritage and Research Laboratory (HeRe Lab), the joint research laboratory in heritage-related topics between the Municipality of Florence and the University of Florence.

Preserving Authenticity through Evolution: the Value of Pietra Forte in the Unesco World Heritage Site Historic Centre of Florence

"'Conservation therefore makes sense not when, or only when, it is a matter of preserving the material of the monument, but when, and especially when, it is a matter of preserving its meaning.' (Marconi, 1999)

'It matters what materials we think with to think other materials [...].' (Haraway, 2016)

Inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1982, the Historic Centre of Florence presents within its Core Zone an urban fabric that is the result of result of millennia of evolution. From its medieval layout to the areas adjacent to Ponte Vecchio, rebuilt after their destruction by the German army (1944): although the area has partly undergone adaptation to 20th c. standards, there is a re-proposition of identity elements, among which the use of pietra forte for the facades stands out alongside period materials such as fair-faced concrete.

Mentioned in the Site's declaration of Authenticity (2014), pietra forte characterises the exteriors of the major Florentine buildings from the rusticated facing of the 11th c. to the sophisticated 15th c. apparatuses. Even in the first half of the 19th c., rusticated decoration followed the examples of the past, using plaster to replace the stone that would return to its role in the 20th c.. Rustication appears to possess an expressive value and a semantic capacity that transcends changes in material and form: the evolution of the urban fabric is the result of a historical stratification of deep-rooted cultural values and characteristics.

Through the analysis of the Historic Centre of Florence case study, the presentation aims to develop a reflection on how Authenticity is preserved through the ability of the Site's identity attributes to evolve over time. Developing a broader understanding of the values, represented not only by the Attributes - which are already constrained by specific legislation - but by the urban fabric within the Core Zone, is fundamental in order to arrive at concrete measures of preservation and regulation.

Gilly Carr / UK [VIRTUAL]

University Associate Professor and Academic Director in Archaeology, University of Cambridge Institute of Continuing Education. Member of the UK Delegation of International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA): Academic Working Group, Safeguarding Sites Chair, and Committee on the Holocaust, Genocide and Crimes against Humanity.

Authenticity and Holocaust Heritage

Holocaust heritage (which covers a range of extant heritage sites today, from former concentration camps to extermination centres and mass graves to killing sites) relies upon authenticity. Authenticity is vital to avoid Holocaust denial and distortion. Proof of the past lies in its material remains. And yet, does this commitment to not falsifying the past play out in the heritage presentation at such sites today?

Many well-known sites of Holocaust heritage encompass reconstructions and non-original elements. The bunk-beds at Auschwitz are reconstructed and those in the small fortress of Terezin are not original. Some barrack blocks in Mauthausen Memorial in Austria and Fossili in Italy have been heavily restored and look modern. At Westerbork in the Netherlands, a reconstructed watchtower stands by a torn-up railway track as part of a memorial. In fact, the harder you look, the more you realise that what we see at sites of the Holocaust today are not authentic.

But what do we mean by 'authentic' in such a context? Do renovations and restorations count? Would 'real authenticity' - making the sites look as they would when operational, complete with prisoners, guards, violence and death - be ethical? Is this the best way to remember those who suffered? Do people who visit Holocaust heritage today know or mind about inauthentic elements? Can we consider other aspects of authenticity, such as the authenticity of the location or the experience of visiting?

This paper will pose these and similar questions, asking ultimately what the limits are of (in)authenticity at sites of Holocaust heritage.

12.15 -13.45: Session V

Nigel Walter / UK

Architect, Cambridge, UK; PhD in Conservation (University of York). Research Associate, University of York..

Alternative Views of Authenticity: The Case of Park Hill, Sheffield

Park Hill is the largest listed building in Europe. Opened in 1961 it comprised 995 flats, together with 31 shops, four pubs and other communal facilities. The design is an innovation on Le Corbusier's Unité d'Habitation, with horizontal 'streets in the sky' at every third level, with duplex apartments extending above and below each access level. It was Britain's first completed scheme of post-war slum clearance and the most ambitious inner-city development of its time.

However, while the development was conceived and opened with great optimism, by the time it was listed in 1996 it was in serious decline, both socially and physically. Unable to finance its refurbishment, Sheffield City Council sold Park Hill to developers for £1 in 2004. With the extensive involvement of Historic England the subsequent refurbishment has upgraded the buildings and gentrified them, with only a small minority being available for affordable housing. The physical fabric of this development has been preserved and renewed, but its original social significance has arguably been lost.

This paper examines the question of the distinct views of authenticity seen in the Nara Document and Venice Charter as they may apply to the story of Park Hill. The paper will provide a brief description of the development and its original social vision, explain the changes that have been undertaken, and discuss in what sense the significance of this remarkable building has been conserved. It will go on to consider the extent to which the Nara and Venice views of authenticity are complementary, as is often claimed, or competing, and indeed whether authenticity is a relevant or helpful idea when applied to such a case.

Sotiria Alexiadou / Greece

Architect; PhD, University of Thessaly. Teacher at University of Cyprus, University of Thessaly, and Aristotle University. Employee of the Hellenic Ministry of Culture.

Authenticity in S, M, L, XL Scale of Thessaloniki

Since the Nara document publication new challenges have emerged concerning the cultural heritage evaluation. The aspects of the information sources considered in authenticity judgments spread from XL to S scale, like location & setting, form & design, use & function, materials & substance, and traditions & techniques. The transformation of the artistic, historic, social, and scientific dimensions is challenging the postwar city identity and its 'Ordinary Everyday Modernism' buildings. This research focuses on Thessaloniki's postWWII city center and its main element, the multistorey housing building, aka polykatoikia.

Thessaloniki's peculiarity is that 2/3 of the city center has been a 'historical site' since 1994 [XL scale], containing both listed and non-individually listed buildings. The city's building blocks [L scale] are constituted by a diverse assemblage of built and internal free space. The built part consists various eras constructions exhibiting diverse architectural styles, techniques, and other internal and external factors. The polykatoikia [M scale], integrates the contemporary practices concerning changes such as the middle-class lifestyle, the short-term rentals opportunities and the energy consumption reduction EU norms. The polykatoikia's distinctive ownership model which divides the building into numerous individual ownerships [S scale], like flats and stores, enters a new era that affects significant aspects like the building's uses and functions from a bottom-up view.

This paper addresses emerging challenges of a future authenticity evaluation for the postwar polykatoikia. How changes in multiple aspects may affect the authenticity factor for an OEM? Which parameters should be taken into consideration for sustaining the possibility of considering an OEM building authentic in a future judgment?

The paper is based on the author's postdoctoral research; recent literature and case studies analysis of OEM buildings interventions support the objectives."

Lukasz Mikolaj Sadowski / Poland

Head of Art Theory and History Department at the Academy of Fine Arts in Łódź. President of the Łódź Branch of the Association of Art Historians. Author of books about French influences in the residential architecture of the Polish gentry, and an album on residences-museums in Poland.

Authentic or not? An Art Historian's Reflections on Castle Reconstructions in Contemporary Poland

In Poland, most castles were destroyed as early as the 17th and 18th centuries as a result of numerous wars. In the following centuries, an unfavourable political situation (the partitions of Poland) or just economic considerations caused numerous demolitions. A significant number of castles disappeared, or functioned as 'romantic ruins'. A few important private castles were rebuilt in the 19th century, in the spirit of 'historical revival'. In the 20th century, after independence, and after the devastation of World War 2, many of the most important buildings were rebuilt or even reconstructed from scratch. In most cases, the sites were rebuilt immediately after the end of the war, by people who knew the buildings from autopsy, before demolition. It was not until the 1970s that the Royal Castle in Warsaw was rebuilt at the latest. Many of the original elements saved by specialists were used then.

For many years, castle ruins functioned in the Polish landscape as 'permanent ruins'. After the fall of communism, reconstruction of some castles began at the beginning of the 21st century. The most spectacular example may be the 'reconstruction' of the castle in Poznan - one of the most important cities in Poland. It was rebuilt on the basis of poor iconographic material – no older than from the 18th century. However, a large part of city dwellers support the fact that the former capital of Greater Poland had 'reclaimed' its castle. Another 'reconstruction' of recent years is the Bobolice Castle, praised by numerous tourists and heavily criticised by art historians and conservators. There are also reports in the media about the planned reconstruction of Krzyżtopór Castle, which is a huge ruin that has been standing since 1656.

Contemporary castle reconstructions are not only specific to Poland (f.e. reconstruction of the Royal castle in Berlin, or Lower Castle in Vilnius), but are becoming a worrying trend. It may, in future pose a serious threat to the authentic, substance of historical castle buildings.

Olesia Chagovets / Ukraine [VIRTUAL]

Architect-restorer; PhD candidate, O.M. Beketov Kharkiv National University of Urban Economy, Ukraine.
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The Dialectic of Authenticity in the Context of Continuous Losses: The Ukrainian Perspective

Since the beginning of the 20th century, Ukraine has experienced continuous losses of its cultural heritage. From the destruction wrought by early Soviet rule, which deliberately sought to erase traces of the past, to the catastrophic consequences of World War II and subsequent Soviet policies. Following independence, the country faced challenges of ineffective management, leading to further decline in heritage preservation, while the ongoing war has brought new waves of destruction.

In light of the 30th anniversary of the Nara Document, which significantly broadened and contextualised the concept of authenticity, the Ukrainian context offers an important case for reflection. The Nara Document emphasises the importance of considering cultural specificity and intangible aspects, allowing authenticity to be viewed not only as a physical condition but also as a complex interaction between the tangible and the intangible. This perspective is critically essential for countries that have suffered losses as severe as those in Ukraine.

This paper will analyse the main aspects of the dialectic of authenticity in the Ukrainian context, as they manifest in the interplay between the material and the intangible, originality and adaptation, preservation and loss, tradition and modernity. The Ukrainian experience, shaped by ongoing historical losses and current challenges, demonstrates how a philosophical approach to authenticity can help preserve cultural heritage even in difficult circumstances.

The paper will explore how the principles enshrined in the Nara Document could influence Ukrainian heritage conservation practices, and what conclusions can be drawn for the future. Although these principles have yet to be fully implemented in Ukraine, their application holds the potential to become a foundation for developing new approaches to heritage preservation under conditions of continuous loss. This presentation aims not only to shed light on the Ukrainian experience but also to contribute to the global dialogue on the role of authenticity in heritage preservation, particularly in contexts where physical preservation is often impossible.

15.15 - 17.00: Session VI [VIRTUAL Presentations]

Tino Mager / Germany - Netherlands

Assistant Professor of the History and Theory of Architecture and Urbanism at the University of Groningen; President of ICOMOS Germany; Secretary General of the ICOMOS ISC on Water and Heritage.

Attributions of Authenticity in the Context of World Heritage

Based on my award-winning dissertation on the concept of authenticity in architectural heritage, I would like to provide an insight into the attribution of authenticity in the context of World Heritage. Since 1978, the World Heritage Committee and its advisory bodies have been dealing with the concept of authenticity, including in charters and in decisions on listing from Warsaw to Kampala. In this context, it becomes evident that there is a stark contrast between well-considered and nuanced theoretical considerations and an astonishingly pragmatic approach to the concept of authenticity in practice. Although ‘authenticity’ was included in the Venice Charter on the basis of moral considerations, as exemplified by the contributions of Jan Zachwatowicz and Jakub Pavel, it only became a central concept with a time lag, defying a clear definition.

While Zachwatowicz and Pavel associated authenticity with the material reliability and source value of monuments, the World Heritage Committee is increasingly deviating from this approach. It is now recognised that the authenticity of sites may be upheld even when they have undergone significant alterations, including complete reconstructions. This process is reflected, inter alia, in the 'Debate on the permissibility and standards for reconstructions' initiated by ICOMOS in 2014. In light of the aforementioned praxis, it can be demonstrated that the attribution of authenticity in and of itself has become the relevant act, rather than the identification of properties' characteristics that carry authenticity. The presentation will highlight several cases in order to provide a comprehensive understanding of the attributions of authenticity in the context of world heritage. Furthermore, it underscores the pivotal role of the elusive quality of authenticity as a defining attribute, continuously facilitating novel re-negotiations of heritage values.

Siyuan Liu / China

PhD. in Architecture (University of Cincinnati); Postdoctoral Researcher at the College of Architecture and Urban Planning at Tongji University. His research focuses on the principles and policies governing the preservation of historic built environments.

Authenticity as the Legacy of Romantics and Modernists: The Pursuit of Truth versus Falsification, Facadism, and Anachronism in Reconstruction

Authenticity is a critical concept in conservation theory and plays a significant role in debates about reconstruction practices. This paper examines how the pursuit of truth, a notion originating in the Romantic era and later embraced by Modernist architects and preservationists, underpins opposition to reconstruction. The Romantic legacy challenges reconstruction on three intertwined grounds: expressive truth, structural truth, and historical truth, each highlighting the falsity and deception involved in reconstruction.

Expressive truth, best captured by the functionalism axiom “form follows function,” condemns falsification in reconstruction for concealing its true nature. Reconstructed buildings deceive by presenting themselves as something they are not, becoming mere stage sets. Structural truth intensifies opposition to facadism, a practice that preserves only the exterior of a building while altering its interior. However, the challenge lies in reconciling structural truth with the Modernists' simultaneous effort to liberate appearance from constraints. Historical truth aligns with the idea that architecture should reflect the zeitgeist or the spirit of its time. Romantics and Modernists critique reconstruction as anachronistic, asserting that rebuilding in historic styles disconnects a structure from its temporal context. Although defenders often misquote the principle of “restoring the old as old,” the proliferation of faux-antique buildings in renovation projects and new developments at tourist sites in China underscores the problematic nature of such practices.

This paper examines how these three dimensions of truth—expressive, structural, and historical—form the core of opposition to reconstruction. By addressing concerns about falsification, facadism, and anachronism in reconstruction, this research contributes to ongoing global debates in heritage conservation, where the authenticity of reconstruction in historic built environments remains contested.

Yoshinori Iwasaki / Japan

Dr. Eng. (Kyoto University); Member of International Society of Soil Mechanics and Foundation Engineering (ISSMGE), and of Technical Committee for Geotechnical Engineering for Heritage, ISSMGE; he studied the soils and foundations in Angkor.

Authenticity of Foundation of Heritage Structure

Soils and foundations have been recognized as one the important factors of structure but not as heritage. The foundations of heritage structures have been easily changed or modified without discussion of the authenticity.

ISO 13822 (Bases for design of structures – Assessment of existing structures) was reviewed by ISCARSAH and the revised version was published in 2010 including the new concept of authenticity of foundation of the heritage structure as follows,

1.5.3 Authenticity of foundation; From the point of view of conservation, foundations are not different from the rest of the structure and should be assessed and rehabilitated taking into consideration their heritage value. This involves the requirement to identify their authenticity and character-defining elements.”

Case studies of the authenticity of the foundation of the Leaning Pisa Tower and the foundation mound in Angkor are discussed as follows,

Leaning Pisa Tower: When the Pisa Tower was discussed how to be preserved in 1990', there was no attempt to preserve the original foundation system but to extract soil under the foundation to reduce the angle of the inclination. The authenticity of the foundation are soft soil condition and the direct foundation without pile which had caused the differential settlements with inclination of the Tower and are successfully preserved without any intension to conserve the authenticity of the foundation.

Soil and Foundation Mound in Angkor; Soil and foundation mound in Angkor are found to have unique characters. The Central stone masonry Tower of about 42m in height of Bayon temple has been standing with the shallow direct foundation upon the thick sandy soil mound of about 15m in thickness for more than 700 years under heavy rain season in every year. The sandy soil used to construct the mound is identified to have unique characteristics of silty sand in terms of the uniform grain size distribution, which shows very high strength just like soft rock but easily collapses in water.

In the warm climate condition, the continuous rain is anticipated to cause weakening the foundation mound in Angkor leading to the failure of the Main Tower. Some protective measures are being implemented to preserve the Bayon temple.

Antonio Friello / Italy

Architect; PhD in Conservation of Architectural Heritage; Employed by Soprintendenza Archeologia, belle arti e paesaggio per le province di Caserta e Benevento.

The Restoration of the Real Sito di Carditello (San Tammaro - Caserta - Italy): The Reintegration

The contribution that we present is a reflection on the restoration methods adopted in the recent intervention carried out in 2023 on the Real Sito di Carditello.

The Real Sito di Carditello, designed by Vanvitelli's pupil, Francesco Collecini and built starting from 1789, is composed of a central building and eight lateral towers connected by sheds.

Active with different functions until at least the first half of the twentieth century, the monument was progressively abandoned, finding itself at the center of an area occupied by landfills, becoming itself an open sky landfill.

The neglect and lack of maintenance has produced extensive damage and collapses to the wall structures and wooden elements of the roofs and horizontals. With the acquisition of the monument by the State, which took place in 2014 and the establishment of a Fondazione Real Sito di Carditello, with the task of managing the site both in terms of valorisation and protection, a process of progressive restoration. Starting from 2014, restoration works were carried out in parts which initially involved the recomposition of the roofs, gradually extending to the interiors, to the decorated surfaces which had large gaps, etc.

Reduced to a mass of ""bones"" of a ""body without flesh"", the contribution will illustrate the interventions carried out, explaining the project choices in relation to the objectives of conserving the values of the monument and safeguarding its authenticity. Authenticity which appears all the more exposed to the risk of loss, the more extensive the gaps that the artefact presents and which in a monumental site which have a landscape dimension, like Carditello, cannot be limited to the materia alone, like an archaeological ruin. Furthermore, the values of the monument cannot be reduced to only cultural ones, but must be extended to include economic values connected to financial self-sustainability.

Rosa Anna Genovese / Italy

Professor of Architectural Restoration, University of Naples 'Federico II'. Member of ICOMOS Academy.

The Nara Document: Conservation and Authenticity of Values

The International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), created in 1965, has continuously and consistently worked towards the application of the principles included in the Venice Charter and in the Nara Declaration, through the network of prominent expert Members of the Committees present throughout the world, and the contribution of international and national emeritus Presidents.

Concerning the theoretical reflections and operational implications in restoration projects, the following points should be highlighted:

Methodology of restoration planning. On the theoretical and philosophical features of conservation and restoration Roberto Di Stefano gave life, from 1975 to 1984, together with specialists and university professors of Restoration, Urban Planning and History of Architecture, to numerous Meetings and Symposia, promoting, in Italy, in Ravello jointly with ICOMOS, fundamental Congresses including 'Restauro: esigenze culturali e realtà operative' (Restoration: Cultural Requirements and operational realities) 1975; 'Un domani per il restauro' (A tomorrow for restoration) 1976; 'Il restauro in Italia e la Carta di Venezia' (Restoration in Italy and the Venice Charter) 1977 ; and in Naples, in the fourteenth-century church of Donnaregina, in 1984, among others, the International Congress of Studies on 'Architettura e città antiche: conoscenza e valorizzazione' (Architecture and Ancient Cities: Knowledge and Enhancement) and, in 1985, the one on 'La Carta di Venezia trenta anni dopo' (The Venice Charter thirty years after).

Conservation and Authenticity of Values. During the Congress on 'Authenticity and Monument Heritage' promoted in 1994 by the Italian ICOMOS Committee, light was shed on the Authenticity of values borne by properties in reference to historical, aesthetic and psychological features.

The scientific results of the Meeting constituted the fundamental cultural premise to the Nara Declaration, a document representing the summary of contributions by ICOMOS experts from 22 Countries, reunited in Japan in November 1994, to carry out an accurate analysis of the concept of Authenticity in relation to the different categories of Cultural Heritage. Great impulse was given to the reflections on Authenticity contained in the Nara Declaration also by Raymond Lemaire, with his essays taking into consideration the different approach of other non-European civilisations to restoration and protection issues and the different sensitivity of each culture towards aspects of the past.