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EDITORIAL

The sixth issue of PCA presents the material from two conferences held in different European countries last year.

*The volume opens with some of the papers presented at The British School at Rome (April 2014) at a conference on The Recycling and Reuse of Materials during the Early Middle Ages. The meeting – organised by Alessandro Sebastiani (who has collaborated as guest editor for this section), Elena Chirico and Matteo Colombini – dealt mainly with productive structures related to the transformation of glass and metal in Italy (papers by Alessandro Sebastiani, Stefano Bertoldi, François-Dominique Deltenre and Lucia Orlandi). Other international experts have agreed to add their contributions to the subject: Robin Fleming on the reuse of construction material in early medieval graves, Sarah Paynter and Caroline Jackson offering a synthesis on the reuse of glass, and the team of Carmen Fernández-Ochoa in Spain presenting the early medieval productive structures at the villa of Veranes (Gijón). Two papers by Florin Curta and Michele Asolati, dealing with exchange in the Byzantine Mediterranean, have been published in the *Variae* section.*

After the catastrophe of World War II, many international institutions were founded: the United Nations, UNESCO, the European Community. All these organizations are today immersed in a transitional phase in the systemic crisis which affects the entire Western world, a crisis to which the nihilist and relativist positions have contributed and which has (rightly) delegitimated the imperialism on which the West had built its dominant position. In this crisis, the recovery of shared historical memories is increasingly revealed as a central element in the defence of a rational world, which, although it may have abandoned the utopias of the 1900s, at least safeguards the principles of freedom and the pluralism of values. Today, there is wide debate, even among archaeologists, over how to present cultural heritage in a globalized society while nevertheless pre-

serving its multiple identities and cultures. The discussion of these matters was the purpose of the papers dedicated to the World Heritage List. This collection, guest edited by Margarita Díaz-Andreu, results from a workshop of the EU-project JPI–JHEP Heritage Values Network (H@V) held at the University of Barcelona in February 2015. The main question, summarized in the title of the paper by Díaz-Andreu, is whether the inclusion of social values and local communities in the management of cultural heritage is an impossible dream. Is it a utopian vision, typical of the historical processes which gave birth to the international organizations and their initiatives to hold back the spectre of a World War III? In many of these contributions, the watchwords still conform to this direction: the participation and involvement of stakeholders in the hope that local communities will be led to a positive valuation of assets and their public use.

The different directions of the debate move between the two poles of economic management and cultural enrichment of local communities. Too often, it is difficult to find a balance between touristic exploitation and a useful cultural proposal for local communities, as happened in the telling example of the Daming Palace in China, developed by Qian Gao, winner of the 2016 PCA young researcher award.

Direct involvement is often difficult in a globalized and multicultural society that has lost its historical roots. Most of the contributions consider that a proper balance can be found between global strategies promoted by UNESCO, based on the decalogue of general principles under which to file an application for protected sites, and the feeling and evaluation expressed by the local community (the focus of Torgrim Sneve Guttorsen, Joel Taylor, Grete Swensen on Heritage Routes and Matthias Maluck and Gian Pietro Brogiolo on organizational proposals in the interventions).

Also related to the subject of cultural heritage and the public is the project section of this issue, a homage the Poggibonsi Archeodromo. A project developed in recent years by the team of Marco Valenti (University of Siena), this is a unique living archaeological park recreated from archaeological evidence, presenting the life of an early medieval village, an initiative that clearly demonstrates the social and economic benefits of good practices in public archaeology in Italy.

Finally, the retrospect section, which addresses the history of early medieval archaeology in different European countries, is this year devoted to the fascinating recent history of early medieval Archaeology in Russia, with an extensive study by Nadezhda Platonova (St Peterburg).

The UNESCO network “The Longobards in Italy. The Places of Power (568-774 A.D.)” and the Brescia case

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On 25 June, 2011 the network of Lombard sites, named “*The Longobards in Italy. The Places of Power (568-774 A.D.)*”, was inscribed on UNESCO’s world heritage list. The series comprises goods which are heterogeneous in function and morphology and in some cases their chronology and real relationship with Lombard culture are under discussion. The paper discusses the history of the project (1996-2010), its actual relationship with UNESCO criteria II.II.VI, the Management Plan, its current coordination by the association *Italia Longobardorum*, its success and its criticalities.

Keywords: Brescia, Longobards, UNESCO, Management, cultural projects

Il 25 giugno 2011 la rete di siti longobardi chiamata The Longobards in Italy. The Places of Power (568-774 A.D.) è stata iscritta nella lista dei siti patrimonio dell'umanità. La serie comprende beni eterogenei per funzione e morfologia e in alcuni casi si discute ancora della loro cronologia e del rapporto con la cultura longobarda. L'articolo discute la storia del progetto (1996-2010), il suo reale rapporto con i criteri UNESCO II.II.VI, il Management Plan, l'attuale coordinamento con l'associazione Italia Longobardorum, i successi e le criticità.

Parole chiave: Brescia, Longobardi, UNESCO, Management, progetti culturali

1. Introduction

In Italian history the Lombards occupy a central place, therefore the attention paid to them in research and in the study and safeguarding of the objects and artefacts linked to their presence is hardly surprising. Museums and sections of museums are dedicated to Lombards, and since 1978 four major exhibitions (in Lombardy, Friuli, Brescia and Turin) have examined certain aspects particular to their period. It is also no coincidence that a network of locations with important Lombard evidence

has been granted registration as a World Heritage Site. In this paper, after a mention of the various significances that can be attributed to the Lombards, the bureaucratic process that led to recognition will be described, and the case of Brescia outlined. In the cultural development policy of the city's historical heritage, the considerable financial investments and many institutional initiatives do not seem to have fully understood the significance and value of the Lombard evidence, despite its UNESCO recognition.

2. The Lombards in Italy as a case-study

Italy underwent two distinct phases during which Germanic peoples settled: the first, which began in the early 5th century with the incursions of the Visigoths, came to an end with the Ostrogoths of Theodoric, supported by the emperor of the East; the second, eighty years later, saw the occupation of certain regions by the Lombards. This Germanic people, through a slow process that lasted at least a century, managed to build a society that was sufficiently integrated, equipped with its own culture and with a real chance of extending its control over the entire peninsula. However, the opposition of the Pope and his alliance with the Franks led to the destruction of the kingdom and Italy's inclusion within the Carolingian and then German empires. These events represent a crucial stage in the history of Italy which it has been necessary to re-examine within the historiography on several occasions. During the 1990s within the context of the progressive stages of European integration, the positive contribution of the Lombards, like the other barbarian tribes that settled in the Empire, was highlighted in the official documents for the nomination of Lombard monuments on the World Heritage list:

“the excellent cultural synthesis the Longobards made between their traditional values and those of the peoples they encountered during their long journey, values belonging to classical civilization, to the Christian-Roman-Byzantine civilization which led to the development of a new and genuine civilization; the reception, the conservation, the upgrading and the dissemination of architectural, monumental and artistic form and content of the classical, Roman and Hellenistic cultures; the reception, the transformation and the processing of a number of contents and expressions of the Christian tradition, which the Longobards disseminated all over the world; the fundamental contribution the Longobards made to pilgrimage, which led in the Middle Ages to an intense interchange of values and the development of a sense of unity between different peoples”.

In recent years, archaeological knowledge about the Lombards has expanded radically, opening up new avenues of investigation. Their movements in Europe can now be traced not only through the material culture, but also through new DNA and isotopic analyses. Moreover, environmental, palaeobotanical and zooarchaeological analyses confirm how the Lombards introduced new production models with an integrated economy including crops, livestock and exploitation of uncultivated land for firewood, hunting, fishing, etc. This information leads us to reflect on the huge climate and productive changes taking place today, enabling us to see things in a different light. Moreover, any historical reconstruction is based on general theoretical approaches, specific sources (besides the written ones, by now well-known, ever increasing material ones as well), tools and analysis procedures that are constantly being updated. A research project is therefore always in progress and results and interpretations change over time. The UNESCO project, which started in the late 1990s and was formulated in 2007-2009 on the basis of the ideas developed in the 1990s, cannot be considered as an unchangeable statute.

3. The history of the project for UNESCO recognition

The process leading towards UNESCO recognition took some fifteen years, during which the subjects proposed changed up to seven times, as well as the title (3 times) and consequently the contents of the project. Five major periods can be identified in this process:

- 1996-1999. A proposal for inscription of the "Historical Centre of Cividale and Longobard Temple" on the Italian Tentative List of candidates for the UNESCO World Heritage list was submitted by the Cividale Municipality to the Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities (MiBAC). The proposal was written by administrators and supported by a series of local stakeholders (see below).
- 1998-2000. Preparation and opening (October 2000-February 2001) in Brescia of the exhibition "The Future of the Longobards" (Bertelli, Brogiolo 2000; 160,000 visitors, which for Italy in 2000 was a very good result). The exhibition took on a particular significance because it came after 20 years of excavations and research at the Lombard monastery of San Salvatore/Santa Giulia. This was part of a plan to create a large museum, based on a project developed in the mid-1970s by Andrea Emiliani and which cost the City of Brescia over 25 million euro in the 1980s-early 1990s. Organisation of the exhibition included relationships with other European countries in a project that produced

three more interconnected exhibitions. These took place in Paderborn (1999), Split (2000) and Barcelona (2001) and all had the purpose of emphasising the role of the individual nations in Carolingian Europe. Those of Brescia and Paderborn represented the culmination of archaeological excavations at the sites (respectively, the monastery founded by the last Lombard king, and one of the palaces built by Charlemagne where, in 799, he reached an agreement with the pope to be crowned emperor in Rome). The other two, in Croatia and Catalonia, highlighted the role of the two regions in the Carolingian Empire, a role noted in the Italian case as well since, after twenty years of research, the church of San Salvatore in Brescia and the small temple of Cividale were attributed to the Lombard period. Two other consequences of the exhibition that were to play a key role in the evolution of the proposal for the UNESCO World Heritage list were the relationships with important centres of Lombard power and culture (Castelseprio, Cividale, Spoleto, Benevento, Salerno, Pavia) and the creation of a sequence of historical ideas that were to underpin the storytelling of the project. A detail which I will return to later;

- 2003-2004. In the wake of the exhibition, Cividale and Brescia developed a preliminary cooperation on the basis of a “common Lombard history” (both cities were important Lombard duchies) and plans for an international “Longobard Route” (which, however, never extended beyond Italy);
- 2006-2008. The idea was submitted and contacts for the nomination (for the tentative list) started. At the beginning there were three northern Italian sites (Cividale del Friuli, Brescia, and Castelseprio-Torba), to which were later added (2007) four more Lombard monuments from the *Langobardia minor* (Spoleto, Campello sul Clitunno, Benevento and Monte Sant’Angelo), and the common title “*Italia Langobardorum. Centres of Power and Worship (568-774 A.D.)*” was given. In March 2008, the application for nomination, coordinated by MiBAC (A. M. Ferroni), was submitted and accepted by the UNESCO Offices in Paris, and in October that year the inspector of ICOMOS visited all the centres and monuments up for nomination;
- 2009-2011. In May 2009 ICOMOS recommended a series of in-depth analyses and some modifications, and suggested postponing the inclusion on the World Heritage List. In June the Association, “*Italia Langobardorum*” was set up and a new nomination – in agreement with MiBAC – was submitted in 2010, under the title: “*The Longobards in Italy. The Places of Power (568-774 A.D.)*”

4. The project: topics and management

With the exception of the exhibitions, the input of experts in the process leading to the inscription of the Lombards was minimal. The project was handled by the directors of the participating centres and supported by various groups and associations. The attempt to involve local stakeholders was therefore clear from the start, while the technical and scientific processing, and the documents required for the application were entrusted not to experts, but mostly to institutional representatives of the Superintendence and local museums, who had no specific expertise on the Lombards.

The absence of experts resulted in uninformed ideas and expressions, even in the proposals to legitimise application of the UNESCO criteria. For example, in the 2008 document, concerning UNESCO's criterion II (to exhibit an important interchange of human values over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design), it is specified that the Lombards stood out for their extraordinary capacity to disseminate their poignant (sic) cultural, artistic, political and religious expressions. They left a deep and permanent mark in Italy and then in the rest of Europe, not only on the subsequent Carolingian rule, but also on the following 1,000 years of European history.

The triumphalist tone of the storytelling of the project and product marketing lacks any attempt at critical interpretation, despite its necessity, considering that the seven UNESCO sites grouped in the *Italia Langobardorum* series have long been subject to conflicting interpretations and chronology. Not all experts agree that the *tempietto di Cividale* and San Salvatore in Brescia, are Lombard (Brogiolo 2014). Built and decorated by the same workmen, art historians are still divided over dating to the Lombard period (mid-8th century), which I personally subscribe to, and a later one in the Carolingian period (end of 8th and 9th centuries). At Castelseprio there are also problems with the dating of the church of Santa Maria *foris portas*, which oscillates between the mid-6th and mid-10th century and therefore may not be Lombard but Carolingian; or even the Torba complex, where the only finding from the Lombard period is a single part of a wall from the end of the 7th century! (Brogiolo 2013). The two Spoleto buildings – the basilica of San Salvatore and so-called *tempietto di Clitunno* (Jäggi 1998; Emerick 1998) are earlier than the accepted date of arrival of the Lombards, 569 AD, since most scholars date them from the late 5th to mid-6th centuries. Finally, while the Lombards were certainly present in

Benevento and Monte Sant'Angelo (Carletti, Otranto 1990), there are infinitely fewer signs than at Pavia, the capital of the kingdom, which was mysteriously excluded from the project. The inclusion on the list of such a high number of buildings with highly uncertain Lombard dates perhaps makes ironic the adherence of the project to UNESCO criteria III (bearing a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared), which according to the 2008 project it does (i.e. "meets the criteria of integrity and authenticity both as a whole").

Regarding UNESCO criteria VI (be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history), instead of explaining the universal meanings expressed by the Lombards and their continuing presence in Italian culture, the proposal simply reminds us of the toponomastic and linguistic remains, the founding of monasteries and *the pilgrimage to the grotto of St. Michael (...) a prominent example of worship practices directly related to medieval traditions*.

The project repeatedly emphasises, in general terms, a single idea: the uniqueness of the Lombards and their fundamental contribution to European history owing to their ability to blend "*classical, Roman and Hellenistic* [sic!] *cultures*" and the "*Christian (Roman-Byzantine)*" one, into one, which is described as "*a new and genuine civilization*". The mere inclusion of Hellenistic culture means that anyone informed about Late Antiquity and the early medieval period would recognise the scant historical knowledge supporting the proposal in 2008.

The 2008 document missed the opportunity to offer a critical interpretation of this key period, between the end of the Roman empire in the West and the long process during which medieval Europe was formed (a central topic in the exhibition in Brescia in the year 2000: Bertelli, Brogiolo 2000). Instead, the advocates of the inscription decided to tell a story that avoided complexity. Nothing is said about the historical process leading up to the Lombard period and in particular the part marked by integration of very different cultures, or any critical interpretation of them. It offers the user of this product a totally uncritical vision of a historical period that deserved a more open approach, which would be useful for understanding the contemporary world. The account was attractive and pleasant but basically uninformed and outdated.

Who was behind the initiative and 2008 document? The marketing project was entrusted to a "professional journalist and expert in cultural and socio-economic development projects", Bruno Cesca, who saw it "as an instrument to pursue a development model that would unite the

requests for conservation (...) with their tourist fruition and with the need for transformation and growth of the national and local economies"¹. To organise this, in 2008 the *Associazione Italia Langobardorum* was set up at the City of Spoleto municipality. In addition to the other municipalities concerned, members included the Fondazione CAB-Cultural Institute Giovanni Folonari and the Ministry of Heritage and Culture. The Association was supposed to promote itself through commercial activities, for the purpose of knowledge and safeguarding, enhancement by promoting culture, awareness and socio-economic development as part of the UNESCO heritage sites related to "The Longobards in Italy. The places of power (568-774 A.D.)". In fact, the main activity consisted of regular meetings and managing the website bearing the same name as the project (www.italialangobardorum.it), which today is still "under construction" (August 2016).

While it is easy to criticize the non-professional writers, I would like to suggest academics were partly responsible for the outcome. There is a huge problem in the relationship between academia and the public, as a part of the more generalised problem of transmitting the ideas of the academic and scientific world to the varied public that uses them; this is a problem that requires consideration. The last few years have witnessed a debate in the Western world related to the impact of science depending on the different user targets (McManamon 1991; Holtorf 2007): as an economic resource (Silberman 2012) within the field of cultural tourism (Bruner 2005) and in relation to the new multimedia tools of communication (Pletinckx, Silberman, Callebaut 2003; Hadley 2012).

Italy is no exception to the situation described above. The Italian scholar lives and communicates in a restricted environment, uses a specialist language (especially if he or she is an archaeologist) filled with technical terms hard to understand by a person with a basic education. With few exceptions, academics do not consider it a social obligation to write concise works in everyday language. This attitude not only characterises the editorial phase, but also heavily influences museums and archaeological sites, where structures and objects are accompanied by long captions full of technical terms that not even archaeologists specialised in other periods are able to understand.

Therefore, if scholars are not able to sell their ideas by themselves, it is natural for clients to use a 'translation' adapted for the various

¹ <http://www.italialangobardorum.it/eng/sito/areagestione/pianodigestione.asp>

types of visitors. This means that the 'translation' requires an appropriate method, together with a knowledge of individual and social psychology, able to turn the scientific information into storytelling without distorting it. In other words it means educating, a difficult task in Italy where, from primary school onwards, no one teaches critical analysis or a technical-scientific approach to problems. Of course it is easier to present culture not as a place for critical reflection but like any product where marketing champions over authenticity. Then, however, we are forced to ask ourselves what culture is and what purpose it serves today and whether it is profitable, as happened with the "*Italia Longobardorum*" project: sidestepping the scholar, entrusting directly to the 'translator' the responsibility of independently creating the product. The answer is not simple, as the specific case of Brescia shows, where the two levels, although present and interacting, produced a confused situation due to an overlapping of interests and skills.

5. The Lombards in the Brescia cultural project

5.1. Institutional projects

Two monuments on the list of Lombard sites inscribed on the World Heritage List are located in Brescia: the monastic complex of San Salvatore/Santa Giulia and the *Capitolium* archaeological area. Their inclusion was extremely well received locally. Brescia is a city that after the Second World War became one of the most dynamic in Italy thanks to its industries, especially those related to iron working, as a result of a strong entrepreneurial tradition. Its material assets consist of exposed remains of the Roman city (*Capitolium*, theatre and forum), numerous medieval and modern examples of architecture (churches, the town hall, private residences), two beautiful squares (Duomo and Loggia) and of a castle built on the hill overlooking the city. But as a city it has never attracted tourists as it does not have any really exceptional attractions, unlike the palaces, churches and works of art accumulated in Verona, Padua, Mantua, not to mention Venice. Brescia's most important monument, historically and for its material remains, is perhaps the monastery of San Salvatore, founded in the mid-8th century by Desiderio, the last king of the Lombards, and known from the 10th century as Santa Giulia. The construction of the City Museum in the monastery of San Salvatore/Santa Giulia was part of a plan in the 1970s to create an archaeological museum route that would unite the castle and monastery (which housed the museum) with the archaeological area of the theatre

and the Capitolium. The aim of this cultural-historical itinerary was to offer an image of the complex history of the town, with a view to reviving Brescia as a city of art.

The City of Brescia played a central role in the project, being owner of the Santa Giulia complex, the area of the Theatre-*Capitolium*, the Castle and also in view of its considerable financial contribution and organisational tasks: it created the Santa Giulia Museum (inaugurated in 2000) and a series of exhibitions devised to increase the number of visitors to the new museum. After a major exhibition on the Lombards in 2000, with 180,000 visitors, it then held a series of important exhibitions on the Impressionists, which, between 2000 and 2010 attracted hundreds of thousands of senior visitors/students but created only a moderate increase in regular visitors to the Museum. The warning light was, in 2008, the crisis of the *Fondazione Brescia Musei*, marked by the departure of the *Fondazione CAB* (which had generously funded the activities of the Museum) which "went from producing and distributing events to managing and developing and promoting the assets and contents of the museum" (L. Castelletti, councillor for culture of the municipality of Brescia, in *Corriere della Sera*, Brescia, of 23 February 2016, p. 2). This resulted in a change of register as the exhibition tradition was brought to a halt due to the difficulties of covering expenses (ticket sales and sponsorships cover only one-third of the costs: 400,000 euro out of a total of 1,300 for the two exhibitions 2015-2016). The offer, launched in August 2015, of two weeks free entry to the museums, accompanied by 'buy one, get one free' tickets for the exhibition on Romanisation were part of the same logic. The result was an increase in visitors (up 43% in the three years from 2013 to 2015) but a decline in revenue due, in 2015 alone, to 54,599 free tickets out of a total of 154,817!

Back to the project, in Brescia, since 1980, archaeological research has been a central component. This has been carried out by the Superintendence with the contribution of the public authorities, in line with Andrea Emiliani's project. Over a period of thirty years five sectors were excavated:

(a) large spaces within the monastery, which, except for a small sample, were not included in the museum due to an 'original sin': the museum project, which also envisaged radical changes to some of the monastery buildings, did not provide for excavations, which immediately became indispensable as soon as work began. Digging was undertaken only afterwards therefore, rather than being considered as a prerequisite that would have increased the exhibition potential of the museum;

(b) the Roman *domus* known as the Ortaglia (the name given in the Middle Ages to the monastery gardens), made part of the museum of

Santa Giulia. Here however, as in the area of the orchards there were no traces of the medieval period, the opportunity disappeared for showing the fifteen hundred years of history subsequent to the *domus*: the Goth settlement, the Lombard *corte regia*, and finally the monastery founded by King Desiderio;

(c) the republican phase of the Capitolium, opened to the public in the summer of 2015 in combination with a major exhibition on the various stages of Romanisation of the “People of the Po” (Rossi, Morandini 2015). It should be noted that in the exhibition neither the proto phases nor the Lombard reuse of the Capitolium as a craft and residential area emerged, the topic for which this area had been added to the UNESCO Brescia project;

(d) certain sectors of the Theatre, which in the Emiliani project was an essential part of the museum. Adjacent to the Capitolium and dug out of the side of the hill overlooking Brescia, it underwent, after being abandoned in the 5th century, different stages of reuse for burial and settlement, culminating in the 13th-14th century with the construction of the palazzo of the Maggi-Gambera family, which occupied the entire podium. Part of it was demolished in the 1950s and 1960s with the aim of recovering the theatre, but then, in the 1970s and 1980s, the Superintendence staff, and consensus, changed: the surviving part of the palazzo was restored (although its future is still awaiting a final decision) and the plan to restore the podium and stairs was rejected. The idea had been to revive the use of the theatre, as is the case at the Arena and Roman Theatre in Verona. Unused, it looms over the theatre and the Capitolium like a strange and mutilated body, having lost its outbuildings. Therefore the opportunity was lost for some important cultural improvement that could have brought visitors to the museum next door;

(e) the top of the castle, where the museum visit planned by Andrea Emiliani ended, was already known to have a Roman temple inside the medieval fortification and a large church, the remains of which were brought to light by old excavations; new excavations at the foot of the temple shed light on early medieval phases including a baths area belonging to the era, probably to the Gothic period. But instead of thinking about showing the archaeological remains they were almost all buried again, including the church, and the fortification – used as an exhibition hall for the Renaissance weapons collections – was cut off, like a foreign body, from the museum visit.

For a sector that was removed, another two, not planned in the project, arrived on the scene, independently of the initiatives of the City Hall, and without occupying any relevant position.

The Province of Brescia, owner of the "palazzo Martinengo", which overlooks the Forum and is adjacent to the Capitolium, created there an exhibition centre for the excavations showing the sequence, relating to the Forum-Capitolium, with the remains of Iron Age huts, the porch and bath overlooking the Forum and a subsequent phase of Lombard occupation, which is presented in a video projected on one of the exhibition walls. Unfortunately, it is open only sporadically (in the summer of 2015 thanks to the volunteers of the Touring Club of Italy).

The Archaeological Superintendence, having acquired ownership of a part of the church that closed the Forum off to the south, excavated there and now uses the space for its offices. The area is not open to the public, but it could be in the future.

Brescia, like other wealthy cities, has invested significant resources in an effort to create an image of a city able to attract visitors and generate wealth through cultural tourism. This objective, however, is remote because the project, drawn up in the 1970s by Andrea Emiliani and drawn out for 30 years, found itself in a peripheral social and cultural environment that tried to imitate experiences carried out elsewhere, instead of enhancing the strong points of Brescia. It also lasted too long, with a change in administration, and too many decision-makers alternating in time. Lastly, it involved architects, who without the genius of Carlo Scarpa in Verona and Palermo, were unable to create quality structures independent from their content. Let us take a detailed look at the weaknesses:

1. The idea of an all-comprehensive City Museum with so many disparate sections, from prehistoric to modern times, as well as the collections, was misguided: the focus of what was exceptional and represented by what survives of the monastery and the church of San Salvatore was lost in a web of horizontal information. Some areas were built on ideas that were already old, and are now totally outdated; other sections, too full of artefacts of little value, have a 19th century look about them; the multimedia tools are dated; the education department needs a facelift.

2. While scientific results of archaeological research revealed a complex sequence in which the Lombard phases promised outstanding examples, the museum display imposed by the Archaeological Superintendence, with its purely Roman-oriented vision, only showed the building phases of that period, removing meanings and structures from the UNESCO project the municipality was meanwhile carrying out.

3. Even more marked was the inconsistency with the story that another player in the project, the *Fondazione Brescia Musei*, was

creating in relation to the launching of “Lombard Brescia”. While the idea of creating a myth was a good one, the decision to focus on the figure of Ermengarde, the repudiated wife of Charlemagne, was less appropriate. The story of this unfortunate figure, who sought refuge in the Brescia monastery until her death, has no historical footholds and was invented by Alessandro Manzoni in *Adelchi*, one of his minor works. A novel has recently been published by Silvana Piva Viganò, titled “*Langobardia. On the trail of Ermengarde*” and for its launch a conference was organised on “*The myth of Ermengarde. The women of king Desiderio: on the trail of Ermengarde*” (Brescia, 16 May, 2015), at which eminent scholars spoke on the topics of their research. This provided the setting for the book launch by Paolo Corsini, former mayor of Brescia in the 1990s. In itself the idea of building a myth is positive and serves to attract visitors. One such example is that of Romeo and Juliet, which has helped to make Verona a tourist centre of excellence. The problem is that Manzoni is not Shakespeare (and we can’t help that). Moreover, Romeo and Juliet are two young romantics that attract the sympathy of their current peers; the restructuring carried out in 1937-1940 transformed an anonymous medieval house in Verona into Juliet’s house and added a balcony built with some 15th century elements, which has become a visual part of the myth (Bernard c.s.). Conversely, Ermengarde is a wife repudiated by her husband, and the unfortunate daughter of a king imprisoned in France. Finally, the Arena, the Roman theatre of Verona and the Castel Vecchio, turned into a venue by an architect as great as Carlo Scarpa, cannot be compared to the crass restructuring of the castle and the Santa Giulia monastery in Brescia, while the Roman Theatre is a ruin, which interests only architectural specialists.

In conclusion, the City of Brescia, has focused on three cultural products, not only uncoordinated but even in obvious competition with each other: (1) the Santa Giulia museum, stuffed with a mishmash of objects and lacking an itinerary based on the excavations of the 1980s, which would have enhanced the value of the Lombard building period; (2) later, since the 1990s, it has financed the archaeological excavations of the theatre, Capitolium and Roman forum, leaving the decision to the Superintendence to enhance only the Roman monumental phases; (3) at the same time it joined the *Italia Langobardorum* project, not as a priority, but just as one of many cultural initiatives.

On the tourist front the desired results have not arrived, probably due more to organisational problems than anything else: attempts at creating synergy with Lake Garda, a tourist attraction par excellence,

have not been able to divert any of the traditional excursions to Verona, Venice and Mantua. It is true that cultural tourism today is conditioned by the large tour operators that control the flow, but it is equally true that little has been done. This is due, on the one hand, to the lack in Brescia of any tourist entrepreneurship; on the other, to the multiplicity of groups involved, a problem that should now be solved with the establishment of a tourist agency for the whole of Garda.

Amid this stalemate, UNESCO recognition arrived in 2011, and the city needs to decide whether to keep supporting it, even as rumours from authoritative representatives of economic power are beginning to attack local cultural policies, considered to have used up a lot of money with few results. It is, however, a priority to reflect explicitly on how much weight should be assigned to the Lombards today compared to the overall cultural policy of the city. Should it remain a secondary option among many in the cultural policies pursued in recent years, or should it become the reference point, the city's logo, like the other sites on the UNESCO list, such as Cividale, Spoleto and Benevento, cities that have staked everything on the Lombards? Not an easy choice, and that leads us to another problem hitherto unconsidered: that of having included in the same serial project a city such as Brescia, medium in size, but rich and ambitious, along with other, rather small urban centres and with an uninhabited archaeological area (Castelseprio-Torba). These have all been grouped together with a single goal: to exploit the remains and evidence of the Lombard period. The result is that the list is not homogeneous, and it is impossible to build a hierarchical relationship (the sites being spread across three quarters of Italy) or an equal relationship; it is totally unrealistic for the city of Brescia to be given the same importance as Monte Sant'Angelo!

5.2. Spontaneous initiatives

Outside the institutional activities of the public administration and associations/institutions affiliated to them, the promotion of Brescia in the UNESCO site has been exploited to launch new partnerships and new initiatives. I shall examine a couple, highlighting the positive aspects and limitations with respect to what should be understood as a marketing strategy.

Some scholars of varying skills (but curiously no Lombard specialists) have formed an association (CISL: "*Centro Italiano di Studi Longobardi*"), which successfully obtained substantial funding from different institutions. As a first step, in 2013, it organised a meeting to show that the church of San Salvatore is not Lombard. A second conference

was held in Varese in December 2015, entitled “Teodolinda. The Lombards at the dawn of Europe”, a title borrowed from the exhibition of 2007 in Turin (“The Lombards. From the fall of the empire to the dawn of Italy”: Brogiolo, Chavarría 2007). No doubt it is positive for the furthering of research to have initiatives which break with tradition (and this is the case, since no one in the new association took part in the exhibition in the year 2000, or in the research carried out at the monastery of San Salvatore/Santa Giulia). We are still waiting, however, for the proceedings of both meetings to verify the novelty and quality of the new research.

As regards the agriculturalists, on the other hand, the association “Wine Route” (Strada dei Vini) organized a “Lombard” guided tour with tasting at cellars and restaurants in the western territory of Brescia. Among the cultural heritage advertised in a guidebook of some 100 pages there is not one Lombard site, which there would have been if an expert had been involved in the book project. These initiatives are bound to grow, thanks to funding from the Lombardy Region, which seems to believe in the opportunities offered by the UNESCO sites. In 2015 it launched an “ERDF Operational Programme 2014-2020” which includes a tourist/cultural development of big ‘attractors’, in a first step identified in the “UNESCO World Heritage” and “Lombard Opera Heritage”, a strange coupling that will share the planned funding. The overall objective is “economic exploitation of entire regions through the development of integrated products and services that boost tourist inflows”. The specific objective must instead seek to qualify the cultural ‘attractors’: to equip them with new storytelling and multimedia services (3D, augmented reality, mobile apps, and gamification), to integrate these online and with tourist facilities and services (accommodation, gastronomy, shopping).

Considering that in Lombardy, besides the two serial sites (Brescia and Castelseprio) there are eight more UNESCO sites (the Rock Drawings in Valcamonica, the Pile dwellings, Leonardo’s Last Supper, the Worker Village of Vaprio d’Adda, the Sacred Mountains of Varese, Mantua and Sabbioneta, the Fossils at Monte San Giorgio, and Mount Bernina) it is unlikely that any substantial funding will reach Brescia. I believe, however, that new ideas are needed, and that the voice should be given back to specialist scholars in this new phase.

These initiatives, to be viewed positively because they have taken advantage of the impetus brought by UNESCO recognition, also lead us to reflect on the role of private associations who act as ‘translators’ of the results of the research done by the professionals, to be reworked

for the various target audiences, a problem obviously not only of the UNESCO sites but of the whole of the historical heritage enhancement system.

I believe that this delicate issue has to be dealt with by specialised professionals, not only as concerns the traditional activities of writing the educational material, but also regarding the many possibilities offered today of reconstructions of virtual reality that can accompany those of experimental archaeology.

There are many examples beyond the Alps, such as the reconstruction of the Anglo-Saxon village of West Stow in Suffolk (www.weststow.org) and the layout of the Merovingian Musée des Temps Barbares at Marle in France with the reconstructions of the excavation of Goudelancourt-lès-Pierrepont (www.museedestempsbarbares.fr). A well exemplified exhibition trend now is visible at the Poggibonsi Archaeodrome (see the paper by M. Valenti in this volume), where part of the Lombard village has been rebuilt and animated by volunteers acting out the various tasks that were carried out there, all in keeping with the excavation findings. The result is the direct involvement of the visitor in one of the best educational-attractor tools possible. The exhibition is alive and open to collaboration with associations and local institutions, as museums should be and as many were, those in Brescia included, until the 1960s. Associations, enthusiasts and scholars frequented the museums up until the 1980s when this was stopped by the self-referentiality of institutions that thought they could safeguard through bureaucratic repression alone and not through widespread culture. Without a situation where scholars work together as equals with the specialists of 'translation' and the diversified social world, safeguarding is not possible, museums do not attract visitors and the UNESCO sites, never mind their quality and opportunities, are likely to be the merely the rhetorical exercise of their designers, in a cultural scene that is changing before our eyes and will reject them.

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