Greek and Roman Theatres in Mediterranean area
International Seminar

Tuesday 11th June | Wednesday 12th June 2019
Palazzo Badoer, Aula Tafuri

Maddalena Bassani, Alessandra Ferrighi
Cataloguing ancient monuments: international standards and specific needs

The theme that we propose concerns the Cataloguing of Cultural Heritage.
I will try to introduce this theme in more general terms, but first of all I must underline an important aspect.
When we talk about Heritage we must always contextualize the place and the geographical context where we are. Because the concept of Heritage, and its protection, is not the same in all the continents or countries of the world. So also the need to "catalogue in order to know" depends on the values that we attribute to the landscape, to the historical centres, to the architecture, to the objects of art to all that we call "Cultural Heritage".
When the Ministry of Cultural Heritage (Ministero dei Beni Culturali) was established in 1975, the Istituto centrale per il catalogo e la documentazione - Central Institute for Cataloguing and Documentation - ICCD was also created, which has become one of the model institutes for cataloguing.

In my research experience every time, I found myself with the need to collect data, from creating the catalogue for scientific instruments at the Padua astronomical observatory, to cataloguing the historic plasters of Venice, I always took the rules as a starting point from ICCD.

We should ask some questions. Why catalogue Cultural Heritage?
The first answer is to know, for quantify, locate, define number, circumscribe the Heritage, after what has been defined what is the Heritage. You must know the Heritage to safeguard for protection it, to conserve it.
We have attributed to the artefacts a value of history and art, and culture, once this value is assimilated we must protect them from time, from disasters, from the work of man.
You must catalogue to manage the Heritage, to know how many resources are needed for their protection. And If you know the Heritage, it can add value and promote it.
But how to catalogue the Cultural Heritage? What data to collect?
How to identify the object? Let's think about its location linked to the address, to the cadastral data. How to organize the data of the card, how to group them by data categories. How to fill in the data so that they are comparable to each other. For example, how to write the date. Do I separate the year from the month and day, or do I write day, month, year together? These are some old paper cards. Originally the cards were paper-based and compiled by hand, then with the typewriter.

But how to catalogue the Cultural Heritage in the digital age?
What was done at the beginning? the cards were organized in digital format, the cards were written with writing programs, then with table, then structuring in databases but at the beginning were not interoperable.
The lack of interoperable structures highlighted some problems. The difficulties were therefore to share the data or to have a general catalogue to work with.
In Italy the Ministry of Cultural Heritage - Mibact - has established standardization for cataloguing through IT procedures. The Mibact has created a web site where all the data were merged into the idea that they could also be used in emergency situations. That's why the card name is "Carta del rischio", Paper of the risk.
The Mibact then created "Vincoli in rete", a new study of the typology of Cultural Heritage.
Here we have a database that can be searched online. We can filter data based on location. To the typology and look the dating. A new window opens with the list. For Sicily it selected 15 records. And by clicking on the icon of the world we can open a new window and locate the theatre we were looking for. We can repeat the same
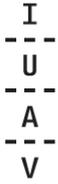
thing by changing province. Let's put Padua we find a single record and go to see where the theatre of Montegrotto is.

Beyond the institutional obligations of the various competent office, cataloguing means sharing the data and making it available to the community. Just like UNESCO did. In their website you can view all the sites protected by UNESCO through an interactive map.

There is the possibility through a mask to open a window where to make search filters. For example, choosing the geographical area, the country, I chose Greece. You see where the UNESCO sites are in Greece.

Click on one of these, as you can see a small pop-up window opens. Clicking in the window opens a new page with all the data that Unesco has decided to make available to the public.

Finally, I mention Diazoma, through their website, where the Greek theatres were located. But our guests will talk about this.

But I need to back to the original question.

Why? Why catalogue theatres with this new research that brings together the skills of different work groups.

In my opinion, because we want to create new content to enrich research. Because we want to reorganize these new contents, we want them to be able to visualize, perhaps mapping them, query them. And that's because we want to improve, refine and enlarge the research.

But above all because with the use of new technologies, in the digital age, we have the opportunity to ask ourselves new questions and, in this way, progress in research.
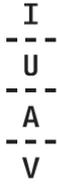
Alessandra Ferrighi

The catalogue of ancient monuments, in our case, of Greek and Roman theatres, represents a great opportunity to study and to promote archaeological buildings in a contemporary dimension. First of all, of course, in terms of preservation of the structure, but also in terms of a 'reappraising' an ancient theatre by community as an 'own' place.

The 'bulletin', with its cards for each theatre, should in fact offer a free tool to be used by both scholars and people, planning wide research projects or touring visits.

For this reason, the two sections of each card ensure different levels of information (I will show you the first version of the card, tomorrow we will see the new one).

The first one, dedicated to the 'objective data', explains the location and the current state of the structure (slide 1), in terms of accessibility and conservation, with a short reconstruction of the history, the studies and the excavations related to it (slide 2): in this way people can have an immediate notion of the archaeological building and its present being, visualizing the monument through selected images (slide 3).

The second section pertains to the 'critical data': it offers a detailed description of the monument in its principal chronological phases (slide 4), with a specific focus to the plan, the decorative elements and so on. Furthermore, in this section, all the information about the modern use (legal protection, owner's and entrusted management) are listed (slide 5), in order to guarantee a wider perspective of the structures in the contemporary reality. Finally, because of its double use (for scholars and for non experts), the bulletin presents a selected bibliography of the most important studies related to the monument.

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This type of informatic bulletin can represents an important tool to evaluate the state of the ancient buildings and to plan their promotion in the modern city. In this sense it could be useful to arrange different levels of queries in order to permit a multiple usage of the database, both by scholars or authorities and by public.

Such cataloguing potentialities appeared immediately after a firts test running of the bullettin, realized by the students of the Class of Greek and Latin Sources in the Università Iuav di Venezia, and that will be presented tomorrow morning. Many data related to the permanent or no-permanent buildings around the ancient theatre can in fact suggest new ideas to plan future architectural interventions, as well as to update the current state of conservation and to highlight the need of specific restoration actions.

For this reason, because the bulletin will consider all the ancient buildings for shows around the Mediterranean area, it should be really easy to complete by authors and it should be immediately comprehensible by people and tourists approaching the cards without a scientific background.

In my opinion, it is very important that the scientific management of the network will guarantee a permanent check of the bulletin through the time, in a long term perspective: it's going to permit scientific progress of the studies and at the same time to ensure a high level of the dataset searchable by people.

To conclude, I would also add some observations about the contexts where the structures for shows were built (slide 6-10). In most cases the theatres rised up in Greek or Roman *municipia* or *vicus*, as in the case of Montegrotto Terme: for this reason, to better understand their role in ancient settlements we could also foreseen a further field dedicated to notes about other archaeological buildings linked to the theatre, or to highlight remarks related to the buildings for shows and their uses in Antiquity.

With all these suggestions, the bulletin will be a strong challenge for we all to encourage the next steps of the network.

Maddalena Bassani