

ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE

MUR DM118 - History of the vulnerabilities of the architectural heritage: studies and interpretations of sources for risk assessment and community place-making

Funded By	MINISTERO DELL'UNIVERSITA' E DELLA RICERCA [P.iva/CF:97429780584] Dipartimento DIST
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Context of the research activity	<p>The knowledge of the architectural heritage and the evaluation of the risk to which it is subjected pass through an analytical and historicised examination of the components of the risk itself, that is: the vulnerability of artefacts, the hazardousness of territorial contexts, the exposure of human and cultural resources, and the resilience of communities. The disciplines that study the history of the transformations of settlements and architecture can thus contribute decisively to a correct evaluation - periodized and spatialised - of each of the factors that contribute to risk assessment, based on a correct exegesis of the historical sources - documentary and material - that can narrate the biography of the vulnerabilities to which the heritage is subjected.</p> <p>Progetto finanziato nell'ambito del PNRR – DM 118/2023 - CUP E14D23001880006</p>
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	<p>The doctoral project intends to experiment and develop methods for studying the vulnerability of heritage based on historical knowledge, and aimed in particular at those places in which communities identify themselves and to whose social process of heritagization they actively contribute. In particular, attention will be paid to those areas where not only the territory but also the sense of belonging to a living community is most fragile. These are in fact places 'at risk' for a plurality of historical and social causes, which current 'technical' risk assessment mechanisms tend to underestimate or neglect: vulnerability is therefore in the artefacts, but also in the system of values that presides over heritage processes and in the daily care practices, which also constitute place-making processes. The issue is therefore a delicate one for the most marginal areas of the country, from the point of view of both morphological fragility (seismic, hydrogeological, forest fire risk) and anthropic problems (depopulation, disaffection to heritage, neglect or vandalism due to</p>
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Objectives

abandonment), since the capillary distribution of so-called minor heritage on the territory and its consistency discourage extensive surveys and investments in research. It is precisely in such areas, however, that heritage constitutes a fundamental resource.

The topic has already been addressed in recent years by the Politecnico - within the framework of research agreements supported by different bodies and foundations - with particular attention to the vulnerabilities to which heritage of religious interest is subjected. The topic now intersects with research programmes that thematise the relationship between the study of vulnerabilities, prevention and planning, extending the focus from religious heritage to a much broader range of heritagization and de-heritagization processes.

The study of a broad spectrum of vulnerabilities for multiple categories of heritage needs to interpret sources that are less familiar to traditional, single-discipline historical-architectural research. The objective is to include in the protocols for assessing vulnerabilities, dangers and therefore risks, at the various scales, analyses that reveal the historical depth of the phenomena, making use of a correct exegesis of sources of various kinds, such as chorographies, narratives and chronicles, erudite accounts, administrative and fiscal records, technical and accounting sources, local publications and magazines, homiletic and political literature, hagiography, etc. The aim is the construction of a kind of exegetical and methodological abacus, aimed at understanding the historical reasons for vulnerability, and available through the correct and reasoned application of appropriately georeferenced digital platforms.

The development of the project will of course have to take into account the intense dissemination activity of methods and new practices promoted by the competent international bodies (Icomos and Iccrom first of all, in particular the Icomos-Icorp scientific committee) and operate within the criteria defined by the international documents on risk management and reduction (Sendai Framework and application documents, as well as the Heritage and resilience document of 2013 and subsequent declinations).

Outcome will be a manual/protocol/tool kit that can integrate the interpretation of historical sources of different nature, in order to identify, test and validate a framework of methods, lexicons and investigation tools that allow to give historical depth to the processes of risk assessment and design of regeneration dynamics at territorial scale, in particular for the most fragile and marginal areas of the country.

The outcome should have an academic and institutional consistency, based on international literature and practices, but it should also have an operational expendibility in the local scenarios, in order also to stimulate the dialogue between heritage communities, policy-makers and professionals/practitioners, to foster the circulation of testimonies and documents that are sometimes themselves 'fragile', deposited in local archives and memories. Such data could be of great use in preventive and maintenance practices, in which the role of heritage communities is becoming more and more internationally recognised, e.g. also by the Faro Convention.

The doctoral candidate must be interested in developing a research career in the field of historical-architectural disciplines, but must have solid technical skills in his/her basic training in order to be able to engage in a competent dialogue with experts in risk assessment (master's degree in architecture or building/civil engineering). The doctoral student will have to work within a disciplinary framework in which the historical disciplines will play a decisive role in investigating the cultural and geographical rootedness of the

Skills and competencies for the development of the activity

phenomena of heritagization, de-heritagization, abandonment and therefore risk, collaborating in the transdisciplinary framework that the PhD in Architectural Heritage traditionally offers. He/she will also need to be familiar with relating the exegesis of written sources of a different nature with the interpretation of the related stratified material sources, investigated by means of the appropriate methods of investigation and diagnostics.

The project is therefore open to transdisciplinary contributions that can connect the architectural scale with the territorial and landscape scale, and to disciplines dealing with data management systems and georeferenced spatialisation of physical and cultural phenomena. In developing the specific objectives of the research project, also in experimental pilot case studies, cotuteries may be envisaged of disciplines pertaining to urban and territorial planning, structures and structural risk assessment, conservation, and the sociology of the environment, cultural heritage and risk.