Chapter 61

Resource Integration and Value Co-Creation in Cultural Heritage Management

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ABSTRACT

Cultural Heritage-Management (CHM) in Italy appears to chronically suffer from resources fragmentation. The aim of this chapter is to highlight the need for a value co-creation logic based on resource integration in CHM to improve awareness and involve citizens, organizations and other stakeholders in the cultural heritage preservation and enhancement activities. The methodological approach adopted is an integration among Service-Dominant-logic (S-DL) and Service-Science (SS), within the general framework of the Viable-Systems-Approach (VSA). By shifting focus from the objects of exchange to the relations among parties, S-DL and SS emphasize the importance of collaboration in market interaction. VSA integrates the two perspectives within the structure-system paradigm explaining how collaboration among viable systems takes place. On the basis of the proposed integrated perspective a Service-Based-Systems approach is defined that allows developing a model for CHM based on a value co-creation logic. The authors argue that, to implement an effective co-creation, actors should be linked as resource integrators within a network relationship and share a governance approach inspired cooperating principles as postulated by the VSA consonance model. The chapter provides a conceptual framework of reference for integrating the wide variety of resources needed for an effective management approach to cultural heritage preservation and enhancement. This approach requires a cultural change in CHM organizations in order to effectively exploit opportunities of a co-creation logic oriented to integrate multi-disciplinary; multi-professional resources; capabilities and competences. By adopting the VSA consonance framework, the authors highlight the relational conditions for resource integration in a Cultural Heritage Territorial System model on the basis of a value co-creation logic.

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1. INTRODUCTION: THE CHANGED VIEW OF CULTURAL VALUE

In the evolution of culture theory, especially in the 1960s, a new concept of culture emerged that was opposed to the dominant material view; this new concept clearly shows the shift from an objective and structural view of cultural heritage to a global, systemic and functional view. In this view, the focus is on the user, and the emphasis is on the anthropological significance of the concept, which approximates that of civilization (Montella, 2012). According to the evolving interpretation, the cultural heritage includes not only tangible goods but also intangible ones, such as symbols and values, as relevant elements that contribute to an expression of community and individual identity that is both historically and territorially contextualized (Montella, 2009a, 2009b, 2012, Barile, Montella & Saviano, 2011).

The notion of bene culturale, in particular, was introduced in Italy in the mid-1960s and is defined as “any material evidence with value to civilization” (AA.VV, 1967; Montella, 2012). According to this definition, the notion of bene culturale includes any evidence of civilization offered not only by objects of value but also by everyday materials and, most importantly, by the context through which cultural value is expressed. This globally recognized relevant step, enshrined in the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage, has significantly enlarged the notion of cultural value.

Cultural value, therefore, is viewed not so much as embedded in an object but, conversely, as emergent from the interaction between several components, both tangible and intangible. From a customer perspective, in particular, cultural value emerges from the interaction between an offering system, which has been organized to propose a value, and a beneficiary/user who is capable of extracting that value through the interaction process.

This cultural shift in how the value of cultural heritage is viewed has many implications. It leads, first of all, to valorizing the cultural value of a wider set of goods, but it goes far beyond. The changed view helps to recognize, for example, that the cultural value of a landscape is not only linked to the aesthetic enjoinderment of its view, i.e., to its attributes of beauty, but also and primarily to the multiple meanings emerging from that view on the part of the observer when enjoying it. However, the most relevant implications of this evolution lie in the change in perspective that it stimulates when addressing the novel notion of cultural value; this change makes it possible to capture value in a contextual and dynamic manner (Vos & Meekes, 1999).

The problem is that this change in perspective appears to not yet be fully accomplished. In fact, behind this novel notion of cultural value, there is a more relevant change that must be better understood and that can lead to a change in the interpretation and management of cultural heritage and, in particular, its valorization. In a nutshell, the most significant change is in the way in which cultural value is offered and enjoyed, which essentially implies a focus on its ‘emergence’ mechanisms.

Therefore, there is still a significant gap to cover, both theoretically and practically, by clarifying the implications of the changed view and by deriving from it new lines of action with the aim of better and more effectively valorizing cultural heritage.

Italian cultural heritage, indeed, is currently in need of urgent interventions of conservation and valorization (Burch & Magar, 2007; Stanley-Price, Burch & Magar, 2007; Varoli-Piazza, 2007; Petrillo, 2008). Italy is a unique country that is privileged in terms of the territorial continuity of its cultural phenomena (Chastel, 1980; Siano & Siglioccolo, 2008; Siano, Siglioccolo & Confetto, 2009; Siano, Eagle, Confetto & Siglioccolo, 2010). Nevertheless, the mapping of the attraction capacity of Italy’s cultural heritage reveals that the greatest common interest in cultural goods derives from tourism (Johnson & Thomas, 1995) in the two forms of mass tourism and the niche