

The intent: to collect points of view and opinions from widely differing backgrounds and experiences and which have been expressed as a result of previous exchanges that converge into synergistic contributions. The themes under discussion, the scientific areas covering historical-philosophical and technical-managerial fields involved in considering current social, economic, cultural and scientific research in a globalized world, are represented by several scholars whose expertise and activities come primarily from the academic world. This refers to Universities with different histories and territorial realities that have, however, been affected by the process which for years has standardized or has attempted to standardize the trends, needs and objectives of different countries. The reader will decide whether the present contribution is constructive and significant in strengthening that important concept which for years now has been the primary objective of this Journal: interdisciplinarity, a synergy and mutual need that can be summed up in: "It is not knowing how to, but the love of knowing".

Editor-in-Chief

# ART, SCIENCE AND HISTORY IN A GLOBALIZED WORLD: THE CASE OF ITALY-CHINA

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## **Introduction**

First of all two truths need to be highlighted.

History can illustrate both the past and the present, but there is no teaching from the past that forbids us from plotting and pursuing paths for the future.

In this regard, it is right to point out that there is no doubt about the documentary basis representing the functional source history uses as a reference: even documentary references to primitive legends and myths can be traced back to the memories of tribes and / or clans.

A great many ages and centuries have passed and, correspondingly, history has resorted to writing in a less arbitrary way and is increasingly based on numerous and sophisticated types of documentation: tangible proof can be found in the use of informatics, analytical and statistical technologies for the procurement, classification, analysis and archiving of a vast amount of traditional and new data.

In this way, if it is true that history establishes identities that come from our past and allows exchange and cohesion between peoples of different nationalities by outlining a future with common intents and objectives in a world currently without borders and with a pluralistic social vision, it is equally true that this is evident, not only in the multifaceted commercial sector but also in the scientific sector of various countries at an international and intercontinental level.

It is in this globalized world, a world of exchanges that is open and interconnected,

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organized as a network as vast as the earth, that communication happens, in a constant connecting and disconnecting that in certain places is denser because favored by their location and by what is produced or traded.

It is also important to mention that impoverishment, questions of material and physical security, crises in welfare, cultural withdrawal, all translate into the need for regional and national borders, for impassable frontiers, in clear contradiction with a globalized world.

It is equally true that the immediate language used for communication does not include historical memory, just as the time-consuming decision-making mechanisms at national and European level are not understood by those who demand answers, living their daily lives with difficulty or by those who are filled with European ideals that have proven to be increasingly less attainable.

The absence of historical memory accentuates the negative perception of reality and determines retreat in the face of external threats, from terrorism to immigration, from climate change to commercial dumping.

Although briefly covering these contrasting views and effects, in other words, this active process of globalization, which, however, responds to a situation that engages countries with different histories, identities, cultures, socio-economic and political situations, the “case of Italy-China” is examined as it is considered an emblematic example and due to the experience which has involved us directly (and discussed later).

### **The development of cultural heritage conservation in China and collaboration between China and Italy**

A plurality of values exist in cultural heritage, each of particular significance for scientific research. For example, the cradle of humankind in South Africa’s Gauteng province, about 50km northwest of Johannesburg, was listed by UNESCO in 1999 as a World Heritage Site. This is because a large number of hominid fossils were found there, some dating back to as far as 3.5 million years ago, making them the oldest ever found. This heritage has contributed to the understanding of human evolution, and is considered to have exceptional scientific value. The cultural heritage can also help us to understand the history and society of the past; it therefore has an educational value. People are able to learn about the history, the evolution of humankind and our society through observation and interaction with these artifacts. Cultural heritage has often been seen as a source of national unity arising from the recognition of great architecture, monuments or achievements (1). Cultural heritage helps to create social identity and contribute to social cohesion. Very often, cultural heritage also has an aesthetic value. Some even claim that aesthetic value is related to the quality of our human life. This is one of the reasons why cultural heritage can attract visitors.

Moreover, cultural heritage can also have an enormous economic value. Just take the following two examples in China: in 2015, 15 million people visited the Forbidden City in Beijing (2),<sup>1</sup> and 5.6 million people visited Emperor Qingshihuang’s Mausoleum, a museum site in Xi’an, to see the terracotta soldiers (3). Ancient traditional architecture in small towns such as Wuzhen in Zhejiang Province and Wuyuan in Anhui province, now attract visitors from all over China, evidencing the fact that more and more people are aware of the importance of cultural heritage. In 2014, around 300 million people travelled around China sightseeing, spending 3031 billion yuan on tourism. In

the past 10 years more and more Chinese people have travelled abroad for tourism. In fact, the number of Chinese visiting heritage sites around the world increased from 70.25 million in 2011 to 119.8 million in 2015 (4). Regardless of whether it is national or international tourism, cultural heritage is often seen as an important factor in attracting people to travel. Cultural heritage could consequently be a potential 'gold mine' for economic development, as it is evident there exists a mutually beneficial relationship between the protection and sustainable use of cultural heritage and economic development (5).

Following China's rapid economic development since 1978, the government has had more money to invest in the conservation of cultural heritage. In 2012, the Chinese government raised the budget for cultural heritage conservation to 12.7 billion yuan (6). And the special subsidy for cultural heritage conservation was increased significantly from 1.1 billion yuan in 2010 to 8 billion in 2014 in China (7). Beijing municipal government alone increased the fund from 0.15 billion of the past years to 1 billion yuan in 2012 (8). However, there has been criticism regarding the actual amount spent on cultural heritage conservation which accounted for only 5% of the overall budget for museums (9). Moreover, scholars report that in the past 30 years cultural heritage in China has been destroyed at an unprecedented speed. In May 2015, several ancient tombs were found during the construction of a new road in Jinan city, capital of Shandong Province. Although some tombs were about 1000 years old and had very beautiful murals, they were still destroyed without carrying out any form of archaeological excavation or protection, in spite of the fact that some private entrepreneurs were willing to offer donations for their protection (10). It is evident then that China still has a long way to go in the protection and conservation of cultural heritage.

However, there is optimism for the future concerning cultural heritage conservation in China. Italy has a long history of cultural heritage conservation with a wealth of knowledge and expertise in this field: collaboration between China and Italy will be of great help in programming China's cultural heritage conservation. This is crucial for our global community, as this particular cultural heritage may belong to China, but they also belong to humankind.

Italy and China are significant testimony of this long history of goods, customs, languages and cultures of the world: two atavistic and prestigious "*historiae*", but at the same time different, both genetically and operationally, methodologies to understand, realize and promote projects.

Indeed, it is also right to speak of the needs and benefits which both countries have reciprocally received, as well as the charm and attraction that has characterized Italic technology and imagination and the mystery and reality of the Celestial Empire.

Furthermore, in the field of commerce, turning to China has become a "must" for many entrepreneurs in the West in recent years. It was the era of the "flat" world, described as a system without financial friction and geopolitical tensions, in which obstacles could be ignored thanks to technology. In what now seems to be a long ago golden age, the race of European companies to produce in China has become one of the symbols of modernity. This is why then, Italy is now 15<sup>th</sup> in the list of commercial partners in the Celestial Empire worldwide and 4<sup>th</sup> in Europe, with trade in 2014 reaching 35.6 billion euros and a significant number of products carrying the "made in Italy" logo: a situation which, despite the series of current events regarding recent setbacks in the Chinese economy, leading to concern for the possible effects of a slowdown in

trade and overall in world development, due to the tension that the uncertainty of prospects creates on the markets, also in relation to management of the exchange rate.

This is how the needs of the two countries – even though geographically distant but extremely close in their intent and objectives – have converged unilaterally, enclosing and realizing in their “creativity” both of the particularities that distinguish their respective genetic characteristics.

The conceptual term “creativity”, in fact, indicating the art or the cognitive ability of the mind to create and invent, thanks to imagination and innovation, introduces the categories of “new” and “useful” enclosed in the creative activity of society and history.

“The term “new” relates to the historical moment in which it is conceived, the term “useful” is linked to social understanding and recognition. New and useful adequately represent the essence of the creative act: an overcoming of the existing rules (new) establishing an additional shared rule (because it has proven useful).”(11)

### **Collaboration between the University of Bologna and Zhejiang University**

What has been reported in reference to “creativity”, already highlighted in the Editorial of this issue of the Journal, finds additional documented and tangible confirmation in science.

In this respect it is right to consider, as Galenson points out (12), that there are two kinds of creativity: the purely conceptual innovators, who are often young people, able to create models of the world intuitively; the experimental innovators, often more advanced in years, who look to the world and gain experience, to then return it in a different form in their works.

An aging society such as that in the Western world is now beset by prejudices about its infertility: it believes in the innovation of young people, and discourages it in the not so young.

In referring to this bilateral concept of creativity, the scientific answer, in this context, falls within the themes and activities, planned and pursued in the cultural and environmental heritage sector as a result of the collaboration between the Cultural Heritage Institute of Zhejiang University in China and the Department of Cultural Heritage - Diagnostic-Laboratory for Cultural Heritage of the Alma Mater Studiorum University of Bologna (Ravenna) in Italy, as part of the Agreement of Cooperation between the two universities signed in December 2014 and related to the: “Joint Research Laboratory for Cultural Heritage Conservation and Diagnosis”(13).

This refers, in particular, to the complex issues relating to the protection and valorization of sites and artifacts of historical, artistic and archaeological interest, fully and correctly integrating historical, technical and managerial skills addressing the above interventions. In this regard there is no doubt that by intervening in the protection and valorization of the artistic and archaeological heritage, the territory - in this case, Chinese - can generate value for culture and simultaneously draw value from it.

The technology and know-how, acquired over the years by the members of the Diagnostic Laboratory for Cultural Heritage of the University of Bologna, have been made available to the cultural reality in China. Laboratory and staff are synonymous with new and useful as a practical store of knowledge of experiences gained in the field of research and has become an “Institute of Excellence” in the Italian system<sup>1</sup>.

This has resulted in the research project “Historical anamnesis, preservation and

valorization of the statues of the Longxing Buddhist temple at Qingzhou (China)", involving the following operational phases: historical anamnesis, diagnosis, restoration, conservation, creation of a database, valorization.

The case study refers to one of the most important archaeological discoveries of the twentieth century. It presents a number of diverse issues and problems that are however of special significance from a: historical perspective, involving a time span ranging from 520 to 1100 AD; technical perspective, relating to the materials, products, as well as the fine workmanship of the sculptural and artistic fabrication and realization; political-religious perspective, attributable to periods of great success and sudden upheavals such as the emergence of Buddhism, which was then followed by Taoism<sup>2</sup>.

### **Collaboration between the Salesian Pontifical University and three Universities in China**

Within this context, of particular interest is the collaboration established at the Salesian Pontifical University (SPU) in Rome with three Chinese universities, the Shanghai Fudan University, Zhejiang University and Beijing Foreign Studies University, respectively, concerning activities relating to studies on philosophy, pedagogy and Latin literature.

After an initial contact in 1998, the first of the three agreements was signed in July 2007, made possible thanks to the valuable work of Professor Roberto Giannatelli, former *Rector Magnificus* of the Salesian Pontifical University: the first between the School of Philosophy of Fudan University and the Faculty of Philosophy of the Salesian Pontifical University, including the College of Education of Zhejiang University and the Faculty of Education of the Salesian Pontifical University, and between Beijing Foreign Studies University and the Faculty of Christian and Classical Literature of the Salesian Pontifical University. The agreements were later renewed in the summer of 2010.

During these years, this collaboration has enabled the exchange of teachers, the presence of Chinese students at the Salesian Pontifical University (with a total of more than 70 since 2002) with projects of qualification and specialization, research and publications (among them the five volumes of the series *Education in China* [ZJU Press 2009] translated into Italian for the series *Italia-Cina Educazione* [LAS 2010-], and - reciprocally - five volumes on *Educazione in Italia*, published in Chinese by ZJU Press).

More specifically, from 2007 to 2012, the Zhejiang University Seeco Education Research Centre was activated and co-directed by Prof. Xu Xiaozhou and Prof. Carlo Socol, who organized several symposia including Educational Innovation (2006), Media Education (2008), VTE (2009), Educators in the Society of Knowledge and Globalization (2010). In 2010, he then started working at the Beijing Foreign Studies University on the promising Latin Language Promotion Centre, called "*Latinitas Sinica*", coordinated by Prof. Michele Ferrero. This specific agreement makes provision for China to send a student to the Faculty of Christian and Classical Literature at the Salesian Pontifical University every year, and that courses in Latin language are organized both in Beijing and Rome.

It can indeed be said that investment in culture not only brings together skills and disciplines, but peoples and persons too.

### Training and research to draw value from culture

It is also important to point out that in the current international socio-economic situation, there is no doubt that culture with its problems of conservation and management should be the leading sector for different countries.

The term "culture" from the verb "*colere*", cultivate, moreover, conveys meanings with different interpretations. A conception of institutional model (education / pedagogy) considers culture as a tool for training and applied research in a society that is based on meritocracy and remunerated competences. In this perspective, a lack of culture leads to socio-economic decline and inventive: this is the situation in present-day society.

But if culture has to be an instrument of education and research, it also follows that businesses should participate in these activities. In particular, Cultural Units (museums, art galleries, libraries, archives,

Superintendencies, cultural centers, foundations, ministries) and Productive Units (Banks, Companies, Firms, companies, associations) because, in a relationship of learning and collaboration and a reciprocal and complementary need, they satisfy the requirements of the institutions involved in the project, in other words, in the "research", as well as providing additional economic and managerial support.

In the past, the economy has almost always addressed culture from a standpoint of public support, thus involving state intervention, considered to be essential to avoid the decline or even the disappearance of the cultural sector.

Funding for artistic and cultural heritage and activities have been distributed without taking into account the real opportunities for economic development that culture has offered resulting in a perspective that is far from being forward-looking.

In recent decades, however, the gradual reduction in public funds allocated to culture has forced those working in the sector to search for new forms of financing.

This situation has consequently given rise to the flourishing of a whole series of innovative fundraising strategies for culture.

Some of these have been directly borrowed from fund-raising techniques traditionally used by no profit organizations in support of the most diverse social causes. Others instead, have their roots in territorial development policies and follow the same lines as public-private partnerships (PPP) set up with the aim of incrementing the competitiveness of certain territories.

This is how new models for the public-private management of cultural heritage emerge which once, might have seemed inadequate, due to the erroneous belief that the logics of culture would clash with those of profit and that on the other hand, profit would imply a negation of culture.

Culture, instead, is a key factor in competitiveness and is able to generate significant economic value for businesses and territories which decide to invest in it.

This refers not only to the current regulatory framework into which sponsorships and donations fall, together with tax incentives, but also to the main techniques of "fundraising".

In this perspective, work is being carried out internationally with the aim of supporting the sectors of culture and creativity and offering increasing opportunities, particularly to young people entering the labor market, whose current problematic fluctuations they are experiencing.

But it is equally important in this international context, as underlined by Elia Valori



(14), that there be compliance with certain ethical values at a personal and interpersonal level, such as: altruism, loyalty, faith, namely, the renunciation of particularism, commitment to solidarity, openness to the metaphysical dimension. In this manner, it is highlighted how, through moral response and adherence to these values, it is possible to contribute to peace and harmony both on an innermost plane and at a social level.

In conclusion, how can reference not be made to Pope Frances' recent denunciation on the "globalization of indifference"?

In Pope Frances' message for the World Day of Peace on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2016, one of his summaries is entitled: "Overcome indifference and win peace" and asks States to take "concrete measures in favour of the weak and vulnerable". He also requests that "legislation on migration be reviewed, so migrants are treated with acceptance".

There is also an appeal to governments for sustainable management for countries affected by conflict and poverty.

Finally, Pope Frances mentions love for others as a unit of measure by which to judge our actions.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Change Performing Arts, an international company which organizes artistic and cultural events, the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Activities and Tourism (MiBACT) and the Institute for Foreign Trade (ICE) have indicated the Diagnostic Laboratory for Cultural Heritage of the Department of Cultural Heritage of the University of Bologna as one of the public and academic institutes of excellence in Italy. As a result, within the context of the Universal Exposition 2010 in Shanghai, Change Performing Arts, MiBACT and ICE requested results and images related to the research activities of the Diagnostic Laboratory for Cultural Heritage of the University of Bologna, so as to create a video installation representing the city through time. The work was entrusted by ICE to Change Performing Arts S.r.L. Milan, directed by Peter Greenaway.

<sup>2</sup> Emperor Huizong of the Song dynasty was known for repressing Buddhism in favor of Taoism.

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### Biographical notes

**Salvatore Lorusso**, former full Professor in “Chemistry of the Environment and Cultural Heritage” in the Department of Cultural Heritage at the University of Bologna (Ravenna Campus), continues his academic activities in various fields. His scientific activity continues as a member of the Scientific Committee of the project “Joint Research Laboratory for Cultural Heritage Diagnosis and Conservation”, within the Agreement of Cooperation between the University of Bologna, Italy, and Zhejiang University, China. He is the founder and Director of two book series: the first, “*I beni culturali e l’ambiente*” consisting of 11 volumes (Pitagora Editrice, Bologna), and the second, “*La formazione e la ricerca nel settore dei beni culturali e ambientali*”, of two volumes (Mimesis Edizioni, Milano-Udine). He is also Editor-in-Chief of the historical-technical Journal “*Conservation Science in Cultural Heritage*” (Mimesis Edizioni, Milano-Udine).

He is the author of more than 400 publications in national and international scientific journals and congress proceedings, and of 22 volumes covering subjects such as commodity science and the system: artifact-environment-biota. He is a Foreign Member of the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences; the former Vice-president, he is now a Councilor of the Presidency of the *Società Italiana per il Progresso delle Scienze (SIPS)* - founded in 1839); Director General of the Academy of Food and Wine Culture; member of the Scientific Committee of the network “Gardens of Babylon - Green Hub”; Emeritus Professor and Visiting Professor of the Cultural Heritage Institute of Zhejiang University (China); President of the Academic Committee of National Cultural Heritage Preservation (Cultural Relics Bureau of Zhejiang Province). His biography appears in the Marquis 2016 Edition of “Who’s Who in the World”.

**Mantovani Mauro**, a Salesian priest, is currently Rector and Dean of the Faculty of Social Communication Sciences at the Salesian Pontifical University of Rome, where he is full professor in theoretical philosophy. He is Doctor of Philosophy at the Pontifical University of Salamanca in Spain and in theology at the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas “Angelicum” in Rome. He teaches philosophical theology, philosophy

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**Gangfeng Zhang** is an associate professor of the School of Management of Zhejiang University in China, where he teaches Cross-Cultural Management, International Business, and Corporate Culture to undergraduate students and graduate students. He obtained a bachelor degree in Chemistry from former Hangzhou University in China. Later, he received PhD degree in Sociology and Social Research from the University of Trento in Italy with a specialization in Cross-Cultural Management. His interests of research reside in the fields of Cross-Cultural Management and Internationalization of firms. He is a founding member of “Centro Martino Martini per sviluppo relazione Europa-Cina” in Trento, and currently he is working on the publication of the Chinese version of the complete works of Martino Martini in China. Recently (September 2015 – February 2016), he served as a visiting professor in the Business School of Kyushu University in Japan, where he taught a course named “Doing Business in China – A Cultural Perspective” to Japanese MBA students and international exchange MBA students to Kyushu University.

**Vincenzo Barone** is Full Professor in “Theoretical and Computational Chemistry” at the Scuola Normale Superiore of Pisa. Author of more than 650 papers in ISI journals and of several book chapters with more than 35000 citations, an h-factor of 75, and 7 papers with more than 1000 citations each. The most significant scientific contributions include fundamental developments in density functional theory, solvation theory, and computational spectroscopy, together with state-of-the-art applications in materials chemistry, life sciences, nanosciences and cultural heritage. He is fellow of the Accademia dei Lincei, of the International Academy of Quantum Molecular Chemistry, of the European Academy of Sciences and of the Royal Society of Chemistry. He received the Pisani medal in 2014 and the Sacconi medal in 2009. He has been President of the Italian Chemical Society (SCI) and of the Chemistry Panel of the National Agency of Research Evaluation (ANVUR), and is a member of the Advisory Boards of *Spectrochimica Acta A*, *Open Chemistry*, *PCCP*, *Journal of Computational Chemistry* and *Theoretical Chemistry Accounts*. Further details and full reference list are available on the website <http://dreams.sns.it>.