

CONNECTING SITES: WHAT DOES WORLD HERITAGE SITE MANAGEMENT CONSIST IN? INSIGHTS FROM VENETO

Keywords:

World Heritage sites, governance, sustainable development

As often emphasized, UNESCO's World Heritage programme stands out for its global relevance as much as for its local impacts. At the same time, such impacts are heterogeneous and their assessment uneasy, inasmuch stakeholders involved in processes related to World Heritage sites (WHS) act according to sensibly different agendas and procedures: local, regional and national governments, civic organisations, tourism operators, heritage experts – including those working for, or in collaboration with, the World Heritage Center itself –, and so on. What is meant by WHS' management is thus less clear-cut than generally assumed. Drawing upon the experience of the 'support to the coordination of UNESCO sites of Veneto' carried out by a research group of IUAV through a formal agreement with the Veneto Region, this contribution presents an application of the actor-network theory (ANT) to WHS management. It provides an accurate mapping of actors and agencies involved in processes related to WHS, and proposes a pragmatic approach to a field often investigated primarily through documents (such as international recommendations or management plans) rather than in terms of social dynamics. Further practical implications for planning and public policy at the local, regional, national and international levels, are then highlighted.

References

- 1 - Latour B., 2007. *Reassembling the Social. An Introduction to ActorNetwork-Theory*. Oxford: OUP
- 2 - Lusiani M., Ferri P. and Zan L., 2018. *Making Sense of Site Management*, in Makuva (ed.), *Aspects of Management Planning for Cultural World Heritage Sites. Principles, Approaches and Practices*, Cham: Springer, pp. 227-240
- 3 - Pendlebury J., 2013. Conservation values, the authorised heritage discourse and the conservation-planning assemblage. *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 19(7): 709-727
- 4 - Ripp M. and Rodwell D., 2018. Governance in UNESCO World Heritage Sites: Reframing the Role of Management Plans as a Tool to Improve Community Engagement. In Makuva (ed.) *Aspects of Management Planning for Cultural World Heritage Sites. Principles, Approaches and Practices*, Cham: Springer, pp. 241-253
- 5 - Stegmeijer E., Veldpaus L. and Janssen J., 2021. Introduction to A Research Agenda for Heritage Planning: the state of heritage planning in Europe, in Stegmeijer, E. and Veldpaus, L. (eds.), *A Research Agenda for Heritage Planning*. Cheltenham (UK)-Northampton (MA, USA): Elgar, pp. 31-48.