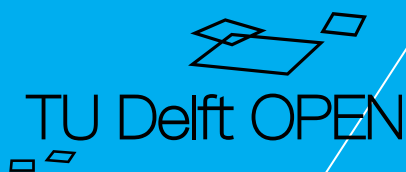




**CA²
RE+DELFT**



Rec — om — men— — da — tion

Conference for Artistic and Architectural
Research & Collective Evaluation of Design-driven
Doctoral Training Programme

Rec —om —men— —tion da

**Conference for Artistic and Architectural
Research & Collective Evaluation of Design-driven
Doctoral Training Programme**

Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment,
Delft University of Technology

The Netherlands, Delft, March 28 – April 1 2022

Recommendation Book of Proceedings Colophon

CA²RE+ Delft RECOMMENDATION: Conference for Artistic and Architectural Research & Collective Evaluation of Design-driven Doctoral Training Programme

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Scientific Committee

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Designing Preservation Integrating the Architectural Project to UNESCO Tools to Tackle Territorial Fragility: the Tivoli Case as a Pilot Experience

Sara Ghirardini, Politecnico di Milano



Intermediate doctoral stage

Supervisors: Pier Federico Caliari, Politecnico di Torino; Francesca Lanz, Northumbria University

UNESCO buffer zones, heritage territoriality, heritage design

Abstract

The research investigates the potential contribution of a design-based approach to the current institutional UNESCO safeguard tools concerning the relation core/territory, challenging the conservative role of *buffer zones* that lead to stalemate situations in terms of territorial development, especially in the Italian context. Through the analysis of case studies, a methodological approach is developed that focuses on the one hand on the use of design tools for the assessment of heritage-related territories (*cognitive framework*), and on the other hand on the use of design actions in the management strategies for valorisation (*interpretation framework*). These tools are tested on the relevant experimental case of Tivoli, seat of two major World Heritage sites, as a pilot experience of integration of design tools in safeguard and management strategies for the solution of territorial fragility in complex heritage-related contexts.

DDR statement

A research based on the cultural heritage debate is naturally committed to the idea of interdisciplinarity: not only in the traditional archaeology/architecture confrontation, but in the wider possible extents, from philosophy and human sciences to economics and technology. But, as architects, we should not forget that architecture is fundamentally design-based, and therefore a doctoral research in architecture should always deal with the practice of design. Even in the most academic works, the role of design is to interlace the tangible and intangible aspects of space. Design are the actions through which we understand, analyse, interpret and think space, and in this research they are crucial both in terms of topic and methodology.

Starting from the consideration that heritage-related territorial fragility is fundamentally due to the lack of care, of use, of transformation, the centrality of the idea of architecture as a practice of spatial care makes design experiences the main object of investigation.

At the same time, the relation between heritage and its surroundings concerns deeply the spatial relations involved, which can be better investigated and transformed through design tools, both analytical and projectual. Different tools are used for different research sections: in the *cognitive framework* the design analysis is interlaced with the direct experience of places, reporting it through graphic and visual elaborations (photo assembling, mapping, sketching); in the *interpretation framework* design tools are used in a proactive way, at different scales and detail, in continuity with the design practice but at the same time re-organising general research contents.

The research aims at bringing a contribution to the international debate on the relationship between cultural heritage and territoriality,¹ exploring the potential of design tools for helping tackle the challenges related to issues of territorial fragility in UNESCO *buffer zones*, namely the areas surrounding a UNESCO designated heritage, with specific concern on the Italian situation, starting from a given opportunity of deepening personal knowledge, as national policies are currently stressing cultural heritage valorisation for the economic recovery of the country.

In the last twenty-five years, the debate on the topic has been developing mainly under the influence of, on one hand, an academic critical approach to heritage values, which has shifted the attention from the static idea of heritage as material artifacts that testify a past, to a more complex vision of heritage as a 'cultural practice',² and on the other hand, the institutional response to these arguments, developed mainly by UNESCO and other international organisations. This resulted on the ground in a widening of the heritage vision from the spotlight on single monuments, including territorial perspectives and immaterial connections in management strategies.³

Within this framework, that has resulted in an increasing formal inclusion of territorial dynamics in heritage practices,⁴ the research critically explores the role of the main tools implemented by UNESCO for the management of the relation between heritage *core* and its surroundings.

In particular it draws on the consideration that the more recent institution of *management plan* (compulsory for any WHL site since 2004), theoretically fostering the inclusion of local dynamics and actors in valorisation policies, is dramatically conflictual with the older institution of *buffer zone*, which defines a passive respect area aimed at excluding external threats for the preservation of heritage integrity. While management plans are object of a wide institutional literature, the role of buffer zones has never been accurately defined,⁵ and even though their conception has significantly changed over the years in the nomination dossiers, in practice they are little more than areas marked on a map, with an overlapping of limitations that often lead to territorial stalemate.

Moreover, none of these tools, though involving different disciplines and expertise, consider design and architectural transformations in the development of strategic interconnections between heritage sites and their surroundings. The inefficacy of UNESCO safeguard tools, reflected in local policies through a rigid mechanism of constraints, often affects the physical state of heritage-related places, resulting in conditions of marginalisation, lack of spatial care, isolation of heritage sites.

The focus of the research is on the Italian situation, not only for the prominent number of sites inscribed in the World Heritage List, but also for the importance given to cultural heritage valorisation for national recovery and development policies: in 2006 a specific law was promoted (L77/2006), establishing annual funds for safeguard and valorisation of UNESCO enlisted sites, with specific concern for the drafting and implementation of management plans. The results of the first ten years since the promulgation of that law have been reported in the publication "*White Paper L.n.77/2006*", which emphasises a growing need of

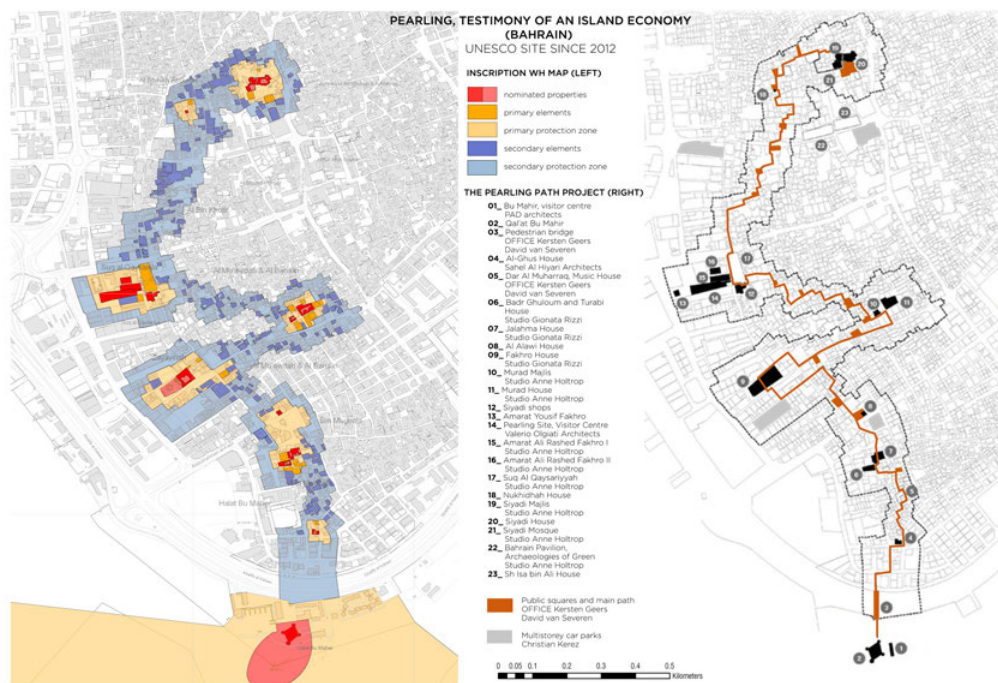


Figure 1: The pearling path, Bahrain. Visual synthesis of the case study. Graphic elaboration by the author based on official UNESCO documents and on the map from: Bernhard Schultz "Valerio Olgiati in Bahrain", Domus 1042, jan 2020

territorial reconnection, but without any contribution of architectural systemic design. Conversely, architecture can be a key factor to investigate and lead the territorial management related to human activities, given its disciplinary attitude for space transformation.

The general research goal is therefore to define the potential role of design in the solution of the dichotomy between abstract strategic planning and heritage territorial reality, identifying architecture as the main practice of spatial care. Design has been chosen as the interpretation key for an architectural investigation on the spatiality of territorial relations between heritage and its surroundings.

The idea of "architecture as therapy of the space",⁶ far from the demiurgic connotation of designers as almighty healers, is related to the recognition of the ethic role of the project in the transformation of the space we live in, and to the relational and social aspects of every modification of the environment. Thus, the focus on the design process as architectural tool for guiding territorial transformation is not a self-referred practice: the interconnection with social and economic disciplines is fundamental to understand the local dynamics and specific needs.

Though criticizing the current role of UNESCO safeguard tools, the research aims at working at the problem from the inside, focusing on a main question: which design tools can be integrated to existing UNESCO management and preservation processes? And how can they contribute to the solution of the territorial heritage-related stalemate?

Due to the extremely different conditions of every heritage site, it wouldn't be realistic to look for universal answers, and the search for

general, top-down solutions for the heritage management, even in the limited national context, has already been proven inefficient.⁷ Especially when it comes to architecture and planning, there are no solution that start from the universal to get to the particular; there is always a specific case, which as such must be analyzed, and which will then produce an optimal solution for that case, and perhaps procedures that can also be generalized to others.⁸

This consideration leads to the development of a research methodology based on the assessment of specific experiences, extrapolating relevant features from a wide range of case studies and then experimenting a scientifically structured design strategy on a practical case. Therefore, after the literature review necessary to frame the topic in its different aspects, a selection of two sets of international reference case studies is investigated, and an "experimental lab" case has been chosen to test the implementation of previously identified design actions.

The first set of references, called "methodological case studies", searches for successful design examples – or, better, *traces of design* – within the official implemented UNESCO safeguard tools of *buffer zones* and *management plans*. These, help defining the structure and the sequence of design integration elements: the *cognitive framework* (analysing the territorial features of the site through the architectural lens in order to establish effective criteria and characters of the buffer zone) and the *interpretation framework* (defining a multi-scale set of spatial actions aimed at integrating general strategies with an effective controlled territorial transformation). [1]

The second set of references, called "design case studies", investigates experiences in which architecture acts in transforming the surroundings of heritage sites in order to create new opportunities and significance, independently from their inscription to the WHL.

Tivoli, the case selected as "experimental lab" is particularly relevant in the Italian framework for several aspects. The municipality hosts two UNESCO enlisted sites, Villa Adriana and Villa d'Este, and a third one in the tentative list, Villa Gregoriana, which attract hundreds of thousand visitors every year, but in a quick tourism dynamic that ignores their territorial context [2] [3]. The ministerial Istituto Autonomo di Villa Adriana e Villa d'Este unifies the two UNESCO sites under the same management institution, that has been working on the development of a wider cultural system, including other nearby historical sites with promotional and marketing actions. Each of the two sites, inscribed separately in the WHL in 1999 and 2001 respectively, has its own buffer zone, defined with unclear criteria, that lies in a frozen state of non-care, while neither of them has a real management plan yet. Currently, a conjoint management plan is finally being drafted; it will involve the context of the two major sites through the proposal of a conjoint buffer zone system. In 2018, an international scientific design consultation promoted by a non-profit academic organisation explored the possibilities and limits of the development processes in Villa Adriana buffer zone through design actions, fostering a new debate on the role of architecture in these areas.



Figure 2: Villa Adriana, core zone vs buffer zone. Ph. Federica Pisacane, Sara Ghirardini



Figure 3: Villa d'Este, core zone vs buffer zone. Ph. Agnese Perrone, Sara Ghirardini

All these factors contribute to define the Tivoli case as the ideal experimental field for the introduction of architectural multi-scale actions within the already existing UNESCO system: the specific goal of this research section is actually the experimentation of design-oriented tools integrated with the UNESCO management structure, in order to foster heritage valorisation through positive planned territorial transformation.

Informed by the previous research sections, the “experimental lab” is split into two phases, derived from the previously analysed methodological case studies, that are subsequent and with specific outputs each.

The *cognitive framework*, intended as an architectural investigation on territorial features, integrates existing documentation and official risk assessment with the direct experience of places: it is based on the *promenadology* theories by sociologist L. Burckhardt,⁹ with the aim of highlighting the human-scale, slow-paced aspects of the relation between heritage and its context, through photographic report of surveys, mapping and sketching. The holistic experience is completed by an investigation on the morphology and topography of the area, but also on the features that define its historic, landscape and architectural value, as well as

social and economic identity. This research phase had the specific goal of (re)defining the buffer zone(s) for Villa Adriana and Villa d'Este, with explicit criteria related to the awareness of places and territorial scopes for transformation/preservation. However, the practical experience brought out the inadequacy of the official and traditional buffer zone implementation, highlighting the necessity of a new heritage-related territorial scope definition that acts as a preliminary step for the valorisation design strategy. [4]

The *interpretation framework* specific output is a design-oriented annex to the new management plan, structuring a concrete process for the controlled territorial development and heritage valorisation coordinated with the strategic social, cultural and preservation policies of the main official document. Preserving the territorial vitality as well as the heritage values, the multi-scale project starts from a general masterplan of the whole buffer area, underlining some main reconnective design actions and defining some punctual architectural intervention of primary and secondary enhancement. The definition of a hierarchy of interventions is essential, both in space and time: they are meant to act as guidelines and trigger for further spontaneous transformations, so the interpretation framework must have a good degree of flexibility and possibility of adaptation to subsequent developments. The project takes on a narrative role, it aims at "revealing another text layer", using an expression borrowed from the *landscape restoration theories*.¹⁰

The connection with the strategic goals identified institutionally in the management plan and derived from the territorial knowledge at different levels, allows the development of an innovative tool for the integration of landscape and architectural transformation in heritage preservation policies, aiming at a mutual exchange and support between heritage and territory.

The last research section will deal with the assessment of the Tivoli experience, with particular attention on the transferability of the results and the potential application of the design approach on analogous cases, even in an international context. As already argued, the specificity of each place, both in terms of heritage values and territoriality, makes it difficult to define general rules for the management and interpretation of the *core-surrounding* interconnection. Acknowledging this, UNESCO tried to avoid in official documents specific indications for the definition of buffer zones and management plans; this produced a great uncertainty and vagueness in the implementation of these safeguard tools. On the other hand, some State Parties (such as Italy) have tried to establish more standard guidelines for the drafting of management plans, creating a bureaucratic entanglement that scatters funds and resources without reaching tangible, long-term results. Learning from the criticalities of too general or top-down, standardized solutions, the research aims at extrapolating from a relevant specific case a pilot design experience developed in collaboration the management system, as a further step towards a flexible methodology that could be adapted efficiently to other similar cases.

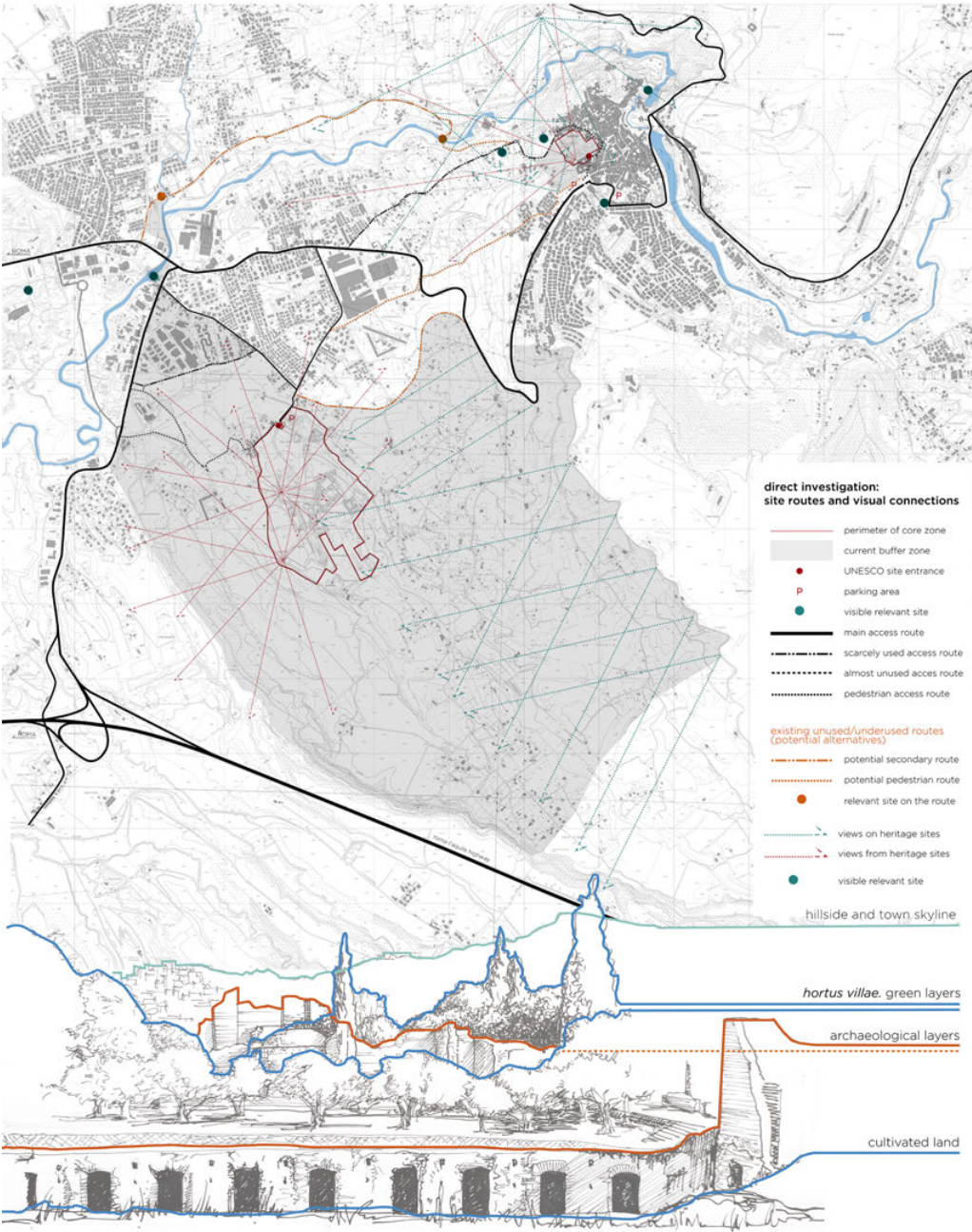


Figure 4: Tivoli experimental lab / cognitive framework: mapping and sketching some results of the direct survey.

- 1 The term "territoriality" is here intended in both its meanings, according to the Collins English Dictionary: 1. the state or rank of being a territory; 2. the behaviour shown by an animal when establishing and defending its territory.
- 2 See the works of Smith, Laurajane (2006): *Uses of Heritage*. London: Routledge; or Labadi, Sophia (2013): *UNESCO, cultural heritage and outstanding universal value: value-based analyses of the World Heritage and Untangible Cultural Heritage Conventions*. London: Alta Mira Press.
- 3 The topic is widely discussed in UNESCO manuals, conferences and papers, such as: UNESCO (2013): *Managing Cultural World Heritage*. Paris; Martin, Oliver and Giovanna Piatti (ed.) (2009): *World Heritage and Buffer Zones*. Paris: UNESCO World Heritage Centre.
- 4 De La Torre, Marta (2005): *Heritage Values in Site Management: Four case studies*. Los Angeles: Getty Conservation Institute.
- 5 In the current Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention, unchanged on the topic since 2005, a buffer zone is defined as "an area surrounding the nominated property which has complementary legal and/or customary restrictions placed on its use and development to give an added layer of protection to the property. This should include the immediate setting of the nominated property, important views and other areas or attributes that are functionally important as a support to the property and its protection." (art. 104)
- 6 Emery, Nicola, (2007): *Progettare, costruire, curare*. Bellinzona: Edizioni Casagrande.
- 7 AA.VV. (2018), *Legge n.77/2006 Libro Bianco*.
Soveria Mannelli, Italy: MiBACT, Rubbettino editore.
- 8 Calabrese, Omar (1988): »Renzo Piano. Pompei, progetto per la città del tesoro«, in: Umberto, Eco/Augusto, Graziani/Piano, Renzo/Federico, Zeri (Eds.), *Le isole del tesoro. Proposte per la riscoperta e la gestione delle Risorse Culturali*. Milano: Electa, p. 109
- 9 Burckhardt, Lucius, (2019): *Il falso è l'autentico. Politica, paesaggio, design, architettura, pianificazione, pedagogia*. Macerata: Quodlibet.
- 10 Purini, Franco, (1991): »Un paese senza paesaggio«, in: Casabella, 575–576, Milan: Electa, pp. 40–47.

CA²RE / CA²RE+, the Conference for Artistic and Architectural Research, is dedicated to promoting Design-Driven Doctoral Research (DDDr) through its conference series. This initiative aims to strengthen and expand the community of researchers interested in this subject. The Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment at Delft University of Technology has gladly provided the platform for this noteworthy conference.

The central theme of this event revolves around the "RECOMMENDATION" for Design-Driven Doctoral Research. This theme is a natural progression from the main topics explored in the previous CA²RE+ conferences, which included OBSERVATION, SHARING, COMPARISON, REFLECTION, and FRAMEWORK. The CA²RE+ Delft conference seeks to scrutinize the progress made thus far and endeavors to formulate guidelines and recommendations for the establishment, introduction, development, and evaluation of DDDR.

