

Reality calls to a new interpretation of culture

In Italy, one of the most widespread interpretations of the cultural role in our lives and societies, affecting also the interpretation of cultural heritage and production, tends to create a visible division between the role of public bodies and private entities.

Indeed, this kind of interpretation, still relevant in various contexts, today appears quite anachronistic, weakly reflecting the real state of the art.

Largely diffused in the second half of the 20th century, this kind of interpretation claims for a strong differentiation between an ascetic-like approach to cultural heritage, mostly led by public entities in the name of the “public good” nature of culture, and the opportunistic, marginalist, profit-based private approach, in which private entities are represented as a sort of commodification agents, whose interest in culture is only led by profits and egoistic interests.

Despite the public debate draws this kind of interpretation with more euphemistic words, undoubtedly this kind of approach still remains in the background of the cultural debates: on one hand, there are plenty of laws and rules focused on limiting the role of private agents in cultural fields; on the other hand, there are even more examples of public interventions calling private agents to an only fundraising role within the cultural context.

In response to this kind of approach, together with the non-always-brilliant results in terms of cultural heritage management that are visible in our country when we go far from the Superstars (Colosseum, and so on), it is growing a more and more widespread public dissatisfaction, mostly in younger generations of professionals which would like to work within the cultural heritage sector.

Paradoxically, this kind of tiredness could help to grow another extreme approach to Cultural Heritage, in response to the conservative attitude that, in fact, governs our cultural heritage management.

It is important to underlie that our society needs a drastic change in the interpretation of the role of private agents within the management of culture as well as in the management of other kinds of public goods.

The European “vision” of private-public partnerships, the more and more social-responsible interpretation of the role of private enterprises should be important guidelines in the next future.

There is no need to remember how important a renewed cooperation between public and private agents could be in view of the huge amount of investments that will characterize the “recovery plan” actions.

Is the real opportunity for our Country to assess a new relationship among professionals, private organizations, and public administrations.

This number of Tafter Journal recalls two specific nuances of this needed change: while the analysis of Martino remembers us the relevance of an editorial phenomenon that looks at the relationship between private enterprises and corporate monographs, the article of Brunetti well reflects a new liberal interpretation about the role of cultural institutions.

The readings of these two different articles, for topics and for the different “research” approach, is a sort of glimpse to the extremely complex scenario, underlying how important are the efforts that governors, as well as private cultural entrepreneurs, are called to adopt in order to shape the future of our cultural heritage in new few years.



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