



ESTRATTO

Generative communication for cultural heritage

Towards a new paradigm of resources

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A neutral technique, regarding our humanity which needs specific and oriented techniques to enhance itself, will never exist. I start from the main conviction that our humanity is not an original condition to preserve or a static heritage to defend, but a resource – as explained in the New Testament parable of the talents – to be used and be allowed to grow. If the potential of this resource is not invested with some risks in order to expand its effects on every human activity and on the world, it will cease to exist.

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2. Beyond the current model of “development” and “sustainability”, towards a new paradigm of “resource”

“Sustainability” is a term (introduced in 1972 to social and economic discussions) that cannot be limited to the culturally dominant definition of balance between development (also found when we speak about “sustainable development”) and natural resources. In summary, the value of “resource”, in its dimensions both tangible and intangible, must change. This world has changed and will always be changing its structures both physical and symbolic. It must be made clear that it has not only changed faster than in the past; every age had its own speed relevant to the cultural system. We can hardly understand the tangible and intangible ways in which this word changes. This is also because of strong interest groups that do not want us to understand them in order to maintain their hegemony. Speaking about the definition of the term “resources” is a technical topic but it can impact the ethical, cultural, social, economic, political and strategic decisions we make. A neutral technique, regarding our humanity which needs specific and oriented techniques to enhance itself, will never exist. I start from the main conviction that our humanity is not an original condition to preserve or a static heritage to defend, but a resource – as explained in the *New Testament* parable of the talents – to be used and be allowed to grow. If the potential of this resource is not invested with some risks in order to expand its effects on every human activity and on the world, it will cease to exist. This is a kind of energy which becomes stronger once you use it and does not concern the logic of possession and accumulation. Our humanity can be reinforced recovering its central role, which is presently being lost or which has already been lost, by only working on the cultural, social, economic grammars which are invisible to the majority of the people. This will lead to profound structural changes, giving a new sense to single lives and everyday actions for a new cooperative and shared project. In this sense the relationship between communication and education is fundamental. In other words: if the communication generates knowledge, the scenario will be very different from the current predominant model. This latter paradigm aims to persuade and to confuse judgement and to debase the value of the experience as a moment of evaluation of the relationship between expectations promoted by Communication and concrete, accessible reality. So, good communication teaches and stimulates the evaluation of the concrete correspondence between tangible and intangible, actual and symbolic. Good communication helps our humanity to grow and governs its inevitable transformation - which is impossible to stop even if we give up controlling it- and consequently our society, culture, politics and economy. Therefore the “sustainability” parameters must be analysed and defined by facing apparently “unsustainable” proofs and by trying to come up with unthinkable solutions. We need to overcome the idea of “resistance” or “resilience” in order to get into the new human dimension of projects and the realisation of a real change based on paradigm shifts where the meanings of “values” and “resources” will be redefined. If we accept the current interpretation that we are living

in the age of discontinuity, we must convert our way of “writing” and “reading” reality in order to create and generate new and innovative resources. Otherwise we will have to face an even harder time. Our future must be conceived as considering and giving life to our knowledge and memory –this is the main function of our historic-artistic and landscape heritage- which was used first of all as an analytic tool useful for seeing and highlighting resources that were, until that moment, not recognizable, humiliated and suffocated. These resources (we will find out that there will be a lot of problems but not the lack of resources!) are fundamental in developing an innovative world. The change we must plan and simultaneously start to realize, according to a perspective that must be necessarily experimental and high risk, is no longer deferrable because once in progress a total transformation will be undergoing. Any delays can only cause further damages. It is time to abandon every kind of ambiguity, and decide if the huge power which men gave themselves, with a millenary work made of beautiful things but also of terrible horrors, to write and rewrite the reality in which they live, must be inspired by the idea of a systemic change to strengthen deeper values, seated in our humanism. We have to decide if the global machine that we have been building up with lots of difficulties, which was inspired by the technological drift (both physical and symbolic), must proceed. In this global machine we are living and paying a high price for damages which are in front of our very eyes: from the education system to the enterprises, from politics to economics. It is useful to repeat: we are in the middle of a cultural, social and economic change which is a real paradigm shift that has never occurred in our History. The tools available for converting physical and symbolic reality belong to a new generation, because (as is well described by the discovery of nuclear energy) they force us to choose between a threat with no return for human beings or the creation of wellness conditions for humanity never even thought of before. More than this, our activities are part of a system which is so strong and omniscient, planned to every detail and led by automatic management systems, and the relationships are always strongest between the digital representation of reality and the effective action on it and between natural and anthropic dimensions. If we do not act as soon as possible on this structure which guides our ordinary life – seizing it and giving it a precise project based on ethical values - the paradigm shift will stabilize itself in a prospective we had not chosen. It will always become harder to go back. The drift that we are following is led by chance and by few “Lords of the social economic grammars” who are the motors of the current system. These are always like powerful bandits, who do not know how much serious damage they are causing to the society with their baleful actions. History, the attention to become reality, in this context becomes not an optional but a necessary tool to understand what is happening around us, at micro and macro level, and to recover a design intent. We need to overcome the logic of an isolated photogram, of the tendency to fragment everything in this digital reality (which is not the only possibility). We also must abandon the tendency to dematerialize and deny place sense. We must abandon the destruction of the value of the

specificity and diversity of knowledge historically and geographically defined and lived. This is a fragmentation that exalts the importance of every single part of the system but that actually prevents us from understanding and analysing the choices which rule the society under the ancient strategy *divide et impera*. Writing History is first of all a critical, evaluated and planned way of thinking in order to capture trends and dominations; a way of thinking to evaluate them and build new ones in a global system where the writing of the relationship between a small thing to a very big one becomes essential. Only in this context is it correct to speak about the value of the historic-artistic and landscape heritage and its culture.