

THE SPIRIT OF THE PLACE – THE PROBLEM OF (RE)CREATING

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Abstract. The presented research focuses on sociocultural ability to (re)create spirit of a heritage site. The author defines a human habitat as a socio-cultural rhizome, and *genius loci* – as an intangible quality of a material site, perceived both physically and spiritually. *Genius loci* sites are identified as physical realities, and as mediators and media of societal interactions at the same time; they possess a distinguishable set of fundamental framework attributes: integrity, complementarity, continuity, a touch of eternity, non-evidence, being both a reality and an entity, and rhizomatousness. From this theoretical perspective the author defines conservation as an arboreal, and sustenance of continuity – as a rhizomatic phenomenon, and makes a comparative identification of basic attributes, qualities, objectives, activities, and outcomes of the both systemic phenomena. The research resulted in two basic conclusions. First, that – though, due to on-going cultural shift in interactions with history, reconstructions gain in popularity – *genius loci* sites cannot be created or re-created intentionally, because they are happenings, and not creations. Second, that heritage conservation cannot substitute sustenance of traditional habitats, however, nowadays it plays an irreplaceable crucial role in safeguarding of tangible heritage, and this way becomes a cradle for emerging future cultural traditions.

Keywords: arboreal, continuity, Deleuze, *genius loci*, habitat, heritage conservation, heritage site, local communities, outstanding universal value, perception, preservation, reconstruction, rhizomatic, space and place, spirit of the place, sustainability and sustenance.

Introduction

The research presented in this article aims at identifying those concepts on space and place, which might serve preservation of heritage sites, in defining the basic paradigmatic approaches for sustaining a *genius loci* phenomenon, and in determining possibilities to intentionally (re)create this phenomenon.

There is practically no literature on the research topic yet, though, paradoxically, an issue of the spirit of the place is at the cutting edge of actual heritage discourse on landscape and build environment, the intangible and tangible heritage, and the authenticity. On the other hand, *genius loci* is not an autonomous phenomenon, but rather a derivative from a physical environment, as it appears and is interpreted in perceptions and reflections; the latter may be or may not be distinguished from its real nature as a thing-in-itself. Consequently, any insights into the *genius loci* result from fundamental founding concepts on space and place, in which these insights are inevitably rooted.

Notions of space and place are as old as mankind's mythological and religious creation stories. Theories of Plato and Aristotle were at the beginnings of a permanent Western *philosophical discourse on space, place and local spirits* that continued in medieval and Renaissance speculations about space, in modern spatial conceptions of Newton, Descartes, Leibniz, and Kant, in the 20-century phenomenological approaches of Husserl, Merleau-Ponty, Bachelard, and Heidegger, as well as in new scientific physical theories. The postmodern philosophic thought, such as theories of Foucault, Derrida, Tschumi, Deleuze and Guattari, and Irigaray, introduced new perspectives to the vibrant discourse on these worldview related ideas.¹ *Behavioural and related social sciences* focus the discourse on individual and

¹ A comprehensive in-depth analysis of space and place concepts through ages is presented by Edward S. Casey in his *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History*, Berkeley / LA / London: University of California Press, 1998.

social perceptions of and interactions with space and place, and on their origins either in physicality, or in mentality and spirituality. *In human geography* concepts of places span between two paradigms: of physical (geomorphological) structures, as defined by physical geography, and of entirely social constructs. On the latter side, Doreen Massey rejects essentiality of a place and defines them as a product of sensing and perceiving². The former mainstream emphasizes physicality of places, defining them as tangible entities that have distinct (and identifiable) physical character. These notions are best expressed by a classic and widely quoted Carl O. Sauer's definition of a *cultural landscape*: 'The cultural landscape is fashioned from a natural landscape by a cultural group. Culture is the agent, the natural area is the medium, the cultural landscape is the result'. David Ross Stoddart expressed this environmental tradition in his reflections on the landmark publication 'Man's Role in Changing the Face of the Earth'³: 'Reading it you feel the dust in your eyes, the sand between your toes, the salt spray on your face. It is a palpable, tangible, real world, peopled by the real men and women who have transformed it'.⁴ *Humanities* – mainly culture studies, heritage studies, and history – generate a major node of space and place concepts that deal with phenomena of cultural and historic memory and remembrance, cultural identity and continuity, and relevantly with symbolic environments. The *70-s and 80-s of the past century* triggered *holistic insights* arising from system theories, especially of living systems and self-organization; ecologic philosophy; cognitive sciences, etc., as well as *multi- and cross-disciplinary theoretical approaches*. These trends have their starting point in Yi-Fu Tuan's theory of *topophilia*, theoretical foundations in philosophy of *deep ecology*, esp. by Arne Næss (Næss 2005), and in numerous studies on social exclusion, displacement, homelessness, such as Kai T. Erikson's studies of the *trauma of loss of place*, etc.

A specific discourse on the Genius Loci phenomenon is deeply rooted in and cannot be isolated from mainstream discourses on space and place, though

some of its notions also are specifically theorised. It does not suggest any common concept. Multiplicity of theoretical literature in human geography, philosophy, theology, cultural anthropology, etc. presents wide scope of notions that span from physical substantiality of a place and its sense-based perceptions to spiritual experiences and intangible interactions, emphasising relationships between spatial processes and social processes. One of the basic nodes suggests *genius loci* being an attribute of human beliefs or historic memories, relating it with the presence of God, or 'of those who are not physically there'. Bell states that: 'What I am describing is, I believe, a common feature of the human experience of place, for both modern and traditional peoples. The point of this essay is to argue that ghosts – that is, the sense of the presence of those who are not physically there – are a ubiquitous aspect of the phenomenology of place. Although the cultural language of modernity usually prevents us from speaking about their presence, we constitute a place in large measure by the ghosts we sense inhabit and possess it. The meaning of a place, its *genius loci*, depends upon the geniuses we locate there. /.../ Ghosts of the living and dead alike, of both individual and collective spirits, of both other selves and our own selves, haunt the places of our lives. Places are, in a word, personed – even when there is no one there'.⁵ In *architecturology*, Christian Norberg-Schulz and many others associate a site's *genius loci* with its character as an integral part of the house as a dwelling, a home; social philosophy and sociology studies of homelessness, no-place, nomadism, etc., also emphasize this notion. In *architecture*, mainly landscape architecture, a *genius loci* idea has been triggered by the idea of Beauty, reflected as Harmony with Nature. The 'starting point' usually is attributed to 18th-century English poet Alexander Pope's *Epistle to Burlington* regarding good landscaping: 'Consult the Genius of the Place in all; That tells the Waters or to rise, or fall, Or helps th' ambitious Hill the heav'n to scale, Or scoops in circling theatres the Vale, Calls in the Country, catches opening glades, Joins willing woods, and varies shades from shades, Now breaks or now directs th' intending Lines; Paints as you plant, and, as you work, designs'. According to *ecologic philosophy*, especially *deep ecology*, this phenomenon arises from the physical world, and represents symbiosis between a human being and the Nature; this is based on the idea on self-realization by self-identification with the Earth (*re-earthing*).

Contemporary heritage conservation philosophy is rather dichotomic as regards concepts of place. This derives from the very nature of the discipline. On the one

² Instead then, of thinking of places as areas with boundaries around, they can be imagined as articulated moments in networks of social relations and understandings, but where a large proportion of those relations, experiences and understandings are constructed on a far larger scale than what we happen to define for that moment as the place itself, whether that be a street, or a region or even a continent' (Massey, D. 1991. *A Global Sense of Place, Space, Place and Gender*, 154).

³ *Man's Role in Changing the Face of the Earth*, 1956. Edited by William L. Thomas, Jr. Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research: University of Chicago Press.

⁴ Stoddart, D. R. 1987. To claim the high ground: geography for the end of the century, *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 12(3): 330. Quoted in: Stephen Daniels, 1992. Place and the Geographical Imagination, *Geography* 77(4 October): 320.

⁵ Bell, M. M. 1997. The Ghosts of Place, *Theory and Society* 26(6 December): 813.

hand, conservation is about safeguarding and maintenance of *tangible* remains of the Past. On the other hand, preservation seeks to fulfil *spiritual* aspirations and human values based both on perception-related experience of things and physical environments, and interactions with them, i.e., on *sensing the Past*. John Ruskin, one of the founding fathers of the Western heritage conservation doctrine, indicated this *spirituality through materiality* by relating historic memory to visible signs of ageing and patination.⁶ Contemporary *concepts of heritage authenticity* follow this logical sequence, at the same time making a cautious attempt of non-omitting anything in a variety of notions and aspects throughout the World, countries, and human communities; this cautiousness is very evident in the ICOMOS *Nara Document on Authenticity*.⁷

Concepts of genius loci usually relate with the concept of authenticity, and refer both to tangible and intangible qualities of sites, to fabric and human activities, associating this with values. Robert W. Passfield gives a rather typical definition: ‘The *genius loci* is another intangible heritage value that resides in the envi-

ronment of the setting in which a cultural resource was created and maintained. It constitutes the spirit of a place that brings the environment of the setting to life as a dynamic living place, working place, or inhabited landscape. The *genius loci* transmits the patterns, meanings, and image, which gather together and organize the elements of the environment of the setting into a meaningful and intelligible whole within conscious or felt boundaries – a gestalt that transcends the meaning of the sum of its constituent parts. In so doing, it orients the visitor, conveys a sense of functionality and continuity, and manifests a traditional way of life that links the present with the past. The *genius loci* is evoked by the physical properties of the cultural resource within its setting, the physical properties of the setting, and the dynamic activities carried on within the setting at different levels. By conveying the character and significance of the cultural resource within its setting, it transmits a strong sense of authentic place’.⁸

Similar notions are evident in the ICOMOS Québec Declaration on the Preservation of the Spirit of Place.⁹ However, the Declaration does not stop at perceptions, but goes further to social interactions by defining processes of transmittal and keeping of a local spirit: ‘Recognizing that spirit of place is transmitted essentially by people, and that transmission is an important part of its conservation, we declare that it is through interactive communication and the participation of the concerned communities that the spirit of place is most efficiently safeguarded, used and enhanced. Communication is the best tool for keeping the spirit of place alive...’.¹⁰

Since cultural heritage belongs to the basics of human development, the contemporary conservation doctrine is generally open to many areas and trends of contemporary thought, and attempting to absorb and

⁶ ‘Indeed, the greatest glory of a building is not in its stones, or in its gold. Its glory is in its Age, and in that deep sense of voicefulness, of stern watching, of mysterious sympathy, nay, even of approval or condemnation, which we feel in walls that have long been washed by the passing waves of humanity. It is in their lasting witness against men, in their quiet contrast with the transitional character of all things, in the strength which, through the lapse of seasons and times, and the decline and birth of dynasties, and the changing of the face of the earth, and of the limits of the sea, maintains its sculptured shapeliness for a time insuperable, connects forgotten and following ages with each other, and half constitutes the identity, as it concentrates the sympathy, of nations: it is in that golden stain of time, that we are to look for the real light, and colour, and preciousness of architecture; and it is not until a building has assumed this character, till it has been entrusted with the fame, and hallowed by the deeds of men, till its walls have been witnesses of suffering, and its pillars rise out of the shadows of death, that its existence, more lasting as it is than that of the natural objects of the world around it, can be gifted with even so much as these possess, of language and of life’ (Ruskin, J. 1907. *The Lamp of Memory*, in *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*. Leipzig: Bernhard Tauchnitz, 248–250).

⁷ ‘In a world that is increasingly subject to the forces of globalization and homogenization, and in a world in which the search for cultural identity is sometimes pursued through aggressive nationalism and the suppression of the cultures of minorities, the essential contribution made by the consideration of authenticity in conservation practice is to clarify and illuminate the collective memory of humanity; /.../ Authenticity, considered in this way /.../ appears as the essential qualifying factor concerning values. The understanding of authenticity plays a fundamental role in all scientific studies of the cultural heritage, in conservation and restoration planning /.../; Depending on the nature of the cultural heritage, its cultural context, and its evolution through time, authenticity judgements may be linked to the worth of a great variety of sources of information. Aspects of the sources may include form and design, materials and substance, use and function, traditions and techniques, location and setting, and spirit and feeling, and other internal and external factors’ (*The ICOMOS Nara Document on Authenticity*, Japan: Nara, 1994: Para. 4, 10, 13 (Online). Available from Internet: <http://www.icomos.org/charters/nara-e.pdf>).

⁸ Passfield, R. W. 2005. Evaluating Authenticity: Reconstructed Timber Swing Bridges, *The Journal of the Society for Industrial Archeology* 31(2): Para. 68 (Online). Available from Internet: <http://www.historycooperative.org/journals/sia/31.2/passfield.html>

⁹ ‘Spirit of place is defined as the tangible (buildings, sites, landscapes, routes, objects) and the intangible elements (memories, narratives, written documents, rituals, festivals, traditional knowledge, values, textures, colors, odors, etc.), that is to say the physical and the spiritual elements that give meaning, value, emotion and mystery to place. Rather than separate spirit from place, the intangible from the tangible, and consider them as opposed to each other, we have investigated the many ways in which the two interact and mutually construct one another /.../ Spirit of place exists, in one form or another, in practically all the cultures of the world, and is constructed by human beings in response to their social needs’ (The ICOMOS Québec Declaration on the Preservation of the Spirit of Place, adopted by ICOMOS 16 GA at Québec, Canada, October 4th 2008: Para. 4, 10, 13 (Online). Available from Internet: http://www.international.icomos.org/quebec2008/quebec_declaration/pdf/GA16_Quebec_Declaration_Final_EN.pdf).

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

integrate a variety of theoretical notions of philosophy, cultural anthropology and sociology, human geography, political and economic sciences, humanities, etc. This approach of ‘excluding nothing by a inclusion of everything’ generalizes phenomena, which are vital to conservation due to universal nature of cultural heritage. However, when it comes to specific meanings, this is not precise and clear enough. What does this really mean: ‘the spirit of place is a continuously reconstructed process, which responds to the needs for change and continuity of communities, /.../ it can vary in time and from one culture to another according to their practices of memory, and a place can have several spirits and be shared by different groups’¹¹? How could this content guide activities of identification, preservation, or reconstruction of the spirit of a place?

Such conceptual gaps between generic and target levels are rather typical for the conservation doctrine. Due to them sensitivity and experience of local heritage practitioners tends to be a better driver for preservation than the doctrinal guidance. The presented research attempts to narrow this type of gaps in the fields of interpreting the *genius loci* concepts, and suggests some specific intermediary theoretical aspects of perception and relevant preservation activities.

Sensing and Defining a *Genius Loci*

Not all of the mentioned concepts on space and place, as well as their derivations of a *genius loci*, could be applicable to heritage preservation. For the purposes of this research, it is vital to identify applicabilities.

A *spirit of the place* primarily refers to human perception and sensation; there is no doubt that we *sense* it. Poets, artists, and researches present us numerous evidences of this phenomenon, and almost everybody knows it from a personal experience.

There is a rather paradigmatic consent that human perception of the surrounding world is not a *pure sensing*, that it rooted in our physical and emotional experiences, aesthetic or other reflection, preconceived knowledge (in the Gadamerian sense of the term), patterns of living, mutual interactions with the environment, etc. No aspect of the human habitat remains unaffected by our presence, and people are embedded in their world, implicated in a constant process of action and response, as Arnold Berleant states continuing Edward T. Hall and Yi-Fu Tuan: ‘a physical interaction of body and setting, a psychological interconnection of consciousness and culture, a dynamic harmony of sensory awareness all make a person inseparable from

his or her environment. Traditional dualisms, such as those separating the idea and the object, self and the others, inner consciousness and external world, dissolve in the integration of person and place’. Berleant defines a human being as an ‘experiential node’ that is both the product and the generator of environmental forces: physical objects and conditions, altogether with psychological, historical, and cultural conditions. Environment is the matrix of all such forces, and people both shape and are formed by the experiential qualities of the universe (Berleant 2002: 21–22).

From this perspective, our sensing largely depends on our *participation on a spiritual level*. In addition, it relies on our benign view and respect toward human environment, taking it an independent entity, a partner for dialog, but not a mere economic resource, useful only for exploitation and open to any instrumental manipulations (Berleant 2002). On the other hand, *conservation activities*, by virtue of the discipline, *deal with the tangible world*, even when declaring preservation of intangibilities. Recognition of this duality is the essence of conservation doctrine.

The defined basis allows us to *specify some framework postulates* for understanding and consequent preservation of ‘*genius loci* sites’:

1. *Genius loci* sites are *realities*, as other things in the world that exist, whether we believe in them or not, and *have a spirit*, whether we sense it or not. However, this is a specific existence. Xavier Zubiri points out an essential difference between *reality* and *being*, and that they are often confused. He defines this confusion as the *entification of reality* (i.e., action of giving objective existence to something), explaining that *reality is not formally entity*, because ‘from the standpoint of a sentient intelligence’ reality is not existence, but rather being as itself, a formality, and ‘only by being real does the real have an ulterior actuality in the world’ (Zubiri 1980). Understanding and clarifying this difference is very important for preservation of sites of this type.
2. *Genius loci* sites are both *media and mediators*, letting us break out of the day-to-day routine and just listen to the Breath of Nature, the Speech of the Universe, get a glimpse into Deeds of History, or to feel an eternal human longing for happiness... However, a *genius locus* is not necessarily a permanent ‘resident’ of the sites. It may appear for a while at sunrise or sunset, in autumn or in winter... It may even abandon the site forever, driven by its changes.

Since a *genius loci* phenomenon may be (and usually is) described as an intangible manifestation, a cha-

¹¹ *Ibid.*

racter of the material site that we perceive through sensing and reflexing, the question arises: are we able to identify its constituents more precisely and less personally?

For preservation purposes, sites are typically identified as physical-morphological structures, consisting of frameworks and elements, which could be distinguished, measured, and documented. The found site-specific characteristics serve as spatial planning guidelines for ‘compatible development’. Unfortunately, this type of data is not fully adequate to spiritual qualities of *genius loci* ‘residential’ sites, and even might be misleading from the latter perspective. On the other hand, if such tangible sites were taken not as mere material objects, but as ‘containers and carriers’ of intangible qualities, preservation and sustaining activities might target in ‘container-based’ sustenance.

The above-mentioned postulates allow us to define a specific set of fundamental qualities that are essential for understanding of *genius loci sites*. From this perspective, **a *genius loci site* is characterized by:**

1. Being *both a reality and an entity*.
2. Presenting *a touch of eternity* – a specific feeling, related to a long time span of emergence and existence of the site.
3. *Integrity*. This notion has a variety of meanings. However, just a few are relevant to our topic. Eric L. Edroma presented his anthropologic formula of integrity in relation to environments of traditional African societies that ‘take God, the Creator, the traditional rural people and the natural and cultural resources as its integral components’ (Edroma 2001). UNESCO defines it in a less ‘secular’ and more ‘tangible’ way: ‘Integrity is a measure of the wholeness and intactness of the natural and/or cultural heritage and its attributes. Examining the conditions of integrity, therefore requires assessing the extent to which the property: a) includes all elements necessary to express its Outstanding Universal Value; b) is of adequate size to ensure the complete representation of the features and processes which convey the property’s significance.’¹² These formulas are not contradictory. They supplement each other, and should be equally taken into account.
4. *Complementarity*. Since a site is the entity, interlinks between the whole and its constituents are specific: *the whole is greater than the sum of*

its parts, and any ‘part’ of the whole is more than a part. Arne Naess stresses this specificity of perception, giving an analogy of a known melody: ‘If we listen to a part of an unknown melody the experience is different from listening to that part when the melody is known. Moving from the consideration of gestalt perception of gestalt apperception or thinking, the characteristic part/whole relation is even more clearly that of parts “being more than parts”.’ Naess relates this with experience of ‘being in a known forest’. He states that while walking, ‘a tiny part visually present, provides an experience, determined, by the apperception of the forest as a whole’. When a part of the forest is changed, ‘the forest as a gestalt may remain the same, change, or vanish’. Altogether, *there is an experience of a specific kind that is destroyed*: ‘It is usually said that the forest remains really the same except for a, perhaps tiny, part. This is misleading in so far as the spatial arrangement is taken to be the real forest, whereas the forest as a gestalt is taken to be subjective. For gestalt thinking or ontology, there exists no such spatial reality, which can be isolated from the reality of the gestalt. ‘Parts’ being easily thought of as spatial, it may be misleading to speak of parts of a gestalt, better to speak of subordinate gestalts’ (Naess 2005). This definition is very important, because it both specifies site perception, and directs towards assessment of compatible either incompatible changes of the site.

5. *Continuity*. This is a key for existence of intact natural places and sustainable anthropogenic environments. Otherwise, we may face a reverse situation, as in a poetical insight of Italo Calvino: ‘Sometimes different cities follow one another on the same site and under the same name, born and dying without knowing one another, without communication among themselves. At times even the name of the inhabitants remain the same, and their voices’ accent, and also the features of the faces: but the gods who live beneath names and above places have gone off without a word and outsiders have settled in their place. It is pointless to ask whether the new ones are better or worse than the old, since there is no connection between them, just as the old postcards do not depict Maurilia as it was, but a different city, which, by chance, was called Maurilia, like this one’ (Calvino 1974). As a paradox, heritage conservation often leads to situations of the latter type.

¹² *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*. UNESCO: WHC. 11/01, November 2011: 23, para. 88 (Online). Available from Internet: <http://whc.unesco.org/archive/opguidel1-en.pdf>

6. *Non-evidence*. *Genius loci* sites often lack characteristics of heritage sites, such as an evident visual uniqueness. They may be of great importance to local communities, seeming ‘nothing special’ to the others at the same time. The irreplaceable significance of the most modest local heritage has been first emphasized almost a century ago by Max Dvořak.¹³
7. *Rhizomatousness*. This quality has been identified basing on Gilles Deleuze’s and Felix Guattari’s concept of rhizome, where this type of vegetative structure is presented as a model relevant to human society, and rhizomes are described as *networks*, which ‘cut across boundaries imposed by vertical lines of hierarchies and order and build links between pre-existing gaps between nodes that are separated by categories and order of segmented thinking /.../, ceaselessly establish connections between semiotic chains, organizations of power, and circumstances relative to the arts, sciences, and social struggles’ (Deleuze, Guattari 1987: 7). From this point of view, sites are ‘nodes’ of a major ‘socio-cultural rhizome’, and at the same time – autonomous rhizomes, having their own constituents. They are nourished by tradition-based interactions. When isolated from its rhizome a ‘node’ might be preserved as a representation, but gradually stops being a habitat. Therefore, heritage conservation not necessarily coincides with sustenance of continual living sites.

Identification of a set of these qualities should be focal for planning any preservation-related activities, because this would ease relevant interpretations of and caring for heritage environments of this type.

Conservation of heritage and care for continual places: controversies and similarities

Care for habitats and tradition-based continuity is perhaps as ancient as the humankind is, while conservation (including preservation of sites) is an intellectually inspired product of the Modernity (Markevičienė 2006). Nowadays both activities are intertwined, mutually sustaining, and dealing with the same realities. However, the approaches are different by virtue of their intrinsic specifics. This differentness may be best clarified on the basis of Gilles Deleuze’s and Felix Guattari’s theory of rhizome. The theory refers not only to social development models, but also to different models of thought and systems of knowledge – *arbo-*

rescent and *rhizomatic*. *Arboreal thought* is linear, hierarchic, sedentary, full of segmentation and striation, vertical and stiff. It reminds a tree-like structure with branches, which continue to subdivide into smaller and lesser categories. *Rhizomatic thought* is non-linear and multiplicitous, it moves in many directions and connects to many other lines of thinking, acting, and being. Rhizomatic thinking deterritorializes arboreal striated spaces and ways of being, and reinterprets reality as dynamic, heterogeneous, and non-dichotomous (Best, Kellner 1991).

It is important to note that for Deleuze and Guattari arboreal and rhizomatic models are not *pure* oppositions neither in time, nor in location. The first is functioning (and changing) like a pattern and a framework, while the other develops like an immanent process that challenges the patterns and creates its own mappings. However, due to the mentioned nature of contemporary heritage conservation, it is substantially dichotomous from this perspective.

Heritage conservation is an arboreal activity. In many aspects, it is based on a museological and educational approach, is selective and aiming towards the Unique that should be preserved due to ‘outstanding cultural values’:

1. Conservation neither aims in sustaining continuity, nor is able for a comprehensive engagement in general domains of human interactions. It is a highly specialized activity, attempting to prolong duration of material elements of the physical world.
2. It is based on rational reasoning of *why* and *what* should be preserved. It covers *conservation-restoration strictu sensu* that preserves material and visual authenticity, and *presentation* that ‘reveals and explains heritage values’. As a result, these activities tend to separate a reality from an entity, and factually catch the former as *evidences of the Past*.
3. This *manipulative* and *instrumental* approach is based on scientific *rationales*. However, these formulations often refer back to ‘zones of uncertainty’, such as imprecise *intrinsic values / memories* of the local people or *identity values* (as defined by Jukka Jokilehto). Nevertheless, the declared respect for ‘local cultures and communities’ (The Nara Document 1994, The Quebec Declaration 2008, etc.), happens turning into a *dominant* and *paternalistic* attitude, even when declares ‘partnership’, ‘empowerment’, and ‘devolution’.
4. Conservation is based on a broadest democratic doctrine of all-inclusive equity, openness and

¹³ Dvořak, M. 1916. *Katechismus der Denkmalpflege*. Wien: J. Bard.

accessibility of cultural heritage. However, when summed with mass tourism and other heritage industries, this sometimes unwillingly restrains interactions between sites and their dwellers, turning habitats to the ‘sites (and life) for show’. Some changes tend being irreversible.

By no accident, from the 19th century, conservation activities have been compared to medical treatments, which nowadays cover a set of socio-cultural aspects as well.

Preservation of continual sites is a rhizomatic activity. In general, *rhizomatic development* is not identical with ‘letting anything grow anyhow and anywhere’. It relates rather with ability of the rhizome to continue by reproducing and sustaining itself in a non-hierarchic way. Preservation of continual sites aims in sustaining the Continuous for living, self-identity, and self-continuity; it is based on a socio-cultural and a socio-petal approach, and usually rooted in traditions. Sustaining techniques partially remind child nurturing, because they are based on intuition, sensitivity, respect, and love no less than on scientific knowledge and skills. The mentioned qualities of *genius loci* sites are in fact **basic conditions** for sustaining such places. Though contemporary sustenance usually is based on conservation, it differs in its attitudes towards both sites and heritage.

Arntzen clarifies **the existing dichotomy between the two approaches** by comparing heritage conservation and landscape preservation: ‘The preservation¹⁴ of works of art and of cultural monuments is typically an attempt to ‘arrest’ them in some past or present state. This approach has been also applied to the preservation of cultural landscapes /.../. When preserved along these lines, a cultural landscape is made to be a museum piece, a mere object of observation, as opposed to being a living and lived landscape /.../. This kind of preservation fails to preserve that dimension of a cultural landscape, which makes it valuable and worthy of preservation in the first place: the dynamic relationship of mutual influence that humans engage in with the land. From the point of view of ecophilosophy, preservation of the complex cultural landscapes involves maintaining the inside perspective of the dweller and doer as opposed to the outside perspective of the visitor or mere spectator’ (Arntzen 2002).

The research, presented in this article, has identified how conservation phenomenon and continuity phenomenon differ in their objectives, attributes, qualities, activities, and outcomes regarding *genius loci* sites

Table 1. Conservation and Continuity phenomena compared

CONSERVATION PHENOMENON	CONTINUITY PHENOMENON
Attributes	
Arboric	Rhizomatic
Reality	Entity
Anti-habitat	Habitat
Authentic	Genuine
Objects	Things
Traces and signs	Myths and symbols
Outstanding universal value	Eco- and philotopic value
For spectators	For dwellers
Others as ‘visitors’	Others as ‘quests’ or ‘intruders’
Qualities	
Outer	Inner
Unknown, unexpected	Known, predictable
Impersonal	Personal
Literal	Loose
Linear	Non-linear
Homogeneous	Heterogeneous
Distant perspective	Proximity
Open	Homeostatic
Physical	Metaphysical
Interpretative	Given, preconceived
Evidentiary, manifestative	Existential
Equity, egalitariness	Group self-identification and self-protection
Wonder, excitement	Empathy, trust, security
Curiosity, desire, pleasure	Belief, love
Objectives	
Pride, memory, admiration	Day-to-day societal life
Leisure-time, education	Living
Activities	
Curing	Healing
Fixing	Sustaining and adapting
Selective	Given-based
Possessive	Reflexive
Manipulative	Self-identifying
Pre-established rules for conservation	Given higher order for interactions
Dominative, paternalistic, authoritative, protective	Coexistent, empathic, companionate, respectful
Outcomes	
Presentation	Being
Spectation	Co-creation
Socio-cultural alienation or exclusion	Nativeness, socio-cultural inclusion
Interpretative information	Social self-awareness
Meta-expression	Direct expression
Cradle for emerging traditions	Framework for continuity of traditions

¹⁴ I.e., conservation.

(see Table 1). However, it is important to emphasize that in practice conservation-based and continuity-based activities are intertwined, thus they may differ in intensity, scale and vectors of the ‘extremes’ from case to case.

The knowing of features, which could be engaged in caring for a specific site, is a precondition for any conservation success. Therefore, sites management planning should not be limited to research on identification of the site’s qualities. Specified sociocultural profiling of related communities, as well as other social groups (where relevant) should be conducted as well; this gained knowledge on rhizomatic aspects of the community life, such as local values, attitudes, traditional activities, etc., is an irreplaceable instrument in preservation of *genius loci* sites.

The Question of (Re)Creation

Individuals and communities often are calling the things that do not exist or no longer exist as though they did, and are longing for them. Therefore, reconstruction of dear, but lost *was, is* and, perhaps, *will be* taking place. Interest in heritage is permanently increasing through decades. It goes hand by hand with a shift in interactions with history:

1. Aesthetic and cognitive spectating starts being compromised by ‘tourist floods’; due to this it gradually turns into a disappointing activity, since popular heritage sites are hardly available for aesthetic reflection and contemplation, offering just a glimpse instead.
2. Usual visiting and gazing (Urry 2002) tends to be replaced by *participatory* leisure time activities, such as ‘living history events’ (re-enactments, moths-lasting reality-shows, etc.), which are gaining more and more popularity. ‘Reality’ or ‘aliveness’ often makes no difference in these cases.
3. The third kind of the shift is an emergence of *heritage communities*, which recently have been defined even as legal entities (Faro Convention 2005). They tend sustaining historic sites for dwellers, and not spectators. In addition, a *genius loci* is gaining in value as an attribute of a day-to-day life environment.

A growing **popularity of reconstruction** is triggered by these shifts. Nevertheless, is it possible to re-create or create such places intentionally? Though continuous debates do not give any unambiguous answer, multiple unsuccessful practical attempts seem more doubtful than not. This might also be the reason, why present reconstructions aim rather in ‘approximate’ presenta-

tions (‘alike’ or even simulacric) than in a ‘revival of the old spirit’.

By virtue of their nature *genius loci* sites are no ‘ready-mades’. They just **happen**, gradually shaped by mutual feedback relationships of nature, human creativity and interactions, and the passing time. They are **happy accidents** – unpredictable integral entities that are difficult to define and to plan. Therefore, these sites are like *dear gifts*; by losing them, we lose much more than ‘a lovely old street or a picturesque group of trees’ – we are loosening spiritual ties with the surrounding world, ... They altogether exist and continue as both entities and realities. Assurance of continuity is the best way for preserving them. However, globalization does not give a good chance for continuity of habitats as *genius loci* sites.

Concluding Remarks

Genius loci is an intangible character of the material site, including its physical qualities. We sense, perceive, and reflect a spirit of the place altogether physically and spiritually.

Such sites are featured by: being a reality and an entity altogether; a touch of eternity; integrity; complementarity; continuity, non-evidence, and rhizomatousness. Due to the specific nature, *genius loci* sites cannot be (re)created intentionally: extended restorations and reconstructions of a historic site usually wipe out its *genius loci*. On the other hand they might reveal and enhance historic information. In addition, while preservation of natural environments means protecting against threats and letting nature be and live as it lives, protection of *genius loci* sites means letting people continue as well.

Care for continuity is a rhizomatic activity, which aims in sustenance of habitats, their physical and socio-cultural integrity and continuity. However, in our rapidly globalizing world sustenance means more than preservation of traditions and traditional ways of life. Sustenance of integrity means continuing a state of symbiosis of its constituents by subtle balancing between homeostasis and innovative change (Markevičienė 2002). Thus non-invasive sophisticated technologies, social engineering, etc., may really help. Radical changes should not be allowed, but minor compatible ones are acceptable (INTBAU 2007). Unfortunately, this is not enough. The sense we make of external things is based in what we see outside and on the patterns located in our minds. Future generations may revive patterns, which we put aside or forgot.

Heritage conservation is an arboric activity, which aims in ‘capturing’ material evidences of the Past for

various spiritual and utilitarian uses. Therefore heritage conservation acts as an irreplaceable mediator for the sustenance and continuity process. Through its museological instrumentalism, conservation collects and safeguards ‘The Treasury of the Past in the full richness of its authenticity’. By safeguarding tangible heritage, conservation fulfils an extremely important socio-cultural task: it creates a ‘cradle’ for potential future traditions – that may revive or emerge based on preserved frameworks, returning integrity to a fragmented and deconstructed contemporary life. If these unique possibilities were lost, the resources for some potential cultural futures would be lost altogether.

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VIETOS DVASIOS KŪRIMO (ATKŪRIMO) PROBLEMA

J. Markevičienė

Santrauka. Pateikiamame tyrime nagrinėjamos sociokultūrinės galimybės (at)kurti paveldo vietų ir vietovių dvasią. Autorė apibrėžia žmogaus buveines kaip sociokultūrinės rizomas, o *genius loci* – kaip nematerialią materialios vietovės savybę, kurią suvokiame tiek fiziškai, tiek dvasiškai. *Genius loci vietovės* yra identifikuojamos tiek kaip fizinė tikrovė, tiek kaip socialinių interakcijų tarpininkai ir terpė; šioms vietovėms būdinga išskiriančių pamatinių savybių sanauja: integralumas, papildomumas, tęstinumas, amžinybės dvelksmas, neakivaizdumas, buvimas realybe ir esiniu vienu metu, rizomiškumas. Šiuo teoriniu rakursu autorė apibrėžia paveldo saugą kaip medžio pavidalo (angl. *arboric*) sistemos, o tąšos palaikymą – kaip šakniagumbinės (rizominės) sistemos reiškinį, identifikuoja bei lygina abiejų sisteminių reiškinų požymius, savybes, siekinius, veiklą ir padarinius. Remiantis tyrimo rezultatais daromos dvi išvados. Pirma, nors dėl vykstančios kultūros slinkties ir kintančios sąveikos su istorija populiarėja atstatymas ir atkūrimas, *genius loci* vietovės negali būti tikslingai sukurtos arba atkurtos, nes yra ne kūriniai, bet atsitikimai. Antra, paveldo sauga negali būti tradicinių žmogaus buveinių tąšos palaikymo pakaitalas, tačiau mūsų laikais ji atlieka esminį ir niekuo nepamainomą vaidmenį – išsaugo materialųjį paveldą ir taip tampa ateityje galinčių atsirasti kultūrinių tradicijų lopšiu.

Reikšminiai žodžiai: atstatymas ir atkūrimas, bendruomenės, Deleuze, erdvė ir vieta, *genius loci*, išskirtinė visuotinė vertė, medžio pavidalo sistema, paveldo išsaugojimas, paveldo vietovė, rizoma, suvokimas, tęstinumas, tvermė ir palaikymas, žmogaus buveinės.

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