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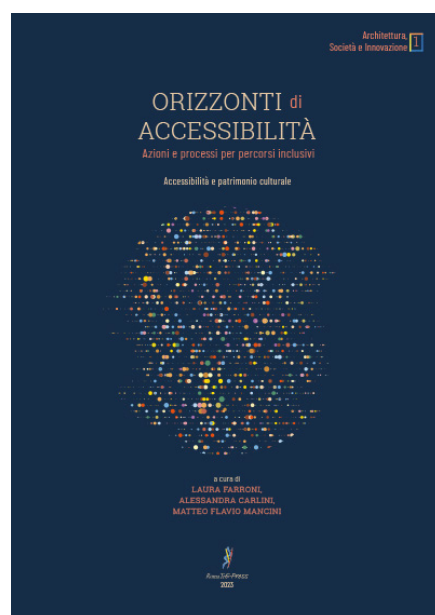
Book reviews

Orizzonti di Accessibilità, Azioni e processi per percorsi inclusivi
Accessibilità e patrimonio culturale (vol.1)
Accessibilità e cultura (vol.2)

Laura Farroni, Alessandra Carlini e Matteo Flavio Mancini

RomaTrE-Press, Roma, dicembre 2023

di Antonella di Luggo



The two volumes edited by Laura Farroni, Alessandra Carlini and Matteo Flavio Mancini and published in 2023 are part of the series Architettura Società Innovazione for Roma Tre-Press and collect the contributions presented at a conference held in Rome, organized by the same editors of volumes and dedicated to a topic of great relevance, which is that of accessibility to cultural heritage and, in a broad sense, to culture.

Starting from the broader title “Orizzonti di Accessibilità, Azioni e processi per percorsi inclusivi”, which defines the reference context, the two volumes explore issues related to accessibility in the relationship with cultural heritage (Accessibilità e patrimonio culturale, vol.1) and with culture (Accessibilità e cultura, vol. 2).

The volumes are characterized by quality graphics and are organized with methodological rigor within a structure which, starting from the introductory texts, articulates the different contributions according to an interesting interdisciplinary comparison, where the contribution of different authors is consolidated in a broad and diversified overall vision, also through the presentation of experiences and research relating to the implementation of projects and/or activities aimed at inclusion and accessibility.

Each contribution is preceded by a brief profile of the authors, thus allowing to frame the disciplinary horizon and building together all the essays a constellation of reflections that deepen the theme of accessibility to cultural heritage and culture, declining it from a plurality of points of view.

The common thread that runs through the two volumes is the reference to new technologies whose potential is explored in relation to the production of digital contents and their dissemination with a view to a broad fruition of cultural heritage and such as to encourage inclusion processes for every kind of user, as well as the role of the media for access to knowledge and the possibilities of application according to pedagogical

criteria - also in this case - oriented towards inclusion. Accessibility and inclusiveness are therefore the main axes of the discussion in reference to which the volumes provide a state of the art of great interest, prefiguring, through the case studies, an approach to culture as a device capable of promoting well-being with positive effects on the community in social, economic and cultural terms.

As indicated in the introductory essays written by the editors and which open the volumes, the discussion is structured around four main themes which concern: Access to knowledge through inclusive policies; The culture of design in the transformation of physical space; The use of technologies for fragilities and the definition of multimedia languages; Sample experiences compared for the construction of communities of practice.

In this context of reflections, several texts highlight the aspect of architectural space as a “social device” capable, if well designed, of contributing to the definition of the interactions that will take place in it. From this perspective, it is worth remembering the new definition of museum, approved by the Extraordinary General Assembly of ICOM, which emphasizes the themes of participation, accessibility and inclusion, underlining the need to rethink routes and installations that aim to eliminate all kind of barriers, while expanding, at the same time, the cultural experience for each individual user. From here arise some experiences that focus on the possibility of allowing visitors a new use of the exhibition space that, through innovative approaches, offers a different and renewed interaction, allowing not only physical but also emotional involvement with the cultural heritage.

In particular, in the first volume “Accessibilità e patrimonio culturale” the various contributions express, through theoretical considerations and projects, the need for an inclusive and sustainable vision of knowledge, outlining new horizons of enjoyment of cultural heritage in accordance with a broader vision of the concept of accessibility, which is not limited to overcoming physical barriers alone, but which also extends to sensorial, social, cultural and economic ones.

The case studies focus on the use of digital technologies, applied to architectural and archaeological heritage, to encourage knowledge and therefore valorization, offering information experiences capable of including users of every category, through new and diversified storytelling methods.

Implicitly, the set of contributions demonstrates the need to address the issue of accessibility with a multidisciplinary awareness, in order to effectively deal with the various problems that still prevent full accessibility to cultural heritage, creating different forms of usability, in order to ensure not only the participation and education of the community in this heritage, but also its protection and safeguard.

In continuity with the first volume, the contributions of the second volume “Accessibilità e cultura” aim to give voice to the typological vocation of the places in order to strengthen the educational potential of the spaces, putting at the center the wide and diversified use of them and therefore the different forms of possible participation.

In reference to museums, among the different experiences presented in the volume,



an important space is occupied - once again - by those that highlight digitization as a tool for learning and social inclusion, as they are capable of creating new relationships between environments and society. The different ways of approaching knowledge and scientific dissemination with which museums are starting to deal facilitate the use for an increasingly wider public, making it possible to give relevance and a future to often little-known realities.

Accessibility, conceived as “access to knowledge”, finally, allows us to analyze the theme of inclusion from a pedagogical point of view, underlining the necessary attention to be paid to the contextual, cultural, emotional, relational, social and economic elements that affect on individual willingness to learn.

From reading the volumes it emerges the close relationship between cultural accessibility and content management. Therefore, only through creative design processes that are able to connect disciplinary different components, it will be possible to make our society inclusive and participatory, supporting the role of culture as a driving force for development.

The challenge of cultural accessibility, therefore, taken up by different realities and excellently told in these volumes, represents not only an opportunity for growth and enrichment for all civil society, but also an important opportunity for scientific research, to be part active in a change of vision that invites us to rethink the ways of approaching our cultural heritage also through digital technologies.

