

THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY IN ADAPTIVE REUSE: RESPECTING AUTHENTICITY AND INTEGRITY

MARCO ACRI, JUKKA JOKILEHTO, SAŠA DOBRIČIĆ,
University of Nova Gorica
marco.acri@ung.si; Jijokilehto@gmail.com; sasa.dobricic@ung.si

Abstract

One of the main topics of discussion and research at present in the building sector is related to the principles of circular economy in a new global scenario of resilience and sustainability. Given that most of European urban areas and landscapes are considered as cultural, it derives that the circular economy should be also applied to the actions and processes of conservation and valorisation, giving thus new emphasis on the concept of adaptive reuse. Thus, it is not merely an issue of retrofitting historic buildings to respond to energy efficiency parameters, or to adapt them for the climate change threats, but much more: it is about rethinking adaptive reuse of cultural heritage (adaptive in both directions) within and overall sustainable process which intakes reflections on materials, techniques, technologies, praxes, but also policies, businesses, management and governance. This is the effort of the CLIC project, Circular Models leveraging investments in Cultural heritage adaptive reuse, in the Horizon2020 research framework, where the University of Nova Gorica is a partner.

This new approach in a global market economy perspective is strongly looking backwards to the traditional building site mechanisms, techniques and procedures, as matured in logistic and technological constraints. In history though, prior of the enforcing of the conservation theory principles, the aspects of authenticity and integrity were not a reference for the builders as the materials and the technologies were usual, repetitive for centuries, while today they are essential criteria for conservation and reuse. But what does it mean today looking at circular models in adaptive reuse? Adaptive reuse refers to the need to adapt cultural heritage to new needs and uses, but circularity ask also to adapt to the cultural heritage peculiarities and fragilities. May this mean we have an additional ally for the preservation of the integrity and the authenticity, as well as for a new wave in preservation of objects, urban and cultural landscapes?

Keywords: *Adaptive Reuse, Circular Economy, Authenticity, Integrity*

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