

Placemaking, urban identity and new technologies

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Abstract: - The rapid consumption of culture which is affecting many historic sites is leading to the loss of place identity that increasingly becomes hybrid and compromised. In order to face the new urban topics, the “placemaking” has updated its theory and has added representational tools in order to become suitable to illustrate more complex urban scenes. Indeed computer science and new technologies have in recent decades become increasingly useful supports and more a for improvement of studies and applications in the field of area investigations. Moving from these premises, aim of this work is to illustrate the questions concerning the relationships between placemaking and new technologies, a new dynamic tool and, as case study, the results of two research project - TECON@BC and a China-Italy Bilateral project -, with attention to the study of the medieval burgh of Sovana.

Key-Words: - Placemaking, new technologies, urban design, place identity, cultural resources, urban regeneration

1 Introduction

The rapid consumption of culture which is affecting many historic places devoted to chiefly economic advantage is leading to the loss of place identity that increasingly becomes hybrid and compromised [1]. The importance of the relationship between places - in its wide meaning - and people was first mooted in the early 1960s, when new ways of interpreting the urban environment arose in the USA and England. The key figures in these studies are Kevin Lynch [2] and Gordon Cullen, whose theories can be considered - for their particular attention to the perception and design of place and its identity - the origin of placemaking. Lynch and Cullen's ways to interpret the city have been implemented over the years. Nowadays, changes in the contemporary city are extremely rapid. The urban image referred to by Gordon Cullen is no longer a typical example of the urban landscape. One of the consequence is the creation of places which are not authentic and where locals feel less and less inhabitants. The typical visitor is commonly attracted by places where it is possible exploiting the greatest quantity of attractions with the least waste of energy and time, contributing to the acceleration of aggressive territorial marketing. Preserving the place identity [3], meant as a fundamental component of the culture heritage, is now increasingly at risk due to a

contemporary trend at homologation of places which makes the cities and towns similar one to another [4]. Placemaking can be defined - paraphrasing the definition of urban design reported by Cabe [5] as “the art of making places for people. It includes the way places work and matters such as community safety, as well as how they look. It concerns the connections between people and places, movement and urban form, nature and the built fabric.” Indeed, the new urban features are not easily identifiable and cannot be easily represented through traditional cartography. In order to face the new urban topics, “the art of making places for people” has updated its theory and has added representational tools in order to become suitable to illustrate more complex urban scenes. Indeed computer science and new technologies have in recent decades become increasingly useful supports and more a for improvement of studies and applications in the field of area investigations [6]. The different ways of collecting information are translated into specific display modes which cover a wide range of maps and virtual tools, often using combinations of data to obtain new kinds of information. Moving from these premises, aim of this work is to illustrate the results of the research project “Innovative TEchnologies for the COnservation and Enhancement of Cultural Heritage” - Italian

acronym: TECON@BC - carried out in the framework of the ROP - Regional Operative Programme, with attention to the study of the medieval burgh of Sovana and its updating in the framework of the Bilateral project “Valorisation-Tourism-Participation: Developing alternative integrated solutions for less promoted historic sites” with ICVBC-CNR of Rome (Italy) and CACH: Department of Cultural Relics Research of Beijing (China). The aim of the TECON@BC project (2010-2013) is to develop methods and technologies for the conservation and enhancement of cultural heritage to the end of promoting and improving the enjoyment of the Tuscan (Central Italy) cultural heritage, with special regard for heritage located in underdeveloped areas, as a means to favour progress in these areas. Notably, Task 4.2 of the TECON@BC project is the “Development of a software which supports the PlaceMaker method for the identification of potential problems in the area of Sovana (Tuscany region, Italy) for the purpose of integrated development.” Thus, the project has two objectives: to create a dynamic and interactive software, and to define actions to foster the development of Sovana. In continuity with this project, the aim of the Bilateral project (2016-2018) is the identification of models and computer science tools for the planning and enhancement of the historical sites for a more durable sustainable development to be investigated in Sovana as emblematic case to be used in China. By using the PlaceMaker method - which will be explained in the following - within the complex sensitive approach and specifically devoted to the identification and design of place identity resources - [7-9] I was able to highlight identity-related features of the town of Sovana. The town attracts few tourists, in spite of the nearness of some remarkable Etruscan necropolis and the fact that guidelines have been set for its sustainable development as part of a local network. Furthermore, aim of the present essay is to illustrate the PlaceMaker software [10-11], in the framework of the TECON@BC project. As regards the first objective of Tecon@BC, the software should support the PlaceMaker method and reinforce it by allowing the collected data to be managed, merged and visualized without detracting from the wealth of their content. The graphical user interface of the software should be suited to the nature of the perceptual and objective data to be imported into it. The needs of a software tool derives from a desire of innovation and possible use of it in museums, web pages, etc..

As to the second objective of Tecon@BC and the Bilateral, the development of Sovana should be carried out with a view to integrating identity-related, cultural and sustainability-related resources as regards not only urban-planning aspects, but also social, economic and environmental ones. In this perspective, it is important to single out the current identity-related resources of the place as a means to restore the value of living in town for both residents and visitors, and develop tourism so that visitor flows will not be concentrated, but spread out over different periods of the year. The paper is organized as follows: Section 2 is devoted to the illustration of the software tool implemented in the Tecon@BC project context; Section 3 shows the Sovana case study; Section 4 illustrates the updating of the case study; finally section 5 presents observations and conclusion.

2 Enhancing cultural resources

PlaceMaker has been implemented in urban sites in Europe, Japan and USA [4]. Particularly, a series of experiments were carried out in pedestrian or semi-pedestrian thoroughfares in some major European cities, such as: Oxford Street in London [7], the Esplanade area in Helsinki, the Ramblas in Barcelona (Sepe, 2009), Market Street in San Francisco and Broadway in Los Angeles, where the process of globalisation has already started and the effects on place identity may be observed. These case studies are located in areas which are dimensionally and geographically quite different, but share a central position and proximity to the historical centre of the city and represent symbolic places for citizens, tourists and users in general.

In the case of the village of Sovana, characterized by a low touristic flux despite its proximity to the Etruscan necropolis, the PlaceMaker method was used for identifying the identity resources and the construction of project guide lines in order to enhance the culture of the place and create a network with the cultural resources of the surrounding area. Sovana, mainly visited for its Etruscan Necropolis tour information centre, is currently inhabited just in the periods - and hours - of major concentration of visitors, becoming "empty" in the rest of the year. In meetings to discuss the projects with the local administrations, the idea arose, which we subsequently sought to implement, that the development of Sovana required that visitors be drawn to the town, but without overloading it with mass tourism. Another observation made in these meetings, which was

subsequently confirmed, is that several websites informing about Sovana and its monuments exist, but they have not led to an increase of visitors to the town, probably because it lies outside traditional tourist circuits in Tuscany.

The request was thus to create an attractive and innovative software application employing new technologies to put all the cultural resources of Sovana online in a dynamic and interactive fashion, and thus keep the town alive with visitors throughout the year. The software will contain multimedia maps of Sovana that can be displayed and navigated in interactive kiosks to be installed in Sovana itself as well as nearby locations. These maps should also be downloadable onto tablets and smartphones. In this perspective, computer technology is meant not so much as a tool, but rather as an aid to policy actions to make Sovana a more lively place, but without consigning the town to the global market and mass tourism. The PlaceMaker method [4] comprises eight phases – five of analysis and three of design – and a Phase 0 that consists in constructing the grid required for the operations which are to be implemented later. The different types of database have to be created to contain the different types of data collected: there are data from anticipatory analysis; the denominative and perceptive, the graphical, the photographic, video surveys; the elements deduced from the study of traditional planimetries; the questionnaire administered to visitors to the places. It is necessary to decide the categories of elements to analyze, which are particularly connected to the urban events identified above, and the corresponding measurement parameters. Moreover, it is necessary to establish which days are the most significant and the most appropriate time slices for surveys. The product of the PlaceMaker method consists of two complex maps, one of analysis and of design. The information collected and systematized in the course of several surveys, questionnaires and analysis is summarized in the maps in the form of symbols, which, albeit effective to illustrate the final results of the method, do not allow all the data collected to be easily viewed, intersected and updated.

The creation of a specific software, as required by TECON@BC, was meant in order to connect and communicate the information contained in the complex map and power the use of the method.

With the PlaceMaker software it is possible to represent and interpret the places in an area through interactive dynamics and by creating multimedia maps. Adobe Flex/Air – for its characteristic of flexibility – is the platform which is used in order

the PlaceMaker software to implement. The programming language is ActionScript 3.

Places are represented by inserting symbols and elements into maps connected to multimedia schedules that can be continuously updated. The prime users of this tool are: urban planners, administrators and citizens. Regarding three important aspects connected to the analyses which study aspects not univocally translatable into objective facts - namely scientificity, updating and the times - the main characteristics of the software include: flexibility, facility and rapidity of use, strong graphical impact, and indexing of the results. Its flexibility makes it possible to store, manage, modify and update in a particular format the multimedia data required to create the multimedia schedule, connected to the symbols placed on the maps. With respect to the facility and rapidity of use, with simple rapid operations the maps are created on the basis of an official traditional cartography or other kinds of maps. In map construction the cartography can be made easier by tracing the contours through the use of lines or tracing filled parts through the use of areas. The map therefore consists of a cartographic base on which are inserted a series of symbols to which the multimedia database is associated. The multimedia database connected to the symbols contains the data collected in the different phases of the PlaceMaker method, especially written texts, schedules, images, planimetries, maps and audiovisuals. Once the symbols are inserted on the map, they can be modified, moved or eliminated. Indeed, the software possesses a database that allows the creation and modification of the categories of the PlaceMaker symbols, used for the entire map. Once the database of categories has been constructed, the symbols can be positioned on the base map, making it possible to connect the information referred to the places with the related multimedia schedule. The symbols may also be linked to other symbols, maps or internet addresses. In order to facilitate the construction of the final complex maps and consultation of the information when many data are present on one map, it is possible to decide the categories of areas, lines and symbols that must appear on the map and overlay the various maps. The partial maps and the symbols created for the final complex maps can be overlain and connected, the final products being characterized by a strong graphical impact.

With respect to the indexing of the results, the symbols created to construct the complex maps can be connected to a database and translated by PlaceMaker into numerical indices in order to

allow the calculation of data useful for the study of the sustainability of the places in question, such as liveability, well-being, chaoticity, etc.. Furthermore, the map can be adapted to local changes by updating the multimedia database and symbols.

Every phase produces a map with the symbols and the related multimedia schedule. In the first phase, devoted to anticipatory analysis, it is possible to directly insert the text in word format or make a sketch in electronic format. Once the analysis of the expectations has been carried out with a synthesis operation it is necessary to assimilate a text, an image or something else to a symbol; if the database does not contain the suitable symbol, an appropriate one can be created. Such data are necessary in order to construct the multimedia schedule to link to the symbols. In the second phase, once the five surveys have been carried out, in addition to the nominal database, also the sketches in digital format, the images and the video are inserted in PlaceMaker software. A second partial map with symbols and related multimedia schedule is constructed from the information obtained from the second phase.

With the third phase, the different types of maps which are used for the traditional analysis are imported by the software. The product of this phase is a map identifying the components required for the site description that can be found only through traditional planimetric interpretation. The symbols in this map will not be associated with a multimedia schedule but with those of two traditional maps. In the fourth phase, the information obtained from the questionnaire is transferred onto the fourth partial map and the schedule for the symbols will mainly comprise images and written text. In the fifth phase, involving assembly of the collected information, the recorded data represent the basis for the construction of the graphical system of symbols and the related multimedia schedule. By suitably overlaying the maps obtained from the previous phases, with the software it is possible to produce the final complex map with symbols and related schedule of syntheses (Sepe, 2010a). In the sixth phase, that of detecting the identity resources, the software allows the analysis map to be drawn up by selecting the elements which identify the potential, the critical issues and quality with respect to the identity resources. This allows the construction of three maps to be superimposed and the identification of possible sites for project interventions. The connection to the multimedia schedule will be activated to one or more aggregated symbols related to such intervention

areas. In the project questionnaire phase, the seventh, the software functions are the same as for the questionnaire in the analysis phase. In this phase, the information will be imported by the software for constructing the map and the multimedia schedule which lists the respondents' questions and answers. The software will also highlight the relationship between the answers given, nationality / age of the respondent and where the interview was administered. In the last phase of the method, phase 8, the software allows us to process the results obtained in the analysis and design phases for the construction of the complex map of project. The schedules related to the symbols will address both data of project and analysis phases. For both the complex maps, the software will update the results by entering new data. The software is a flexible tool open to different uses. The main users targeted by the method and software are urban designers and planners, and administrators, while a simplified form of the complex map is designed for local, citizens, place users and visitors. As regards administrators and city planners, PlaceMaker enables them to understand, in the framework of the planning process, the potentials and problems relating to any given place, and how the place itself is perceived by its users and residents. The map may also be used for specific purposes to redefine the identity and image of a place vis-à-vis initial demand (e.g. historical identity, commercial identity etc...), to assess the compatibility of any activity with its identity or again, if the aim is to restore traditional businesses, to gauge whether such recovery is still in line with current demands. The map also enables the collection of analytical data on the place and data useful for project design purposes. Thus, the data contained in the map may be used to create active indices and reference parameters for gauging project sustainability, such as quality of life or pollution thresholds, or sustainability of identity, through assessment of the elements making up urban identity from the viewpoint of sustainability.

As to the citizens, PlaceMaker will enable them to garner a deeper understanding of their city's identity, feel stronger ties to it, hence protect and safeguard it or play a proactive role by proposing improvements to administrators or participating in planning choices. Lastly, tourists and place users will find the map a tool providing an insight into the city that goes beyond mere identification of major landmarks and captures the complexity of a place identity, including its tangible and intangible elements, both permanent and temporary.

3 The Sovana *placemaking*

I followed the PlaceMaker method and used the software created for the purpose to study ways to improve Sovana—the second objective of the Tecon@bc project and the Bilateral project. Below I illustrate the results achieved in phases 5 to 8, ordered according to the succession of stages prescribed by the PlaceMaker method.

My main objective was to use the identity resources of Sovana in order to both sustainably enhance the Medieval town (Whyte, 1980), and activating the roots of the new idea of territory in its inhabitants.

3.1 The identity of places in Sovana

Having merged all the data collected in the previous phases, I created symbols suitable to represent the peculiarity of the place and drew up a complex analytical map (Phase 5, fig.9). The symbols created specifically for this study designate places of archaeological interest, local crafts, places for meditation, planned green spaces, flower plants, and uncultivated green spaces.

The complex map of analysis shows that the identity of places in Sovana is based on a combination of a number of factors, including the town's very ancient history, in which the Etruscans and, later on, the Aldobrandeschi are especially prominent; its medieval layout and tuff architecture; nature in its various forms; and the peaceful atmosphere of the burgh.

The surveys conducted in the second phase revealed a place that appears to be frozen in time and dense with interesting elements and perceptions, especially on the less frequented streets and those that are less evident in traditional maps, namely, Via Dell'Oratorio and Via del Siviero. These streets, along with Via del Pretorio and Via del Duomo, each show distinctive peculiarities. Via del Pretorio and Via del Duomo form the backbone of Sovana.

They are the axes that run through the whole length of the burgh and characterize and structure it, with the Rocca Aldobrandesca on one side, the Cathedral on the opposite one, the central widening of Piazza del Pretorio, and the low houses flanking these streets for all their length. Some elements, such as artisanal souvenir shop and the flower pots gracing the ground floors and facades of houses, further contribute to giving this place its character. Via dell'Oratorio is characterized by unexpected views of the hills and their landscape. Via del Siviero, with its privileged view of the Cathedral, is remarkable for the sounds of nature and of silence.

The nearness of the Etruscan necropoleis does not seem to contribute directly to the identity of Sovana, although Palazzo del Pretorio does serve as an information point for visitors to the necropoleis. In general, the place seems to be scarcely frequented. My surveys suggest that visitors spend little time here and tend to concentrate only on Via del Pretorio, Via del Duomo and monuments of historical interest. The pace is prevalently calm throughout the burgh. One does not see many locals out on the streets, and neither Piazza del Pretorio nor the other open spaces and the Piazzola are used as places for socialization.

3.2 Singling out identity-related resources and the project questionnaire

The sixth phase was devoted to the singling out of the identity-related resources of the place to determine what material and immaterial resources were available for the project. The interpretation of the complex map showed that the medieval burgh has many potentialities and qualities, as well as some criticalities, as related to the identity of the place and the fact that tourism appears to be the main factor in the way people live in Sovana and frequent it.

Starting from identity-related potentialities, one observes first of all that the space around the Rocca Aldobrandesca—a monument of remarkable archaeological interest—is mainly occupied by uncultivated green that does not adequately enhance the building. Although presently a ruin, the Rocca is of great importance for the history of Sovana, as are the remains of Etruscan walls. It is also one of the points of access to the burgh, and should hence be granted adequate space for its visit or its observation from afar.

Via dell'Oratorio, with its flower-dotted meadows, vineyards, olive orchards and hills in the distance, has remarkable landscape potential, but is mainly used as a service street for the houses facing onto it. In Via del Pretorio there are several artisan shops that are inadequately promoted.

Piazza del Pretorio is perceived as an “emptiness” and not used as a place for traditional socialization. Something could be done to improve the second stretch of Via del Duomo, which has a very agreeable front of stone houses, although with some discontinuities and gaps compared to the first stretch.

The space around the Cathedral, a historical monument of remarkable interest, is not used to its full potential as a place for stopping and meditating.

As a place where the senses are stimulated in an agreeable way, Via Siviero has remarkable potential; with its “privileged” view of the Cathedral, it could constitute a sort of perceptual itinerary peaking in the space in front of the Cathedral, but it is underused.

As to identity-related qualities, the first thing one notices in the map is the presence of places of historical and archaeological interest. Furthermore, the treed avenue leading into Sovana is rich in inspiring features, including the archaeological vestiges alongside it, and thus provides an agreeable invitation into the burgh. The historical monuments, churches, and old-style terracotta paving of Piazza del Pretorio are features of remarkable value. The flower-ornamented staircase of one of the houses on the Piazza offers an agreeable visual perception and contributes to the peculiarity of the urban landscape. Palazzo del Pretorio and the information and exhibition space for the Etruscan tombs it houses is much visited. The rows of tuff houses decorated with flowers on Via del Duomo make for an agreeable townscape. The Cathedral has a very interesting structure. Finally, the green hill landscape visible from several points in Sovana offers especially pleasant views. As to criticalities, the most problematic are the inadequately enhanced accesses to town; the absence of places for traditional socialization; and a certain neglect of the spaces surrounding interesting monuments. More specifically, the first thing one sees on entering the burgh from the treed avenue is parked cars and a poorly maintained building. The street widening with a car parking leading into Sovana from Via dell’Oratorio does not do adequate justice to the significance of the burgh. The other widening at the end of Via dell’Oratorio is used as a parking lot for camper vans and trailers. The Piazzola, a widening of Via del Duomo, is also used as a parking lot. In the Piazzola, on the side near the school, are several advertisement billboards arranged chaotically, which constitute a disagreeable sight. Finally, Via del Siviero is poorly maintained and dirt-floored for some stretches. The project questionnaire (Phase 7) comprised nine questions relative to ideas about actions to be taken based on considerations made in the previous phase. It was an important occasion for participation for users of the place. I interviewed a total of thirty locals and visitors, of Italian, Swiss, Belgian and French nationality. The languages used for the questions, listed below along with a synthesis of answers, were Italian, and English for foreigners.

Age and Nationality

- 1) Do you think it would be a good idea to improve the artisan shops in Sovana?
- 2) Did you notice the flowers gracing the portals of the houses on Via del Duomo? Do you think these houses should be improved?
- 3) Did you walk on Via del Siviero? Did you notice the perceptions it offers?
- 4) If you were to mention an idea summarizing all the sensations you experience as you walk through the burgh, what would you say?
- 5) Do you think that a better design of Sovana’s places for socialization (piazzas, street widenings, etc.) would improve the quality of the place and its livability for its inhabitants and visitors?
- 6) Do you think it would be a good idea to enhance panoramic views, especially from Via dell’Oratorio?
- 7) How long are you staying in Sovana? Poche ore. Dipende dal tipo di corso, probabilmente sì.
- 8) Would you participate in workshops on local crafts and products, or visits of gardens of cultural or landscape-related value?
- 9) Do you think it would be a good idea to establish information points to let visitors know about all available activities and cultural resources?

To the first question, about promoting the artisan shops of Sovana, most of the interviewees, especially the visitors, replied positively. Although not all the interviewees had noticed the artisan shops, they answered that promoting them would be an interesting way for people to be informed about local products. The rest of the interviewees, especially the locals, replied negatively or, in general, did not think that any further promotion of the artisan shops was needed.

To the second question, about having noticed the flowers in Via del Duomo or not, most of the interviewees, independently of nationality and age, replied that they had, and expressed their appreciation. The rest, although they had not specifically remarked the flowers in Via del Duomo, had noticed the flowers gracing some residential buildings in Sovana. To the third question, if they had walked along Via del Siviero and observed similarities with sensorial perceptions they had had in the Cathedral piazza, the interviewees replied in different ways. About seventy per cent had not walked along this street at all. Of the remaining thirty per cent, half said they had walked along it and noticed its peacefulness and views on the landscape. The other half said they had walked along it, but only perceived this atmosphere in the space in front of the Cathedral.

To the fourth question, regarding their global perception of Sovana, in their replies all the

interviewees mentioned the feeling of peacefulness and serenity evoked by the burgh. Several characterized this feeling as one of joy.

To the fifth question, regarding the planning or renovation of traditional socialization places, such as the piazzas and street widenings, the answers reflected certain aspects of Sovana that confirm the perception I had of the place during my surveys. Most of the interviewees, especially those who are not local, perceived the burgh as not much “lived” or, at any rate, not much inhabited. These interviewees saw the need for places for socialization, and also simply of public spaces where to stop both for visitors and, above all, for the local population. The rest argued that new public spaces are not needed and that Sovana is a unique enough place as it is.

The sixth question concerned Via dell’Oratorio. Most of the interviewees had not walked along it. The rest, especially the locals, had walked along it and noticed its landscape qualities. (It is worth mentioning that the non-local interviewees did not know the names of the streets of Sovana, except for Via del Pretorio and Via del Duomo.)

To the seventh question, regarding how long they were staying in Sovana, most of the interviewees replied they were only staying for a few hours. Some added that they had not expected the place to be so beautiful and to have such a peaceful atmosphere, and that they intended to come back for a longer stay. Of the rest, half replied they were staying for two days, including a visit to the necropoleis. The other half, constituted by locals, replied that they lived in Sovana, but not the whole year round. To the eighth question, about itineraries focusing on local crafts or gardens, most of the interviewees said they would have been interested. Reflecting the different interests of each interviewee, the answers focused on food products, handicrafts, the floral art, or landscape. Some of the interviewees added that they would also have been interested in the products of the countryside of Sovana, and thus in itineraries taking them out into the surroundings of the town. A small minority replied they had no interest in itineraries taking them elsewhere than in the necropoleis. To the last question, about the need for multimedia info points in Sovana to inform about all available cultural activities and resources, most of the interviewees replied positively, especially as regards improving street signage. Half of the interviewees only go to Piazza del Pretorio to get information on the necropoleis at the Palazzo del Pretorio, partly because information about the rest of the burgh is

not available. The rest were satisfied with their visit of the burgh.

3.3 The identity-related project of Sovana

The last phase concerning the construction of the complex map of design with the project interventions which are identified.

The actions I outline here are aimed at enhancing and promoting Sovana’s identity-related resources in an integrated and sustainable way, and at addressing the criticalities I observed. Of the six actions I propose, the first three consist of the creation of thematic itineraries.

The first action I propose is Creating a Landscape Itinerary. Sovana’s nature on Via dell’Oratorio is mainly experienced by the locals, who use the street to come and go from their homes, or cultivate the plots alongside it. Renovating this panoramic street with benches, adequate paving and viewpoints onto the scenery would make it attractive for visitors and tourists as well as locals. Furthermore—as specified in the fourth proposed action below—the two widenings halfway along the street and at the end of it should also be renovated to provide, respectively, an adequate access to the burgh and an agreeable stopping point. The second action is Creating an Art and Craft Itinerary. There are several antiquarian and artisan shops along Via Pretorio and Via del Duomo. These could be included in a single itinerary also involving illustrations of the use of traditional craftsmen’s tools. Floriculture could also be integrated into this itinerary to provide a more comprehensive overview of local culture.

The third proposed action is Creating an Itinerary of the Senses. All the streets of Sovana stimulate the senses in various ways. This is especially true of Via del Siviero, but Via dell’Oratorio and the piazza of the Cathedral also provide constant sensorial stimuli to visitors. Scenic views, the scents of nature, the taste of the plants, the song of the birds, and the tactile perception of nature, if organized into a single itinerary, can make for a rich sensorial experience. Such an itinerary would make the most of the potential for meditation of the Piazza della Cattedrale and, in general, of the whole area, and invite visitors to experience these places of great sensorial attractiveness. Such an itinerary could also provide special perceptual experiences to visitors with physical disabilities.

The fourth action is Enhancing Public Spaces and Monuments. This action does not concern the monuments themselves as much as the places where they stand. The specific steps to be taken

are: renovating the three accesses to town—the one on the Via dell'Oratorio widening, the one on Via del Pretorio, and the ramp near the Torre Aldobrandesca—which currently do not do justice to the historical importance of the Borgo; redesigning places with important monuments—notably the spaces around the Rocca Aldobrandesca and the Cathedral, which are both neglected, in different ways—and programming the maintenance of the buildings; creating and renovating public spaces for the socialization of locals and visitors, including Piazza del Pretorio and the Piazzola; reorganizing the currently chaotic parking system. The fifth action is Differentiating Activities. Creating new activities, besides the currently present handicraft shops, to enhance available natural and cultural resources would favor the presence of visitors and, hence, of inhabitants at different times of the year. Steps to be taken in this direction could include organizing a festival of gardens in the summer months in an area in Via dell'Oratorio or Via Siviero, the planning of which should be assigned by an international competition to be held at some other time during the year. Other activities could include a flower-arranging festival, and training courses in the various local crafts. All these activities should maintain a close connection with the various places of Sovana and its countryside. The sixth action is Organizing a network of Artisan shops. This action should include the local food stores in the area around Sovana and the Etruscan tombs in order to enhance the whole territory. Finally, the last action is the Creation of Information Points. To improve access to cultural and identity-related resources, both information points and adequate signage are needed. Besides the Palazzo del Pretorio, where information is currently provided on the Etruscan tombs, other infopoints should be planned to provide information about the new itineraries, events and workshops, and about typical products. They should be designed to harmonize with the history and architecture of the place. Each infopoint should be equipped with multimedia devices to visualize and navigate the PlaceMaker multimedia maps of identity-related resources, and of itineraries and activities.

4 Updating of the experiment

The phases of the method in which the main transformation of the place were observed in comparison with the previous experimentation

include phase 2, 4, 6 and 8. In the following, the main results of these phases are illustrated.

As regards phase 2, both surveys concerning phase 2 and the questionnaire were carried out. With respect to phases 2 what follows is the main elements relieved. In Via del Pretorio, it is observed that inside the wood shop the artisan shows the modalities to realize the wood objects, creating a better interest to stop there. In Piazza del Pretorio, the wine shop has been substituted by one which sell souvenirs, books with information on Sovana and surroundings and proposes guides for excursion or visits at the monuments in Sovana or surroundings. The Piazza del Pretorio in this way welcomes visitors immediately with information about the Village and the Etruscan necropolis also given by the Information office in the Palazzo Pretorio. On Via Duomo, which follows Via Pretorio, two new shops of typical products, the bakery with typical bread and cake, and the Mieleria (literally “honey shops”) the artisan explains all the honey cycle which are produced and sell there as well. On this street, an increased presence of both tourists and locals is observed compared to the the previous surveys. As the places of socialization, a new one for children concerns in particular that of the ex School, which is now used for games and meeting by children. Women and men (mainly elderly) sit down outside their home and socialize each other. Visitors sit down on the benches which can be found both in Piazza Pretorio and on via Pretorio-via Duomo stretch. The Piazzola square is still used as a little parking but appears more lived both for the presence of a bakery with typical products and of ricreative space for children in the ex-school. As regards the means of transport, there are observed mainly bicycles, in particular mountain bikes (tourists) and city bike (locals). Few cars are observed (the street in some periods is only for pedestrian use) and are used for reasons related to the commercial activities which are presented there. As regards the natural elements, a notable presence of cats is observed. The perceptions which are modified include those of sound - due to the steps of people who walk here (medium-notable) - and those of taste (medium) – due to food prepared in the homes and restaurants. Furthermore, on billboards close to the Rocca Aldobrandesca, Palazzo dell'Archivio, Palazzo Pretorio, Chiesa di Santa Maria, Palazzo Bourbon, Museo di San Mamiliano and Casa di Ildebrando monuments,qr codes are inserted with information concerning those monuments. Via dell'Oratorio, in the summer period - due to the summer traffic rules –is used for both car circulation and parking and

the end of the street for parking of camper and roulotte. The two main observations with respect to the first experiment concern both visual and sound perceptions. As regards the visual perceptions, a remarkable presence of cars parked in the open space in the village arrival and on the right side of the street is observed, while, on the opposite side, a major presence of rows of vines and other vegetation which creates a limit to the view of the landscape around. The sound perceptions concern the sound of cars (medium). With respect to Via Siviero, there are not specific transformations. The meditative atmosphere is the same. The street is little used, only few people decide to follow it completely, may be because it is unpaved and not very easy for pedestrians. For who chooses to follow it, the silence together with the nature sounds highlights the smell and sound perceptions of the place, the latter culminant in the Cathedral. As regards phase 4 concerning the analysis questionnaire, answers which are mainly changed concern the symbol of Sovana: while in the questionnaire previously carried out there is not a specific answer, now more than 50% of interviewees have answered the Palazzo dell'Archivio, although some of them noting the bell on the top of the Palazzo, define it "Church". This is also witnessed by the images taken by tourists with the Palazzo on the background. For the remaining 50%, the Sovana symbolic element is Palazzo Pretorio (30%) and, more in general, the atmosphere of the place (20%). The minor vagueness in the answering to this question demonstrates that Sovana became a place of attraction with its specificities which differentiate it from the near Pitigliano and Sorano. With respect to phase 6, potentials are those concerning the public spaces in front of the archeological monuments which are not particularly enhanced such as the Rocca Aldobrandesca Cathedral, and the Casa di Ildebrando. The presence of qr codes offer the possibility to have a better knowledge of the place but not to have a good enhancement and fruition. The same happens in Via dell'Oratorio where landscape potentials are not enhanced. As regards the Via del Pretorio and Via Duomo shops, these are well enhanced and, selling typical products, maintain alive the traditions of the place. Piazza del Pretorio, thanks to a good number of visitors, which cross it with a slow pace both to walk and visit monuments, artisanal shops and bar, is perceived as a place lived and agreeable in all the hours. It is only observed, at the end of Via Duomo, a no-used building which could host cultural functions such as a local artisan school which

would attract visitors during the whole year. Via Siviero continues to be a place with many perceptive potentials as already relieved. I qr codes are interesting but could be powered with further and interactive contents. Qualities are increased in particular on Via del Pretorio and Via Duomo which appear very lived without suffer of mass or invasive tourism. Shops, although not organized as a network, are many and all with local products or close to the local culture and posed long the street with a close distance one to another. In many artisanal shops the modalities of realization of products are explained, making the visitor nearer to the tradition of the place. As regards criticalities, the main problems include: the presence of accesses which are little enhanced and the presence of spaces around some monuments of cultural interest which are little cured. Some billboards are observed on the wall of the ex School of Sovana which give a non agreeable and chaotic visual perception. In Via del Siviero a low degree of maintenance of the street is noted, in some stretches unpaved. As regards the last phase, phase 8, in relation to the interventions to be previewed, the three paths – landscape, art and crafts, and perceptive – are confirmed. Indeed, the Art and craft path has been realized although this not defined as a path. For a tourism active all the year and a better involvement of population, the fourth intervention "Enhancement of monuments and public space" and the fifth "Differentiate activities" are confirmed. The last intervention "Inserting Info point" is, although not realized with qr code posed close the most famous monuments, could be furtherly powered and interactive with the illustration of maps - such as those carried out with PlaceMaker - with the possibility to answer to questions through blogs, etc. Interviewees – about 40 Italian and foreigner visitors – answered in a positive manner to the the questions concerning those interventions, confirming the previous questionnaire.

5 Observation and Conclusions

I have presented here a multimedia interactive software for the enhancement of the identity-related resources of Sovana, and a connected project conceived in the framework of Progetto Tecon@BC and a Italy-China Bilateral Project. The burgh of Sovana has an intact medieval layout with archaeological monuments and an architecture that enhance its urban fabric. Until the last three years, because of the nearness of the renowned Etruscan

necropoleis and the presence in town of an information point for these, it was mainly used as a mere point of departure for visits to the tombs. Few tourists used to visit the burgh itself, and even these do not always spent enough time there to fully appreciate the place's urban, architectural, landscape and identity-related qualities. At the same time, Sovana is apparently perceived as the locals as a mainly touristic place. The town actually runs the risk of becoming a non-authentic place, one that its residents no longer identify with [12-15]. This is reflected in the lack of places for socialization and public spaces for both the locals and visitors. Now Sovana is becoming more and more a centre of attractivity, although the elements of interest are concentrated in only one street (via Pretorio-Via Duomo). The problems are related to the lack of residents during the winter period and a possibility of "musefication" and loss of authenticity. I have applied the PlaceMaker method, and the software based on it, to Sovana for its flexibility, which makes it adaptable to totally different contexts and objectives, and for its ability to highlight, protect and enhance the identity of places by collecting and processing data regarding both tangible and intangible features of an area. The PlaceMaker software imports data using a protocol that is at once rigid and flexible, and supports a method capable not only of recognizing and representing the identity of places, but also of developing criteria for their sustainable planning. Herein lies the innovativeness of the method. It allows a complex understanding of places, a higher degree of awareness both in making operative land-planning decisions at different scales and in creating new needs and business initiatives. PlaceMaker incorporates several different modes of utilization addressed to different kinds of users, including administrators, sector professionals, citizens, and tourists. The software allows updating of the data and, hence, of the thematic maps, an indispensable feature considering the current speed of the evolution of local areas. The proposed actions are aimed at both restoring and deepening the roots of the value of living in Sovana by means of an integrated enhancement of cultural, identity-related and landscape resources and the creation of public spaces and activities for both locals and tourists. The ultimate purpose is hence to foster a better understanding of the burgh and its life even during periods when visitor flows are lower, and a long-term rooting of the results achieved in the area. The illustrated project is only an example of the possible uses of the PlaceMaker software. Thanks

to its flexibility and the investigation protocol it supports, the application is suitable for use in different contexts and for different ends and, above all, as a tool for collaborative planning.

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