

MEETING FOR COOPERATION
ITALIAN – EGYPTIAN WORKSHOP
FOR ARCHAEOLOGY AND CULTURAL HERITAGE
Cairo, 8th-10th December 2019

CIERA
Vocational Education and Training for Cultural Heritage

The "EIDS-CIERA Project", Vocational Education and Training (VET), was supported by Autorisation of the Ministry of Antiquities, on the advice of its Permanent Committee sessions of March 3, and August 6, 2012.

The project aims to extend, over the whole area of the Hilmiyya - El Khalifa district (1, *photo from Ibn Toulun*), the cultural promotion carried out by CIERA as a “work site school” in the "Mevlevi architectural complex" (2, *overview of the complex*).

The activities of the work site school, as we remember, began in 1979. They were promoted by the IIC (3, *whose director at that time, was prof. Carla Burri*) and by the EAO (*with prof Abdel Tawab*) and carried out as training for the Cairo University restoration courses of (4, *in the photo prof. Mohammed Abdel Adi with students*).

Subsequently, archaeological research and restoration, training and dissemination activities, were carried out through numerous and diversified programs promoted and agreed upon with Italian and Egyptian Institutions. (5, *diagram shows, how the recovery of traditional techniques, and the introduction of new techniques and materials converge in the activities of the work site school, and involve technicians and craftsmen, architects and restoration specialists of the Ministry of Antiquities, Universities and free organizations*).

Among the most relevant cooperation programs realized are:

1976-84, “Theoretical-practical lessons” for Cairo University; (6, *professors and students of Cairo University during the first interventions on the sama'khana dome*), (7, *model of the sama'khana dome*) (8, *interior, restoration painting: inspector Haggaghi Ibrahim and me*).

1984-88, “CIERA’s vocational training course in restoration and archaeology”, by the Italian Directorate for Co-operation (DGCD. (9, *professor Angelini from the ICR with inspector Mohammed Awad who wrote his thesis and today is a professor, in Luxor*). Many people took part in the restoration of the paintings (10, *in the photo, with me, Hosam Amin, then secretary to the Ministry of Culture*).

In **1988-91**, Programs of "work-site school of specialization" were promoted by CIERA itself, as an organization registered in Italy thanks to the executive protocol of Egyptian and Italian Governments on February 9, 1988; (11, *the training of artisans; teachers arch. Ahmed Ali and eng. Dina Bakhoum who received a stone restoration course from ICCROM*). (12, *the autoclave realized by CIERA for injection of epoxy resins, used in the brick walls of the sama'khana*).

Since 1988 until today, CIERA collaborated in the setting up of courses or departments of restoration at the following universities:

Helwan, (13, *prof. Semir Seif, contributor at the University of Helwan*)

Qena, (14, *in 1988-90 two-year course at Qena University by prof Haggaghi with the support of the Dean El Bedrawi Zahran*)

Cairo -Alexandria, where in 1997 - 99 we held a training course for the Supreme Council of Antiquities employees (15, *in the photo, prof. Bongrani Luisa, archaeologist and prof. Renzo Delia, physicist for radiocarbon applications, from Rome University. From Alexandria University, Dr. Mohammed Helal who had written (16) his doctoral thesis, in our work site school, on the mausoleum stucco*

1992-98, “Training Pilot Archaeological Project” was carried out with the contribution of the Directorate for Cultural Cooperation DGCC; (17, *the archaeological excavations have brought to light the remains of the Sunqur Sa’di madrasa and more ancient testimonies The study of ceramics has been the subject of a thesis at the University of Venice by Gabbrielli*) (and Thesis of Yashbak palace by Cinzia Tavernari with Venice and Paris Universities)

In **1995-99**, Theoretical-practical program for the students of Tanta University by Egyptian Ministry for International Cooperation (MIC); (18, *the students worked on the paintings of the Sounqur Sa’di madrasa.* 19, *Group photo with the program bus*)

1991-94, 1996-2000, CIERA’s Applied Technologies for Restoration and Conservation in the (20) *"Mediterranean Project: Research and Training for Third Countries".National Research Council (CNR, SMED - CFPR); (21, a chemical laboratory for site analysis was organized (22, photos of chemist Scala (23, lesson of site safety expert Marco Palma from CNR)*

2002-08, Two Programs interacted (24): the “Program for the Professional Training”, by the Directorate of Cooperation for Development DGCD, and the project of restoration of the Mevlevi "takeyya" (25, *convent*) carried out by the contract between CIERA and the Italian Ministry of Productive Activities, (26, *photo lessons by Lorenzo Lazzarini of the University of Venice*) (27, *operai e restauratori*).

Buildings involved in the restoration activities.

1. **in 1988**, CIERA has accomplished the recovery of the **Sama’khana**, (28, *the sama’khana and the underlying archeological area*)
2. **from 1998 to 2002**, the recovery of the **Madrasa of SunqurSa’di** (29). The restoration involved archaeological excavations below the sama’khana, (30, *photo of the Madrasa Iwan-used as a Mevlevi Museum*)
3. **in 2003-2008**, CIERA accomplished the restoration of the **Mevlevi Takeyya** and the **Mausoleum of Sunqur Sa’di**,. (31, *photo of mausoleum*).

Since 2008, within the Italy-Egypt MoU, CIERA increased cultural activities, with the support of International Institutions: UNESCO (32, *Environmental Day*); and Italian Embassy, (33, *in the photo, Seminar of technology by Italian Trade Center “ICE”, with an exposition of machineries of numerous Italian companies operating in the restoration field.* (34, *photo of the cutting machine with a 3 meter blade made by CIERA in Egypt.* (35, *Sandblasting machine realized by CIERA to being used by several people at the same time.* (36, *The 4th international congress on Science and technology.*

Several graduation theses were written in collaboration with Italian universities (37, *in the photo the students of the University of Bari and Matera with their theses. With Prof. Canova of the University of Naples and our chief restorer Ali Taha who received this year (2019-20) the invitation from the University of Bari and Matera as visiting Professor*

(38) since 2008, itinerant exhibitions “Restorations and Restorers” and various cultural dissemination events (the last exhibition took place in the “Florence Biennale”, October 2019)

The restoration activity essentially aims to recognize and improve the cultural heritage and the human identity itself within it.

The recovery of the Cairo sama'khana is emblematic of these objectives. The building represents the philosophical and religious thought of the great mystic Galal al Din Rumi and his mevlevi dervishes brotherhood.

(39-40) At a symbolic level, the circle, is the path of man, and the *culture* itself in the evolution of knowledge¹ (41) .

But, what is culture?

The most appropriate definition of culture we have found lies in the thought of Cesare Brandi (author of the “*Theory of restoration*”) who says: “...*culture is not given recipe; and since culture is not erudition (notion), culture is what through knowledge increases consciousness...*”².

Namely, culture improves by knowledge and the purpose of culture is consciousness.

Unfortunately, in today’s culture, long-standing values have been lost. In fact, as for religion, God is no longer an objective but a simple tool of use for individual or collective needs; Science itself, in its widespread meaning, is no longer a cognitive goal of knowledge, but rather a tool for technology, so that the values have been inverted.

Finally, the school that should promote culture does not educate but instructs,. Thus, it promotes competition to manage the power of notions, but not their cognizance.

(42) *The “work site school” is based on everlasting values: it promotes education through work, for a cultural awareness.*

Giuseppe Fanfoni (Cairo, 2019)

¹ M. Molé, “La danse extatique en Islam” in *Les danses sacrée* (Sources orientales), Paris 1963, p. 250.

² C. Brandi, *Carmine o della pittura*, 1962, p. 127 “...*della cultura non si dà ricetta: ma, poiché la cultura non è l'erudizione, cultura diviene solo quello che, entrando a far parte della conoscenza accresce la coscienza...*”.