

Instead of a conclusion

By the beginning of November 2011, the GCDO was officially informed by the European Commission that it would receive 270 000 Euros for the implementation of a project for the creation of the Monumental House Owners Association, training, and the restoration of the roofs of ten abandoned monumental houses in Gjirokastra and Berat.

Prior to the restoration, the house owners ‘shared’ with their communities their ideas on how their houses (once restored) would serve the communities. Sharing is done on a bigger scale now! The scale on which the ‘sharing phenomenon’ is being implemented in Gjirokastra (and lately in Berat) has led me to believe that, once you start sharing conservation decisions, partnerships for heritage conservation and development will be created.

Omari House raises another important issue: the Gjirokastra Foundation is now working so that all stakeholders are involved when conservation decisions are taken. Moreover, they are also organized better. The Gjirokastra Foundation supported the creation of the house owner’s association and is also supporting the creation and growth of the association of the artisans and craftspeople of Gjirokastra, the association of the young friends of the heritage, the association of tour guides of Gjirokastra, etc.

From my knowledge of the social capital paradigm, I consider all these activities a way to increase the social capital of the town. So what started as ‘sharing’, has now transformed into ‘partnering’ for heritage conservation and social development.

References

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Acknowledgement

This article would not have been completed if not for the patience of Catherine Antomarchi and the lovely team at ICCROM.