

including the encouragement to “let all the senses participate in forming the first impression of the storage”. The general idea was the same as, I believe, it was in the Varallo case study, to ‘calibrate’ perceptions and retrieve fresh and uninfluenced information of the place. It is similar to the object-oriented analysis approach that was adopted for archaeological site surveys by Corrado Pedeli and Valerie Magar in courses in Archaeological Conservation for Southeast Europe. It goes from micro to macro observation of the site features. All these methods are aimed at recording the information without interference and before the full context is given attention.

In accordance with the general idea, the students were encouraged to ask themselves questions at the very beginning of the survey, on the doorstep, and even from the outside: Is it light or dark in the storage? Does the space seem large or small at first glance? Is there a strong smell inside? What can you hear while entering the storage? What is the first thing that attracts your visual attention? What is the air like? Can you move freely? The students were also asked to think of a role while entering the storage (who are you while entering the storage – a visitor, a researcher, a curator, a conservator, a journalist, a marketing specialist, a cleaning lady, a thief?). The survey itself was done in pairs, based on observation and an interview with the curator. The approach was adapted to the time and space limitations and the fact that it was only a four-day Storage Organization course. The aim was not for the students to produce a full storage reorganization plan. Even though it seemed everything was taken into consideration while planning the exercise, there was a one big limitation that was not considered sufficiently: the involvement and impact of the curator. There was a tendency to give surplus information and limit access. This was incompatible with the idea of retrieving the information based mainly on observation.

The debriefing after the exercise was deliberately organized in a coffee shop close to the Natural History Museum. I had already taken the role of an experimenting teacher in this case, so there was no reason not to go a bit further and look for the reactions and results in a relaxed atmosphere outside the classroom. What was achieved was the involvement of all 12 students for the first time in the course, but in an overheated discussion. It might have been too ambitious to test this approach in such limited conditions. To really test it in the context of museum storage, there should be enough time to carry out and control the exercise. The results were not as clear as in the Varallo exercise.

Teaching SCD concepts and tools

Evaluating options (AHP)

Apart from the didactic tools and concepts used in the Sharing Conservation Decision courses, the content was also of interest to