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**Course:** *Organizational ethics, Politics and sustainability:  
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**SUSTAINABILITY ETHICS LEADERSHIP,  
CHANGE, AND ENGAGEMENT ACTION PLAN:**

*The new architecture design and building  
process/project of “ nuovo palazzo del cinema”  
for the “biennale cinema “ in Lido di Venezia  
committed by Biennale foundation with a major  
financial sponsor by Italian governments for the  
150° anniversary of the unification.*

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# SUSTAINABILITY ETHICS LEADERSHIP, CHANGE, AND ENGAGEMENT ACTION PLAN:

## Introduction

*The new architecture design and building “ nuovo palazzo del cinema” for the “biennale cinema “ in Lido di Venezia committed by Biennale foundation with a major financial sponsor by Italian governments for the 150° anniversary of the unification.*

The impact on the territory and on the people of this building and the collateral intervenes is very relevant and, has been criticized a lot for the failure of the project in the current status-quo.

This kind of realization has again created a wide debate, plus a rise in lot of controversy points since the earliest stages (i.e. the similar big impact of big intervenes as Mose or o the onward described “impossible architecture”). Local communities follow closer this debate but the democratic process continues to follow the big building path, and continue to give asymmetric information. I’d like to share that what I’m going to write about ,later on, is almost coherent and mostly match with the point of view of the local community, represented adequately by the association “Un'altro Lido”, who saw a growth in “popularity “ with various kinds of actions( as the fake opening ceremony, when the building site was already stopped for problems onwards described ) speeches and public debates, with also conferences with experts or other institutions as IUAV (ist. universitario di architettura Venezia..) all concerning about pushing the social and environmental point of view at the first position,

trusting in the concept that money can't solve the majority of Venetian's and Lido's problems.

### **1-Situation analysis.**

The Lido of Venice is an 11 km long island that forms the natural border between the Venetian lagoon and the Adriatic Sea; during the early 1900's there was the idea to transform the littoral in an exclusive place for holidays. It became like this and after in the 30's where instituted the "mostra del cinema" who was the highest appealing event and somehow the engine of that situation, created by local entrepreneurs and the town hall of Venice. The wealth created since the earlier years brought on the island prestigious liberty architecture, with its characteristics mosaics and decorations, prestigious hotels as *excelsior* or *des bains* and the prestigious event let Lido's become the more requested holiday place in the north Adriatic.

The territory of the Lido municipality is composed by three main areas, denominated: the north part, S.Nicolò the S.M.E. central lido and the south part Malamocco- Alberoni; which have different urbanization, environmental heritage and are all interested (excluding Malamocco) in this new building process/project. In the lido's territory, both ground and water present a multiplicity of micro habitats as dune formations, protected vegetation and protected place for migration, shielded by EU laws and Italian environmental protection laws.

The building is going to be built in the central part, but other interventions related to this are going to rise in the northern part and involve also the prestige of the southern part (exclusive-golf club appeal...) but globally do not match the requirements of protection and valorization of these habitats.

**Biennale** is a cultural association which creates contemporary art exhibitions in Venice. Since 1895; established at Giardini , it had organized thousands of events reaching high respect in the field, worldwide, it operates in various sectors as architecture(every 2 years, coming this summer 2012), art, music, theatre, cinema. Biennale cinema is a section that obviously concern to the cinematography industry and manage the international film festival called “mostra del cinema” since 1937, when the local touristic entrepreneurs together with the regime started a film competition, sometimes using the event for propaganda-like movies. It is the first international movie competition.

The very positive peak of relevance in Venezia’s 1930 till 1960/70’s scenario is well known, but progressively trough the 80’ and 90’ this main event, **biennale’s “mostra del cinema”** started a slow and constant change and decline until somehow the association were again needing a new peak of wealth and popularity, as the first explosion earlier in the 19<sup>th</sup> century It started to think, among the other things, about building a “new symbol” to enhance and enlarge the main event; “shouting” it’s presence in the international movie festivals globalized arenas and markets(Cannes, Berlin or even Rome, Milan, Turin) where the business of the presences and the related prestige around these events is bigger.

This needs summarized in this key last architectural design’s contest in 2004. But become involuntary a part of a list of several big modern architecture impossible to build in an environment as Venice. Unique possibility given a few famous and estimated Architects , treasure and unique masterpiece each , but difficult to build practically; such a big project in Venice , opportunity accorded to few “characters” trough the last 60 years as Le Corbusier, Louis Kahn, Frank Lloyd Wright.

In 1990 when was instituted a design contest, and Rafael Moneo, a famous Spanish arch. Star won that contest; so biennale seem to had reached the

solution of its problem, but the winning project felt in the *list of forgotten venetian projects* ( the three architect cited before produced designs for a new hospital, an University and a big cinema palace) but this time the guiltiness was attributed to the excessive costs of Moneo's project for the Biennale cinema's palace.

A point of relevance, as past "error" made by biennale, in the list of "impossible modern Venetian architectures, can be represent a point in favor for the thesis that the environment problematic as the construction of these realizations or the willingness, or solid consensus, are central to the sustainability of whole Venice, and means also that the past errors made shouldn't be forgotten (excessive costs failures have certain characteristics, especially in place like Venice).

September 1, 2005: Award of the **International Design Competition** of the New Palace for Cinema exhibitions (hereafter NPC), launched in 2004 by the Fondazione La Biennale di Venezia. The competition saw 10 projects in the race. The winning project involves the construction of a building shaped like a shell length of about 90 meters nearby sea front and land: a "stone" which contains the 2,400-seat hall; on one side there is a large window in the shape of the wings of dragonfly in homage to the masters of Murano. It will be built alongside the former Casino; will have an area of 18,500 sqm. A volume of 184,000 cubic meters. Some buried deep over 6meters and 16 meters high at the surface. Then there are other halls for 320, 120 and 50 seats. The design contest notice read: "The NPC should be designed in such a way as to ensure the correct insertion into the surrounding environment in both phases of the realization that in the subsequent phase of operation ..." But the work will involve the demolition of the entire pine forest (130 trees nowadays cutted), although the project did not envisage (the Study winner subsequently expressed through legal judgment their disappointment for this decisions, outcome of a special commitment for

the 150° anniversary, held by a special commissary) and even the invasion of the nearby Park bound protected by Palav.

This design were successively modified by the construction firm, with the disappointment of the architect who declared big changes in the winning design.

In addition to this building itself, the **mechanism for the funding** the same building create a financial leverage imposed for the construction of the project. The major realization are a big “darsena” outside north inlet (s.Nicolo), not randomly in front of the Lido ex- Hospital, today sized in few basic health assistance operations now, but involving already the next cut of fast- public health-transport and the probable shut down of the service, considered unnecessary. In the north part of the island, this complex denominated, OAM=ospedale al mare, is going to be sold to est-capital (real estate developers) which ambitions are to cut totally the service and restore the whole special complex, obviously in the best look for the nearby new Darsena’s customers (darsena is the place to park yatches and boats, this one will be around 1000 boat place, so in front of s.Nicolo sensitive inlet this monster will modify in an irrevversible modification of the lagoon and on the living there). The third big collateral action in Lido is a controversy decline of some masterpiece of the lido’s historic hotel, which rating will be \*\*\* instead of\*\*\*\* and the same happened, in this years, at another same classify hotel. The shift is seen by many as a pre-stage for the luxurious complex that will take the richest customers/tourists market.

By the way, this new building is full of sense of renewal and expectations but today is a 6 meters deep hole partially covered by plastic-like materials.

**The 150° Italian anniversary (1861-2011) occasion** had expressed in 7-8 big investments with hundreds of medium and hundred thousands of

small ones and billions of initiatives, in order to celebrate the Italian Unification( most of the nowadays country were annexes that year, although the north east part was controlled by the Austro-Hungarian empire and annexed later after the ww1).

This 7-8 big projects become new buildings, and in most of the occasion with strange enlargement of the expenses (Teatro regio in Napoli, or the Tiburtina high speed railway and station in Rome..), and Venezia's "Nuovo Palazzo del Cinema" is the most significant building not realized yet and with the strangest lack of financial resources. Nowadays, the big hole remains to waste the lido's landscape and 37 millions of euro has gone for that ground hole.

One of the **strangest thing** is about the mechanism of surveying this building. Since 2008 there was a kind of law (opcm nr°3746/2009 and 3759, 3791 and 3792 of the same year) who established a special committee for the realization, and enlarged its decisional power to the management of the majority of island by-passing institutional, urbanistic, environmental laws; making the head of this mechanism a kind of *super partes* who have decided without the legitimacy(onward described the sentence of the tribunal TAR of Lazio declared illegitimate this mechanism), where initiatives of not public interests have took place.(see collateral intervents).

This commitment by-pass of ordinary procedures and limits for construction in Lido's territory, it was given by the Berlusconi 2008 government and the focused point is the attribution of the definition of "special event" at the building of the new cinema palace in Lido, and the consequent insertion in the 150° anniversary 7-8 big realization, but the sentence of Lazio's TAR legitimate that a special event (as the Italian translation means ) is a high tide, a broken bridge, or other risky emergence situations. Where a task-force can work faster than normal

procedures, but the evidence of the nowadays big hole signify the failure of this government's initiatives.

This building was analyzed, during the last semester at IUAV, by my class of "economic project evaluation" and for a business plan or a start-up plan, the analysis of the competitors to locate the rent price or the tickets, in such a 2000 people events, inside different hypothesis of use and management during the year, (considering also real quotes of visitors-lido is difficult to reach from the inland) and the real appeal for big events like those only allowed by the new "big shell". The creation of spaces for everybody, maybe with a Biennale's "mostra del cinema sponsored park", with the possibility of restoring the existing 100 year-old important buildings are real alternative and also solution of the existing Lido and Biennale's problems.

## 2-Diagnosis.

- --The first point when there was an ethic sustainability problem/opportunity is the **environmental approach**, who has been underestimated majority of the steps of the process/project. The Venetian lagoon has faced, earlier in the century, a biodiversity loss (especially migratory birds), serious pollution problem (from Porto Marghera to the actual Lido's obsolete heating system) and has to tackle the erosion of the buildings..a fragile territory like Lido or Venice should be protected both more about environmental attention, citizenship importance, and safeguarding policies; due to the preservation of the cultural heritage too. Essential part for the future Venice, Lido has to be ruled by the town hall of Venice regularly. The partial suspension of the regular and instituted laws is not tolerable in such a sensitive environment as the lagoon, as

Venice is.-- As example lido's southern part is seen by many report an example for the original biodiversity and morphology of the lagoon (significant losses and changes during the last century) and for the future restoration of the natural harmony (or kind of) that this areas deserve. it could be taken as example for the future environmental intervets, if did in the sustainability ways. Relevant causes/obstacles are due to the praxis to attribute more decisional power, and engagement in real phisic management of Venice, to economics side despite environmental and social sides.

- --Another point when there is ethic sustainability problem/opportunity is the problem of biennale, which should match the same Lido's problems about the **common future** they have, closely interlinked, coherent and dependant among each other strategic decision. When relevant causes/obstacles are the specific small group of interested people, concerning to **real estate development** and **construction firms** with the **touristic entrepreneurs and apparatus** (one of the major CEO involved in the realization of such a big projects is an ex- town hall employee).
- --Another point when there is ethic sustainability problem/opportunity is the fact that ordinary procedures should be not bypassed for supporting particular interest, especially if it is not the common good interests. Problem of **transparency** and problems of **participation** also have been seen along the whole process/project.  
-(for process I mean the documents, special commission(held by mr.Spaziante ) at the head of the decision, the law in favor of, for project I mean all the decisions, permissions, and architectural parameters of the "nuovo palazzo del cinema").In this two last problems relevant causes/obstacles are due to the praxis to attribute

the decisional power to a single group of shareholder instead of considering the total stakeholder compositions, by an illegitimate emergence situation which “stealed” the decisional power from the town hall in favor of A commissary (held mr. Spaziante)

- --Another ethic sustainability problem/opportunity is represented by the “**new building vs. equating the existing ones**” question which have seen the decision for the new palace of Biennale looking only to the construction of a new building, ignoring the real availability of the Historic Lido’s Building (few meters from the place of the new building)

When relevant causes/obstacles I guess are the construction and touristic lobbies.

- --another evident point where an ethic sustainability problem/opportunity appeared is the lack of certain professionals or institution that have made silly, not naïve, errors, as the not adequate soil test before finding a large amount of asbestos under certain depth, which Aristotle’s proportionality is larger in favor of the costs instead of the benefits of a more depth search for asbestos.

When relevant causes/obstacles are the lack of adequate professionals with the right knowledge of the territory. (Due to the illegitimate commitment mainly).

### **3-Sustainability ethics leadership, change, engagement actions.**

**How and why react in different ways, my opinions to some possible solutions is:**

**N°1**-The biennale problem to bring the past splendor of the “mostra del cinema” had summarized in a new big “impossible” building. The citizens on the other hand wanted to a less invasive solution, as restoring the old buildings or invest in other lido’s environmental circumstances that will affect positively the “Mostra del cinema” event too; according to a Lido’s more sustainable development (economic, social and environmental). Biennale architecture contest’s winner design was several time modified and resulted not so much coherent with the existence; a possible renewal of some Lido’s Building as a **more accurate evaluation of the real needs of habitants and Biennale’s objectives had worked surely better**. More participation avoids this kind of suggestions/limits, but it is often used to escape from control and realize someone’s interests as the real Biennale’s needs are not a huge building but new glory and prestige of “mostra del cinema”.

*Objectives:* shape the Lido’s citizens and Biennale’s goal to create a common point of discussion. A reasonable compromise between extremes, a win/win solution should be created, because the evidence said that the economic interests will not let businesspeople reasoning neither with heart nor brain techniques( ethics arguments or storytelling) so the needs is to find something they want in the direction to satisfy the parts.

*Action approach:* win-win solutions

*Sustainability strategy/outcome:* a smaller new building designed with a sort of participative design at least had been easier to realize (lot of controllers are better than few ones), more useful and less invasive than the original design.

*Tactics/techniques:* this kind of design are not often used because their equalitarian approach that sometimes show the real lucrative interests of

the various actors that are in the building's production/realization steps. Users are often at the center of the architect/engineer ideas and attention if they're seen as customers (i.e. shopping mall). So the tactics to use this outcome, will be someone that has committed lots of research on touristic targets and different business plan of different solutions in the earliest stages, showing the bad impacts of such a big building instead of targeted small-medium interventions.

*Alternatives:* the amount of solutions is very big and from the renewal of the casino and the old cinema palace, from the landscape management and public spaces focusing (social squares, park implementing (there's a protected and marvelous park nearby) with maybe the creation of a beautiful places to meet, not only the big building , the choice is wide.

A possible solution for the entire island would be implementing bike-sharing service, the green areas, the sport facilities, and restoring the existing spaces all under the biennale sponsorship could improve "mostra del cinema" appeal from international customers more than a big building opened few weeks during the year.

**N°2-**The firm who found asbestos had proceeded without the right accuracy; the test for the soil was too closer to the surface, but in a territory when asbestos were used for touristic goal, back in the century (roofing..) **was a naïve guess = more money on the preliminary phases, on the soil tests** (as the proportionality of time of intervent/costs involved between intervention in the existing site and a more accurate design phase. Today's the construction site is a big hole (without absentos)

*Objectives:* excluding that this was a voluntary act, the objective is to make everybody more aware of the problem in order to avoid it. If there were a more in-time interventions on the design of the building (a smaller and cheaper one, for contain the costs) the budget needed for the

construction haven't grown as it has did (already spent 38.000.000 of euros for the big hole).

*Action approach:* if I could react, a sort of compliance system or the cost excessive growth whistle blow in my opinion could have worked, *to avoid the happening of the painful, nowadays situation.*

*Sustainability strategy/outcome:* a special committee to evaluate the progresses of the work and receive all the report, or a sort of people's committee in the board of the construction, for a transparent evolution of the process/project can be seen as effective outcome.

If someone informed of the facts had raised the public and national attention to this growing sustainability failure, it could have shifted the path to a more effective and useful resolution.

*Tactics/techniques:* if the institutions do not often allow a transparent way to follow construction processes of buildings, and do not excel in transparency with more effective control and compliance system, then the whistle blow of the possible scandal could have worked in order to create a *transparency tool* (committee...) and stop the bleeding of money spent; depending on the degree of the information and the seriousness of the contents, a public or private(judges) audience could have both worked.

**N°3-The democratic problem represented by the special **commitment at Spaziante** of the responsibilities and decisional power (illicit for the Lazio's TAR 21-2-2011 sentence), **has been an evidence of non-participatory process and the habitants deserved** one. Few day today's payment on nowadays management and maintenance of the "big hole" (nearly 20.000 euro a day cost), versus a public **referendum-like or collaboration since the earlier stages.****

*Objectives:* today on the management of the building there's the control of the town hall but for balance the initial abuse is necessary to cooperate more for the wealth and comfort of everybody.

*Action approach:* a solution to this problem would that since the earliest stages the town hall opened a round table to discuss with cultural institutions (mainly Biennale), citizens, environmentalist, architects, businesspeople etc... To know the different goals and start a useful negotiation or discussion; for finding a solution for Biennale's problem of restoring the prestige of the "mostra del cinema". But since it is not like this, a today's social movement (not radical but very tough) could create the institutional pressure to politicians to allow this kind of processes.

*Sustainability strategy/outcome:* a "is time to balance the priority" social movement with at the head the coordination of the citizens and environmentalist association where a green and social reform agenda is at the center of the future investments for the NPC.

*Tactics/techniques :* with formal rationality and the possibility to rely on mainstream communication channels and forms, this kind of peaceful and nonviolent legal actions can shake a little bit the bureaucracy of institutions. Citizens are very convinced that there are plenty of better alternatives to the big building and the future of Lido's important environment.

*Alternative:* a radical, nonhierarchical based upon involment social movement with non-egalitarian concepts, could have interrupted dramatically the "mostra del cinema" to show worldwide the mess that this building has caused and ac more drastically.

**N°4-This process of special delegation** that held Spaziante to run this sort of alternative institution (special commission that ruled the intervents in lido's territory), has decided the results by its own. This time a more adequate solution **would be the Sovran institution normal procedures,**

the “law is equal for everybody” principle. The evidence of the need to direct the efforts (and the whole process/project) in the ordinary procedure. These special procedures avoided the restrictions given by some law, **especially in the collateral lido’s modification**, as the northern’s new darsena, or in the selling of the ex-OAM to a real estate company, also involved in the darsena. Practically these special procedures had given the decision to the economics and business part instead of the social and environmental parts of the triple bottom line of this specific situation.

*Objectives:* Ordinary institution “building” as the legitimate institutions that do what the special institutions do not do (NPDC special commission failures)

*Action approach:* the law should regulate properly and effectively these modifications of the territory without exceptions, especially in a sensitive context like this. The law concern to ethic so avoiding certain law limits can be as avoid ethic principles, the evidence I’ve write about try to explain this un-ethical actions and situations.

*Sustainability strategy/outcome:* the certainty of punishment is a medicine for the reduction of illegal situation and it has to be improved in Italy. And this is an ambitious and long-term goals, it could be started by a huge social movement, which through generations succeed to change the system.

*Tactics/techniques:* social movement methods can create the needed continuity to prosecute this point over the generations’ and because of this, create the positive change.

**N°5-** Environmental attention was surely not given neither from the “Nuovo palazzo del cinema” architectural design projects (properly speaking it was green washing) nor from the decisions of the institutions for what happened. **Environmental field was not so much considered.**

*Objectives:* environmental approaches presence's improvement.

*Action approach: alternative institutions* building institutions that do what nowadays institutions do not.

*Sustainability strategy/outcome:* From the energy battles and wars (embargo U.S.- Japan, pearl harbor in ww2); mid'70's oil crisis and so on to the sustainable development concept and industrial ecologies.. The future human needs will be in a green perspective, obviously recognizing the environment as the main actor for the human's comfortable life on earth. So the practices in the next century we will improve a lot the efficiency in order to support human life, and institutions must adapt this nowadays situation towards a sustainable approach to be effective and representative.

*Tactics/techniques:* this slow process is going to continuously grow as nowadays green market and true benefits are getting larger and larger, so, non-radical social movement is probably the kind social movement which will occur. The importance of the environment will be hidden for other little time, because of the evidence of preserving humanbeings depend closely to environment protection.

#### **4-Reflection and transformation.**

The first boom of the earlier 19<sup>th</sup> century has seen the creation of symbols (casino, excelsior, Hungaria palace...)in the Lido territory but now the same tactics could not work anymore, The availability of the land, the mechanism of growth are dramatically changed and Biennale's purpose can be not so effective and useful, by the other hand the collateral event continue along their path and environmental and social sides seem in

danger; and this is a real shame because Venice must realize its modern environment( and people) request and dangers of irreversible actions and consequentially admit the related responsibilities, especially cultural and environmental ones.

Following the foresight of their Serenissima previous colleagues, nowadays, Venetian Institution first should recognize the real interdependence with the environment and the sustainable development, and focusing in elevate Venice in the *Avangarde* not in the luxury market of the tourism.

Elaborated a logic scenario between different perspectives (the institution, nowadays, lack in answer properly to certain treated points of discussion) of ethical leadership, relationships and different kind of organization of the social-political-economic system and environmental importance, this paper report a evident complexity and passive institutional logics behind the choices that affect and will affect future people and territory in the broadest sense. Like other big decisions on the Venetian area, as the NPDC and the collateral events are, the participatory process is seen as a sort of utopia for the most, a goal placed a little too far from reality, it seem like a *meta-physical* entity. The reasonable good is too often confused with mere profits and, a more environmental involvement in important choices will be again set in the first place after a disaster? Like the 1966? Is Venice really going to become like Disneyland? Or a rise in population, wealth, services, comfort of city's life and happiness will be the future? Maybe together with a safe and sustainable future from true safeguarding and protection of the environment and the cultural heritage? The Italian "oil" is culture and environment, except the Italian historic architecture and few other buildings all the new construction should be sized properly and in true harmony with the context situations. As I've learned from this case-study targeted small-intervents and actions, for the

Development of the social, environmental, economics sides, are better than this big project in Lido, and are also the answer of lot of long term questions. The actions I've mentioned are developmentally consistent with the environmental, social and cultural importance among economic and financial topics, in order to achieve sustainable development must be the goal of firms, of institutions and citizens (tourist included).

These arguments have to grow on their importance in order to perform theoretical changes, shape and suggest transition periods and become solid pillar of the future of Venice. The different kind of causes and obstacles are submitted to asymmetrical information and underline the need for open data system (see open data concept) in order to control and collaborate in the success of a relevant project. The Italian institutional environment is too often known as bad manager of some public building, infrastructures, and the political and economic representatives are several times guilty of inefficiency. The way how the public sector gives jobs and spread money will be ever a complex arguments but with the analysis and the communication of this kind of works I hopefully useful in the future for socially responsible peoples to know a more equal reasoning to plan with and not against the territory and the peoples.