

# CHARTER OF TURIN




**HANDBOOK PART 1**


Revised edition 2023

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# Preserving Automotive Heritage: The Timeless Charter of Turin

**By Tiddo Bresters,**  
President of FIVA

The Charter of Turin is an important pillar of FIVA's mission. It is a timeless document, but even more topical now than when it was introduced in 2012. Because it very much helps to understand the essence of preserving cars and motorcycles as they were presented by their creators, and describes the principles to be followed in restoration and conservation. The Turin Charter is much more than a manual. It is also the basis by which not only the vehicles tell the story of their fundamental contribution to the development of society, worldwide, since the late 19th century. The Charter also emphasises the importance of preserving examples of infrastructure around production and use of cars and motorcycles, and around road transport in general. The Charter supports the incredible story of the motorisation of mankind and the enormous progress it has brought to individual freedom of people and transportation of goods. All this must continue to be presented in a working condition and in an interactive way, now and in the future. I am convinced that the Charter of Turin will continue to play a crucial role in pursuing that goal, even more now it has got a new, fresh look.

# Unraveling the Legacy: FIVA's Turin Charter

By **Nataša Grom Jerina,**  
FIVA VP Culture and Youth

In the heart of every historic vehicle, there pulses the rhythm of history—a vibrant narrative of innovation, a tribute to long-gone eras, and a reflection of the societies that brought them into being. Historic vehicles are more than mere metal and gears; they serve as living archives, preserving the essence of our cultural and technical heritage.

Within the pages of this book, we embark on a profound exploration of historic vehicles, delving into their pivotal role in shaping the history of our world. Anchoring our journey is the Fédération Internationale des Véhicules Anciens (FIVA), the association of historic vehicle enthusiasts. FIVA, propelled by an unwavering commitment, stands as a beacon for the preservation and responsible use of these historical marvels.

At the heart of our narrative lies the Turin Charter, a meticulously crafted guiding principle born from FIVA's wisdom. Drawing inspiration from UNESCO's Venice Charter (1964), the Barcelona Charter (2003, dedicated to historic ships), and the Riga Charter (2005, focused on historic rail vehicles), the Turin Charter outlines an ethical and practical framework for the treatment, conservation, and restoration of these invaluable vehicles.

Our journey transcends the surface of these automobiles. We delve into the intricate network of roads, the hum of factories, the nostalgia of fuel stations, and the adrenaline of racetracks—each element echoing the footsteps of these vintage vehicles through time. Through the lens of FIVA's Turin Charter, we discover historic vehicles not merely as relics but as vital conduits connecting us to the very essence of our shared human history.

Join us in this literary odyssey, where each chapter peels back a layer of the captivating world of historic vehicles. Together, we pay homage to the artistry, marvel at the engineering brilliance, and recognize the profound societal impact of these vehicles. By preserving their legacy, we ensure that they continue to inspire generations, bridging the past with the future in an unbroken continuum of heritage.

A heartfelt and special thanks are extended to Jochen Thoma and Keith Gibbins, both members of the FIVA Culture and Youth Commission, dedicated and focused colleagues without whom this second revised edition of the Charter of Turin - Handbook (first part) would not have been possible.

# Charter of Turin

## Art. 1

### - AIM -

The aim of this Charter is to preserve and safeguard the history of vehicles including their engineering, form, functions and documented histories and their many and diverse relationships with society and social environments.

To understand, appreciate and ensure the preservation and operation of historic vehicles, including their use on public roads, it is important to use the research methods, scientific, historical and technical knowledge available and involve the organisations and facilities working in this sector.

## Art. 2

### - FUTURE -

Preservation, restoration and any related work processes are aimed at sustaining historic vehicles as both technical artefacts and witnesses of transport history and culture. It is imperative to pass on the methods used, material knowledge and work processes to future generations. We also aim to preserve the special knowledge, expertise and skills related to the manufacture and operation of such vehicles.

## Art. 3

### - CARE -

Permanent and sustainable care are essential for the survival of historic vehicles. Use of historic vehicles, including on public roads, is important for their preservation. It is the only way to fully understand and pass on the traditional knowledge of driving and maintaining them for future generations.

**Art. 4****- POSITION -**

It is beneficial for the preservation of historic vehicles that they are seen as an integral part of public life and perceived as a contribution to our cultural heritage. It is important and desirable that they can be used. However, in order to use them, historic vehicles should not be modified more than necessary. Unavoidable modifications should not interfere with the historic substance. As a matter of principle, they should not alter the vehicle's period engineering and appearance.

**Art. 5****- PROCESSES -**

The preservation of historic vehicles can require interventions or restorations to different extents. Preservation means the care and prevention from deterioration or damage, by which the present condition, individual and memorial quality of a historic vehicle or object is safeguarded. Conservation includes all acts serving to secure and stabilise the vehicle or object that do not alter the historic substance, parts and materials. Conservation treatment will not put at risk the object's historical or material documentary value in any way. It serves exclusively to prevent or at least delay continued deterioration. Usually, such measures are not visible on the surface. Restoration is the process of replacing missing parts or areas with the aim of displaying an earlier state of the vehicle and goes further than conservation. Restored areas should discreetly blend in with the existing historic stock, but remain distinguishable on closer inspection. This is different from repair that stands for the adaptation, refurbishment or replacement of existing or missing components. Repair makes a vehicle fully operational again and may not take into account the authentic substance belonging to the vehicle. Preservation, conservation, and restoration are specialised processes aimed at safeguarding and displaying a vehicle's engineering, aesthetic, functional, social and historic value. They should aim at understanding and considering the original design and the historic background of the individual vehicle. They should be based on respect for the individual historic entity and information found in authentic documents.

**Art. 6****- HISTORY -**

Any changes and modifications to a vehicle which occurred during its ordinary life span and altering its condition as originally delivered are testimonials of the vehicle's history and should be preserved as such. Therefore it is not necessary to restore a historic vehicle in a way that adjusts its look and technical features back to the appearance of the manufacturing date. A restoration that would return a vehicle to the appearance of a certain period should only be attempted with careful examination of historical records or thorough planning. Components and materials inserted to replace historic parts in the process of a restoration should be identified with simple and permanent markings to distinguish them from the historic substance. For replaced parts, FIVA recommends the marking system attached to this charter (see Appendix 1).

**Art. 7****- ACCURACY -**

During the restoration of historic vehicles historically accurate materials and work techniques should be preferred, unless such materials or techniques can no longer be used because of safety concerns, lack of availability or legal prohibitions. Especially in the conservation of historic substance, traditional materials may not be adequate. As elsewhere in the field of restoration, modern materials and working techniques may then be used instead, provided they have been proven adequate and durable in experiments or tried in practice.

**Art. 8****- APPEARANCE -**

Any modifications to a historic vehicle required outside of its ordinary lifespan should be integrated discreetly and respect the original structure and appearance. Such modifications should be reversible. It is recommended that any important original parts removed should be kept with the vehicle for later use and to serve as reference of their original existence and make.

## Art. 9

**- PLANNING -**

Any work undertaken on a historic vehicle should be planned systematically and documented in an appropriate manner. These records should be maintained with the vehicle.

## Art. 10

**- ARCHIVES -**

Any persons, facilities and organisations involved in the preservation, conservation, restoration, repair and operation of historic vehicles should take appropriate steps to protect their records and archives.

## Art. 11

**- STATUS -**

Institutions engaged in the preservation and transfer of knowledge or specialist skills required in the preservation and operation of historic vehicles should seek recognition by international and national governmental authorities as cultural heritage and institutions Archives consisting of documents, drawings, photographs or other media and artefacts relating to historic vehicles should be cared for as part of the cultural heritage.

## Appendix 1

**PROPOSED MARKING SYSTEM**

The system uses the following letters for permanent marking:

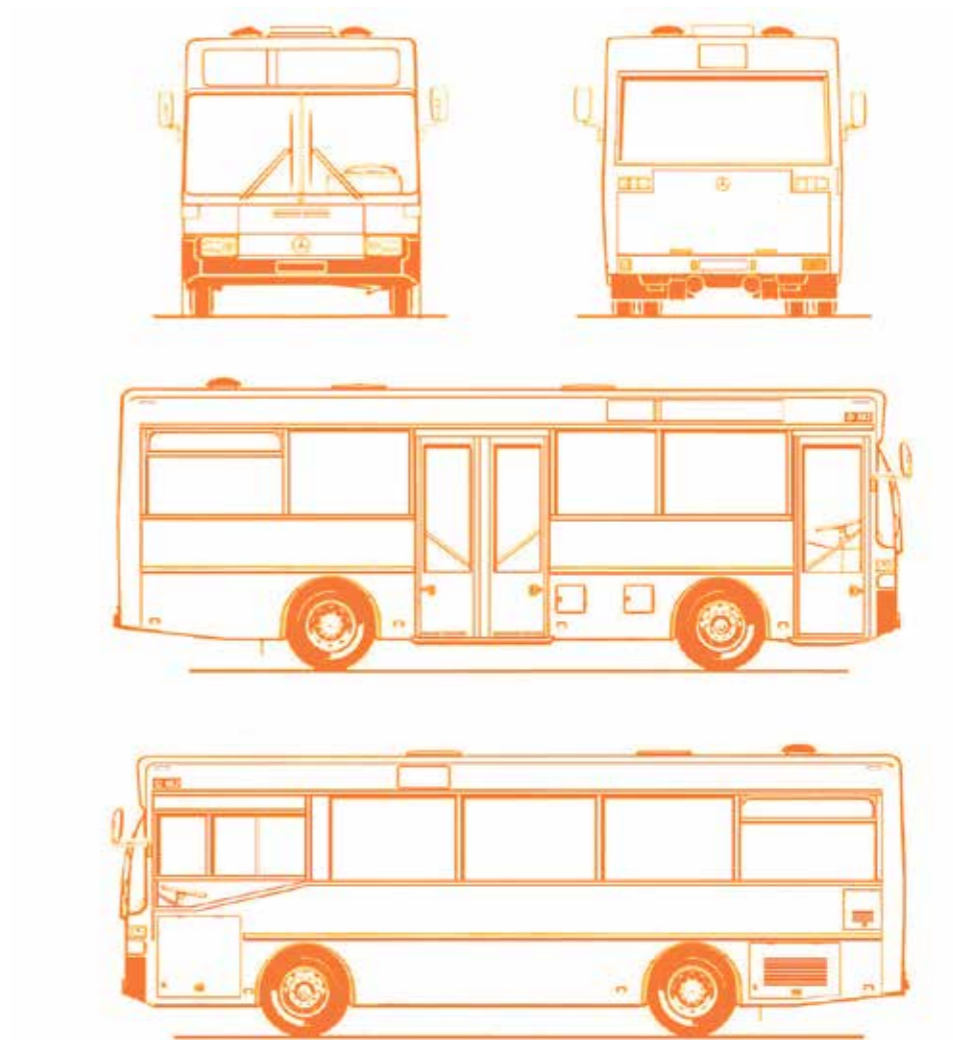
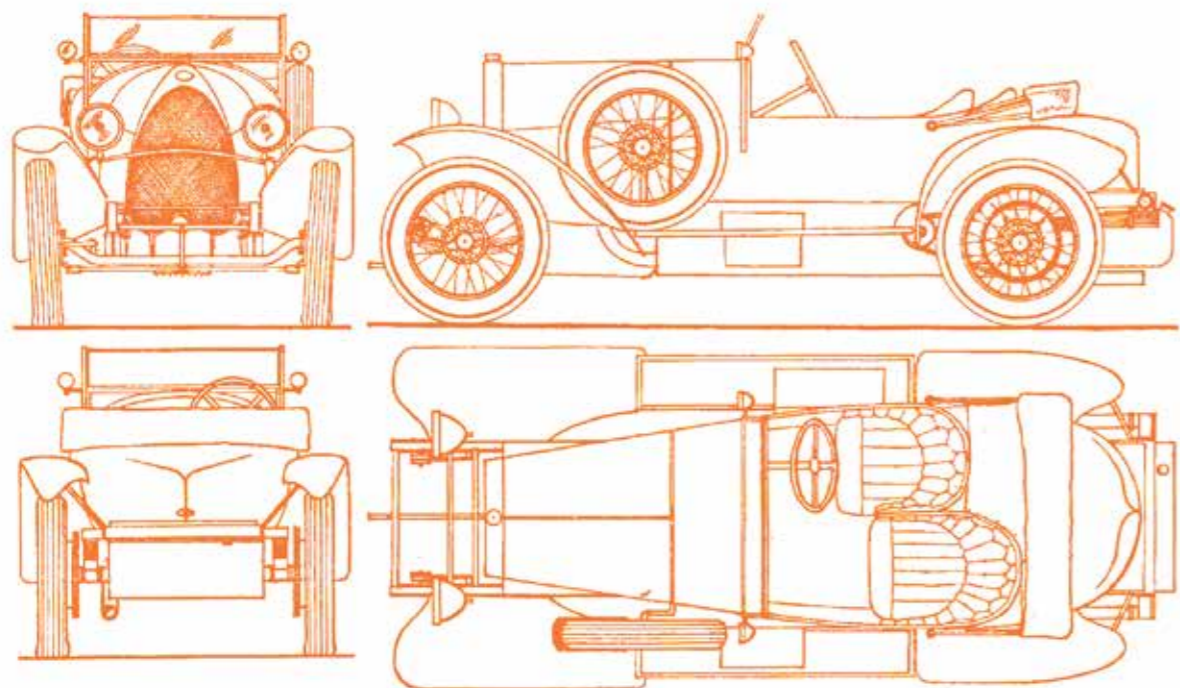
NB = "newly built" an accurate as possible a copy in terms of form, materials and make, reproduced directly from a documented original).

FR = "free reconstruction" (reconstruction without using any historic model in terms of form, material or work technique. The part however fulfils the technical function of an historic component utilised earlier).

CS = "conservational stabilisation" (a later structural reinforcement added to stabilize the historic substance).

We recommend the indication of the year of restoration/manufacture of the replacement part with the two-letter code.





# Glossary of terms

This glossary aims to define the terms used in the Charter of Turin for the preservation and treatment of historic vehicles.

It seeks to harmonise the different terms used in the field of historic vehicles where possible, for example in the FIVA technical code and the professional terms for description and treatment of cultural goods used since the 1960's.

This includes important references including the terms established in international law concerning cultural goods, in the following:

- the Venice Charter;
- the European Standard DIN EN 15898: 2011-12 (conservation of cultural property, main general terms and definitions) where appropriate;
- the professional vocabulary adopted by ICOM (International Council of Museums) and the ICOM Committee for Conservation.

See also the UNESCO note on the list of cultural goods and services<sup>1</sup>.

The Charter is also forming the basis of the FIVA strategy to develop relationships with other heritage organisations, including The International Committee for the Conservation of the Industrial Heritage (TICCIH) and the relevant sections of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). The aim be to gain recognition for FIVA as the leading body for historic vehicle culture and heritage.

In order to assist with clarifying the balance between a historic artefact and a real life restoration, examples of vehicles restored and maintained in sympathy with the Charter of Turin are planned to be shown in an associated Handbook.

## Alteration

Modification of the material that does not necessarily imply a worsening of its characteristics from the point of view of conservation. For instance, a reversible coating applied on a vehicle may be considered as an alteration.

## Artefact

An object that is made by a person especially one that is of historic interest.

## Conservation

The basic principle is that the original substance that has been lost cannot be regained. Conservation measures aim to stop or at least delay existing deterioration and damage.

The historic substance of a vehicle would not normally be altered by such measures but additional materials to stabilise the substance can be brought into the object.

Conservation treatment should be managed so as to not put at risk the object's historical or material value. It should aim to minimise any alterations to the historic substance, parts and materials. These measures may not be visible on the surface of the vehicle.

Conservation measures aim to consolidate the materials and stabilise the current condition of the vehicle. Conservation work should not alter traces of make, use, wear and ageing, even existing damage will only be stabilised but not removed.

Examples:

- Additional bracing that is required to fix loose wooden joints in the inner construction of a vehicle body.
- Refixing loose components.
- Securing tears in textile or leather.
- Consolidation of chipped paint layers.
- Covering corroding metal areas with protecting materials.

## Cultural Heritage

### *a) Material Cultural Heritage*

Material cultural heritage means movable or immovable objects, which have been made, formed or altered by people. These objects represent important values for present and future generations because they give an insight into the historic, social, artistic, scientific, architectural and technical development of mankind. These may include unique specimens, mass produced objects, collections or the complex manufacturing and distribution facilities.

### *b) Mobile Technical Heritage*

This was coined as a technical term by cultural historians. It was originally taken to refer to any rail vehicle, vessel, aircraft or automobile, which in total is deemed to be significant in the history of human culture and technology.

Factors, such as design, technical breakthroughs or special cultural relevance are important. Including a history related to certain key events and/or personalities.

Examples are many and varied and can include vehicles;

- that show innovative technical features for their time starting with Karl Benz' first automobile built in 1885, the 1908 Ford Model T, the 1938 air-cooled Volkswagen "beetle" and the hydropneumatic suspended Citroen DS, the MZ 2 stroke racing motorcycle whose technology was the basis for the Japanese championship winning machines used by Barry Sheene and Kenny Roberts;
- which have been involved in historic events such as the 1911 Gräf & Stift Double Phaeton, which the Archduke Franz Ferdinand was in when he was assassinated, the trigger for the 1st World War, the special SS-100-X Lincoln in which JFK was shot or Lenin's 1922 Rolls-Royce 40/50 Silver Ghost;
- with a racing history, such as a Maserati 250F raced by Juan Manuel Fangio, the Mercedes 300SLR used by Stirling Moss to win the 1955 Mille Miglia or Jim Clark's Indianapolis 500 winning Lotus 38;
- that have featured in movies or TV series, such as Steve McQueen's Mustang in Bullit, the Disney "Herbie" Beetle, the De Lorean DMC-12 in Back to the Future and "General Lee" the Dodge Charger from The Dukes of Hazard;
- that have been achieved certain milestones, such as US citizen Irv Gordon's 1966 Volvo P1800, which since being purchased new has clocked more than 3 million miles without ever breaking down<sup>2</sup>;
- which have had an impact on society or reflect special social issues of their time such as the mass produced Ford model T, possibly the most influential car of the 20th century, the Austin 7 which was licensed to BMW and to Nissan amongst others and the Mini which became an icon of the "swinging sixties" as well as successful in racing and rallying.

### *Damage*

Changes, which considerably limit or inhibit the operability of an object, phenomena which cause severe progressive deterioration and changes caused by ongoing neglect.

Examples;

- a road traffic accident;
- severe corrosion;
- tears in textiles that would be made worse by normal use.

Damage that fits these criteria are not normally part of patina!

### ***Deterioration***

The natural process of degeneration, whereby the vehicle condition becomes worse without quality storage or regular use, servicing and maintenance. Thus reducing the quality, value, and character of the machine.

### ***Documentation***

The compilation of information records about a historic vehicle, for example;

- drawings, photographs or other pictorial documents,
- historic training or maintenance literature,
- written descriptions and reports about servicing, conservation and restoration treatments,
- results of investigations and analysis,
- reference documents compiling details about the individual history and the material entity of a vehicle.

### ***Historically Accurate***

Historically accurate means changes made using materials and techniques available when the vehicle was originally made.

These may be subject to national regulations, including safety concerns and the availability of skilled technicians, equipment and parts.

### ***Historic Substance***

Any changes and modifications to a vehicle which occurred during its normal life span.

### ***Individual and Memorial Quality***

Maintenance and preservation undertaken in line with how the original role of the vehicle is remembered.

### ***Manufacturer***

The entity or person(s) who own the rights to and designs, constructs and markets a vehicle.

### ***Modified***

Modifications are all deviations from the condition as delivered from the manufacturer or constructor. These can be described on the FIVA Identity Card and should include the date and if known, the modifying entity.

Such modifications will be differentiated by their historical significance and classified into the following categories:

- **Period modifications** - are documented and confirmed to have been completed in period.
- **Period type modifications** - modifications completed to a vehicle out of period of a kind that were used in period.
- **Non-period modifications** - modifications not used in period or made using parts or technology not available at the time of construction. Such modifications may affect the vehicle value and depending on the type and national regulations, the build year and/or year of registration<sup>3</sup>.

In any event it is strongly recommended that a historic vehicle owner should carefully document any modifications performed, so that future owners will know the history.

### **Ordinary Life Span**

FIVA defines this as 15 years.

So if a vehicle was manufactured in 1960, it can be expected to no longer be in regular use or scrapped by 1975. An exception can be made for special circumstances, for example the period is increased to 20 years for vehicles built between 1925 and 1945 because of World War II.

### **Preservation (synonym: Preventive Conservation)**

Preservation means the care taken to minimize or prevent future deterioration, damage or at least delay their appearance as long as possible.

Once the original substance has been lost cannot be regained but preservation measures will safeguard the current condition and quality of a historic vehicle. Such measures do not interfere with the present substance of the vehicle or change it in any way.

Examples:

- Storage facilities that are environmentally beneficial, particularly re temperature and humidity. They should preferably provide a cool, dry atmosphere that both inhibits corrosion and also does not damage components such as leather or wood framing through over-drying.
- Regular servicing and maintenance.
- Removal of aggressive dirt layers that will cause deterioration, such as bird droppings.

### **Repair**

Repair involves the adaptation, refurbishment or replacement of existing, damaged or missing components. It can make a vehicle fully operational again and may not take into account the authentic substance belonging to the vehicle. Such measures aim to regain full functionality to the standard it was prior to the damage or even enhancing it compared to the historic standard.

We can differentiate between;

- Pragmatic repairs: the vehicle will be made operable again probably by improvised method which do not necessarily comply with professional standards.
- Professional repairs: the methods and materials used comply with the current professional standards.

Examples for pragmatic repairs can include;

- The replacement of the broken original engine with an engine of an entirely different type that can be made to fit, with the simple aim to keep the vehicle in operation.
- Broken components are fixed temporarily with a piece of wire.
- A hammer is used to move bent bodywork away from a wheel.

Plus for professional repairs;

- A partly damaged wing of a VW Beetle is replaced by a newly built spare part made of metal or even laminated glass fibre.
- Repairing torn or split leather seats so that they are kept at the current level of patina but will not deteriorate further.
- Damaged bodywork is repaired and painted with professional skills and full garage facilities. This is different from a "patina" style restoration which could have been repaired by inserting sheet metal into corroded parts of the wing, so to a large extent the remaining original substance of the wing would have been kept.

### **Responsible Use/Responsible Utilisation**

The challenge for the owner of a historic vehicle is to balance stewardship against the pleasure to be derived from usage.

Stewardship involves the owner having the responsibility of keeping the vehicle in a condition whereby when it is passed on to the next generation it will still be usable and enjoyable to drive/ride on the road.

Historic racing may be regarded as an extreme example, i.e. should a Ferrari 250LM, of which 32 were built, be raced on the limit at Classic Le Mans or the Goodwood Revival or driven more as a historic display? Economics may be a major factor given that, at the time of writing, a Ferrari 250LM example was due to be auctioned in New York where it is expected to sell for in excess of \$12 million.

## Restoration

Restoration is the process of replacing missing parts or areas with the aim of displaying the vehicle as it was at a particular point in time.

The basics to be followed are to recognise the principle “to interfere as much as necessary and as little as possible”. Treatment should only be carried out in areas that show deterioration, missing components and/or damage.

It should not change the driving characteristics, technical features or design of a historic vehicle.

Authentic materials and working techniques should be used wherever possible. Restored areas should discreetly blend in with the existing material but can remain distinguishable on closer inspection.

Modern materials and working techniques can be employed when historic methods cannot be used. In most cases of totally restored vehicles, repairs and newly built/reconstructed components will have to be used. Areas treated, completed or added in this manner should preferably be marked and documented.

The overall aim being to maintain the vehicle in a historically coherent state with minimal disruption. For vehicles in a “mixed condition” that show a range of different period modifications typically from older restorations, care will be needed when planning on-going treatment. Otherwise the vehicle is in danger of being “disrupted” as a historic entity.

In some of these cases it can be appropriate to leave even “out of period” modifications as part of the vehicles history instead of replacing them by new and possibly hypothetical (i.e. guessed at or assumed) reconstructions.

Examples of “disrupted condition” vehicles can include:

- The Mercedes 710 SS GP10 “Malcolm Campbell”, from 1930, delivered in “bluebird blue” paint with fuel pipe running on the outside of the body. The car was overpainted white in 1945 and the fuel pipe was changed to running on the inside. A restoration back to the primary blue body colour without also changing back the fuel pipe would mean the vehicle is in a historically “disrupted condition”.
- A BMW 319 from 1935 has been modified in period by adding a supercharger/ compressor and at the same time repainted in a different colour. For the restoration it is planned to keep the compressor as a “modification in period” but to repaint the vehicle in the original body colour.
- So called “rat cars or motorcycles” that intentionally shown in a superficially neglected and damaged condition on the surface, which sometimes can be done by artificial patination. However underneath they can have been restored to a good standard or even renovated and tuned.

## Reversibility/Reversible

Reversible means that materials can be removed without residue and changes can be returned to the earlier condition it was in before treatment, without causing damage or loss of the historic substance of the vehicle.

As a principle, conservation and restoration measures and the materials used should, whenever possible, be planned, chosen and executed with the aim that they should be reversibility whenever possible.

This concept, which is very important for the saving the historic substance is often limited by real-life requirements.

Examples can include;

- Fixing modern licence plates or additional lighting equipment which require drilling holes into the body. Of course the mounted components can be removed, but the drilled areas cannot be entirely brought back to the condition they were in previously.
- The use of gluing agents to reattach chipped paint layers or the application of wax on porous materials: such materials may be reversible because they can be restored by appropriate solvents and removed from the surface but practically they cannot be entirely removed (i.e. underneath paint chips or from textiles).
- When retouching damage and losses in painted areas. In some cases they may have a thermoplastic content. This means they can deteriorate with higher temperatures that could occur in vehicle when in active use. In practice they can be employed in selected areas but this should be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- Welded additions of sheet metal to replace corroded or missing parts of the vehicle body. Such additions can be removed again, but the condition before the treatment cannot be entirely regained.

## Sustainable Care

Necessary work to keep the vehicle fully functional.

<sup>1</sup> [http://fr.unesco.org/creativity/sites/creativity/files/ct\\_cpdp\\_note\\_list\\_goods\\_services\\_en\\_092004.pdf](http://fr.unesco.org/creativity/sites/creativity/files/ct_cpdp_note_list_goods_services_en_092004.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.vcoa.org/index.php/community/irv-o-meter>.

<sup>3</sup> See also the relevant sections of the FIVA Technical Code.

*“The car is the closest thing  
we will ever create  
to something that is alive.”*

Sir William Lyons, Founder of Jaguar Cars

# Preserving the Past, Guiding the Future

**By Keith Gibbins,**  
member of the FIVA Culture and Youth Commission,  
editor of the first edition of the Charter of Turin - Handbook

The Charter of Turin, a pivotal document in the realm of historic vehicles, has served as a guiding light for the preservation and promotion of these mobile heritage artefacts since its inception in 2012.

The genesis of the Charter of Turin can be traced back to its early days when Thomas Kohler, as the chairman of the Culture Commission, established a working group focused on formulating a charter specifically tailored for historic vehicles. Their unwavering commitment bore fruit in 2012, marking the inception of this significant document.

One of the initial triumphs of the Charter of Turin was its instrumental role in FIVA's quest for recognition by UNESCO. This international acknowledgement validated the cultural and historical significance of historic vehicles, highlighting their relevance in the contemporary world.

The Charter aims to foster a paradigm shift in how historic vehicles are perceived beyond the confines of museums. Recognizing the pressing need for adaptation in the face of the 21st-century challenges, the charter advocates for preserving and protecting these vehicles as essential artifacts of mobile heritage. It underscores the importance of respecting history while embracing the benefits of a sustainable future.

FIVA has proactively engaged with prominent heritage organizations, such as The International Committee for the Conservation of Industrial Heritage (TICCIH). This collaborative approach aims to garner support and patronage for specific events, further solidifying the standing of historic vehicles on the global stage.



Acknowledging the cultural differences between regions, particularly in Europe, the United States, and Asia-Pacific, FIVA recognizes the need for tailored approaches. In the United States, for instance, notable achievements include the establishment of a permanent archive of historic automobiles within the Library of Congress and the effective utilization of social media through the “This Car Matters” series of short videos.

This booklet in its second iteration, places a significant emphasis on the intangible cultural heritage (ICH) aspect of historic vehicles. This encompasses not only the vehicles themselves but also the captivating narratives that surround their restoration and preservation efforts. These stories breathe life into the machines, adding an invaluable dimension to their historical significance.

While the majority of examples in this context revolve around automobiles, it is essential to note that FIVA’s purview extends to all categories of historic vehicles, including motorcycles. The vibrant motorcycle community, characterized by enthusiasts who often achieve remarkable feats of maintenance and endurance, is an integral part of the historic vehicle landscape.

Historic vehicles, whether cars, motorcycles, buses, trucks, military or farm vehicles, face the inevitable wear and tear associated with their use. Preservation challenges abound, with the need for suitable storage facilities and transportation posing additional hurdles. In this regard, the Charter of Turin acknowledges the necessity for modifications and adaptations while preserving the essential character of these vehicles.

Recognizing the importance of imparting knowledge and values associated with historic vehicles, FIVA has created a cartoon version of the Charter to engage audiences of all ages, especially children.

FIVA’s alignment with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG3 on “health and well-being,” underscores the positive impact of engaging with historic vehicles. Scientific studies have shown that riding old bikes, and by extension, engaging with heritage vehicles in line with the Charter of Turin, triggers the release of “happy” chemicals like dopamine and endorphins. The Charter of Turin stands as a testament to the enduring significance of historic vehicles in our rapidly evolving world. Its evolution reflects the commitment of FIVA to ensure the preservation, promotion, and protection of these mobile heritage artifacts. As we navigate the challenges of the 21st century, the charter remains a guiding compass, steering us towards a sustainable future where the rich history of historic vehicles continues to captivate and inspire generations to come.

# CONSERVATION AND ENHANCING OF HISTORICAL HERITAGE

**Original by Rodolphe Rapetti, General Curator, National Heritage Trust,  
French Ministry of Culture.**

(Text published in the Records of the Proceedings of the 2nd International Forum on the authenticity of historic vehicles, Turin - Italy, 14th - 15th November 2008).

In 1957, Roland Barthes, who at the time was not very well-known yet, published a collection of texts entitled *Mythologies*. This book, then frequently reissued, made its author famous and one of the most renowned French intellectuals of the Sixties and Seventies. The work included some dozens of monthly chronicles, which had been published in earlier years, where Barthes explored those he defined, the myths of the second half of the 20th century, from television to horoscopes, through plastic materials and strip-tease. Of course, the car had its place in the book too. In an article, which then became very famous, Barthes analysed the historic, social and aesthetic meaning behind the appearance of what he called "The new Citroen"; he obviously referred to the DS model.

The article begins with a sentence which may easily represent our study sessions, in fact it precisely places the car in the perspective of a common heritage: "I believe that nowadays the car is the precise correspondent of ancient Gothic cathedrals, I mean those huge products of an era, designed with passion by unknown artists, and which are used and enjoyed by an entire people who, with them, takes possession of a perfectly magical object."

Barthes had identified the appearance of this car as the characterising event of a new era of design, with the change of codes associated with the use of cars, the actual change of a paradigm. His farsightedness is undeniable. Among the texts collected in *Mythologies*, the one dedicated to the Citroen DS is to date one of the most renowned and, possibly, the one which alone represents the real innovation of the book, the one which represents most clearly the intellectual approach of the author, who aimed at turning an everyday object into a myth.

It is clear when you look at the cover image chosen for the pocket version of the book, which has been printed since the Seventies, where, on a white background, a green metallized DS stands out.

Although the graphics of this cover changed through the years the image stayed the same, at least in the copies we could retrieve. Everyone will notice that unfortunately the model shown is not the one mentioned (and so precisely described) by Barthes when he first published his book (in 1956, year when the article first appeared), but a model later than 1968, easily recognisable by the famous headlights. Therefore, the registration number reading "1956 DS 19", instead of creating an illusionist effect, suddenly becomes a statement of ignorance.

This oversight may seem trivial, a minor error, due to the little knowledge of the history of automobiles in a field mostly devoted to literature. However, because the subject is a "legendary" car like the DS, and, most of all, a dear reference to possibly the most well-known text in the book, I believe this is a clear evidence of the lack of culture in the automobile sector.

For example, for a pocket edition of the *Romantic Theatre* of Victor Hugo, no one would ever think to illustrate the cover page with the portrait of the old writer, the senator with a white beard. Instead, it seems that the automobile subject is light enough that

such an approximation could easily be tolerated, as it is used for its unexpected character and therefore for its subversive content, which echoes the provoking character of the text that it cannot represent. This example leads to the issue, just one amongst many, of the place gained by cars in the historic heritage and, more generally, within the so-called culture.

As a direct consequence of this issue, and in the context of the constant investigation by the specialised press on the future of the French automobile museums, I was entrusted with the drafting of a report entitled "Museums and the Automobile Heritage in France". This report, see <https://goo.gl/cctocz>, was submitted to the Minister of culture, Mr. Renaud Donnedieu de Vabre, in April 2007, is a first step along a wider reflection on this topic, the preliminary investigation of the state of the art, to examine the ways more frequently used to view cars as an actual element of our historic heritage.

The long-term preservation of automobile collections is put at risk by their technical specificity. Of course, any object located in a museum needs specific measures to be maintained in good condition and preserved for future generations (the main aim of a museum). However, said measures are more or less difficult to apply and more or less onerous depending on the nature of the object itself. An automobile collection, as happens in few other fields (another being aeronautics) sums up all these difficulties. With respect to the preservation of collections, the technical museums present the most complex issues. Technical objects are made of extremely varied materials; the systems necessary for their manufacture often require multiple engineering processes, deriving from different specialisation fields and from processes that at times are difficult to trace back in history.

As for buildings, vehicle restoration may imply the reconstruction of missing parts and involve a number of different parties. The discipline of restoration applied to cars is therefore based on a theoretical/empirical knowledge of historic vehicles, where it is necessary to decide whether to assign certain operations to experts.

## THE NEW CITROEN

(Extract from "Mythologies" by Roland Barthes, 1957).

*I think that cars today are almost the exact equivalent of the great Gothic cathedrals: I mean the supreme creation of an era, conceived with passion by unknown artists, and consumed in image if not in usage by a whole population which appropriates them as a purely magical object.*

*It is obvious that the new Citroen has fallen from the sky inasmuch as it appears at first sight as a superlative object. . We must not forget that an object is the best messenger of a world above that of nature: one can easily see in an object at once a perfection and an absence of origin, a closure and a brilliance, a transformation of life into matter (matter is much more magical than life), and*

*in a word a silence which belongs to the realm of fairy-tales. The D.S. - the "Goddess" - has all the features (or at least the public is unanimous in attributing them to it at first sight) of one of those objects from another universe which have supplied fuel for the neomania of the eighteenth century and that of our own science-fiction: the Deesse is first and foremost a new Nautilus.*

*This is why it excites interest less by its substance than by the junction of its components. It is well known that smoothness is always an attribute of perfection because its opposite reveals a technical and typically human operation of assembling: Christ's robe was seamless, just as the airships of science-fiction are made of unbroken metal. The DS 19 has no pretensions About being as smooth as cake-icing, although its general shape is very rounded; yet it is the dove-tailing of its sections which interest the public most: one keenly fingers the edges of the windows, one feels along the wide rubber grooves which link the back window to its metal surround. There are in the D.S. the beginnings of a new phenomenology of assembling, as if one progressed from a world where elements are welded to a world where they are juxtaposed and hold together by sole virtue of their wondrous shape, which of course is meant to prepare one for the idea of a more benign Nature.*

*As for the material itself, it is certain that it promotes a taste for lightness in its magical sense. There is a return to a certain degree of streamlining, new, however, since it is less bulky, less incisive, more relaxed than that which one found in the first periods of this fashion. Speed here is expressed by less aggressive, less athletic signs, as if it were evolving from a primitive to a classical form. This spiritualization can be seen in the extent, the quality and the material of the glass-work. The Deesse is obviously the exaltation of glass, and pressed metal is only a support for it. Here, the glass surfaces are not windows, openings pierced in a dark shell; they are vast walls of air and space, with the curvature, the spread and the brilliance of soap-bubbles, the hard thinness of a substance more entomological than mineral (the Citroen emblem with its arrows, has in fact become a winged emblem, as if one was proceeding from the category of propulsion to that of spontaneous motion, from that of the engine to that of the organism).*

*We are therefore dealing here with a humanized art, and it is possible that the Deesse marks a change in the mythology of cars. Until now, the ultimate in cars belonged rather to the bestiary of power; here it becomes At once more spiritual and more object-like, and despite some concessions to neomania (such as the empty steering wheel), it is now more homely, more attuned to this sublimation of the utensil which one also finds in the design of contemporary household equipment.*

*The dashboard looks more like the working surface of a modern kitchen than the control room of a factory; the slim panes of matt fluted metal, the small levers topped by a white ball, the very simple dials, the very discreetness of the nickel-work, all this signifies a kind of control exercised over motion rather than performance. One is obviously turning form an alchemy of speed to a relish in driving.*

*The public, it seems, has admirably divined the novelty of the themes which are suggested to it. Responding at first to the neolo-*

*gism (a whole publicity campaign had kept it on the alert for years), it tries very quickly to fall back on a behaviour which indicates adjustment and a readiness to use ("You've got to get used to it"). In the exhibition halls, the car on show is explored with an intense, amorous studiousness: it is the great tactile phase of discovery, the moment when visual wonder is about to receive the reasoned assault of touch (for touch is the most demystifying of all senses, unlike sight, which is the most magical). The bodywork, the lines of union are touched, the upholstery palpated, the seats tried, the doors caressed, the cushions fondled; before the wheel, one pretends to drive with one's whole body. The object here is totally prostituted, appropriated: originating from the heaven of Metropolis, the Goddess is in a quarter of an hour mediatized, actualizing through this exorcism the very essence of petit-bourgeois advancement.*

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Among others, the director of museum preservation plays an important role. There are different opinions regarding the notion of restoration applied to vehicles. If you consider a vehicle as an original work, clearly any intervention of reconstruction of missing or defective components, even a partial one executed in compliance with the original techniques and materials, can be seen as compromising the authenticity of the vehicle. Consequently, some collection managers may prefer a non-intervention approach and only allow minimal maintenance. This is not just a hard assumption to support on theoretical grounds but it needs to be discarded based on common sense: if applied to a vehicle collection it will end up with worn out machines and, in the longer term, with the decay of the entire collection. Technical objects are not designed to last, or to be preserved in museums. Maintenance implies therefore constant preventive restoration. On the theoretical grounds, applying to technical objects, reasoning that are valid for written work is disputable: since the late 19th century, with the appearance of industrial manufacturing, the intervention of the inventor is limited to a conceptual rather than an execution domain, although execution is still very important in the instance of handicraft products.

In the end vehicle collections, as we will see later, have always been and still are restored to be preserved up to today. Similarly, there is no point in denying the truth: it would be preferable if these restorations were made according to artistic rules and with the support of cutting-edge techniques. Of course, it is necessary that each intervention be executed whilst keeping clearly in mind the origin of the object. Historic documents, material analysis, and the research for expert engineers are indispensable requirements to enable the actual execution of the work. The process should be documented before and during the execution, so as to be able to precisely define the range and nature of the restoration.

A descriptive grid may be imagined, composed of indexes in order to quantify a percentage of restoration executed on the various components of a vehicle (frame, mechanics, bodywork, multi-axed bogie, upholstery...), in such a way that the sum of said index-

es may result in the total percentage of restoration, therefore indicating the degree of authenticity on the vehicle in relation to a theoretical initial state estimated at 100%.

Moreover, the investigation techniques currently used for restoration (x-rays, chemical analysis of pigments, etc) have not yet actually been experimented in the vehicle field, where they may have interesting applications. While the automotive sector evolves to a real awareness of the notion of authenticity, restoration stays a relatively manual sector, which is good as far as the actual restoration work is concerned but not as regards the necessary investigations.

Many vehicles that are considered to be in their "original" conditions may benefit from this kind of research: very often, the so called "original" condition of some vehicles corresponds to a condition of restoration, the memory of which was lost, and which simply superposed the actual original condition. But, is there a threshold that the preventive preservation of a vehicle should not trespass? Should a vehicle be considered adequate for a museum exhibition where it is complete and its visual aspect mirrors the original one, or should it also function as the original, in other words, should it be actually running? Here too museum practices are based on different principles than in the historic vehicle sector, a sector where the notion of conformity to the original not only includes the exterior and interior looks of the vehicle but also its capacity to exercise the functions for which it was originally built, that is to say, if necessary, running according to the evidence of the performance stated in historic documents. We believe that this point of view should prevail, however a set of norms needs to be provided. In fact, if historic vehicle has to be functioning, restoration may imply interventions which are incompatible with the very notion of historic heritage.

However, a perfectly preserved vehicle is a vehicle which is mobile as originally intended.

Moreover, is it necessary to remind everyone that the appearance of a vehicle is indissolubly linked to the idea of movement? From the questions arisen by the subjects of preservation, restoration, and use of the automobile museums heritage derives the issue of what the threshold is between rigour and rigourism. At the moment, these questions are answered based on circumstances. But standards that regulate both preservation and restoration issues are strongly needed. They may be defined only through the close cooperation between historic vehicle professionals and preservation managers and I believe that museums will also play a fundamental role. The subject of standards for the preservation and restoration of historic vehicles must be at the core of a debate between professionals from various countries, and should be aiming at the publication of an International set of standards and good practice which will define the perimeter of historic vehicle authenticity.

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*Captions*

*The cover of 1957 "Mythologies" by Roland Barthes, a capital text of semiotics, where the famous Citroen DS from a symbolical point of view.*

# PRESERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT OF HISTORICAL VALUE

**Based on a talk by Richard Keller, Curator of the Automobile Museum in Mulhouse, France.**

(Published in the Proceedings of the International Forum on the Authenticity of Historic Vehicles, held in Turin on 12th and 13th November 2004).

Inviting Museum curators to the world of collectors is a sign of the times. Perhaps we have a common interest in preparing the future for the "recognition of the impact the vehicle has had on our heritage" and in managing its development in our 21st Century society.

Vehicle museums were opened all around the world in the 20th Century. Typically industrialised countries led the way. It is believed one the first to open was in London in 1912 at an address in Oxford street.

It is perhaps worth repeating the reasons for it coming into existence<sup>4</sup>.

"It's been a matter of common knowledge for some years that vehicles and cycles of great historical interest were being destroyed by their owners or sold for breaking up purposes. The fruitful period of experiment in modern road locomotion may be fixed between the years 1890 and 1899, yet, although less than twenty years have elapsed since investigation and invention became prolific, no possibility exists, even now, of preserving many vehicles which attracted world-wide attention by their comparatively recent performances....."

It then goes on to say how Mr Edmund Dangerfield, from "The Motor", decided that the magazine would put together that first collection.

Since then the movement has progressed such that all the major industrialised countries have a range of vehicle museums up to and including National Museums like the National Motor Museum at Beaulieu in the UK, the Motorvehicle Museum of Japan in Komatsu city, Ishikawa Prefecture, the Museo dell'Automobile Torino, in Italy and of course the Cité de l'Automobile at Mulhouse in France.

However, let us focus the discussion on the question of authenticity. This means asking the curator of a "French museum" to speak from the heart about his job.

Crossing the threshold of our museums the visitor expects to see, as far as possible, original and authentic historic vehicles. Each may have a personal vision, given his individual experience of particular makes and models.

Entering a museum, they move into one of the many display areas of "historic" vehicles. A novice may not be able to distinguish between a copy and an original. However, they would expect an accurate description of the exhibit.

In addition to the cultural responsibilities that the "guardian" of our heritage is set, Cité de l'Automobile has further administrative and legal duties. Specifically, relating to its classification as a Historic Monument, to be non-profit making and not being allowed to sell any of the collection, under the laws governing "French Museums" since 2002.

These rules are of limited or no interest to the average visitor, who is looking first and foremost to enjoy seeing the historic

vehicles, many of which would have only be seen in magazines or books previously. Add in a dash of entertainment and education and the recipe for a successful museum is made!

## THE “DAILY WORK” OF A MUSEUM

At the time of the first European congress of the collectors, in 1967, in France there were a dozen or so collections open to the public. The “Schlumpf Museum” did not yet exist, but the collection already included over 500 vehicles.

Today about forty or so vehicle museums have sprung up in France. Almost half of them respect the principles set out by the AMAF - The Association of Automobile Museums in France - over fifteen years ago and now considered “the minimum” by all those who wish to move ahead, including regular opening hours, no vehicles exhibited “for sale”, plus a minimum of facilities and services to welcome the visitor.

In the meantime, many collections and museums have been forced to close down.

The difficulties of staying afloat are in part tied to the market but also due to the obligations deriving from the priority being given to the authenticity or the historic value of the vehicle.

Driving a historic vehicle guarantees facing a range of issues. For example, the original tyres, which may proudly boast decades of use, are a risk for a vehicle that is used on public roads. In a museum however, they have an inestimable value, as does stabilised leather, cracked but original.

The paintwork is another example. It is understandable that a collector who uses the vehicle regularly would have it repainted, probably to a high standard. A museum visitor may prefer to see the machine in a used condition, with the original “patinated” paintwork.

A Museum can, in this sense, concentrate on its function as a three-dimensional data bank, consulted by more than 200,000 people a year in the case of Mulhouse. Such a mix of “mobile” and “static” heritage enriches the entire sphere of historic vehicles.

This invitation to consider the “static” aspect of a museum, often criticised by our friends the collectors, is not enforced immobility. Some people know that the Museum of the 21st Century has become “a place to experience” activities which include the priority tasks of conserving and studying the collections but also today go further than just SEEING the objects displayed. The 21st Century visitors have different expectations to the 20th Century ones.

Typically, visitors want to know about the:

- history of the vehicles, the manufacturers, the enthusiasts and their passions by reading or viewing information about the events and personalities from the 20th Century;
- imagination of the vehicle designers, coach builders and engineers who had relative freedom from legislative requirements and often used a pencil rather than a computer;
- sound and smell of the mechanical parts and of the passenger compartment;
- competition between countries, manufacturers and drivers in such fields as racing, rallying and the world land speed records which started in the late 19th and continued throughout the 20th Century, less the period covered by the two world wars, plus, technical developments which encompassed the whole vehicle and related infrastructure environment with gave such significant improvements in safety, ease of use, economy and performance.

## CONSERVATION

Conservation is the best medium for the preservation of authenticity, however it is not an end in itself in a museum.

In many countries, the curator’s job is limited to that of being an expert on the objects and ensuring they are looked after in perpetuity.

In France, this role includes the mission of valorisation i.e. getting the maximum value and usefulness from the associated education programmes and projects managed.

In practise this can involve setting up special events and exhibits that attract visitors to the museum. These activities, which help ensure the success of the business, are just as important as the mission to study and conserve the vehicles and other artefacts. However, in these cases it is important that any initiatives do not damage the integrity or perpetuity of the vehicle and/or associated items.

From this point of view museum work is very like that of all the collectors: as guardians who protect the vehicle from unfavourable climatic and environmental conditions and preserve them for future generations. With the passage of time they have organised themselves in a professional manner, into clubs and associations that provide mutual support. They can also in many cases promote the movement and are often able to lobby politicians re the benefits of historic vehicles.

For both museums and collectors, the methods of restoration adopted may be comparable in many cases. Gathering all the

historic and technical information available, so as to get a better understanding of the vehicle being restored is the first step. Establishing the scope of the operations needed to define the desired result in terms of aesthetics and use is the next step. The challenges then begin with selecting who will do which aspect of the work because it is from this stage that the restoration will get started. This will normally be done based on technical qualifications, subject to the available budget. However, they may be interpreted and performed in very different ways. What a collector often does or has done, sometimes in glorious isolation, the museum will undertake in a systematic, methodical and transparent manner.

## AUTHENTICITY IS THE HEART OF RESTORATION

Authenticity is at the basis of all the restoration work done in a “French Museum” as defined by the Ministry of Culture, since the procedure is often long, difficult and expensive. That’s why it starts by defining the authenticity of the object in question. This consists of deciding on the desired result, corresponding to a specific state or existence at some moment in its history. For example options can include restoring to the condition the vehicle was in when it left the factory, or as modified at a certain point in its life or in a manner that preserves the current level of “patina”. This level of “authenticity” will indicate what path to follow, a museum will normally give precedence to the conservation of materials in their appearance and structure, preferring to stabilise them rather than replace them. The vehicle will be thus preserved at the level identified from the research previously undertaken. We are well aware that a vehicle is not just an assembly of materials and functions, just as an artist’s painting has never been reduced to a juxtaposition of colours on a canvas. For this reasoning and respect for authenticity to be possible it is essential, in our museums, that the pre-established aim of restoration is not just to provide a ‘day-to-day’ method of transport but to provide an item of authentic mobile heritage. Following the definition of the authentic state required, the second step for any restoration in a French museum is to consider the level of reversibility of the operation. A rather extreme example would be to throw away a used but correct in-period tyre that is now unobtainable, deciding that it is of no interest and that there will never be the financial, scientific or accommodation resources for it to be conserved. However, at the same time it also means eliminating an essential element for resting the vehicle on the ground. We do not propose to go into this area in great detail in this introductory paper but to say it is a consideration that anyone involved in the restoration work must keep in mind. The third aspect is that of legibility. Every replaced part is marked with a punch or stamp so that our successors will be able to

recognise the “new” pieces even if they don’t have access to the restoration documentation. In effect this confirms the transparency of the methodology being followed.

The application of these three rules aims primarily to preserve the authenticity of an object as composite as the automobile.

Due consideration of these three aspects were not “de rigueur” a few decades ago.

One only has to observe the Schlumpf collection to see that some aesthetic principles, typical of the 1970’s, were then applied according to the aspirations of the collector at that time. The development of archives, including documents, photographs, movies and even how to identify components, were at an early stage with limited academic rigour being applied. Even today, when working, for example, on vehicles that ceased production decades ago, we encounter a lot of difficulty in assembling the objective data on design details, including the paint colours, type of instrumentation and interior upholstery originally used. This despite the considerable information available in the specialised magazines of the period.

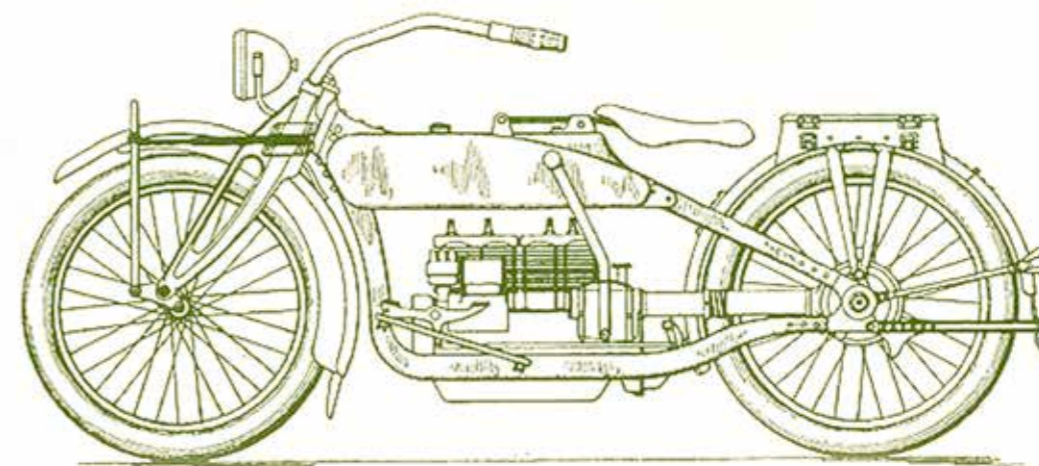
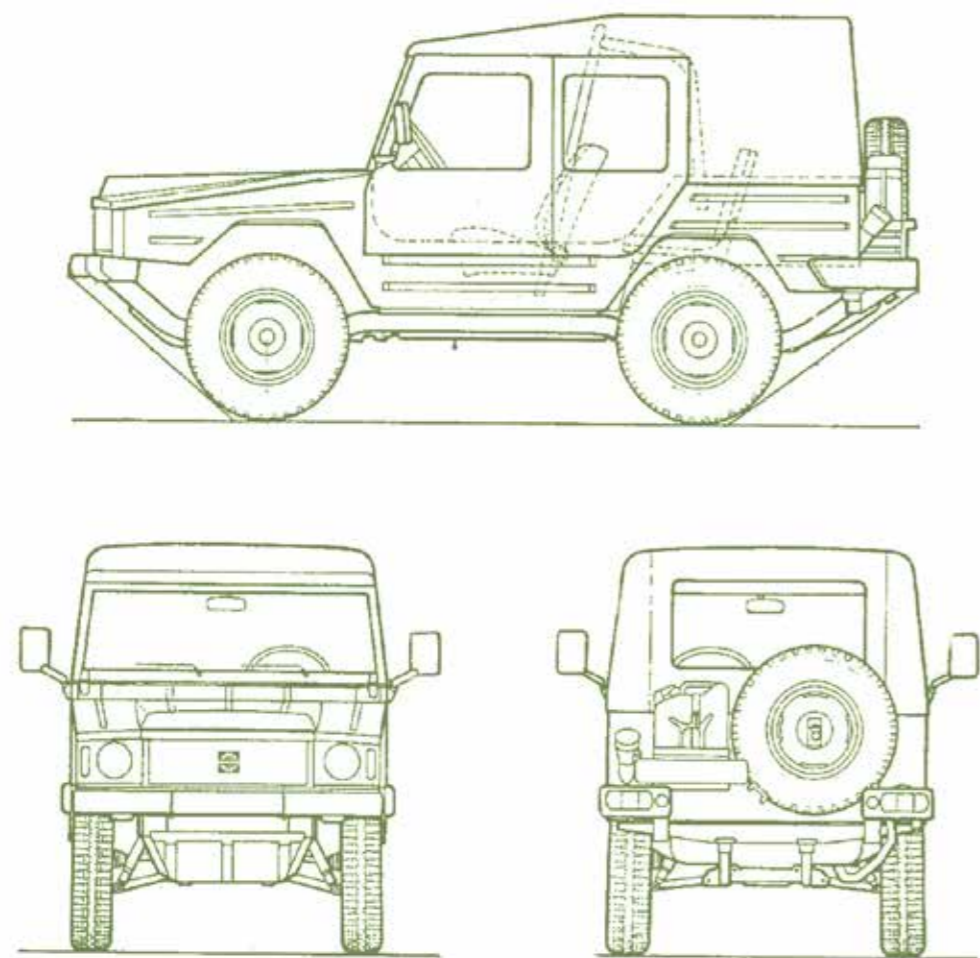
The challenge of restoring vehicles that have travelled along our roads in their hundreds of thousands in their day, to a given level of specification is considerable. Indeed, it would be quite reasonable, given individual circumstances, for two similar vehicles to be restored to different specifications, both of which would be quite viable. However, even a static vehicle can be seen as a reflection of the imagination of the designers and builders.

The Cité de l’Automobile, takes part in the promotion of this heritage with a wide range of exhibitions and events, under the sometimes benevolent and sometimes critical eye of the public. We believe that getting the museum vehicles “on the road” is an integral part of conserving the integrity of them as objects of mobile heritage.

It’s the only way of seeing and sometimes of discovering, the subtleties of the noise of an exhaust or the little “idiosyncrasies” of a vehicle when it’s started. At Mulhouse, we use the arena to demonstrate our vehicles, including a show which presents 17 vehicles that tell the tale of the automotive adventure over a century from 1870. This is done by showing the history of the vehicle, some information on the life of the designers and the technological advances over the period. The models follow on from each other on the exhibition track, to the delight of both young and old. They include a Ford Model T, a VW Beetle, 2CV, 4CV, Bugatti type 40, Simca Chambord, Rolls-Royce and more. See <http://citedelautomobile.com/en/home>.

So, in conclusion we would suggest that the search for authenticity is probably one of the things that can bring museums and enthusiastic collectors together to preserve and enhance historic value.

<sup>4</sup> [goo.gl/9Bfmfb](http://goo.gl/9Bfmfb) - Michael Ware’s article.





# AUTHENTICITY AND AUTHENTIC RESTORATION

**Original by Thomas Kohler, Archeologist, Architect and Writer.**

(Text published in the Records of the Proceedings of the 2nd International Forum on the authenticity of historic vehicles, Turin - Italy, 14th - 15th November 2008).

I am first a motorcyclist but also a partner of a company specialised in the analysis and restoration of listed historic buildings. I would like to compare historic vehicles with historic buildings. They have strong similarities: both are objects of great value and are related to the social status and to lifestyle. Both are an important part of our cultural heritage and can be in our hands for a certain time only, so in a sense we are curators and have a responsibility to pass them on to a next generation. Both must meet certain safety standards if we want to use them. Both need constant care and maintenance and both show their special values and their character only if we use them.

A question for me was how authenticity and originality is defined. I define authenticity as: the original with his entire history, a building or vehicle with undisputed origin. But what is an original? The person, who declares a work as an original, intends it as creative product. Abstraction is made of descriptions such as replica, plagiarism, imitation, copy or reproduction. In the case of architecture, paintings or sculptures, the definition seems to be easy. Every curator of every museum in the world can testify that is not as clear as we would like to believe.

My colleagues in the vehicle world present at this forum know much more than I and they have their own visions and definitions. FIVA defines historic vehicles as "mechanically propelled road vehicles which are at least 30 years old; which are preserved and maintained in a historically correct condition; which are not used as a means of daily transport; and which are therefore a part of our technical and cultural heritage."

FIVA use an Identity Card process to document and safeguard motoring heritage for current and future generations and to provide owners with an accurate (but, not infallible) independently reviewed and prepared document of the historic vehicles identity and history.

Often this is a vehicle which has been dismantled, reconditioned and then reassembled close to the specification of the original model. Minor deviations are allowed when parts were unavailable. Historic vehicles still in existence show traces of use and age and will have been repaired, restored or modified to a greater or lesser extent. Some of them, for example race cars with competition history even have achieved their status only because of modifications during their "working life".

However, for a vital part of the historic vehicle community an imaginary "mint condition" still is the aim of restorations and there is a lot of diffuse "common knowledge" about original condition and authenticity. Such claims are reproduced repeatedly but mostly not reflected critically or backed by precise historical sources. Nevertheless, such assumptions often serve as a basis for restorations, with on occasions rather questionable results. Sometimes the demands of the owners for "original condition" are guided by more or less refurbished and sometimes very freely interpreted examples. In many cases, authentic components have been removed and destroyed, just because they didn't fit into the "accepted" schemes.

The practice to design a vehicle to the owner's visions by destroying an original should be rejected rigorously. Such practices are against the aims of the conservators work and therefore against the spirit and the principles of FIVA. At the same time, there is a wide spectrum in the use of terms like "original" or "authentic" in the historic vehicle community. This has badly hindered a constructive debate on this issue up to now.

Professional terms used in the conservation and restoration of cultural objects for many years include technical objects having a "normal life" or "working life" during which they are considered as simple articles of use.

For historic vehicles and other collectors' items this period is followed by a so called "collection phase" where they are appreciated as artefacts of specific historic value. In this context, the conservator recognizes all materials, components modifications and even the traces of use belonging to the individual vehicle during its working life as "original" or the "historic substance".

How to safeguard the originality of historic vehicles depends whether the vehicle is part of a museum collection or in a private ownership and used on the road as part of our mobile heritage.

In a museum, technical objects are emphasized as a material witness of history and the traces of the working life may be the main focus. These exhibits are often not operable and showed as a static display. For vehicles in untouched historic condition this is an opportunity to protect them from being worn out by further use.

Functionality and motion are important characteristics of a vehicle which otherwise is in danger of turning into a lifeless relic. To keep up the functionality, period spare parts and historic parts taken from similar vehicles can be employed, but in most cases replicated components made of modern industrial materials which are produced with present-day techniques will have to be used to replace the worn historic substance.

Sometimes the appearance of these new components will differ visibly from the original model, especially when for example upholsteries made of artificial leather or fabric are replaced in leather, nickel plating by chromed surfaces, paint by powder coatings and so on.

An exceptional amount of original historic material is lost in so called "Concours restorations", which exaggerate an imaginary mint condition. Immense effort is made here to extinguish every "annoying" or "unsightly" trace of age and therefore the historic substance is stripped to the bone.

This creates an absurd situation, as age and substantial material integrity are the basic requirements on how a vehicle can be recognized as an original object of cultural history.

The carefully planned and prudent restoration will always be a necessary tool to preserve historic vehicles but we should keep in mind that every measure which goes beyond conservation will actually cost original substance. Even when period spare parts

and authentic materials are used, every restoration will create only an imprecise interpretation of a lost appearance.

This means, the aim of measures should be to interfere as much as needed but as little as possible to keep the vehicle "readable" in its intended context, but without denying its factual age and history. Whenever possible, interventions should be executed in a reversible manner that means: historic parts and today's additions can be separated again without damaging the historic material. All rebuilt components should be permanently marked to make them distinguishable from historic parts and all measures should be documented precisely.

If we work on the reconstruction of excavated ruins, we add colour to the mortar to distinguish the reconstructed periods, especially if we use the material found on the site.

Only if such basic principles are followed, a gradual falsification can be avoided. Otherwise the vehicles will progressively turn into mere replications built of spare parts and modern materials, containing only some strongly refurbished historic remains. Then, the specialist magazines publish those replicas without asking too much about its background. Often the questions about a restored vehicles history seems not to be allowed in our circles and clubs.

Recognition of historic vehicles as original objects and part of cultural heritage, which is sought for by the old timer vehicle associations reflects ownership is not only privilege but also a responsibility. Care for the "original" should go beyond maintenance of technical components and a cosmetic make over but rise to the perception of the vehicle as an authentic, historical artefact. Naturally it is not an aim to patronize the owners or to take their vehicle off the road but it is important to give support and options how to preserve and restore historic vehicles with due care.

Associations concerned with historic railways and historic sailing ships have already gone one step further: they have successfully adopted guidelines on the safeguard of the original substance several years ago. They are based on the principles ICOMOS laid down on the restoration of historic monuments and sites.

Efforts like this have not been made by the historic vehicle associations yet, but this is an important process, or the vintage vehicle community will destroy its very own bases: the "original". Here, FIVA must be the leader of the much-needed debate. It's time here, to ask you to work out and agree upon a convention concerning the preservation and restoration of historic vehicles, we may give the working title of the "Charter of Torino".

The authors proposals came into effect when The Charter of Turin was ratified on 29 January 2013, at a ceremony held at the Mercedes Benz Heritage Centre in Stuttgart, exactly 127 years after Carl Benz received patent no. DRP 37435 for his three-wheeled vehicle with a gas-powered engine from the Imperial Patent Office in Berlin. This date signified the birth of the automobile and marked the beginning of personal motorised transportation and was thus particularly poignant for such an important event.

# PRESERVING HERITAGE: Historic Vehicles in Public Life and Cultural Discourse

**By Maria Bussolati,**

Director of the Museo della Mille Miglia in Brescia and

**by Corrado Lopresto,**

Italian architect and worldwide known collector of historic vehicles

## INTRODUCTION

Recognizing historic vehicles as an integral facet of public life is paramount for their preservation and their significant contribution to our cultural heritage. Embracing this perspective fosters a deeper understanding of their importance in the academic discourse, shedding light on the intricate interplay between heritage, society, and mobility.

A museum that displays original vehicles in preserved conditions, with patina and integrity maintained, offers the public a window into the past. These vehicles provide a tangible testament to automotive history and allow visitors to appreciate the authenticity of historical vehicles. The exhibition of vehicles in their original conditions offers a unique and precious experience, as it allows people to connect with the era in which they were created.

When a collector and a museum come together, they can create a meaningful collaboration. The collector can share their knowledge and passion for historical vehicles, contributing their heritage to the museum's collection. At the same time, the museum provides the collector with an appropriate environment to showcase their vehicles to the public, offering a platform to share the history and significance of the preserved vehicles. This collaboration helps preserve and celebrate the automotive heritage, allowing a broader audience to enjoy and appreciate these historical vehicles.

For a vehicle collector, preservation holds a profound significance. It means safeguarding the authenticity and integrity of the vehicle in its original state, including its appearance, mechanics, and history. Collectors cherish the patina and the charm of time that manifests through imperfections, as they bear witness to the past.

Winning a conservation award from FIVA is a prestigious recognition for a collector. This award underscores their commitment to the accurate preservation of historical vehicles. For the collector, this award represents acknowledgement of their dedication and love for automotive heritage. It holds substantial value as it confirms that the vehicle has been exceptionally maintained in its original condition, respecting the authentic features and historical value of the vehicle.

## a) Mille Miglia Experience

by Maria Bussolati

Historic vehicles kept in museums are regarded as genuine works of art and, as such, unique objects, also by virtue of their condition and any restoration work that has been carried out. This is why it is so important to have dedicated museum institutions, where people can go to learn about and admire cars which, being part of our historical heritage, should not remain locked away in a room or a garage, but be shared with the public. In this sense, historical vehicle museums aim to provide places where people can cultivate their passion for vintage cars, which are characterised by a unique beauty, and also in their capacity as indelible testimonies of the period during which they were designed. The museum is also a privileged location in which an increasing number of visitors, including children and young people, can enjoy and interact with artistic treasures, which shouldn't be reserved for only a select few. Museums should increasingly be conceived as spaces of interaction, designed to allow immersive and not extemporary enjoyment, realising that continuity between culture, environment, history and the individual which characterises the structure of a civilised community.

The best way, in this case, to help even the youngest children 'learn' is through sensory experience, particularly at visual level. A concrete example that perfectly illustrates the meaning of this concept is the work of Corrado Lopresto, the world's most famous Italian classic car collector and owner of a collection of Italian prototypes that is an international reference point for research, history and the culture of car-design made in Italy. Together with Corrado, we set up the splendid "Inossidabile Eleganza" exhibition at the Mille Miglia Museum in 2022, where four cars in remarkable condition and with exceptional characteristics were displayed. The itinerary began with a rediscovery, the 1939 Fiat 1500 Cabriolet, the rusty bodywork of which shows the signs of time with a very special charm, before moving on to the 1935 Lancia Augusta Coupé, a completely original car, preserved with exceptional care. The exhibition then continued with one of the most important cars in the Lopresto Collection, the Alfa Romeo Giulietta SZT, a prototype of the truncated tail, restored with a conservative approach on only half of the bodywork and awarded a UNESCO prize in 2016 precisely for the innovative techniques used; in conclusion, we had the Alfa Romeo Montreal prototype, which was an example of a car that had been fully restored to its original condition, with the bodywork repainted and the interior rebuilt. We also wanted to accompany the exhibition with a conference on the subject, with the participation of some leading experts. The exhibition was a huge success with the public and shows how Lopresto, who applies a philological approach to restoration, experiments with new techniques and unconventional approaches to a complex subject that is always different

depending on the car being restored. The precise aim of the event was to summarise the variety of situations and conditions that can be encountered in this world, where every car has its own peculiarities and specificities.

Thanks to Corrado Lopresto's contribution, and the role played by the museum, people were able to understand and visually grasp the difference between a restored, preserved or simply rediscovered work of art, extracted from the barn where time had buried it.

## b) The preservation of historic vehicles, FIVA preservation award and collaboration with museums

by Corrado Lopresto

The preservation of a rare and important vehicle is much more than a matter of restoring it to factory condition, it is also necessary to carry out an in-depth study of the history of the specific specimen, going back to the original owners and their heirs. This is the only way to uncover the true history of the car, which can often hide important details that have been forgotten over time. This rediscovery makes the car even more special and unique, conveying its significance and inevitably creating an emotional attachment in the collector.

Even greater is the satisfaction when an award is won for the work carried out. Of course this is an achievement that involves a tough selection process to enter the world's most important competitions. Winning the FIVA preservation award is one of the highest possible accolades and one of the most coveted. FIVA's focus on vehicles in their finest state of preservation or restored as carefully as possible is widely renowned.

This prestigious award recognises the collector's commitment to preservation and is an acknowledgement of dedication and love for motoring heritage. It has significant value as it confirms that the vehicle has been superbly maintained in its original condition, respecting its authentic characteristics and historical value.

A museum that displays original vehicles in pristine condition, with their patina and integrity preserved, offers the public a window into the past. These vehicles represent tangible evidence of motoring history and allow visitors to appreciate the authenticity of vintage vehicles. The display of vehicles in their original condition offers a unique and valuable experience, offering an insight into the era in which they were created.

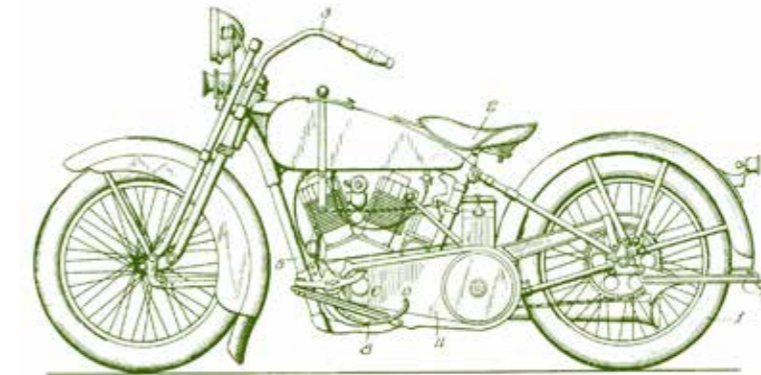
The importance of a museum is crucial. I remember in my early years of collecting, as I struggled with my first restoration,

leaving from a village far away to go and examine a car like mine that I knew was on display in a museum. The plan was to go, with my restorer, and see the finest example and the perfect condition of the specimen to be copied, so that I could restore my car perfectly. Instead, we found ourselves looking at a specimen that had been put on display in the same condition as it had been donated so many years before, which had little in common with the original design of the car.

We went home disappointed and began our search again, eventually finding a good specimen owned by a private collector, which we used as a model to restore mine to as close as possible to its original condition. What this story taught me is that a museum should always be careful to display cars in the most original condition possible, because people approach the museum as the place to find the absolute truth. It is also essential to display documentation, making it available to enthusiasts to help them in the study and restoration of their cars.

When a collector and a museum join forces, they can create a remarkable collaboration. The collector can share their knowledge and passion for vintage vehicles, contributing their heritage to the museum's collection and gaining an opportunity to put extraordinary cars that would otherwise remain hidden on display to the general public. The museum, on the other hand, gains the opportunity to vary and expand its offering to the public, while providing a platform to share the history and importance of the vehicles preserved. This collaboration allows us to preserve and celebrate the automotive heritage, enabling a greater audience to enjoy and appreciate these historic vehicles.

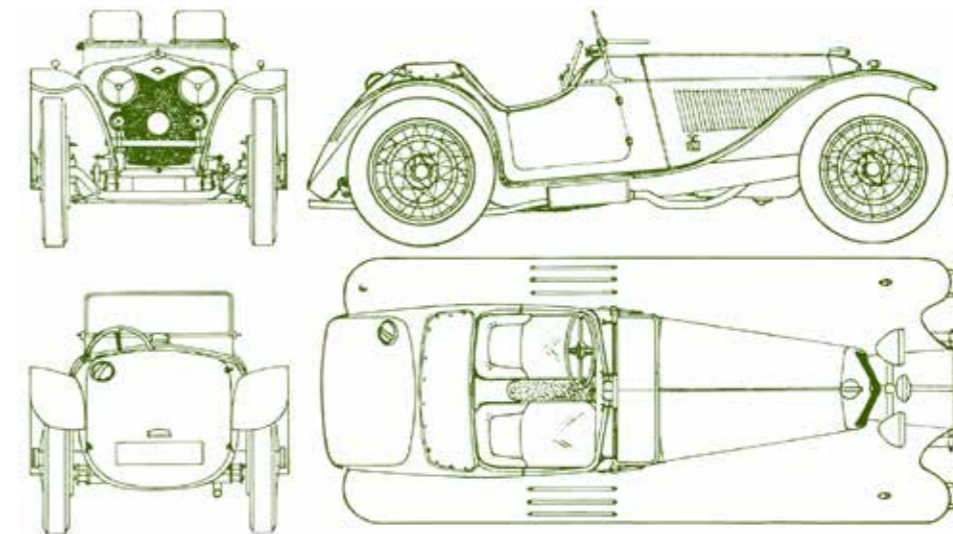
I have worked with many museums around the world over the years, creating exhibitions that are always different, also placing cars side by side with objects, clothes and art, to appeal to a broader public and, at the same time, stimulate reflection on the car as an object of art and design, and not just a means of transport.



Writen  
A. Burkhardt

Fig. 1

Inventors  
William S. Harley  
Arthur S. Davidson  
By William S. Harley, Arthur S. Davidson



# IDENTIFICATION AND IDENTITY OF HISTORIC VEHICLES

**By Anders Ditlev Clausager,**  
archivist to the British Motor Industry Heritage Trust from 1979 to 2000,  
chief archivist for the Jaguar Daimler Heritage Trust from 2000 to 2012,  
motoring historian and author of several books.

We may take as our example the human being. Each human is broadly speaking identified by their DNA, which is unique to each person, except in the case of identical twins where it is shared. This DNA will remain the same, regardless of whatever changes may be made to the physical body or change of given name. However, another way of identifying human individuals is practiced in many countries, where the administrative state offices will issue a unique identification number to each citizen.

Inanimate objects such as motor vehicles do not have a scientifically measurable DNA, although popularly we may refer to the DNA of a vehicle, by which it is simply meant that the vehicle possesses some characteristics which in the opinion of an observer will be deemed to have been "inherited" from earlier products from the same manufacturer, e.g., "the latest Enzo has inherited its DNA from earlier Ferraris". Alternatively, the expression DNA may be used to mean that, despite all physical changes, an historic vehicle has preserved the character that it possessed at the time when it was first manufactured, e.g., "despite having had two chassis, three engines, and a change of bodywork, the car still has all the DNA that it was born with in 1953". (Cp. the legal case of the Old Number One Bentley, George Washington's axe, or the paradox of the ship of Theseus.)

However, what motor vehicles do have, and did have from the earliest times, is an identification number issued by their manufacturer. The practice predated the motor industry. During the nineteenth century, as mass-production techniques evolved for instance for firearms, sewing machines, and bicycles, and companies set up factories to make these goods in large numbers, manufacturers often introduced the practice of giving each item a unique serial number for identification. It is likely that manufacturers also kept records of these serial numbers.

The earliest motor vehicle that I know of which apparently carries an identifying serial number, is a De Dion steamer dated by the Veteran Car Club of Great Britain to 1884, with both car and engine numbers quoted as 6. The next is the 1888 Benz three-wheeler in the Science Museum in London which has an engine number of 5. It is a delicious speculation that it may be the fifth Benz vehicle made! Unfortunately, it also has a "car number" of 367 which may be a little high for 1888 – but the Daimler-Benz company is happy that it is an original genuine 1888 vehicle. Similarly, Daimler (both German and British), Panhard, and Peugeot vehicles of the 1890s, are all recorded as having both engine numbers and car or chassis numbers. Manufacturers who made engines for sale separately, such as De Dion Bouton, numbered the engines.

There are many names for the main identification number found on motor vehicles. In (British) English, it was usually called car number, or chassis number; the latter is a relic from the days when most cars did have a separate chassis, and the number was stamped into this. On motorcycles, it became the frame number. Some manufacturers did not issue a number to their chassis, but only to their engines and this was then adopted as the main identification number (e.g., Ford Model T and many later Fords, but the practice spread to other car makers, and was also adopted for instance in Australia). It will be realized that this leads to problems when a vehicle has had a change of engine.

Originally these numbers were simply numbers, but after a while many car makers decided to add some form of alpha-numeric prefix code which would help to identify the model of vehicle. The prototype for the modern VIN (Vehicle Identification Number) system was introduced in the USA in 1954, in co-operation between the US Government and the Automobile Manufacturers Association. The main intention of this seems to have been to replace the previously common use of the engine number as the main identification number (cp. above), but the format of the VIN was still left to the discretion of the individual manufacturers. It was only 25 years later that the system was standardized and adopted world-wide, and even then, there were differences between the VIN systems used in North America and in Europe. All vehicles made from 1 January 1981 had to carry a VIN and a VIN plate. European Union legislation was laid down in EEC directive 114/76 as amended by 507/78 and subsequently. We then arrived at the 17-figure VIN, with an eleven-character prefix and a six-digit serial number.

Broadly speaking, together with the VIN system came three legal requirements. Firstly, that the VIN must be stamped into the structure (typically the body, but sometimes still the chassis or frame) of the vehicle in an area where the number can be easily found and read, but an area which at the same time is deemed to be relatively safe from damage or destruction in a collision. This may be the bulkhead at the rear of the engine compartment, but it has also been known to be stamped in other locations. Secondly, there must be a visible VIN, which is normally found on a tag at the bottom of the windscreen aperture, behind the glass. The visible VIN had been a legal requirement in the USA since the early 1970s. Thirdly, VIN prefixes must include a letter for model year, so it became easier to date an individual vehicle; here again the US authorities had for some time insisted on having various forms of dating stamps on cars, beginning in the early 1960s in California with a model year marking, but eventually with a Federal standard requiring plates showing month and year.

From the 1890s onwards, car manufacturers usually fitted a plate in a prominent location, with their name, often address and logo, quoting the car or chassis number, sometimes the engine number, and in at least one case (Jaguar), the gearbox and body

numbers as well – giving rise to that much misunderstood and misused phrase “matching numbers”. These identification plates were typically attached to the scuttle or bulkhead behind the engine, or elsewhere in the engine compartment. It must be stressed that the engine, gearbox, and body numbers, are simply numbers of these components as components, and are not proper vehicle identification numbers as such.

## Implications for the preservation of historic vehicles

The Turin Charter states in Article 5, “Processes”, that:

Preservation, conservation and restoration are ... aimed at safeguarding ... a vehicle's engineering, aesthetic, functional, social and historic value. They should aim at understanding and considering ... the historic background of the individual vehicle. They should be based on respect for the individual historic entity and information found in authentic documents.

The logical implication of this is that the original identity and identification of an historic vehicle should be preserved, and not altered by anyone except the manufacturer. Equally, an original identification number should not be applied to a vehicle which is not that historic vehicle which originally was issued with the number in question.

However, there are several problems which have arisen from time to time, including:

1. A preserved genuine historic vehicle which has lost its original numbers and there is no supporting documentation. In such cases, it can be accepted that an appropriately qualified authenticating body issues a replacement number. The same may apply, if a vehicle is built up from a variety of genuine historic parts, even if also incorporating new parts. Such systems are unfortunately open to abuse. Both in the UK and in several US states, the licensing authorities may prefer to issue an identifying number of their own devising in a format which typically resembles a VIN. This may also be the case in other countries.
2. The manufacturer has, whether deliberately or by mistake, issued the same number to more than one vehicle. A famous case in the UK concerned a Lister racing car (Lloyd v. Svenby), which was thrown out of court. If it is not possible for owners to reach an amicable settlement, and if both vehicles are registered in the same country, the licensing authority may withdraw

the identity from both cars, and issue new identification and registration numbers. Otherwise, the simplest solution is for each party to agree to add a suffix letter to the claimed identification number.

3. Cloning or identity theft. This is clearly wrong, but the difficulty lies in convincing the relevant authorities to take steps against the perpetrator, always assuming that they can be identified. If the vehicles are in different countries or jurisdictions, the authorities are unlikely to take any interest. However, I believe that in one case concerning the creation of fake 1960s Mini-Coopers for sale to Japanese collectors, a perpetrator was identified and brought to justice.

4. Creative usage of original identities in replicas, so-called “evocations” or “tribute” cars. This is where the original vehicle has been scrapped, but fortuitously a very small part with the stamped-in identification number has survived, together with the maker’s plate and documentation. Using these parts, a vehicle is then constructed, which is to all intents and purposes new, although it claims the identity and privileges of the original vehicle. Such practices go back at least 30 years, an example being the Healey Frogeye of around 1990. Ironically some such cars are now becoming historic vehicles in their own right.

5. Kit cars. This may mainly be a British phenomenon, which has flourished due to lax legislation and until recently, lack of type approval. It goes back to the 1950s, when impecunious enthusiasts fitted fibreglass sports car bodywork to the chassis of old Austin Sevens and Ford Eights or Tens. A later generation favoured Triumph Heralds, as one of few 1960s cars with a chassis, but Volkswagen Beetles received similar treatment. The next more ambitious step was to take redundant Jaguar saloons and fit all their mechanical components into look-alike C- and D-types, e.g. by Lynx and Proteus. Such cars were legally permitted to retain their original identification numbers, which seemed acceptable if they were constructed on an original chassis, less so if they were not.

6. Reproduction chassis number plates. They were originally a well-meant attempt at helping restorers of vehicles which had a damaged plate, but such plates have inevitably also been fitted to a variety of vehicles which are of more recent date of construction than those on which a particular type of plate was originally fitted. There are also cases where an original plate has been moved from one vehicle to another. The latter practice is often connected with fraudulent sales or transfers of registration marks, which is possibly uniquely encouraged by the British registration system.

7. Major changes from original specification. These are cases which are not quite in the kit car or evocation categories, and the

legal situation differs from country to country. Changes of engine, usually to a more powerful type, appear to be generally accepted. Just over thirty years ago, British Motor Heritage introduced the first newly manufactured replacement bodyshell for a classic car, the MGB roadster, and subsequently followed this up with bodies for other types of cars. The problem that arose is that some MGB owners took the opportunity to restore their GT with a new roadster body, but kept the original car number identifying the car as a GT. A more recent phenomenon concerns historic vehicles which are being re-engineered with electric powertrains. This is addressed in the FIVA Position Paper of November 2021 on “Electrification of Historical Vehicles” which clearly concludes that “Vehicles so converted cease to be historic vehicles, except for ‘in period’ changes.”

8. Continuation cars, which is the currently fashionable term for replicas or facsimiles built by the original manufacturers, or licensees thereof (e.g., AC, Aston Martin, Bentley, Jaguar). When these cars are given identification numbers which follow in the series of numbers allocated to the original cars, there is (and will increasingly be) scope for confusion. Such cars are now mostly sold as being not road legal, but there may be evidence that some purchasers have got them road registered, possibly by pretending them to be historic vehicles. Equally worryingly, Jaguar apparently offers to supply a new replacement XK engine, stamped with whatever original engine number the customer requests.

It may be useful briefly to mention that in many cases, original manufacturers’ records still exist, and can be consulted, usually on payment of a fee, by historians, researchers, enthusiasts, owners, and potential owners, anxious to obtain information on the original specification of a vehicle, in the form of a “Heritage Certificate”, a service which I pioneered for the BMIHT in the 1980s, and which has since been copied by many other manufacturers. However, this was always a double-edged sword, since information on original “matching numbers” supplied in good faith to an enquirer could be misused to claim an identity for a fake historic vehicle. It has also caused me much amusement to see faked certificates sometimes bearing my name.

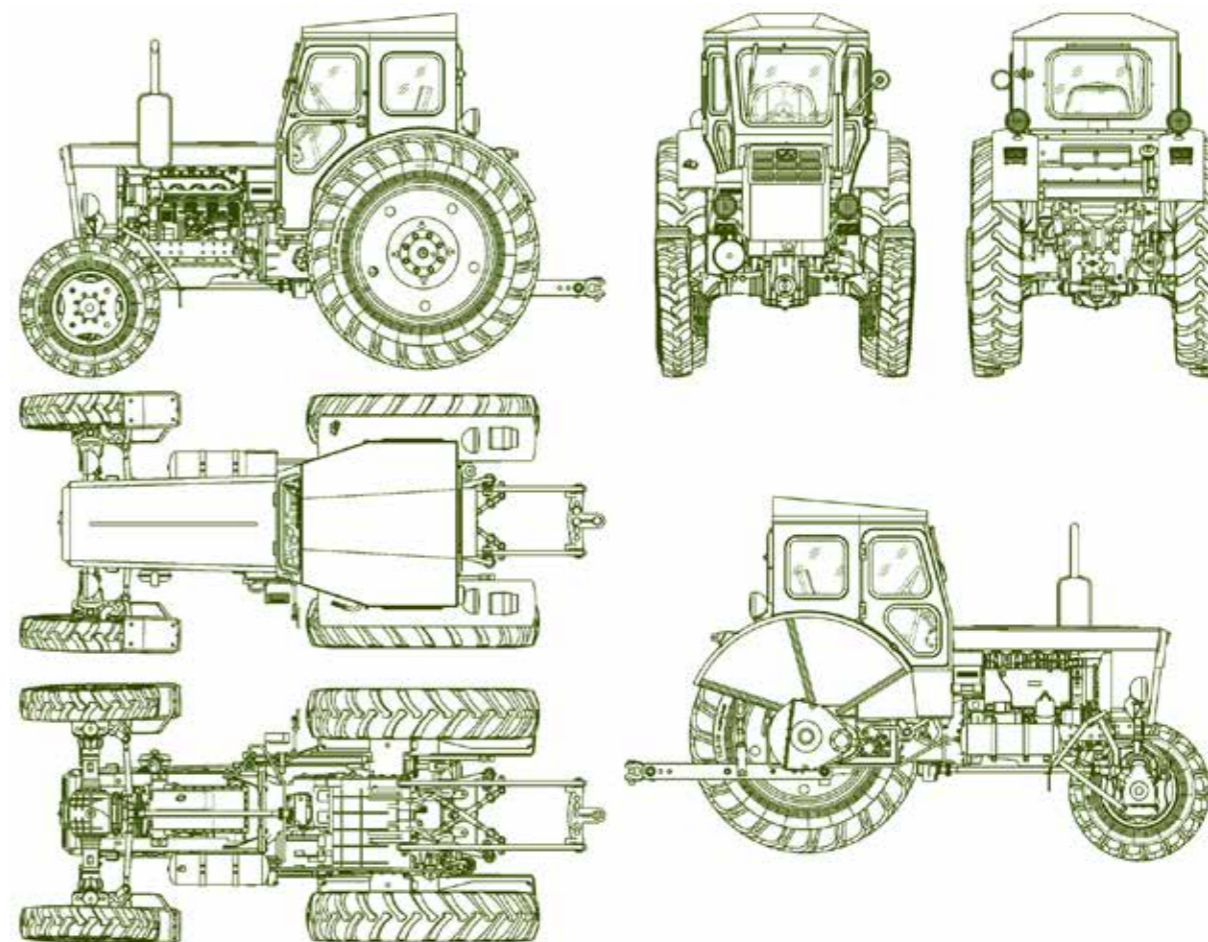
## Some references

In 1987, the late Denis Jenkinson in his *Directory of Historic Racing Cars* proposed a number of categories for classifying historic vehicles, with particular application for racing cars which are typically not road registered. His arguments are still largely sound, but he stopped short of defining outright fakes which was subsequently done by the Jaguar authority the late Ole Sommer in 2014 as follows:



"Fake": By-product of greed, where the result of a Reconstruction or a Duplicate gradually takes on the identity of an Original/Genuine/Authentic car, possibly after passing through several owners. The present keeper might in good faith be absolutely convinced that he owns a genuine article. *[or maybe the owner is not in good faith... ADC]*

I have contributed a couple of papers on the subject of "Real Replica or Fake", to the World Forum of Motor Museums and to the Society of Automotive Historians in Britain (both 2018), and an introduction to *The Complete Register of Jaguar C-types, D-types & Lightweight E-types* in 2022, hoping to create greater awareness of these matters. Finally, there is Paul Griffin's book *The Past and the Spurious* (2022) which also deals with many of these questions.



# MOTORING HERITAGE: valorisation and prospects for UNESCO designation

**Rossella Maspoli**

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The Culture Commission thanks Rossella Maspoli ( Department of Architecture and Design – DAD, Politecnico di Torino) for the following essay about the current and future possibilities of the Motoring Heritage world to collaborate with UNESCO.

## Abstract

The transformations addressed by transportation on wheels - not only at the factory level, but even in terms of showrooms, garages, parking lots, filling stations, as well as national infrastructure including works of engineering such as highways, viaducts, and tunnels - have had substantial impact on the environment and landscape for over a century.

The automotive industry has left - and keeps leaving - indelible marks, spanning from the merely technological aspects to the social-cultural aspects, but the recognition and the insertion in a historical context of such "new" industry starting in the late 19th century is still limited.

The perception of its heritage as a collective historic value only emerged in the late 20th century, under different perspectives and levels of global significance: the territorial brand heritage that distinguished the past and future corporate brand perspectives in traditional manufacturing areas (Detroit, Turin, Nagoya, Wolfsburg, Gothenburg...); the social-economic potential of preservation for temporary and adaptive reuse, as well as urban regeneration and redevelopment; the role of collecting and associations; the growing and universal presence of automotive museums to improve industrial tourism related to the field.

While the trend in historic vehicle restoration grew in the 1960s, at the same time the period saw uncontrolled demolition of historic sites of manufacturing and promotion of automobile culture, as well as transformations that only very partially maintained elements of heritage.

Although the sector has been essential in the 19th and 20th centuries, the UNESCO framework program has never considered the inclusion of related sites in the World Heritage List, a single initiative was included in the Memory of the World Program, and no initiatives were included in the Intangible Cultural Heritage pool. On the other hand, due to their history of technical know-how and design, cities with great automotive tradition are substantially represented in the Creative Cities Network.

This paper sets out to analyze the potential of the UNESCO framework program for the promotion, preservation, and conveyance of the multiple forms of cultural automotive heritage.

## Introduction

In the auto and transportation sector, the concept of heritage has a variety of references, from objects-vehicles to brands, designs and patents, work methodologies and production lines, architectures of mobility and production plants, and industrial and infrastructural landscape. They are all determining factors when it comes to strong interactions between local and global culture, between corporate brand factors - which take on global values - and territorial brand factors - which are consistent with the legacy and/or continuity of an industry in the area where it has settled.

Today the historicisation and validation of memory occur by way of conflicting parts and processes. The perspective is to foster knowledge and interpretation with a historical perspective, to create methods and means of integrating different forms of heritage - in consideration of the overall role of "motor-town" culture - as resources for both sustainable re-development and cultural heritage tourism.

UNESCO's international declarations - as part of its mandate to protect cultural heritage - can play strategic roles in order to bring more attention to automotive industrial heritage during a period of difficult transition of the production system and a change in the very concept of mobility, promoting, both locally as well as internationally, a thematic network of cultural communication, which is a condition for fostering asset protection plans.

## The peculiar nature of automotive culture

The emergence of the so-called "automobile society" and a "speed culture" is considered an acceleration of social processes and a change in the perception of time and space, driven by the experiences of city life and road travel<sup>1</sup>.

The significance of the "Western automotive system" must be researched not only in production sites and products, but also when it comes to infrastructural and urban impacts and changing user behaviour.

The very perception of the automobile evolved through three stages during the 20th century<sup>2</sup>, each characterised by a contradictory development of production, consumption and social identity. In the early age, from the very beginning up to the 1920s, cars were perceived as transportation vehicles, and ownership was indicative of class differences.

During the age of mass individuality, from the 1930s to the 1960s in the United States and presumably from the 1950s to the 1970s all over Europe, the car was a consumer good. Standardisation of products put a limit on variety, cars made by hand became the

exception, and bodywork increasingly involved design.

During the third age, from the 1980s to the end of the century, because of cultural differences in societies and consumption, cars expressed the lifestyle identity of groups, with corresponding specific types of models - like sports cars, compact cars, station wagons, sport utility vehicles ... - and brands, which in special cases became cult items.

During this current age, the environmental approach strongly affects the automotive market, from an ecological perspective, when it comes to energy transition, sustainable mobility, and autonomous driving.

A broad spectrum of social and cultural factors - from types of group behaviours to fashion, music, theatre, visual arts, and architecture ... as well as inspiration from design, production, labour and the environment, shape the ages of motoring.

Recognising the various components and their interactions therefore opens up to specific forms of valorisation that - from the UNESCO perspective - respond to different categories of patrimonial goods.

## The enhancement of automotive industrial heritage

Various forms of historicisation and communication concern the so-called automobile system.

The assumption of symbolic and historical values of cars on the part of amateurs and collectors has stimulated corporate brand strategies aimed at building consumer loyalty by re-evaluating the roots of a successful product, through an increasing use of social media marketing.

In the early 2000s we saw emblematic case studies like the "Mini" and the "FIAT 500", new brands built on the tradition of car manufacturers. Emotional retro-marketing involves a range of innovative products that, through a re-design, evoke and see the value in historical models with a particularly deep-rooted experience in collective memory and consumer culture.

With the brand 500 case, the communication campaign for the second generation born in 2007 looked back at Italian history starting in the 1950s, giving the car the role of being a symbol of widespread motorisation and national identity. Communication is defined as an exemplary case of the convergence of retro-marketing, cooperative innovation - in which innovation is inspired by the market and consumer demand - and community management - through which the company manages activity on social media<sup>3</sup>.

The role of social network communities is also emerging, as they share experiences, and emotions, and they build on the storytelling - about the item, its use ... - with both emotional attachment and expertise. Jumping back to the past appears to be related to the theme of authenticity. Consumers, amateurs, and collectors seek satisfaction in the authentic experience as a relationship with

objects and production environment in a specific context.

In particular, communication that is related to historic vehicles refers to authenticity factors through elements, documents and other evidence of material culture for recognition, preservation and restoration.

With this perspective, the role of associations such as the **"Fédération Internationale des Véhicules Anciens" (FIVA)** - which brings together national historic vehicle clubs, such as the "Automotoclub Storico Italiano" (ASI) - whose activities are aimed at "valuing the history of motoring", the "interpretation and representation of mobile technical heritage", and the protection of motoring heritage, in the perspective not only of events and networks for promotion, but of preservation restoration and the acceptance of the historic vehicle as a cultural object<sup>4</sup>.

The acquisition of socio-historical and market value of testimonials related to the vehicles produced by motoring potentially involves real estate and technical-documentary heritage as a whole.

Recognition can be focused on different signs of automotive history:

- the vestiges of factories and manufacturing infrastructure;
- the facilities and architecture that testify to the overall context of mobility;
- the imprinting elements related to the industrial and urban landscape;
- the evidence of material culture (labour memoirs, reports on types of contracts, union activity and claims, histories of societies ...);
- company archives that collect patents, trademarks, technical reports, design processes ... and concern not only production, but reproduction (from corporate welfare facilities and events to architectural achievements for residences, leisure, education ...);
- machines and production lines, from artisanal to advanced industrial cycles;
- creative works, in various art forms, inspired by automobile culture (from advertising to visual arts and multimedia).

Recognition orients the preservation and protection of a vast heritage that needs to be catalogued, communicated and often selected for preservation. The technological factors of production, such as contemporary industry work lines and islands, can be documented rather than preserved, because of short life cycles and the large quantity of components as well as equipment, plant systems and functional constructions.

The extent of traces and artefacts, and their stratifications, condition the heritage process and policies. As early as the 1990s, François Barré - director of l'Architecture et du Patrimoine at the Ministry of Culture in France - spoke about the difficulty of

preserving industrial architecture and its landscape: "what is heritage if it does not continue to live, if it does not have the ability to reinvent itself?"<sup>5</sup> and the presence of contradictory processes.

## Patrimonialization. Recognized memories and signs?

A heritage process can be defined as the transition from potential heritage to one that is recognized as a collective good, characterised by its economic, social, environmental, and cultural aspects<sup>6</sup>. The patrimonialization is, oftentimes, the result of a dynamic and relational process. It requires compromise amongst different parties, it comes to terms with preferences and oppositions, and it brings political and regulatory aspects into play.

The particular issue of motoring refers to international groups and corporations that have so-called heritage interests, which must be perceived and shared by the community and local institutions. The behaviours and preferences of different parties in the local area need to be considered in the patrimonialization process, for example the assumption of the value of an object or place that testify to the motor industry even by young people who are not self-motorised or by ethnic communities who recently immigrated. With this in mind, it is essential that different types of inhabitants and tourists have adequate tools to enjoy the heritage. They must have a satisfactory experience and actively participate as well.

The assumption of an area's historic automotive heritage as a shared value has preconditions that include the communication and increase of cognitive and physical accessibility to the assets and the prospect of construction of local development models related to heritage resources.

When it comes to industrial architecture that is no longer in use, moreover, an aesthetic of memory was established in the 2000s with the use of traces even of the recent past as a value, even where there is decay and abandonment. An in-depth study of material history relates to reading the building as palimpsest of the past. The "economy of aesthetics"<sup>7</sup> in coherence to cultural plurality, art and creativity has triggered a reclaiming of unused sites, according to a model defined as neo-bohème. Traces of the industrial past are preserved through reuse without interventions or adaptive redevelopment, and open to industrial tourism<sup>8</sup>.

The *second life* of sites<sup>9</sup> is also about strategies to make them experiential places, to recapture industrial memories even for those who have not experienced their conditions and critical natures, in a re-branding process that begins by opening factory enclosures, which creates narratives and new rituals and helps to read memories.

The risk of former industrial sites undergoing transformation is that they become the hubs of redeveloped neighbourhoods in terms of the new economy and glamorous tourism, or at the opposite end of the spectrum they could be depopulated, with a loss of the original inhabitants and activities, denying the local community's "right to cultural heritage"<sup>10</sup>. The building's second life must allow an "extrinsic value"<sup>11</sup> of the assets, which goes beyond their own value; rather it concerns the meaning that is given to it by the civilisation that recognises them, which is no longer the civilisation that produced them.

Contributing to a delineation of this value are volunteer associations, experts, and even local governments and companies within the industry, as is the case of the "MotorCities National Heritage Area" in the U.S.A, dedicated to researching, preserving, interpreting and providing the heritage to the public, particularly the historic automotive fabric of south-eastern and central Michigan.

The cultural push and the lack of specific constraints for preservation mean that there is an orientation to preservation, but in transformative ways, i.e., architectures take on the value of landmarks even while being on the prospective real estate market, and they take on new functions, without adopting scientifically recognised criteria for the preservation of signs of the past.

Heritage that has lost its original function can, on the other hand, be the subject of a process of resignification consistent with identity factors, reinterpreted with a current vision.

A spectacularisation of history occurs, on the other hand, when automotive sites take on an essential role in the context of a new approach to communicating the image of the international automobile company, like the case of Wolfsburg, headquarters of the Volkswagen Group.

The industrial legacy and continuity of the automotive brand are, however, preferential conditions for territorial redevelopment, in terms of soil resources and industrial pre-existence, technological and entrepreneurial skills, research and top training in related fields, as well as testimoniality of historical automotive brands and products<sup>12</sup>.

## Real estate heritage. "Outstanding Universal Values" UNESCO (OUV)

The implementation of heritage recognition by national organisations and UNESCO may refer to intentions and pressures of external and international policies – such as associations of experts and enthusiasts or companies in the field – but must deeply involve the realities in the territories.

The designation of OUV affects more than one thousand fifty sites throughout the world, of which just over 5 percent are classified as industrial and infrastructural heritage, and none belong to the automotive sector. The UNESCO list includes proto-industrial

and industrial mining culture sites, production landscapes, water and transportation systems and individual infrastructures, cities of historic tradition and company towns – such as Ivrea, industrial city of the 20th century –, individual manufacturing complexes with a great amount of architectural significance – such as the Fagus Factory in Alfeld – or exceptional sites for the permanence of the vestiges of the integrated production system – such as the Völklingen Ironworks.

Heritage strategies can – despite risks and critical issues – provide orientation with regard to freeing up the resources needed to invest in rehabilitation as well as musealisation, and facilitate access to the visitation of the sites.

High UNESCO recognition, therefore, sets up the conditions for the preservation of assets that are in danger of being lost and generally determines their economic valorisation. Cultural heritage tourism requires effective planning and a diversified production of services, in order to activate a mechanism of economic multiplication of benefits in the area for the community as a whole and without irreversibly altering the heritage.

Outstanding universal value for present and future generations is defined as cultural and/or natural, transcending national boundaries. Assessments by UNESCO – in consultation with ICOMOS and TICCIH – are aimed at helping people understand the structures and the value that they have, promoting active protection.

The guidelines to be listed on the "World Heritage Tentative List" include the main criteria of: "outstanding universal value, integrity, authenticity"<sup>13</sup>.

Attributes may include form, materials, functions, traditions, techniques, management systems, context, intangible heritage, artistic, historical, social and scientific dimensions.

The second criterion is a measurement of the completeness or integrity of the attributes that convey the outstanding universal value.

The third criterion, authenticity, concerns whether the identified attributes convey the "truth" and express its value, without being copies or imitations of production elements or architecture.

To be considered for the "Tentative List", the comparative analysis must, in addition, explain the importance and significance in the international scenario, compared to other assets that have a similar combination of universal value, and that are part of the same geographical or cultural area.

Other terms that are considered are boundaries, legal protection, management, preservation, interpretation and communication, number of visitors, threats and risks.

Industrial testimonies can have universal value in technological, social, environmental, architectural, and scientific terms. First,

UNESCO's traditional criteria place the emphasis on an appropriate assessment of values consistent with stages in history that have now come to an end, whose perception and historicisation is left to contemporary societies and cultures, which possess a cognitive and communicative gap from the past. This is of particular relevance especially for industrial assets, which often need a neutralisation of the negative perception associated with degradation of brownfield and land pollution, crises and critical manufacturing divestments.

The perspective of historicisation can be seen in the automotive sector with Ford's historic buildings in the Detroit area. In 2006 and again in 2016, the National Park Service (NPS) considered adding Ford's first Piquette Avenue plant - where Henry Ford conceptualised the assembly line and built the first Model T automobiles - opening an investigation with international experts<sup>14</sup>. The study considered the limited presence of industrial and technological sites on the U.S. "List", and noted how most of the sites that could meet the criterion of "outstanding universal value" have undergone major changes to their structures and functions, in relation to the era of the plant, in contrast to other coeval sites that are considered to be representation because of their architectural value.

The first Fordism site was not on the 2017 "Tentative List" because - built in 1904 and decommissioned from automobile production in 1910 - it underwent functional transformations that resulted in an essential loss of its original equipment and layout. The owners who acquired it in 2000, the "Model T Automotive Heritage Complex" - a preservation non-profit - has turned it into a museum, shining a light on a few testimonial items and including others from the age.

The NPS recommendations are about the reconsideration of the value of the most significant serial sites of Ford Motor Company's later history in the area, such as Highland Park and River Rouge<sup>15</sup>.

The focus on preservation is mainly by way of recognition on the National Historic Landmark list, also as a threatened site.

The three sites have critical issues with respect to UNESCO criteria of authenticity and completeness. With regards to the Piquette Avenue building, the recognition is essentially about the intangible witness of production, while the preserved industrial architecture is significant only because of its historically connotative building type. Looking at cases like the large Highland Park and River Rouge complexes, and Packard Plant as well, the connotation of value is, on the other hand, also related to architectural and technical quality, as they are works by Albert Kahn, who represented the international architectural model of the multi-story automobile factory and the construction innovation of reinforced concrete.

With the perspective of sites being on a future UNESCO tentative list, the preservation and permanence of sites must be considered. If the Piquette Plant has continuity of preservation, for the two largest complexes the strategies of heritage valorisation do not

emerge. Highland Park Plant was partly demolished and partly acquired by the "Woodward Avenue Action Association" (WA3) in 2013 - an economic and community development organisation formed to coordinate a planning and economic redevelopment study - which, after forty years of substantial neglect, has envisioned its transformation into an "Automobile Heritage Welcome Centre" without being able to fund the redevelopment. The Rouge River Plant site, after the decay and recent demolition stage of part of the historic architectural heritage, constitutes the "Ford's Rouge Centre" industrial park, under transformation as a hub for electric motorisation and as a model of a sustainable green factory, where the visitor tour tells the story of the past mainly through the media.

Recognition as universal heritage UNESCO can constitute only the outcome of a long process of compatible valorisation and reuse, which requires promoting incentive policies and defining socio-economic and cultural strategies on the part of public and private entities, with the participation of the local community.

## "Memories of the World" (MoW)

Critical issues of preservation and access to documentary heritage are part of the foundation of the UNESCO program, which follows criteria akin to those for real estate heritage. MoW's mission is to foster a sense of belonging, facilitate preservation and enable permanent accessibility to selected documentary heritage. The objectives include both the creation of a list of universal value, the "MoW Register", and the identification and creation of registers of national and regional documentary heritage. UNESCO also intends to support the addressing of making access copies of materials, preservation, media promotion, publication and information. Support is also aimed at private and local institutions, individuals or associations that have the sources.

Digitalisation is an essential goal to enable remote research and to democratise access, and requires strategic choices of selection, acquisition and preservation, favouring open source software and platforms on a non-profit basis<sup>16</sup>. There is a special focus on the risk of losing local film and photography heritage of the 1910s and 1920s, which is quite significant in the automotive field.

Signs, codes, sounds and images can be part of the "Register" as individual items, collections and funds, which are generally reproducible. The main selection criteria include: the ability to evoke one's "time"; the connotation with the "place"; a significant context of human behaviour or social, industrial, artistic or political development; the "object" representing particular developments in the natural, social and human sciences, politics, ideology, sports and the arts; and "form and style" in terms of aesthetics, stylistic or typical value that may be in danger of disappearing<sup>17</sup>.

MoWs currently contain rare documentary records that reference industrial society in social, scientific and production terms. This vast heritage is at risk because the processes of decommissioning and transformation are quite rapid - this often results in latency in the preservation of historical archives - and contains elements and systems that can potentially be listed in the UNESCO program, particularly in areas such as the automotive industry, whose processes have universal significance.

Two chains of valorisation emerge. One concerns archives in museums, businesses and industry associations that territorially/internationally document categories of products, productions, and companies. In particular, corporate archives are at risk of being lost with the end of production activities, requiring both cataloguing according to scientific criteria as well as forms of constraint to prevent them from being dispersed.

Currently automotive archives are not represented, but there are organised collections related to the mercantile age between the 1600s and 1800s, such as the "Archives of the Dutch East Indian Company" and the "Archive Middelburgsche Commerce Compagnie".

The other chain concerns elements that are scientifically-technically rare, such as the DRP 37435 "Gas-operated vehicle" patent submitted by Carl Benz in 1886, the only document of the car in the "Register". The recognition is justified in that it testifies to the beginning of individual and automobile company mobilisation, in relation to other notable patents in the Daimler AG corporate archives.

A significant number of equally outstanding, documents and patents, are presumably attributable to the countries that had early automotive culture, such as Germany, France, the USA, and Italy ...

An important outlook is, therefore, to delve into the conditions for UNESCO valorisation in relation to individual documents, the construction of networks of archival sites, and the consideration of the role of documentary preservation not only as a factor of cultural transmission, but of territorial branding.

In Italy, the actions that are setting the pace for valorisation are, for example, the experiences of cataloguing, digitalising, and increasing the fruition of the cultural heritage of the Documentation Centre of the Automobile Museum in Turin - on the history of locomotion, business and car design -, the Alfa Romeo Documentation Centre in Arese and the Pirelli Historical Archives in Milan, the Maire Tecnimont Group's plan that focuses on its historical, technical and cultural identity, with regard to the archival fund of architectural and engineering projects of the former Fiat Engineering, bound by the Archival and Bibliographic Superintendence of Piedmont, as well as the FIAT Historical Archives, still awaiting valorisation.

## "Intangible Cultural Heritage" (ICH)

The theme of valorisation of documentary heritage is in continuity with the intangible heritage of know-how. UNESCO's ICH program aims to draw attention to the importance of safeguarding the traditions and know-how of communities that reflect cultural diversity, and the sharing of expressions that have evolved in response to the environment and that contribute to a sense of identity and continuity.

The main criteria for nomination to the "List" are risk of survival, and a community's interest in continuing the practice and passing on the heritage, with a broad response when it comes to participation. For example, the "Craftsmanship of mechanical watchmaking and art mechanics" is recognized in 2020 as ICH.

The criteria - which have resulted in the recognition of ancient craft traditions in different countries - potentially refer to the early stage and evolution of craftsmanship in automobile construction and knowledge and skills in labour trades.

The following can be identified as relevant traditions, and technological change has now made it critical that continuity is assured: local techniques from horse-drawn vehicle workshops to the proto-industrial stage of wagons and railroad carriages and then cars, from the early 1900s to the 1920s; specialisation in the construction of luxury vehicles and then of off-road sports cars from the 1930s to the 1960s; in parallel, the production culture of motorists, from proto-industrial manufactured goods to the development of mechanics schools, to the application of new techniques in motor vehicles.

Such know-how experience is still present in historic car cities such as Turin, as the tradition is currently ingrained in the specialities for restoration of historic cars and sustainable automotive innovation.

What is significant is that historic vehicle preservation criteria are now covered by the **"Turin Charter" adopted by the Fédération International des Véhicules Anciennes (FIVA) in 2012.**

One prospect is the recent development of various initiatives related to historic vehicles in connection with UNESCO designation programs and the role played by FIVA, recognized in 2016 as an Official Partner of UNESCO, with major events titled "World Motoring Heritage".

## “UNESCO Creative Cities Network” (UCCN)

The correlation between intangible and tangible heritage, and the consequences in the future some of the themes of the UCCN program. It was established in 2004 to select cities interested in sharing experiences, ideas, and best practices for cultural, social, and economic development emerging in one of the seven defined sectors of the creative industry: literature, film, music, crafts and folk arts, design, media, art, and gastronomy. The designation criteria significantly consider the past, present and future: “a strong cultural heritage, a vibrant and diverse contemporary cultural scene, aspirations and vision to develop cultural potential”. The UNESCO nomination is an opportunity for cities in different perspectives, and the “Mission Statement”<sup>18</sup> promotes the exchange of experiences not only for events, but for pilot projects, best practices, training and skill building, consistent with policy measures. UCCN’s goals are currently focused on implementing the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

The essential theme is the exploitation of the potential for creativity and innovation in territories that are critically underdeveloped or seeking re-development. In particular, the conversion to a city of knowledge, creativity and innovation leads to considering the so-called post-industrial heritage as a resource through active conservation, adaptive reuse, urban regeneration and tourism valorisation. The different memories of industrial heritage can, therefore, represent factors of continuity and be a guarantee of authenticity and truth, or fundamental values of the city’s identity.

At present, 46 cities are part of the UCCN Design cluster, and they are metropolises and medium-sized cities in transition beyond traditional industry. Among them are three historic global motor-towns - Detroit, Turin and Nagoya -, cities that have had large established automotive companies since the 1960s - Seoul and Shenzhen - and cities that are part of the manufacturing globalisation of big brands - Geelong and Puebla.

In historic Western motor-towns, the assumption of symbolic values of the car object and the process of historicising the past are ongoing and often functional for brand revitalisation strategies, by historic or resettled companies. In the other cities in the network, however, the attention to the plurality of history is not very significant.

In parallel - in all cases - there emerges a spatial continuity of the sector that is innovating - for example in the perspective of the Manufacturing Technology Centre - after the crisis and paradigm shift at the end of the millennium. Activities, actors and spaces of manufacturing districts tend to play a role in stimulating the establishment of new functions of research and education, service and trade, and advanced manufacturing and creative industries.

Regeneration under the UNESCO Creative cities model also affects cities such as Geelong in the Melbourne area, where the government has purchased the iconic former General Motors Holden site in Fishermans Bend to form a new university district for design, engineering and technology.

Inclusive re-development integrates regeneration of historic neighbourhoods, tourism on peripheral former factory sites, and the activities of independent creative production centres and tech hubs on the actual traditional sites.

In addition, the city as a place of automotive tourism opens up new and evolved visions for collectors and aficionados of historic vehicles themselves, and enriches the network of motoring symbols. The historical tour, for example, encompasses the past of automotive production and reproduction, the heritage of historic factories and infrastructures, the museum vision integrated with the contemporary motor-centre vision, and visits to mobility locations and even company towns.

UCCN is considered a quality brand worldwide. In Turin, the designation (2014) covered four integrated city-branding themes, including the valorisation of the history and products of the automotive supply chain, to emphasize the continuity between industry tradition and automotive and design innovation. The designation is, potentially, an opportunity to implement recognition and communication from the local to the international scale.

## Conclusions. The potential of UNESCO programs for automotive heritage

One perspective is to promote integrated recognition in UNESCO programs for motoring memories: the universal value of architecture and infrastructure, elements and archives of documentary heritage, the know-how of disappearing manufacturing traditions, and the propensity for the sustainable model of the creative-innovative city directed toward cultural valorisation and accessibility.

There is potential for integration that can be a common goal extended to different territories, bearers of culture and with the outlook of globalisation.

There is also an emphasis on the problem of recognising universal real estate sites in relation to the ever-changing dynamics to which the heritage of historic industrial sites is subjected, sites that are potentially identifiable as intangible universal value - the case of Piquette Plant - or preserved though not totally authentic - such as the Lingotto in Turin - or still on hold after decommissioning - such as Highland Park Plant.

In historic cities and centres of so-called car colonialism, signalling and valorisation - even while recognising certain limitations of



integrity, continuity, and authenticity – is a relevant driver for sustainable re-development that makes industrial legacy a resource, at this crucial stage of changing paradigms of mobility, production and culture, and after a period of significant and indiscriminate heritage loss.

Factories, landscape, material and documentary traditions, creative design, and technical innovation during 150 years are cross-sectional elements of expressing the authenticity of knowledge, to be transmitted by re-creating memories according to the perception of contemporary society. They are, in addition, elements of city-branding and development of industrial cultural tourism, which according to UNESCO accounts for 40 percent of total world tourism revenues.

The international recognition of tangible and intangible assets plays an important role in defining marketing policies for cultural tourism, linked to the quality and leisure of the area, and which can combine tours of experiential places of past resources, and museum and contemporary landmarks.

The development of digital transmission strategies of the automobile city culture cluster is essential. The scenario is a multilingual information ecosystem with communication protocols to give open source access and with interfaces that are adaptable to multiple tools, social communities, heritage tourists as well as cataloguing and research professionals.

The process of international valorisation of sites and landscapes, and objects and documents, cannot, moreover, be separate from the activation of audience development and engagement processes<sup>19</sup>, aimed at broadening and diversifying the users of the cultural product and improving interactions, in order to achieve a broader context of active participation.

Important actors are not only conservation institutions and local authorities, but the local and international cultural interest associations, amateur organisations, citizens and local stakeholders for an integrated approach to preservation, enhancement and management policies.

*The present text is the reworking and translation of: R. Maspoli, Il patrimonio del motorismo: la valorizzazione e le prospettive di designazione UNESCO, In: Stati Generali del Patrimonio Industriale 2018, edited by G.L. Fontana Marsilio, Venezia, 2020.*

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