

„Heritage in Transformation“
“Heritage protection in the 21st century
- problems, challenges, predictions“



Warsaw, 22-24 June 2015

1. Aims of the conference

At the Second International Congress of Architects and Specialists of Historic Buildings held in Venice in 1964, a resolution was adopted to establish an international organisation associating specialists in conservation and heritage protection. Constituent Assembly held in 1965 in Poland created ICOMOS, International Council on Monuments and Sites. Hence, the year 2015 is the 50th anniversary of establishing this institution.

For 50 years ICOMOS has become the most important international organisation representing conservator communities not only in specific countries but also on the international stage. Over ten thousand specialists dealing with conservation and heritage protection are associated by ICOMOS in 110 National Committees and about 30 International Scientific Committees. Moreover, problems arising from heritage protection can be identified, analysed, and assessed due to the international character of this organisation. Hence, ICOMOS is responsible for examining the contemporary issues arising from heritage protection as well as for developing vision for the future.

For any organisation, 50th anniversary is a great opportunity to summarise achievements and to prepare future plans; and the future is the most crucial aspect for the institution dealing with heritage protection. The principles and forms of protection have to be carefully considered due to great and radical changes that have been made in protection requirements as well as in understanding the heritage and its function. The foregoing discussion indicates that the paradigm of the entire discipline is being shifted. Hence, the future of the heritage is an open project and the cultural heritage may not survive in forms that have been recognised by heritage protection specialists so far. Principles and forms of the cultural heritage have not been determined; on one hand this fact may be considered a threat, yet on the other hand, it provides us with an opportunity to adapt heritage protection to contemporary needs and possibilities. This issue should be perceived by heritage protection specialists exclusively in this way.

2. Thematic scope of the conference

As ICOMOS is celebrating its 50th anniversary, it decided to organize a debate not only on contemporary problems faced in heritage protection but also on different ways of solving such issues. The international conference "Heritage in transformation. Cultural Heritage Protection in the 21st Century – problems, challenges, predictions" is organised by ICOMOS Poland and will be held in Warsaw on 22-24 June 2015.

The term 'transformation', which is used in the conference title, has multiple meanings. Namely, the transformation consists in:

- changes in understanding the term 'heritage',
- changes in functions fulfilled by the heritage,
- changes in principles and forms of conservation and heritage protection,
- changes in circumstances in which the heritage is protected.

Each of the aforementioned aspects involves radical transformations; each of them needs to be analysed and each of them exerts influence on the current situation of cultural heritage protection.

The conference aims not only at analysing the existing problems but also at establishing diagnoses of the future. With respect to heritage protection, a full overview can be provided by juxtaposing the past, i.e. views put forward by our predecessors, with the present, i.e. contemporary problems, and with the future, i.e. ideas for resolving the contemporary problems and for developing the vision of the future. Hence, the conference will be divided into three sessions.

1. The past

Description of changes in the term 'heritage' and the concepts of heritage protection in the last 50 years

(symbolic time limits).

Traditional concept of the heritage and its protection - reflection of the past conditionings.

The main weaknesses, failures, and successes in heritage protection in the last period.

What elements of the traditional conservation theory and what forms of protection are still up-to-date?

2. The present

Description of the contemporary problems faced in cultural heritage protection.

Reasons for and consequences of implementing changes in the paradigm of cultural heritage protection.

Modern understanding of the heritage and heritage protection.

Influence that current conditionings exert on heritage protection.

The main problems, successes, and challenges in contemporary cultural heritage protection.

What functions are currently fulfilled by the cultural heritage?

How should the complex value of the cultural heritage be estimated?

3. The future

Development predictions of the term 'heritage' as well as protection conditions and opportunities.

How should the cultural heritage be differentiated?

What should the cultural heritage protection system look like in the future?

What conservation theory will be needed in the future?

Will the heritage be needed in the future?

Will we need heritage protection?

What conditions ought to be created for protecting the heritage successfully?

Papers submitted for each session should have overall character, i.e. analyse the most important problems, heritage groups, and regions. The papers should include deductions and conclusions significant for the topics covered at the conference.

We would like to invite all representatives of National Committees, Regions, and ICOMOS International Scientific Committees to participate in the conference.

3. Organisational information

Proposals for conference speeches should be submitted no later than **28 February 2015** to: icomos50@gmail.com

Paper summaries should not exceed 2 pages. Summaries presented in the form of separate points will make it easier to convey the ideas discussed in papers.

Scientific reviewers will select papers to be presented at the conference and published in monograph (conference materials will be published in a form of reviewed monograph).

Paper authors will be provided with reviewers' decisions no later than **20 March 2015**.

Participation in the conference is free of charge; participants cover their travel and accommodation costs.

Questions concerning additional information should be sent to: icomos50@gmail.com

We would like to encourage you to submit your paper proposals,

We invite you to participate in the conference,

We invite you to visit Warsaw.

Bogusław Szmygin


ICOMOS Poland President