

EDITORIAL

Religious cultural heritage through maintenance, monitoring, valorisation and promotion

The 2017 edition of the European Symposium on Religious Art Restoration and Conservation was organised by the ‘Gheorghe Asachi’ Technical University of Iași (Romania) in its beautiful conference halls with the slogan of Dr. Iulian Rusu: ‘ESRARC comes home’ to stress that, after a long time, Iași was again the host of this international symposium and the place where it was born.

Very interesting contributions from all participants were presented to the Symposium covering, as usual, the topics of ‘Socio-spiritual values of the Religious Art’ and ‘Sacral sights in the light of tourist trade marketing’. As in the previous edition of ESRARC, a relevant number of papers were included in the section named ‘Conservation, restoration and diagnostics of religious cultural heritage’ demonstrating the great importance of these topics for guaranteeing the preservation and transmitting to the future generations of our religious heritage.

Today, conservation and preservation should be strictly linked to maintenance as fundamental activity in cultural heritage. Maintenance has been widely discussed in international conferences and is assessed also by standards and recommendations but it is usually forgotten. The culture of missed maintenance was sometimes evocated to stress the problems arising in cultural heritage degradation or losses due to lack of maintenance actions. At European level the CEN/TC 386 (Conservation of Cultural Heritage) published a lot of standards clearly defining the aspects of environmental monitoring and control, documentation and condition recording, materials characterisation and water determination in artworks, both movable and immovable. In particular, a recent standard (EN 16853:2017: Conservation of cultural heritage - Conservation process - Decision making, planning and implementation) underlines some relevant aspects linked to conservation such as the necessity of dialogue between all professionals and stakeholders involved, the necessity of maintenance and planned maintenance, etc. The innovative approaches in cultural heritage should include maintenance, monitoring, valorisation and promotion, through different traditional and innovative instruments and methodologies, as main focus [1, 2].

It was a great pleasure to know that also at this edition the contributions published in the Proceeding book are now indexed by ISI Web of Science thanks to the efforts of Scientific and Organising Committee, which guaranteed the high scientific level of all presented papers.

All participants had also the possibility to visit the beautiful city of Iași and to complete the first day with very good dinner and wine in the Orthodox monastery of Cetatuaia.

The closure ceremony, in the conference hall from Mangeron Boulevard was particularly touching. The Scientific Committee granted for the first time the ‘Daniel Mareci’ Award for three young researchers, in the loving memory of Daniel, a young and brilliant colleague which devoted his too short life to research also in the field of scientific study of religious cultural heritage.

As participant to the symposium, I can say that it was organised with great care and that we had the possibility to know a beautiful city and to strengthen the relationships between different countries from Europe. This should contribute to continue the symposium for the future and furthermore to open new collaboration chances for European projects, also in view of the 2018, year of Cultural Heritage.

Religious cultural heritage could become a common base for creating a link between researchers and countries involved in ESRARC. The papers presented to the Symposium demonstrated again the great relevance of religious art and events in each European country and the need of maintaining single identities within a general globalization.

ESRARC researchers and colleagues, thanks to the network created during the time, could further diffuse the topics of maintenance, conservation, valorisation of religious cultural heritage that is the base of our society and must become an element of junction not of division.

Dr. Claudia Pelosi

References

- [1] C. Parisi, G. Agresti and C. Pelosi, *Eur. J. Sci. Technol.*, **14**(1) (2018) 159-171.
- [2] V.D. Diaconescu, L. Scripcariu, M.R. Diaconescu and L. Vornicu-Albu, *Eur. J. Sci. Theol.*, **14**(1) (2018) 181-192.

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