

PREFACE

SAHC 2012 is another edition of the world-wide Scientific Conference, which this time is held in the UNESCO-listed Centennial Hall, designed by Max Berg at the beginning of the 20th century, in Wrocław. The previous editions were held in Barcelona, Guimarães, Padova, Bath, New Delhi and recently in Shanghai. SAHC 2012 focuses on the following topics:

- conservation of concrete, brick, stone, timber and metal structures,
- modernization and reuse of cultural heritage buildings,
- NDT technologies,
- theory and practice of conservation,
- repair and strengthening techniques,
- rehabilitation and safety,
- history of construction building, technologies and materials,
- analytical and numerical approaches,
- experimental results and laboratory testing,
- innovative and traditional materials/technology,
- seismic behaviour and retrofitting,
- stabilization and valorization of historical ruins,
- laser scanning,

imparting the latest trends, tendencies and methods useful in the broadly understood conservation of monuments to scientists, experts, designers, contractors and students.

The conservation of monuments is an interdisciplinary process. If it is to be properly conducted, it requires the collaboration of specialists in many fields. This is a requisite, considering the immense value of the global heritage for the culture and development of the current and future generations, but also poses certain dangers. The conservator associations, and other, in the particular countries, the National Committees of ICOMOS and the ICOMOS International Subject Committees propose or draw up ever new conventions, guidelines and principles which all make up the contemporary conservation doctrine. A substantial majority of such documents begin or end with the statement: “in keeping with the spirit of the Venice Charter (1964)...”. Against this background, the CRACOW CHARTER drawn up in Cracow (Poland) in 2000, as one of the few documents, contributes concrete regulations useful in conservation in the contemporary world. This was confirmed by the discussion during the ICOMOS General Assembly in Paris in 2011.

Considering the multiplicity of the actions, I have this impression that we are beginning to lose the sight of the primary aim – the actual, active and effective action for the preservation of the largest possible number of objects belonging to the global heritage and for creating possibilities for their material and cultural existence in the contemporary world, which is the necessary condition for handing them down to the next generations. Besides, nothing will replace creators’ knowledge and culture. Perhaps the proper way here is even greater activity of university scientific and research groups, but supported by government and opinion-forming circles and conservation organizations (national Associations of Conservators, ICOMOS, etc.) in the generation of concrete projects both ones aimed at saving important individual heritage objects and ones aimed at creating methods, materials and technologies which could be universally used. Considering that funds need to be raised from different sources, international cooperation is vital here. Therefore, perhaps one should consider, in the whole conservation world, a certain shift of focus. The proper main platform for this discussion seems to be ICOMOS INTERNATIONAL, SAHC 2012 in which scientists, engineers, designers, architects and conservators take part. It is one of the platforms for the creation and transfer of concrete solutions which could be used by the contemporary conservation world. It is a platform for mutual inspirations and for possibilities of generating joint international actions for the preservation of the global heritage.

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