

Changing World, Changing Views of Heritage: The Impact of Global Change on Cultural Heritage

2010 theme: **Heritage and Social Change**

Symposium date: Thursday, 28 October 2010 - Dublin, Ireland

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The Background: In Quebec City, Canada, on the occasion of the Scientific Council meeting in September 2008 at the 16th General Assembly, a task force of 14, representing 14 of 28 ISCs and two National Committee presidents, met to debate and propose the next two Advisory Committee meetings' scientific symposia themes. The themes selected evolve from the ongoing interdisciplinary research on Global Climate Change and its effects on cultural heritage, and build on the 2007 Pretoria scientific symposium on this topic. They were presented to the Advisory Committee and adopted at the 16th General Assembly. The theme for 2009 was Technological Change, held in Valletta, Malta on 7 October 2009, and for 2010, the theme of Heritage and Social Change will be examined in Dublin. The three "change" themes are intended to address directly ICOMOS challenges in a rapidly changing world, as is also being done by the ICOMOS President's "Tolerance for Change" online forum and the activities of a number of individual ISCs, including the Committee for the Theory of Conservation..

The ICOMOS Symposium on Social Change also coincides with UNESCO's adoption of 2010 as the Year of Rapprochement of Cultures and ICOMOS's adoption of the Year of Agricultural Heritage.

The Context: The 21st century has witnessed far-reaching political, economic, and cultural transformations that combine industrialization, mass migration, regional fragmentation, ethnic tensions, and the fluctuations of transnational markets, all of which transcend and permeate traditional political and cultural boundaries. How do all these changes affect the foundations of heri-

tage practice? How do they mesh with existing national legislation and international conventions based on territorially-bound traditions and concepts of universal significance? Social Change (SoCh) lies at the heart of newly emerging heritage paradigms that are often focused more on community-based significance criteria and involvement than on the interventions of outside heritage professionals.

In the same way that Global Climate Change (GCC) is altering familiar landscapes and environmental relations, and technological change (TC) is transforming communication and information networks, the social changes of massively shifting populations, unprecedented industrial development, and dramatically changing lifestyles and landscapes are creating new meanings for the cultural hybrids of “local” and “global” all over the world.

There are many questions posed by these issues, primarily because contemporary Social Change is so complex and far reaching—and it interacts with TC and GCC in unpredictable ways. As cultural heritage is created by people and valued by people, the changes in lifestyles, values, and economics will undoubtedly have significant impacts on both the form and significance of heritage.

Symposium Format: The Dublin symposium will be based on the Pretoria and Valetta models. Papers and poster presentations will be solicited through the Scientific Council listserv and National Committees. Paper abstracts and poster proposals will be blind peer-reviewed.

In the **morning session**, open to the general public, approximately six 20-minute papers will be selected for presentation. Posters will be accepted as space and the blind peer-review process permits.

The **afternoon session** will be devoted to breakout sessions for ISC members wherein working groups will be asked to reflect on a specific question and how it relates to their specific ISCs.

The breakout groups will return for a **final plenary session** to present each group’s recommendations which will then be synthesized into formal recommendations to be distributed and discussed by the Advisory Committee and published on the ICOMOS website. The goals of the 2010 Symposium will be to integrate all three aspects of change to begin the formulation of a practical agenda for ICOMOS in the coming years.

Call for Abstracts and Posters: The 2010 Symposium will highlight five main themes in its examination of Social Change. However, the questions posed below are merely suggested as sub-topics; we welcome additional perspectives in submitted proposals for abstracts and posters.

1. The Heritage of Changing/Evolving Communities:

- To what extent does heritage conservation and management retard or accelerate other social processes?
- How can heritage “sustainability” be defined in social terms? Does WH site inscription create unanticipated pressures on the contemporary communities that surround them?
- How does WH listing alter the traditional social context of small living sites?

- How can heritage “conservation” become a part of future-oriented development?
- Has traditional heritage practice served to create boundaries or bridges between states, regions, and ethnic communities?
- Should contemporary social changes (demographic, economic, cultural) contribute to evolving concepts of significance?

2. *Diasporic, Immigrant, and Indigenous Heritage:*

- In a world of movement, migrations, and cultural diversity, how can monuments and intangible heritage be honored and appreciated by scattered communities, often in very different cultural contexts?
- Does the heritage of indigenous and aboriginal communities require special management and interpretive methods?
- Should the history and traditions of immigrants become part of the heritage of the host country?
- How should heritage professionals deal with the reality of the major demographic changes now occurring throughout the world?

3. *Religious Heritage:*

- What is the relationship between active religious observance and heritage monuments—is ritual an obstruction, a privileged activity, or a common human heritage meant to be accessible and viewable by all?
- What role can or should religious observance play in 21st century heritage practice relating to places of worship?
- Can heritage play a constructive role in encouraging coexistence between faiths?

4. *Sites of Conscience:*

- Is Heritage dedicated to commemorating only historical and architectural achievements, or can it include sites of historical and human tragedies?
- What is the Outstanding Universal Significance of political prisons, concentration camps, and mass murder sites? Does it lie in the original fabric of those structures, or in the injustices they represent?
- How can the tangible and intangible values of sites of conscience best be conserved—long after the end of living memory of the events themselves?
- What role can or should heritage play in defending and focusing on human rights?

5. *The Social Impacts of GCC:*

- How does climate change affect human settlements and economic patterns in a way that indirectly impacts cultural heritage?
- The earlier SC discussions dealt with physical threats posed by GCC on tangible heritage resources; what is the effect of GCC on intangible traditions?

- What change in significance does a monument undergo when its environmental context shifts?
- How can the heritage profession adopt new interpretive and administrative techniques for dealing with an environmentally, economically, and culturally changing world?

Submission of Abstracts:

Abstracts for papers or posters should be a maximum of 250 words in English or French and should be submitted to pamela.jerome@icomos.org by **1 March 2010**.

Please indicate clearly whether the submission is for a paper or a poster.

All abstracts must contain the title of the proposed paper or poster, the name of the author(s), and contact information (institutional affiliation, mailing address, phone number, and email address).

Timeline for symposium organization:

- Deadline for paper abstracts and poster proposals 1 March 2010
- Announcement of abstract and poster proposals selection 1 April 2010
- Full Papers due: 1 June 2010
- Blind peer review of full papers completed by 1 July 2010
- Authors resubmit by 1 August 2010
- Final editorial group review and posting on the web by 1 September 2010