

# Cultural Heritage Research Needs in Europe

## Introductory Comments

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At the end of the year 2000 and the beginning of the year 2001 several events were organised in order to identify future development, research and society control needs concerning cultural heritage in Europe. Let us very briefly summarise important features emerged at different occasions.

### ***European Commission Conference***

***“Research for protection, conservation and enhancement of cultural heritage”***

***(Strasbourg, 22-24 November 2000)***

#### Themes:

- Conservation materials (protective treatment of masonry, mortars and wood)
- Optical technologies for cultural heritage conservation (laser and lighting)
- Microclimate conditions of cultural heritage (material protection, environmental control)
- Damage assessment and balance between costs and benefits of preservation (air pollution effects, valuing the built heritage by cost benefit approach)
- Sustainable development of cities and preservation of cultural heritage (considerate construction technologies, protection of archaeological sites, integration of new buildings within historic city centres)
- Tourism and sustainable management of cultural heritage

#### In other words:

- Technology
- Environment
- Societal impact
- Economic impact

Among those themes the “Tourism and sustainable management of cultural heritage” can be considered as an item of increased research interests. There are many questions for deeper investigations, such as:

- Economy data – income/costs ? What is an European picture? Does it confirm the statements by Claude Karnoouh that “Heritage economy can be only loss making activity” and “Economic exploitation of heritage serves other ends than the heritage” (Claude Karnoouh, CoE Meeting in Paris, December 2000)?

- Impact and risks of a high attendance on cultural heritage objects ?
- Role of cultural heritage in small sites with respect to tourism ?
- Tourism and development planning in cultural heritage sites ?
- Role of Information Technologies ?

### **Council of Europe**

#### ***“Forward planning: The function of cultural heritage in a changing Europe” (Paris, 13-14 December 2000)***

##### Themes under discussion:

- ❖ Changing ideas in heritage
  - From monuments to human rights – redefining “heritage”
  - Europe: common heritage and differences
  - Sites of historical significance and sites of discord or conflicts
- ❖ Information society and net economy
- ❖ Sustainable development
  - Landscape and heritage
  - Cities as “urban monuments”
  - On social cohesion, locality and residential context
- ❖ Heritage management and participation

##### Key themes selected by the Forward Looking Group for further development:

- Building the Future of Europe through Heritage
- Heritage in the Network Society
- Heritage and the Property Market
- Heritage and the Environment

##### Conclusion:

- ❖ Cultural heritage isolated, under-resourced and under-valued as a peripheral rather than a central activity. It is not seen to be valued at a European level.
- ❖ Cultural heritage in our present environment, increasingly shaped by globalisation, risks the loss of both physical objects and cultural fabric that constitutes our identities as European.
- ❖ Care for European cultural environment as a whole – whether ideas, language, traditions or places - must remain at the centre of work of European governmental bodies.

##### Council of Europe interests in further RESEARCH:

- The “common heritage” concept (philosophical, ethical, methodological issues, “europeanisation”)

- Function of cultural heritage in an information society for the benefit of all, conversion of heritage into digital forms as a matter of urgency and subject of international activities
- Diversification of means of participation and of public access to culture and heritage in the context of globalisation.

***Commission Vision Workshop***

***“European City Visions - defining Research needs”***

***(Brussels, 8-9 February 2001)***

Cultural heritage and research needs:

- Assessment of Environmental Influences (thresholds, large scale assessment methodology, pollution from transport)
- Materials and structures with sustainable parameters
- Mechanisms of pathology of CH objects
- New conservation technologies and methods
- New approaches to development planning (strategic planning and management)
- Information technologies for increase of participation and accessibility (city management, monuments protection, cultural heritage accessibility, tourism)

***6th Research Framework Programme of EU 2002-2006***

***Research priorities proposal***

***(Brussels, 21 February 2001)***

Main research priorities (do not include cultural heritage oriented research):

- Genomics and biotechnology
- Information society technologies
- Nanotechnologies, intelligent materials, new production methods
- Aeronautics and space
- Food safety and health risks
- Sustainable development and global change, energy, transport
- Citizens and governance in European society
- Anticipation of Scientific and Technological needs for the Union (JRC, emerging technologies)

In other words:

- ❖ GLOBALIZATION Priorities,
  - where Technology & Business proved to be problem generators for living environment & society when ignoring cultural and natural heritage traditions
- ❖ SUSTAINABLE “DEVELOPMENT”
  - which calls for continuity and cultural heritage based holistic approach

- ❖ “EUROPEANISATION” Priorities,
  - where Democracy (participation) & Mobility (co-operation) have strong links to “cultural heritage”

#### GLOBALIZATION (comments)

- Nothing new - historical examples of technology and business development as problem generators for living environment & society (CH)
- Recent examples:
  - Environmental crisis
  - Societal crisis
  - Urban problems
- Underestimated danger for green environment caused heavy damages
- Underestimated danger for cultural heritage in physical as well as spiritual matters is present

#### CULTURAL HERITAGE in GLOBALIZATION (comments)

- Contemporary understanding & interpretation
- “Modern” philosophy and holistic approaches
- Complex interdisciplinary research of European dimension with a strong national support

#### ***Draft for the 6th RF Programme Requirements:***

- ❖ Involvement of New Cultural Heritage Key Actions into the following priorities
  - Information Society Technologies
  - Sustainable Development and Global Change
  - Citizens and Governance in European Society
- ❖ Cultural Heritage to be one of priorities for the ERA base strengthening and promoting new national programmes
- ❖ Cultural Heritage to be one of priorities of networks of excellence
- ❖ Promoting establishment of national research programmes for cultural heritage as a base for European research co-operation in the field

#### ***Further questions for possible discussion concerning relation between EU and Associated States in the field of Cultural Heritage:***

- ❖ Are the Associated States on the way to (Western) Europe? or Is Europe on the way to those countries?
  - ❖ Have (West) European theoreticians a real knowledge about the Associated states?
  - ❖ What “Added value” can Assoc. States bring to Europe?
  - ❖ (How) can Europe contribute to development in Assoc. States?
- Isn't the accession a historic challenge for testing EU system changes?