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DZIEDZICTWO MIAST. OCHRONA I ROZWÓJ  
HERITAGE OF THE CITIES. PRESERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

CIVVIH Meeting, SYROS Greece, 16-19 September, 2015



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**The role of Heritage in Sustainable Development**  
*Danuta Klosek-Kozłowska*  
CIVVIH, SYROS – September 2015

Reflection on the birth of **the concept of heritage** as an important **issue of the theory and philosophy** of the protection of monuments since its beginnings in the late XIXth and early XXth century

From the moment when, both in theory and practice in Poland, a coherent system began to be built, the **protection of historic cities was coupled with town planning**, and viewed as also **the important legal instrument** for protecting the cultural heritage.

*This approach was accompanied by the awareness that preservation of historic cities as an urban planning issue, while reaching back into the past, should be considered as a thoroughly contemporary issue, deeply rooted in the present day reality of the place and its social needs.*

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- Today, as we know, it is social needs and **grassroots movements** that determine the final shape of spatial solutions and **the fate of heritage** in order to create for themselves **an alternative urban life**, one that is not alienated but happy and open to the needs of others. In response to the crisis in urban administration, they also seek knowledge about “their place on Earth”, wishing to better understand it and be more active and responsible.
- heritage protection is a vital aspect of guiding the development of modern cities, though this is a truth decision-makers not always seem to realise. The spatial quality of European cities has long been co-created by new structures of high aesthetic standards and by cultural heritage with its unique “magic of the past”.
- Therefore, the urban environment, while forming a frame for the life of its community, requires scientific recognition and interpretation of its historical value before it can be remodelled to suit the unstable reality, variable expectations and needs and the current narration in a versatile culture. This is because the space of the city is an archive of different values, both tangible and intangible, which make up the city’s spatial identity, *genius loci*

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- the perception of an object, the personal emotions, the symbolism and meaning that make the object a monument, **which is valuable not only to the few experts and researchers**, but most of all to the many observers and recipients.  
and it is them, Alois Riegl writes, **the sensitive “observers”**, who will demand the preservation of these **“unintentional monuments”** in which we recognise a part of our own selves.
- In his theory, Riegl ascribed much importance to **the values expressed by common observers**. He created therefore an immensely modern basis for the study of **heritage**, (not monuments only) though, as practice showed, neither then nor **now** has it been fully understood.

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The essential problem for Riegl was also the question whether monument conservation should be effected by governmental agencies, administration or by citizens themselves. In his view, the distinction between altruistic institutional operations and a personal sense of duty raises an important question about **the role of the government in heritage preservation:**

**is it to invest in state institutions and administration bodies**  
**or**  
**in the "sense of humanity" – education and awareness of its citizens**

Alois Riegl aims to prove **that investing in people** can be much more beneficial in the long term, since the notion of "sense of humanity" is broad enough to encompass the aspect of national identity, **tried to strip** the concept of heritage protection from **the burden of nationalistic connotations** - monument preservation must be kept motivated by other values of social importance, possibly broadly understood and accepted **in a given point in history.**

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Alois Riegl and Max Dvorak (like Caillio Sitte before them,) observed that **the concept of a monument restricted to its artistic aspect, is not sufficient when thinking about cities**, since there is another type of old objects, the "**unintentional monuments**", which also requires attention due to its value as perceived by observers. Thus became key to creating a theory **of heritage preservation** - right at the beginning.

**As a planning issue**, strong rooted in history, **preservation of historic cities** remains a valid problem of the present, closely interrelated with the current reality of the place and the relevant social needs.

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- **The city of today is shaped as much by creative imagination as by historical research and the participation of citizens** aware of their needs and responsibility for decisions. Urban development history teaches us that **it is a phenomenon specifically created, characterizing the time and generation to which it belongs.**

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Professor Wacław Ostrowski, an architect, urbanist wrote in his book, published many years before the "Leipzig Charter on Sustainable European Cities", Leipzig 2007, **that also when protecting the heritage of cities "...we are concerned not only with the framework of life created by old buildings, streets and squares, but also with the life which fills that framework"**




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*Thank you for your attention*



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**ANNOUNCEMENT**

ISC on the Historic Towns and Villages has established in 2012 a sub-committee for the **cities heritage in the Central and Eastern Europe**. Until now it consisted mainly of our members from the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia and Poland.

At now, after the discussion in Paris we decided to invite all the active members of the Region of the Central and Eastern Europe to enforce our activity.

**Euro Group meeting and the celebration of the 50th anniversary of ICOMOS in Warsaw Poland in June 2015 was a good opportunity to invite all the ICOMOS Presidents of the Region for cooperation, to join the initiative.**

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Even we call it the **Group of the Central and Eastern Europe** it is open for all CIVVIH members. At now we are in the process to formulate a routes of functioning in accordance with the practice we have **with the Mediteranean Group of CIVVIH**

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It was also a good time to talk about an **international conference in 2016 in one of the countries in the region**. We have recived a proposal from the CIVVIH members of the Czech Republic to organise the conference **in Cesky Krumlov World Heritage Town.**

The subject could be, for example „*The quality of public space in the World Heritage Cities opportunities and threats.*”

**All the ICOMOS Presidents from the Region of the Central and East of Europe are invited to cooperation within the CIVVIH**