



2017
INTERNATIONAL YEAR
OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM
FOR DEVELOPMENT

18 April 2017 “Cultural Heritage & Sustainable Tourism”

Interpretation, presentation and dissemination of Spanish Cultural Heritage: awareness, professionalization and celebration

Background

Every year on 18 April, ICOMOS celebrates the International Day for Monuments and Sites, whose establishment was approved by the 22nd UNESCO General Conference in 1983. In 2017, bearing in mind the United Nations International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development, the theme chosen is “Cultural Heritage & Sustainable Tourism”.

The sustainability of tourism has been analysed by several scientific disciplines in order to assess tourism negative impacts on cultural heritage, mitigate them, and foster its positive effects. Most of these analysis focus on the different dimensions related to the carrying capacity of cultural properties (among which cultural, conservation, economical, ecological and social aspects), but usually they do not deepen on questions equally relevant to achieve tourism sustainability, such as the quality of cultural properties’ presentation, dissemination and interpretation.

The importance of these activities has, nevertheless, been widely stressed by international recommendations such as the ICOMOS International Cultural Tourism Charter (1999) - which underlines that “Interpretation and presentation programmes should facilitate and encourage the high level of public awareness and support necessary for the long term survival of the natural and cultural heritage” (principle 1.3), and that “Conservation and tourism programmes should present high quality information to optimise the visitor’s understanding of the significant heritage characteristics and of the need for their protection, enabling the visitor to enjoy the place in an appropriate manner” (principle 3.1)-, or the ICOMOS Charter on the Interpretation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage Sites (2008), among others.

Considering the relevance of these principles, but also their weak implementation in several countries, Aproha (Spanish Professional Association of Art Historians) wishes to contribute to this 18th April highlighting the key role that interpretation, presentation and dissemination might play to raise citizen awareness of heritage issues and to foster a more sustainable, fair and creative relationship between cultural properties and tourism development.

Proposed activity

Heritage dissemination and interpretation are essential to turn heritage public visits into educative, sustainable and sensitive experiences. Aproha will therefore celebrate the 2017 International Day on Monuments and Sites presenting and interpreting several Spanish cultural properties to the general public. These presentations' main aim is to reinforce visitors and citizenship awareness on the right to access to cultural heritage, on the relevance of heritage dissemination and interpretation, and on the need to professionalize these activities through their legal regulation. The ICOMOS Charter on the Interpretation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage Sites (2008) has particularly deepened on these questions claiming for the establishment of standardised and accepted professional principles for the Interpretation and Presentation, which will also be defended by Aproha and all participants.

Objectives

- Increase tourists and Spanish citizens' awareness on the right to access and enjoy Cultural Heritage, framing it within cultural rights overall context and showing the central role of heritage presentation, dissemination and interpretation to reach this goal.
- Inform tourists and the general public about the deregulation of heritage presentation, dissemination and interpretation in Spain and about the need to regulate these activities in order to confront issues like visitors difficulties to access cultural properties, heritage tourist overcrowding, the overcoming of heritage properties' carrying capacity, the scarce control of interpretative tools, especially in historic cities, etc.
- Sensitise visitors and society on the importance to implement heritage presentation, dissemination and interpretation with the same degree of high professional, scientific and quality standards than other protection activities, like heritage restoration or archaeological excavations.
- Inform citizens that the competent professionals to present and interpret heritage must be graduates in the disciplines specialized on the type of cultural property subject to dissemination. In the case of Historic-Artistic Heritage those professionals should be Art Historians.

Activity details

Participants will interpret and explain the most relevant cultural property of the cities holding this event (Granada, Sevilla, Valencia, Santiago de Compostela, Cáceres, Barcelona, Madrid, etc.). Art Historians will gather at these properties the 18th April morning to conduct several dissemination and awareness activities, including the following:

- Guided visits to the target monuments by professional Art Historians: These visits will be free of charge, developed outside - and when possible also inside- monuments, and offered to all persons willing to enjoy them, regardless its nationality, age or cultural level.
- Lecture of a declaration drafted by Aproha in collaboration with other Art Historians professional associations. This declaration will delve with the above mentioned principles and with Spanish Historic Heritage dissemination' current deficiencies and gaps, deepening on its scarce professional qualification and on Aproha's proposals to confront it.
- Recreational and vindicatory activities conducted by Art Historians and aimed to all kind of publics, especially children.

International Day of Monuments and Sites
Year of Cultural Heritage and Sustainable Tourism

The ICOMOS Spanish National Committee will host the talk entitled

“FROM VALPUESTA TO SILOS, A JOURNEY TO THE SOURCES OF CASTILIAN”

Dr. D. Antonio Álvarez Tejedor, Universidad de Burgos
Dr. D. José Manuel Ruiz Asencio, Universidad de Valladolid

18th April 2017
Burgos
Spain

Brief introduction to the event:

From Valpuesta to Silos. A journey to the sources of Castilian is an invitation to a real and imaginary journey to search and research the birth places of the Castilian language and evidence of its first ever written legacy, as well as to gain insight of the natural ecosystems *in situ* that shaped the way of life of the people of Castilla, the “los castellanos de la *Castilla Citerior* o *Castella Vetula*” in the intricate terrain of mountains and canyons, in the small valleys and in the land of “*Castilla Ulterior* o *Castilla de Burgos*” too.

Heroes and myths were born within this society as well as the believes and legends that are at the core of Spanish and Hispanic culture: Los Siete Infantes de Lara, el Poema de Fernán González, el Cantar de Mío Cid.

From these sources a very fertile river, called Castilian, was born where the heroes of the Castilian greatest feats rode, fought and suffered and finally within those forests, canyons and rivers the history of Castilla began.

From Valpuesta to Silos. A journey to the sources of Castilian is ultimately a cross-wise project with deep outreach potential that is made of a compilation of objectives and physiological, historical, environmental and touristic component elements. In Valpuesta, Oña, San Pedro de Cardeña, Covarrubias and Silos, the interest for the Castilian language and for its first ever recorded literature invite us to feel and get to know better the history, to know and enjoy the cultural heritage, buildings, houses, bridges, squares, churches, sanctuaries and shrines, all cultural and traditional manifestations, and to live and enjoy the kind of primal natural beauty that constitutes this exceptional natural heritage.



ICOMOS
COMITÉ NACIONAL ESPAÑOL
CONSEJO INTERNACIONAL DE MONUMENTOS Y SITIOS
INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON MONUMENTS AND SITES
CONSEIL INTERNATIONAL DES MONUMENTS ET DES SITES

***AÑO 2017, DEDICADO POR ICOMOS ESPAÑA AL RECONOCIMIENTO DE
NUMANCIA COMO PATRIMONIO DEL MUNDO***

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