

FRH TORCH INITIATIVE

A collection of stories, memories and experiences
in the context of European religious heritage

Future for Religious Heritage

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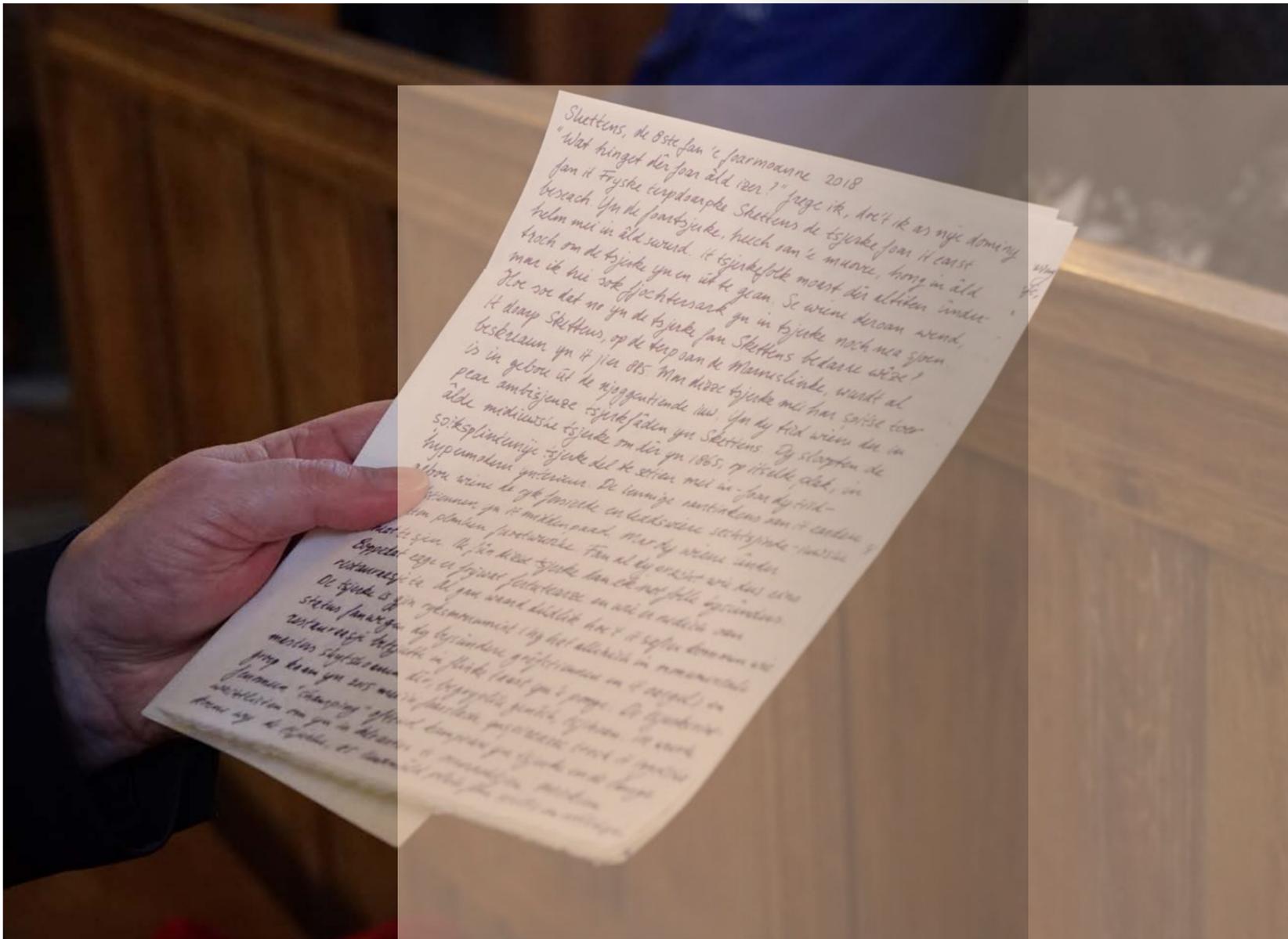
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Content





Introduction

By EU Commissioner of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport Mr Tibor Navracsics

“Our heritage: where the past meets the future” was the motto of the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018. These words reflect how I feel about cultural heritage: it is not something to be put in a museum, but something that belongs at the heart of our daily lives – and that is vital if we are to build a cohesive, resilient Europe for the future.

I am very proud that, with the European Year, we reached over 10.6 million people who participated in more than 18,000 events across Europe. 30 million people took part in the special edition of the European Heritage Days. And almost 14,000 projects, events and initiatives received the label of the European Year.

The Year focused on the European dimension of cultural heritage – underlining the important role heritage can play in overcoming borders. I was particularly pleased to contribute to the FRH Torch of Heritage and Culture Initiative launched by Future for Religious Heritage. The FRH Torch travelled to ten cities in nine different countries, a journey during which dozens of testimonies and personal stories related to religious heritage were collected.

Religious heritage represents by far the largest single category of European cultural patrimony. But although some places of worship attract large numbers of visitors, the potential of less famous religious heritage sites and the treasures held in smaller buildings is still largely underexploited. Maintaining such heritage relies essentially on the efforts of volunteers. This contribution from civil society is particularly important in rural areas where churches or temples are often the last remaining community building.

With the support of the EU's Creative Europe programme, the FRH Torch Initiative managed to highlight the importance and sometimes the fragility of religious heritage, which is part of our common roots, whether we are believers or not. Last year I travelled a lot promoting the European Year of Cultural Heritage, from Dublin to Madrid and from Sofia to Krakow. And I saw huge engagement and enthusiasm: from local communities, stakeholders, young people and authorities at

national, regional and local level. The commitment by stakeholders such as Future for Religious Heritage helped us put Europe's cultural heritage high on the EU's political agenda. This dedication will play an equally important part in making sure that the European Year has a lasting impact, as we implement the European Framework for Action on Cultural Heritage that I presented in December 2018. The treasure box of the FRH Torch Initiative travelled for most of last year; it has now been opened to reveal some of its secrets in this publication, to which I am happy to contribute. The European Year of Cultural Heritage has created a unique momentum – it is now up to us to make the most of it. I know I can count on dedicated partners like Future for Religious Heritage to help us preserve and promote our heritage for the benefit of future generations.

Mr Tibor Navracsics

EU Commissioner of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport





FRH Torch Initiative

As part of the 2018 European Year of Cultural Heritage celebrations, FRH organised the 'Torch for Heritage and Culture Initiative' aimed at raising awareness of the importance of Europe's religious heritage using the ideal of the Olympic torch travelling across Europe as a symbol of unity and shared heritage.

On its way, the 'FRH Torch' collected personal letters and testimonies from prominent personalities and citizens alike, containing stories and memories linked with religious heritage.

The 'FRH Torch' journey started in the European Cultural Capital Leeuwarden (the Netherlands) on the 8th of January, followed by Aschaffenburg (Germany), Potes (Spain) Lund (Sweden), Mont-devant-Sasse (France), Berlin (Germany), Krakow (Poland), Budapest (Hungary), Bucharest (Romania), and Skopje (Northern Macedonia). It ended its journey with a closing ceremony at the FRH Conference in Paris. The 'FRH Torch Public Campaign', open to all European citizens, continued until the conclusion of the EYCH, on the 31st of December 2018.

FRH was proud to initiate this event, which has raised interest in religious heritage across Europe and would like to thank the contributors for their stimulating and inspirational statements and memories associated with their places of worship and other aspects of Europe's rich religious heritage.

We wish you an excellent read!

Oliver du Rocher



The FRH Torchbearers

Throughout the European Year of Cultural Heritage, the 'FRH Torch of Heritage and Culture' travelled across Europe, with three Torchbearers lighting the way.

They were FRH Council Honorary Secretary Lilian Grootswagers, FRH Council Member Pilar G. Bahamonde and FRH Executive Officer Jordi Mallarach Parés. The following excerpts provide an overview of each one, showcasing their motivation for bearing the FRH Torch.



Lilian Grootswagers-Theuns
Council Honorary Secretary
Future for Religious Heritage

It has been a privilege to contribute to this initiative. Gathering this unique collection of memories. While reading one can only conclude that we do have a lot in common as Europeans and that there is a collective need for protecting and promoting religious heritage.

The sacred buildings which play(ed) an exceptional and significant role in the private and public life, are an integral part of any city or village. No matter which part of the sacred cultural heritage in Europe you wish to explore, all of them tell incredible stories, from the Notre Dame in Paris to the Portuguese Synagogue in Amsterdam and the recently opened Eco-friendly Cambridge Central Mosque. Many generations of artists, craftsman immortalized their talent and hopes, creating and preserving our religious heritage, regardless of political turmoil throughout the centuries. All together they offer a spectrum of multiplicity which impresses everyone. The importance of the FRH Torch Initiative was to foster our collective memory and history. Show there is unity through diversity. The many stories, interviews and quotes are very inspiring, without compromising the others, I would like to end with a quote of Risto Solunchev: "Culture should always be a vivid reflection upon its sources and roots, and at the same time, is a projection of the future as a time that is coming and is being pushed forward from the past."

The FRH Torch Initiative was a moment in time, we live with stories and enjoy telling them to each other, every day new stories originate when people get together and pass them on. A never-ending story...



Pilar G. Bahamonde
FRH Council member
Director, Centro de Estudios Lebaniegos Potes,
Cantabria, España

I was born in Santiago de Compostela, Spain, on a Jubilee Year of Santo Toribio de Liébana Monastery, also in the North of Spain, two of the four medieval places of Jubilee for the whole Catholic Christianity since Beato de Liébana's words "O Dei verbum" established the Apostle as patron saint of Hispania. I remember and cherish the faces and expressions of pilgrims whom I met in my childhood and youth, on their way to obtain their reward. Through their personal stories, it is engraved in my memory as well as how the Camino changed their lives.

Later on, in Rome, I've observed the commonalities of pilgrimage routes all through Europe, paving the way to a better understanding and respect for each other. It was then when I got to know the quotation attributed to Goethe "Europa ist aus der Pilgerschaft geboren" and at that precise moment everything seemed to fit in like a puzzle. Pilgrimage has shaped my life, profession and my decisions ever since... In a Europe of multicultural and multi-religious diversity, this phenomenon is the intangible thread that binds together and incardicates all the religious buildings, helping us, Europeans of the 21st century, to embrace the cultural, artistic and spiritual heritage of our roots, our identity, that lays underneath the aged stones of this palimpsest we live in, and transmit it together with our commonalities and differences to the new generations to come.

"Ultreia and suseia!" to all of you...



Jordi Mallarach Parés
Executive Officer
Future for Religious Heritage

Coming from the Catalan Pyrenees in Spain, since childhood I learned to appreciate and wonder at the impressive religious heritage around me, so closely connected to the region's identity and culture. Having witnessed the varying states of conservation and preservation of these sites throughout Europe, I understood that involvement is needed from the public, private and civil society sphere. Only with coherent policies that reflect the sites' socioeconomic benefit for the community can a proper subsidy system be put in place. Private sector philanthropic efforts can also assist where the public sector cannot, but ultimately the future of religious heritage rests on the implication of civil society. The 2018 European Year of Cultural Heritage proved a great opportunity to connect with citizens across Europe, with culture and heritage as a common nexus. In this framework, the 'FRH Torch of Heritage and Culture' sought to bring together those working to safeguard religious heritage by hosting symbolic Torch ceremonies across Europe, in unison with culture and heritage events. I had the honour of carrying the FRH Torch in several of these events, where I recognised the impact religious heritage has for intercultural and interreligious dialogue and as a unifying element, bringing together people from different countries, languages, cultures and religions around a common goal; the valorisation and appreciation of such an intrinsic part of our common European heritage.

The Journey of the FRH Torch

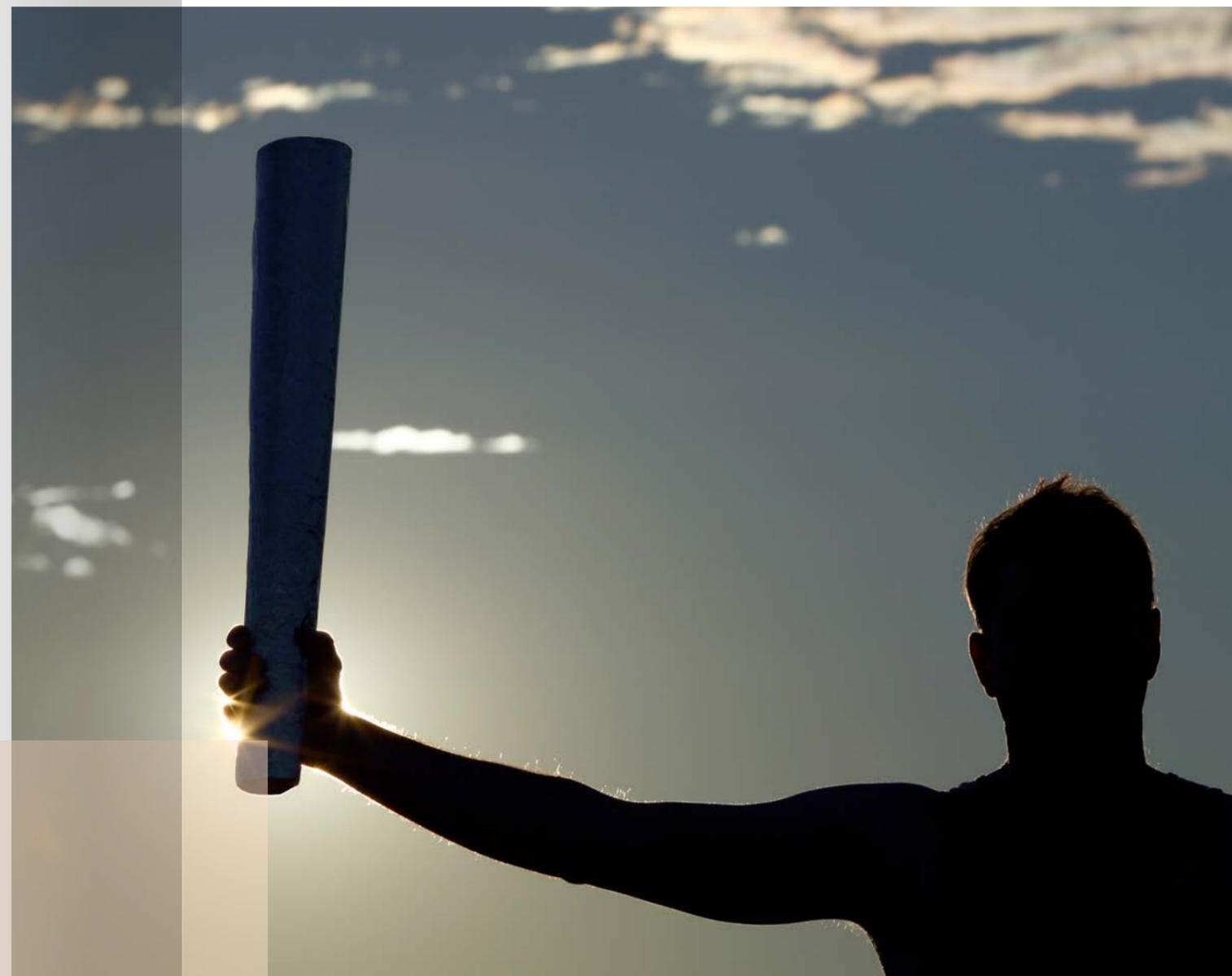
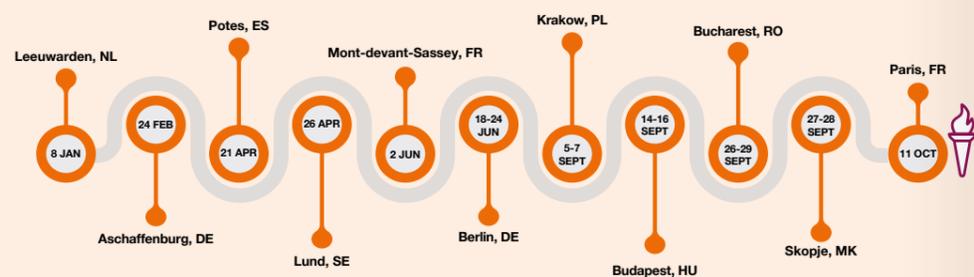
Inspired by the Olympic Torch of Athens, and to raise awareness and safeguard the importance of Europe's rich religious heritage, FRH launched the Torch of Heritage and Culture initiative.

Part of the European Year of Cultural Heritage, the FRH Torch was a memory treasure box, containing personal letters. These letters, describing personal memories about religious heritage, were presented to the European Commissioner of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, Mr Tibor Navracsics.

Contributions came in many forms, including personal experiences, memories, opinions, ideas or even drawings and photographs!

The FRH Torch Initiative was open to everyone. Each memory is equally important, as they all add up to the vital sense of community built around religious heritage.

We live with memories and stories and you can now read some of them!





Huizum/Leeuwarden The Netherlands

The FRH Torch was launched on Monday 8th January in Leeuwarden, the Netherlands, the European Capital of Culture 2018.

Accompanying the Under de Toer programme, the FRH Torch was presented for the first time at the village church of Huizum, (12th century) the oldest monument in Leeuwarden, owned by the foundation Alde Fryske Tsjerken. During the EYCH2018 as part of Under de Toer Programme, Manifestations in which artists from different art disciplines worked together with the community, reminiscing and depicting the special stories of/near their church, an exhibit and a theatre performance in and around this beautiful monument dedicated to one of the Netherlands' greatest poets, Jan Jacob Slauerhoff (1898-1936) was organised. An excellent place to start the FRH Torch tour through Europe.





Anas Hannoun
Musician
The Netherlands/Syria

“Whenever December comes the main church that happens to be in the center of the village sets loudspeakers with Christmas songs so the whole village would be able to hear the Christmas is around. The residents would help the church to set up a big tree in the middle of the village and everyone hangs either a lighting cross a star or a snowflake to point out that they are celebrating Christmas.”

“What I like about the residents is their solidarity, whenever someone passing by a house that is not celebrating Christmas or any other holiday because they have lost someone, people would visit them to pay respect and show solidarity.”



“We live with stories and enjoy telling them to each other. Stories originate when people get together and pass them on.”

Peter de Haan | Chairman Church of Huizum
The Netherlands

Rev. Edna Zwerver
Reverend of Schettens
The Netherlands

“In 2015 the English phenomenon ‘champing’ and the interest in monasteries inspired us. Perhaps the church itself, a place of silence and reflection, singing and praying, could be shared with others. And thus we started a restoration and a renovation. We built a bedroom in the tower, a kitchen in the consistory, a bathroom in the broom closet, a lounge area in the church and a website on the Internet.”



Huizum/Leeuwarden, The Netherlands



Ingrid van Engelshoven
Dutch Minister of Education, Culture and Science
The Netherlands

Heritage teaches us about the past. It helps us to interpret the present and makes us think about the future. Heritage offers recognition. It gives us guidance and a sense of identity. It spins a common thread from our ancestors, through us, to future generations – a thread through history.

Heritage is therefore of great importance. In my heritage policy, this importance is expressed not only by investing heavily in the preservation of heritage, but also by promoting development and accessibility. Because I believe wholeheartedly that the lasting value of heritage lies in the combination of practical use, social significance and cultural-historical significance.

An unfortunate side effect of the secularization in our country is that the thread through history is becoming thinner. Churches stand empty and a connection with our religious heritage is lost. If we are to pass on to this aspect of our history, it is vital that we preserve these edifices and the knowledge they embody.



Johannes Kramer
Vice Governor of Fryslân
The Netherlands

I grew up in Gaasterland, an area in the southwest of the province of Fryslân, in a Catholic environment rooted in the large farming families of the Greidhoeke, the area between the cities of Bolsward, Franeker and Sneek. It was and is not a “severe” faith. Roman Catholicism in Fryslân was more cheerful and more liberal than Roman Catholicism in the south of the Netherlands. Roman Catholics were not free to practise their faith until a long time after the Reformation. Today, the clandestine churches still tell this story. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, when Catholicism was accepted again, a lot of new Roman Catholic churches were built, as was ‘my’ church in Balk, dedicated to Saint Ludger. It was designed by architect Alfred Tepe and inspired by the neo-Gothic style of the renowned Dutch architect P.J.H. Cuypers. The church is now a national heritage site in the Netherlands. I would not call it a beautiful building but to me, that is not the most important thing.

In my view, the church represents a self-confident part of the population that was proud to let themselves be seen and saw no reason to hide their presence or make themselves smaller in any way than perhaps some people would have liked them to have been.





Prof. Dr. Todd Weir
Director, Centre for Religion and Heritage, University of Groningen
 The Netherlands

The tides are an apt metaphor for what is going on with religious heritage in this part of the Netherlands. The dechurching that has seized the region since the 1960s is like an outgoing tide that is emptying the churches of certain practices and meaning that they have had since their erection 800 years ago. We should not be timid in identifying secularization as the most radical rupture in Dutch religion since the Reformation, if not since the early medieval conversion to Christianity. This secularization has led heritage to become associated with loss and nostalgia. Yet, one should not be entirely pessimistic about this process, I believe. Is it not the case that nature abhors a vacuum? Alongside the emptying of the churches another development is occurring: churches are drawing in new meaning. In other words, there are many signs that the tide is coming back in again. Incoming tides bring flotsam and jetsam, a jumble of detritus from the past.

This is an apt methaphor for heritage and the work entailed in reassigning meaning through heritage work. How are immaterial and material heritages to be ordered and by whom? This is a creative process. On the one hand, religious heritage allows for invention and reassembly by the modern, spiritually inclined individual. However, on the other, the buildings themselves are not silent. One cannot simply do with heritage what one wants. Making use of local religious heritage is not the same as borrowing from other cultures. Because the churches bind heritage materially to a place, they demand a word in any discussion about the meaning of religion, whether in Huizinge or beyond.

Gerhard Bakker
Director of Alde Fryske Tsjerken Foundation
 The Netherlands

“The high density of churches in the Frisian countryside is still an intriguing mystery in 2018. Almost every village, every mound got its own church. Where did the construction boom, which started around the year 1000, suddenly come from? Was there a bigger plan behind it? How was the construction of all the churches financed? A lot of people must have been crooked about that, you will soon be inclined to think. Even many tourists in the 21st century are deeply impressed by all the splendour of churches that originated here over time.”





Aschaffenburg Germany

As a celebration of the 'Decade of Action Landscapes in Europe', CIVILSCAPE hosted the 'European Landscape Forum' on 23th - 26th of February 2018, bringing together international experts in the field of landscape protection, management and planning.

The event was hosted in Aschaffenburg, Germany, a city with many important cultural landmarks including the Johannsburg and Schönbusch castles or the splendid gothic St Peter and Alexander Abbey Church. The FRH Torch was presented to the forum participants, many of who contributed their letters to the treasure box.





“Who was the clever man who decided to put the churches in the middle of the village?”

Luc Emile Bouche Florin | European Council of Spatial Planners | France



Prof. Michael Dower
University of Gloucestershire, Co-author of the European Landscape Convention United Kingdom

I strongly support your campaign to provide awareness of the rich and diverse heritage of religious buildings, lands, artefacts, traditions and stories which are rooted in Europe. They contribute enormously to the character of landscapes and of communities in Europe; to local diversity and communal pride; and to the unifying consciousness of this continent.

We need to face and handle that change in a generous, positive spirit, respect the beliefs and the work of past communities and the realities of the present. The inherited evidence of past faith is not only a physical, but also an emotional capital. We can use that capital in new or adaptive ways to serve the physical, social, emotional and religious needs of the present generations. We should do so in a way that respects the past and which sustains that capital for use in the future.





Dr. Martin Kares
Musicologist & Consultant for Musical Instruments
Germany

Heavy metal for the soul. Bells have been around for over 5000 years as sounding-signal instruments. For many hundred years they also served as a signal for important messages in Europe: there were fire, storm, court, clock bells, and signals for many other occasions. The different sounds informed the public about recurring and special events – comparable to today’s tweets, which draw attention to themselves via mobile phone signal. The sound codes of the bells were well known. For about 1500 years they have been used in Christianity as call instruments and as a sign for liturgical acts. With their global sounds, they connect the cultural history of humanity and appeal to people – no matter which skin colour, which ethnic origin, whichever nation they may be. Even people who are not connected to churches and to Christianity can understand the ringing of a bell as a positive signal. For this it helps to convey its dedication: the noontime peal as a plea for peace and the evening bell as a request for the preservation of creation can probably be accepted by many or at least tolerated. Thinking together and acting on the well-being of people and the world unites religions and worldviews.



Piet Jaspaert
Vice President of Europa Nostra
Belgium

When you think of religious heritage, I think that there are three dimensions; you have the architecture that are the buildings and that is so important because lots of people like and enjoy watching them. Second, you have the message, the narrative behind all this, we know that this is disappearing, not only the religious practice but also the narrative of what is behind, the narrative in the symbols, the rituals and the real questions is how can we do it? Because even if you are not religious this narrative is so important to understand. Third, next to architecture and the narrative, I think that what religious heritage is doing is creating communities, it is part of their social life, people and communities should be included in adaptive reuse initiatives.

Dr. Gerhard Ermischer
President of the Archäologisches Spessartprojekt (ASP)
Germany

“For me the most essential and moving memory is music, listening to the Messa de Florin von Giacomo Puccini in a Cathedral is an emotional experience that touches the heart.”





Prof. Dr. Harald Schwillus
Doctor of Theology, Professor for Catholic Religious Education
Germany

Like many other monasteries, Helfta, too, was dissolved in the course of Reformation in the 16th century and served for many centuries as a domain of agriculture. During the time of the GDR, it was a socialised estate (VEG – Volkseigenes Gut: “estate belonging to the people”). The historical buildings suffered growing dilapidation and the remains were supposed to be demolished in 1988. Fortunately, this could be averted by a number of courageous Helfta residents. When I came here in the 1990s to visit this historically and theologically important location, I found a nearly abandoned estate, the ruins of the church and a rather displeasing pond. This seemed to be a place whose cultural and religious importance had been forgotten for good. And yet, since 1999, through the support and confidence of clubs, private people and church institutions, and after 450 years, this place is home to a Cistercian convent again, having reclaimed this spiritual place despite many hardships.

Because of such experiences and thoughts, I firmly believe that it is a central task of European politics and cultural promotion to make sure that the religious heritage of our continent is appreciated and preserved as a potential for the future.



Dr. Inge Gotzmann
President CIVILSCAPE
Germany

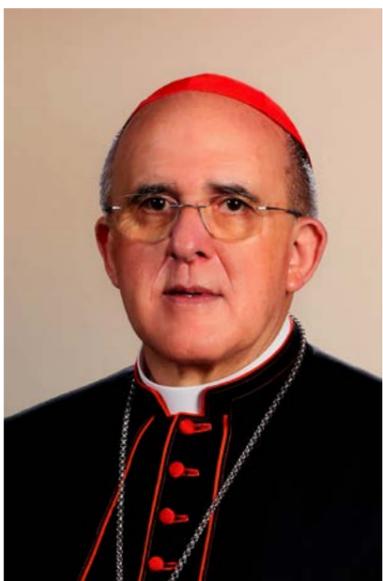
“It is dearly needed to preserve the historic cemeteries and to raise awareness for this cultural heritage!”

Potes Spain

The FRH Torch was hosted in Potes, Spain, on 21th of April 2018 in the medieval 'Torre del Infantado', a gothic tower built in the 14th century, which is now used as an exhibition centre.

The FRH Torch arrived in the framework of the celebrations of the 'Lebaniego Jubilee year'. These celebrations began in 1512 when Pope Julius II granted the Monastery of Saint Toribio the privilege of hosting this celebration, making it an important centre for pilgrimage and an important European holy site for Catholic Christianity. A symbolic and very relevant figure, the 'Beato de Liébana' gave the name to the 'Beato de Liébana awards', which were presented after the closing of the 'Lebaniego Jubilee year' celebrations, and was awarded to the Former President of the European Parliament Josep Borell, and film director and writer Manuel Gutiérrez Aragón for their contributions to Spanish heritage. The FRH Torch was well received by public authorities and event participants, who shared their stories and memories.





Monsignor Osoro
Cardinal, Archbishop of Madrid
Spain

Thank you very much for inviting me to participate in this cultural and religious event of the “European FRH Torch of Heritage and Culture”. Thank you to all the Council Members of FRH.

If it is necessary to give a written testimony in which to be able to express a personal experience, I would like to give the following:

From a very young age, my parents took me to the Monastery of Santo Toribio de Liébana, and from an early age they explained to me that, there, there was a piece of the Cross on which Jesus Christ died. I was always impressed that in my home land, Cantabria, there was the greatest sign of Peace, Reconciliation and Love that exists.

On the Cross, life is given out of love for all men and so that everyone may have life. Liébana and its Patrimony is the place where the “Culture of encounter” specifically manifested in the Cross is cared for, promoted and cultivated.

It is there where the largest piece of the Cross that brought salvation is preserved, there is no Peace if one is not willing to give one’s life for others; Liébana is a monument to freedom and reconciliation.



“Heritage is the family album of communities, capable of making so many dead generations alive again.”

Dani Font | Coordinator Catalonia Sacra | Spain



Francisco Javier Gómez Ruiz
Mayor of Potes
Spain

“The emotion that overwhelms me year after year, while I can see her banners in the distance, when I see the Virgin adorned with her cherries. The pride I feel when I crash the baton and carry the Virgin’s platform on my shoulders, representing my neighbours with the touching memory of those who are no longer with me, are unforgettable memories in my memory.”



Potes, Spain



Miguel Ángel Revilla
President of the Autonomous Community of Cantabria
Spain

I have always been intrigued by the Albeldense Chronicle of the year 883 that describes the end of the battle of Covadonga in the year 722. In the town of Los Llanos (Camaleño) a fragment of that Chronicle is in bronze: “Then those of the Hosts of the Saracens, who had survived the battle of Covadonga were buried in Monte Subiedes when a mountain of rocks collapsed on them, burying them by divine judgment. That day the Kingdom of Asturias was born.”

Whether the judgment was divine or not, the Muslims camped in the worst place of the Liébana region where, over the centuries, the landslides of rocks and earth are constant. Pelayo, knowing the area like nobody else, undoubtedly, laid a trap for them.



Josep Borrell Fontelles
Spanish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Former President of the European Parliament
Spain

The churches bordering the Loire Valley, marking a transition between Romanesque and Gothic as the river moves towards the sea at its slow, almost imperceptible pace. Its reflection in the water at dawn and its forms silhouetted against the glorious sunsets have also accompanied important moments of my life, because in one of them, Saint Clement du Thoureil, I married my first wife and in the shadow of her Cloisters, my children played during the summers of their childhood.

Its stone is less solid than the Pyrenean granite; the tuff is almost compressed sandstone that decomposes with sun and wind. The curves of their capitals and the faces of the characters that adorn them have been polished over time and emanate a melancholy beauty, related to the river and the scenes of incessant wars that witnessed.

“There is still someone there?”



Manuel Gutierrez Aragon | Film Director and Writer | Spain



Francisco Javier Lombraña Fernández
President of the Brotherhood of the Holy Cross
Spain

My first impression of the monastery was of sadness. I remember an elongated building, almost half white on the outside and almost demolished inside. Behind it was the church, it seemed very large, almost like the one in Potes, and very ugly inside: there was almost nothing but the altar...

But on the side, there was a smaller chapel with a very nice ceiling and a kind of marquee above the altar, and there it was "The Holy Cross" that both at home and in the school of nuns of Potes told us that on that cross there, Jesus Christ, the Son of God had died.

There was a solemn Mass, although those of my age wanted to go out and play with friends ... but that Cross ... Something in it was different from other images of other churches.



“It is difficult to understand the culture of our region and the Spanish culture without taking into account the religious heritage.”

Francisco Javier Fernández Mañanes
Counselor for Education, Culture and Sport of Cantabria
Spain





Carlos Herrera
TV and radio journalist
Spain

Some observers, from a certain superficiality and simplicity, are alarmed at what they consider to be excessively festive and theatrical street scenography, ignoring the fact that the Andalusians of this lower part of the country exteriorize the dramas with joy.

They celebrate life, Faith, popular culture, memory, tradition, the hand of the father who takes them for the first time to see it pass, the taste, smell and colour of spring that assaults hearts in flock...

As we look out over the gate of that spring that seems like a princess walking on tiptoe, we all go to the same thing, to what we know by heart, to the silvery pain of Passion, to the lace of the handkerchief of Charity, to the thunderous pale silence of Calvary, to the gothic pain of the Holy Burial, to the silent Mercy of the Holy Cross...



Nicolás Berlanga Martínez
Member of the Board of Huerta de San Antonio
Foundation
Spain

Heritage is above all part of common memory. The loss of the church would have vanished eight centuries of neighbourhood collective memory with it. I have to confess we were initially more interested in recuperating part of that memory than in rehabilitating the church. In fact, we felt we were part of the social memory at risk as our ancestors developed the same professions and trades or farmed the fields and gardens like the people who lived around the church.

The possible disappearance of the church of San Lorenzo seems a bad dream nowadays. Around 50 activities per year (musical concerts, theatre, traditional markets, expositions, seminars and conferences, etc.) are organized inside the walls that was almost in ruin 5 years ago. The new stimulus is having effects in the neighbourhood as well, with houses being rehabilitated and younger families coming to live in the vicinity.

We are proud to have done all this with private funds mostly. In a society where eyes turned to public institutions in search of answers face to heritage problems, we have become an excellent example of a private commitment.





Lund Sweden

The FRH Torch Ceremony was held at the International conference on ecclesiastical heritage and its future challenges in Lund Sweden, organized by the Church of Sweden, Diocese of Lund on 25th - 26th of April 2018.

The program included an opening of innovative digital art experiences and music performances in the recently renovated 12th century picturesque Odarslov Church. Recently a closed and decaying rural church in the outskirts of Lund, today newly renovated as a possible conference venue for art, music, science and theology.

The international conference focused on the use and development of church buildings and other ecclesiastical heritage. Several projects and methods were presented with the aim of finding extended uses for churches as sustainable resources for local communities. During the event, several keynote speakers offered theological, societal and heritage perspectives on church buildings and cultural history in a European context.





Lena Simonsson-Torstensson
Director Diocese of Lund, Church of Sweden
Sweden

We all connect to the landscapes and regions where we are born and raised, to its buildings and traditions. Many of the church buildings of Dalarna are located by the numerous lakes of the region. I want to tell you about a specific tradition I experienced as a child in this region around Lake Siljan and later in my life in the southern parts of Dalarna. This is the tradition of church boats; row boats that bring parish members to churches located around the lakes. Local people built the boats together through teamwork and made this huge effort in order to get to church every Sunday.

The church boat tradition began during the 18th Century. The boats were the only available public transport to and from the churches and Sunday services. Each village used to have at least one church boat. There could be as many as thirty church boats filled with parish members in their best clothes on Lake Siljan every Sunday during the summertime. A boat called "Yrvädret" ("Snowstorm"), built in 1803, was the biggest one on Lake Siljan. It could carry 90 people! The oldest boat on Siljan, "Räven" ("Fox"), has a sign with year 1716 in front of the vessel. It has ten pairs of oars and was probably built on the island of Sollerön.



Rickard Isaksson
Heritage Officer Diocese of Stockholm, Church of Sweden
Sweden

In 1997 I lived in London, around Carnaby street. I took a break from my studies and went to London for two years to learn English.

My memory is of one of my favorite bands playing at the Union Chapel in Islington, London. I remembered this because I saw them again here in Stockholm. The band is Current 93.

The Union Chapel concerts is my favorite concert of all times. The sounds was poetic and gothic. The chapel made out of stones was the perfect setting for a music concert.

I felt like the music and I were the same person and it felt good. I remembered I thought: can you drink a pint in a church? Yes I could and it was good. I still have the record of the live concert, its called 'cats drunk on copper'.

“What we want is a dynamic approach to cultural heritage, what does it mean today and how it can be used for the future.”

Hughes Becquart | European Commission officer, Cultural Heritage Department | Belgium



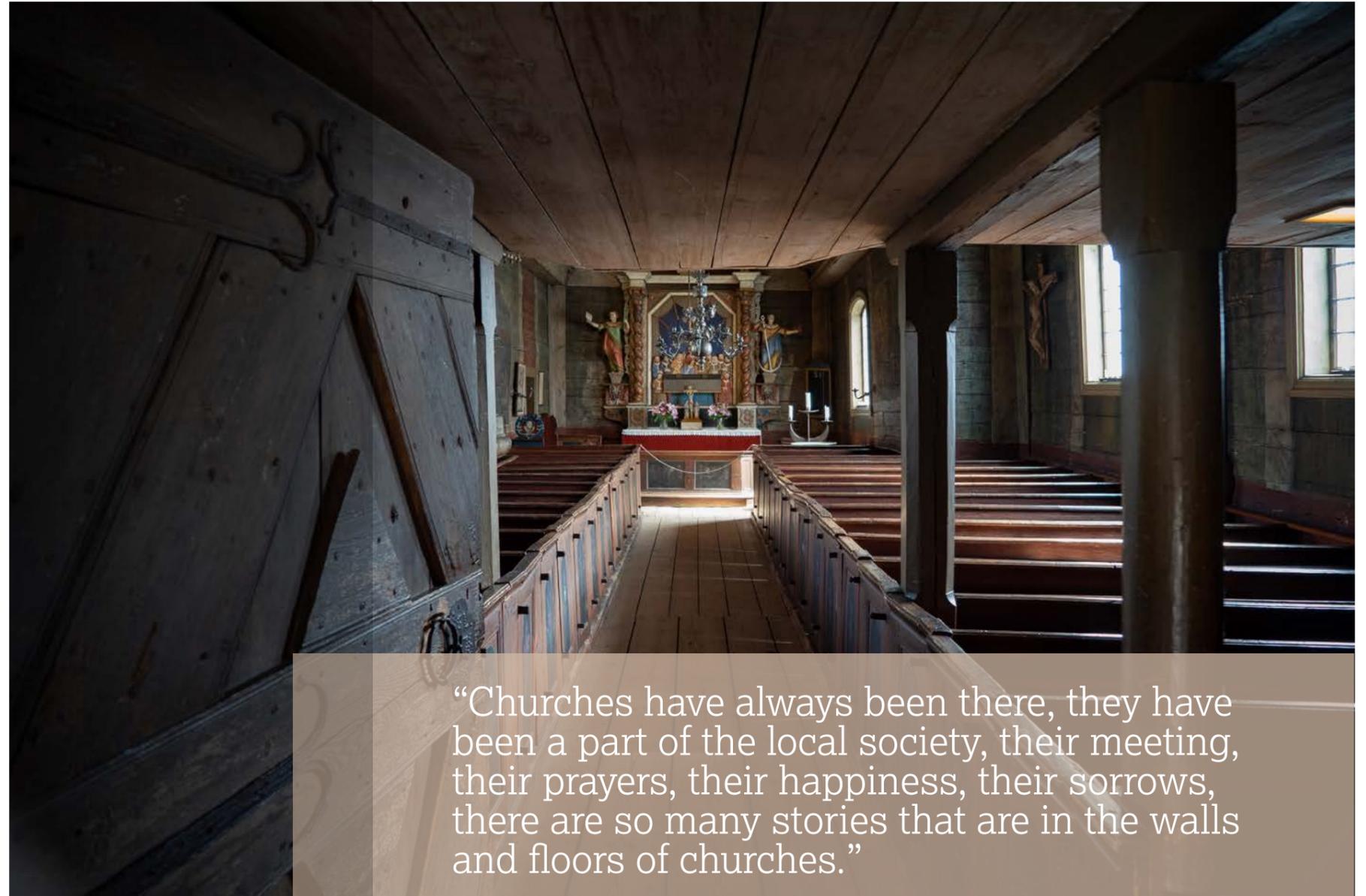


Henrik Lindblad
Heritage Officer, Diocese of Lund, Church of Sweden & Vice President of ICOMOS International Scientific Committee PRERICO Sweden

In the middle of a very dark night in November 2001, a farmer woke up by a fierce fire. The old wooden church next to his homestead was burning. He called the fire brigade, which had a long way to drive to this remote rural area in midsouth Sweden. There was nothing to do when they arrived. The old timber building was burned down to ashes. There were no fire sprinklers and the newly installed alarm was not activated. Several years later, it was revealed that an arsonist had deliberately put fire to the church, without any rational reason.

Except from removed pews and some other lost furnishing and inventories, Södra Rada Old church was an exceptional well-preserved medieval timber church. All walls and ceilings were decorated with magnificent suites of medieval paintings. The oldest paintings in the choir were of a very high quality, probably made by a French artist in 1323, the very same year the church was consecrated.

In the 19th century the population grew rapidly in many parts of Sweden. When the parish decided to build a new and larger stone church, their plan was to demolish the old wooden church. During the 19th century there was an awakening interest for historic buildings and antiquities. The Antiquarian Nils Mansson Mondelgren went to Södra Rada in 1849 to visit this beautiful though neglected old church. When he understood that the parish planned to demolish it, he managed to get funding to buy the building in situ and it could be saved as a museum. Until the fire 2001, the church was owned by the state and managed by the Swedish National Heritage Board.



“Churches have always been there, they have been a part of the local society, their meeting, their prayers, their happiness, their sorrows, there are so many stories that are in the walls and floors of churches.”

Heikki Ranta | Heritage officer at the Diocese of Lund | Sweden



Luc Noppen
Professor of Urban studies and heritage
UQAM University
Canada

“Churches are of public use and should be used as what they are.”



Peter Aiers
Chief Executive The Churches Conservation Trust
United Kingdom

Historic churches tell a story of everyone, from the poorest to the richest. These stories are written in the stories of our historic churches and we must continue to tell them. I have the great privilege of working for the Churches Conservation Trust.

Local communities do have their churches and when given the opportunity they make them shine. I was recently at St. Peter's Preston Park where the local community raised money and executed a project to restore the churches decorative scheme. Not only did they do this but they engaged the whole community from young to old, with arts and events. The building now truly reflects how the community feels about this important historic building, it shines!

If society cares about this buildings they shine, if it does not they decline. We all have the responsibility to make them shine.



Kerstin Barup
Architect MSA, Professor of Architectural Conservation
Sweden

I grew up in a house with a garden in a small village in the south of Sweden. The neighbours around had houses and gardens. God had the most beautiful house, a huge white-washed church with a breathtaking interior, overveiling acoustics and a beautiful garden — the cemetery with even more people than in the village.

As an architect and professor of architectural conservation I have had the privilege to work a lot with religious heritage, to preserve, maintain and develop this foothold of belonging as something great and beautiful; material and intangible. My work always includes co-operation with lots of other professionals such as theologians, church members, academics, students, landscape architects, artists, musicians, historians, conservators, archaeologists, engineers, craftsmen, politicians and civil servants.



Janet Gough OBE
Former Director of Cathedrals and Church Buildings, Church of England
United Kingdom

Religious affiliation is changing in England as it is across Europe and we can no longer rely on the model based on voluntary giving mostly from congregations. We need to be nimbler and more inventive and the consensus is the solution lies in greater community involvement with religious heritage buildings combined with more consistent government funding, critically where local populations are small or community support is not viable.

Whether it's the walkers and picnickers at tiny 7th century St Peter-on-the-Wall or the multicultural, multifaith crowds that lined the streets leading to Leicester Cathedral for King Richard III, there is a huge support to preserve, use and develop these precious historic religious buildings to serve everyone now and for the future.



“A heritage space elevates those within it, and inspires people to get involved.”

Jono Hart
Managing Partner at Dave Stewart Entertainment,
Charity Founder, Tech Owner
United Kingdom

Dave Stewart
Musician, Owner of Dave Stewart Entertainment
United Kingdom

“In 1983 along with my partner Annie Lennox we bought a Church in London and spent over a million pounds as we painstakingly converted and transformed this abandoned building into a vibrant creative center. Over the years this became a worldwide famous space housing three recording studios and as well as recording ourselves with orchestras and gospel choirs went on to record some of the greatest artists in the world, U2, Bob Dylan, Adele and Mick Jagger to name a few. For quite a while now I have been working closely with the C.C.T to help raise money to restore a church in my hometown of Sunderland and ended up in March 2018 securing 2.8 million pounds in funding.”



Anna Svensson Melin
Reverend, Lund Parish, Church of Sweden
Sweden

“The church hall is the bearer of security, truth and justice! Each generation has got the task of carrying this on the basis of its prerequisites. It is our loan of the future”

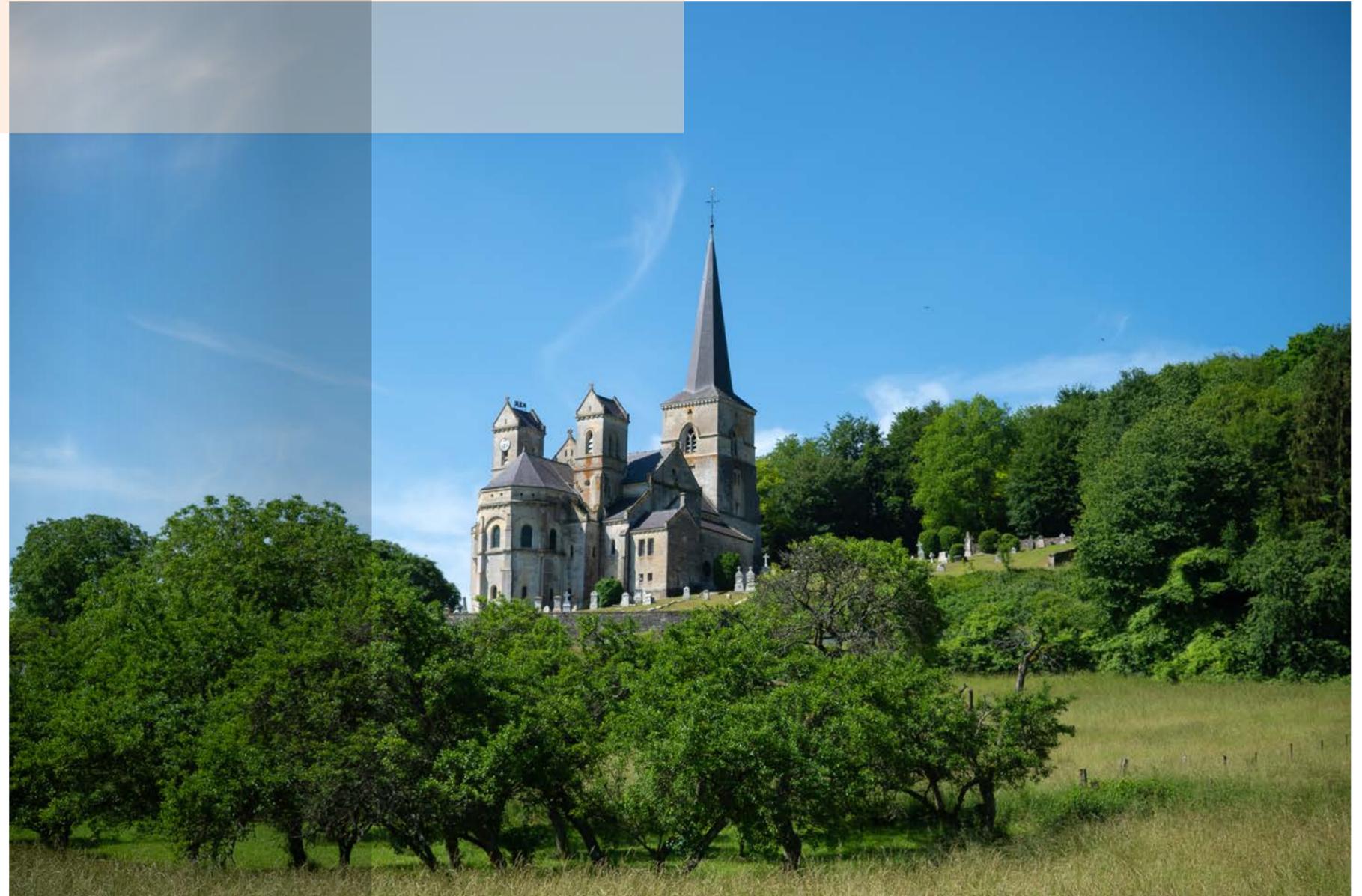




Mont-devant-Sassey France

The FRH Torch arrived in Mont-Devant-Sassey, France on 2nd -3rd of June 2018 on the occasion of the 11th edition of the Open Churches Heritage Days. The event was held in the wonderful Notre-Dame de l'Assomption church, a monumental Romanesque church built in the 11th and 12th centuries by the Canonicals of Andenne (Belgium) and recently restored by passionate local volunteers who created the 'Amis de l'Eglise de Mont-Devant-Sassey' association.

The FRH Torch event began with the arrival of a live torch carried by a young athlete, followed by the lighting of the FRH Torch inside the church. Throughout the ceremony, contributors shared the contents of their letters with the audience, finishing with a musical conclusion; a performance by Resonance, an ensemble that performs in religious heritage sites.





Juliette Roy
President of the National Office of Veterans and Victims of War of the Meuse
 France

Religious buildings, often of a smaller size than the pre-war churches, are not generally the object of a real architectural innovation, adopting a refined style. However, real architectural works are emerging, while others are decorated by the greatest artists of the time. The mastery of the art of stained glass by the master glassmaker Jacques Gruber is equal, in painting, to the talent of Lucien Lander, author of unique creations that sublimate many churches but also, it should be noted, the chapels of villages destroyed the field of Battle of Verdun.

How then can we imagine that this exceptional heritage will be forgotten, even as the Centenary of the former Great War, the interest in its memory deeply rooted in the national base, will undeniably decline? It is therefore up to today's players and the citizens of tomorrow to make a commitment to continue to live up to this heritage and its memory through the generations. I particularly support initiatives such as that of the Association Églises Ouvertes Grand-Est de France, which aims in particular to create a tour of the churches of the reconstruction, by associating Young Heritage Ambassadors who will insufflate all the youth energy into this mission, making them the transmission of memory and cultural heritage. They will be the conveyors of History, of their History.



“Our churches and our sacred buildings are less and less used, but they belong to the community: we must give them a meaning or a new and shared utility.”



Stéphane Bern | TV journalist and special Heritage advisor to the President of the French Republic | France



Rita Jabourn
Syrian origin and very sensitive about the preservation of religious heritage
France/Syria

My mother-in-law comes from a village perched in the mountain named Maaloula, which you have probably heard about. Maaloula shelters troglodyte refuges and religious buildings dating from the 1st century of Christianity. This village was devastated by Islamist groups in 2013 that killed men, ransacked houses, burned and desecrated churches, but mostly tried to erase the roots and the story. Liberated in April 2014, the city of Maaloula is gradually recovering and trying to heal its wounds. Thanks to the will of its inhabitants, government institutions and volunteers, its churches and monasteries are being restored and Masses are once again celebrated in Aramaic, the language of Christ. This religious heritage is our history, our identity, our memory but not only: it is also the history of humanity and invaluable universal treasures. To preserve them, to love them, to transmit them to future generations, is to keep their roots and their identity, but it is also a responsibility, a duty. And it is, especially in the context of the current conflicts in the Middle East, a message of peace, life and hope within the horror, the war and the annihilation.



Nanou Bouillet
President of the Friends of the Church of Mont-Devant-Sassey
France

On the weekend or in summertime, we quickly participated and discovered that a church in the middle of a village is the history of the village and a formidable integration tool. There are no distinctions between the locals and the city dwellers on vacation: we all had our hands in the same bucket of cement!

Churches also have the extraordinary power of bringing people together, as they have done for millennia at a wedding or funeral, when one finds shelter during wars, for Sunday service, or simply marking the rhythm of their everyday lives through the ringing of the bells. Their function and meaning have changed but they remain a point of reference for all and can be a great socialisation tool.



Françoise Nyssen
Minister of Culture of France
France

It is with enthusiasm and pride that we welcome on this day the only stage of the FRH Torch in France, before its arrival at the UNESCO headquarters in Paris.

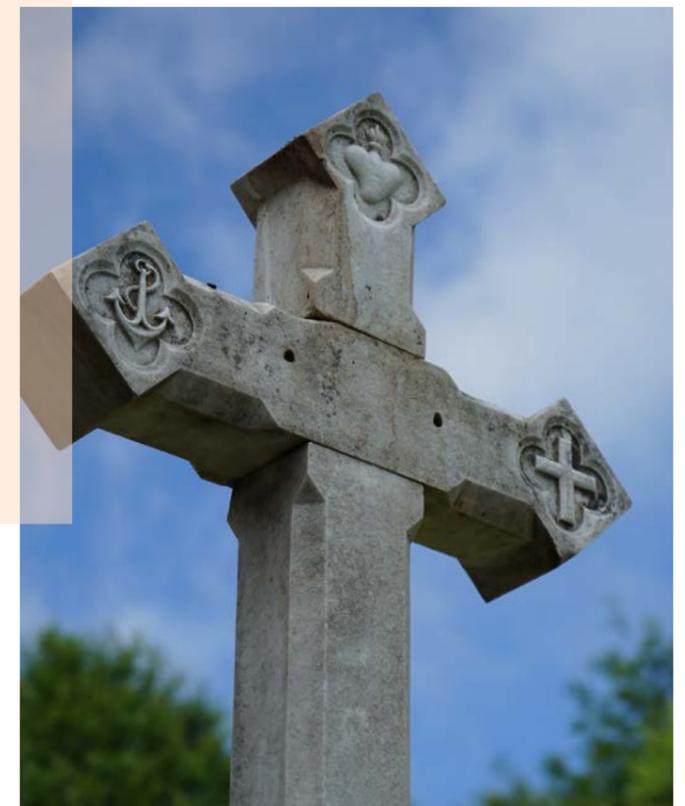
The arrival of the FRH Torch materialized the commitment of local actors who have mobilized for months to welcome it.

Today, I know that the testimonies will succeed one after another, from scientists, stakeholders of the cultural field and French artist. All contributed to the success of the Heritage discovery activities that took place during the day. Through this letter I particularly wish to thank these actors.

The FRH Torch is also a true artistic and cultural education tool, it fosters collective knowledge on the importance of our religious inheritance.

Romain Delaume
Co-Founder of Dartagnans
France

“I think if everyone brings their heart and their ideas, we can do something very special concerning the preservation of religious heritage.”



“A closed church is a hidden treasure!”

Mgr. Jean-Paul Gushing | Bishop of Verdun | France

Emilie Cariou
 French National Assembly,
 representing the department
 of Meuse
 France



“I think that the message we have to send is the fact that we have a common heritage because we have a common history, a European history, that our European civilization has progressed in interaction with all these European countries which form today’s Europe. And to remember our roots, make the heritage alive, make our history alive is also to thrive the idea of Europe and show how deeply Europe is anchored in each of us.”



Kevin de Zorzi
 One of the first guides of the Young Heritage
 Ambassadors
 France

And one day, my math teacher, Annie Champenois, who is part of the Association of Friends of the Mount Church since the beginning, came to see me at the end of a class to ask me if eventually, I was interested to come for a weekend in May to handle a reception at the church. Directly, I thought “What is she talking about? To handle a reception at the church?” And at the same time, I was curious to know what she meant by that, so I told her “why not”, knowing that, in any case, I did not have much else to do.

At the end of the weekend, I was rather satisfied for two reasons; First of all, I had learned cool stuff and secondly, I will not hide it, I was especially happy to have made some money. So, I went to see Annie to tell her that if ever needed, I was available. That’s how I started coming to church one or two weeks every summer to take care of the visits. And I quickly discovered that in our little village we really had an exceptional monument, especially when I met visitors who came from far away only to come and see this church.

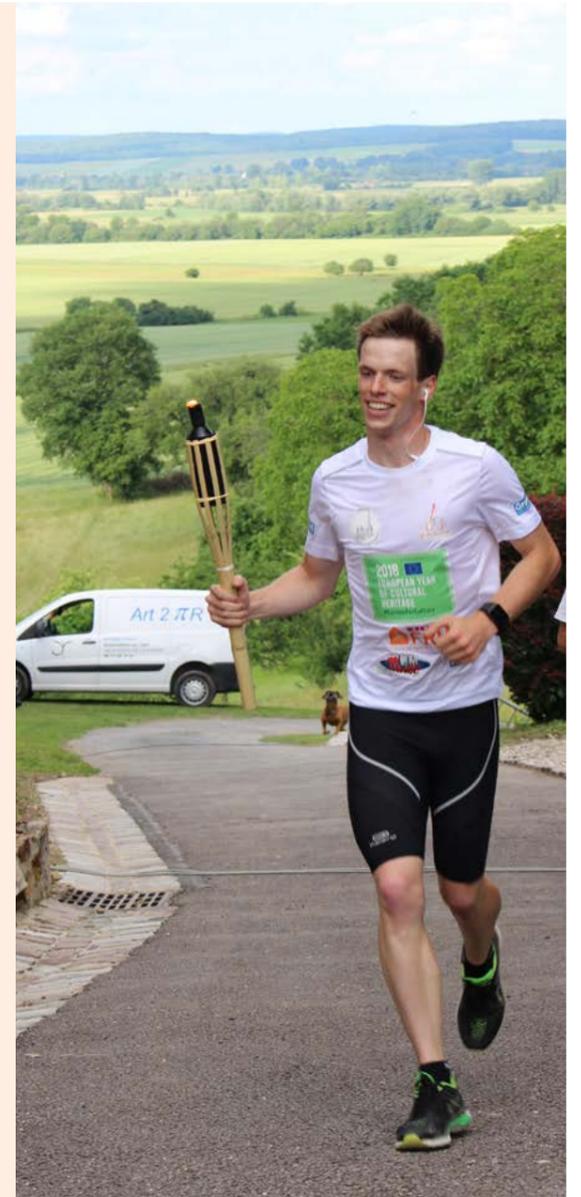


Samuel Cattiau & Quentin Dujardin
 Composers and musicians, Resonance project
 France

Mont-devant-Sassey Church was our recording studio for the first Resonance album. The beauty of the place, the remarkable church acoustics, the warm Mayor and inhabitants welcome in the heart of this French Meuse village, offered us ideal conditions to carry out this ambitious project which associates MUSIC and HERITAGE.

We are composing a repertoire of melodies for guitar and voice, inspired by texts and works of ancient music from the 12th to the 18th centuries. We offer a musical exploration in the spirit of troubadours along with a journey through timeless themes including the fragility between friendship and love or antagonism between men and women that the countertenor voice suggests.

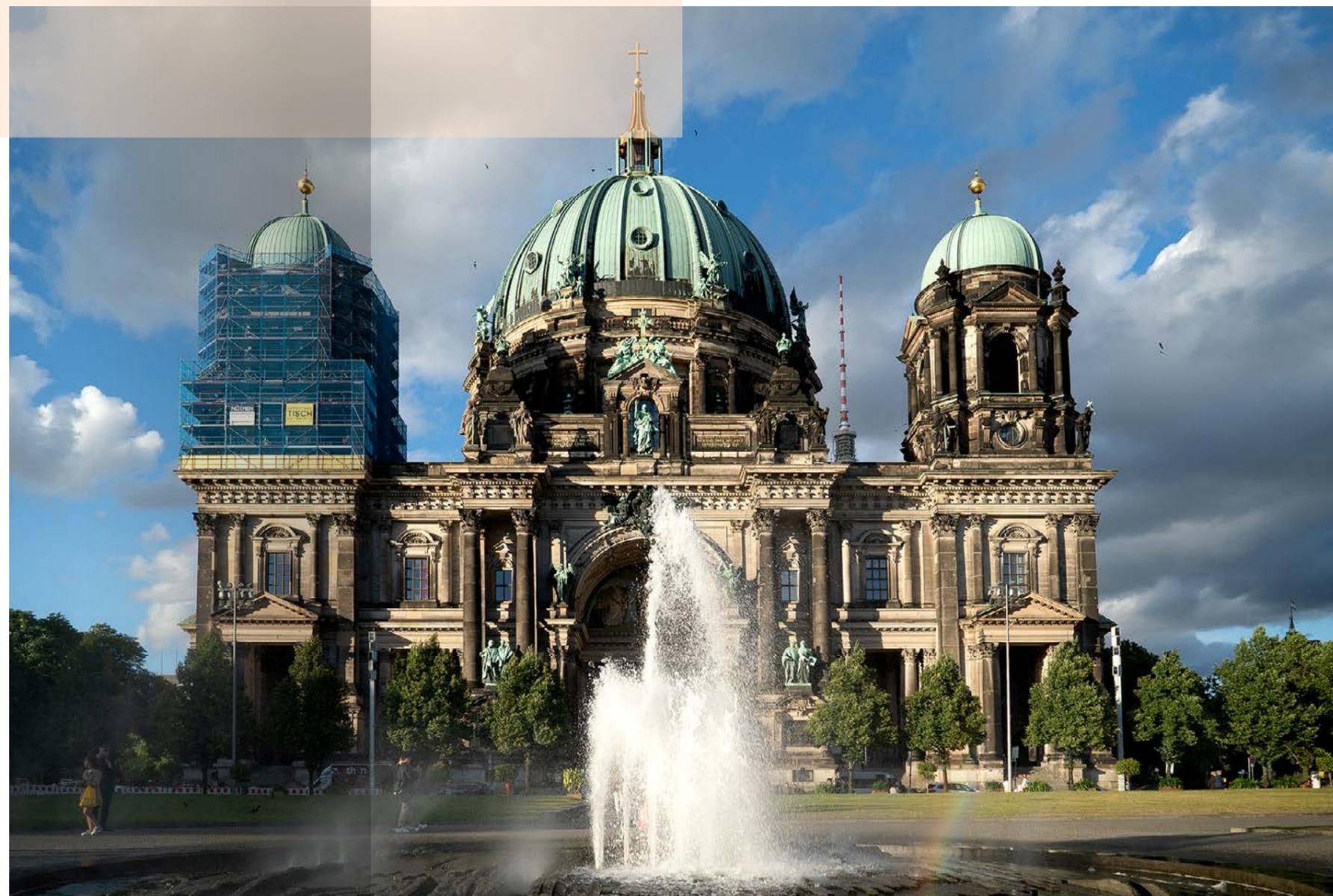
This cultural heritage for which we are gathered today is our heritage. It’s up to you and its up to us artist and musician, to make it live like today for this great event and tonight for this exceptional quartet concert.



Berlin Germany

The European Cultural Heritage Summit took place from 18th - 24th of June 2018 in Berlin, Germany, under the motto; 'Sharing Heritage – Sharing values' and was one of the key events of the European Year of Cultural Heritage. It was co-hosted by Europa Nostra, the German Cultural Heritage Committee (DNK) and the Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation.

It brought together more than 1500 participants and 85 organisations working in the field of heritage, including Future for Religious Heritage. The FRH Torch was presented during the 'Creative session' on the 22nd of June, which was hosted at Bertelsmann editorial headquarters near the 'museum island', with several high-level contributions added to the initiative, both in letters and in video interviews.





Michael Strecker
Committee member of Monument Watch
Brandenburg-Berlin
Germany

I am glad the initiative got this name: FRH Torch. I like the idea, as it is connected to the Olympic games where you hand on something, and that you feel yourself being part of something bigger and that you yourself are not the only one carrying something but you have shared responsibility. It enables shared joy of the success hopefully and quite confidently the FRH Torch resembles something that usually is burned so that it gives warmth and energy and encouragement and so on. I think it is good to assemble or to collect good examples and personal stories to make them better known to multiply their encouragement and their enabling and empowering function.



Count Rodolphe de Looz Corswarem
President of the European Historic Houses
Association
Belgium

I think it is a top initiative in its own, but adding the athlete is a great idea: Here we are we have to run to get it, if you want to get things in life do not walk, run. Don't go behind, run straight to the part you want to get. Even in the route in Jeanjaques de Compostelle you have to go for days and days before you arrive to the church.

Churches are everywhere, in every village they are the soul, they are what people love in their village. Even if they do not visit the church often, they know it is there.



Lazare Eloundou Assomo
Deputy Director World Heritage Centre UNESCO
Belgium/France

“Cultural heritage is about uniting the people, cultural heritage is not about dividing the people. Lets celebrate the European Cultural Heritage.”

Luca Jahier
President European Economic and Social
Committee
Belgium/Italy

“Our religious heritage also stands as a memory of difficult times, in which the churches and religions were used as justification for man's ambitions and warfare. But rather than tarnishing the beauty of these places, this ambiguity adds a profoundly human warning to us all to strive for peace and mutual respect.”





Paul Dujardin
Artistic Director and CEO of the BOZAR
Belgium

The FRH Torch Initiative fits well in the global world where Europe is an important part of the common narrative. We need to share the European values, inside Europe as in European space as in European new coming space, but also in the World. We always say that the political world has to take responsibility, however I think that citizens can also take their responsibility concerning religious heritage. In the art world we can show many narratives and a lot of ways how we can change the world in tangible and intangible art. Because in the end the inspiration of artists of today innovation and creativity is always based on what was in our past. This is needed to find the right balance. The past gives us a common identity which we need to share with one another. Within the current world that is in constant movement we must use our additional time to connect and it is our common responsibility to work on that. Cultural heritage is important as it is our common heritage which should be kept alive.



Emanuel Rotstein
Director Production A+E Networks, The History
Channel
Germany

The FRH Torch Initiative appeals to me because it has the word torch and being a German Jew and having had the Jewish upbringing the idea of torch or the bringing of taking something from generation to generation is very inherent to my life and to my philosophy as a human being.

History is like a mirror. You and the other, you realize who you are in the others, in the people you meet the people you talk to. When you talk about the feelings and the inner thoughts you realize that we are all one for example. One of my interview partners first nation Canadian said 'Namwayut' we are all one, it is a saying in their language which means we all share the same feelings we all share the same thoughts and we all have the same wishes this is peace, doing what we want to achieve, and this we can only do together.



Karl-Heinz Lambertz
President of the European Committee of the
Regions
Germany

I believe that promoting cultural heritage is one of the essential components of cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue and territorial development of our continent. It aims to strengthen the sense of belonging to the European Union, to a common identity, which is part of our history, but which is also projected into the future. Cultural heritage and identity help to better understand the change and history of society, and to reinforce tolerance and acceptance of differences, in order to thwart the growing anti-European divisions.

Of course, religious buildings are at the forefront of heritage because they essentially add the spiritual dimension to European cohesion that has been, in the past, too often underestimated. Preserving the diversity of this heritage to which several religions have contributed and making it accessible and comprehensible means strengthening the foundations of our Europe.

Rafaël Deroo
EFFORTS EU liaison in Brussels
Belgium

“The message I want to give is when we think of culture we think of diversity we think of things that touch us in the deepest of our heart it is still religion or it is just the opposite not-religion but both ways will touch us right in our hearts.”



Berlin, Germany



“I am Spanish we have a lot of religious heritage buildings. In my idea if we cannot keep them in the functions they had in the past at least to keep the sense and to keep the significance and to keep what they are, in order to understand cultural heritage.”

Jose Maria Ballester | International Civil Servant and Art Critic, Botin Foundation | Spain



Hon. Dr. Owen Bonnici
Minister for Justice, Culture and Local Government Malta
Malta

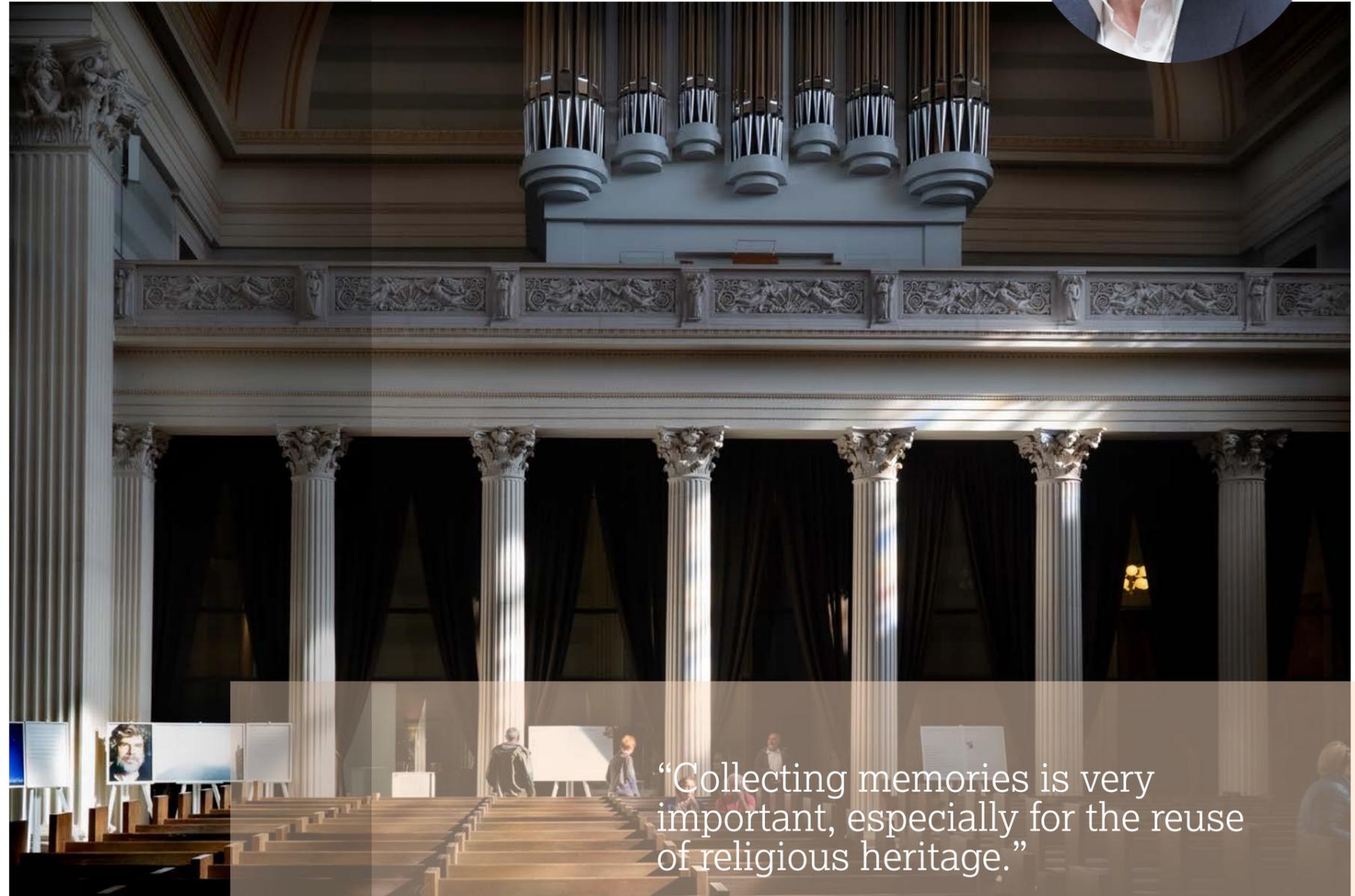
Being now a Minister for Culture, I still relish those memories and I do help in a different way to cultivate this important part of our cultural heritage. During the past few years, my Ministry has assisted financially our band clubs in their projects within the community and introduced incentives to improve the health and safety at fireworks factory, among other initiatives.

Besides being the European Year of Cultural Heritage, 2018 sees Valletta the Capital of Culture. The theme of this celebration is the Maltese festa. One of the activities is actually a religious feast, but with one big difference.

There are a number of towns in Malta and Gozo, which celebrate more than one feast. An element of healthy rivalry does exist. Valletta happens to celebrate four religious feasts: St. Paul, St. Dominic, St. Augustine and Our Lady of Mount Carmel. There are two band clubs in Valletta. After meticulous diplomacy with all stakeholders, we have managed to have the four statues and the two band clubs celebrating in the streets of Valletta on the same day. It is one of those religious memories that I will cherish for the rest of my life.

Patrick Timmermans | Director Erfgoed Brabant | The Netherlands

“It is a great initiative, let your story be heard too. Not only my story but stories of all kinds of Europeans, young and old and all kinds of colours. Because our religious past is a shared past, not a divided past.”



“Collecting memories is very important, especially for the reuse of religious heritage.”

Anette van Dijk | Policy Advisor at the City of Amsterdam | The Netherlands





Lydia Koniordou
Greek Minister of Culture
Greece

I feel we need to be aware at this moment, and I feel I just want to climb on a church and ring the bell. And say to the world we don't have time, we don't have the privilege of time, things are urgent. They are necessary and culture is the necessary way to keep us together to fight fear, fight hatred which is tearing us apart. And it doesn't make sense because only together we will find a solution.

I think this is a very interesting initiative. We are at a point where our culture and civilisation is turning a page and we need to be more alert to be more conscious, first of all of all the challenges and opportunities that the moment raises. It is a moment that we need to rethink where we are heading and where we are coming from, and what future we want to build on this in our societies. Especially for the young children for the younger generation, sometimes I feel that there is a rush for new things and then we forget the jewels of the past.

Frederick Baker
Virtual Reality Filmmaker, media scholar and archeologist
Spain

The Great Austrian composer Gustav Mahler said tradition is always about passing on the flame and not just worshipping the ash, and I think that is a crucial thing for the FRH Torch Initiative is that you think it is about the positive sides of the religious traditions here in Europe that that flame is continued. Looking at for instance at places in former Austrian Hungarian empire, today Romania, where you have the synagogue next to a catholic church next to a protestant church on the main square. Those are the places to be highlighted because that has to be the tradition of the future of Europe. Heritage is not just about looking at the nice side, the pretty side, the things you can have picture postcards about, we have to be aware of the dual side of heritage and its history. If we are aware of that than those can be the most power sides that are actually the warning as well that can actually be healthy for our values. Looking forward and passing on those positive values of the most important one being tolerance. Of each and everybody right to find the answers to big questions themselves in whatever way they want.



Anton Peršak
Minister of Culture
Slovenia

Throughout Europe there are countless very important, interesting and extremely expressive buildings and other monuments that bear witness to the important and diverse religious life of European from prehistory to the present. This heritage, from the prehistoric megaliths, which still raise questions of how they were built and what were their meaning and purpose, to the interesting and monumental creations of modern and postmodern architecture of churches built three, two or even one decade ago, with all their ingenuity, diversity and differences in "genre" is also an important attestation of not only the development of architecture, pluralism and diversity in the religious life in Europe, both in the diachronic and synchronic meanings of the word, but the eloquent history of European thinking and feeling about the environment and its real and metaphysical dimensions.



Michael Mail
Founder of the Foundation for Jewish Heritage
United Kingdom

I have been delighted to be involved with FRH for a number of years I think it is fascinating to be part of a wide network of heritage experts who are working in the particular field of religious heritage, which has its own particular issues and challenges that relate right across Europe and across the different denominations. Obviously religious heritage has played a crucial role in the evaluation of European society and European civilization. It is so integral, crossing right across Europe and all the different communities and societies. I think that religious heritage can act as a bridge between Europe of the present and Europe of the past. It can help us understand where we came from, which can also point the way to where we need to go in the future.



Berlin, Germany

“Important duty to take care of this heritage and constantly seek ways of allowing as many people as possible to learn about it, recognize it and become aware of its importance and the importance of the messages it conveys.”

Anton Peršak | Minister of Culture | Slovenia



Delphine Dupeux
Senior Policy Officer, European Historic Houses Association
Belgium

I am working for the historic houses association now for 10 years, mostly dealing with policies big big subject and working in Brussels with the European institution trying to convince them to adopt proper legislation for private historic houses owners. Personally I think it is really important to protect religious heritage. This is also a part of the heritage that is in danger so we are really keen on promoting it everywhere.

We like to raise our voice for heritage in 2018 but also for the story and people behind the heritage. This is really key that we do not stop but represent the second message as well. This should be the motto for the future. I think it is really important to remember that it is not one year only but for the future, especially to convince the politicians that they need to invest even more for building a good EU and a good ideal situation for the EU concerning heritage.



Romain Delaume
Co-Founder of Dartagnans
France

I think the FRH Torch Initiative is something very inspiring because it will allow people from every country to give the world their ideas, their creativity to what cultural heritage means to them according to their culture according to their education and what they have in the passed.

I think having all these messages coming from all around the world gathering in one project called the FRH Torch Initiative is something everyone should be involved with.

On my perspective cultural heritage, which is basically linked to the passed should be linked to present and saying that, creativity and creating new initiatives may be one of the key points to preserve it and to fight for this European issue. And I think if everyone brings its hearts and its ideas we can do something very special about it



Lorena Dianel Aldana
EYCH task force, European Commission
Germany

“My main message is aimed first and foremost at the younger generations, we, I am a young professional myself as well, we really are the voices of the future and of the present as well. And I think that for Europe to really have a future and a sustainable future we need to build upon youth, the younger generations. This is why I think also the FRH Torch Initiative is great as it has the potential to really talk to this audience and this segment of the population.”

Plácido Domingo
Renowned artist and President of Europa Nostra
Spain

We must never forget that Europe’s heritage sites - from an ancient temple to a modernist factory; from the smallest chapel to the largest castle; from a romantic park to a historic theatre - are not only the places of our collective past but are also the building blocks of our collective future. They form our shared heritage, which also includes various forms of intangible heritage, and embodies our shared values. That is why I welcome and am happy to contribute to the FRH Torch Initiative, launched by our partners from “Future for Religious Heritage”, in the form of a memory box that travels across Europe to capture the heart and soul of Our Europe. Such a symbolic initiative, alongside the #Ode2Joy Challenge which I had the pleasure of launching with Europa Nostra, or the Ringing the Bells for Peace Initiative, launched by DNK, our partners from Germany, has the power to connect Europe’s citizens in a simple but very meaningful way by reaching out to their hearts and to their minds.



“Time is running and we can have a look at changes and cultural heritage is very very important for our future.”

Guntis Gailitis | Chairman of the Riga Latvian Society | Latvia



Galanè Casnati
Centre for Studies and Documentation of
Armenian Culture in Italy
Italy

The FRH Torch Initiative is a very good initiative that gives room for remembering stories that are related to our cultural heritage and mainly religious heritage that is very important for us and for our culture. I am coming from Armenia and Italy and for us religious heritage has always had an ever-important place.

I want to outline an example of culture and religious heritage that can be the drive for the development of a village in Armenia. That is the church of Yereruyk, it is a church of the 8th century and it is in a very remote place near the border with Turkey. And now it will be the occasion to revise the village with 300 people who are living in poverty and they will have a chance to attract tourism thanks to their religious heritage.

I think it is a very good initiative that gives room for remembering stories that are related to our cultural heritage and mainly religious heritage that is very important for us for our culture. I am coming from Armenia and Italy and for us the religious heritage has always had an ever important place



Bert Ludwig
Director of the European Heritage Volunteers
Germany

The engagement of religious heritage in rural areas is very important because often religious heritage is the core of the heritage and of the identity of the population. European Heritage Volunteers connects the locals, which mostly are elderly people, with young people coming from countries through the care taking of religious heritage. It offers a European dimension which offers the effect of empowerment of the local population through a kind of mirroring as the involvement of people coming from the outside often increases the understanding of the value of their heritage for the locals. It can open the eyes of locals to upgrade their religious heritage which they have underappreciated before.



Sneska Quaedvlieg Mihailovic
Secretary General Europa Nostra
The Netherlands

My message for Europe in this historic, once again I want to say, European Year of Cultural Heritage is that the European cultural heritage movement is a formidable force. And it is time that we realize that we are a force and that cultural heritage is a huge resource for Europe and Europe's future. That is why we have to be much more united and much more forceful in getting the decision makers in Europe to recognize the importance of that resource and to give it a much higher priority in European policies. Also concerning funding and in all sort of action that we will present on the 22nd of June. We will invite as many citizens and organisations to sign the "Berlin call to action", to share, and to once again show that we are a formidable force for the future of Europe.



"I cannot imagine Europe without churches, without synagogues, without other religions that cooperated to the peace to the mutual understanding and also in some crises and in very difficult phase in the history of Europe."

Silvia Costa | Member of the European Parliament | Italy

Uwe Koch
National Coordinator for the European
Year of Cultural Heritage 2018 in
Germany
Germany

"We have to work to communicate the importance and the stories of these heritage to our society as a great resource for European identity."





Guilherme d'Oliveira
EYCH 2018 Coordinator for Portugal
Portugal

The FRH Torch Initiative is very important for cultural heritage and the reflection on the importance of cultural heritage as a peace factor. For me personal this is very important. I coordinated within the Council of Europe the EU convention of Faro on the value of cultural heritage in the contemporary society. And I marked the importance to recognize that the tangible and intangible heritage are all very significant concerning the building of the common respect and common knowledge between different cultures. In this moment we have preoccupied aspects of the European life concerning the comprehension on the importance of hospitality versus hostility. More often we are afraid of the other and the different. For us it is very important to link the sustainable development, the diversity of cultures and also security and peace. For me, it is also important that we have the Berlin appeal as an important document for all European and non-European citizens because we recognize the importance of history, the importance of memory, and the importance of heritage.



“We have to be very creative about all possibilities that churches can give, however this has to be done based on the demand of the community surrounding the building. It has to be their initiative, as it is their heritage.”

Henri Swinkels | Dutch Politician, Noord-Brabant Province | The Netherlands



Karel Loeff
Director at Heemschut
The Netherlands

My message for the European citizens is that heritage is the basis of our common grounds within our societies. Without religious heritage we have no common grounds. And in a changing society I think it is really important that we see that these buildings in all the towns and in all the cities are the focus points. They have been part of our historical landscapes for years, decades and even centuries. We should notice that heritage is very important for our future and we can use this heritage as our asset. It is important for tourism, it is important for the local wellbeing, it is important for communities as a whole.

So, for me heritage is the blood in which a country and the whole of the European community can live with. Heritage is the blood of a body which is our European society and we should carry it together, we should see that heritage is the building block of our society. We should keep the history of these buildings alive, the identity of this architectural history which forms the basis and can develop to be a great asset for a common Europe.



Krakow Poland

The Conference on Urban Jewish Heritage took place on 5th -7th of September 2018 in Villa Decius, a Renaissance palace first constructed as a mansion in the 16th century and largely restored in the 1970s by the Villa Decius Association, which now uses it as its headquarters for hosting cultural events.

The event was organised by the Ironbridge International Institute for Cultural Heritage (University of Birmingham) and the Foundation for Jewish Heritage, in association with the City of Krakow and Villa Decius Association, Creative Europe, Future for Religious Heritage and The European Association for the Promotion of Jewish Culture. The conference featured many cultural heritage experts, focusing on Europe's rich Jewish heritage, with a special focus on urban Jewish heritage. The FRH Torch was presented, highlighting the relevance of Jewish religious heritage as an intrinsic part of Europe's religious heritage.





Mike Robinson
Director, Ironbridge International Institute for Cultural Heritage, University of Birmingham
United Kingdom

My story is one of taking a group of Chinese students around a cathedral in England. Our guide was a knowledgeable historian who exalted in some detail the history of the building. I could see however that the students had little idea of what was being said. Why should they know of the Christian tradition? Why should they have any prior knowledge of church architecture and the historical periods represented? Why should they be interested at all? As is so often the case we fail to interpret our heritage in line with what the audience can comprehend and process rather than what we may like to tell. After the visit we discussed the experience and they opened up to declare that they had learned little about the cathedral – what it was, why Christians built them, how they were used and the problems facing them in the present day. So I made the analogy of the temple and how different parts of the temple perform different functions. How some people don't go to the temple while others do and even if they were not religious or did not understand fully they could still understand the craft and skills and spaces of the building and respect how it is used and what it means to some communities.



Dr Ruth Ellen Gruber
Director Jewish Heritage Europe
United Kingdom

Indeed, Jewish heritage is part and parcel of European heritage, of national heritage, of local heritage. This means, physically, Jewish heritage sites, such as synagogues, Jewish cemeteries, former Jewish quarters ritual baths, etc.

Even though, in much of Europe, few Jews now live, these places, and the culture they represent, are just as worthy of notice, presentation, preservation, and care as are the churches, castles, town halls, and other historic sites that dominate the “built heritage” concept.

Jewish heritage is not “a thing apart” or something separate from “mainstream” Europe.

As Lowenthal put it, they embody and perpetuate one of the oldest cultural forces of the Western World and form part of the heritage of our common civilization. And they need to be regarded and cared for as such.



Hester Abrams
Project Leader Willesden Cemetery “Hous of Life”, The United Synagogue
United Kingdom

“For more than 20 years my husband and I have been interested in tracing our family stories. I have two surnames that I can confidently match to places; he can identify ancestors back to the 18th century. We always knew they came from Russia but were curious to find out more. In the summer of 2015 we at last made a trip to Lithuania and Latvia, with our student son, to visit the small provincial towns where our great grandparents lived and said goodbyes before emigrating to Britain.”

“European Citizens now more than ever, they need to know about the cultural differences among their own citizens. You cannot love a culture if you don't know that culture.”

Assumpció Hosta
Secretary General AEPJ
Spain





“I think religion is having an important role in order to connect and to give a very important message in order to strengthen our cultural identity. Young generations must be part of this dialogue that is happening in Europe nowadays.”

Victor Sorensen | Director AEPJ | Spain



“Religious heritage especially is very important, and the religion is not only taking care of the tangible, it also should be taking care of the intangible things.”

Hae Un Rii
President ICOMOS International Scientific
Committee PRERICO
Korea



Susanne Urban
Executive Manager ShUM-Cities Association
Germany

My eyes opened towards Jewish Heritage and Jewish religious heritage also because a small, energetic woman, born 1929 in Berlin, didn't let me go with shallow thoughts or quick answers. Her name was Maayan (and her mother was the founder of Youth Aliyah). Maayan and I met and befriended in 2003 and at some point, I entitled her my adopted grandmother. When I arrived in Israel in 2004, she, a trained tour guide, drove with me from east to west, from north to south. During one of our first excursions — a real tizul she reached into a bag and took a Hebrew Bible out of it. It was a heavy German print from the 1920s. While throwing the book on my lap she said: “See the small pink notes sticking out? There you can learn about the sites we visit today. Read it!” She connected biblical stories to real places. She also asked me when I was travelling in France or Germany if I have visited this or that synagogue, this or that cemetery. She told me why she knew about the place — perhaps because of a relative once lived there or because she had read something about the place. When we talked about the journeys or looked at photos, she always asked: “And, have you seen the small details?” Could be a beautiful Torah ark or a tombstone for a special person.



Zsofia Maroti
PhD researcher Central European University
Hungary

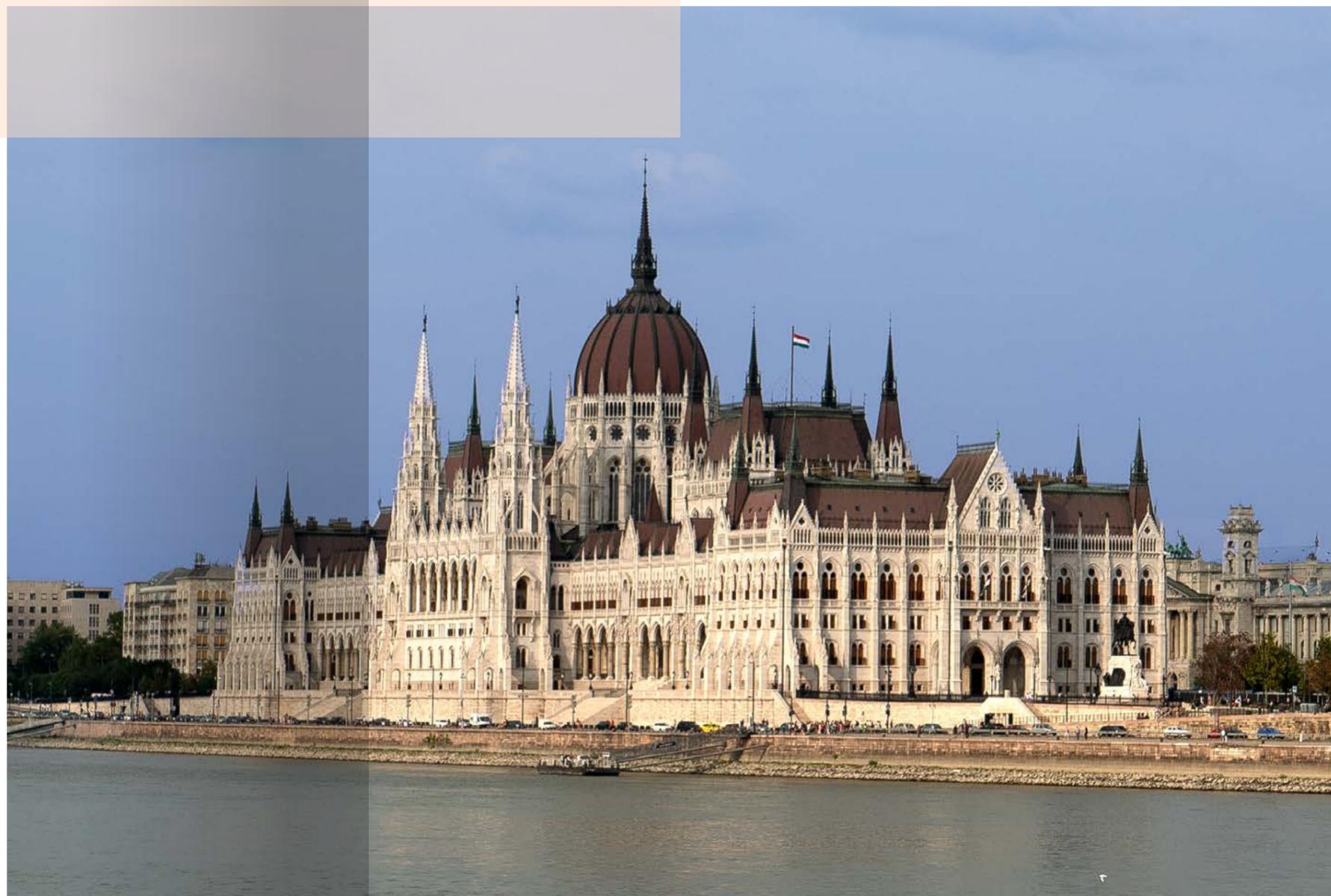
My grandfather was Jewish but he did not practice his religion. His wife, my grandmother is a Catholic, she used to go to church and pray on daily basis. We never discussed in the family the Jewish heritage of my grandfather, I was raised as a Catholic.

When I was 13 years old, my grandfather passed away. I had a sense that he was somehow different when it came to religion but I could not put my finger. In his life, regardless of the fact that after the Soah, he never ever visited a synagogue, he said that he would like to have a Jewish funeral. At that moment, I realized he was Jewish. Also, that was the first time that I encountered the Jewish religion. I learn how to dream. What to say and how to behave during the ceremony. This changed my life, for the first time I entered a synagogue and saw a Jewish cemetery. Since then Jewish heritage and culture became an essential part of my life. Even more since I have started to work around Jewish heritage and engaged in his protection. Families do not always discuss the issues of religion and beliefs but I figured that at some point we go back to our heritage and have a need to discover and to know it. Religious heritage is not only important because it tells a lot about the past but it is essential to imagine the future. It plays a crucial role in our personal life.

Budapest Hungary

The FRH Torch was invited by the office of the Hungarian Prime Minister to join the opening ceremony of the 'Hungarian Cultural Heritage Days' on 14th September 2018.

The cultural heritage days, carried out across Europe during the European Year of Cultural Heritage, allow citizens to visit sites that are usually not open to the public, including cultural and religious heritage buildings. The opening ceremony took place in the splendid Hungarian Parliament, a vast (18,000 m²) neo-gothic building built at the turn of the 19th and the 20th century and UNESCO World Heritage Site since 2002. During the opening, various Hungarian organisations and professionals presented their traditional cultural heritage initiatives, followed by the FRH Torch ceremony, which was welcomed by the Hungarian authorities and received contributions from notable Hungarian cultural heritage professionals.





Bence Tuzson
Minister of State for Public Administration Hungary
Hungary

If we re-establish our historical buildings bearing a rich cultural heritage, if we give function to these monuments, they will be able to carry messages, they can pass on this culture for future generations, for our children. They can serve as a bridge between Hungarians and culture of the past and of the future. That is why it is important that every such building block regains its own place.

My grandfather was at the forefront in realizing these efforts, he participated in the restoration of hundreds of churches around the country, among them in the restoration of the Havas Blessed Virgin Roman Catholic parish church of Krisztinaváros (a neighbourhood in central Budapest), what also hosted the wedding of the “biggest Hungarian” Count Istvan Szechenyi.

Following also his example, the Hungarian Government is making efforts so that these little building blocks become the building blocks of the nation, and such a nation builds up which is able to appreciate its past, its present, and - what is even more important - is able to think in future, and appreciate the culture and Hungarians of the future. Our aim is to show everybody, to show to all the Hungarian people, that the Christian Hungarian culture, Hungary and the Hungarian nation has a future.



“If we would like to preserve this continent, this culture, we have to protect its roots.”



Gabor Foldvary
Ministerial Commissioner for Cultural Heritage Protection
Hungary



Imre Ritter
German nationality member of the Hungarian Parliament
Hungary

The Passion of Budaörs of 1933 is the past, 2018 is the present. And what about the future?

In 2009 one of our primary goals was to involve more and more children and young people in the Passion and today more than a hundred youngsters is performing already. The children actors of the junior Passion performance of 2009 are performing today serious roles with texts, so that we can involve more and more youngsters to the adult Passion. I would like to express my gratitude to the teachers of the children - Nora Kuszmann and Anna Csanyi-Csulits-, and to the adults who are providing enormous help.

I am very grateful for the members of the German Nationality Self-Government of Budaörs, the colleagues of Heimatmuseum, the creative team participating in the professional programmes, the German Nationality people from the northern region and all the others supporting us for their help and sacrificial work!

As a result, the Passion of Budaörs has gained a European reputation. As a sign of appreciation, the Europassio Meeting and Congress will take place in Budaörs in the last four days of the Passion of Budaörs between May 31, 2019 and June 3.

More than 300 participants are coming to Budaörs from 12 European countries and 42 sites of Passion Games to the Europassio Meeting and Congress.

I just add it silently but proudly as an inhabitant of Budaörs, as far as I remember in the last 15 years there was no precedent that in the Europassio Congress there would have been participants from 10 countries and from more than 40 sites of Passion Games!

And of course the most famous are amongst them as the Oberammergau and the Auersmacher from Germany, the Saint Margareten and Erl from Austria (where Passion has been played for more than 400 years), or the Esparaguero from Spain, or the Skofja Luka Passion from Slovenia - which is also part of the cultural world heritage — and many others.



Tamas Erdi
Prima Primissima Prize Piano Artist
Hungary

My relationship with the Heavenly had been evolved through music. When I was playing ‘The fountains of Villa d’Este’ of Franz Liszt in Rome in the Tivoli Concert Hall, not just the experience was unforgettable that I could hear the voices of the same waterfall that inspired Franz Liszt, but also that dramatic point in the piece after the presentation of water paddling and voices of the fountain, signed by a powerful. musical shift. After the tinkling illustration of the beauties of nature, the music becomes dramatic, and here appears the admiration of transcendental beauty, the liaison with the Heavenly in front of the magic offered by the beauty of nature. Here, I felt the same piety

that I feel during the A - major piano concerto theme 2, what is said to be by many the music of angels. According to Einstein this theme is a proof of God, according to Tamas Vasary it wasn't even written by Mozart but was dictated to him. I met the song of birds when I was playing in Kuwait and Poland: in both places the prattling of birds was so strong outside above the trees, that people were coming in from the street to see what the birds are listening to, what is this prattling. I was playing Chopin to them. I remember when I was a pupil, once I called my mother to the balcony to listen to the birds that were playing Chopin to me already at that time. A book will just be published by Corvina Press in which my mother has written my story, of which the title is relating to this experience ‘For whom even the birds are singing Chopin’.





“I believe that Europe’s cultural heritage cannot be interpreted and cannot exist without European religious heritage.”

Imre Ritter | German nationality member of the Hungarian Parliament | Hungary



Mihály Raday
President of Hungaria Nostra and of the Town Protection Association of Budapest
Hungary

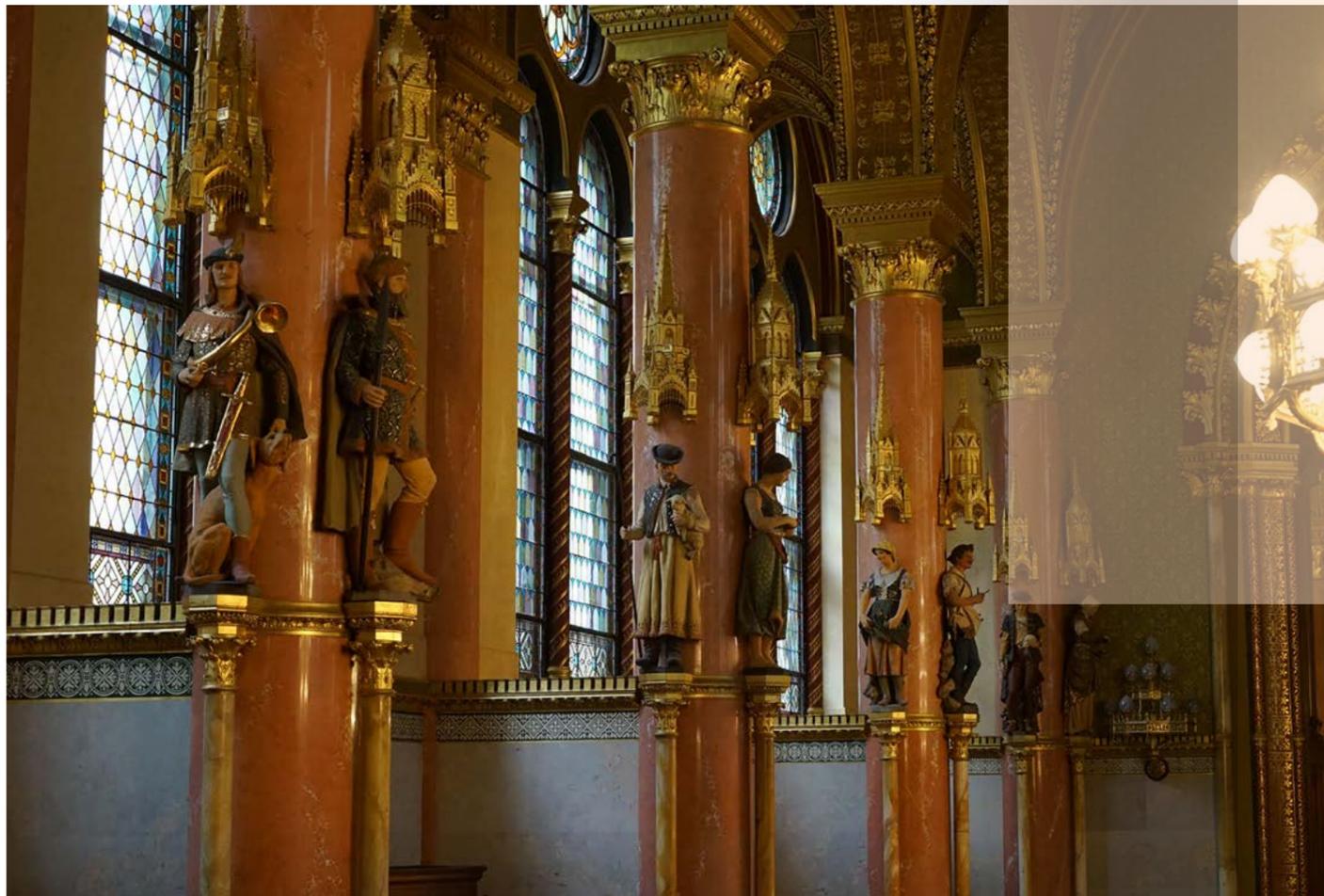
During the history of mankind, churches have always been the best designed and constructed, most valuable, most decorated buildings built by the best - apart from the dwelling-houses, palaces and castles of the ruling elite. This was so in the antiquity, and so it is still today when the number of religious people or at least number of people who attend church has been declining worldwide. I have already seen ‘For Sale’ sign on English churches as well...

The most important buildings of religious communities lost their original functions in Africa and in America during the period of colonisation, and became unowned also in Europe in the era of genocide, and in the period of religious wars and holocaust. The maintenance and careful preservation of ecclesiastical buildings became a problem after rearrangement of borders and changes in the population composition. The maintenance of empty and deteriorating Serbian Orthodox Churches and Synagogues after elimination of their worshippers is also a problem for us - as for example the careful preservation of Hungarian, Jewish and Saxon churches in Romania. Several of them are part of the World Heritage...



Zsolt Visy
Professor Emeritus of the Department of Archeology at the University of Pecs
Hungary

The most significant result for me was the clarification of the entrance situation of the crypts. Lacking exact archaeological observations it had been thought that there was a possibility to go in the underneath crypts also after the burial to commemorate to the dead person. Following this idea the entrance was restored with a stairway and a door. However the fact that the grave chapels on the surface had their entrance exactly above the entrance of the crypts caused severe headache to the represents of this theory. The observations made during my excavations proved that the crypts never had a door, because the opening was closed by big stone slabs, and the stairway or rampart was filled after the burial. It is then clearly understandable, why the door of the grave chapel could be placed exactly above the opening of the crypt.





Bucharest Romania

“ENCATC had the great honour of hosting one of the stages of the FRH Torch project on 28th September 2018 in Bucharest, as a closing event for its annual Congress on Cultural Management and Policy.”

“It was very exciting for all the participants to see the 6 representatives of the religious cults of Romania gathered in the same room, around the same table. This sort of event had never taken place until now! It was an unforgettable moment for all those present at the ‘ceremony of light’. It was a surprise for us all to see how the participants, regardless of their religion and country of origin wanted to take the candle in hand, to pass it to their neighbour. It is incredible how such a simple project can have such extraordinary results and can effectively contribute to creating the much sought-after dialogue between religions, cultures and people. Thanks, Future for Religious Heritage for this wonderful opportunity offered to the ENCATC and all the participants of our 2018 Congress!”

Stated GiannaLia Cogliandro, Secretary General of ENCATC.





Dr. Aurel Vainer
President of The Federation of Jewish Communities of Romania
 Romania

Our autumn holidays have always brought us joy, from childhood to old age. Boys who turned 13, having become of age, according to the Jewish faith, spent the holidays in the Synagogue, learning the holy teachings by reading and singing. We, the children, played in the yard of the synagogue, happy to no longer be under the close supervision of our parents or grandparents. As a child, aged 5 or 6, I used to spend a nice time with other children, being beautifully dressed for the holiday. I remember a small adventure that comes to my mind. I was smartly dressed, let's say it was an elegant costume, staying on the bank of the Başeu brook (an affluent of the Prut River). Not caring about my special outfit, along with the other children, I began to run along the water course. Just like that, I, the sage and smartly dressed boy, plunged into the waters of the Başeu: it was not at all deep, but it was not clean, either. All the other children started to laugh, but I began to cry, thinking about the scolding I would get from mom and dad. Let me get to a serious topic: ever since I became the head of the Federation of Jewish Communities in Romania – the Mosaic Faith, 13 years ago, I became very interested in renovating, in the most beautiful and bright manner, our places of Mosaic worship, the numerous synagogues and temples located in many places in the country.



“May the FRH Torch lastingly light up the way on our European journey towards beauty and harmony.”

George Ivaşcu | Minister of Culture and National Identity | Romania



Pr. dr. Florin Serbanescu
Advisor to the Romanian Orthodox Patriarch
 Romania

In the context of monuments and church collections evocation, significant aspects of architectural history have been tackled together with the guests of the program—hierarchs, academicians, teaching staff of universities, priests, monks and nuns, professors and curators. At the same time, Romanian Orthodox art and culture and the major contribution that the Orthodox Church has had at the spiritual-ethnic building and the historical development of Romanian nation, in general, were also evoked.

“Bringing together specifics of different nations of the “Old Continent”, through the strong bond of common elements that have conferred, throughout millenniums of the Christian era, a conspicuous particular physiognomy.”



Mufti Muurat Iusuf
Mufti of Muslim Cult of Romania
 Romania

An architectural jewel of the Muslim community of Romania is Esmahan Sultan Mosque from Mangalia – the oldest place of Islamic worship of our country, which was built in 1573 (931, according to the Muslim calendar Hadjira) by order of princess Esmahan, the daughter of Sultan Selim II, in honour of her father.

It is a monument built in the Moorish architectural style, with particular features in comparison with the other centers of worship from Dobrudja since the time of the Ottoman Empire and it has a rich historical, religious and cultural

tradition. The construction was built of stone with a thickness of 85 cm, carved on site by the Turkish craftsmen and it is surrounded by a Muslim cemetery where notable people of the time were buried. After 1989, unfortunately, the mosque was in a deplorable state and it needed reconditioning. The support came in 2008 when, in order to make an attempt to preserve elements of the religious and cultural heritage, a Turkish businessman financed the whole project, the consolidation and restoration of the “Esmahan Sultan” constructions (the mosque and the cemetery); the value

was estimated to one million euros. Ten years ago, on August 27, 2008 in Mangalia the reopening ceremony of the mosque took place with the attendance of important people from Turkey, from our community and local administration as well.

The reopening of the mosque was a very important event, a reason of joy and pride for the whole Muslim community of Romania. At the same time, Esmahan Sultan mosque is a remarkable tourist attraction, taking into consideration the great number of visitors from our country, but also from abroad.

Nigel Bellingham
Director of British Council Romania
 Romania

“People say that religion divides us, but from all these experiences all I have seen is the good that all faith bring, with their power to calm us, to inspire us, to unite us – to make us better people and to make the world a better place.”





Dr. Virgil Stefan Nitulescu
Head of Cabinet in the Ministry of Culture and National Identity
 Romania

For me, one of the most touching moments in my curatorial experience was the fact that, since 1992, I am passing – sometimes, several times per day – near the little wooden church from Bejan. Hunedoara county, which was brought in Bucharest and reassembled, twenty six years ago, in the country yard of the National Museum of the Romanian Peasant. Erected in the 18 th century in Valea Bradului, was moved by the inhabitants of the Bejan village to their place and it was used as the main church of the village, until 1947, when a new brick church took its place. The old historical monument remained as an almost forgotten construction, until 1991, when it was brought to Bucharest and placed in the museum, which it was re-installed, after almost 40 years in the building used by the Communist regime for a propaganda museum. Since then, this old church has become a kind of symbol for the museum that encapsulates the essence of the religious traditions of the Romanians Standing in front of the huge mosaic placed on the wall behind it, glorifying the Communist Party. The contrast between the wealthy mosaic and the modest and frail wooden church is more explicit than any other curatorial arrangement in a Romanian museum, about the ancient tradition, represented by a church, and a dictatorial regime, which was imposed on the Romanian nations by a foreign army, represented by the mosaic. More than this, I think that it is meaningful that we don't know the names of the craftsmen who built the church. We may consider that those who made it hold the belief that their names are not important in front of eternity, when someone makes an offering – because this is a church, an offering rose for God – the author is not important. It is a gift offered for the community, from now, in eternity.



“Grazie Future for Religious Heritage per questa bellissima opportunita offerta all’ENCATC e a tutti I partecipanti del nostro Congresso 2018!”

Francesca Imperiale
President of ENCATC
 Italy

“It is incredible how such a simple project can have such extraordinary results and can effectively contribute to creating the much sought-after dialogue between religions, cultures and peoples.”

GiannaLia Cogliandro
Secretary General of ENCATC
 Francesca



Andrei Pinte
Pastor of the Evangelical Church in Sibiu
 Romania

Six years ago together with a group of friends, invited to my wedding, we have visited the fortified church in Biertan, perhaps the most famous Transylvanian village church, also on the UNESCO list. Inside this beautiful church, besides things that are usually found in a church, there is something unexpected: a reconciliation room. This was thought for still married Saxon couples who have expressed their desire to divorce. In this room there are a bed, a table and a chair. The man and the woman were encouraged to spend some time in this room before the Christian community to accept their desire to divorce. They did not have the courage to take this step without the will of the community, living together in the neighborhood (an association of families in order to support each other). They were always subject to its moral judgment.

The time spent in this room was so beneficial that over the course of history only one couple kept their desire to divorce. This story and the church had impressed my brother's future wife (a native of the former German Democratic Republic, who is not baptized in the Christian faith) so much that she had expressed the desire to receive the blessing in a church too.

This desire was accomplished years later: they were blessed by me in the beautiful church of the old town of the neighboring city, Sighisoara, also a UNESCO heritage church.



Rev. David Gyerö
Vicar Bishop of the Hungarian Unitarian Church
 Romania

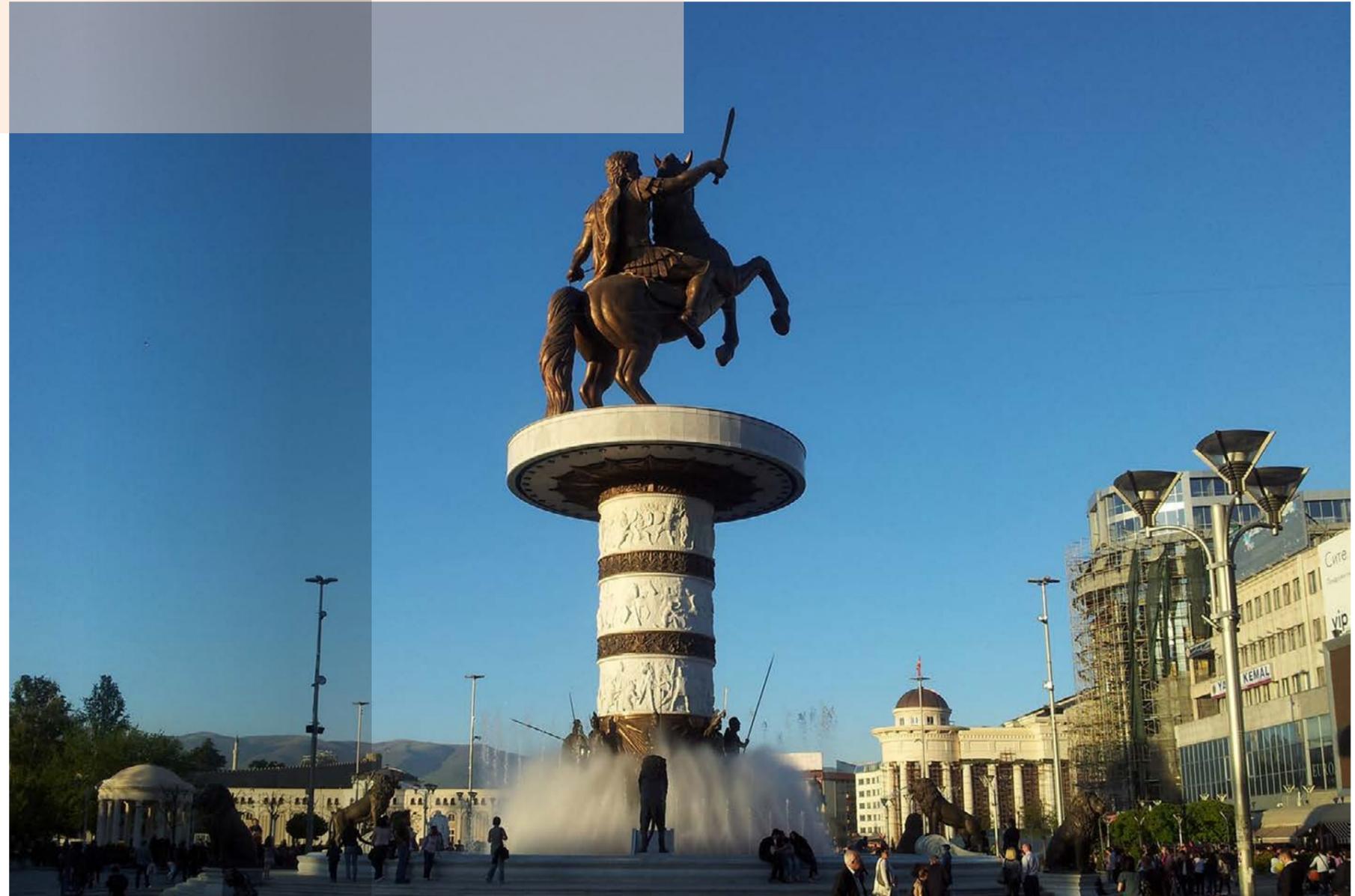
“As we celebrate the rich religious and cultural heritage of Europe, let us ask for blessings to our continent by building many free ladders of faith – ones that are not old and dusty, but neat and glossy from being used. I wish for us to realize that by living with them makes us spiritually richer people. Our task in 2018 should be not just to remember the glory of the past, but to make new plans about how to recreate those miracles of that past. One thing we can certainly do is to try to fulfill the Torda dream in our homes, in our towns and cities, in our regions, and all over Europe.”



Skopje Northern Macedonia

The event 'Valorisation of the Church St George in Kurbinovo from the XII Century as a Cultural Heritage Site on the Cultural Heritage Route on 27th - 28th September 2018, was organised by FRH member Makedonida Foundation at the EU info centre in Skopje, Northern Macedonia.

The FRH Torch ceremony was conducted after the event by FRH Council Member Pilar Bahamonde at the 'Čifte Hammam', a 15th century Ottoman bath house located in the centre of the Old Skopje Bazaar, which now hosts part of the National Gallery of Northern Macedonia.



Asaf Ademi
Minister of Culture
 Northern Macedonia

An important part of our heritage is undoubtedly the various objects of the Islamic tradition, which for the first moments of the establishment of the Ottoman Empire in this region are widespread in all parts of Macedonia. A number of mosques, such as the undisputed Mustafa Pasha in Skopje, but also several Teqes and Turbes, are an important integral part of our rich cultural heritage.

In other words, no matter which part of the sacred cultural heritage in Republic of Macedonia you wish to explore, all of them tell incredible stories, from the Temple of Isis to the magnificent Decorated Mosque from the beginning of the Renaissance in Republic of Macedonia.

The cultural heritage of Republic of Macedonia offers exhilarating spectrum of multiplicity which impresses everyone. Therefore, it is a privilege for us to know that we carry a part of the craft of the great minds in our DNA, which united us throughout the cultural heritage, which was built with many layers and multi-cultures from the very beginning.



“Our common cultural and religious heritage with its diversity, can represent a strong ground base for dialogue and coherence.”

Eleonora Petrova-Mitevka
Director of the Directorate for Protection of Cultural Heritage
 Northern Macedonia





Dr. Panche Velkov
President of the Makedonida Foundation
 Northern Macedonia

Since a few years ago, Makedonida has been working actively to popularize the sacred heritage by publishing guide books on the most important churches and mosques in Macedonia, dating back to the Byzantine and Ottoman periods, in Macedonian, in Albanian, English and French.

We also pay special attention to forging cooperation with our European partners, with the network Future of Religious Heritage from Brussels - FRH, as well as with many important institutions from France and Germany, hoping for the support by European institutions that is of particular importance to us, who are supposed to accompany and support Northern Macedonia in its Euro-Atlantic integrations.

Today, after many completed projects, as well as many projects that are still underway, cultural heritage, by its very importance and diversity, is not only a profession to me. It is a great privilege, mission, commitment, but also an inexhaustible source of inspiration and energy that lends me with support and helps me to cope with the every day challenges of globalization.



“Culture should always be a vivid reflection upon its own sources and roots, and in same time, it is a projection of the future as a time that is coming and is being pushed forward from the past.”

Risto Solunchev | **Associate Professor Faculty of Philosophy** | Northern Macedonia

“During my undergraduate studies at the Department of History of Art in Skopje I built the relationship between religious and cultural medieval heritage. It is a source of particular delight to see shrines being part of our urban environment, which allows us to have every day access to them, so that we can enjoy and relish their beauty, and be able to picture ourselves for one moment as being at the time of their creation.”

Frosina Jovcheska
Graduate Student at the University of St. Cyril and Methodius
 Northern Macedonia

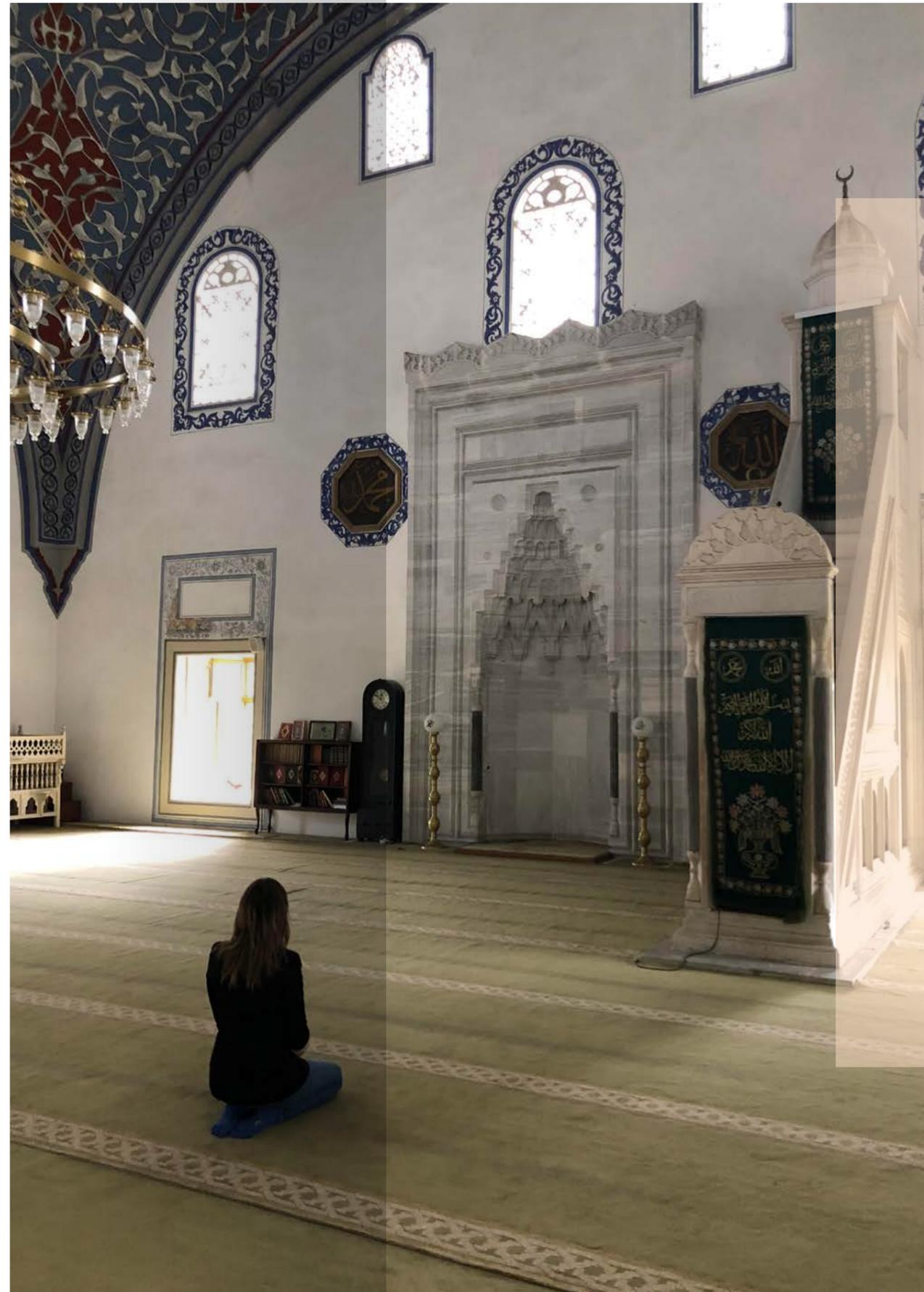




Risto Paligora
Art Historian Conservator and the National
Museum in Bitola
Northern Macedonia

In the three state territories, there are monuments of religious heritage that are perfect for a joint cooperation in near future, directed towards the protection and promotion of these sanctuaries. I am convinced that if we employ the trilateral approach in the idea to utilize the cultural heritage as a tourist offer, the economic development of this predominantly neglected area will be significantly increased.

It can easily happen that current political events give a strong impetus for the realization of such ideas. I think that this initiative should be expanded with a wider support, that is, the region should be protected by UNESCO. Thus, the religious heritage of the Prespa valley will contribute to the establishment of an intercultural dialogue, sustainable development and prosperity of the local communities in the three countries.



“Art alone can save the world - said Fyodor Dostoevsky. That to me is exactly what cultural heritage, and sacred heritage is.”

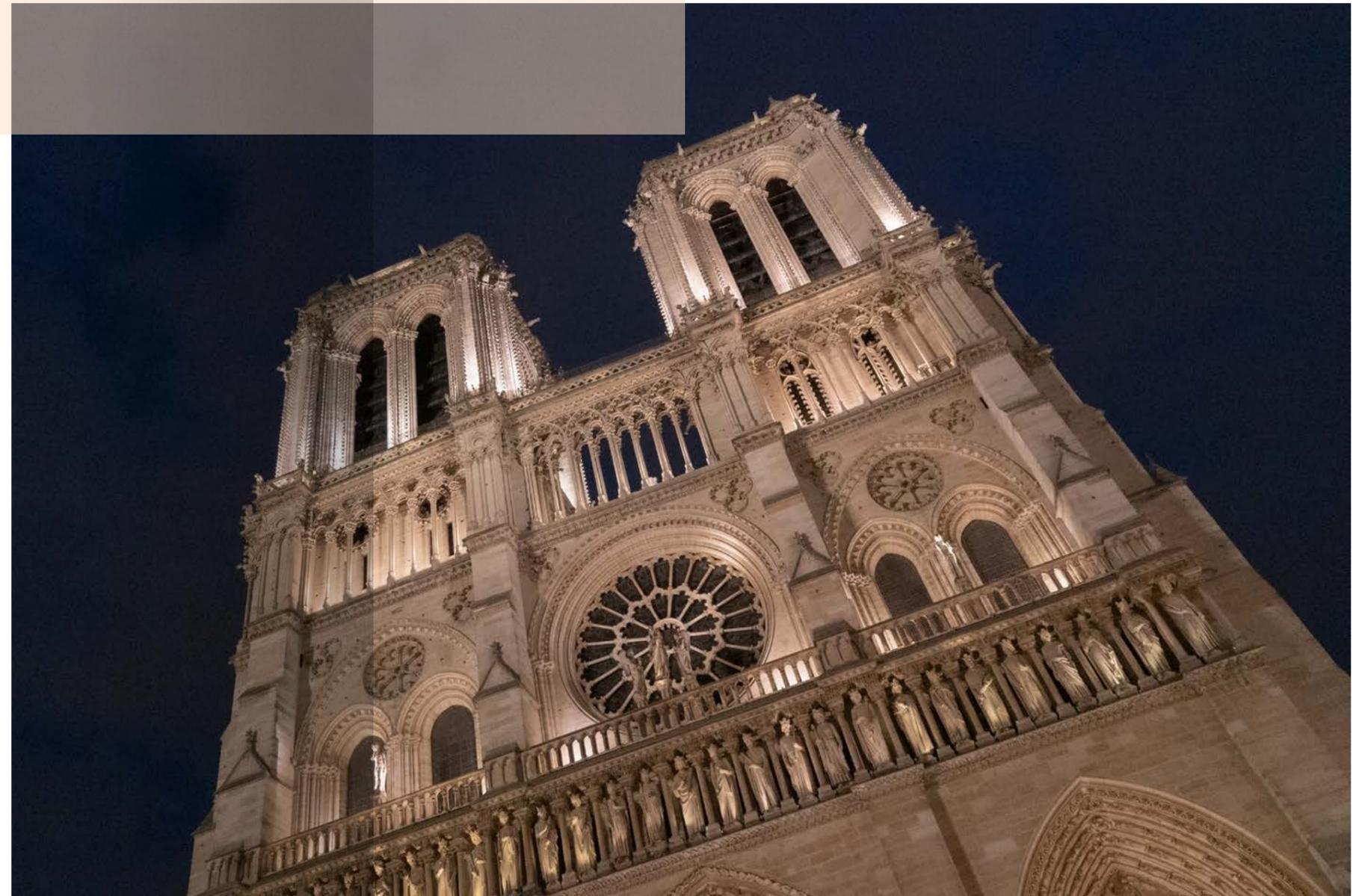
Pance Velcov
President of the Makedonida
Foundation
Northern Macedonia



Paris France

The 2018 FRH Biennial Conference, titled “Religious Heritage – Europe’s legacy for the future”, was held at the UNESCO headquarters in Paris on the 11th - 13th October, under the patronage of; the Ministry of Culture of France; the ICOMOS International Scientific Committee on Places of Religion and Ritual (PRERICO); la Fondation La Sauvegarde de l’Art Français; the Belgian French speaking and German speaking Commission for UNESCO; and the Flemish Commission for UNESCO.

The conference welcomed more than 200 participants from 64 organisations and 24 countries, bringing together experts from the field of religious and cultural heritage, academics, representatives from EU institutions, and representatives from public and private institutions. The final FRH Torch ceremony was held during the conference, with the participation of young student athletes, who symbolically carried the Torch throughout various religious heritage sites in Paris, ending up at the conference stage, where they presented the letters to Commissioner Navracsics.





“My childhood and youth was fundamentally determined by the intellectual influence of this Christian heritage in my hometown. It was an intellectual influence not a burden.”

Tibor Navracsics | European Commissioner of Culture | Hungary





Public Campaign

After the ending of the journey of the FRH torch across Europe, the Public Campaign was launched until the end of the EYCH on 31st of December 2018. The Public Campaign was aimed at obtaining personal messages from European citizens.

With this purpose in mind, several FRH Torch contribution boxes were distributed across Europe, located in public buildings, churches and museums, allowing visitors to share their messages. The Campaign ended with many contributions from across Europe, showcasing just how much European citizens treasure and value their shared religious heritage, and how it is linked to their lives in many ways.





Huib van Olden
Alderman of the City of Den Bosch
The Netherlands

As alderman with heritage in my portfolio, I am very proud of our cathedral basilica of Saint John evangelist. St. John cathedral is in the midst of the society and our citizens are proud of it. This cathedral is a beacon of history but also of the future. Visiting the cathedral is an experience; We must make this experience accessible to the visitors of today and the future so that this valuable location can remain what it is: a pearl of the city.

If you ask me one sentence: The importance of religious heritage? Because stories must be told and passed on!!



Jan-Willem van Zoelen
Official municipality of the City of Oss
The Netherlands

Diversity of buildings is an added value for the distinctive landscape characteristic. The beauty of the buildings in terms of architecture and ecclesiastical art property must be preserved as a treasure.

In most cases such buildings were built by a small community. the building are rooted in the community and everyone has personal memories related to them. The big challenge is also in the community to jointly examine how the buildings can be maintained and can continue to be a sustainable part of our living environment.

It is important that we hold on to our religious DNA and pass it on to our next generations. Man is a temporary factor in comparison to the buildings that continue to speak and sustain the story.

Frank Strolenberg
Programmanager on a future for Religious Heritage, Cultural Heritage Agency
The Netherlands

Awakenings. Having good grades in elementary school I was supposed to go to Rolduc for my high school education. Rolduc is a medieval abbey of the 11th century in the Southern part of the Netherlands. In the sixties not only famous for it's high school but even more so for it's seminary where young Roman Catholic priests got their training. Visiting this abbey as a 10 year old boy I got startled by the dozens of priests running around, the huge kitchens full of steam and most of all the remains of the founder of the abbey Ailbertus of Antioing lying in the crypt. This was not my school! But being a teenager I found out that Rolduc unlike my own school, offered a complete cultural and sports programme: mens sana in corpore sano. I loved visiting it and soaked in all new impressions. In my twenties I met this wonderful girl and at first glance I knew that I was going to marry her. And I did. Of course, it turned out that she finished her high school education at Rolduc. How an old abbey can get under your skin...



“I enjoy still every day the wonderful stained glass windows of our own beautiful village church!”

Anonymous



“Entering a peaceful, reflective place like a church while walking around a bustling city can be a great experience, and the contrast always give me a chance to appreciate both the old and the new.”

James | United Kingdom

Daniel | United States of America

“I have spent the last decade visiting 13 cities in 8 countries to hear stories of wars and worries like my grandmother a member of the Jewish community in which footsteps I always imagined myself walking. I found only hints of lives such as kept in sites that tended to focus almost exclusively on the Holocaust. In Poland in the museum of the history of Jews in Warsaw, I found the history I sought.”

Harry Peters | The Netherlands

“I strongly support the cooperation between community, politicians and owners to get the power to make the right choices and drive our religious heritage to the future.”

Anonymous

“We all grew up surrounded with it, not only art and buildings which are a severe proof of it, but religious heritage is part of our entire life, the western society is based on it: healthcare, access to education for everybody (all inclusive), elderly care, our entire social system originates from Christianity. Inspired by God, fantastic heritage.”



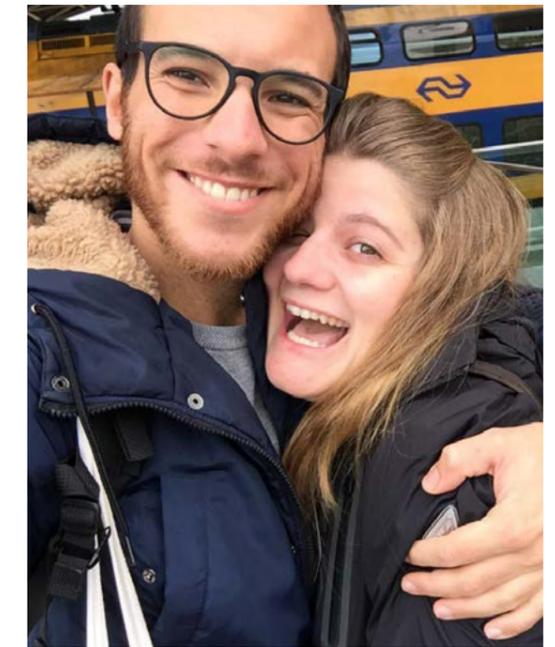
Wobine Buijs-Glaudemans
Mayor of city of Oss
The Netherlands

Megen is the most northern place in the province of Noord Brabant. A beautiful town that has been able to maintain its purity. With a special history. After Frederik Hendrik conquered the city of 's-Hertogenbosch, the Catholics had to leave the city. The Franciscans settled down in Megen as well as the Carmelites. There was a beautifully restored Latin school that now serves as the Akropolis community center.

When I am in Megen, I often walk into “Bruurke van Megen’s” Brother Everardus, whose 150th birth date is being celebrated this month. There are rolled notes in his hands with the wishes of all kind of people. It helps to entrust your deepest thoughts to paper, the hope you have, the powerlessness that you can feel when confronted with unsolvable problems. Fascinating to be in a church and to think of how for centuries people have come to this place at special moments in their lives: to stand still, to thank, to celebrate, to mourn. An age-old place of gathering and meditation. In Megen you can go back to the really important things in life, the things that are timeless: love, friendship, family, farewell.

“This is the reason why churches must prevail, even if not as religious temples. They bring us together – no matter who you are, where you come from, in a church you’ll find a friend.”

Francisco Granja D’Almeida
Portugal



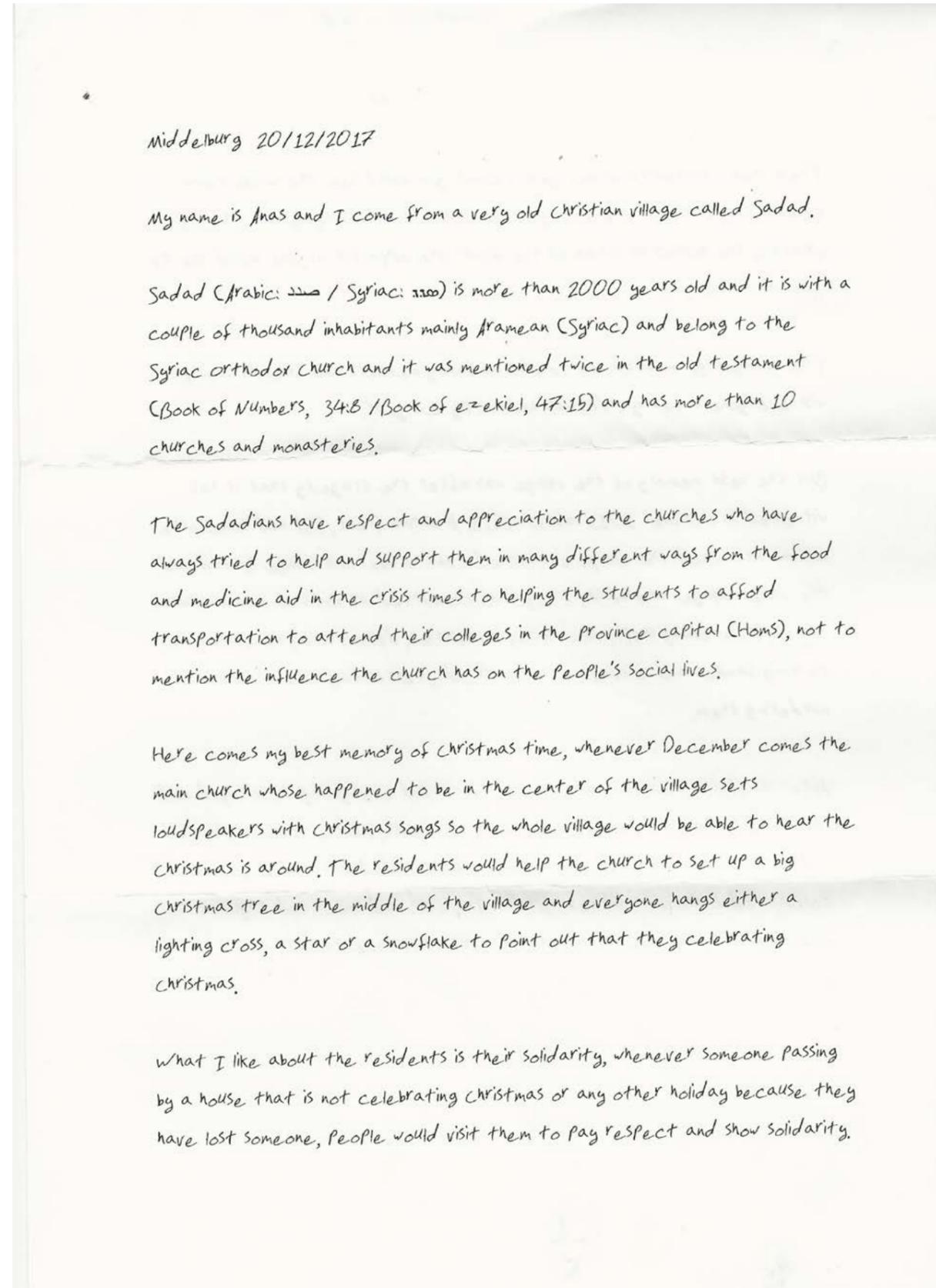
“A holiday seems not to be complete without the experience of entering a religious building at our destination. We feel it is a great way of experiencing a countries culture and history in multiple ways.”

Linde Grootswagers
The Netherlands



The letters

The letters



The letters, Leeuwarden

Anas Hannoun

Then when Christmas and new year's come you would see the whole town celebrating, Parties here everywhere, all the people playing music, singing, dancing, the houses lit up and all the doors are open for anyone would like to join while passing by.

The younger generation has to visit all family members and friends families to wish everyone a merry Christmas and happy new year.

But the best memory of the village was after the tragedy that it has witnessed in October 2013 after ISIS, Al Nusra front, FSA and some other militias attacked the village established control over our village Sadad and the other villages around it. They have committed all kinds of violent brutal crimes, from robbing shops, vandalizing properties, desecrating religious symbols to using families and children as human shields, terrorizing safe civilians and murdering them.

After all of this we went back to Sadad to find everything destroyed and vandalized, that did not break it or its residents, people stood by, helped and supported each other and within 3 months Sadad was standing again and celebrated Christmas and new year's with tears and smiles and a great intention to rebuild everything the terrorism has desecrated.

Anas Hannoun

Skettens, de 8ste fan 'e foarmoanne 2018
 "Wat hinget dêr foar âld izer?" frege ik, doe't ik as nije dominy fan it Fryske turpdoarpke Skettens de tsjerke foar it earst besoch. Yn de foartsjoke, heech oan 'e muorre, hong in âld helm mei in âld swurd. It tsjerkfolk moast dêr altiten ûnder troch om de tsjerke yn en út te gean. Se wiene deroan wend, mar ik hie sok fjochtersark yn in tsjerke noch nea sjoen. Hoe soe dat no yn de tsjerke fan Skettens bedarre wêze?
 It doarp Skettens, op de terp oan de Marnuslinke, wurdt al beskreaun yn it jier 885. Mar dizze tsjerke mei har spitse toer is in gebou út de njoggentiende iuw. Yn dy tiid wiene der in pear ambisjense tsjerkfâden yn Skettens. Dy sloopten de âlde midieuwske tsjerke om dêr yn 1865, op itselde plak, in soiksplinternije tsjerke del te setten mei in -foar dy tiid- hupemodern ynterieur. De iennige oantinkens oan it eardere gebou wiene de ryk fersierde en leadswiere sechtstjinde-iuwskke grêfstienren yn it middenpaad. Mar dy wiene ûnder houten planken fuortwurke. Fan al dy oracht wie dus eins mat te sjen. Ik fûn dizze tsjerke dan ek net folle bysûnders. Boppedat eage er frijwat fertutearre en wie er redich oan restauraasje ta. Al gau waard dúdlik hoe't it safier kommen wie. De tsjerke is gjin ryksmonumint (hy hat allinich in monumintale status fanwegen dy bysûndere grêfstienren en it oargel) en restauraasje betsjutte in flinke taast yn 'e ponce. De tsjerkereint-masters slytshoanen dêr, begryplike genôch, tsjinoan. In wurk groep kaam yn 2015 mei in foarslach, ynspirearre troch it Ingelske fenomen "champing" oftewol kampen yn tsjerke en de lange wachtlisten om yn in kleaster te oernaachtsjen. Miskien koene wy de tsjerke, as iuwenâld plak fan stilte en refleksje,

Rev. Edna Zwerver

fan sjongen en bidden, sels ek wol oan oare minnen
oanbride. Dat wie it begjin fan in restauraasje en in ferbouwing
Der kaam in sliepkeamer yn de toer, in keuken yn de konsistoarje,
in badkeamer yn it biezembok, in loungehoek yn de tsjerke en
www.kerkovernachting.nl gie de loft yn. As wy der net wiene,
koene oaren de stilte fan de nacht yn ús tsjerke belibje en
der sliepe. Underwylst krige us tsjerkerintmaster yn 2016
in tillefoantsje. De konservator fan it Nasjonale Militaire
Museum hie op de webside fan tsjerke in foto fan ús âld helm
sjoen en woe delkomme. Hy beseach de helm, syn hannen, yn
wite wantsjes, en wist daliks: dizze helm is wat bysûnder.
Dy komt noch út de tiid fan de 80-jierrige oarloch. Doe't hy
deselde helm ek noch yn tsjerke op in grêfstien stean seach,
wie hy hielendal yn 'e wolven. Dit wie net samar in âld helm.
It wie de helm fan Skelte van Aysma (1578-1637), de ealman dy't
yn Shettens op Osinga State wenne. Skelte focht as militêr yn
de 80-jierrige oarloch tsjin de Spanjerts en sneuvele by it belis
fan Breda. Nettsjinsteande syn hast seis kilo swiere helm.
Neffens it gebrûk brocht in lykstasje fan hege militêren, yn 'e
jûn by it ljocht fan fakels, Skelte syn lyk fan syn wenhûs,
Osinga State, mei de tsjerke fan Shettens. Dêr waard kolonel van
Aysma begroeven. Syn helmen swurd droegen se ek mei yn de
stout. Dy krigen in plan oan it rûboerd dat yn de eardere
tsjerke hong. Dat bord is der net mear, mar de helm en it
swurd binne bewarre bleaun. De fynst fan benammen de
helm is sa bysûnder dat dy yn 2017 opnommen is yn de Kanon
fan de shiednis fan Nederlân. Yn 2017 wie der noch in fynst.
De flier fan tsjerke lei derút fanwegen de restauraasje en
de wurklju stjitten op in muorre ûnder de grûn en in

Rev. Edna Zwerver

grêfkelder vjocht ûnder Skelte syn grêfstien. It mitssele
grêf wie lykwols sheind. It lei fol modder, metaal, bronzen,
hout en stedsels. Yn in rûch en dúdlik hastich mitssele
muorre stiene de inisjalen fan in timmermansfeint út
dongerhou dy't yn 1865 miwurke oan de bou fan de nije
tsjerke. Wy tinke dat yn dy tiid de kelder foar in part ynstoant is
en mar gau wer repararre. Hawwe wy nei de helm en de
grêfhelder no ek Skelte sels noch fan? DNA-ûndersyk sil it
is mooglik fertelle binne. As tsjerkeumienship hawwe wy yn
alle gefallen syn grêfhelder opromme. It is der wer netsjis.
Yn 2018 hoopje wy Skelte en syn famylje wer bysette te kinnen.
Ut in histoaryske besef is de grêfhelder ek tagonklike make. Yn
alle eardere wolle wy sa minsten de mooglikheid jaan stil te
stean by hoe't men earder mei de dea omgie. It is foar ús as
tsjerkeumienship in stap dy't past by de eardere stap wêrmei't wy
ús gebou as plak fan stilte en besinning iepensteld hawwe
foar wa't der oernachtsje wol. Op deselde wize wolle wy ek de
shiednis en de ferhalen, ferbûn mei dit gebou, net foar ússels
hâlde, mar mei oaren diele. Ta beslút, yn septimber 2018 dogge
wy, yn 'e mande mei ús fantareorbest Excelsior Skraard en de
doarpsmienship, ek mei oan it projekt "Under de Toer" yn it
raam fan Ljouwert-Fryslân Kulturele Haadstêd 2018 mei ús
jierhaal oer Skelte yn de foarstelling "Sheltmania". De
tsjerke is dan ien fan de lokaasjes dêr't ferteld wurdt.
By ús yn Shettens is dus yn tsjerke hiel wat te belibjen.
Jo binne fan herte wolkom.

Edna Zwerver

predikant fan de Protestantse Gemeente te Shettens, Skraard, Dongerhou

Rev. Edna Zwerver



Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en
Wetenschap

Future for Religious Heritage
67, Rue de Treves
1040 Bruxelles
Belgium

Dear reader,

Heritage teaches us about the past. It helps us to interpret the present and makes us think about the future. Heritage offers recognition. It gives us guidance and a sense of identity. It spins a common thread from our ancestors, through us, to future generations – a thread through history.

Heritage is therefore of great importance. In my heritage policy, this importance is expressed not only by investing heavily in the preservation of heritage, but also by promoting development and accessibility. Because I believe wholeheartedly that the lasting value of heritage lies in the combination of practical use, social significance and cultural-historical significance.

An unfortunate side effect of the secularization in our country is that the thread through history is becoming thinner. Churches stand empty and a connection with our religious heritage is lost. If we are to pass on this aspect of our history, it is vital that we preserve these edifices and the knowledge they embody.

In the Netherlands we see many local communities investing time and energy in looking after their own religious heritage. Vacant churches are often given a new, creative function. To support these initiatives, I encourage municipalities to develop 'church visions' which set out their ideas on how to make the most of their religious edifices.

In my opinion, this is the best way to make sure we make the right decisions for the future of our religious heritage. Because only by doing so we can secure our religious heritage for generations to come.

Yours sincerely,

the minister of Education, Culture and Science

Ingrid van Engelshoven

Ingrid van Engelshoven

provinsje fryslân
provincie fryslân

My religious heritage: the Roman Catholic St Ludger church in the Dutch village of Balk

Religious heritage is the place where community and religion intersect, where time meets place and where individual persons come into contact with a higher power.

One could say: so many different people, so many different churches. The understated Mennonite churches and the smaller Reformed churches as well as the big medieval village churches with their characteristic saddle-roof towers built on Frisian clay soil. Each church marks the way in which the community of this particular denomination saw themselves and their place in the grand scheme of things.

I grew up in Gaasterland, an area in the southwest of the province of Fryslân, in a Catholic environment rooted in the large farming families of the Greidhoeke, the area between the cities of Bolsward, Franeker and Sneek. It was and is not a "severe" faith. Roman Catholicism in Fryslân was more cheerful and more liberal than Roman Catholicism in the south of the Netherlands.

Roman Catholics were not free to practise their faith until a long time after the Reformation. Today, the clandestine churches still tell this story. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, when Catholicism was accepted again, a lot of new Roman Catholic churches were built, as was 'my' church in Balk, dedicated to Saint Ludger. It was designed by architect Alfred Tepe and inspired by the neo-Gothic style of the renowned Dutch architect P.J.H. Cuypers. The church is now a national heritage site in the Netherlands. I would not call it a beautiful building but to me that is not the most important thing.

In my view, the church represents a self-confident part of the population that was proud to let themselves be seen and saw no reason to hide their presence or make themselves smaller in any way than perhaps some people would have liked them to have been. The Protestant neighbours needed to be made aware of the fact that a representative of "Rome" was being built here and that a part of the population, growing both in numbers and in self-confidence, would no longer be swept under the carpet by the Protestant government in The Hague. Since then, the village of Balk has grown somewhat. However, you can imagine that when the church was built and stood free of all the buildings that surround it today, that it dominated the small village.

Personally, I would have liked the church to be smaller, more intimate and less extravagant. I love big churches as important examples of our cultural history but I prefer a more modest and less pretentious place of worship for my own religious experience.

In any case, the Roman Catholic St Ludger church in Balk tells a story as part of a bigger whole, as do all the other churches in the province of Fryslân, big or small, in all their diversity. It is not yet clear how this story will translate into the future. However, every generation creates its own stories as well as its own monuments. To retain and preserve the wealth of all these stories, is a task for us all.

Johannes Kramer
vice governor of Fryslân

Johannes Kramer



university of
 groningen

faculty of theology and
 religious studies

department of theology
 and history of ideas

Reflections on religious heritage: The Janskerk in Huizinge

Todd H. Weir, Director, Centre for Religion and Heritage, University of Groningen

In September 2017, I took a group of students from our master's program in religion and cultural heritage to visit the small village of Huizinge, which lies about twenty kilometres north and east of the city of Groningen. It has a remarkable Romanesque church, the Janskerk, which was built in the thirteenth century. We walked through the nave, peered up the dark bell tower, and then settled down with two members of the congregation to speak about their efforts to create an inclusive community for people from different faith and even non-faith backgrounds. Afterwards, we wandered around the church grounds and read the names and dates upon the gravestones. At the back a lovely view opens up onto fields and pastures. The church sits on a hillock, or wierden, that granted us this view. A few meters of elevation counted for a lot in this part of Northern Netherlands when the church was built. Before the dikes high tides periodically ravaged the farmlands. When the waters from the sea came pouring in, the villagers sometimes sought refuge in the church on the wierden.

The tides are an apt metaphor for what is going on with religious heritage in this part of the Netherlands. The dechurching that has seized the region since the 1960s is like an outgoing tide that is emptying the churches of certain practices and meanings that they have had since their erection 800 years ago. We should not be timid in identifying secularization as the most radical rupture in Dutch religion since the Reformation, if not since the early medieval conversion to Christianity. This secularization has led heritage to become associated with loss and nostalgia. Yet, one should not be entirely pessimistic about this process, I believe. Is it not the case that nature abhors a vacuum? Alongside the emptying of the churches another development is occurring: churches are drawing in new meaning. In other words, there are many signs that the tide is coming back in again. Incoming tides bring flotsam and jetsam, a jumble of detritus from the past. This is an apt metaphor for heritage and the work entailed in reassigning meaning through heritage work. How are immaterial and material heritages to be ordered and by whom? This is a creative process. On the one hand, religious heritage allows for invention and reassembly by the modern, spiritually inclined individual. However, on the other, the buildings themselves are not silent. One cannot simply do with heritage what one wants. Making use of local religious heritage is not the same as borrowing from other cultures. Because the churches bind heritage materially to a place, they demand a word in any discussion about the meaning of religion, whether in Huizinge or beyond.

1 • 1

Prof. Dr. Todd Weir

STICHTING ALDE FRYSKE TSJERKEN

“Onze kerk”

Wat zou Friesland zijn zonder kerken en kerktorens? Iedereen die wel eens gewandeld, gefietst, gezeild of geschaapt heeft in deze weidse en waterrijke provincie weet dat de kerktorens als bakens in het landschap aanwezig zijn, waarop je je heel gemakkelijk kunt oriënteren. De kerkdichtheid is nergens in Europa zo groot als in Noord-Nederland. Vanuit de kerktoren van Baard zie je in een straal van vijf kilometer maar liefst 25 kerken om je heen. In totaal telt Fryslân ruim 770 kerken, waarvan er 360 de status hebben van Rijksmonument. Al deze kerken vormen tezamen de grootste cultuurschat van de provincie. Waard om gekoesterd te worden.

Waar vrijwel alle kastelen en kloosters in de loop der eeuwen gesloopt zijn, resteert in veel dorpen nog de kerk als - vaak verreweg - het oudste monument. Een gebouw vol geschiedenis, vol meubilair en voorwerpen die herinneren aan een rijk (of een juist arm) verleden, maar sowieso vol verhalen. Over de adel die haar sporen in veel kerken nadrukkelijk zichtbaar achterliet, maar ook over de gewone Friezen en hun lief en leed, hun doopdiensten, huwelijken en uitvaarten die de eeuwen door veelal in en vanuit kerken plaatsvonden. In een kerk voel je de tijd, hangen de gebeden en de liederen van je voorouders als het ware in de lucht, en wordt in hout, steen en kunstobjecten letterlijk tastbaar hoeveel mensen vroeger over hadden voor hun geloof.

De grote kerkdichtheid op het Friese platteland is anno 2018 nog steeds een intrigerend mysterie. Bijna ieder dorp, iedere terp kreeg een eigen kerk. Waar kwam die bouwwoede, die begon rond het jaar 1000, opeens vandaan? Zat er een groter plan achter? Hoe werd de bouw van al de kerken gefinancierd? Daar moeten heel veel mensen krom voor hebben gelegen, ben je al gauw geneigd te denken. Zelfs veel toeristen in de 21^{ste} eeuw zijn danig onder de indruk van alle kerkenpracht die hier in de loop der tijden ontstaan is.

Voor de dorpsbewoners zelf is de kerk veelal min of meer vanzelfsprekend aanwezig. Ze ervaren het vaak als “hun” kerk, óók als ze helemaal geen lid zijn van de religieuze kerkgemeenschap. De kerk, het gebouw wordt gezien als de “ziel” van het dorp. Zonder kerk is een dorp geen dorp, klinkt het dan. Het is die sterke verbondenheid van de dorpsbewoners met “hun” kerk, die mij in mijn werk als directeur van de Stichting Alde Fryske Tsjerken steeds weer inspireert en motiveert. Ook als de veelal krimpemde en vergrijzende geloofsgemeenschap het gebouw heeft moeten loslaten en overdragen aan de Stichting Alde Fryske Tsjerken, blijken er toch weer vrijwilligers op te staan die iets met het gebouw willen gaan doen. Leegstand en in verval raken is hier geen optie. Het zijn “levende stenen”, en geen dode monumenten.

Al sinds haar oprichting in 1970 streeft de Stichting Alde Fryske Tsjerken er naar dat de kerken gebruikt blijven worden. Dat ze een plek in de “mienskip” houden, waarmee ze bijdragen aan de leefbaarheid van het platteland, waar al zo veel voorzieningen verdwenen zijn, zoals Geert Mak heeft beschreven in zijn veel gelezen (en vertaalde) boek *Hoe God verdween uit Jorwerd*.

Graag spreek ik de wens uit dat nog heel veel mensen de Friese kerkenschat zullen komen bezoeken. U bent van harte welkom.

Gerhard A. Bakker, *directeur Stichting Alde Fryske Tsjerken*

Tel: 058 - 213 96 66 | info@aldefryskekerken.nl | www.aldefryskekerken.nl |
 Postbus 137, 8900 AC Leeuwarden | Emmakade 59, 8961 AG Leeuwarden

Gerhard Bakker

for Future for Religious Heritage

I strongly support your campaign to promote awareness of the rich and diverse heritage of religious buildings, lands, artifacts, traditions and stories which are rooted in Europe. They contribute enormously to the character of landscapes and of communities in Europe; to local diversity and communal pride; and to the unifying consciousness of this continent.

This special heritage faces great change, as the people move within or into Europe; as the balance of faiths shifts; as religious observance falters in some areas.

We need to face and handle that change in a generous, positive spirit, respecting the beliefs and the work of past communities and the realities of the present. The inherited evidence of past faith is not only a physical, but also ^{an} emotional, capital. We can use that capital in new or adaptive ways to serve ~~the~~ the physical, social, emotional and religious needs of the present generations. ~~in a way~~ We should do so in a way that respects the past and which sustains that capital for use in the future.

As a pantheist - that is, one who sees the divine in all that has been created - I plead that the religious heritage be widely interpreted, in the spirit of St. Francis.

Michael Dower

Michael Dower
Co-author of the European Landscape Convention

Prof. Michael Dower



BA
BERATUNGS-
AUSSCHUSS FÜR
DAS DEUTSCHE
GLOCKENWESEN

Beratungsausschuss für das Deutsche Glockenwesen

Lilian Grootswagers
Future of Religious Heritage
67 rue de Trèves
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Karlsruhe, den 11.07.2019

FRH-Torch-Initiative

Heavy metal for the soul

Bells have been around for over 5000 years as sounding signal instruments. For many hundreds of years they also served as a signal for important messages in Europe - there were fire, storm, court, clock bells and many other occasions. The different sounds informed the population about recurring and special events - comparable to today's tweets, which draw attention to themselves via mobile phone signal. The sound codes of the bells were well known. For about 1500 years they have been used in Christianity as call instruments and as a sign of liturgical acts. With their global sounds, they connect the cultural history of humanity and appeal to people - no matter which skin color, which ethnic origin, whichever nation they may be.

Even people who are not connected to the Church and Christianity can understand the ringing of a bell as a positive signal. For this it helps to convey its dedications: The noonday peal as a plea for peace and the evening bell as a request for the preservation of creation can probably be accepted by many, or at least tolerated. Thinking together and acting on the well-being of people and the world unites religions and worldviews.

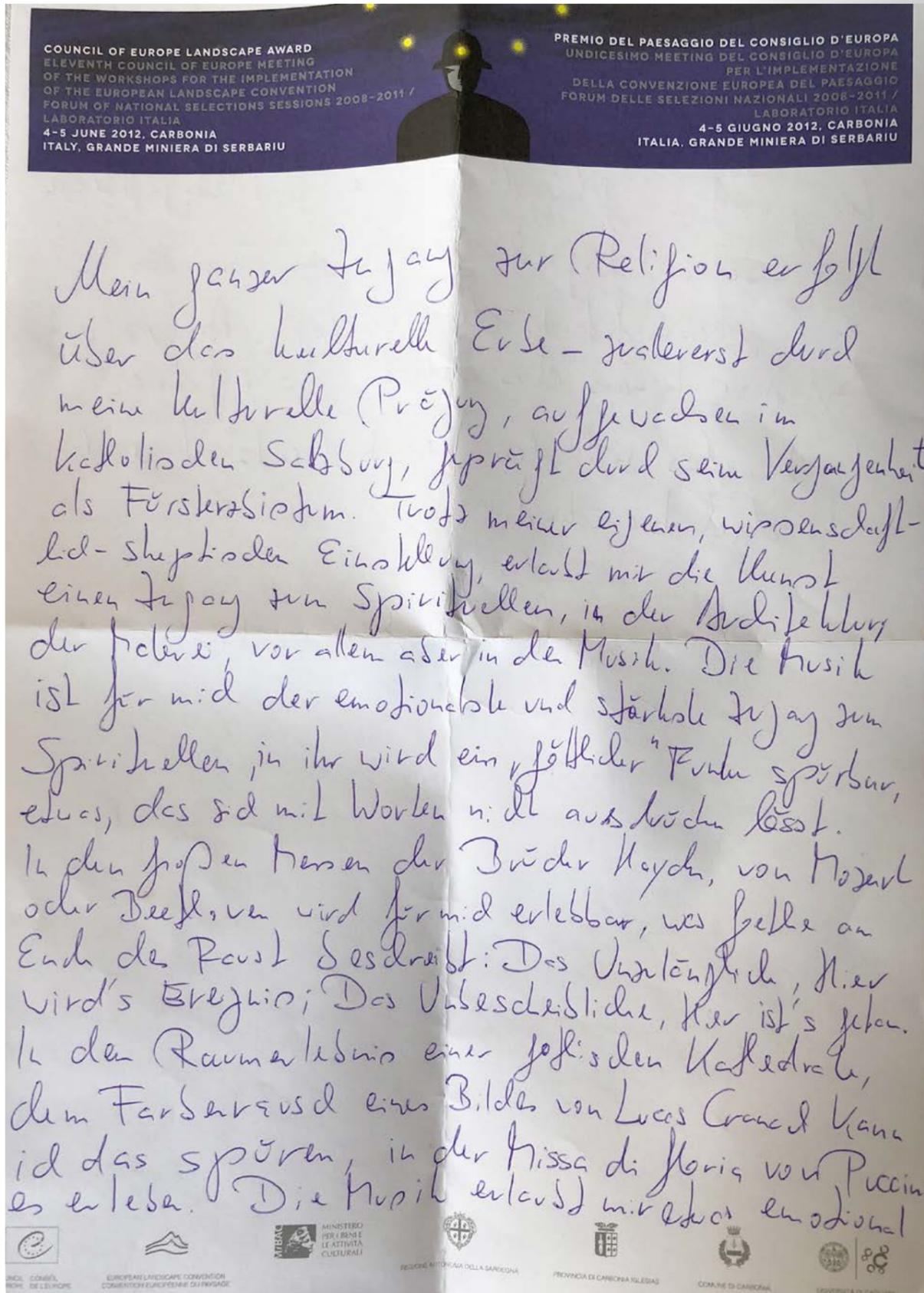
Dr. Martin Kares

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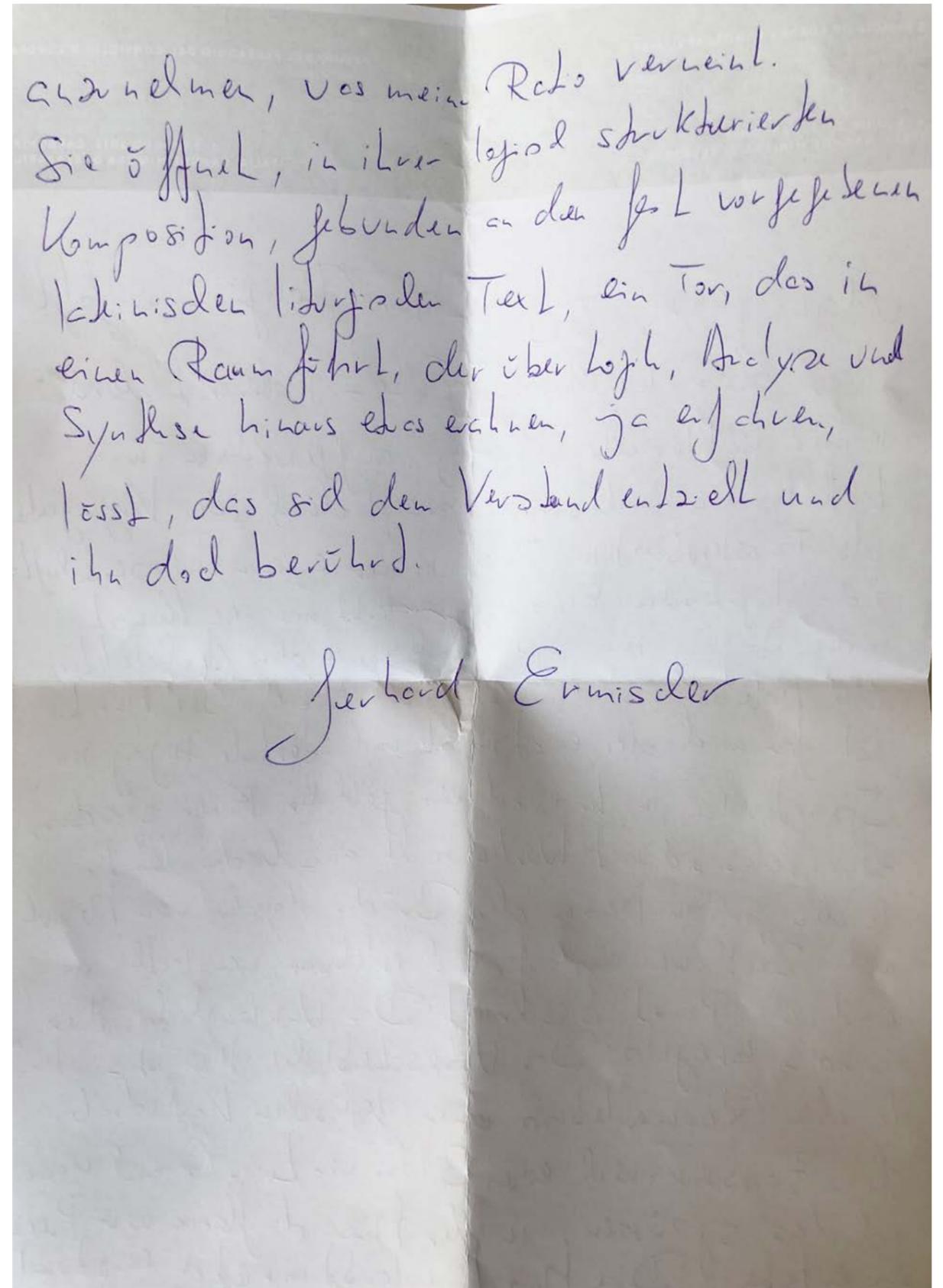


Dr. Martin Kares





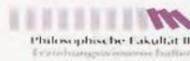
Dr. Gerhard Ermischer



Dr. Gerhard Ermischer



MARTIN-LUTHER-UNIVERSITÄT
HALLE-WITTENBERG



Institut für Katholische Theologie
und ihre Didaktik
Professur für Religionspädagogik
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Lilian Grootswagers
Future for Religious Heritage
67, rue de Trèves
1040 Bruxelles

Belgien

Halle (Saale), 30.4.2018

Als Wissenschaftler und speziell als Theologe beschäftige ich mich seit vielen Jahren mit den Chancen und Schwierigkeiten der Kommunikation von Religion und Glaube in der kulturellen Öffentlichkeit. Deshalb fällt es mir schwer, eine einzige Lieblingsgeschichte zu diesem Thema auszuwählen. Ich glaube vielmehr, dass gerade die Vielzahl von Geschichten des Umgangs mit dem religiösen Erbe in Europa den Reichtum unseres Kontinents ausmacht.

Diese Geschichten sind Geschichten von Nutzung, Umnutzung und Wiedernutzung des religiösen Erbes, das sich in Gebäuden, Objekten und nichtmateriellen Zeugnissen findet. Die Kommunikation dieses kulturellen Reichtums versuche ich in meiner Arbeit auf zweierlei Weise umzusetzen: einerseits durch das Begleiten, Beobachten und Analysieren solcher Prozesse im wissenschaftlich-theoretischen Diskurs mit unterschiedlichen Wissenschaften und Arbeitsgebieten und andererseits im Rahmen von transferorientierten Museums- und Ausstellungsprojekten, die ich mit meinen Mitarbeiterinnen und Mitarbeitern gestalte.

Der wissenschaftliche Diskurs findet seit 2008 im Rahmen einer in Zusammenarbeit mit dem Evangelischen Diakonissenhaus Berlin Teltow Lehnin veranstalteten Symposiumsreihe statt, die sich im zweijährigen Rhythmus dem Thema „Religion ausstellen“ widmet und sich mit der Frage beschäftigt, wie das spezifisch Religiöse bei religionsbezogenen Objekten und Themen im Rahmen musealer und ausstellungsbezogener Settings zum Thema werden kann, damit es für Bildung und persönliche Auseinandersetzung zur Verfügung steht.

Zum transferorientierten Bereich meiner Forschungsarbeit gehören darüberhinaus religionsbezogene Museums- und Ausstellungsprojekte, wie etwa das kürzlich eröffnete Informations- und Besucherzentrum im Kloster Wechselburg in Sachsen. Dort erhalten die Gäste dieses ganz besonderen Ortes historische, kunsthistorische, aber insbesondere auch theologische und spirituelle Informationen, die von der vielfältigen Geschichte religiöser Nutzung, Umnutzung und Neunutzung erzählen.

Aber vielleicht liegt mir ein anderer Ort noch mehr am Herzen: das Zisterzienserinnenkloster Helfta in Lutherstadt Eisleben, dessen stellvertretender Kuratoriumsvorsitzender ich sein darf. Dieses Kloster war im Mittelalter berühmt durch einige seiner Bewohnerinnen, die zu den bedeutendsten Mystikerinnen jener Epoche zählen und das Kloster zu einem ganz besonderen

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Prof. Dr. Harald Schwillus

geistlichen Ort machten: Mechthild von Magdeburg, Mechthild von Hackeborn und Gertrud von Helfta. Wie sehr viele Klöster in Deutschland wurde auch Helfta im Zuge der Reformation im 16. Jahrhundert aufgelöst und diente dann über viele Jahrhunderte als landwirtschaftliche Domäne. Während der Zeit der DDR war es ein Volkseigenes Gut (VEG). Die historischen Gebäude verfielen immer mehr und ihre Reste sollten 1988 gesprengt werden. Dies konnte durch den mutigen Einsatz etlicher Bürger von Helfta glücklicherweise verhindert werden. Als ich dort in den 1990er Jahren zum ersten Mal war, um diesen historisch und theologisch bedeutsamen Ort zu besuchen, fand ich ein fast verlassenes Gelände, die Ruinen der Kirche und einen wenig angenehmen Tümpel vor. Ein Ort also, dessen kulturelle und religiöse Bedeutung ein für alle Mal vergessen und vergangen zu sein schien. Doch existiert dort seit 1999 aufgrund der Unterstützung und der Zuversicht von Vereinen und Einzelpersonen, aber auch von kirchlichen Stellen nach über 450 Jahren wieder ein Zisterzienserinnenkloster, das nach vielen Schwierigkeiten 1999 diesen geistlichen Ort neu in Besitz genommen hat.

Aufgrund solcher Erfahrungen und Überlegungen halte ich es für eine zentrale Aufgabe europäischer Politik und Kulturförderung, dass das religiöse Erbe unseres Kontinents als Potential für die Zukunft gewürdigt und bewahrt wird. Das Torch-Projekt und FRH insgesamt machen meines Erachtens dieses Anliegen nachdrücklich deutlich. Dafür vielen Dank!

Harald Schwillus

Prof. Dr. Harald Schwillus

Historische Friedhöfe

Wenn ich auf Reisen in Europa bin,
 suche ich immer Friedhöfe auf.
 Friedhöfe haben eine besondere Atmosphäre,
 Menschen verbinden Geschichten, Geschichte
 und Erinnerungen mit Friedhöfen.
 Historische Friedhöfe spiegeln die Historie
 eines Ortes und der Region wider.
 Hier vereinen sich Kulturerbe und Naturerbe.
 Unterwegs in Europa habe ich viele
 unterschiedliche Friedhöfe besucht,
 christliche und jüdische, alte und neue
 Friedhöfe, und immer habe ich ein
 Stück weit die Menschen und den Wandel
 in der Gesellschaft verstanden.

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Es gilt, historische Friedhöfe zu erhalten
 und mehr Aufmerksamkeit für sie
 zu schaffen.

Dr. Inge Gotzmann

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Cardenal Arzobispo de Madrid

Septiembre 2018

Estimada Pilar:

Muchas gracias por invitarme a participar en este evento cultural y religioso de la "Redechea Europea del Patrimonio y la Cultura". Gracias a todos los que forman parte del Consejo de FBH.

Si hay que dar un testimonio escrito es el que poder manifestar una experiencia personal, quiero dar la siguiente:

Desde muy pequeños mis padres me llevaron al Monasterio de Santo Tomás de Liebana. Desde edad temprana me explicaron que allí estaba un trozo de la Cruz en la que murió Jesucristo. Siempre me impresionó que en un tierra de Cantabria estuviera presente el signo más grande de paz, reconciliación y amor que existe. En la Cruz se da la vida por amor a todos los hombres y para que todos tengan vida.

Liebana y su Santuario es el lugar donde se cuida, promueve y cultiva la "cultura del encuentro" manifestada especialmente en la Cruz. Allí se conserva el trozo más grande de la Cruz que trajo la salvación, por lo que Liebana es un momento a dar la vida, reconciliación.

con gran afecto y un bendición,
+ las bendiciones de los Santos
Arzobispo de Madrid

Monsignor Osoro



Francisco Javier Gómez Ruiz

ALCALDE

EXCMO. AYUNTAMIENTO DE LA VILLA DE POTES

Para cualquier lebaniego, estemos lejos o cerca, cuando se acerca mayo, hay una fecha marcada en nuestro calendario, el día 2 de mayo, día de la Santuca, patrona de Liebana.

Yo, como lebaniego enamorado de mi tierra, no soy menos.

Mis primeros recuerdos infantiles son de ir de la mano de mis padres y hermanos a esperar a la Santuca a Roscabao. Mis recuerdos juveniles me llevan a ir buscaba de madrugada a Dniezo... era un día de fiesta.

Con el paso de los años y la ausencia de personas tan queridas para mí, ese día está lleno de emoción y recuerdos.

En mi función como alcalde, es un orgullo recibir a la Santuca y exaltarla a su paso por mi pueblo, Potes.

Pero quizás hay algunos momentos imborrables en mi memoria... la primera vez que como alcalde recibí a la Santuca en Ojedo, acompañado de vecinos, amigos y con Fouso siempre presente en mi memoria.

El recuerdo imborrable de mis padres, que siempre me acompaña este día de fiesta.

Francisco Javier Gómez Ruiz

La parada de la procesión en la residencia de ancianos y las lágrimas emocionadas, que asoman a los ojos de nuestros mayores.

El primer día, que de la mano de mi hija María recibí a la Santuca en Ojedo, intentando transmitirla todo lo que la Santuca significa para mí.

La emoción que me embarga año tras año, mientras veo asomar los pendones a lo lejos, cuando ya divisó la Virgen con sus cerezas engalonada, el orgullo que siento cuando choco el bastón de mando y al portar las andas de la Virgen sobre mis hombros, representando a mis vecinos con el recuerdo emocionado de los que ya no están conmigo, son recuerdos imborrables en mi memoria.

Francisco J. Gómez Ruiz

Mi -

Siempre me intrigó la crónica Albeense del año 883 que describe el final de la batalla de Covadonga del año 722. En el pueblo de los Llanos (Camaleño) está en brouche un fragmento de dicha Crónica:

"Entonces los de las Huestes de los Farracentos que habían sobrevivido a la batalla de Covadonga, fueron sepultados en el Monte Lebedes al derrumbarse sobre ellos una montaña de rocas sepultándoles por el juicio divino. Ese día nació el Reino de Asturias".

Fuese juicio divino o no los musulmanes acamparon en el lugar peor de Liebana donde a través de los siglos los derrumbes de rocas y tierra son una constante. Pelajo sin duda les tardó una temporada conocedor como nadie del terreno

Miguel Ángel

Liebana 21 Abril 2018



Hay tres elementos del patrimonio arquitectónico religioso europeo que han estado estrechamente relacionados con mi vida, porque de alguna manera han sido testigos de ella.

Las iglesias románicas del valle de Boi-Taull, en mi pirineo natal. Elevan sus graciosos campanarios sobre los colores otoñales del bosque y sus ábsides contienen, o mejor contenían, impresionantes pinturas románicas cuando el arte balbuceaba en dar forma a la pasión y majestad de Cristo en medio de animales fabulosos. Una obra de arquitectos italianos llevados al valle por los señores feudales impresionados por lo que vieron en sus peregrinaciones a Roma. Son como campaniles florentinos, aunque más sólidos y pétreos, escondidos tras las colinas marcando la frontera ante el invasor musulmán.

Ellos fueron testigos de mis correrías de infancia. Largo tiempo abandonados, despojados de sus pinturas murales que hoy se pueden admirar en los museos de Barcelona, han recuperado su esplendor y calificados como Patrimonio de la Humanidad dan nueva vida a esos valles donde recaló en busca de paz y a cuya sombra me gustaría reposar para siempre.

Josep Borrell Fontelles



Las iglesias que bordean el valle del Loira, marcando una transición entre el románico y el gótico a medida que el río hacia avanza hacia el mar a su ritmo lento, casi imperceptible. Su reflejo en el agua al amanecer y sus perfiles recortados contra las gloriosas puestas de sol han acompañado también momentos importantes de mi vida, porque en una de ellas, la de Saint Clement du Thoureil, me case con mi primera mujer y a la sombra de sus claustros jugaron mis hijos durante los veranos de su infancia.

Su piedras es menos sólida que el granito pirenaico, el *tuffau* es casi arenisca comprimida que se descompone con el sol y el viento. Las curvas de sus capiteles y los rostros de los personajes que los adornan se han pulido con el tiempo y emanan una melancólica belleza, emparentada con la del río y las escenas de incesantes guerras que presenciaron

Y finalmente, la iglesia dominica de la Badia de Santo Doménico da Fiesole, en lo alto de las colinas que contemplan Florencia, donde tienen lugar las celebraciones académicas de Instituto Universitario Europeo que tuve el honor de presidir. Un conjunto monástico de extraordinaria belleza donde se refugiaron los nobles florentinos durante las pestes medievales, acogió a Boccaccio y fue testigo de las

Josep Borrell Fontelles

conspiraciones, que acababan en matanzas, entre los Pacci y los Medicis. Sus mosaicos de mármol que cubren las fachadas, su campanile que emerge sobre el claustro y las impresionantes vistas sobre Florencia son recuerdos indelebles de mi vida

Los europeos debemos sentirnos muy orgullosos de nuestro inmenso patrimonio arquitectónico religioso. Y contribuir a conservarlo

Potes, 21 de abril 2018


Josep Borrell Fontelles

Josep Borrell Fontelles



21-ABRIL-2018

Cofradía de la Stma. Cruz
Santo Toribio de Liébana
Apto. 4, 39570 POTES (Cantabria)

RECUERDOS DE NIÑO

TEMIA 4 O 5 AÑOS CUANDO SUBI POR PRIMERA VEZ AL MONASTERIO DE STO. TORIBIO DE LIEBANA. ERA EL 14 DE SEPTIEMBRE, FIESTA DE LA CRUZ Y ERA COSTUMBRE SUBIR LAS FAMILIAS A MISA Y MAS TAMBE LOS GRUPOS FAMILIARES SE REUNIAN PARA COMER EN LOS CAMPOS CERCANOS AL MONASTERIO. MI PRIMERA IMPRESION DEL MONASTERIO FUE DE TRISTEZA, RECORDO UN EDIFICIO ALARGADO CASI MEDIO BLANCO POR FUERA Y CASI DERAMADO EN EL INTERIOR. DETRAS ESTABA LA IGLESIA; ME PARECIO MUY GRANDE, CASI COMO LA DE POTES Y MUY PEA POR DENTRO; NO HABIA CASI NADA MAS QUE EL ALTAR..... PERO EN UN LATERAL HABIA UNA CAPILLA MAS PEQUEÑA CON UN TEGHO MUY BONITO Y UNA ESPECIE DE TEMPLETE, ENCIMA DEL ALTAR Y ALLI ESTABA "LA SANTISIMA CRUZ" QUE, TANTO EN CASA COMO EN EL COLEGIO DE MONJAS DE POTES, NOS DECIAN QUE EN ESA CRUZ HABIA MUERTO JERUCRISTO, EL HIJO DE DIOS. HUBO MISA SOLEMNE AUNQUE LOS DE MI EDAD QUERIAMOS SALIR A BUSCAR FUERA CON NROS AMIGOS... PERO AQUELLA CRUZ... ALGO HABIA EN ELLA DISTINTO A OTRAS IMAGENES DE OTRAS IGLESIAS. CON EL TRANSCURSO DE LOS AÑOS NOS ENTERAMOS DE MUCHAS COSAS: QUE LA CRUZ LA HABIAN TRAJIDO DE ASTORGA Y LLEVABA MUCHOS SIGLOS EN EL MONASTERIO. Y QUE UN PAPA EN 1512 HABIA CONCEDIDO AL MONASTERIO EL PRIVILEGIO DE CELEBRAR UN SUBILEO SIEMPRE QUE EL 16 DE ABRIL FUESE DOMINGO. TAMBIEN SUPIMOS QUE LA IGLESIA ERA DE ESTILO ROMANICO DE TRANSICION AL GOTICO Y LA CAPILLA DE LA CRUZ ERA ESTILO BARROCO COLONIAL.... Y QUE EL SUBILEO SOLO SE PODIA CELEBRAR EL 16 DE ABRIL DOMINGO; TAMBIEN SUPIMOS QUE, DESDE EL AÑO 1181, EXISTE UNA COFRADIA DE LA STA. CRUZ, ENCARGADA DE PROTEGER LA CRUZ. ACTUALMENTE LA FORMAN 2800 COFRADES, CASI TODOS DE ESTOS VALLES LEBANIESES; ACTUALMENTE ESTAN FINALIZANDO EL AÑO SUBILAR, QUE COMENZO EL 23-ABRIL-2017 Y FINALIZA MAÑANA 21-ABRIL-2018. TODO ESTO LO ESCRIBE AQUEL NIÑO DE 4 O 5 AÑOS, QUE DESDE HACE 2 AÑOS PRESIDE LA COFRADIA DE LA CRUZ DE STO. TORIBIO DE LIEBANA Y AHORA YA TIENE 69 AÑOS. ME LLAMO Fco. JAVIER LOMBRANA FERNANDEZ.

Francisco Javier Lombrana Fernández

Desde el sur de España, donde habito y donde tanto se le espera, los moradores abordamos el hecho religioso con un aderezo popular --calificado en algunos ámbitos como La Estampida de La Fe-- que hace algo más digerible el inequívoco sentido trágico de la Pasión y Muerte de Cristo. Pareciera que los andaluces de este rincón en concreto --el Valle del Guadalquivir-- supiéramos mejor que los de otras latitudes el final de una Semana, la Santa, en la que el Hijo de Dios es apresado, martirizado y crucificado. Si analizamos bien el comportamiento colectivo de las masas, observamos una diferencia crucial entre los fieles que viven esta Semana tan intensa aquí abajo y los que la gozan o sienten más arriba de las mesetas, de allá donde vinieron a desalojar al moro en los albores siglo XII Santos como el Rey Fernando y Sabios como su hijo Alfonso. Los andaluces de estos lares, a diferencia de los castellanos de la apasionante y ancha España de la sobriedad, sabemos que, al final de los pesares, Cristo resucita cuando asoma el Domingo, cosa que no estoy seguro que sepa la psiquis social heredada de las tierras de Castilla. A pesar de que los andaluces no somos sino castellanos a los que nos ha dado más el sol, la gravedad de los hechos rememorados cada Semana Santa tienen en este apasionante sur de las cosas una lectura menos funeraria. Los andaluces, como digo, sabemos que Cristo vuelve a la vida al cabo de su Muerte, con lo que a lo largo de los siete días --mas su previa Semana de Pasión-- abordamos con otro aspecto facial y emocional, con otra puesta en escena, la representación de sus Últimos Días. Algunos observadores, desde una cierta superficialidad y simpleza, se alarman ante lo que consideran una escenografía callejera excesivamente festiva y teatral, obviando que los andaluces de este bajo vientre de la península exteriorizamos los dramas bajo el manto venial de la alegría. Cuando los fieles que rodean el Paso de la Esperanza de Triana, por poner un ejemplo, gritan emocionados Vivas a la Belleza de Nuestra Señora, lloran desconsolados su marcha o vitorean felices su llegada, ----que es la de todos los años, en el mismo sitio, con las mismas voces o la misma música--, están celebrando la vida, la Fe, la cultura popular, la memoria, la tradición, la mano del padre que les llevó por vez primera a verla pasar, el sabor, el olor y el color de la primavera que asalta corazones en bandada, que no es otro que el color que el sol comienza a escribir por las azoteas del barrio cuando llega la Cuaresma.

Asomados a la cancela de esa primavera que se antoja una princesa caminando de puntillas, todos acudimos a lo mismo, a lo que sabemos de memoria, al plateado dolor de Pasión, al encaje del pañuelo de Caridad, al atronador silencio pálido del Calvario, al dolor gótico del Santo Entierro, a la silente Misericordia de Santa Cruz... a esa vista aérea de Dios que es una Cofradía, al sabor de incienso en las palabras, al sueño de capirotes en bandada sobre la penumbra de las calles. Compréndame cuando le digo que aquí en el Sur los nazarenos somos un llanto de luceros que expurgan penas de cera y penitencias de asfalto, y que igual que vuelve el paisaje con su delantal de flores, volvemos nosotros a abrir senderos hacia el llanto definitivo. Volvemos, en pocas palabras, a ser niños asombrados ante la Majestad de un Dios que ha bajado a vernos otra vez, al igual que en aquellos años llenos de aroma de vida recién estrenada, mucho antes de ese día en el que parten de verdad los barcos de juguete.

¡Qué puedo decirle de la Imagen titular de mi Cofradía, la Virgen de la Candelaria! Si se acercase por estos calores un Martes Santo a las seis de la tarde, vería cristalizar en gozo la espera de un año entero, largo como un bostezo de gato, para que el aire de su ternura se meta por nuestras venas como un río silencioso e imparable. Pasan los días de pétalos y úlceras y, al final, llega la hora en la que se encapota de Palios el cielo de Abril entre arrullos de gorriones y carcajadas de palomas. Ella sale a la calle y no hay corazón que no se venza ante sus vendavales.

Entienda lo que le digo no como un mero ejercicio de prosa pastelera: en este pliegue de España, Dios y Su Madre son un objeto de culto íntimo, personal, lleno de resortes secretos, pero también un

Carlos Herrera



objeto de culto masivo, feliz, despierto, luminoso y gozoso. En cada emoción ante la mecida de un Paso, están nuestros mayores, nuestros amores perdidos, nuestros hijos y toda la memoria posible almacenada en algún rincón inasible del sentidero. Perítame que le concluya estas letras urgentes con el soneto que escribí para mi Cofradía con motivo del Pregón de la Semana Santa que tuve el honor de pronunciar ante mi ciudad:

Caricia, y sollozo, y Fe y certeza

María ofrece como Aurora al día,

Eterno todo siempre en su belleza

De lumbre alta como luna fría

Por tu Hijo trajina una tristeza

Que en tu rostro se sacia de agonía

Y sin deseo el alma a darse empieza

Entera cuenta de su voz tardía.

El mundo en desafío ante tu puerta

Mi amor de hombre, carga endurecida

Y su pasado roto, y su alma herida

Mis extremos silencios de agua incierta

Y mi ansiedad de Ti, y sin medida,

Mi esperanza, Candelaria, y mi vida.

Carlos Herrera

Carlos Herrera

Úbeda, 12 marzo de 2018



La iglesia de San Lorenzo en Úbeda, ciudad patrimonio de la humanidad en el sur de España, estaba en ruinas a principio de 2013. Otro duro invierno como el de 2012 hubiera tenido efectos desastrosos en muros y tejado, probablemente entonces irreparables.

La iglesia comenzó a construirse en el siglo XIII al lado de uno de los torreones defensivos de la muralla medieval. En realidad, la capilla románica inicial se erige paralela a la muralla y utiliza el espacio alrededor del torreón como sacristía. Una ampliación posterior conecta la capilla y el torreón con delgados nervios de arcos góticos, ampliando el espacio para el culto. Un par de siglos más tarde, el apogeo renacentista completa el espacio con capillas de familias nobles sobre criptas funerarias y un coro, y facilita que la nave principal acoja varias centenas de fieles. Finalmente, en el siglo XVIII una cúpula barroca completa la iglesia según ha sido conocida en las últimos doscientos años.

A principios de 2013, varios miles de personas pidieron públicamente a las autoridades locales y religiosas una solución al deterioro de San Lorenzo. La Fundación Huerta de san Antonio se apoyó sobre esa movilización ciudadana para proponer al obispado, el propietario de San Lorenzo, un acuerdo razonable: financiar conjuntamente los trabajos de recuperación urgentes. A cambio, la fundación continuaría con la rehabilitación y utilizaría los espacios recuperados para actividades culturales.

El patrimonio es sobre todo historia común. La pérdida de la iglesia hubiera diluido ocho siglos de memoria colectiva del barrio con ella. Tengo que confesar que nosotros estábamos inicialmente más interesados en recuperar una parte de esa memoria que en rehabilitar la iglesia. De hecho, nos sentíamos parte de la memoria social en riesgo de desaparición ya que nuestros antepasados habían desarrollado los mismos oficios y trabajos o habían cultivado la tierra y las huertas como las personas que habían vivido alrededor de San Lorenzo.

La posible desaparición de la iglesia de San Lorenzo parece un mal sueño ahora. Alrededor de 50 actividades al año (conciertos de música, teatro, mercados tradicionales, exposiciones, seminarios y conferencias, etc.) se organizan en el interior de los muros, en ruinas hace apenas cinco años. Este nuevo empuje también empieza a tener efectos sobre la vida de barrio, con casas que se rehabilitan o familias jóvenes que vienen a habitar en los alrededores.

Estamos orgullosos de haber hecho esto con fondos privados en su casi totalidad. En una sociedad donde las miradas se giran hacia las instituciones públicas cuando se trata de un problema de patrimonio, nos hemos convertido en un ejemplo reivindicativo de compromiso ciudadano.

Nos queda mucho camino por recorrer en la rehabilitación de San Lorenzo. Pero no tenemos la misma presión ya que ahora se trata de decoración, yeserías, diseño y otros detalles. Además, los trabajos de rehabilitación pueden simultanearse en la utilización de los espacios con las actividades culturales. Los muros rejuvenecidos de piedra ofrecen un entorno maravilloso para sensibilizar acerca de la modernidad, la tolerancia y fomentar la importancia de la educación y la cultura. En realidad, pensamos que la combinación de la memoria del pasado con un presente dinámico y comprometido ayuda muy bien a preparar el futuro.

Un respetuoso saludo.

Nicolás Berlanga Martínez
Patronato de la Fundación "Huerta de san Antonio"

Nicolás Berlanga Martínez

Svenska kyrkan 
LUNDS STIFT

2018-04-23

Future for Religious Heritage

Letter by Lena Simonsson-Torstensson, Diocese Director at the Diocese of Lund

Jag är uppväxt i ett litet samhälle i Sverige närmare bestämt i det vackra dalarna som oftast ses av de som besöker vårt land som en symbol för Sverige med bl. a sina dalahästar och vackra folkdräkter. Mitt i det vackra landskapet finns det en mångfald av kyrkligt kulturarv precis som på många andra ställen i vårt land och i världen i övrigt. Alla har vi våra relationer till den bygd och de byggnader och traditioner som präglar människor där man växer upp och lever. I dalarna är många av kyrkobyggnaderna belägna vid en insjö, vilket landskapet har många av. Jag vill berätta om en tradition som jag själv fått uppleva både som liten i Siljans bygden (området runt Siljan som är benämningen på dalarnas största sjö) och som vuxen i min egen hembygd i södra dalarna. Nämligen kyrkbåtsrodden och kyrkbåtarna som man färdades till kyrkan med varje söndag. Människor tillverkade, samverkade och ansträngde sig för att ta sig till kyrkan, vilket var målet för dagen.

Det hela startade på 1700-talet. Kyrkbåtarna representerar en mycket gammal tradition i Siljans bygden. Kyrkbåtarna var förr ett kommunikationsmedel för färderna till kyrkan och söndagens gudstjänst. Varje by hade sin båt eller sina båtar. Det kunde vara upp till trettio kyrkbåtar med helgdagsklädda människor som varje söndag var på väg mot Leksands kyrka.

En av båtarna men namnet "Yrvädret" var störst och byggd 1803, och den kunde ta upp till 90 personer. Den äldsta kända kyrkbåten från Siljan, "Räven" har årtalet 1716 på stävnocken. Den har tio par åror och är säkerligen byggd på Sollerön.



Kyrkbåt med Kristineberg och Tingsnäs i bakgrunden. Anders Olssons arkiv.

Lena Simonsson-Torstensson

Söndagen 2 augusti 1857 reste Artur Hazelius på Österdalälven från Ål till Leksand. Han skriver bland annat följande i sin dagbok: "Kyrkbåten nalkades; det var en obeskrivlig anblick, en sådan, som kanske intet ställe - icke i Sverige och ej heller utom detsamma - torde ha något motstycke till. Den som ej sett en sådan båt, vet ännu ej hvad folklif i Dalarna vill säga".

Kyrkbåtarna är i bruk än idag, men numera som exklusiva inslag vid vissa speciella tillfällen sommartid. Man är i bygden angelägen om att slå vakt om såväl båtbyggarkonsten som om bevarandet av de gamla båttyper, som är typiska för bygden och som var så oumbärliga för människors möjlighet till förflyttning. Varje sommar genomförs kyrkbåtsrodd på olika sätt i de olika bygderna och det sker en gemenskap som också fortsätter att bestå då man deltar i gudstjänsten tillsammans, vilket jag fått uppleva de senaste somrarna.

Sammanfattningsvis så kan man säga att detta är ett ytterligare bevis på hur kyrkans och dess kulturarv har betydelse för människor genom att traditioner skapas och för att hitta en lösning på ett färdigt sätt att ta sig till gudstjänsten.

Min relation till kyrkobyggnader och dess kulturarv är mina egna upplevelser från det jag var barn tills dess jag är vuxen är att de innehåller så många delar. Allt från de stora valven som för mig symboliserar människans inre till de enkla kalkmålningarna som är naivistiska i sina framtoning som dåtidens konstnärer eller traktens målarkunniga tolkade sin omgivning och gav bilder ur bibeln.

Våra kyrkobyggnader är fulla av historia. Byggnader består av många olika användningsområden där gudstjänster firas och viktiga händelser i människors liv äger rum i såväl glädje som sorg. Det är viktigt att kyrkobyggnaden med sin inre kraft och bevarande av kulturarv finns kvar och vårdas. Mer än någonsin behöver vi människor stunden i kyrkorummet för att finna den inre ro och sändas ut i verkligheten och det samhälle som är vår vardag. Kyrkan har alltid tagit plats i samhället och trots att det nu sker stora förändringar i våra stadsmiljöer där kampen om horisonten hårdnar, så representerar kyrkan alltjämt det största samlade kulturarvet i vår del av världen. Nya kyrkor skapas med nya arkitekturer men alla har samma budskap trots att kyrkans roll har förändrats i samband med samhällets utveckling varje samtid formar sin kyrka och sitt kulturarv vilket är viktigt att så sker.

Lena Simonsson-Torstensson
Diocese Director
Lund, Sweden

2018-09-26
Lund

My memory

In 1997 I lived in London, working at a café in Camsey Street. I took a break from my studies in Sweden, just having fun in London for two years, learn some English.

My memory is about one of my favorite bands playing at the Union chapel in Islington, London. I remembered this because I saw them again here in Stockholm, Sweden last weekend. The band is Current 93, the lineup was broad and the poet himself was there, David Tibet.

The Union chapel concert is my favorite concert of all times, part the music, part the venue. The sound was acoustic, melancholic, poetic and gothic. The chapel made of stone and bricks, the

lighting, rare materials and the
hunk arches, wooden benches.

The music and the building
was one and it felt good.

I remember I thought, can you
actually drink a pint in a
church? Yes I could, and
it was good.

P.s. I still got the record from
the live concert, it's
called "Cats drunk on copper"

P.s.

Rickard Isaksson

Rickard Isaksson



Henrik Lindblad, Lund, Sweden, 24 April 2018

Memories of a Lost Church (which might be resurrected again)

In the middle of a very dark night in November 2001, a farmer woke up by a fierce fire. The old wooden church next to his homestead was burning. He called the fire brigade, which had a long way to drive to this remote rural area in mid-south Sweden. There was nothing to do when they arrived. The old timber building was burned down to ashes. There were no fire sprinklers and the newly installed alarm was not activated. Several years later, it was revealed that an arsonist had deliberately put fire to the church, without any rational reason.

Except from removed pews and some other lost furnishings and inventories, Södra Råda Old church was an exceptionally well preserved medieval timber church. All walls and ceilings were decorated with magnificent suites of medieval paintings. The oldest paintings in the choir were of a very high quality, probably made by a French artist in 1323, the very same year the church was consecrated.

In the 19th century the population grew rapidly in many parts of Sweden. When the parish decided to build a new and larger stone church, their plan was to demolish the old wooden church. During the 19th century there was an awakening interest for historic buildings and antiquities. The Antiquarian Nils Månsson Mandelgren went to Södra Råda in 1849 to visit this beautiful though neglected old church. When he understood that the parish planned to demolish it, he managed to get funding to buy the building in situ and it could be saved as a museum. Until the fire 2001, the church was owned by the state and managed by the Swedish National Heritage Board.

I still remember the day when I heard the news, working at a museum in another part of Sweden. I was shocked, knowing this church belonged to the most valuable cultural heritage in Sweden. The loss was national and even universal. This old timber building was likely to have values worthy a UNESCO World Heritage. But to me it was also a personal loss. The old church was situated in my home province of Värmland, just a few kilometres from our family cottage. The church was open in summertime and possible to enter for a modest fee of 10 kronor. I was there several times, cycling to it on the narrow and winding road through southern Värmland's dense spruce woods, lightened by modest pastures and occasionally open water. Except for the guide, I used to be alone in the church, few visitors found their way to this very rural site. Most of my museum colleagues know about the church and its unique paintings, but very few had been there and they regretted it.

It came out something good of the fire. The values of the lost church were more acclaimed than ever, and the general importance of documentation and safeguarding was highlighted. There are still about ten medieval wooden churches preserved in Sweden, hopefully all of these very fragile monuments are now equipped with modern fire sprinkler systems and alarms. The National Heritage Board even decided to reconstruct the vanished church, using the same materials and methods the original craftsmen would have used. It appeared to be a very difficult task and the project is not yet completed. However, much have been learned about medieval building technique through the years. After the church burned down, the numbers of visitors to the site increased every year, which is something of an irony.

So what can we learn from the sad story of the old church in Södra Råda? Most of it is rather obvious. We can never promote and inform enough about the values of historic churches. The importance of safeguarding, documenting and studying these very fragile monuments should always be emphasized. If they do get destroyed, we would then know how they appeared and were constructed, maybe enough to rebuild them again. But my strongest and very simple advice is to go and see all these wonderful historic churches you have heard about and been thinking to visit. At least you took the chance to see them while they were still standing there.

Henrik Lindblad

Henrik Lindblad



THE CHURCHES CONSERVATION TRUST

Dear Europe,

The historic parish church is one of the defining elements of the English landscape, but also their importance runs much deeper. These architectural gems sit in most communities, but they are very complex as they represent faith as well as the story of place. I fear that the historic church may become irrelevant to society if we do not take steps to explain their importance, spiritually, physically and historically. Historic churches may well be of national or international significance but they are a local asset. Historic churches tell a story of everyone from the poorest to the richest and everyone in between. These stories are imbedded in the stones of our historic churches and we must continue to tell them.

Society Building, 8 All Saints Street, London N1 9RL
0845 303 2760 visitchurches.org.uk

President: HRH The Prince of Wales Chairman: Peter Ainsworth

Vice Presidents: Lord Brooke of Sutton Mandeville CH PC Baroness Kay Andrews OBE

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Dr Bettany Hughes Dr Loyd Grossman CBE FSA

Registered Charity No. 258612



Peter Aiers



THE CHURCHES CONSERVATION TRUST

I have the great privilege of working for the Churches Conservation Trust. We looked after 353 historic churches in England that do not have a worshipping congregation. We are given more churches every year. Although there are pressures on the Church of England, local communities do love their churches and when given the opportunity they make them shine. I was recently at St Peter's Preston Park where the local community raised money and executed a project to restore the chancel's decorative scheme. Not only did they do this but they engaged the whole community from young toddlers with art and events. The building now truly reflects how the community feels about this important historic building; it shines!

If society cares about these buildings they shine, if it does not they decline. We all have a responsibility to make them shine!

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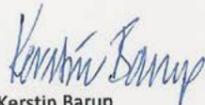
Peter Aiers



For Future for Religious Heritage

I grew up in a house with a garden in a small village in the south of Sweden. The neighbours around had houses and gardens. God had the most beautiful house, a huge white-washed church with a breathtaking interior, overwhelming acoustics and a beautiful garden – the cemetery with even more people than in the village. As an architect and professor of architectural conservation I have had the privilege to work a lot with religious heritage, to preserve, maintain and develop this foothold of belonging as something great and beautiful; material and intangible. My work always includes co-operation with lots of other professionals such as theologians, church members, academics, students, landscape architects, artists, musicians, historians, conservators, archaeologists, engineers, craftsmen, politicians and civil servants. Lund university has given me and a professor of theology the possibility to teach students of architecture together with theology students to increase interest and knowledge about religious heritage. In the work with my architects' bureau co-operations shift, but always add both knowledge and new questions. The tasks are manifold and seldom alike; from lime-washing of a facade to the conservation and development of entire cathedrals, it is always a learning process.

In Sweden the churches constitute our most extensive built heritage. It is currently exposed to the biggest change during its thousand-year history due to the Church's separation from the state 18 years ago and the changes in our society. These changes bring opportunities but also risks: In the work with churches the aim must be a sustainable built environment which demand long lasting and maintainable quality in materials, craftsmanship and workmanship. I think this challenge is one of the most interesting one can get as an architect. Quality and beauty can not be ignored; lack of money is never a motive to stop the cultivating of embedded qualities and resources in the existing heritage. Too much transformation can make the magnificent and sacred atmosphere which separates a church from a profane building to fade away. In times of intangible and indefinite change in society the religious heritage is a significant anchor when life gets more complicated than I found it in the village where I grew up.



Kerstin Barup
Architect MSA
Professor of Architectural Conservation
Sweden

Prof. Kerstin Barup



For Future for Religious Heritage: Torch Initiative

Lund, 26th April 2018

St Peter-on-the-Wall is a tiny seventh century chapel on the deserted Essex coast near Bradwell-on-Sea. It was built by Irish missionaries re-using materials from an earlier Roman fort on the site. St Peter's is one of several surviving church buildings from the 600s which are England's oldest church buildings, in fact they are England's earliest surviving intact buildings of any type and they are still in use for the purpose for which they were built.

Our extraordinary cathedrals, including two World Heritage Sites, are the jewel in the crown of England's built heritage. Indeed churches and cathedrals make up 45% of England's grade 1 or most significant historic buildings.

And the best news is they've never been in such good physical shape. This is down to a combination of local responsibility and maintenance, paid for by voluntary giving, fundraising particularly from the National Lottery, some commercial activity and occasional government grants.

But religious affiliation is changing in England as it is across Europe and we can no longer rely on the model based on voluntary giving mostly from congregations. We need to be nimble and more inventive and the consensus is the solution lies in greater community involvement with religious heritage buildings combined with more consistent government funding, critically where local populations are small or community support is not viable.

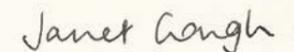
St Peter-on-the-Wall has no regular congregation but is sustained by many walkers and summer visitors together with the local parish priest supported by Chelmsford Cathedral and was one of the first churches to be awarded a grant from the UK Government's Church Roofs Fund.

My other inspiring story comes from Leicester, today a multicultural and multifaith city thanks to significant post-war immigration from England's former colonies. In 2012 King Richard III (killed in battle 1485) was discovered under a car park 50m from Leicester Cathedral and it was decided to bury him in full honours in Leicester Cathedral. The locals really got behind this and it was heart-warming to watch King Richard's cortege as it was driven through the streets of Leicester, cheered on by huge multicultural crowds on the way to his reinterment in Leicester Cathedral. And they claim this wonderful uniting civic act focusing on Leicester Cathedral was the reason Leicester City Football Club won the premiership the following year in 2016!

Whether it's the walkers and picnickers at tiny 7th century St Peter-on-the-Wall or the multicultural, multifaith crowds that lined the streets leading to Leicester Cathedral for King Richard III, there is huge support for our historic religious buildings.

Our challenge is to create the conditions to sustain a working partnership of local and national support to preserve, use and develop these precious historic religious buildings to serve everyone now and for the future.

With every support for FRH Torch initiative and best wishes,



Janet Gough OBE
Former Director of Cathedrals and Church Buildings, Church of England

Janet Gough OBE

Jono
JONATHAN LORD HART

We needed to throw a concert.
Dave Stewart recommended a church.
I thought that was a horrible idea.
It was not.
We found that if you fill a church
with art & artists that a new
audience will walk through the doors.
And with new audiences come
new ideas & solutions →

A heritage space elevates those
within it, and inspires people to
get involved.

We were looking for new places
to perform & also found a
new way for a community to
connect.

The church building showed us the
way as soon as we filled it
with art. ~~Jono that~~

Jono Hart

Dave Stewart
ENTERTAINMENT

To the F.R.H.,

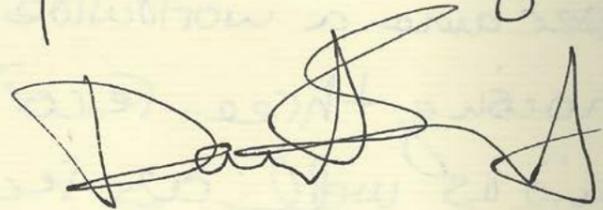
In 1983 along with my
partner Annie Lennox we bought
a church in London and spent
over a million pounds as we
pamstakingly converted and transformed
this abandoned building into a vibrant
creative center. Over the years this
became a worldwide famous space
housing three recording studios
and as well as recording ourselves
with orchestras and Gospel choirs
went on to record some of the
greatest artists in the world, U2,
Bob Dylan, Adele and Mick Jagger
to name a few.

Dave Stewart

For quite a while now I have been working closely with the C.C.T helping raise money to restore a church in my hometown of Sunderland and ended up in March 2018 securing ~~a~~ £2.8 million in funding.

I look forward to working with the F.R.H. as we re-imagined these heritage spaces together.

Yours Sincerely



Dave Stewart

My memory / mitt minne

Mitt minne är egentligen inte ett minne. Det är mer en känsla eller rent av en onre vetskap, där kyrkorummet spelar en viktig roll i mitt liv.

För mig är kyrkorummet en bärare av historia, min egen men också alla de som levat före mig och de som kommer efter mig.

Rummet är också en bärare av tro, en plats för att dela liv tillsammans, både med de jag höinner och de som är ohäunda för mig.

Glädje och sorg sitter i väggarna som låter oss ana evighetens ringslag och de låter oss ana att det finns något som är större än mig.

Kyrkorummet är bärare av trygghet, sammanhållning och uthållighet! Varje generation har utifrån sina förutsättningar, fått uppgiven att bära detta vidare. Det är vårt lån av framtiden.

Anna Svensson Melin
Föreläsningssherde Norra Nöbbelöv
och Torns församlingar, Lund.

The letters, Lund

Anna Svensson Melin

• **Mont-devant-Sassey, le 2 juin 2018**

Mesdames, Messieurs,

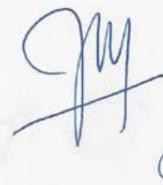
Mon nom est Juliette Roy. J'exerce comme directrice départementale de l'Office National des Anciens Combattants et Victimes de Guerre de la Meuse. Après des études en histoire et en communication, en France et en Allemagne, au cours desquelles j'ai concentré mes recherches sur l'étude de la mémoire de la bataille de Verdun, j'ai travaillé comme journaliste pour la mairie de Metz ainsi que comme chargée de communication chez Renault, dans une usine de fabrication de véhicules utilitaires. J'ai également été en charge, pour le département de la Meuse, de dossiers d'animation en vue du Centenaire de la Première Guerre mondiale, ainsi que du projet d'inscription au Patrimoine Mondial de l'Humanité de l'UNESCO des paysages et sites de mémoire de la Grande Guerre. J'ai complété mon parcours par une formation à l'Institut des Hautes Etudes de la Défense Nationale.

Aujourd'hui mes fonctions à l'ONACVG consistent à décliner trois missions principales, confiées à l'office par le Ministère des Armées : la solidarité, afin d'accompagner les plus démunis ; la réparation, qui a pour but de reconnaître l'engagement et les souffrances vécues au service de la nation ; la mémoire, pour célébrer, partager et transmettre.

Le département de la Meuse recèle de nombreux et fabuleux trésors patrimoniaux, témoins d'une histoire multiséculaire d'une richesse extraordinaire. Situé à la confluence des invasions, au carrefour des grandes routes de commerce, au cœur des guerres et au centre de l'Europe, il a su renaître de ses cendres des plus belles manières qui soient. Au sortir de la Première Guerre mondiale, avec 171 communes sinistrées à plus de 50%, la Meuse fait partie des 13 départements touchés par les destructions. En mars 1919, la loi Cornudet impose aux communes de mettre en place une véritable réflexion sur l'urbanisme, tout en concevant cette tragédie comme une occasion unique d'améliorer les cadres de vie.

En ce sens, les églises de la reconstruction, discrets témoins de ce tournant majeur de l'histoire du XXème siècle, démontrent de façon remarquable que l'Homme, confronté aux extrêmes, a toujours su réinvestir son territoire pour rebâtir un avenir meilleur. Ces édifices religieux, souvent de taille plus modeste que les églises d'avant-guerre, ne font généralement pas l'objet d'une réelle innovation architecturale, adoptant un style épuré. Cependant, de véritables œuvres architecturales voient le jour, alors que d'autres sont décorées par les plus grands artistes de l'époque. La maîtrise de l'art du vitrail par le maître verrier nancéien Jacques Gruber le dispute au talent du peintre Lucien Lantier, auteur de créations uniques qui subliment de nombreuses églises mais aussi, faut-il le souligner, les chapelles des villages détruits du champ de bataille de Verdun.

Comment alors imaginer que ce patrimoine exceptionnel tombe dans l'oubli, alors même que le Centenaire de la Grande Guerre passé, l'intérêt pour cette mémoire profondément ancrée dans le socle national, viendra indéniablement à décliner ? Il revient donc aux acteurs d'aujourd'hui et aux citoyens de demain de s'engager pour continuer à faire vivre ce patrimoine et sa mémoire à travers les générations. Je soutiens tout particulièrement les initiatives telles que celle de l'association Eglises Ouvertes Grand-Est de France, qui a notamment pour ambition de créer un circuit des églises de la reconstruction, en y associant de Jeunes Ambassadeurs du Patrimoine qui sauront insuffler toute l'énergie de la jeunesse à cette mission, faisant leur la transmission de la mémoire et de l'héritage culturel. Ils seront les passeurs d'Histoire, de leur Histoire.

 Juliette Roy.

Juliette Roy

Bonjour à toutes et à tous, Je m'appelle Rita Jabourn et voici mon mari Yezou Jabourn, nous sommes Français d'origine syrienne. Mon mari est arrivé en France en 1963 et moi en 1992. Je suis médecin pédiatre et mon mari gynécologue.

Nous venons tous les deux d'un pays, la SYRIE, qui a une civilisation millénaire et qui possède un patrimoine religieux et historique très riche. L'héritage historique imprègne et embellit tous les coins de ce pays. Nous avions l'habitude de passer sous la porte St Thomas, de nous promener dans les ruelles de la vieille ville de Damas, marcher à côté de l'église St Anne, où St Paul avait reçu la guérison après avoir été aveuglé et converti sur le chemin de Damas, puis passer à côté de la chapelle St Paul qui était bâtie à l'endroit où l'apôtre s'est enfui dans un panier.

Lors de sa visite à Damas en 2007, le pape Jean-Paul II a notamment pu rappeler que c'est depuis DAMAS que le christianisme s'est répandu dans le monde entier.

Malgré l'histoire est également présente dans toute la SYRIE: en effet, ma belle-mère vient d'un village perché dans la montagne nommé Maaloula, dont vous avez sans doute entendu parler. Maaloula abrite des Refuges troglodytes et des édifices religieux datant des 1ers siècles du christianisme. Ce village a été détruit par les groupes islamistes en 2013 qui ont tué les hommes, saisi les maisons, incendié et profané les églises mais ils ont surtout tenté d'effacer les racines et l'histoire. Libérée en Avril 2014, la ville de Maaloula se relève peu à peu des ruines et essaye de passer un bon moment. Bonne

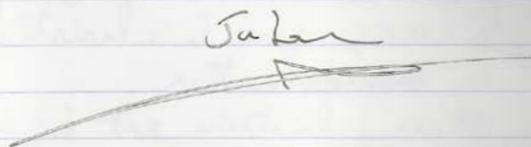
Rita Jabourn

à la volonté de ses habitants, des institutions gouvernementales et des bénévoles, ses églises et ses monastères sont en cours de restauration et des musées ont de nouveau pu être célébrés en araméen, la langue du Christ. Cet héritage religieux est notre histoire, notre identité, notre mémoire mais pas seulement: c'est aussi l'histoire de l'humanité et des trésors universels inestimables. Les conserver, les aimer, les transmettre aux générations futures, c'est garder ses racines et son identité mais c'est également une responsabilité, un devoir. Et c'est tout particulièrement dans le contexte des conflits actuels au Moyen-Orient, face à l'horreur, la guerre et l'antéchristisme, un message de paix, de vie et d'espérance.

le 02-06-18
Rita Jaboun



Nizma Jaboun



Rita Jaboun

Mont-devant-Sassey - 2 Juin 18.

Je suis historienne de l'art, médiéviste. Mais je n'avais jamais entendu parler de Mont-devant-Sassey quand j'y suis arrivée, par hasard, en 1997. Premier miracle: l'église était ouverte, grâce à un petit groupe de bénévoles. Et j'ai su tout de suite que je ne repartirais plus!

En w-e ou en été, nous avons vite participé et nous avons découvert qu'une église au milieu d'un village, c'est toute l'histoire du village et un formidable outil d'intégration. Pas de distinction entre le natif et la citadine en vacances: on avait tous les mains dans le même seau de ciment!

Les églises ont aussi le pouvoir extraordinaire de RASSEMBLER LES GENS, comme elles le font depuis des millénaires lors d'un mariage ou d'un enterrement, lorsqu'on y trouve asile pendant les guerres, pour l'office du dimanche ou lorsqu'elles rythment simplement la vie de tous les jours en servant la "craûte" ou la "soupe". Leur fonction et leur sens se sont modifiés mais elles demeurent des repères pour tous et elles peuvent être de formidables outils de socialisation.

Le travail ici était énorme, pour redonner vie à une église aussi immense dans un si petit village. Il a fallu aller chercher tout le monde, les jeunes qui s'enfuyaient et les

Nanou Bouillet

vieux isolés, chez eux, les bricoleurs et les maladroits. Il a fallu, comme aujourd'hui, s'entraider et s'échanger des coups de main entre associations, se prêter du matériel ou des compétences...

Et il y a eu des miracles, à Mont ! Pas comme à Lourdes, mais on a vu des gens fâchés depuis des générations, ne sachant même plus pourquoi, se reparler autour d'un job de peinture ou à chaque extrémité d'un meuble à déplacer.

Cette église, c'est avant tout une FORTIDABLE AVENTURE HUMAINE, une aventure qui dure ici depuis presque mille ans puisque l'église est toujours debout ! Elle a failli tomber dans l'oubli mais elle accueille aujourd'hui près de 11.000 visiteurs par an.

Nous sommes fiers de vous la faire découvrir et de continuer l'aventure.



Nanou BOUILLET
Vice-Présidente des
Amis de l'Église de Mont
Présidente de EOC&F
Églises Ouvertes Grand Est France

Nanou Bouillet

Bonjour, on vient de me présenter deux fois, je vais vous épargner une troisième, et aussi beaucoup ici me connaissent parce que je suis du village. Alors au début, comme tous les jeunes du village, cette église n'était pas ma plus grosse préoccupation : pour moi elle était là, et c'est tout, je n'y faisais pas plus attention que ça. De manière générale, pour la plupart des gens, c'était juste le seul endroit du village où on captait du réseau, et on pouvait être tranquille pour passer la soirée.

Et un jour, ma prof de maths, Annie Champenois, qui fait partie de l'Association des Amis de l'Église de Mont depuis le premier jour, est venue me voir à la fin d'un cours pour me demander si éventuellement, j'étais intéressé pour venir un weekend de mai pour assurer l'accueil à l'église. Directement, je me suis dit « de quoi elle me parle ? Assurer l'accueil à l'église ? », Et en même temps j'étais curieux de savoir ce qu'elle voulait dire par là, donc je lui ai dit « pourquoi pas ? ». Sachant que, de toute façon, je n'avais pas grand-chose d'autre à faire.

A la fin du weekend, j'étais plutôt satisfait et ce pour deux raisons principalement : premièrement j'avais appris des trucs sympas et deuxièmement, on ne va pas se le cacher, j'étais surtout content d'avoir gagné de l'argent. Alors je suis allé voir Annie pour lui dire que si jamais y avait besoin, j'étais disponible. C'est donc comme ça que j'ai commencé à venir 1 ou 2 semaines par été à l'église pour la faire visiter. Et j'ai rapidement découvert que dans notre petit village, on avait vraiment un monument d'exception, surtout quand je rencontrais des visiteurs qui venaient de très loin uniquement pour venir voir cette église.

Aujourd'hui, je suis vraiment fier d'avoir découvert ce trésor que j'ai appris à faire découvrir après toutes ces années, et d'avoir participé au succès grandissant de cette aventure.

C'est pour ces raisons que ce que je souhaite le plus, c'est que tous les actuels et futurs jeunes guides puissent vivre cette aventure comme je l'ai vécu.

Je suis donc totalement prêt à, comme a dit Stéphane Bern, reprendre le flambeau.

Kevin de Zorzi

Resonance

Mont-devant-Sassey, France
June, 2nd 2018

It is a real pleasure for us to attend this exceptional day in this church Notre-Dame de l'Assomption Mont-devant-Sassey. It is for us a "return to the source". The adventure of this musical project **Resonance** could indeed not have been born without this jewel of Romanesque architecture in Lorraine and without the team of passionate volunteers of *the Friends of Mont Church Association*. They have been working here for many years in order to revive and preserve this remarkable heritage.

Mont-devant-Sassey Church was our recording studio for the first Resonance album. The beauty of the place, the remarkable church acoustics, the warm Mayor and inhabitants welcome in the heart of this French Meuse village, offered us ideal conditions to carry out this ambitious project which associates MUSIC and HERITAGE.

We are composing a repertoire of melodies for guitar and voice, inspired by texts and works of ancient music from the 12th to the 18th centuries. We offer a musical exploration in the spirit of troubadours along with a journey through timeless themes including the fragility between friendship and love or the antagonism between men and women that the countertenor voice suggests.

The *Resonance* album was recorded here and was presented during two seasons from 2015 to 2017 in major international Festivals, basilicas, churches, chapels, castles, museums ... more than 80 concerts in France, Belgium, the Netherlands, India, Morocco, ... with a first album released in spring 2016.

Estrella music – 12 rue Premier – Allée C – F-26100 Romans-sur-Isère – France
E-mail : info@estrellamusic.fr - www.resonance-music.fr - P 1/2

Samuel Cattiau & Quentin Dujardin

Resonance

The new album is in preparation, **Illuminations**. It was recorded at the abbey of Noirlac, jewel of the Cistercian architecture near Bourges in France. It's a new and original repertoire with 6 musicians including *Matthieu Saglio*, cellist, *Léo Ullmann*, violinist, *David Doron Sherwin*, cornettist, and *Bijan Chemirani*, percussionist, who are joining this new musical adventure.

This cultural heritage for which we are gathered today is our heritage. It's up to you, and it's up to us artists and musicians, to make it live like today for this great event and tonight for this exceptional quartet concert.



Samuel Cattiau & Quentin Dujardin
www.resonance-music.fr

Estrella music – 12 rue Premier – Allée C – F-26100 Romans-sur-Isère – France
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Samuel Cattiau & Quentin Dujardin



European Economic and Social Committee
The President

Brussels, 04 September 2018

When growing up in Italy, tangible cultural heritage was part of my everyday life. I was furthermore educated in a Jesuit school- thus religion and religious heritage, learning and understanding were inseparably entwined.

When I have the time to stand still and experience places of cultural heritage, I am always struck by a sense of humbleness before the infinity of time and space, in which we inhabit just a small passing instant.

The artists and architects who created buildings and artworks which are now part of our 'tangible religious heritage' once were contemporary artists, pouring their sensitivity, their sense of beauty, hope and adoration into their works. Today's arts will link us with the next generations; beauty will persevere beyond the spans of our individual lives.

Our religious heritage also stands as a memory of difficult times, in which the churches and religions were used as justification for man's ambitions and warfare. But rather than tarnishing the beauty of these places, this ambiguity adds a profoundly human warning to us all to strive for peace and mutual respect.

The freshness of air, the echoing of steps, the filtering of light through cut-glass windows, the calm instants stolen from our bustling lives- I cherish these moments.

Let me pick a few recent ones:

For example, I could underline the strength emanating from the Burgos cathedral on the Camino de Santiago, providing pilgrims with a refuge for spirit and body after a long day's dusty walk. Incidentally, the similarity between this cathedral and the Brussels' cathedral of St. Michael et St. Gudule makes me smile when I pass, creating links between my memories and my 'second home' in the Capital of Europe.

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Secretariat +32 2546 8409 — EESC web page: <http://www.eesc.europa.eu>

Luca Jahier



And how can I not mention the Sixtine Chapel, this chapel at the centre of Catholic faith. Its architectural beauty is enhanced by a multitude of frescos, including the famous Last Judgement by renaissance painter Michelangelo. The ceilings bring together scenes and symbols both of Christian theology and renaissance humanism with its focus on social responsibility and on the human being as a driving force.

Furthermore, the UNESCO world heritage medieval Boyana Church in Sofia, with its walls covered in frescos from as early as the 11th–12th-century, the famous second layer from the 13th century and up to the 19th century: Generations of painters immortalised their hopes and devotion on the walls, covering older paintings, which were preserved through this layered process. This is perhaps an interesting symbol of the layers of our heritage and identity, in which one does not erase, but builds upon and preserves the former.

Lastly, my recent visit to the Krakow led me to the 14th century cathedral of Archbishop Karol Wojtyla before he became Pope John Paul II- a clear commitment of the Church to Europe and a hand held out to the people of a country behind the Iron Curtain. Let us not forget that religious heritage always has a historical and political context.

The list is long, and I could continue easily.

However, I will end with Vitruvius, a 1st century BC Roman author, architect, and engineer. His discussion of perfect proportion in architecture and the human body led to the famous renaissance drawing by Leonardo da Vinci of the *Vitruvian Man*. Vitruvius described three key principles of good architecture: *firmitas*, *utilitas* and *venustas*. Clearly, our tangible religious heritage is solid, having withstood the centuries, useful not only for worship, contemplation, meditation, but also for community - and above all: beautiful.

Let us preserve this heritage for the good of the generations to come
With this letter, I fully support the FHH TORCH
I wish above

Luca Jahier

Luca Jahier



Comité européen
des régions

Le Président

Bruxelles, 12.07.18 01213
PCAB/mj (2018) D1607

Au Comité européen des régions, l'assemblée des représentants locaux et régionaux de l'Union européenne, nous envisageons l'Union depuis le terrain, aux côtés des Européens, avec le regard de nos 350 élus locaux et régionaux. Les régions, les villes et les communes sont d'abord les lieux de vie des 510 millions d'Européens. Ce sont les territoires de l'Europe. Ils sont d'une grande diversité de cultures, d'histoires et d'environnements.

C'est une diversité qu'il faut valoriser au niveau européen comme c'est le cas avec l'Année européenne du patrimoine culturel. Les territoires traversent l'Europe. Certains sont même à cheval sur plusieurs pays, comme les macro-régions du Danube, de la Mer baltique, de la région adriatique et ionienne ainsi que de la région alpine. En tissant des liens entre elles, les régions tissent les liens sociaux, économiques et culturels qui unissent les Européens.

La perspective de l'Année européenne du patrimoine culturel 2018 rassemble tous les Européens en vue de célébrer non seulement la richesse du patrimoine européen mais aussi pour valoriser les spécificités qui font la diversité de notre continent. J'estime que promouvoir le patrimoine culturel est l'une des composantes essentielles de la diversité culturelle, du dialogue interculturel et du développement territorial de notre continent. Il vise à renforcer un sentiment d'appartenance à l'Union européenne, à une même identité qui s'inscrit dans notre histoire, mais qui se projette aussi dans l'avenir. Le patrimoine et l'identité culturels permettent de mieux comprendre le changement et l'histoire de la société, et de renforcer la tolérance et l'acceptation des différences, afin de contrecarrer les divisions anti-européennes de plus en plus marquées.

Bien évidemment, les bâtiments religieux sont au premier rang du patrimoine, car ils ajoutent essentiellement la dimension spirituelle à la cohésion européenne qui a été, dans le passé, trop souvent sous-estimée. Préserver la diversité de ce patrimoine auquel plusieurs religions ont contribué et le rendre accessible et compréhensible signifie renforcer les bases de notre Europe.

Le patrimoine culturel religieux incarne donc tout particulièrement la devise de l'UE, «Unie dans la diversité». Sauvegarder, protéger et développer le patrimoine culturel et particulièrement religieux est une tâche essentielle, non seulement en vue de la protection des monuments historiques, mais aussi pour sauvegarder la spiritualité, la diversité et la cohérence de notre continent.

Pour toutes ces raisons, je souhaite transmettre un message de soutien à la TORCH Initiative: l'Europe a besoin de vos efforts.

Karl-Heinz Lambertz

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Karl-Heinz Lambertz



MINISTRY FOR JUSTICE, CULTURE
AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT
30, OLD TREASURY STREET, VALLETTA, MALTA

27th March, 2018

Dear Organizers,

Your invitation to describe a personal memory and story relating to religious heritage is indeed an excellent idea to mark the European Year of Cultural Heritage.

I come from Malta, a country which is renowned for religious feasts in every town and village. It is almost impossible not to involve oneself in the religious feast of one's hometown. I come from Zejtun, where the feast of St. Catherine of Alexandria is adored. The church was built early in the 18th Century and is one of the best works of Lorenzo Gafà, a Maltese Baroque architect and sculptor.

The preparations start many months before the actual liturgical feast. The external celebrations are organised by the local band clubs, which are part and parcel of the social and cultural history of the Maltese islands and have, over the years, established themselves as an institution in the core of every town and village. Besides being responsible for band marches, they also see to the manufacture of fireworks and the street decorations.

Then there are those who help in the interior decoration of the church which is covered with red damask, silver candelabras donning the altars and chandeliers hung in pride in the naves. Everyone is expected to give a helping hand to foster a sense of community.

Being now a Minister for Culture, I still relish those memories and I do help in a different way to cultivate this important part of our cultural heritage. During the past few years, my Ministry has assisted financially our band clubs in their projects within the community and introduced incentives to improve the health and safety at fireworks factory, among other initiatives.

Besides being the European Year of Cultural Heritage, 2018 sees Valletta the Capital of Culture. The theme of this celebration is the Maltese festa. One of the activities is actually a religious feast, but with one big difference.

There are a number of towns in Malta and Gozo, which celebrate more than one feast. An element of healthy rivalry does exist. Valletta happens to celebrate four religious feasts: St. Paul, St. Dominic, St. Augustine and Our Lady of Mount Carmel. There are two band clubs in Valletta. After meticulous diplomacy with all stakeholders, we have managed to have the four statues and the two band clubs celebrating in the streets of Valletta on the same day. It is one of those religious memories that I will cherish for the rest of my life.

Regards,

Hon. Dr. Owen Bonnici
Minister for Justice, Culture and Local Government

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Hon Dr. Owen Bonnici



Anton Peršak



Anton Peršak

Berlin, 22 June 2018

Dear Colleagues & Friends,

As we come together to celebrate this European Year of Cultural Heritage, it is important to think on the many historical monuments and sites across Europe that are being threatened and to ring the alarm to highlight their need for urgent repair and care. Together with Europa Nostra, the largest European network of heritage organisations of which I am proud to be President, we aim to raise stronger awareness about how important these heritage sites are to local communities. This is not just about the bricks and mortar; this is about what heritage means to people. All of these sites tell us not only a local or national story but also a European story. They connect us to other people in Europe with whom we share history, memory, culture – with all its diverse expressions – and a sense of belonging to a wider community.

We must never forget that Europe's heritage sites – from an ancient temple to a modernist factory; from the smallest chapel to the largest castle; from a romantic park to a historic theatre – are not only the places of our collective past but are also the building blocks of our collective future. They form our shared heritage, which also includes various forms of intangible heritage, and embodies our shared values. That is why I welcome and am happy to contribute to the *TORCH Initiative*, launched by our partners from "Future for Religious Heritage", in the form of a memory box that travels across Europe to capture the heart and soul of Our Europe. Such a symbolic initiative, alongside the *#Ode2Joy Challenge* which I had the pleasure of launching with Europa Nostra, or the *Ringling the Bells for Peace Initiative*, launched by DNK, our partners from Germany, has the power to connect Europe's citizens in a simple but very meaningful way by reaching out to their hearts and to their minds.

We must indeed seize the momentum of this historic European Year of Cultural Heritage to promote a new narrative for Europe. We, the Citizens of this Continent of Culture, have to ask ourselves what kind of Europe we want for our children and our grandchildren. A Europe where we live in harmony or in division? A Europe where we concentrate on what divides us or rather on what connects us, across generations and across borders? Europa Nostra and I strongly believe that Europe does not need new borders or new walls. We need a Europe of bridges. A Europe of solidarity and generosity. A Europe of kindness and respect. A Europe of inspiration and creativity. In spite of all the political and economic challenges which our society faces today, I know this is possible. I also know that to achieve these ambitious goals, our cultural heritage is a huge asset and resource. The moment for action is here and now.

Let this European Year of Cultural Heritage be a turning point in the way in which we shape the future of Europe. Let us put culture and cultural heritage where they belong – at the very heart of the European project!

Let the flame of this TORCH of culture and cultural heritage burn brightly and enrich the lives of many in Europe and elsewhere in the world!

Plácido Domingo
President

Plácido Domingo



The Voice of
Cultural Heritage
in Europe

La Voix du
patrimoine culturel
en Europe

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As a long standing member of the academic community and as someone who is intimately involved with the concept of heritage, I am naturally and constantly engaged with those heritage forms and sites that relate to religion. For religious heritage does not only include churches, temples and synagogues. Religion is connected to the vast majority of what we designate as heritage. The remains of Greek and Roman Empires across Europe and beyond were shaped by beliefs in the Gods. Castles throughout the centuries were built to defend faiths or impose them. The morphology of towns and cities have their historical roots around the organisation of places of worship. Even for me who sits outside of formalised, organised religion can acknowledge the influence of faith communities in our cultures, patterns of daily life, languages and foodways. My story is one of taking a group of Chinese students around a cathedral in England. Our guide was a knowledgeable historian who expounded in some detail the history of the building. I could see however that the students had little idea of what was being said. Why should they know of the Christian tradition?

The letters, Krakow

Mike Robinson

Why should they have any prior knowledge of church architecture and the historical periods represented? Why should they be interested at all? As is so often the case we fail to interpret our heritage in line with what the audience can comprehend and process rather than what we may like to tell. After the visit we discussed the experience and they opened up to declare they had learned little about the cathedral - what it was, why Christians built them how they were used and the problems facing them in the present day. So I made the analogy of the temple and how different parts of the temple perform different functions. How some people don't go to the temple while others do and even if they were not religious or did not understand fully they could still understand the craft and skill and spaces of the building and respect how it is used and what it means to some communities. They understood this. We need new ways of speaking about religious heritage - ways that open up under discussion about meaning and connection.



Mike Robinson

LETTER REGARDING THE FUTURE FOR RELIGIOUS HERITAGE

Budapest
September 13, 2018

I have been researching and writing about Jewish heritage in Europe for three decades, attempting to put back on the map - literally and figuratively - what had been erased or suppressed during the Holocaust and, in the following decades, by Communist rule in east-central Europe.

When I started out, few sites of Jewish heritage in what for centuries had been the Jewish heartland were mentioned in tour guides or regarded as "attractions." Most were derelict or, in the case of synagogues, had been transformed for other uses, ranging from warehouses to fire stations, to sports halls, to workshops...

Visiting them - as I made clear in my first major article on the subject, in 1990 - was an exercise in what we today call Dark Tourism. Each abandoned synagogue or overgrown Jewish cemetery was somehow a survivor. I called them *symbolic mezuzahs*: for just as living Jewish homes are marked by mezuzahs placed on their doorposts, even ruined or transformed buildings marked towns and cities where Jews had once lived and, for the most part, live no more.

Throughout my work, I have been influenced by a sentiment voiced in what has been described as the first comprehensive guidebook to Jewish heritage in Europe and North Africa.

This is *A World Passed By*, by the American writer Marvin Lowenthal.

It was published in 1933 - the year that Hitler came to power. But already then, Lowenthal made a powerful point that has resonated with me and underlain my work and thinking.

Jewish heritage sites, he noted, were often overlooked and not deemed of interest for the "mainstream."

He wrote:

The synagogues, as in Segovia, Cordova, or Lemberg, often stand within a stone's throw (and many were the stones thrown) of a famed cathedral. The cemeteries, as in Pisa, often lie literally and figuratively in the shadow of a

Ruth Ellen Gruber

renowned historic pile. The ghettos ... wait around the corner from a tourist postcard shop.

But the average traveller knows nothing of their existence.

Yet, like the cathedrals and castles of Christian Europe and the Moslem antiquities of Spain and North Africa, the Jewish monuments embody and perpetuate one of the oldest cultural forces of the Western World.

They, too, are a part of Europe's past and the heritage of our common civilization.

Indeed, Jewish heritage is part and parcel of European heritage, of national heritage, of local heritage. This means, physically, Jewish heritage sites, such as synagogues, Jewish cemeteries, former Jewish quarters ritual baths, etc.

Even though, in much of Europe, few Jews now live, these places, and the culture they represent, are just as worthy of notice, presentation, preservation, and care as are the churches, castles, town halls, and other historic sites that dominate the "built heritage" concept.

The resources on the web site I direct, www.jewish-heritage-europe.eu, demonstrate the scope.

Jewish heritage is not "a thing apart" or something separate from "mainstream" Europe.

As Lowenthal put it, they embody and perpetuate one of the oldest cultural forces of the Western World and form part of the heritage of our common civilization. And they need to be regarded and cared for as such.

Sincerely,

Ruth Ellen Gruber

Director, www.jewish-heritage-europe.eu

Ruth Ellen Gruber



The Torch of Heritage and Culture

Cracow, September 6, 2018

Dear Sir or Madam,

being in Cracow is a journey through centuries. Each street is a journey into Jewish and Jewish Religious Heritage, into the Jewish past and present: the pre-war Jewish quarter Kazimierz, the area of the former Ghetto where the Germans forced Jews to live in and the space of the former Camp Plaszow. In Kazimierz, numerous Jewish religious heritage sites are visible. However, most of these spaces are not vibrant with Jewish life, as no Jews gather and pray any more. They display the vanished past – as it is in many sites in Europe. Are religious heritage sites adequately connected to its origins and spirituality? Do we explore a museum or is there still a sense of the synagogue and its community?

These thoughts were implemented into me not only by reading books, but while I listened and learned. My eyes opened towards Jewish Heritage and Jewish religious heritage also because a small, energetic woman, born 1929 in Berlin, didn't let me go with shallow thoughts or quick answers. Her name was Maayan (and her mother was the founder of Youth Aliyah). Maayan and I met and befriended in 2003 and at some point, I entitled her my adopted grandmother. When I arrived in Israel in 2004, she, a trained tour guide, drove with me from east to west, from north to south. During one of our first excursions – a real tizul –, she reached into a bag and took a Hebrew Bible out of it. It was a heavy German print from the 1920s. While throwing the book on my lap she said: "See the small pink notes sticking out? There you can learn about the sites we visit today. Read it!" She connected biblical stories to real places. She also asked me when I was travelling in France or Germany if I have visited this or that synagogue, this or that cemetery. She told me why she knew about the place – perhaps because of a relative once lived there or because she had read something about the place. When we talked about the journeys or looked at photos, she always asked: "And, have you seen the small details?" Could be a beautiful Torah ark or a tombstone for a special person.

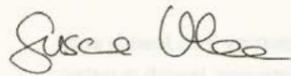
In 2015, when I started to work for the ShUM-Cities, she was, as an Ashkenazi Jewess, very excited. She sent me thoughts on ShUM and its rich tradition; even a CD with a song arrived, bringing to me one version of "Unetanneh Tokef"; a liturgical song that is part of the Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur liturgy for centuries. Maayan knew that this Piyyut based on a legend from the 10th century in Mainz, but: a century-long tradition was established through this prayer and its story. We exchanged many E-Mails on the special places and traditions of the ShUM-communities, which date back to the 10th century and why their traditions are still alive and commemorated.

1

Dr Susanne Urban

In 2016, Maayan wrote to me that she noted a certain happy tune in my lines. She said, she was sure that with the former ShUM-cities I found the place to unfold myself. This is probably true. But it was her spirit and knowledge leading me.

Treasuring religious heritage in a secular world is not a contrast. This specific heritage connects us with times and spaces, with different cultures and people, their beliefs and traditions. Maayan led me to this experience and through her, I learned. She passed away in January 2018. Heritage and especially religious heritage is a chain from generation to generation – and it all starts with listening to someone else.



Dr Susanne Urban
(Managing Director, ShUM-Cities Association)



MINISZTERELNÖKSÉG

A keresztény kulturális örökség él és lélegzik

Mi, európaiak – bevallva, bevallatlanul, tudottan vagy tudatlanul – a keresztény tanítás szerint berendezett kultúrában élünk. A keresztény kulturális identitásunk határozza meg az értékrendszerünket, a keresztény kultúra határozza meg az erkölcsi tartásunkat, az igazságosság és az igazságtalanság mivoltáról, a családról, a munkáról és a becsületről alkotott nézeteinket. A magyar nemzetet is ez tartotta meg ezer esztendőn át Európa közepén.

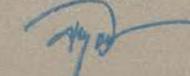
Kodály Zoltán gondolatával élve: „A kultúrát nem lehet örökölni. Az elődök kultúrája egykettőre elpárolog, ha minden nemzedék újra meg újra meg nem szerzi magának.” Egy nemzet attól válik nemzeté, hogy képes a múltját megbecsülni, de úgy becsüli meg a múltját, hogy az nemcsak történelmi emlék, hanem építőkövévé válhat a jövő magyarságának és a jövő nemzetének.

Ha újrateremtjük a gazdag kulturális örökséget hordozó történelmi épületeinket, ha funkciójával látjuk el ezeket a műemlékeket, képesek lesznek arra, hogy üzenetet hordozzanak, tovább tudják adni ezt a kultúrát a jövő számára, a gyermekeink számára. Egy híd szerepét tölthetik be a múlt magyarsága, a múlt kultúrája és a jövő magyarsága, a jövő kultúrája között. Ezért fontos az, hogy minden ilyen kis építőelem a helyére kerüljön.

Nagyapám élen járt e törekvések kivitelezésében, országsszerte több száz templom restaurálásában vett részt, köztük a budai Krisztinaváros szívében álló Havas Boldogasszony római katolikus plébániatemplom felújításában, amely helyszínül szolgált a „legnagyobb magyar”, gróf Széchenyi István esküvőjének is.

Az ő példáját is követve a magyar kormány is arra törekszik, hogy ezek a kis építőkövek a nemzet építőkövei legyenek, egy olyan nemzet épüljön fel, amely képes megbecsülni a múltját, a jelenét, és ami talán ennél is fontosabb, képes a jövőben gondolkodni, a jövő kultúráját és a jövő magyarságát is megbecsülni. Célunk, hogy megmutassuk mindenkinek, megmutassuk a teljes magyarságnak, hogy a keresztény magyar kultúrának, Magyarországnak és a magyar nemzetnek van jövője.

Tuzson Bence



Közszolgálatért felelős államtitkár

Budapest, 12 September 2018

We live in a strange world: it is important for non-religious people or also those who are not related to churches that temples will be remained or maintained.

During the history of mankind, churches have always been the best designed and constructed, most valuable, most decorated buildings built by the bests – apart from the dwelling-houses, palaces and castles of the ruling elite. This was so in the antiquity, and so it is still today when the number of religious people or at least number of people who attend church has been declining worldwide. I have already seen „For sale” sign on English church as well...

The most important buildings of religious communities lost their original functions in Africa and in America during the period of colonisations, and became unowned also in Europe in the era of genocide, and in the period of religious wars and holocaust. The maintenance and careful preservation of ecclesiastical buildings became a problem after rearrangement of borders and changes in the population composition. The maintenance of empty and deteriorating Serbian Orthodox Churches and Synagogues after elimination of their worshippers is also a problem for us – as for example the careful preservation of Hungarian, Jewish and Saxon churches in Romania. Several of them are part of the World Heritage...

We need a common way of thinking how, and from what ecclesiastical buildings can be saved for our grandchildren and also for the future generations. Change in the function can only ensure the preservation of the appearance in some cases, while the interior may be converted into a concert hall or an exhibition house by removing decorations or rebuilding floors; but unfortunately there was an example that a church changed to a gym of a sport club. While the typical Hungarian way of thinking is the main reason for this in case of management of our common built heritage, the empty churches or that of maintained by communities continuously declining.

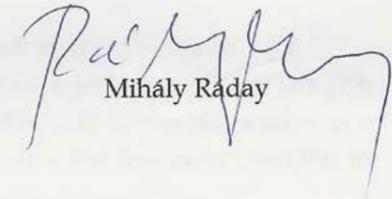
I created a television programme in 1980 through which – until its withdrawal in 2010 – I successfully agitated and inspired people to endear, to

Mihály Raday



protect, and to get acquainted with built culture of Hungary for nearly 31 years. Since 1980, town protection and safeguarding civil associations have been constantly evolving or newly forming helping each other's work in National Federation since 1986. As chairperson of the organisation I have the opportunity and it is also my duty – even without television appearance – to support and manage the organisation which became a member of Europa Nosta named Hungaria Nostra.

So, without any closer attachment to any religious community personally, I am trying to – even in this topic as I sometimes define myself, – to help verbally or in writing everywhere to everyone as „the first civil worker of the country” across borders and beyond, do something for our common cultural heritage, for our treasure individually or as a member of a civil community.


Mihály Raday

Mihály Raday

The significance of the early Christian cemetery of Pécs as part of the Christian heritage of Hungary

The Christianity spread out in the territory of Hungary in the 4th century AD at the first time. Due to the acknowledgement and victory of the new belief the Roman Empire changed to be a Christian empire under Constantine and his successors. As the seat of the civil government of the Pannonian province Valeria was Sopianae (Pécs), the Christian finds can be found in a higher number here than elsewhere. The most important site in this town where the Christianity is strongly represented is the cemetery. The first crypt painted with biblical scenes, the burial building St. Peter and Paul, was found in 1782, and it is until now the most impressive one in the group of the different type burial buildings in Sopianae. This part of the cemetery was nominated by Hungary in the World Heritage list, and has been inscribed in 2000. Some years later new excavations and a comprehensive restoration program could be started with the support of an EU project.

I was invited to lead the archaeological research, which turned out to have been the biggest one in this area. Lots of late Roman graves, more new burial buildings, among them the *cella septichora* could be fully unearthed, apart from the earliest civilian settlement of Pécs of the 11th-13th centuries, newer parts of the bishop castle and other medieval remains. These investigations brought many new finds and data, and led to more accurate scientific results than before.

The most significant result for me was the clarification of the entrance situation of the crypts. Lacking exact archaeological observations it had been thought that there was a possibility to go in the underneath crypts also after the burial to commemorate to the dead person. Following this idea the entrance was restored with a stairway and a door. However the fact that the grave chapels on the surface had their entrance exactly above the entrance of the crypts caused severe headache to the represents of this theory. The observations made during my excavations proved that the crypts never had a door, because the opening was closed by big stone slabs, and the stairway or rampart was filled after the burial. It is then clearly understandable, why the door of the grave chapel could be placed exactly above the opening of the crypt.

Zsolt Visy



This archaeological observation solved the problem of the structure of the crypts and grave chapels, but led to a more important result which is connected with the strong belief in the bodily resurrection, the main message of the Christianity. The walls of some crypts were covered by paintings, often with biblical scenes. Up to the denial of the earlier reconstruction, one could imagine that these representations served the survivors, but the new observation proved that everything in the crypt served only the requirements of the buried person. It means that also the paintings did so, representing without any exception the resurrection in the Paradise. They were then painted for this person at the time of his/her resurrection on the judgement day! A similar, also not understandable case was that the inner side of some graves constructed from stone slabs or tiles (*tegulae*) were painted with similar motifs, among others with the Christogram. Now it is clear that the reason was the same, only poor people could not let built grave chapels with crypts.

For me the Christian belief incorporated in the ancient Christian built heritage and investigated through archaeological methods means one of the greatest revelations, which proves again the importance and effectiveness of the scientific research of the past. Furthermore, the belief of the early Christians, materialized in the structure of the 4th century grave chapels builds a bridge between our predecessors and us, causing devotion and high respect toward the strength and effectiveness of the religious heritage.

Budapest, 13 September, 2018

Visy, Z.
Zsolt Visy

Zsolt Visy

Religious Cultural Heritage Torch

by Dr. Aurel Vainer, president of the Federation of Jewish Communities of Romania

It is with a lot of consideration that I, Dr. Aurel Vainer, President of the Federation of Jewish Communities in Romania - The Mosaic Faith, as well as with joy, responsibility and dedication to God and religious institutions, hereby express my best thoughts and warm wishes for the complete success of the "Religious Cultural Heritage Torch" Ceremony.

As for me, I am a Romanian citizen of Jewish origin and of Mosaic faith, which I received at birth, 86 years ago. I was born in the small town of Ștefănești, Botoșani County, and by parents had seven children. In accordance with the good Jewish tradition, since early childhood, I began learning about the Almighty, His creation and His constant supervision of the most important masterpiece: the Human Being. As I aged, I kept on learning about the religion and history of the Romanian people, as well as about the Jewish faith.

I am proud to belong to each of these two peoples, to their culture, and also to the Mosaic faith, which, together with Christianity and Islam, forms the Abrahamic religions. Of course, in my life, which is quite long, I have met many people and deeds dedicated to God.

As a child, but also later on, in Synagogues and Temples, I met people and witnessed deeds that got me closer to God, as well as to the faith in what is good and beautiful, including being useful to the larger society.

Obviously, my memories of religious life are filled with images and a strong knowledge about all religion and religious life in general.

I can unequivocally say that, from my contacts with the world of faith, I had a lot to learn, especially in terms of behavior towards fellow men and women and, of course, in the practice of human relations, irrespective of ethnic origin and religion. Let me recall an event, in my life, which is connected to the world of Jewish religious traditions.

Our autumn holidays have always brought us joy, from childhood to old age. Boys who turned 13, having become of age, according to the Jewish faith, spent the holidays in the Synagogue, learning the holy teachings by reading and singing. We, the children, played in the yard of the synagogue, happy to no longer be under the close supervision of our parents or grandparents. As a child, aged 5 or 6, I used to spend a nice time with other children, being beautifully dressed for the holiday. I remember a small adventure that comes to my mind. I was smartly dressed, let's say it was an elegant costume, staying on the bank of the Bașeu brook (an affluent of the Prut River). Not caring about my special outfit, along with the other children, I began to run along the water course. Just like that, I, the sage and smartly dressed boy, plunged into the waters of the Bașeu: it was not at all deep, but it was not clean,

Dr. Aurel Vainer

either. All the other children started to laugh, but I began to cry, thinking of the about the scolding I would get from mom and dad. Let me get to a serious topic: ever since I became the head of the Federation of Jewish Communities in Romania – the Mosaic Faith, 13 years ago, I became very interested in renovating, in the most beautiful and bright manner, our places of Mosaic worship, the numerous synagogues and temples located in many places in the country.

I returned from the beautiful city of Oradea on Wednesday, September 5, 2018. There, we reinaugurated the Great Synagogue (of the Orthodox Rite). This is a splendid building of historical and architectural importance.

As we celebrate the rich religious and cultural heritage of Europe, let us ask for blessings to our continent by building many free ladders of faith – ones that are not old and dusty, but neat and glossy from being used. I wish for us to realize that by living with them makes us spiritually richer people. Our task in 2018 should be not just to remember the glory of the past, but to make new plans about how to recreate those miracles of that past.



Dr. Aurel Vainer





MINISTERUL CULTURII ȘI
IDENTITĂȚII NAȚIONALE



Torța Patrimoniului Religios - 28.09.2018

Am plăcerea să fiu alături de Dumneavoastră și profit de ocazie pentru a mulțumi Doamnei Carmen Croitoru și tuturor organizatorilor, care au dat dovadă nu doar de profesionalism, ci și de cunoscuta "ospitalitate românească", adică au știut să pună mult suflet în această acțiune. Pentru că, nu-i așa, totul depinde de suflet.

Mi-au revenit astăzi în gând imaginile și sentimentele unui moment din copilărie. Școlar fiind, am fost într-o excursie la mănăstirea Horezu. Cu toate că în anii aceia religia era un subiect ocultat, profesorul nu uitase să ne spună că Vodă Brâncoveanu a renunțat mai curând la viață decât la credința sa.

La Horezu, credința acestui martir era dintr-odată ceva concret, durat în piatră și culori fascinante. La Horezu, religia, istoria și cultura apăreau peste veacuri unite în mod indestructibil. Constantin Brâncoveanu ne lăsase aici un mesaj luminos și optimist nu doar despre privirea poporului său înspre Cer, ci și despre nevoia acestuia de armonie și frumos în lume, despre priceperea și stăruința meșterilor săi. În Valahia acelor vremuri, mesajul era asemănător celor puse în sticle de către naufragiați, părea o făclie fragilă în furtuna întunecată ce stătea să ne cuprindă țara. Însă Vodă a crezut în ea, a aprins-o și ea a putut încălzi în mod miraculos până și inima unui școlar din perioada comunistă. Cu acea speranță tainică și trainică, veche și mereu proaspătă, mă aflu acum alături de Dumneavoastră.

Iată că astăzi avem onoarea de a găzdui la București Torța Patrimoniului Religios. Astăzi, luminița noastră modestă și încăpățânată este întărită de văpaia alăturării tuturor prietenilor și partenerilor noștri. Astăzi, fiecare din cei de aici are în mână o scrisoare pentru viitor. Astăzi, cultura noastră veche nu se mai sprijină doar pe credința religioasă, ci și pe cea în viitorul nostru comun european. Pentru că, înainte de a fi o realizare politică sau economică, Uniunea viitoare este în primul rând un șantier cultural și o încercare de credință pentru sufletul fiecăruia. Văd un semn de bun augur și în faptul că pornim împreună pe acest drum de la București, în anul aniversar al Marii Uniri a tuturor românilor.

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George Ivașcu



MINISTERUL CULTURII ȘI
IDENTITĂȚII NAȚIONALE



În încheiere, permiteți-mi să unesc mirarea regăsită a copilului de la Horezu cu speranțele fiecăruia dintre Dumneavoastră. Fie ca Torța să lumineze multă vreme drumul european spre frumusețe și armonie! Vă mulțumesc.

George Ivașcu
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George Ivașcu

Comorile Ortodoxiei Românești

pe postul TRINITAS-TV al Patriarhiei Române
 Înființat în anul 2007 din inițiativa și sub
 atență purtate de grijă a Preafericitului Părinte Patriarh DANIE
 postul de televiziune TRINITAS al Patriarhiei Române
 a inclus, din aceeași înaltă încredințare a Preafericitului
 Sale, între alte cicluri de emisiuni de dezbatere cu
 frecvență săptămânală, o amplă serie dedicată
 „patrimoniului cultural bisericesc”.

Emisiunile, începând chiar sub genericul de mai
 sus, au căpătat, mai apoi, denumiri tematice legate
 de anii comemorativi 2013 - al Sfinților Împărați
 Constantin și Elena și 2014 - al Sfinților cărturari
 Brâncoveni: „cristenirea bizantină în România”
 și, respectiv, „cristenirea brâncovenească”, pentru
 a se cantona, începând din anul 2015 și până
 în prezent (2018 - Anul Centenar al Marii Uniri,
 ca expresie a unei generoase acoperiri tematice,
 în spațiu și timp, sub titlul generic „Comori ale
 Ortodoxiei”.

Răscălit fiind, de Preafericitul Sa, ca realizator
 al acestor emisiuni săptămânale, cu durată de
 50-60 de minute, difuzate, în anul din urmă,
 în seara zilei de duminică, am urmărit constant
 aducerea în atenția publicului telespectator a
 numeroaselor și deseori de însemnatele vestigii
 de patrimoniu cultural al Ortodoxiei Românești,
 deopotrivă din categoria monumentelor istorice, în
 frunte cu cele din Patrimoniul Mondial UNESCO,
 cât și din rândul valorilor de patrimoniu mobil,
 din muzeele bisericesti și din cele de stat. Un exemplu
 grăitor este, în acest sens, exhaustiva suită de peste
 30 de editii realizate în cadrul Secției de Patru Veche
 Românească a Muzeului Național de Artă al României.

Pr. dr. Florin Serbanescu

2
 Seria celor peste 400 de editii realizate, în total,
 până în prezent, ale „Comorilor Ortodoxiei” a urmărit
 să acopere, treptat, întregul teritoriu al României, dar
 și al Ortodoxiei Românești din Republica Moldova,
 adăugând monumentelor cu rădăcini de secole și oferte
 lacasuri reprezentative înaltate în perioada modernă și
 contemporană a secolelor XIX - XXI, până la Catedrala
 Națională - Noua Catedrală Patriarhală, supra-numită
 „Catedrala cărturării cărmulii”, care va fi
 sfințită la 25 noiembrie în acest an, 2018, Anul
 Centenar al cărbării Uniri.

Împreună cu invitații în aceste emisiuni - icerarii,
 academicieni, cadre didactice universitare, preoți,
 monahi și monahii, profesori și muzeografi - au fost
 abordate, în contextul evocării monumentelor și
 prezentării colecțiilor bisericesti, aspecte semnificative
 de istorie a arhitecturii, a artei și culturii ortodoxe
 românești, de contribuție importantă a Bisericii Ortodoxe
 la plămădirea etnică-spirituală și la devenirea istorică
 a poporului român, în general.

Toate acestea constituie o pleadă, permanent
 reînnoită și argumentată, pentru suita unor adevărate
 și fundamentale valori și repere de sens istoric,
 spiritual și cultural, de memorie vie și de conștiință
 de sine lucrătoare, atât pentru poporul român, cât și
 pentru civilizația europeană, în ansamblul său,
 înțelegând ca unitate în diversitate, reunind
 specificitățile diferitelor popoare ale „Bătănieului
 Continent” prin liantul puternic al elementelor
 comune care i-au conferit, de-a lungul milenilor
 erei creștine, o pregnanță fizionomică proprie.

28 septembrie 2018

Pr. dr. Florin Serbanescu
consilier patriarhal

Pr. dr. Florin Serbanescu

Despre Geamia Esmahan Sultan a Mangalia...

O bijuterie arhitecturală a comunității musulmane din România este Geamia Esmahan Sultan din Mangalia - cel mai vechi lăcaș de cult musulman de pe aceste țărâni, ridicat în anul 1573 (anul 931, după calendarul musulman Hadjira) din ordinul prințesei Esmahan, fata sultanului Selim al II-lea, în cinsta tatălui său.

Este un monument de arhitectură în stil maur, având un stil aparte față de construcțiile de cult din Dobrogea rămasă de pe timpul Imperiului Otoman, cu o bogată tradiție istorică, religioasă și culturală. Construcția este făcută din piatră de grăunț de 15 cm, cioplită pe loc de către meșterii pietrari turci și este înconjurată de un cimitir musulman în care au fost înhumate personalități ale vremii.

După 1989, din păcate, geamia a ajuns într-o stare deplorabilă, având nevoie de reconstrucție. Srijinul a venit în anul 2008 când, în vederea măreștii de a conserva elemente ale patrimoniuului religios și cultural, s-a donat o sumă importantă din partea unui om de afaceri

- 1 -

Mufti Murat Iusuf

din Turcia care a finanțat în totalitate proiectarea, lucrările de consolidare și restaurare ale ansamblului Esmahan Sultan (geamie și cimitir musulman), valoarea estimată fiind de un milion de euro.

În vîrstă cu 10 ani, la data de 27 august 2008, în orașul Mangalia a avut loc ceremonia de inaugurare a geamiei, unde au fost prezente personalități din Turcia, dar și ale comunității și administrației locale.

Redeschiderea geamiei a reprezentat un eveniment deosebit de important, un prilej de bucurie și mândrie pentru comunitatea musulmană din România. De asemenea, geamia Esmahan Sultan este un obiectiv turistic remarcabil, luând în considerare numărul mare de vizitatori atât din țara noastră, cât și din străinătate.

datorită acestui act de generozitate, membrii comunității noastre s-au putut bucura din nou de liniștea și pacea sufletească pe care le dobîndesc rugîndu-se în acest loc sacru și, nu în ultimul rând, de frumusețea sa aparte.

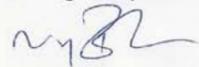
Astfel, puttea simbolică a celui mai vechi edificiu de cult musulman din România nu a pierit...

Șeful Cultului Musulman
din România,
Muftiu,
Murat Iusuf

Mufti Murat Iusuf

I have spent lived most of my life outside my home country. And so I have been fortunate to share in religious moments of many cultures. I grew up in England attending a Methodist church, where the hymns of John and Charles Wesley united our congregation in song. As a young man I lived in remote, rural Nigeria where I witnessed a pagan way of life, and pagan rituals, which bowed down to the power of the natural world – the sun, the land, life and death itself. In the Middle East I've visited the biblical sites of Mount Sinai, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the Dome on the Rock, the grand mosques of Cairo, and the ancient synagogue of El Ghriba in Tunisia. Here in Romania I've been calmed by the still beauty of the fortified church at Prejmer, the wooden churches of Maramures, and the grand cathedral of Cluj. People say that religion divides us, but from all these experiences all I have seen is the good that all faiths bring, with their power to calm us, to inspire us, to unite us – to make us better people and to make the world a better place.

Nigel Bellingham | Country Director | British Council | Romania



Museums were, since their invention, temples. Though, centuries later, they became secular institutions, the cultural heritage they collected was, primarily, linked with religious beliefs, one of the reasons being the fact that churches were the most rich and important sponsors of the arts. Even today, Romanian museums and, generally speaking, European museums are conserving cultural goods having religious significance, from the Prehistory to Modernity.

For me, one of the most touching moments in my curatorial experience was the fact that, since 1992, I am passing – sometimes, several times per day – near the little wooden church from Bejan, Hunedoara county, which was brought in Bucharest and reassembled, twenty six years ago, in the courtyard of the National Museum of the Romanian Peasant. Erected in the 18th c., in Valea Bradului, was moved by the inhabitants of the Bejan village to their place and it was used as the main church of the village, until 1947, when a new brick church took its place. The old historical monument remained as an almost forgotten construction, until 1991, when it was brought to Bucharest and placed in the museum, which it was re-installed, after almost 40 years in the building used by the Communist regime for a propaganda museum. Since then, this old church has become a kind of symbol for the museum that encapsulates the essence of the religious traditions of Romanians. Standing in front of a huge mosaic placed on the wall behind it, glorifying the Communist Party. The contrast between the wealthy mosaic and the modest and frail wooden church is more explicit than any other curatorial arrangement in a Romanian museum, about the ancient tradition, represented by a church, and a dictatorial regime, which was imposed to the Romanian nation by a foreign army, represented by the mosaic. More than this, I think that it is meaningful that we don't know the names of the craftsmen who built the church. We may consider that those who made it hold the belief that their names are not important in front of eternity: when someone makes an offering – because this is a church, an offering rose for God – the author is not so important. It is a gift offered for the community, from now, in eternity.

Dr. Virgil Ștefan NIȚULESCU


President

Dear readers,

the most important heritage treasure of our Lutheran Evangelical Church is to be found in the fortified churches of Transylvania: both in the medieval buildings and in the patrimony objects therein. Spending my childhood in Valea Viilor, a village built around a fortified church of UNESCO world heritage, can relate to many memories. Even though the ethnic Germans in Transylvania mainly left the country in the decades of the last century, those left behind struggle to keep the churches intact, in narrow communities, that is, what always united them.

But something else I want to share today: some of my experiences as a pastor in these churches, related to marriage and wedding.

Six years ago together with a group of friends, invited to my wedding, we have visited the fortified church in Biertan, perhaps the most famous Transylvanian village church, also on the UNESCO list. Inside this beautiful church, besides things that are usually found in a church, there is something unexpected: a reconciliation room. This was thought

Andrei Pinte

thought for still married Saxon couples who have expressed their desire to divorce. In this room there are a bed, a table and a chair. The man and the woman were encouraged to spend some time in this room before the Christian community to accept their desire to divorce. They did not have the courage to take this step without the will of the community, living together in the neighborhood (an association of families in order to support each other). They were always subject to its moral judgment. The time spent in this room was so beneficial that over the course of history only one couple kept their desire to divorce. This story and the church had impressed my brother's future wife (a native of the former German Democratic Republic who is not baptised in the Christian faith) so much that she had expressed the desire to receive the blessing in a church too.

This desire was accomplished years later; they were blessed by me in the beautiful church of the old town of the neighboring city, Sigheșoara, also a UNESCO heritage church.

The numerous guests present at their wedding, coming from East Germany, not affiliated to a church, were amazed by the beauty of the church and the wealthy Saxon architecture

Andrei Pinte

of the Transylvanian settlements.

The divine service celebrated in Romanian and German languages, in order to be understood by all the guests, had unprepared, until the end, some explanations in English too: A large group of Japanese tourists entered the church and, impressed by the organ music, enjoyed staying in the church until the end of the ceremony. I was impressed to look at such a colorful audience, thinking that not only NOKIA or Football connects people and brings them together, but also such a heritage monument on a wedding day or simply at the right time in a holiday trip.

I am honored, delighted and proud that I can share briefly my experiences with you, those who value the heritage of different countries, cultures, confess religions.

With blessing thanks for reading my letter,

Andrei Pinte

Pastor of the Evangelical Church C.A. in Bucharest

Bucharest, 28.08.2018

Andrei Pinte

My name is Andrei Pinte and I am 34 years old. I am the pastor of the Evangelical Church A.B. in Romania in Bucharest. I have studied theology in Sibiu and Heidelberg. I also work as an advisor for the territorial church concerning the bilateral dialogue between the Evangelical Church of Germany and the Orthodox Church of Romania.

Concerning the meeting it is of great interest to me to find out how people from different countries in Europe experience and keep their religious heritage in their political, religious, cultural and social environment. The exchange and the presentation will be enriching to me and will improve my understanding, which later on I want to share it with my bishop colleagues in my church.

Andrei Pinte

Religious Tolerance - a 450 years old European Heritage

On January 13, 2018, one of the world's first documents on religious tolerance had its 450th anniversary! In 1568, in the city of Torda, Romania the parliament of Transylvania proclaimed a law that allowed for the first time the right for the congregations to elect their own preachers. Transylvania became a land of denominational tolerance and freedom, providing shelter for people charged with heresy in other less tolerant countries!

Because Unitarianism was officially recognized for the first time in the Edict of Torda, the event is linked to the founding of the Hungarian Unitarian Church. To celebrate this historic heritage, in January 2018 heads of churches and politicians from Romania and Hungary, ministers and lay leaders, and hundreds of parishioners gathered for an ecumenical worship service in Torda. There, a memorial statue was unveiled, with its shape reminding of a ladder!

In my sermon, I read a story from the Book of Genesis about Jacob leaving home for a long journey. When he reached a certain place, he stopped for the night because the sun had set. He put a stone under his head and laid down to sleep. He had a dream in which he saw a ladder resting on the earth, with its top reaching to heaven, and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. Then above it stood the Lord, who said: "I am with you and will watch over you, wherever you go."

Every person, and each community is often on the road. As Jacob, we too leave, set out for new destinations, and stop for the night where the sun set. And we too have our dreams there. The parliament of Transylvania, too, had such a dream in January 1568, which confirmed that indeed, as Apostle Paul wrote to the Ephesians, there is a blessed relationship between God and humans, there is a ladder connecting the earth and the heaven called faith. One can live out of this faith! One can go up and down on it, live on a ladder, prayers and blessings, joys and sorrows alternate on it, there is only one condition: to make it free.

Rev. David Gyerö

The ladder of the faith is a gift of God, and who uses it how, concerns two parties only: the creator and the created. In every place, the Edict concluded in Torda, the preachers shall preach the Gospel each according to his understanding of it, no one shall compel them, for their souls would not be satisfied, none of the superintendents or others shall abuse the preachers, no one shall be reviled for his religion by anyone - for faith is the gift of God!

The Unitarian Church was inspired by this dream at its birth, and dated its mission having been led by this message. In 2018, we erected a ladder on the soil of Torda, a copy of that other ladder with its top reaching to heaven. Our faith too is a ladder that connects the earth with heaven, its cords and rungs being made of trust, faithfulness, prayers and blessings. And up there stands God, as he stood for the past 450 years, and says with encouragement: "I am with you, and will watch over you, wherever you go."

I find it very inspirational to believe that today, I too am Jacob from the Old Testament, and the citizens of my country are the people of the Edict of Torda. And many others too: Hungarians, Romanians and the other nations of Europe, Unitarians, other Christians, and other believers - all those who appreciate faith as being a gift of God, those who want to live with it responsibly, and to secure it freely for others too.

As we celebrate the rich religious and cultural heritage of Europe, let us too ask for blessings to our continent by building many free ladders of faith - ones that are not old and dusty, but new and glowing from being used. I wish for us to realize that by living with them makes us spiritually richer people. Our task in 2018 should be not just to remember the glory of the past, but to make new plans about how to recreate those miracles of the past. Let us make sure to fulfill the Torda dream in our homes, in our towns and cities, in our regions, and all over Europe.

← Rev. György Dabid, deputy bishop
Hungarian Unitarian Church

Rev. David Gyerö

To: Future for Religious Heritage - FRH network

Rue de Trèves 67, 1040 Bruxelles, Belgium

Dear Sir/Madam,

I was appointed as a Minister of Culture of Republic of Macedonia few months ago, in July to be more precise, the month named after Julius Caesar. I do not mention this in order to give myself any significance, and even less to compare myself to such authority; on the contrary, I would like to give a context to the matter I am referring to.

The cultural heritage of my multicultural and multi-ethnic country is quite impressive and, in that regard, I must say that I have quite strong feelings and emotions. I did not mention Gaius Julius Caesar in the first sentence incidentally; he is the mark of the Roman Empire and left serious imprint throughout our cultural heritage as well, especially in the capital of the Macedonian province MUNICIPIUM STOBENSIVM. According to the material remains, the period when people settled on the territory of Republic of Macedonia is the Archaic and Classical period and continues, with little interruptions, until the end of the Late Antiquity or the late 6th century AD. The sacred buildings, which played an exceptional role in the private and public life of the ancient people, present an integral part of any city. One of the earliest and most impressive sacred localities on our territory is the Temple of the Egyptian Goddess Isis and Serapis, built towards the end of the 1st and the beginning of the 2nd century AD. This temple was first discovered in 2008 and the archaeological explorations on that locality are still in progress. The goddess Isis, symbol of unification of all faiths and religions, was passed throughout the centuries from Old Egypt until today, and is known as Aset or Eset in Egyptian language, Ἴσις in ancient Greek and Roman language, Saint Mary the Holy Virgin in Orthodoxy and Maryam in Islam. Allow me to use this occasion to emphasize the recognition of the Jewish Community as well, which became known for the first time in 1931 in Macedonia, when an inscription was found about Claudius Tiberius Polycharmos, *father of the Synagogue in Stobi*, who donated parts of his house for the needs of the Temple. Several other synagogues were discovered with the continuous explorations on the territory of Republic of Macedonia, and the most impressive data are originated from the nineteen-seventies. One of the most exhilarating buildings for me are the ones discovered in Stobi locality, built one on top of another, one dating from the 2nd and the other from the end of the 3rd and the beginning of the 4th century, as well as the temples shaped from scenery buildings from the 3rd century, such as our most famous Temple of the Goddess Nemesis. There are numerous buildings dating from the Early Christianity as well, and the most thrilling are the ones from the 4th to the 6th century AD. The peacock from the baptistery's mosaic floor in the Old Episcopal Basilica in Stobi is one of the most famous items from the Early Christianity, of which I am very proud, and which is also engraved on one of our coins. An important part of our heritage is undoubtedly the various objects of the Islamic tradition, which from the first moments of the

Asaf Ademi

establishment of the Ottoman Empire in this region are widespread in all parts of Macedonia. A number of mosques, such as the undisputed Mustafa Pasha in Skopje, but also several Teqes and Turbes, are an important integral part of our rich cultural heritage.

In other words, no matter which part of the sacred cultural heritage in Republic of Macedonia you wish to explore, all of them tell incredible stories, from the Temple of Isis to the magnificent Decorated Mosque from the beginning of the Renaissance in Republic of Macedonia.

The cultural heritage of Republic of Macedonia offers exhilarating spectrum of multiplicity which impresses everyone. Therefore, it is a privilege for us to know that we carry a part of the crafts of the great minds in our DNA, which united us throughout the cultural heritage, which was built with many layers and multi-cultures from the very beginning.

Respectfully,

Minister of Culture of Republic of Macedonia

Asaf Ademi

Asaf Ademi

To "FHR" - Network for the Future of Religious Heritage

67 rue de Trèves, 1040 Brussels, Belgium

Skopje, September 23, 2018

Dear friends and colleagues,

When twenty years ago, after completing my doctoral studies in Paris, I returned to my native Macedonia, I could not imagine that the cultural heritage of the country and of the Balkan region as a whole would take such an important place in my life.

Together with a group of conservators, art historians, artists, architects, but also, with passionate amateurs – lovers of cultural heritage, in 1998 in Skopje we founded a non-governmental organization for education, promotion and preservation of cultural heritage - Makedonida. Right from the very start, with its premier educational project *One School – One Monument*, Makedonida has created a true network of partners and supporters, including dozens of schools, the Ministry of Culture of Macedonia and almost all other cultural institutions in the country, as well as important international institutions such as the Council of Europe, Europe Nostra, the World Monuments Fund from New York, the Open Society Foundation - Macedonia, to mention here only the most important ones. Thus, in the ensuing period, Makedonida could also move on to the implementation of projects in the field of conservation, including the cave church in Radozhda with frescoes from the 13th century, as well as the unique church in Macedonia from the 17th century, the church dedicated to the Holy Mother of God in Slivnitsa in the Prespa Lake region.

Since a few years ago, Makedonida has been working actively to popularize the sacred heritage by publishing guide books on the most important churches and mosques in Macedonia, dating back to the Byzantine and Ottoman periods, in Macedonian, in Albanian, English and French.

We also pay special attention to forging cooperation with our European partners, with the network Future of Religious Heritage from Brussels - FRH, as well as with many important institutions from France and Germany, hoping for the support by European institutions that is of particular importance to us, who are supposed to accompany and support Macedonia in its Euro-Atlantic integrations.

Today, after many completed projects, as well as many projects that are still underway, cultural heritage, by its very importance and diversity, is not only a profession to me. It is a great privilege, mission, commitment, but also an inexhaustible source of inspiration and energy that lends me with support and helps me to cope with the every day challenges of globalization.

Art alone can save the world – said Fyodor Dostoevsky. That to me is exactly what cultural heritage, and especially sacred heritage, is.

Dr. Panche Velkov

Engineer conservator and cultural manager

President of the Makedonida foundation

Member of FHR Committee

Dr. Panche Velkov

To „FRH“ – network for the Future of the religious heritage

67 street Trev, 1040 Brussel, Belgium

Bitola, September 27, 2018

Dear friends,

In the last decade, working as an employee in the national institution Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments and Museums - Bitola, I had the opportunity to work on research, conservation and restoration of plenty of medieval or Byzantine churches in the Prespa Valley region. The valley of both lakes is located in the southwestern part of the Republic of Macedonia, and in addition to its outstanding natural beauty, rich in diverse flora and fauna, a large number of Christian monuments can be found from different time periods. I would mention the temples which have been the subject of my work: the Church St. Peter on the island "Golem grad" from the 14th century, St. Ilija in Grnchari dated 13th century, the churches in the Slimnica Monastery from the 17th century and the Monastery near Brajchino from the 15th century. First and foremost, distinct with fresco painting beauty comes the church St. Gjorgji in Kurbinovo, the focus of our work in the past years.

It is noteworthy that the waters of the Great Prespa Lake are adjoining the territories of the three Balkan states. The largest part of the valley belongs to Republic of Macedonia and the other two to Republic of Greece and Republic of Albania. Apart from the shores of the lakes and the four islands located in them, remnants are dispersed of several early Christian basilicas, famous churches from the 10th, 11th and 12th century and dozens of cave churches, which attract attention with their inaccessibility and mysteriousness.

In the three state territories, there are monuments of religious heritage that are perfect for a joint cooperation in near future, directed towards the protection and promotion of these sanctuaries. I am convinced that if we employ the trilateral approach in the idea to utilize the cultural heritage as a tourist offer, the economic development of this predominantly neglected area will be significantly increased.

It can easily happen that current political events give a strong impetus for the realization of such ideas. I think that this initiative should be expanded with a wider support, that is, the region should be protected by UNESCO. Thus, the religious heritage of the Prespa valley will contribute to the establishment of an intercultural dialogue, sustainable development and prosperity of the local communities in the three countries.

We should endeavour and find supporters to urge the enforcement of this initiative.

Sincerely,

BA Risto Paligora, Art Historian, Advisor Conservator.

Risto Paligora

My hometown, Virginia is usually referred
 in Hungary, as the city of churches and castles.
 Indeed, the city has been the centre of the
 oldest - more than 1.000 years old - bishopric
 in my country, mentioned as an already
 existing bishopric in the documents dated
 back in the 10th century.

The castle itself - originally the
 queen's castle - is a geographical concentration
 several churches: basilica, parishes, parishes
 found here among its walls during the centuries
 I also have been raised among these walls
 My childhood and youth was fundamentally
 determined by the intellectual influence of
 Christian heritage in my hometown.

It was an intellectual influence

Tibor Navracsics

not a burden. It has been an
 inspiration which broke and pushed my
 life and my personality, wide and more
 open.

[Signature]

Tibor Navracsics

's-Hertogenbosch, 9th of October 2018

Dear Sir / Madam,

Do you know the story about the cathedral basilica of St. John evangelist in 's-Hertogenbosch?

St. John's Cathedral is the number 1 heritage site of the city of 's-Hertogenbosch in the Netherlands. Every year visited by million visitors. This cathedral basilica in Brabant Gothic architecture, is a place where beauty, art and culture come together. The Sint-Jan is a structure that is completely unique in Dutch ecclesiastical architecture.

The cathedral tells us many stories. It tells us the story about the past how the people of 's-Hertogenbosch built this church; about craftsmanship and dedication. It tells us the story about the experience of the Catholic faith expressed in stone, wood, stained glass and paintings through the ages. It tells us the story about how people come together at the most important moments in their lives; about faith, hope and love. It tells us the story about the passing on of traditions, about symbolism and its meaning.

The cathedral now also tells us stories: and in that story we – heritage managers – have a clear role. Now the story is made about how we deal with this precious heritage. How we maintain this heritage and wat to pass it on to the next generation. This requires just as much love, dedication and managerial expertise as the one with which the cathedral was built. We have a huge responsibility in this.

As alderman with heritage in my portfolio, I am very proud of our cathedral basilica of Stain John evangelist. St. John cathedral is in the midst of the society and our citizens are proud of it. This cathedral is a beacon of history but also of the future. Visiting the cathedral is an experience; We must make this experience accessible to the visitors of today and the future so that this valuable location can remain what it is: a pearl of the city.

If you ask me one sentence: **The importance of religious heritage? Because stories must be told and passed on!!**

Kind regards

Huib van Olden



Huib van Olden

Mijn liefde voor Religieus Erfgoed

Trots ben ik om te mogen werken voor de gemeente Oss (provincie Noord-Brabant). Deze gemeente kenmerkt zich door het ruime aanbod van religieus erfgoed. De vele kerken, pastorieën, kloostercomplexen en bid kappellen sieren en kenmerken het landschap. Deze gebouwen staan voor de identiteit van de Osse bevolking, waarbij de geloofsovertuiging nog steeds in het DNA aanwezig is.

De diversiteit van gebouwen zijn een meerwaarde voor de onderscheidende landschapskarakteristiek. Waarbij de schoonheid van de gebouwen op gebied van architectuur en kerkelijk kunstbezit als een schat behouden dient te worden. Het is mooi om in een gemeente te mogen werken waar de vrijheid van geloofsovertuiging vandaag de dag nog steeds aanwezig is. Dit heeft een maatschappelijke meerwaarde en geeft een gevarieerd aanbod aan religieuze gebouwen van kathedralen, veldkerkjes en middeleeuwse kloostercomplexen tot synagogen en hedendaagse moskee 's .

Geroerd raak ik als je weet dat dergelijke gebouwen in de meeste gevallen door een kleine geloofsgemeenschap zijn gebouwd. De gebouwen vertellen een verhaal 'van trots zijn op je geloofsovertuiging' waarbij het gemeenschapsgevoel een grote rol speelt. Tot op de dag van vandaag hebben de burgers van Oss een band met deze gebouwen in hun leefomgeving. Het zijn de gebouwen waar men wortels heeft liggen, en ieder heeft persoonlijke herinneringen aan het gebouw welke allemaal anders zijn. De grote uitdaging ligt ook in de gemeenschap om gezamenlijk te kijken op welke wijze de gebouwen in stand kunnen blijven en duurzaam onderdeel van onze leefomgeving kunnen blijven uitmaken.

Vanwege de liefde en de drang voor het behouden van deze gebouwen ben ik dankbaar dat ik mijn werkzaamheden binnen de gemeente Oss mag vervullen. Het doet mij goed om te zien dat er naasten zijn die zich ook inzetten voor het behouden van deze mooie parels. Het is daarom van belang dat we ons Religieuze-DNA vasthouden en kunnen doorgeven aan onze volgende generaties. De mens is een tijdelijke factor in vergelijking tot de gebouwen welke blijven spreken en het verhaal in stand houden!.



Jan-Willem van Zoelen
Medewerker Cultureel Erfgoed
Gemeente Oss – The Netherlands

Jan-Willem van Zoelen



BURGEMEESTER
OSS
Oss, 11 juli 2018



Megen is de meest noordelijke plek van de provincie. Een prachtig stadje, dat zijn puurheid heeft kunnen vasthouden. Met een bijzondere geschiedenis. Nadat Frederik Hendrik 's-Hertogenbosch bedwong, moesten de katholieken de stad verlaten. De Franciscanen streken in Megen neer, net als de Karmelietessen. Er was een Latijnse school, die nu prachtig gerestaureerd dienst doet als gemeenschapshuis Akropolis.

Als ik in Megen ben, loop ik vaak even binnen bij het 'Bruurke van Megen', broeder Everardus van wie we deze maand de 150e geboortedag vieren. In zijn handen liggen opgerolde briefjes met wensen van mensen, allerlei soorten. Het helpt om je diepste gedachten aan papier toe te vertrouwen, de hoop die je hebt, de onmacht die je kunt voelen bij onoplosbare problemen. Fascinerend om in een kerk te zijn en te bedenken hoe eeuwenlang mensen op bijzondere momenten in hun leven naar deze plek gekomen zijn: om stil te staan, te bedanken, te vieren, te rouwen. Een eeuwenoude plek van samenkomst en meditatie. In Megen kun je terug naar de echt belangrijke zaken in het leven, de dingen die tijdloos zijn: liefde, vriendschap, familie, afscheid.

Wobine Buijs-Glaudemans,
Burgemeester van Oss.

Wobine Buijs-Glaudemans



Naam A. VAN SCHAGEN-LINDSEN
Nationaliteit NEDERLANDSE
E-mailadres _____

Kerk betekent voor mij,
veiligheid, geborgenheid..!
En heel belangrijk,
deze MariaKapel.
Maria, is mijn steun en
toeverlaat.
Zonder haar kan ik
niet. Amen.

Deel je persoonlijke herinnering...



Name Markus Globisch
Nationalität deutsch
E-mail markusglobisch@gmail.com

Ich bin wesentlich geprägt worden
vom christlichen Glauben, im
Lehrerbüro der röm.-kath.
Konfession und ihrer religiösen
Impulsen, wie z.B. der
Folklorbewegung e.V., aber
auch allgemein von reichen
monastischen Erbe in Deutschland.
Besonders haben es mir die
Benediktiner angetan, die

Tragen sie mit Ihrer Geschichte...

Various senders



Naam W. vd Wiel
Nationaliteit Ned.
E-mailadres _____

Als ik voorbij een kerk,
kapelletje kom, ga ik
een kaarsje opsteken,
in moeilijke tijden vooral
in de Sint Jan & Sebastiaan
en het heilig Bruurke in
Megen. Daar kun je dan
je zorgen kwijt.
Als ik in een kerk kom,
erwaas ik altijd een
enorme rust!

Deel je persoonlijke herinnering...



Name lagerfeuer
Nationalität _____
E-mail _____

ich bereits in Rietberg-Varensell,
aber auch in Sachsen-Anhalt
(Hypsburg) und in Weichselburg
(Sachsen) kennen gelernt habe.
Der authentischer Glaube war
und ist mir ein Vorbild, der
sich zwar nicht einfach in den
Alltag integrieren lässt, aber
immerwieder die Quelle meiner
persönlichen Glaubenskraft
darstellt.

...Erinnerung oder Zeichnung bei



Epilogue

FRH would like to give a special thanks to everyone that shared a letter containing a story or memory to the FRH Torch of Heritage and Culture Initiative.

We would like to thank all the wonderful people we have met along the FRH Torch journey for their dedication and contribution to the safeguarding of religious heritage. We would also like to thank all those people working anonymously, often on a volunteer basis, to preserve and protect religious heritage sites – these are the unsung heroes that ensure future generations can admire and cherish our shared heritage. At the same time, we encourage volunteers, professionals and organisations alike to reach out to like-minded individuals and networks in their efforts, as we have understood that the best way to advance is through cooperation and sharing of best practices.



Colophon

Organisation

Future for Religious Heritage (FRH) is an independent, Brussels based, non-faith, not for profit organisation that promotes the protection and use of religious buildings and their contents.

Pictures

Joop Koopmanschap (official photographer for the FRH Torch Initiative)
Kees Grootswagers
Portraits as received from participants

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Lilian Grootswagers
Jordi Mallarach Parés

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As received from participants

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