



ICOMOS TheoPhilos ISC Conference

***The Protection of Archaeological Heritage:
Theory Meets Practice***

Florence (Italy), 12–13 March 2026

Palazzo Coppini (Via del Giglio 10)

Conference Organizers:

In collaboration with:



ICOMOS ICAHM
International Committee
on Archaeological
Heritage Management



**TRAVEL TO
DIALOGUE**



PALAZZO COPPINI

1. ISSUES OF THE CONFERENCE

Archaeological monuments are a large, important and valuable part of the heritage resource. While movable archaeological artefacts can be secured and collected in museums, immovable archaeological monuments are secured and made available on site – resulting in a complex conservation problem. Archaeological monuments can be found all over the world, which is why their protection is a concern for all conservation communities.

Archaeological sites present specific challenges in that they are usually incomplete, lack a beneficial use and often are in a state of material degradation. Conservation activities should take all these aspects into account and aim to address them as far as possible. That is why the protection of archaeological monuments has developed its own methods of protection, management and presentation.

The protection of archaeological sites requires, among other things, stopping the processes of degradation, protection against devastation, and shelter from weather conditions. Additional activities are required to make archaeological sites available to visitors – organization of access, interpretation materials, pavilions for technical services, lighting, fences, parking, etc. The protection of archaeological monuments must also take into account new needs, including ensuring physical accessibility, cultural inclusiveness, and addressing the new challenges of climate change and the growing threats of illicit trafficking in archaeological artefacts.

The sum of the requirements and limitations makes the protection of archaeological monuments a difficult and complex task. While each archaeological site requires an individual approach, this conference provides the opportunity to take stock of current theoretical principles and to exchange practical experience with international colleagues, in order better to this important category of heritage.

2. AIMS AND THEMATIC SCOPE OF THE CONFERENCE

The aim of the conference ***The Protection of Archaeological Heritage – Theory Meets Practice*** is to comprehensively discuss the problem of protection, development and interpretation of archaeological monuments. The international discussion will concern the theoretical foundations and practical experience related to the protection of archaeological monuments. Particularly important for the conclusions of this discussion are experiences from different countries, regions and cultures.

The conference will address three groups of problems (in 4 sessions)

1. Theoretical foundations of the protection of archaeological monuments
2. Methodology for the protection of archaeological monuments
3. Problems and challenges in the protection of archaeological monuments
4. Examples of best practice in the protection of archaeological monuments

3. ORGANISATIONAL INFORMATION

Submission of abstracts for proposed papers is via this web form: [**https://forms.gle/qQEGyZyaE2ppZAgP7**](https://forms.gle/qQEGyZyaE2ppZAgP7). Proposal abstracts will be limited to 2,000 characters (around 300 words), and you will be asked to indicate the session (1, 2, 3 or 4) within which you suggest your paper would be presented. The deadline for submissions is **Saturday, 17 January 2026**.

The choice of papers to be presented at the conference will be made by reviewers appointed by the Organizing Committee of the conference. Authors of the submitted papers will be informed of the decision of the reviewers by **Monday, 2 February 2026**.

Please note that presentations are limited to **15 minutes**.

Following the conference, the proceedings will be published in a peer-reviewed scientific journal [*Protection of Cultural Heritage*](#), published by ICOMOS Poland, ICOMOS ISC TheoPhilos, and the Lublin University of Technology. [Submission information for authors](#).

The Organizing Committee
ICOMOS ISC for Theory and Philosophy of Conservation and
Restoration (**TheoPhilos**) and
ICOMOS ISC on Archaeological Heritage Management (**ICAHM**)

theophilos@icomos.org

Click [HERE](#) to submit your proposal



PALAZZO COPPINI

“Museum of the Gratitude” of the Romualdo Del Bianco Foundation

<https://www.museofondazioneidelbianco.org>

History of the Palace



The **ancient via del Giglio**, where it is located, whose origins date back to at least the 14th century, connected two important religious realities of the city such as the basilica of San Lorenzo and the Dominican convent of Santa Maria delle Vigne (later Santa Maria Novella). The street followed a **section of the city walls** built by the Florentine Republic between 1173 and 1176.

A circuit of walls, the fifth in chronological order, had a short life. In fact, the demographic explosion of Florence at the time - fourteenth-century chroniclers attribute to Florence at that time a figure of 100,000-120,000 inhabitants - led the Republic, just over a century later (1286), to deliberate a new large circle of walls enclosing an area of about 520 hectares.



Coppini Palace stands out among the Florentine buildings of particular interest, since in the ensemble of its structural and furnishing elements, it is possible to identify some fundamental periods of the city enclosed by the Arnolfian walls. The first period relates to what remains of the **original medieval building**, identifiable in the section of one of those city towers "scraped" in 1250 by decree of the government of the First People, and then incorporated into noble residences. The second period is represented by a phase of **planimetric and structural expansion dating back to the sixteenth century**, and among the prominent elements we mention a **beautiful spiral staircase** in stone and an **elegant fountain** located in a niche and surmounted by a mask typical of Mannerist grotesque. The third period, nineteenth century, is characterized above all by an increase in its volumes, which is part of the almost total restructuring of the oldest noble area, and reflects in the **restorations in style, the neogothic and neo renaissance taste** between the end of the nineteenth and the early twentieth century.

“Museum of the Gratitude” of the Romualdo Del Bianco Foundation A Monument to Diverse Cultures and Human Relations

The Museum Foundation Del Bianco physically represents the culmination and symbol of the decades-long work carried out by the Romualdo Del Bianco® Foundation - Life Beyond Tourism®, and its international network, to recognize human relationships, openness to others, and mutual understanding through tangible and intangible cultural and natural heritage as indispensable needs of the 'Human Family'.



Located in Palazzo Coppini, the Museum Foundation Del Bianco is a vital part of the Congress Center at the Duomo, which the Romualdo Del Bianco® Foundation has established and annually supported as a Research Study Center on the themes of travel, heritage, and dialogue among cultures, developing and realizing the concept of interculturality among peoples through the Life Beyond Tourism® Ethos in over 25 years of activity.

Within its walls, it preserves, communicates, and exhibits for study, education, and enjoyment a private collection of gifts, received during travels or delivered personally, made available to the citizens. This collection encompasses various sectors of culture related to the traditions, customs, and practices of over 83 countries that share the Foundation's commitment to developing communication between peoples.



It houses a rare library with over 6000 volumes written in 51 languages and 12 alphabets from around the world, largely focused on tangible and intangible world heritage.

The museum also boasts precious collections of objects that, in addition to their invaluable material worth, represent gratitude and esteem towards the Foundation from individuals, public, and private institutions who have donated them wholeheartedly.