The future of churches (Lyon, 20-22 Oct 16)

Lyon (France), Oct 20–22, 2016
Deadline: Apr 30, 2016

Benjamin Chavardés

If the religious fact has deeply shaped the western universe and its urban environment until a recent date, religious heritage reuse is one of the first immediate consequences of social contemporary evolutions. Faced with the secularization phenomenon – which generates increased sale, transformation or destruction of places of worship – religious heritage has to face the challenge of functional and architectural mutations in unprecedented proportions. In decades to come, thousands of buildings in Europe and in North America will have to be converted to new uses. This is an increasingly growing phenomenon and today, thousands of churches in Scandinavia are concerned, but also in Germany, in Belgium, in France and in Italy. If approaches for conversion and transformation of religious buildings have been developed for many years in Northern Europe or in North America, such reflections are still at an early stage in southern countries of catholic tradition. This soaring phenomenon must be apprehended in terms of urban renewal issues, densification and sustainable development. The secularization process of western societies is a predilection topic for researchers in human and social sciences, but studies focusing on the consequences of the contemporary decommissioning of places of worship are rare, and those focusing on the way to ensure a reconversion of this building rarer still.

On one hand this conference aims to lay the foundations for a theoretical reflection on an international scale with the intention of measuring the extent of the decommissioning phenomenon of places of worship and its impacts at religious and social, economic and touristic, cultural and heritage levels, and on the other hand to study the conditions of intervention and transformation of churches. Our interest will be more specifically directed towards the establishment of methods and protocols for intervention in the dynamics of conversions. Presentations will focus especially on the architectural project, given the specific problems caused by the reuse of cultic heritage, and on the flexibility potentials of these buildings in terms of social and environmental developments. A set of theoretical, programmatic, architectural and urban planning proposals will be drawn aiming at raising the awareness of professionals, managers but also institutional stakeholders and associations.

The conference, which takes place in Lyon from the 20th to the 22th of October 2016, will mainly propose two types of sessions: oral presentations of twenty five minutes each and round tables.

Terms submission

Submissions should be sent before April 30, 2016, on the website :

http://avenireglises.sciencesconf.org/

They should include a title, an abstract of 3 000 characters (spaces included) and a presentation of the author (scientific activity and/or professional, institutional affiliation, publications and email address).

Submissions can be made either in French, Italian or English. All proposals will be anonymously reviewed by the scientific committee.

Reference:
CFP: The future of churches (Lyon, 20-22 Oct 16). In: ArtHist.net, Feb 3, 2016 (accessed Nov 9, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/12141>.