

## GENERAL REPORT

### *Doctrine of knowledge and of restoration of monuments and sites*

The long and diversified report of Michel Parent moves from far and reflects the dialectical character of the author. He has organized his work in seven chapters and a conclusion, all of which are full of considerations which deserve great appreciation.

The first four chapters are developed in an autonomous way, totally independent from the reports presented to the scientific Conference, and they must be considered as a long theoretical and doctrinal introduction. The subjects: — L'exigence théorique et doctrinale; Contenu de notre recherche; Problématique de notre regard; Spécificités du Patrimoine Architectural — follow each other in an eloquent and pleasant form which uses also literary suggestions.

We could say that the treatment shows a didactic structure which moves from the most distant principles and proceeds gradually with the intent to reach a logical construction or, better, the statement of a thesis. It is not possible to give a satisfying summary of it, nor to follow the author step by step in all the explorations which he makes in this long introduction. We do notice, however, that there are already mentioned his reserves on the codified principles of the Venice Charter. Although many of his arguments seem to be introduced to justify and support such critical attitude, Michel Parent doesn't take a definite position on the restoration doctrine as stated in the Charter, and prefers to appear as a possibilist or maybe a revisionist. This is, after all, the respectable position of many of us and of those who do not believe that we must start from sure principles and do not look for connections with similar situations which arise in other fields of the figurative arts.

Our most eminent colleague, for instance, when he doesn't agree on a historical vision of the problems of restoration, states as an axiom that all

interventions are set in terms of « Choix entre un certain passé et un certain avenir de l'oeuvre ». I would like to observe that we shouldn't speak of a « certain past ». The past has been all handed down to us by the monument, even with the modifications and the additions it has undergone and which document the life of the construction and on which we shouldn't have the presumption to make our anticipated choices. The only essential choice which we are requested to make is that of the best way to insure the preservation of the whole architectural structure, even the most tormented and composite.

In order to do this, it is absolutely necessary to make a complete and precise study of the building or of the monumental complex, in order to discover and understand its most hidden aspects along the different directions of research. When we'll have done this — which, we must admit, doesn't always happen under all latitudes, today — we shall not feel the monument extraneous to us and we shall not consider it as an object on which to experiment new architectural experiences and our own fantasy.

It is only a deep knowledge made with intelligence and great love that makes us consider the architectural object with the “regard différent” of which Mr. Parent so cleverly speaks. It is this consciousness of the monument that establishes the acknowledgement of its quality as a work of art. As a consequence, and because of this global acknowledgement, our careful interventions must be dosed.

Continuing his brilliant “causerie”, after the theoretical considerations, Mr. Parent introduces and places exactly his comments to the texts which concern this important theme of the Conference. In the Vth chapter he enucleates the problems inherent to the consistence of the architectural patrimony, which tends to become bigger, and begins with considering the punctual protection of isolated architectural structures.

A specific argument emerges from the consideration of the different measures adopted by different countries in imposing such protection. Mr. Parent suggests that ICOMOS should study the advantages and the disadvantages of the tendencies intended to reduce or to widen the lists of specific protection for the monumental buildings. It is a wish which I suggest to accept in order to bring closer, certainly not to unify, the too different policies of inventory and catalogue.

After having enounced the specific characters of the protection made by areas, Mr. Parent goes on to consider the actual extension of the consistence of the patrimony (particularly in the fields of rural and of industrial architecture) which establishes the necessary premise to revive the industrial complexes of the nineteenth century and to integrate the ancient districts

with the life of the modern city. On these subjects numerous communications have arrived, thus proving the interest of the members of ICOMOS for the enlargement of the horizon and for the importance of the problems which have been risen.

Chapter VI concerns the arguments connected to the documentation of the architectural patrimony and of its restorations. Mr. Parent underlines the quality of the problems and the necessity to solve them with method and timing, also in view of the future interventions, and brings to evidence the need to deduce from the monument all the useful information.

I think that the renewed proposal to classify and to divulge such information should find a general agreement and should induce ICOMOS to renew its efforts. Such initiatives tend towards a better knowledge of the aspects, the quality and the essence, not only constructive, of the monumental buildings. It will never be too late to give a decisive start to this difficult documentary sector which has had a remarkable development in the museographic field.

The VIIth chapter, titled “Preservation and Restoration”, is the most important and deserves our careful attention because Mr. Parent manifests clearly his thought. He deals essentially with three themes:

- Conditions and Circumstances of a “legitimate restitution”.
- The history written on the monument: the transparency.
- Restoration of restorations.

The long report ends with the analysis and the development of such specific subjects towards which he shows the most indulgent liberality.

These pages show very clearly Mr. Parent's conceptual position as it found its shape after the long exposition. He is favourable to the so called legitimate restitutions and he tries to justify the most different cases not limiting them only to those determined (I would like to say imposed) by violent causes such as war destructions. Mr. Parent seems to be willing to leave the choices to the scrupulous care with which the operation will be conducted and to the sensitiveness of those who will direct it. He even admits that the few remains of an “ensemble classique” will find the key to an exact reconstruction in extrapolations to be made on the basis of similar architectural consistences and forms.

At this point I can't hide my distrust towards these permissive forms of intervention, without commenting the indications suggested in all three points. I feel it is my duty to call the attention on the fact that the so called “legitimate restitution” could legitimate fantasies and arbitrary acts. Theoretically one should not speak of “authenticités successives” with the consequence of privileging one to the others. The architectural object which

has reached us through modifications and additions should be considered by its historical authenticity, in all its parts, no matter to which age they belong. Consequently, there should not even be the specific problem of "debaroquisation", clearly developed by the author.

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It is very strange, in our opinion, that in such a long report which has touched all kinds of problems, down to the most different details, and has used historical and literary quotations, there is no reference whatsoever to the other two main categories of works of art: paintings and sculptures. Nor there is reference to the principles and the methodologies which for a long time have regulated the relative restorations. I am very surprised and I can find no explanation for this. If Mr. Parent had made some necessary reference, he could have not reached formulations which go beyond the atmosphere of our modern culture based on historicism.

The Venice Charter must be revised in order to be more complete and specified. It cannot be, however, substantially refused or avoided in its basic principles. This Charter is not only a good behaviour code, but it also contains a series of logical and articulate statements which have their roots in the culture of our time and reflect themselves in the principles and in the reality of the restorations made in the fields of the most different artistic expressions.

We believe that the Charter must be carefully amplified in order to include also the tutelage of the ancient urban milieu and, especially, the historical centres, as it has been proposed long ago. It is a necessity felt by everyone which, I would like to say, is unposponable in order to save the prestige of ICOMOS. This necessity could find reception even outside of the Venice Charter, if there could be drawn and approved a second document for the tutelage and the preservation of the "ensembles", as proposed by Professor Schmid in the report submitted to this Conference.

I think that it is in the conscience of us all that the principles of the Venice Charter must continue to regulate our activity in the most different fields, even if there must be left a certain natural latitude in the interpretation of its norms which are set clear and concise. I am sure that also Mr. Parent will not refuse to allow his trust to this statement of principle. I also wish that the Conference will be able to give the necessary indications for the completion of the Charter, so that the members of ICOMOS may continue their activity on a not too problematic or different basis and are instead called to extend and refine such basis in the immense field of the "ensembles" and of the urban centres of historical interest.

Beginning his report on materials, Bernard Feilden anticipates six proposals which already constitute a conclusion made obvious with a pragmatic spirit. It is a number of initiatives to be taken within UNESCO and ICOMOS which reveal the personality of the author, who is the director of ICCROM, with his natural disposition and his professional tendency to the practice of international activities.

In a short introduction Mr. Feilden gives an account of three documents submitted to the conference and which would not find an exact place in the continuation of his report.

One of them concerns the importance of using lapidary materials, also regarded as a constant of the environment, the use of which gives serious production and handicraft problems. The other examines the roof made with wood boards (*bardeaux*).

Mr. Feilden dwells on the third document which suggests the production of pit burned tarr which is considered as the best product to preserve the wood used in ancient constructions and particularly in the roofs.

The author gives then a detailed study on the reports submitted to the conference, inserting them in a treatise divided into different parts and above all completing them with new informations and valuable considerations.

Particularly interesting are the notations on the traditional handicraft and on the causes of its degradation. This is a serious phenomenon which deserves all our attention and which should be fought with particularly efficient means.

Mr. Feilden speaks about pollution and stresses the damages caused by vibrations. These are topics which he supports with pertinent and up to date observations, due to the lack of specific reports at the Conference. He also supplies a summary table of the degradation's causes which will be very useful.

A chapter is dedicated, in particular, to the research of such causes of degradation. The research is based on frequent inspections made at first by sight and then regularly repeated and always formalized, in order to indicate the interventions for the preservation of the buildings. He considers and divides such interventions into: "immediate, urgent, necessary and desirable". He then reminds the other studies on the subject and gives an account of the most recent and important ones. He also stresses the reasons for which the Portland cement cannot be used in restoring the historical buildings and gives against it nine arguments.

After mentioning the damages caused by the installations for the internal ambients (heating, climatization and humidification) underlines the necessity to have a deep knowledge not only of all the traditional methods, but also of the chemical products used for preservation and proposes the making of an inventory of all of them in order to establish adequately their composition and their characteristics.

He then deals with the research on stones and on mortars. He dwells particularly on the subject of earthy materials and on raw bricks, starting from the general statement of their difficult preservation established in the Ankara Conference, to end with a short account on wood's maintenance.

We must acknowledge that the particular experiences of Mr. Feilden and his activity as director and consultant in the international field have given him the opportunity of writing a panoramic treatise, pertinent and very much up to date. This report may be thus considered as a brief manual on the subject and makes us feel the necessity and the usefulness of similar documents for the future. It would be wise to establish a regular periodicity for such documents.

As we said, Mr. Feilden ends his report by suggesting six proposals which we think useful to resume because of their wide sphere of action.

1) Each country should document the state of its traditional handicraft and make every possible effort to preserve the living knowledge of the qualifications and of the ancient technology.

2) It would be necessary to write a history of pre-columbian America and of eastern Asia, requested by UNESCO, in order to assist the studies on preservation in these areas.

3) The national committees of ICOMOS should give information on the causes of degradation of buildings, particularly for what concerns insects, atmospheric pollution and rain's acidity.

4) By care of UNESCO, there should be organized researches intended to reduce the atmospheric pollution caused by small and medium heating systems.

5) Other researches should be concerned with the damages caused to the buildings by vibrations due to traffic, in order to establish adequate norms.

6) The national Committees of ICOMOS should make special research on the efficiency of the ancient techniques of preservation of stones and of wood.

I hope that Mr. Feilden's proposals will be approved and that it will be possible to organize in a short time the complex researches which he suggests. The validity of our association may find here a good test.

*Use of the scientific research and of technology in the analysis and the strengthening of the architectural structures*

About the problems concerning the structures and the statics of ancient buildings, the report of Mr. Di Pasquale shows a consciousness and an opening towards the future which concludes with the proposal of a connection between our association and the international institutions operating in the field of structural engineering and of theoretical and applied mechanics.

It is the first time that ICOMOS calls the attention of its members on problems which were an exclusive concern of structuralists and scientists. It seems that the moment has arrived for no to stimulate and encourage the theoretical research on masonry since the methods and the most modern materials — reinforced concrete and steel — almost completely dominate the field of construction, excluding the investigation of the knowledge and the preservation of the building techniques.

We can say that nowadays nobody would do any research on traditional structures if there weren't buildings of the past. The interests and the responsibilities in this sector cannot be separated from the programs and the activity of ICOMOS. Mr. Di Pasquale says: "The experimental investigation finds here more than anywhere else a precise significance: the new intervention techniques based on the use of epoxy and adhesive resins; those based on the insertion of reinforced micropoles; the most different ones which are intended to give to the mass of the building a capacity of resistance to traction through appropriate insertions and distortions."

I think, however, that this research and the consequent application must not be put into practice in a indiscriminate way nor are to be used as an experiment "in corpore viri". Any attempt in this sense should obviously be rejected just as any possible deviation should be avoided. It is therefore necessary to warn against the excessive guarantees of the plannings, the wide uses and the indiscriminate interventions which may be very convenient to the contractors, but force and alter the traditional structures.

Also, there must not be too many substitutions of the in sight materials, because their preservation and their authenticity must be assured.

From these bases, without any intention of substituting or altering the materials, some behaviour lines can be set, which should allow to know the state of the materials after some decades and after the occurring of particular phenomenons. The operator can be thus informed on the technical achievements and on the validity and the duration of the accomplished works.

I realize that unconsciously I came to make some hypothesis of work

based on the experimentation of the systems of intervention and of static protection.

I don't feel guilty, because even the construction of the architectural heritages, on which are set our cares and our scientific interests, has been accomplished in the past on the basis of successive experimentations.

The history of architecture doesn't only give excellent examples on this matter, but it is substantiated by the experimental research. Being in Rome, we may recall the sequences of the vault and cupola buildings which in the ancient roman period could cover large areas of even onethousand square meters and had a courageous revival during the Renaissance. The project and the construction of each building was based on the experience of the previous one. It was a constant continuation of space conquests and of structural achievements on previous realizations. Their history is the history of technical progress in the field of construction.

In today's interventions we should act in the same way, with always better and more refined methods, proved by previous experiences. The use of reinforced concrete in the restoration of monuments confirms the gradual experimental refinements since the first realizations of about seventy years ago until today.

Mr. Di Pasquale, however, looks further, beyond the experimentation and tells us that methodical investigations could lead to the foundation of a general theory on the masonry structures. Such theory he sees now in formation and he hopes that it will be totally defined as with the steel and reinforced concrete structures.

Mr. Di Pasquale then summarizes the state of theoretical researches on the masonry structures from the traditional methods of static control of the structures to the more recent "crack calculations" up to the theoretical problem of "equilibrium of a continuous mean made by elementary parts, reciprocally tied." Two directions of research to which is added a short account on the theory of the states of constraint towards which Mr. Di Pasquale seems to tend.

Going on to the techniques of structural intervention, Mr. Di Pasquale deals with the singling out of the causes of ruin and he resumes the different strengthening procedures. These procedures pose the essential question: in which measure the static intervention must substitute damaged parts or should it only be an integration of those parts which cannot totally perform their static function. And sometimes this dilemma cannot even be approached since the external decorations must be preserved in their authenticity.

The new intervention techniques are resumed in four different kinds:

the micropoles, the total soaking with synthetic resins, the insertion of a steel or reinforced concrete frame, and finally the prestress.

After this general view of the "status quaestionis", Mr. Di Pasquale explains in the last pages the few submitted reports which document the studies on the general theme of the structures and of their strengthening. A field of activity which becomes larger every day together with the expansion of the concept of architectural heritage with the need of a more conscious and efficient preservation.

We can only wish a positive development of the studies on the structures both in the field of theoretical speculations and in the field of experimental research.

#### *Organization of protection service, inventory, professional training*

The report of Mr. Carlos Chanfon Olmos, written in Spanish, and concerning particularly the professional themes, reflects in a very balanced text the experiences and the preoccupations of Mexico. We must compliment this Country for its intense activity and for the progresses made in organizing the protection work as well as for the results achieved in the divulgation work.

Mr. Chanfon Olmos develops his thought in a colloquial form, inserting summaries and observations on the documents he received and which he judges as very interesting material. Such material shows the importance given by ICOMOS to the topics of this Section.

Mr. Chanfon Olmos doesn't take into consideration other professional levels which are not typical of ICOMOS, an organization made of architects. This report on profession is, therefore, not concerned with the problem of the operative cadres, already examined in Mr. Bernard Feilden's report. We do not like, however, to miss this opportunity to stress again the importance of all the collaborators in the field of the difficult and complex restoration operations. We feel at the same time the duty of intensifying the efforts to preserve the traditional techniques where they are still practiced and of soliciting their study and their interpretation where they are not used any more.

Mr. Chanfon Olmos tells us from the beginning that he will speak about the young countries and the mature countries during this "excursus" on the professional activity. He refers to the measure of man and to his ages, in order to characterize the development levels of the different countries.

Why not a word, then, on the old countries, to complete the vision of the three ages of man also represented in so many famous paintings?

This last human condition, among its qualities, includes the positive ones of greater experience and of wisdom. In these countries the history of restoration can teach many things and sometimes even those scrupulous interventions which we consider as an achievement of modern restoration.

Mr. Chanfon Olmos, after saying that in order to avoid misunderstandings he summarizes our professional image as "conservateur-restaurateur" and after mentioning the organization and financial difficulties existing in every country, explains the topics inherent to the professional training and divides them into three paragraphs. The topics are, therefore, examined and differentiated according to the motives, to the protagonists and, finally, to the most advisable methods.

The three short chapters are titled "why", "who" and "how". The author inserts in them and explains the reports of this section.

The architect is the personality best suitable to the role of restorator of the architectural heritage. Especially because he knows the values of the ancient buildings, and these values could be overlooked by those who happen to have a different preparation. He is not suitable, however, if he is considered as an artist, just as the restoration of paintings and sculptures is not entrusted any more to pure artists, painters and sculptors.

Mr. Chanfon Olmos assures that all the texts which he has received agree on the necessity of a serious professional characterization, based on an interdisciplinary training at university level and accompanied by a practical experience. I perfectly agree on the fact that it is not possible to see in a general architect all the capacities to operate in such fields. I would like to add that the necessary qualification should be attained through specialized post-graduate courses of one or two years. I think that this would be the best way to guarantee to the students the basic information in order to better characterize, on the scientific level, the dignity of the studies and the value of the final diploma.

Trying to push further Mr. Chanfon's suggestions, I shall add that if we want to keep high standards of restoration we must have highly prepared people. If, as Mr. Chanfon Olmos says, we must not rely on excessive financial means and on professional offer, I think that we could hope for a thorough preparation for the restorator architects which will give the opportunity of facing better all kinds of situations.

The problem of teaching brings about the other problem of the practical exercise to train the students. A field of activity in which Mr. Chanfon deeply believes. It certainly is essential to know the methods and to keep

contact with reality in order to accustom the students to intelligent and appropriate choices and to make them conscious of the operative difficulties. This training is even more necessary, let us say instinctive, in those countries where these techniques, previously unknown, have been recently imported.

There is, however, a danger in encouraging this educational experimentation which could have deforming effects in the student's mind. To keep the students in the laboratories and to call their attention for a long time on the methods of application could bring about the consequence of attributing less importance to the doctrinal foundations not discussing them extensively in order to better instil them into the students.

In the vast field of choices it becomes a matter of choosing between traditional training and operative exercises the most suitable one. I think, however, that the exercises should only begin after a period of learning the fundamentals of restoration.

In many countries there exists also a problem relative to the preparation of teachers. Even if sometimes teachers from other countries are invited, the choice of teachers is a delicate national problem, because from its solution depends the possibility to guarantee a relevant professional level. It has been therefore proposed that experts in the psychology of education should be consulted for the recruitment and training of professors.

Besides the problems of teaching, there still remain the choices and the problems concerning the theory of restoration on which must be set and developed the training and didactic apparatus. A permanent professional work must be based on sure foundations for the responsibility it has towards society.

Mr. Chanfon's report shows clearly his preference for team-work which should not exclude but direct in harmony all the specialists.

Mr. Chanfon brings to evidence certain projects relative to different professional experiences and which are an answer to the exhortation of Mr. Raymond Lemaire in 1976. It is a work of global inventory on the architecture of the city of New York, of a pilot project to create a lexicon in different languages, linked to the historical antecedents of the famous city of Carthage and finally of the results of a program for the protection of the cultural heritage of the state of Yucatan (Mexico).

Mr. Chanfon ends with the conclusions which derive from his argumentations. I hope that they will be approved and I definitely support them, although I have proposed the opportunity of some additional touches and some specifications.

I would like to add, in particular, the proposal of a special recommendation to the national Committees to take the most suitable action to

suggest to their countries to examine the problems of the preservation of the architectural heritage in a global vision which will allow a program of the interventions, even in long terms. This should be possible since in many countries the architectural heritage is a common heritage.

Only starting from the social reality of the Country it will be possible to meet the anticipations. Planning the preservation work it will be possible to attain a more productive professional activity.

In conclusion, I would like to note that not all the professional activity of the members of ICOMOS should be totally devoted to the project and the realization of restorations. The study and the scientific divulgation of the monument must have their part.

If we want to love and give value to the architectural heritage, we must know it and make it known showing the value of its testimony which is a mural history of humanity which all can read because it is written with the magic of architecture.

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