

THE EUROPEAN NETWORK FOR CONSERVATION - RESTORATION EDUCATION - ENCoRE

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Summary

ENCoRE congratulates with the historic establishment of the IIC Spanish Group. ENCoRE was founded in 1998 to promote research and education in the field of cultural heritage and to improve and encourage cooperation between academic programmes and institutions within conservation-restoration of cultural heritage. The need for clarification of university level and recognised equivalent in conservation-restoration education has been achieved in the form of the ENCoRE document "Clarification of Conservation-Restoration Education at University level or recognised equivalent". In its definitions, the document takes into consideration the Bologna Declaration on the European Higher Education Area. ENCoRE has from its start been actively involved in several European projects aiming at the development, protection and recognition of the conservation-restoration education and profession. This work also includes active cooperation and support to ensure best possible dissemination of the research as well as to help the integration of education and research within the area of cultural heritage. This includes the implementation of the Bologna system of higher education in the area of conservation-restoration. An important tool to support these efforts is the new ENCoRE website: www.encore-edu.org.

IIC Spanish Group

It is with pleasure that ENCoRE offers its warm congratulations to our Spanish colleagues on the establishment of the IIC Spanish Group. ENCoRE is honoured by the invitation to contribute to this historic meeting of significant importance to Spanish and European conservation - restoration society. We wish you a successful meeting, good luck and success in your future work for the development of the Spanish conservation - restoration discipline to the benefit of our common cultural heritage.

The development of conservation - restoration into an academic discipline

Over the last fifty years it has become increasingly evident that the conservation of cultural heritage poses problems too complex to be solved within the existing systems of practice, based on craft skills supported by related academic disciplines e.g. art history, science, etc. During this time many academic study programmes in conservation-restoration of cultural heritage became established in Europe and graduates from these institutions began to enter the field of conservation-restoration as it was defined by ICOM-CC in 1984 (1). Although different in level and quality of provision, all these study programmes aimed to draw together the necessary practical and technical skills with those of related humanistic and scientific disciplines (2-5). They were designed to provide structured programmes of study where practice was supported by a clear underpinning of knowledge, and where research could be fostered and supported. The science of conservation-restoration became established which

forms the basis for the application of practical skills (both preventive and interventive) necessary for the conservation of cultural heritage.

In the 1990's UNESCO defined cultural heritage as the entire corpus of material signs either artistic or symbolic, handed on by the past to each culture and so to the whole of mankind (6). Cultural heritage is not only a source for business and economy, but a fundamental condition for the maintenance and development of society and its economy. The preservation and presentation of cultural heritage should therefore be a cornerstone of any cultural policy. However, during this time, the dangers of commercial interests and pressures which could result in poor quality conservation-restoration with potentially disastrous and irreversible results were also acknowledged. The Document of Pavia recommended the establishment of a regulatory framework to guarantee the quality of intervention on cultural heritage or its environment in order to avoid the negative impacts of market forces (7). Moreover, the Document of Pavia also defined for the first time conservation - restoration as an academic discipline which should be taught at university level or recognised equivalent, with the possibility of a doctorate.

Due to the need for cooperation and to further the development of the European conservation - restoration education to improve the situation of the protection of European cultural heritage, it was decided to form a new European network of institutions providing academic education and research in conservation of cultural heritage. This took place at a meeting held in Dresden in November 1997 (8), between representatives of 30 European education institutions. Following this ENCoRE was founded in Copenhagen on 23rd May 1998 (9) one of the main objectives being to promote research and education in the field of cultural heritage, based on the directions and recommendations given in the Professional Guidelines of the European Confederation of Conservator-Restorer's Organisation E.C.C.O. (10,11) and the Document of Pavia. ENCoRE seeks to develop and promote professional conservation - restoration education at the highest level, and to improve and encourage cooperation between academic programmes and institutions which offer courses and research programmes in conservation - restoration of cultural heritage. Further objectives are to support and increase mobility of teaching staff and students within Europe and to promote collaborative research in the discipline of conservation - restoration of cultural heritage.

ENCoRE regularly offers information to its members and partners on important issues in education, research and policy on European level and ENCoRE has published six newsletters since its establishment (the newsletters is found on our website). Moreover, the network offers assistance to members and partners to find guest teachers and professors or research partners and assistance to students to find host institutions for their master's study, PhD study or places for internship. In addition, ENCoRE has coordinated the yearly publication of thesis summaries of the graduates of member institutions in the special issue of *Zeitschrift für Kunsttechnologie und Konservierung*.

The ENCoRE board members as well as representatives of its member institutions have been involved in several activities since the establishment. Among these activities can be mentioned the FULCO project resulting in "The Document of Vienna"(12), the conbefor project (Conservators-Restorers of Cultural Heritage in Europe: Education Centers and

Institutes. A Comparative Research)(13), the ongoing CURRIC project on developing a postgraduate curricula for conservation scientists. All with financial support from the European Commission. At present a project contract for a thematic network on European network of centres of excellence for digital culture research and education, “E-culture net”, involving ENCoRE as a partner, has recently been signed with the European Commission (14). Moreover, ENCoRE has been actively involved in the discussion of the development of the conservation - restoration education in several countries through its representations in national and European conferences and peer reviews of educational institutions.

Despite these positive trends there is still a need for progress in several areas as identified and clarified by the Conbefor research project and the APEL research project on “the survey of the legal and professional responsibilities of the conservator - restorers as regard the other parties involved in the preservation and conservation of cultural heritage” (15).

The ENCoRE Clarification Document

At the meeting in Vienna held between 43 representatives of European educational institutions, research institutions and organisations within conservation - restoration, the need for clarification of university level and recognised equivalent in conservation - restoration education was expressed (12). In the document of this meeting it is stated that this task should be co-ordinated by ENCoRE, in association with the CON.B.E.FOR. project. This has now been achieved in the form of the document “Clarification of Conservation - restoration Education at University level or recognised equivalent” carried unanimously at the third General Assembly of ENCoRE in Munich, June 2001 (16).

This document is the contribution of ENCoRE to this clarification taking into consideration the Bologna Declaration on the European Higher Education Area (17,18). It states that the necessary existence, access, and protection of cultural heritage as a right to all humankind make great demands on the quality as well as democratic control of and public insight into all aspects of cultural heritage activities and management including education. The quality of, democratic control of and public insight into conservation - restoration education can only be guaranteed by governmentally validated academic education at university level leading to protected and internationally recognised academic titles. Moreover, the clarification document defines: “Educational institutions which are not called universities, but which offer programmes of study which in length, content and quality are regarded by the respective governmental validating bodies (such as Ministries of Education) to be equivalent and/or compatible to university degree provision should be recognised as being the same level”.

Definition of the discipline and the conservator-restorer

In the ENCoRE clarification document, the discipline of conservation - restoration is defined as an empirical science, devoted to the prevention and treatment of the decay of objects of cultural heritage. It is characterized by being a mixture of theoretical knowledge and practical skills, and includes the ability to judge in a systematic way on ethical and aesthetic issues. It

has its origins in arts and craftsmanship as well as in the humanistic, technical and natural sciences. Cognitive and systematic analysis, diagnosis and solution of problems as the basis for practical conservation and restoration skills is what differentiates the conservator-restorer from the artist and the craftsman. The strong basis in practical skills and knowledge of the complexity and interactivity of object material behaviour and information including environmental influences is what differentiates the conservator-restorer from professionals in other related academic fields. These definitions form the basis of and characterize education and research in the field of conservation - restoration.

The clarification document states that conservation - restoration, as an academic discipline, is per definition based on the highest level of research. The basis of conservation - restoration education consists of an appropriate balance between integrated theoretical and practical teaching which should include the possibility of a doctorate as defined in the Document of Pavia. The aim must therefore be that "the conservator-restorer licensed for independent practice is per definition a graduate at Master's level from a university or governmentally recognised equivalent, or doctoral research level (PhD). A programme of study in conservation - restoration at Bachelor's level should be regarded as an entry requirement to Master's level and not as a qualification for independent practice"... "The overall length of study for entry into the profession or to continue to doctorate level should be five years. Moreover, there is a need for clear agreed equivalence between countries for access, content, level and duration of study programmes at Bachelor's and Master's levels."

Moreover, the cross-disciplinary nature of the conservation - restoration profession requires that applicants to conservation - restoration education undertake specific entrance appraisals. A graduate of conservation - restoration of cultural heritage at Bachelor's level will be qualified to enter to study at Master's level and/or work in the conservation - restoration of cultural heritage in the public or private sectors only under the direction and supervision of a conservator-restorer of cultural heritage. A graduate of conservation - restoration of cultural heritage at Master's level will be qualified to register for PhD studies or to work as a conservator-restorer of cultural heritage in the public or private sectors.

The doctoral studies

Doctoral studies in conservation - restoration may consist of basic research, applied research, experimental development or a combination of these things. Due to the complexity of the field it may in most cases be a combination, e.g. basic to applied research and applied to experimental development. Apart from deterioration processes and conservation - restoration development, the research subjects may also be in the fields of theory, philosophy and history of conservation. The doctor (PhD) in conservation - restoration should be able to continue research and development work within conservation - restoration. The doctorate level in conservation - restoration is the basis from which to recruit researchers and educators to develop future practice and research in conservation - restoration. However, experience shows that some conservators-restorers with a PhD degree in the field choose a professional career within managing, development and planning of practical conservation and restoration.

The process of increasing research and research based education requires resources and European joint actions, as such developments are sensitive to the loss of resources. The commitment and responsibility towards our common cultural heritage (as well as to the world outside the member states and the European Union) can only be fulfilled through continuous European cooperation and sharing of resources, supported by the EC Framework Programmes and other initiatives of the Community.

Cooperation with E.C.C.O.

It is obvious and necessary to discuss and set up detailed goals, strategies and recommendations for the development of the European conservation - restoration education towards 2010 to meet the needs in the profession for the highest possible quality in the protection of our cultural heritage. Therefore, the board of ENCoRE together with representatives of the Education Group of E.C.C.O. (European Confederation of Conservator - Restorer's Organisation) has formed a working group on education, qualification and practice. This working group is preparing a draft document to be discussed and elaborated among the members of the two organisations including the subjects of the protection of the title "conservator-restorer" as well as the recognition and protection of the conservator - restorer's profession. It is planned to be decided on the document at the general assemblies of the two organisations during the spring of 2003 and it should form the basis for political activities and negotiations with the relevant European authorities.

Moreover, the recent discussions on the conservation - restoration education development within the framework of the Bologna process in several European countries have urged E.C.C.O. and ENCoRE to the following joint statement of 25th September 2002:

"With reference to the ECCO Professional Guidelines (III) and the ENCoRE Clarification Document and in response to the Bologna Declaration and the Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the recognition of professional qualifications. 2002/0061 (COD)(19). ECCO and ENCoRE state that: The cross-disciplinary nature of the conservation-restoration profession requires that applicants to conservation –restoration education undertake specific entrance appraisals. A graduate of conservation-restoration of cultural heritage at Bachelor's Level (Level 4) will be qualified to enter to study at Master's Level and/or work in the conservation-restoration of cultural heritage in the public or private sectors only under the direction and supervision of a conservator-restorer of cultural heritage. A graduate of conservation-restoration of cultural heritage at Master's Level (Level 5) will be qualified to register for PhD studies or to work as a conservator-restorer of cultural heritage in the public or private sectors."

Dissemination and implementation of research

Education and research at university level within cultural heritage protection are rather new activities compared to other scientific areas. Within the last decade a lot of new activities and development have been brought about to bring conservation - restoration education and

research on the same level as other scientific areas. But even on the European level, the financial and human resources within cultural heritage protection and research are rather limited. However, the EC research funding has brought substantial development into several specific areas of indoor and outdoor cultural heritage which would otherwise not have been possible.

From its start ENCoRE has actively promoted EC framework programme research among its members institutions and partners. This includes the call on our member institutions and partners to contribute to the expression of interest to identify research actions ready for specific programme topics as the basis for the preparation of work programmes for the 6th framework programme for research. Moreover, it is the experience of ENCoRE that the dissemination of research results into educational programmes and for end users in practical cultural heritage conservation is rather fast for those research projects which involve conservation - restoration education institutions as partners. However, cooperation between education and research within cultural heritage should be established between the respective General Directorates and their programmes to improve dissemination of the research results to the end users and support research based conservation - restoration education.

The ENCoRE member institutions are characterised by their close connections and cooperation with institutions, public and private, devoted to practical conservation. Moreover, ENCoRE cooperates with organisations representing the practical conservation field. One major topic for this cooperation is the implementation of the Bologna Declaration for higher education in Europe by 2010 at the latest. Several of the ENCoRE member institutions already have the level and structure set out in the Bologna Declaration, but many conservation - restoration education programmes are still in the process of changing to this system. However, for all conservation - restoration programmes the integration of research still needs to be further developed. This will only be possible with more active research co-operation between educational and end user institutions to ensure sufficient critical mass and resources. ENCoRE offers its active cooperation and support to ensure the best possible dissemination of the cultural heritage research. Moreover, we like to offer our cooperation to help the integration of education and research within the area of cultural heritage including the implementation of the Bologna system for the European higher educations in the area of conservation - restoration.

The ENCoRE website

In order to improve the networking between our members and partners and provide a better service to others, ENCoRE has established a new website. In addition to general information about the organisation, the website will include information on the areas of study of member institutions with direct links to their individual websites. It will also include information on members' and partners' research, on PhD programmes and ongoing PhD projects in member institutions and information on EC research projects. The website is meant to improve activities in the form of co-operation in education and research and the mobility of staff and students between our members and partners. Finally, the website contains all issues of the ENCoRE Newsletter, ENCoRE documents as well as important document from organisations

like E.C.C.O., ICOM-CC and other organisations and on educational matters like the Bologna process. More information on ENCoRE can be found on: www.encore-edu.org.

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