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FROM ATHENS TO NEW YORK VIA MADRID. THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE 1931 CONGRESS ON THE CULTURAL AND MUSEUM POLICIES PURSUED BY THE OFFICE INTERNATIONAL DES MUSÉES

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ABSTRACT

The Athens Conference on the Restoration of Historic Monuments and Buildings, held in October 1931, marked an important chapter in the work of the Office International des Musées (OIM). The aim of this paper is to examine the initial articles produced which addressed the theme of the conference, published in the journal *Museion*, and demonstrate how they influenced the way in which the OIM approached the organisation of two subsequent conferences, one held in Madrid in 1934 – in particular the section on the adaptation of ancient buildings for museum purposes, assigned to Italy – and another, on the social role of museums, which was planned for 1939, but the event did not come to fruition.

KEYWORDS

Museums | Restoration | Museum Architecture | Social Role of Museums | International Institutions

The organisation of an international conference for the study of problems associated with the conservation and protection of artistic and historic monuments, to be held in the autumn of 1931, was included as an item on the agenda of the second meeting of the Steering Committee of the Office International des Musées (OIM) held on 13th and 14th April 1931. This body was set up in 1926 under the auspices of the Institut International de Coopération Intellectuelle (IICI)¹ to promote a new kind of humanism through the cultural action of museums, stimulating dialogue between peoples, in contrast with the growing trend during the era towards nationalism. As OIM Secretary-General Euripides Foundoukidis stated in a radio conference, this project followed in the wake of the work carried out at a conference held in Rome the previous year on the conservation of works of art. At that meeting, work had focused “presque exclusivement sur les peintures et les sculptures”, excluding “toute une catégorie d’œuvres d’art, et notamment les monuments d’architecture” (*La protection et la conservation des monuments d’art et d’histoire*, 1930; 94), which in the event were not dealt with in order to not to overload the conference programme and because “l’on avait estimé préférable de confier l’examen de ces questions à une conférence ultérieure. En effet, la protection et la conservation des monuments d’architecture soulèvent des problèmes d’une nature si particulière qu’il était difficile de les aborder sans faire appel à d’autres compétences que celles réunies à Rome” (*La protection et la conservation des monuments d’art et d’histoire*, 1930; 95). The need for international collaboration in this field had been highlighted several times, especially during the period following the Great War, and had been addressed at the International Congress of Art History in Paris in 1921, but remained a matter of marginal importance as far as deliberations were concerned. The conference which was planned would finally address the following: administrative and legislative issues, through comparative analysis; technical issues, calling on the expertise of qualified specialists with experience in the new methods used to address conservation and related problems, such as those associated with the deterioration of monuments;

and doctrinal issues, related to so-called “architectural” and “archaeological” theories. The steering committee also aimed to reflect on a “nouvelle conception qui se fait jour depuis quelque temps et qui tend à considérer certains monuments d’art comme appartenant au patrimoine commun de l’humanité” (*La protection et la conservation des monuments d’art et d’histoire*, 1930; 98), which was intended to lead to a new principle of international law being established, the scope of which would be clarified during the conference. Its provisional agenda covered six topics: a range of legislation on the protection and conservation of artistic and historic monuments; the restoration of monuments; the degradation of monuments; the environment and monuments; the use of monuments; desiderata with regard to activities that the OIM might undertake as a subject of study, or practical initiatives, in accordance with Foundoukidis’ text.

As is well known, the conference took place in late October 1931 and, with the help of around a hundred experts, many important issues were discussed concerning the protection and restoration of monuments and also their environmental context, the last of these albeit tentatively at this stage. It marked an important occasion and was a great success, which was enhanced by the presence of prominent figures such as the Italian architect and engineer Gustavo Giovannoni, and laid the foundations for future methodological and critical analysis that provided the basis for the development of the theory of restoration. The reports produced as a result of the work of the conference and related findings, such as the analysis of aspects of legislation on the subject, were published on a number of occasions in issues of the journal *Mouseion* from 1932 to 1933, the year in which the OIM published the full proceedings and the Athens Charter². Based on a reading of these documents, the aim of the present paper is to highlight how the Athens conference was closely associated with actions carried out by the IOM in subsequent years focusing on museums, such as the Madrid and New York conferences, the latter meeting which in the event did not take place.

1. For the history of the IICI and the OIM cf. Renoliet, 1999; Maksiniuk, 2004; Ducci, 2005; Caillot, 2011; Cecchini, 2014; Galizzi Kroegel, 2014; Dragoni, 2015a, Cecchini, Dragoni 2016; Leveau, 2017; Savino, 2017; Failla, Varallo 2020.

2. A summary can be found in *Mouseion* 1933, vol. 23-24, nos. III-IV: 235 ss. *L’Activité de l’OIM septembre 1932-1933. Rapport à la CICI (Commission Internationale de Coopération Intellectuelle)*.

THE ATHENS CONFERENCE AND THEORIES OF ARCHITECTURAL RESTORATION IN ITALY

For the organisation of the conference, in accordance with the guiding principles of the Société des Nations (SDN), which regarded heritage as an essential value ensuring cohesion between peoples and cultures and as providing a guarantee of peace, a number of national committees were set up with the aim of seeking out experts who could demonstrate, based on their own experience, relevant examples of restoration. In the case of Italy, given its “ben nota competenza in materia di restauro” (Turco, 2019: 39-46), Gustavo Giovannoni was invited to Athens by the President of the Italian National Commission for Intellectual Cooperation, Alfredo Rocco, with the aim of his providing a contribution to the international debate.

The most senior authority in the field at that time, Giovannoni started out working in the field of restoration in the wake of Boito and Fiorelli and the experiences of D’Andrade, Beltrami and Avena at the Conference of Honorary Inspectors in 1912 (Giovannoni, 1913: 1-42) and his position on aspects of restoration, which he revised to some extent, as indicated in the volume *Questioni di Architettura nella storia e nella vita* (Giovannoni, 1925), summed up the contemporary culture of national restoration.

Appointed head of the Italian group in Athens, in addition to representing the Ministry of National Education, Giovannoni, was responsible for coordinating the presentation of papers – replacing Roberto Paribeni, Director General of Antiquities and Fine Arts, in this role. The present paper comprises six sections, each covering a different topic: legislative issues, the general principles of restoration, the deterioration of monuments, the environmental context of monuments including the role of vegetation, and the use of historic buildings in the future. At the opening session, Francesco Pellati described the Italian experience as being in the avant-garde of a long tradition, in which the concept of the monument had been broadened so that individual monuments were no longer regarded as single elements for analysis, moving towards an approach which took into account the environmental

context. This was debated again at the third session of the conference on 22nd October, at which Giovannoni presented two papers, one on the general principles governing the restoration of monuments in Italy and another on the use of modern construction methods³. As Turco stated, the latter “made such a positive impact that Giovannoni was nominated by the conference as chairman of the editorial committee for the study of materials, comprising of technical experts and specialists in the field; at the same time, he had long expressed the opinion that this subject represented the innovative and characterising factor of the restoration culture of the era” (Turco, 2019)⁴. For Giovannoni, this was based on an “intermediate stance”, or the search for simplicity through overall effects rather than ornamentation.

Despite the undoubted success of Giovannoni’s intervention at the conference – he was also invited by the Archaeological Society of Athens to hold a separate conference on the fringe of the main event to examine the state of restoration in Italy – in a well-known account of conference proceedings later published in the *Bollettino d’Arte* (Giovannoni, 1932: 408-420), he criticised the “excessively rigid” terms of reference for the acceptance of papers, which had led to the rejection of a number of interesting papers by members of the Italian delegation, as well as the lack of “utili scientifiche discussioni, che pure avrebbero potuto animare e rendere feconde le varie trattazioni” (Giovannoni, 1932: 409), while at the same time recognising the importance of the initiative.

The fact that his report, which contained elements which anticipated the “Italian Restoration Charter”, was not widely accepted, showed how scientific criteria which were established in other countries, had not been accepted in Italy, where terms of reference were different.

However, the presentation of the experience of Italy was highly appreciated, so much so that Foundoukidis himself wrote on 15th December to thank the Italian delegation for their contribution to the conference.

3. Published in *Mouseion*, Vol. 19, no. II, 1932: 5-10.

4. Translation by the author.

The Italian Restoration Charter was published in *Mouseion* in 1932, following which more and more articles by Italian experts on the subject of the conservation and restoration of ancient monuments were published.

In 1934 alone, out of 20 articles appearing in the "Supplément Mensuel" of *Mouseion*, on the heritage in Italy, seven concerned conservation and restoration, including information on the transport of the Palazzo Comunale in Borgosesia from the Piazza Vittorio Emanuele II, the restoration of Visconti Castle in Pavia to its original state, the master plan for Rimini and the isolation of the Arch of Augustus, the reorganisation of the Piazza di Porta Maggiore in Rome, and restoration work in Verona⁵; there was also a presentation of restoration plans for the temples of Agrigento⁶ and the cathedral of Pienza⁷, as well as the restoration of the Church of San Marco in Rossano Calabro⁸, carried out from 1926 to 1931, the restoration of Castel Sant'Angelo⁹, the restoration of the cathedral of Vescovio, which revealed a series of frescoes of the Roman school dating from the late 13th century¹⁰, and the restoration of a Venetian palace¹¹.

Italy was thus shown to be in the forefront of the field of monument restoration, numerous initiatives being carried out that were recognised by the international

community, and the 1932 Charter affirmed that as regards monuments that were regarded as forming part of the urban fabric "only uses that are not too far removed from the original should be admitted, such that any adaptations required do not lead to fundamental alterations being made to the building" (*Carta del Restauro*, 1932, no. 4). This is of interest now because many monuments in Italy have gained new life, having been converted into museums. This marks a new configuration for a building that breaks with its original purpose. At the same time, this kind of reuse can be seen as a way of ensuring the conservation of the building without altering its original character too much. Although Italy took part in the international debate in the 1930s, there was an awareness that the country was "architecturally and environmentally disinclined to follow the trends of the modern museum" (Huber, 1997: 53-54). Indeed, Francesco Pellati, in his volume dedicated to Italian museums and their organisation, stated that "When creating new museums, and extending and reorganising existing ones, Italy must not abandon tradition; it must pay due attention to the range of historical characteristics of the heritage, the peculiarities of each region of the peninsula, which have been bequeathed by ancient civilisations" (Pellati, 1931: 160)¹².

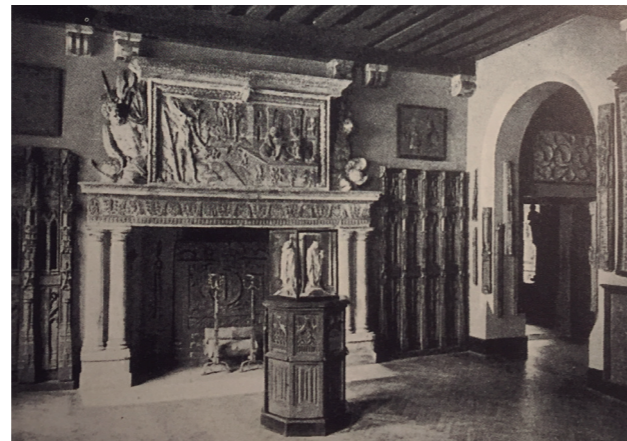


Fig 01. Muséographie. Architecture et aménagement des musées d'art, Conférence internationale d'études, Madrid 1934, SDN 1935, p.187

5. *La conservation des monuments en Italie*, *Mouseion*, Informations Mensuelles, Janvier 1934: 10. These were works approved by the Italian Superior Council of Antiquities and Fine Arts.
6. *La conservation des temples d'Agrigente*, *Mouseion*, Informations Mensuelles, Mars 1934: 4-5. After various measures being taken to prevent the ruin of these monuments, new measures were required: the consolidation of the foundations by means of cement injection, the removal of defective restoration, the reconstitution of features which had been removed, and the consolidation of certain mouldings, among others.
7. *Les restaurations du Dôme de Pienza (Sienne)*, *Mouseion*, Informations Mensuelles, Mars 1934: 7-8; the consolidation of the foundations, the renovation of the windows, the reconstruction of the vaults of the lower church, the levelling of the floor, and the removal of various later additions in a different style.
8. *La restauration de l'église S. Marco à Rossano Calabro*, *Mouseion*, Informations Mensuelles, Avril 1934: 12-13; the consolidation of the foundations and the refurbishment of the building.
9. *Restauration di Château SaintAnge*, *Mouseion*, Informations Mensuelles, Mai 1934: 13; the demolition of part of the wall and the clearing of ditches.
10. *Restauration des fresques à Vescovio (Italie)*, *Mouseion*, Informations Mensuelles, Aout-Septembre 1934: 15-16.
11. *Restauration d'un palais vénitien*, *Mouseion*, Informations Mensuelles, Aout-Septembre 1934: 16.
12. Translation by the author.

FROM ATHENS TO MADRID: ROBERTO AND L'ADAPTATION DES MONUMENTS ANCIENS ET AUTRES ÉDIFICES À L'USAGE DES MUSÉES

Also in 1934, the various issues of the "Supplément Mensuel" show that old buildings in Italy were still being used for museums; a new museum was planned in Ferrara¹³ in the palace of Ludovico il Moro, which was to be restored to its original state in order to house objects found during the Spina excavations; it was to include a specialist library and as complete a collection as possible of photographs of Etruscan artefacts, thus demonstrating the practical application of certain principles of modern museography and the desire to provide a centre for the study of Etruscan art. The journal also informed readers of a different attempt to adapt an ancient monument for use as a museum: the establishment of a museum of ancient art in unused halls of the Palazzo Madama in Turin¹⁴.

In view of the above considerations, it is understandable that in his report entitled "Adaptation de monuments anciens et autres édifices à l'usage des musées" Euripides Foundoukidis put forward the following arguments: "Il s'agit à mon avis, de la question la plus importante de l'ordre du jour, étant donné que l'adaptation à l'usage de musées d'édifices existants est le cas le plus fréquent et aussi le plus difficile à résoudre, au moins dans les pays de l'Europe. Et l'Italie possède, à cet égard, une expérience de premier ordre"¹⁵. As stated by J. B. Jamin, on organising the Madrid congress, the IOM had decided to modify the procedure for selecting authors following the experiences of Rome and Athens, at which individual papers had been presented, instead selecting experts in accordance with two criteria: competence and how far they were representative of SDN member nations. Thus, in the summer of 1933, Foundoukidis sent several letters to his associates, including Francesco Pellati for Italy, asking them to search out the best technical

experts in the country, with a view to assigning a range of topics to leading individuals in the field. In spite of several reminders being sent to Pellati, he was slow in finding Italian experts of the right calibre, leading Foundoukidis to suggest selecting younger individuals, such as Vittorio Viale and Guglielmo Pacchioni (Jamin, 2020: 13-22)¹⁶, among whom there was a greater awareness of museographic innovations.

The choice fell on Roberto Paribeni, former Director General of the Arts, who held a vision inspired by Fascism, "ma forse intimamente legata a quel nazionalismo di marca ottocentesca" (Nezzo, 2020: 23-31), under which he had grown up and which, within the Italian political context of the era, would lead to his appointment as a member of the Committee of Experts of the International Bureau of Museums and chairman of a meeting of the International Commission of Historic Monuments in November 1933, after which he became the official Italian representative¹⁷. One of aims of the commission was the detailed analysis of the administrative and technical departments in each country responsible for the protection and conservation of historic monuments¹⁸.

Documents in the OIM archives show that Euripides Foundoukidis also asked Marcello Piacentini to take part in a study of museum architecture, regarding him as "the highest authority in the Italian school of modern architecture"¹⁹, but there is no further evidence of his involvement in such a study.

While drawing up his report, Roberto Paribeni received from Euripides Foundoukidis, via Giuseppe Righetti, the Secretary of the Italian Commission for Intellectual Cooperation, a number of very precise recommendations. In a letter dated 4th May 1934,

13. *Un musée étrusque à Ferrara* *Mouseion*, Informations Mensuelles, Janvier 1934: 9.

14. *Adaptation d'un monument ancien à l'usage de musée*, *Mouseion*, Informations Mensuelles, Decembre 1934: 5-6.

15. Unesco archives, Office International des Musées (henceforth, the OIM) OIM.IV.13 (1), Letter from Foundoukidis to Pellati, 28th September 1933.

16. On the complex negotiations with the Italian delegation for the appointment of the commission, see Cecchini, 2013 and 2020. See also Fagone, 2001.

17. OIM.IV.13 (1), Letter from the Minister of Foreign Affairs to Henri Bonnet, 24th December 1934.

18. OIM.IV.13 (1), Letter from Foundoukidis to Pellati, 13th February 1936.

19. OIM.IV.13(1), Letter from Foundoukidis to Pilotti, 24th October 1933.

Foundoukidis requested that Paribeni should study the problem of the adaptation of ancient monuments “au double point de vue de la conservation de l’édifice et des collections”²⁰. He insisted that “les rapports qui doivent exister entre le caractère du monument et la nature des collections présentées”²¹, especially as regards the issue of the use of “living” buildings mentioned above. The Secretary General of the Museums Office also promised to provide Paribeni with an example from abroad “afin de donner à son rapport un caractère plus international”²². From the synopsis of Paribeni’s report, it is clear that these points were fully covered. There is one section, supposedly authored by Roberto Paribeni, which was in fact edited by Foundoukidis, and the report was approved on 25th September 1934²³. Assessment of the new draft of the report is somewhat difficult, as the secretary general describes it as follows: “Si vous y trouvez tous les sages principes et toutes les idées que vous avez énoncées, vous ne reconnaîtrez certainement pas la rédaction que je vous envoie. J’ai beaucoup hésité avant de me permettre de toucher à votre texte, désireux d’une part de ne pas priver les membres de la Conférence de goûter toute la saveur de votre exposé et tenu, d’autre part, par les nécessités d’une certaine discipline dans la rédaction des différents rapports qui, en dernière analyse, sont beaucoup plus des chapitres d’un ouvrage de muséographie que des conférences”²⁴. Whatever the case, Euripides Foundoukidis provided numerous bibliographical references, evidence of which can be found in the text of the manual entitled *Muséographie. Architecture et Aménagement des Musées d’Art*. These include the use of Gustavo Giovannoni’s study entitled *Les édifices anciens et les exigences de la muséographie moderne*²⁵, an extract from a book by Paul Clemen on the use of old buildings as museums, in which the author discusses questions of principle,

an extract from the journal “Museumskunde”, and experiences carried out in Frankfurt on the use of old buildings as museums²⁶. Foundoukidis also indicated to Paribeni “certains aménagements des grandes salles du Musée Galliera” in Paris, and asked him to detail the resources which modern lighting technology might offer the curators of old museums “pour la bonne présentation de leurs collection”, mentioning the “système d’éclairage par réflecteurs, dont une application a été faite au nouveau Palais des Arts, à Milan” and providing him with further examples of the use of reflectors to enhance the light and display objects at the museums of Hamburg and Stockholm²⁷. Roberto Paribeni is also said to have received an article by Mr. Lauterbach²⁸, a memorandum by Mr. A. W. Heasman of the H. M. Office of Works in London²⁹, a note by J. Hopper of the Ministry of Public Works in London, and a review of Mr. Laurence Vail Coleman’s book, *Historic House Museum*, as well as the contribution to the report made by Professor Thilenius³⁰. To this list of contributions should be added those of the Director of the State Collections of Poland³¹, Jacques Jaujard, Deputy Director for Musées Nationaux and the École du Louvre in Paris³², two notes by John Markham, of H. M. Office of Works in London³³ and Walter H. Siple, Director of the Cincinnati Art Museum³⁴, and a note by Dr. Ernst Buschbeck of the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna³⁵.

The following is a collection of documents whose sources can be identified and which must have been used by Roberto Paribeni to draw up his report on the adaptation of ancient monuments and other buildings for use as museums, the principles of which are summarised below. The report began by asking a question of principle: “s’il est possible, et dans l’affirmative, s’il est souhaitable d’installer des musées à l’intérieur de monuments anciens” (Paribeni, 1934: 181).

20. OIM.IV.13(4), Letter from Foundoukidis to Righetti, 4th May 1934.

21. OIM.IV.13(4), Letter from Foundoukidis to Righetti, 4th May 1934.

22. OIM.IV.13(4), Letter from Foundoukidis to Righetti, 4th May 1934.

23. OIM.IV.13(6), Letter from Righetti to Foundoukidis, 25th September 1934.

24. OIM.IV.13(7), Letter from Foundoukidis to Paribeni, 4th October 1934.

25. *Museion*, Vol. 35: 17-23.

26. OIM.IV.13(4), Letter from Foundoukidis to Righetti, 4th May 1934.

27. OIM.IV.13(4), Letter from Foundoukidis to Righetti, 4th May 1934.

28. OIM.IV.13(4), Letter from Toschi to Foundoukidis, 18th June 1934.

29. OIM.IV.13(4), Letter from Foundoukidis to Righetti, 28th June 1934.

30. OIM.IV.13(4), Letter from Foundoukidis to Righetti, 16th June 1934.

31. OIM.IV.13(4), Letter from Foundoukidis to Righetti, 12th June 1934.

32. OIM.IV.13(5), Letter from Foundoukidis to Paribeni, 11th August 1934.

33. OIM.IV.13(5), Letter from Lettre de Foundoukidis to Paribeni, 13th July 1934.

34. OIM.IV.13(5), Letter from Foundoukidis to Paribeni, 11th July 1934.

35. OIM.IV.13(6), Letter from Foundoukidis to Paribeni, 7th September 1934.

He wondered whether “l’aménagement d’un édifice, prévu à l’origine pour d’autres destinations, était conforme aux principes et à l’intérêt d’une conservation rationnelle de la dite construction” (Paribeni, 1934: 181). Paribeni’s – or Foundoukidis’s – answer was that one had to consider the type of object one wanted to exhibit and one’s target public. He explained that it was all about the relationship between the setting and the objects displayed, and provided the examples of the Palazzo Ducale of Mantua and the Louvre.

Contrary to other stances taken at the conference, which tended to reject the concept of a museum where the tendency was for curators to try too hard to recreate the original context, one of the advantages of an old building was precisely that the prestige and architectural variety offered by old buildings would help to attract visitors. While the creation of syntheses and reconstructions of interiors might be unwelcome in some recently-constructed museums, the report argued that old buildings were more suitable for this kind of reconstruction. In all cases, the adaptation of an old building would have to comply with one of the principles of modern museography: the requirement that a degree of compatibility between the character of the building and the objects displayed in it should be sought (Paribeni, 1935: 182). In order to achieve this, once again there was a need for establishing criteria for selection.

Paribeni also explained, in accordance with the principles mentioned above, that the use of an old building was also a question of potential, of opportunity:

“Certaines provinces, certaines municipalités ne disposent pas des ressources nécessaires qui leur permettraient d’élever une construction qui fût digne de la collection qui leur est confiée ou qui au contraire, justifiât de si grands frais. Sans parler de la nécessité parfois [...] de trouver un moyen rationnel d’assurer la conservation d’un édifice ancien ou qui au contraire, justifiât de si grands frais. Sans parler de la nécessité parfois [...] de trouver un moyen rationnel d’assurer la conservation d’un édifice ancien” (Paribeni, 1934: 183). He went on to explain the differences that might be encountered when adapting an old monument for use as a museum. In order to reconcile the nature of the collections to be displayed and the character of the building, concessions would have to be made: one had to maintain “l’harmonie entre le contenant et le contenu” (Paribeni, 1934: 184); however, if only the exterior of the building was worth preserving, then the interior could be adapted in accordance with the needs of the museum. According to Paribeni, the purpose of the collection is not only to be admired, but also to contribute to the conservation of the building that houses it, which, in turn, must also become a driver of culture, going beyond the role of a mere receptacle for the collection: “dunque Paribeni, a Madrid, non punta sul binomio arte-bellezza, come stimolo prioritario. Propugna invece un’idea del museo come cantiere di scavo, dove inevitabilmente il passato esce dalle viscere di numerose superfetazioni, in una compresenza fitta e continua, che l’attualità domina fissandone il valore memoriale in una sorta di carotaggio oggettuale” (Nezzo, 2020: 27).

KNOWLEDGE ENABLING CONSERVATION. FROM ATHENS TO THE 1939 NEW YORK CONGRESS PROJECT

Two years after the Madrid Congress, by which time Spain was already ravaged by civil war and it was feared that a wider conflict might undo the efforts undertaken by the SDN and the IICI to counteract the causes of strife through the emergence of a new kind of humanism, Foundoukidis produced an article for the OIM regarding the preservation and safeguarding of monuments and works of art during war, arguing

that it was necessary to take decisions that had been the subject of discussion for some time but had not been implemented. At the Athens Conference, for example, the theme of heritage protection in wartime was dropped from the agenda, the argument being that “une action appropriée des pouvoirs publics et des éducateurs pourra, mieux que toute autre, inspirer le respect de ces monuments et par-là-même,

favoriser leur conservation” (Foudoukidis, 1936: 191; Dragoni, 2015b). This statement is markedly utopian in nature, as would sadly become evident in the years which followed, in line with the ideals of the IOM, which saw in the education of the younger generations the opportunity for a moral renaissance based on the idea that children who were taught to value works of art would not be inclined as adults to destroy them. On 10th October 1932, at the assembly of the SDN, on the initiative of the CICI, “Estimant que la plus sûre garantie de conservation des monuments et oeuvres d’art réside dans le respect et l’attachement que leur portent les peuples eux-même” (Foudoukidis, 1936: 191-192), it was recommended that member states should promote educational activities aimed at increasing knowledge about the heritage and fostering heritage values. A recommendation was also issued that states should establish increasingly close ties and engage in concrete measures for cooperation to ensure the preservation of monuments and the artistic heritage and that they should “invitent les éducateurs à instruire l’enfance et la jeunesse dans le respect des monuments, quelle que soit la civilisation ou l’époque à laquelle ces monuments appartiennent et que cette action éducative des États s’adresse également au public en général, en vue d’associer ce dernier à la protection des témoignages de toute civilisation” (Foudoukidis, 1936: 192). This was supported in 1936 by José Renau who, in an article on the history of the Spanish artistic heritage during the civil war, stressed that the success of the operations depended on the valuable contribution of ordinary people, who should be educated about the national heritage through educational campaigns. Despite the ravages of the war, in fact, “Le peuple a montré à tout instant le plus grand respect envers ces institutions de l’État ainsi que pour les fondations et établissements privés consacrés purement et simplement à des fins culturelles. Ni les académies, connues en général pour leur attitude conservatrice et traditionaliste, ni les collections très précieuses, et peu connues des classes populaires [...] ne se virent menacées en aucun moment” (Renau, 1937: 57), demonstrating the idea that respect for ordinary people was the surest way to provide for conservation.

Also along these lines was the article that appeared in *Mouseion* in 1933 by the President of the Parisian Iconographic Society, Henry Nocq, who in fact claimed:

“Nous avons adopté certains gestes, certaines paroles, certains sentiments parce qu’on nous à souvent recommandé de les adopter quand nous étions enfants, et cela est devenu plus indiscutable qu’une règle de conduit, cela est devenu instinctif” (Nocq, 1933) and called on all schools to encourage pupils to value monuments, while taking into account the scenario of war: “Et, qui sait? Si par malheur de Nouvelles guerres venaient à éclater, peut-être les artilleurs cesseraient de considerer les clochers des cathedrales comme le plus amusantes des cibles?” (Nocq, 1933).

Furthermore, as stated in the Rapport à la commission de coopération intellectuelle, which reported on the work of the IOM from September 1933 to 1934, it was reiterated that one of the focuses of interest of the newly-founded International Commission for Historic Monuments was moral and educational action, along with legislative and administrative action, technical action and international documentation. “La Commission s’attachera, dans cet ordre d’idées, à faire admettre la notion déjà mise en avant par la Conférence d’Athènes et selon laquelle la sauvegarde des chefs-d’oeuvre, dans lesquels la civilisation e’est exprimée, intéresse la communauté des peuples. A ce titre, les pays détenteurs de ces richesses n’en sont pas les seuls bénéficiaires. Ces sentiments peuvent être grandement favorisés par une action appropriée de l’OIM et de sa C des MH, avec la collaboration des éducateurs et des pouvoirs publics. Il va sans dire que cette action devrait commencer dès l’enfance et atteindre également les adultes et toutes les classes sociales” (Nocq, 1933: 291).

In 1937, about ten years after the first conference on the educational role of the museum (Dragoni, 2015a) and three years after the Madrid conference, the OIM, in line with its previous work and the commitment of figures such as Capart to the development of socially-useful museum services, planned a new international meeting, to be held in 1939, with the aim of producing a third volume to complete the treatise on museography that had been begun at the Madrid conference, on this occasion the meeting being exclusively dedicated to socio-educational topics. As we learn from a letter sent by Georges Oprescu to Jammers T. Shotwell³⁶ of the American Commission of Intellectual Cooperation, the general secretary Euripides Foudoukidis sought to harness the opportunity of his

36. OIM. XI.5, Letter from Oprescu to Shotwell, 19th July 1937.

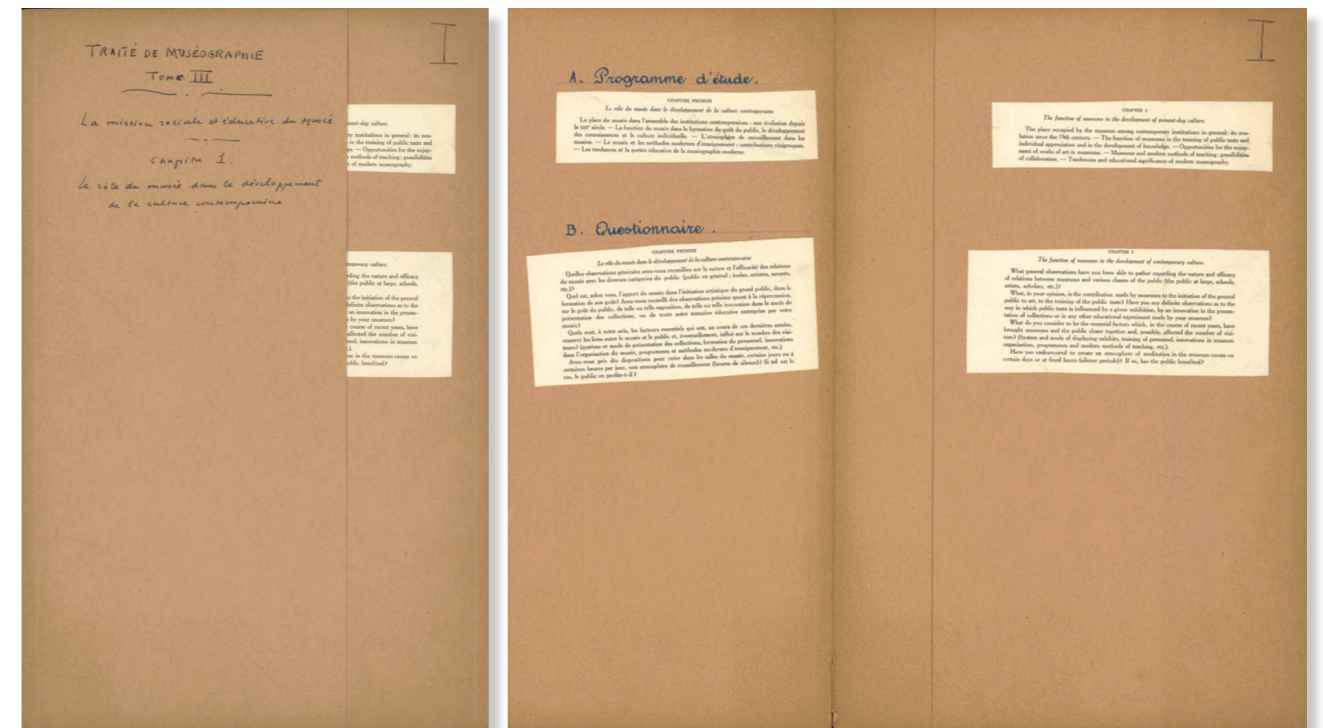


Fig 02. Hypotheses on the structure of the third volume of the Muséeographie treatise, OIM-AG1-IICI-OIM-XI-7, box-NOOCR-000489

attendance at the Universal Exhibition in New York in 1939 to discuss “un sujet qui avait toujours attiré l’attention des éducateurs et des directeurs de musées aux États-Unis et qu’il était de notoriété commune que ce pays ait été le premier entrepreneur de nombreuses et réussies realization”³⁷. According to Foudoukidis, no other country offered such favourable conditions as the United States for a debate on the social role of museums³⁸. Despite political and economic problems, a meeting of the Steering Committee on 16th and 17th December 1938 proceeded to draw up a programme for the conference. As this extract from a letter, sent to the director of the Victoria & Albert Museum, Eric Maclagan, who had already participated in the Madrid debate, shows, the project was a natural follow-up to the work carried out in Madrid: “Vous vous rappeler que lorsque que la Conférence de Madrid fut organisée, nous nous étions déjà mis d’accord pour une seconde Conférence dédiée au sujet. Les deux premiers volumes de notre Traité de muséeographie générale publiés après la Conférence, traitaient de l’organisation et de l’équipement des musées en général. Un troisième et peut-être un quatrième volume

devrait donc être envisagé, pour aborder les questions du rôle social et éducatif des musées. [...] Pour l’élaboration du plan d’étude de cette conférence, qui devrait être conçu selon les mêmes lignes qui ont été suivies pour Madrid, c’est-à-dire sous forme de table des matières, je sollicite votre assistance et vous serai gré de bien vouloir préparer un projet de discussion pour la réunion de décembre. [...] Je pense qu’il devrait y avoir deux principales divisions: les musées dans la vie sociale moderne et les musées en relation avec l’école”³⁹.

A clear idea of a summary of the volume of proceedings of the new conference emerges from a text written for the Management Committee meeting held on 17th and 18th March 1939⁴⁰. Chapter I was to deal with the role of the museum in the development of contemporary culture, outlining, as Louis Hautecoeur had already done with regard to Madrid in his introduction, the history of the institution and its evolution from the 19th century. It should also have included contributions on new teaching methods which had been trialed at museums, as well as the educational effectiveness of modern museography.

37. OIM. XI.5, Letter from Oprescu to Shotwell, 19th July 1937.

38. OIM.XI.5, Letter from Madariaga to Shotwell, 21st July 1937.

39. OIM.XI.5, Letter from Madariaga to Shotwell, 21st July 1937.

40. OIM.XI.7, Text drawn up for the Steering Committee, 17th March 1939.

Chapter II was to address the theme of ways and means to increase the number of visitors and levels of public satisfaction by gauging the importance of the introduction of new ideas or facilities (for example, extended opening hours; free admission), the provision of educational services and the holding of lectures (regular programmes of talks, including occasional guest speakers, and the availability of lecture rooms), occasional events (exhibitions of items on loan, thematic exhibitions), and advertising on the radio and in print, posters, and so on. The relationship between the museum and artists and craftsmen was to provide the subject of Chapter III, whose aim was to examine how museums could foster the production of contemporary items for display by developing a targeted policy of the acquisition and exhibition of works by living artists, facilitating the use of historical collections by artists and craftsmen for study and the use of models and decorative motifs on the one hand, and by industrial and commercial enterprises on the other hand. An important objective associated with these issues was showing how museums could become major players in the local region by bringing economic benefits. Chapter V was supposed to outline forms of collaboration with art schools, including the use of museum collections in teaching. The interaction between museums and research institutes was to be covered in the following chapter, dealing with the possibility of forging links between scientific bodies, the systematic use of museums as documentation centres for support to researchers, the expertise museums could provide to institutions, collectors and also art dealers. Chapter VIII was to deal with the principles of establishing relations with national and local government authorities, focusing especially on issues associated with the granting of subsidies, and governance. Chapter IX was meant to deal with the relationship with the private sector and in particular with organisations whose role was to support museums. It is clear from the detailed summary that this last volume was to have looked at the museum's relations both with autonomous citizens' organisations interested in cultural and tourist issues and with private collectors. Preparatory work for the conference was delayed, perhaps because of organisational problems or, more

likely, because of the political circumstances that led to the outbreak of the Second World War that autumn. In the "Supplément Mensuelle" of March 1939⁴¹, it was reported that the conference would be postponed until the summer of 1940, while no venue was specified.

As a staunch supporter of international intellectual cooperation, Euripides Foundoukidis made a valiant attempt to organise the collection of material required for the drafting of the manual, and requested that contributions planned for each chapter included in the summary should be gathered. In order to facilitate the work of the conservators and other specialists who had demonstrated their willingness to collaborate on the project, along with the programme drawn up at the assembly of 1938, he sent out a questionnaire with the aim of defining the precise content of the topics to be dealt with.

Foundoukidis aimed to demonstrate the extent of progress in Europe on the social front and therefore sought a larger number of experts from Europe to take part in the drafting of the new treaty on museography rather than specialists from other continents⁴². His concern was not unfounded, since a 1940 article which appeared in Lausanne in the journal *La Revues*⁴³ denounced the ongoing supremacy of the United States, which was still "the leading country in the field of art education – the United States spent millions of dollars on developing its museums and fostering a taste for and a love of art among its people"⁴⁴.

In the event, the war thwarted this objective. Paradoxically, the war led to guidelines being drawn up for the protection of monuments, which appeared in the issue of *Mouseion* devoted to "The Protection of Monuments and Works of Art in a Time of War"⁴⁵. At the same time, the journal called for "un apport précieux à l'oeuvre éducative entreprise par les musées pour inculquer à toutes les classes de la population le respect de ces témoignages de la civilization" (Foundoukidis, 1939: 17; Dragoni, 2016 and 2021), in accordance with the long-term guiding principles of the OIM.

41. *Mouseion*, Supplément Mensuel, March 1939:12.

42. It provided that there should be at least three for the USA (OIM.XI.7, Foundoukidis' letter to Edgell, 1st May 1939) and one for Japan, in the person of the Director of the Tokyo Museum (OIM.XI.7, Foundoukidis' letter to Sugi, 3rd May 1939).

43. OIM.XI.7, *Le Beaux-arts aux Etats Unis*, article taken from *La Revue*, Lausanne, 24th December 1940.

44. OIM.XI.7, *Le Beaux-arts aux Etats Unis*, article in *La Revue*, Lausanne, 24th December 1940.

45. *Mouseion*, 1939, Vol. 47-48, nos. III-IV.

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