

# Recommendations of the Madrid Conference (1904)

## Sixth International Congress of Architects

These brief Recommendations constitute an early attempt to set down principles of architectural conservation. The recommendations emphasize the importance of minimal intervention in dealing with ruined structures and of finding a functional use for historic buildings. The document sets forth the principle of unity of style, which encourages restoration according to a single stylistic expression.

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The formatting, to the best of our abilities, have remained intact and any original typographical errors noted, but otherwise have been left unchanged.

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## Report of the Secretary of the Institute.

To the President and Council.

GENTLEMEN, —I have the honour to report that, in accordance with your appointment, Mr. T.E. Colleutt, *Vice-President*, and myself attended the Sixth International Congress of Architects held at Madrid during the early part of the present month as official delegates of the Royal Institute of British Architects. Mr. Cutler, your other delegate, was unfortunately unable through illness to attend. The other British members of the congress were Mr. Wm. Henman [F.], Mr. R. Clarke Edwards [F.], Mr. Wm. Scott (Enniskillen), and Mr. J. Thompson (Tangier).

The official date fixed for the beginning of the proceedings was Wednesday the 6th April, but owing to a change in the engagements of His Majesty the King of Spain the delegates of the various countries were requested by telegram to warn their colleagues that the proceedings would begin on Monday the 4th inst. Mr. Henman, Mr. Scott, and myself arrived accordingly in Madrid on Sunday afternoon.

*Monday, 4th April.*—In the morning I reported myself at the Atheneo, the large literary and artistic club of Madrid, whose convenient offices and beautifully appointed lecture-hall had been given over to the Congress as headquarters. There I obtained the Congress button, a piece of Toledo inlay, tickets for the two excursions and the farewell banquet, and a card of invitation to the King's reception.

The reception took place at the Palace at 3 o'clock. Members of the Congress, with the ladies that accompanied them, were distributed according to nationalities in a suite of rooms leading from the Throne-room to the State Dining-room. The English, American, and Dutch were placed in three groups in one apartment. In due course His Majesty Alfonso XIII, appeared accompanied by the President and Secretary of the Congress and the officers of his Court. The foreign delegates were honoured by presentation to the King, who shook hands and entered into a short conversation with each individually. I had the honour of being addressed by His Majesty in English. After the King had passed out, Her Majesty the Queen-Mother, the Infanta Isabella, the Infanta Maria Theresa (the King's sister) and her husband, the Prince of the Asturias, entered, and each in turn graciously conversed with the delegates and other members on presentation. All the members of the royal family spoke in English to the British and American representatives. After the proceedings were over the company were invited to wander about the State apartments and inspect the art treasures with which they were filled.

*Tuesday, 5th*—The morning was devoted to the opening by Their Majesties of an exhibition of the monumental art of Spain. This was held in a pavilion with glass and iron roof, which formed part of the buildings of a previous exhibition, picturesquely situated in the middle of the Retiro, the public park of Madrid. Their Majesties and the other members of the royal family were received by Señor Don Ricardo Velázquez Bosco, President of the Congress, and the other members of the Spanish Executive committee, and, after the presentation of such foreign delegates as had not arrived at Madrid in time for the reception of the previous day, were conducted round the exhibition. Before the royal personages left they conversed with various members of the Congress who had been presented.

The exhibition itself consisted of a magnificent series of photographs, which gave, as one went round the walls, an almost complete history of Spanish architecture; many original drawings of old buildings, notably the designs of the Italian Saqueti for the royal palace 1742; various models, including one of the Segovia aqueduct; and casts of ornament, chiefly Moorish.

*Wednesday, 6th*.—The Congress proper began in the morning with the preparatory sitting. After the preliminary speeches the *Bureau* or managing committee of the Congress was constituted as follows:

President.

Señor Velásquez Bosco

Vice-Presidents.

Señores Urioste, Repullés, Arbós, Landescho, Palacio.

General Secretary.

Señor Cabllo y Lapiedra.

Hon. Vice-Presidents.

Germany: M. Muthesius and M. Stübben.

Austria: M. Herman Helmer.

Belgium: M. Franze de Vestel.

United States: MM. Allen, Russell, Taylor, Totten, Ittner.

France: M. Daument.  
Holland: M. Cuypers.  
Great Britain: M. Colleutt.  
Italy: M. Koch  
Portugal: M. d'Avila.  
Russia: M. le Comte de Suzor.  
Sweden: M. Möller.  
Mexico: M. Riva Mercado.

Hon. Secretaries.  
Austria: M. Weber.  
United States: MM.W. Eames, Glenn Brown.  
France: M. Poupinel  
Holland: M. Salm.  
Italy: M. Cannizzaro.  
Great Britain: M. Locke  
Mexico: M. Mariscal.  
Portugal: M. Carvalheira Aadaes Bermudes.  
Sweden: M. Wickman.  
Switzerland: M. Fulpius

In the afternoon at 3 o'clock the formal opening of the Congress took place in the hall of the University, the Minister of Public Instruction presiding, and supported by the Minister of Public Works, the Civil Governor, the Mayor of Madrid, and members of the diplomatic body. About 2,000 persons were present. The proceedings were formal and oratorical. After a discourse by the President on Spanish architecture and its relation with that of other countries, terminating with a cordial welcome to the foreign members of the Congress, the representative of each nation briefly addressed the gathering, Mr. Collcutt speaking on behalf of Great Britain. The Minister of Public Instruction in the name of H.M. the King then declared the Congress open.

*Thursday, 7th.*—The sitting opened with the consideration of Subject I.:—"The so-called 'Modern Art' in contemporary Architecture."

M. de Vestel, President of the Société Centrale des Architectes de Belgique, read an interesting Paper in which he defended the freedom of Art, especially in architecture, which must be characterized by a personality and not fall into stereotyped grooves. He established the difference between "modern style" and "modern art" which follows all the vicissitudes or changes of Society.

M. Muthesius (Germany) read a Paper showing the influence of modern methods of scientific construction, and claiming that modern architecture could have rational development only through the close union between the architect and the engineer.

The subject being talked out, Subject II. was brought forward: "The Preservation and Restoration of Architectural Monuments."

A Paper by M. Coquet (Belgium) was taken as read, and various propositions laid down by him were discussed until the sitting terminated. At the afternoon sitting the discussion was resumed, and finally the following resolutions were adopted:

1. Monuments may be divided into two classes, *dead monuments*, i.e. those belonging to a past civilisation or serving obsolete purposes, and *living monuments*, i.e. those which continue to serve the purposes for which they were originally intended.

2. Dead monuments should be preserved only by such strengthening as is indispensable in order to prevent their falling into ruin; for the importance of such a monument consists in its historical and technical value, which disappears with the monument itself.

3. Living monuments ought to be *restored* so that they may continue to be of use, for in architecture utility is one of the bases of beauty.

4. Such restoration should be effected in the original style of the monument, so that it may preserve its unity, unity of style being also one of the bases of beauty in architecture, and primitive geometrical forms being perfectly reproducible. Portions executed in a different style from that of the whole should be respected, if this style has intrinsic merit and does not destroy the aesthetic balance of the monument.

5. The preservation and restoration of monuments should be entrusted only to architects "diplômés par le Gouvernement," or specially authorised and acting under the artistic, archaeological, and technical control of the State.

6. A society for the preservation of historical and artistic monuments should be established in every country. They might be grouped for common effort and collaborate in the compilation of a general inventory of national and local treasures.

Subject III. was then taken: "The Character and Scope of Scientific Studies in the General Teaching of Architecture."

A paper was read in Spanish by Señor Fernandez Casanova, and the meeting was adjourned till Saturday.

After the sitting, members were invited by the architect Don José Grases Riera to inspect the monument to King Alfonso XII, in course of erection in the Park of Madrid.

An illustration of the monument as it will be when completed is given opposite.

*Friday, 8th.*—The day was devoted to a visit to Toledo. The Civil Governor and the Mayor welcomed the Congressists at the railway station. Various Spanish architects attached themselves to small groups of foreign members and conducted them through the Cathedral and to the objects of interest in the town. Mr. Clarke Edwards and myself are particularly indebted to the great courtesy of Señor Acerbo y Retorillo, who placed all his intimate knowledge of Toledo at our service, and spared himself no pains to render our visit delightful. Lunch was served in the little Teatro de Rojas, the floor being boarded up to a level with the stage. The band of the Military Academy played in the balcony, and the boxes and galleries were crowded with all ranks of Toledo society, a gay battle of flowers between Congressists and spectators taking place all through the meal. The bandmaster, after playing a *jota* - one of the Spanish national dances - received a floral ovation, and delightfully played the piece again. In its unexpectedness and spontaneity, this lunch was one of the most pleasurable and certainly the quaintest incident in the Congress.

*Saturday, 9th.*—At the morning sitting of the Congress the educational subject was resumed. Señor Mariscal (Mexico) and Señor Puig y Cadalfach (Barcelona) read papers. The discussion eventually became a contest between the advocates of the scientific and those of the artistic or aesthetic training of the architect. M. Guadet, Professor at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts of Paris, upheld the French atelier system by which the pupil becomes the real disciple of the master and develops by means of intimate personal contact the artistic sense, which is the beginning and end of the architect. Eventually it was resolved that the *bureau* of the Congress should formulate the conclusions that might be deduced from the various arguments.

The same decision was arrived at with regard to Subject IV. - "The Influence of Modern Methods of Construction on Artistic Forms."

M. Berlage (Amsterdam) read a Paper on armoured concrete, proclaiming it to be the determining cause in the evolution of future architecture, and urging architects to study artistic forms in their present use of it if they desire to remain masters of their art.

Señores Forte and Jalvo (Madrid) and M. Cuypers (Amsterdam) read papers, and the synopsis of a paper by M. Guastavino (New York) was placed before the meeting. The discussion lasted until late in the afternoon sitting. A paper, Subject V., "Artistic Copyright in Architectural Works," read by Señor Salvat (Barcelona), brought the proceedings to a close.

In the evening M. Cannizzaro (Rome) gave a lecture, illustrated by lantern slides, on the excavations executed under his care of the Church of S. Sabba, and on the *Ara Pacis Augusta*.

I greatly regret that on the following day personal affairs summoned me imperatively back to London. Being by this time the only English representative at Madrid, I was in some embarrassment, which was relieved, however, by the timely arrival at my hotel of Mr. A. N. Prentice [F.], who, though not intending to join the Congress, very kindly undertook to stay in Madrid and take my place on the *bureau*. The subsequent notes of the proceedings are from material which he has since been good enough to supply.

*Monday, 11th*—The subject of architectural copyright was resumed. M. Cabello y Lapidra's Paper having been laid on the table, M. Harmand, advocate at the Cour d'Appel, Paris, who has identified himself with the question in France, and succeeded in 1902 in obtaining the insertions of architectural works in French copyright Law, moved the following resolutions, which were carried unanimously:

"That seeing:

"1. That architectural designs comprise exterior and interior perspectives, plans, sections, and elevations, and constitute the first manifestation of the thought of the architect and the work of the architect;

"2. That the building is only a reproduction on the ground of the architectural designs; "works of architecture should be protected in all legislatures and in all international conventions in the same degree as other artistic works."

Subject VI. came on for discussion—"*The Education of Builders/ Workmen.*"

The following conclusions were arrived at:

1. Governments, municipalities, and professional bodies should pay particular attention to the technical education of the workman.
2. The teaching should extend to all branches of building, and not be confined to specialties, more or less artistic, for the study of which schools already exist.
3. The teaching in these schools should have as practical a character as possible, so that the teaching should produce good workmen.
4. The direction of these schools should be entrusted *entirely* to architects, and the teaching carried out by technical specialists and experienced master workmen.
5. These schools should issue *certificates* of having passed through the course, and not *diplomas*, which might give rise to false interpretation.
6. Supplementary classes should be established so that workmen after having worked for at least three years as journeymen might by further studies acquire the title of foremen.
7. Architectural societies should encourage workmen by prizes, medals, and other rewards.

The meeting passed on to Subject VII.—"*The Influence of Administrative Regulations on Contemporary Architecture.*"

The conclusions were left to be drawn up by the *bureau*.

Subject VIII.—"*The Expropriation of Works of Architectural Art*"—produced the following resolution:

"The State has the right to expropriate any work of artistic or recognised historic value when in the hands of the owner it is being destroyed or not duly preserved, always provided that an indemnity fixed by competent persons be paid to the owner."

Subject IX.—"*Is it desirable that the Architect should intervene as Arbitrator in the relations between Patrons and Workmen and in the Disputes that arise between them?*"

A resolution was passed answering the question in the affirmative.

A supplementary resolution, proposed by Señor Acebo (Madrid), not down on the agenda of the Congress, was then carried in these terms:

"That foreign delegates and the Executive Committee of the Congress solicit from their respective governments the mutual and gratuitous cession of reproductions of details or not very extensive complete works which, corresponding to different epochs of national art, may become the property of the State museums, on the express condition that such

reproductions shall be applied to the formation of architectural museums in towns in which architectural education is given either in special schools or officially authorised private *ateliers*."

*Tuesday, 12th.*—The day was devoted to an excursion to Alcalá and Guadalajara.

*Wednesday, 13th.*—At the meeting of the *bureau* the application contained in the letter dated 29th March from the Council of the R.I.B.A. was considered, and it was resolved that the next International Congress should take place in London. As four years had elapsed between the Fifth Congress in Paris and the Sixth Congress in Madrid, it was determined, in order to preserve the triennial character of the congress, that the Seventh should take place two years hence, in 1906 and not in 1907, as the Council of the Royal Institute suggested. The formal communication from the *bureau* will no doubt arrive in due course. In the evening the farewell banquet took place.

I cannot conclude without a reference to the enjoyability and great interest of the Congress. We were favoured by the weather of a splendid English June. The courtesy of our Spanish hosts will always be a pleasant memory in the minds of all the foreign representatives. It is impossible to conceive a more perfect organisation. Information was lavishly supplied; in every fixture the strictest punctuality was observed; one had only to follow printed announcements and the way of every member of the Congress was smooth. Too much praise cannot be given to the Executive Committee; and the thanks of the foreign members are particularly due to the President, Señor Don Velázquez Bosco, and the Secretary, Señor Don Cabello y Lapiedra, whose labours in assuring the success of the Congress were indefatigable.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

W. J. LOCKE, *Secretary*.