

Editorial

"Urban Heritage and Buildings Maintenance" is the title of COST-Action C5. Under the chairmanship of Mr F.G. Hofmann a group of selected specialists coming from 12 different European countries has worked together on this subject for about four years. Main results will be published in a comprehensive final report. This report will be structured according to the active working groups: (1) Criteria and current methods for evaluation, (1a) Framework evaluation criteria, (2) Inspection and diagnosis, (3) Repair and revovation, (5) Lime technology.

As a supplement to the work of this group a series of workshops has been organized towards the end of COST Action C5. Three workshops have been organized at Delft University of Technology (The Netherlands) at the end of October 1999. The following subjects have been dealt with in depth in this context:

- Workshop I: Foundations
- Workshop II: Concrete
- Workshop III: Iron and Steel

Proceedings of these three workshops are still available from the Publication Office, Faculty of Architecture, Delft University of Technology.

Four additional workshops have been organized at Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (ETH) in Zürich (Switzerland) at the end of August and beginning of September 2000. At this occasion the following topics have been presented by invited speakers and discussed by a competent audience:

- Workshop IV: Stone and Stonework
- Workshop V: Brick and Brickwork
- Workshop VI: Wood and Wooden Structures
- Workshop VII: Plaster

In this way most essential points of repair and renovation have been addressed. This field obviously is very vast. The wide spectrum of different building materials has to be covered adequately. The time scale starts with historical buildings and materials and ends at hightech structures and smart materials of today. Divers disciplines such as numerical mechanics, electro-chemistry and surface physics have to be brought together with architecture and structural engineering if a real step forward is to be expected.

Work within COST Action C5 and the supplementing series of workshops has never had the ambition to tackle the problem in all its width. Essential points have been selected in contrast. Due to these limits which are imposed among other boundary conditions by the financial support available results must be looked upon to have an examplatory character and they do not necessary respresent a final

state-of-the-art. It was possible, however, to elaborate suitable methodologies. In this way a solid basis for future work is provided.

It is hoped that this special issue of IJR will contribute to initiate co-operation between specialists coming from different backgrounds in order to maintain our urban heritage in the future better than this is possible today. The contributions compiled in this issue and the references given may help to further develop the comparatively new discipline renewal engineering. The introduction on COST might well stimulate more action in the field of maintenance and restoration. It would certainly be a particularly interesting task for WTA to propose new actions and to participate more actively in European research projects.

Zürich, September 2000

F.H. Wittmann