

The Meaning of Further Sharing: from Learning to Teaching Sharing Conservation Decisions within an Active Educational Environment

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ABSTRACT

This paper analyzes the journey from learning to teaching Sharing Conservation Decisions (SCD) after attending the ICCROM SCD course in 2006. It explores how the SCD method and practice brought benefits to the designing and implementation of university courses in Mexico, in order to show that university education, which incorporates both strategic planning and decision-making processes, is key for training professional conservators. This paper stresses the importance of developing local educational experiences that enhance and enlighten the rationale of the sharing experience. It also demonstrates that a real, pragmatic and essential contribution of the ICCROM SCD method is its potential to be replicated, with regional adaptations, on a global scale. As an advocate of active learning of conservation issues, this contribution concludes with a proposal to formulate an SCD training programme for Latin America with the rationale of the ICCROM LATAM programme.¹

Introduction

I attended the ICCROM SCD course in 2006. The experience was both enriching and enlightening due to the carefully structured course curriculum, the knowledge gained from the lecturers, and the great opportunity it afforded to hear fellow conservators, archaeologists, architects and scientists discussing the professional problems, solutions, and challenges they faced in different parts of the globe. Moreover, I had the opportunity to share my own views and experience with colleagues, who were generous in sharing their feedback with me. The participants of the ICCROM SCD 2006 course often stated that this course gave us the opportunity to leave behind the frantic demands of day-to-day professional life for a short time, in order to spend time listening, learning, thinking, sharing and further analyzing. Today, many of the ICCROM SCD 2006 attendees still keep in touch and follow each other's career development. As such, I am honoured to be part of a global community of heritage professionals that continues to share information and opinions on conservation issues via brief chats, e-mails and social networks.

I learned many things on the ICCROM SCD 2006 course. However, it is beyond doubt that the analysis and discussion on two particular issues had a great impact on my professional career: strategic planning and decision-making. These topics are worth further examination in theoretical, methodological and practical terms.

To begin with, it is worth noting that, today, strategic planning is recognized as one of the key methodological tools of conservation practice (Teutónico and Palumbo, 2002). This is because strategic planning is an intellectual instrument that helps heritage professionals understand and examine why heritage is important; how it is affected by natural, biological or human agents; and what conservators and other stakeholders can do to preserve it in the present and for the future (Medina-Gonzalez, 2011). A further advantage of strategic planning is its clear methodological structure – it addresses three analytical stages of the conservation process: