

O.I.M.36.1934

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF INTELLECTUAL CO-OPERATION

INTERNATIONAL MUSEUMS OFFICE

MADRID CONFERENCE

(October 1934)

SUMMARIES OF REPORTS

The indications given in the summaries are not to be taken
as being of a limitative character



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LEONARD COHEN

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SUMMARY OF REPORTS

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A.- GENERAL REPORTS

1. THE ARCHITECTURAL PROGRAMME OF A MUSEUM.- GENERAL PRINCIPLES -

Characteristic features of old collections - Curio collections - The aim and purposes of present-day museums - Distinction between museums containing individual creations and museums in which the interest lies in the grouping of series of exhibits - Evolution of the plan of public galleries since the XIXth century - General principles : plan, distribution of rooms and premises, one-way access and independent approach - Exterior treatment of museum buildings - Site, surroundings, possibilities of extension - Staircases, lifts, emergency exits and stairways, distribution of rooms in regard to supervision : for example, radiating rooms - Distribution of rooms to meet the special needs of a museum - Distribution of openings, doors and windows - Materials : non-inflammable, insulating, water-proof (Knapen method, etc.) - Utilisation of coke breeze blocks for fixing nails; use of stone, brick, reinforced concrete, glass bricks, wood, according to the climatic conditions of the country - Anti-earthquake construction and materials - Museum annexes and branches - Construction of a museum as part of a historical architectural group.

2. MUSEUM EQUIPMENT

Chapter A. Exhibition rooms and rooms open to the public

Exhibition rooms : main, secondary or documentary - Size and shape of rooms : height, width and length, in relation to objects on view - Collapsible partitions - Polygonal and rectangular rooms - Treatment of right-angles of walls - Doors and entrances - Number and position, with or without mobile parts - Perspective of openings - Curtains; their concealment - Screens - Circulation between rooms and from rooms to corridors, with due regard to administrative requirements (temporary closing of a room, for example) - Rooms through which there is no passage ("cul de sac") - Corridors and administrative circulation - Principle of the "hall of honour" - Temporary exhibition rooms, lecture, lanternslide and film rooms, music rooms - Children's rooms - Independent room open to the public in the evening and on days when the other rooms of the museum are closed.

Chapter B. Service and equipment

Rooms for workers and copyists - Information and sale counters - Administrative offices - Library - Workshops for casts, photography and restoration - Printing department, reserve stores and supplies - Reception of objects - Utilisation of basements - Living quarters, smoke-rooms, refectories - Rest-rooms, cloak-rooms, refreshment bars, upholstered seats, rails, etc., courts, gardens, roof-gardens - Floor-coverings : colour schemes, hygiene and sound-proofing.

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Characteristic features of old collections - Curio collections - The aim and purpose of present-day museums - Distinction between museums containing individual objects and museums in which the interest lies in the grouping of objects of art - Evolution of the idea of museums since the XIX century - General principles: plan, distribution of rooms and premises, one-way access and independent approach - Exterior treatment of museum buildings - Site surroundings, possibilities of extension - Staircases, lifts, emergency exits and stairways, distribution of rooms in regard to supervision: for example, radiating rooms - Distribution of openings, doors, the special needs of a museum - Distribution of openings, doors and windows - Materials: non-inflammable, insulating, water-proof (masson method, etc.) - Utilization of concrete blocks for fixing walls; use of stone, brick, reinforced concrete, glass bricks, wood, according to the climatic conditions of the country - Anti-seismic construction and materials - Museum annexes and branches - Construction of a museum as part of a historical architectural group.

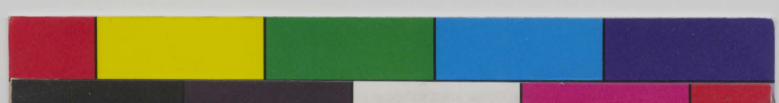
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3. NATURAL AND ARTIFICIAL LIGHTING -

Utilisation of natural direct or reflected light - Systems for the regulating of natural light - Aspect of rooms with regard to light - Protection against effects of light : special glazing, blinds, colour-washing of windows, etc. Technical problems of artificial lighting; various apparatus ensuring general or local lighting - Problem of the composition of light - Financial considerations.

4. HEATING, VENTILATION AND AIR-CONDITIONING -

Examination of plant from the standpoint of the preservation of works of art and the comfort of visitors - Description of the various methods of heating and air-conditioning - Experiments carried out in the different countries in this connection - Synthetic statement of the principles which should be observed in installing plant.

5. CONVERSION OF ANCIENT MONUMENTS AND OTHER BUILDINGS INTO MUSEUMS-

Study of the question from the twofold point of view of the conservation of the monument and of the collections housed therein - Relationship between the character of the building and the nature of the objects exhibited - Characteristic examples of such conversions and experiments carried out to solve architectonic and technical problems : heating, lighting, etc.

6. GENERAL PRINCIPLES REGARDING THE ENHANCEMENT OF WORKS OF ART -

General observations - Interior decoration of museums - Wall-coverings and colour schemes - Enhancement of certain objects by the use of local lighting - Concealment of accessories : fire-extinguishers, radiators, hydrants, etc.

7. DIFFERENT METHODS OF PRESENTING COLLECTIONS -

a) Integral presentation;- b) selective presentation;- c) grouping of paintings, sculpture, objects of art, furniture, fabrics, etc.;- d) systematic presentation: chronological, historical, by schools, by subjects, by material, etc.;- e) reconstructions of architectonic, archaeological, historical, decorative groups, etc.

8. ORGANISATION OF STORES, RESERVES AND STUDY COLLECTIONS -

Accessibility of these collections - Presentation, classification and general organisation - Material for the classification and preservation of these exhibits - Percentage of collections kept in stores.

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9. PERMANENT AND TEMPORARY EXHIBITIONS -

The technique of temporary exhibitions - Presentation of new acquisitions - Circulating exhibitions - Exhibitions organised by rotation - Periodical presentation of isolated works of art - Collective exhibitions.

10. PROBLEMS ARISING FROM THE GROWTH OF COLLECTIONS -

Purchases, donations and bequests, and museographical re-^qquirements - Periodical adjustment of collections by means of loans, deposits, exchanges or disposals.

11. EXHIBITION MATERIAL -

Mouldings, show-cases, hanging systems - Anti-vibration measures - Frames, pedestals, movable partitions, rails - Apparatus for the showing of costumes - Fixing of archaeological fragments, etc.

A special chapter of this report will be devoted to the study of light reflection on show-cases and protective glazing, and the means of preventing it.

12. PLANS OF ROOMS.- NUMBERING AND LABELLING OF EXHIBITS -

General remarks on the numbering and the labelling of exhibits - Aesthetic considerations - Visibility of labels - Dimensions, proportions, material, colour and typography of labels, cartouches, etc. - Notices, plans and guiding diagrams - Publications intended for the use of visitors.

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B.- SPECIAL REPORTS

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14. PROBLEMS RELATING SPECIFICALLY TO ETHNOGRAPHICAL AND FOLK-ART COLLECTIONS -
15. PROBLEMS RELATING SPECIFICALLY TO COLLECTIONS OF SCULPTURE -
16. PROBLEMS RELATING SPECIFICALLY TO COLLECTIONS OF DECORATIVE AND INDUSTRIAL ART -
17. PROBLEMS RELATING SPECIFICALLY TO NUMISMATIC COLLECTIONS -
18. PROBLEMS RELATING SPECIFICALLY TO GRAPHIC COLLECTIONS -

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GRAPHIC AND PHOTOGRAPHIC DOCUMENTATION

Graphic and photographic documentation will be placed at the disposal of Rapporteurs to illustrate their papers and will at the same time be used for the exhibition of museography which is to be organised concurrently with the Conference. This exhibition will be arranged under the direction of M.F.J. SANCHEZ CANTON, Assistant Director of the Prado Museum, Madrid.

This documentation should consist of photographs and drawings of plans, sections and elevations, photographs showing heating, ventilation and lighting installations, lighting effects, exhibition material, stores and repositories, various systems of presenting collections, didactic groups, comparative series, etc. Illustrations should also be given of the aspects of temporary or periodical exhibition rooms, numbering and labelling of collections, posters, plans, miscellaneous signs, guide diagrams of rooms and specimen copies of publications. Samples of the material employed, in particular, for wall-coverings might usefully be added. The actual abstracts of the different reports may, moreover, be used as a starting-point for the choice of the above documentation.

Furthermore, it would be well to include reproductions of old museum interiors (prints, drawings, water-colours, etc.).

The Conference proceedings will deal with collections of art, archaeology, history, ethnography and folk-art.

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