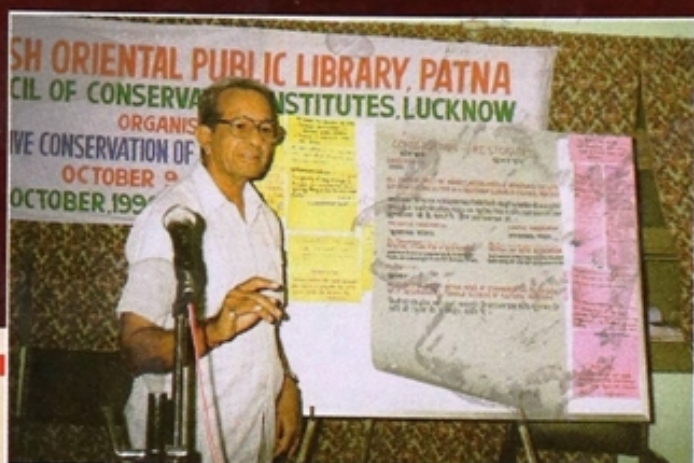


Training in Conservation



A brief account of Workshops and Training Courses
Organized by
ICCI upto December-2002



INTACH

Indian Council of Conservation Institutes
Lucknow

Preface

One of the main missions of the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH) has been, to impart training in conservation, which has two forms, namely preventive as well as curative conservation. With this aim in mind, the INTACH Indian Council of Conservation Institutes, Lucknow, has been organizing short term workshops, normally of one week duration for imparting basic knowledge related to materials of various heritage objects, factors causing damage to them and their prevention. It is 'Preventive Conservation'.

Training courses and Workshops of short and long durations upto 6 months have been organized to train people in conservation treatment or 'Curative Conservation' of various heritage objects. Both types of training have been arranged at various units of INTACH Indian Council of Conservation Institutes and at other institutions in India and abroad. The feed-back from participants/trainees reveal that such programmes have proved highly beneficial to them in preserving the heritage objects in their charge. They enhanced their knowledge of processes of deterioration of art objects, methods of preventing such damage and techniques of restoring the damaged objects.

Mentioned in the following pages is a brief account of such workshops and training programmes organized so far. In organizing them, we have received support of several agencies, particularly the Ford Foundations, NORAD (Norway), Japan Foundation Asia Centre, INTACH (UK) Trust and of course INTACH. We are extremely grateful to all of them.

Quite often programmes are held in collaboration with other institutions and the local hospitality is borne by them. We would like to thank them also.

For all these courses we had to do a lot of experimentation. In the beginning when the first workshop was organized at Lucknow we were not very sure about the duration of the programme.

Should it be 2 days, one week, 10 days? There were different opinions. The feed-back from the participants always indicated that the period of one week was too short. When we decided to hold it for two weeks, the reaction was the same that the period was too short. That indicated that participants were really taking interest, and wanted to learn more and more.

The same was the case for the training programmes. We had one course of six months duration. It was noticed that during the six months period we were able to cover only the most important subjects. There was not enough practice for actual conservation. However at the same time the institutions from where the participants came were reluctant to send their employees for a long duration. Their reaction was that they had only one person on their staff and if he or she also goes away who will do the work. However, what they did not understand was that it was better not to have any person, rather than to have an untrained person. Those who came from abroad were not willing to stay even for six months. The discussions therefore continued and are still continuing.

I have firmly believed that training is extremely important when a person is appointed to a job like conservation, which is something like a medical profession. There must be a thorough training, not in theory alone but also in practising the art and science of conservation. It is for this reason, that the Indian Council of Conservation Institutes from the very beginning has tried to organize training programmes at it's head quarters at Lucknow and also at various other locations in India. We have also gone beyond the boundary of India and have organized workshops in Sri Lanka and Indonesia for example. The training programmes abroad as well as in India have always been in partnership with some other institutions.

Organizing and coordinating a training programme is not an easy task. It involves, developing a syllabus according to the need of a particular workshop, or training course, corresponding with the host institution, getting in touch with the participants, selecting them, arranging their stay, arranging the lectures, acquiring the materials for practical work and many other tasks. I was very

lucky to have very competent persons to handle all this with sincerity and devotion. The first ever workshop organized by the INTACH Conservation Centre was coordinated by Mrs. Usha Agrawal, the Director of the Centre at that time. She was the Coordinator for these training programmes for a number of years. Simultaneously, we were also trying to train others for this task. Mrs. Mamta Misra at that time Sr. Conservator, and now the Director of the Indian Conservation Institute, Lucknow, learnt the art of organizing such programmes very quickly and organized and coordinated several workshops and training programs. Mr. V.P. Mathur, Director (Technical) in the Indian Conservation Institute, Lucknow also organized several workshops. Mr. Anupam Sah the Coordinator and now the Director of our Bhubaneswar Centre has been coordinating and organizing workshops as well as training programmes at Bhubaneswar. Mrs. Mallika Mitra, Conservator at the Bhubaneswar Centre is also doing an excellent job of arranging these training programmes. I am grateful to all of them.

Since workshops were organized not only by Lucknow but also by our other Centres. The responsibility of organizing them fell on the shoulders of the Directors of the respective Centres. Several workshops were organized by INTACH Chitrakala Parishat Art Conservation Centre, Bangalore and the responsibility was handled by it's Director, Mr. S. Subbaraman and the Sr. Conservator, Mr. Chandrahas Bhat. The workshops at Delhi Centre were organized by the Centre Director, Mr. Nilabh Sinha. The first ever long-term training course in conservation of wall paintings was arranged by the Incharge of the Thrissur Centre, Mr. Arvind Kumar. The workshop at Rampur Raza Library was arranged by Mr. Lalit Pathak under the over all guidance and supervision of the Officer on Special Duty of the Rampur Raza Library, Dr. W.H. Siddiqui.

In the beginning, we were drawing the Faculty from other institutions, like the NRLC and the National Museum. But gradually, we were also preparing our own team. Now, we have on our staff very good teachers and trainers, who have devoted themselves for preparing lectures and for preparing practical task. Besides the Coordinators, we have with us now several teachers

like Ashok Kumar Pandey, Ashok Kumar Upadhyaya who have been lecturing at various courses. The number is too large to name all of them. I am grateful to all of them for teaching at various courses.

Besides, the period of or the duration of the training programme, the style and the methodology of teaching has also undergone a sea change. While initially there used to be theoretical lectures, followed by some amount of practical work, there was not much technique and now in each of our programmes, starting from the introduction of the participants, up to the assessment of their understanding, there is a total involvement of the participants. There is never a dull moment. They are always busy with doing various tasks, like preparing posters, writing conservation status reports, preparing something or the other. There is always a scope for improvement, and we are continuously looking for ways and means of making these courses more and more interesting and informative. Feed-back from the participants of each training programme has been our guiding factor.

Mr. V. P. Mathur has helped me in compiling all the information contained in this publication. I am extremely grateful to him.

It has been brought out in the hope that it would inspire various heritage institutions to take part in the training programmes, either by sending their staff-members for training or in hosting such courses in their own institutions.

Lucknow
December 31, 2002

O.P. Agrawal
Director General