

Canadian Government Policies, are they Promoting Conservation Principles and Standards?

by Gouhar Simison

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The Government of Canada is a supporter of ICOMOS and IUCN. It officially joined the World Heritage Convention as a member in 1976 and assumed a major role in drafting and implementing the convention. The President of IUCN International is a Canadian who occupies the office of "Program Policy" in the Federal Department of Environment - Parks Program. Parks paid the salary of a staff member who served as Director of the Secretariat of ICOMOS International in Paris from 1979-83. This support for heritage Conservation suggests that Canadian Government policies, standards, guidelines and legislation for practicing the profession must be well established. Let us examine the situation; there are two national policies and both are managed by the Parks Program in the federal Department of Environment (DOE - Parks).

1. The Parks Policy on Historic Sites (1) was issued in 1972 and revised in 1983. It sets the basic criteria for the conservation of heritage properties owned by the Parks Program. The policy declares a commitment to: a) protect for all times historic resources in areas associated with persons, places and events; b) establish through cooperation with provincial and territorial governments a system of national historic parks; c) ensure that the system reflects a balance between historic themes and geographic regions; d) maintain comprehensive records; and e) interpret historic resources and provide visitors' services. The policy is adequate on many accounts and is based on a multi-disciplinary approach. In dealing with built heritage, the policy emphasizes "preservation" and "commemoration". These two terms sometimes create controversy in approaches developed for any one site. Research-oriented disciplines, including architects, would stress "Preservation" and interpretation-oriented disciplines would stress "Commemoration". Conservation of cultural landscapes, streetscapes or districts is not stressed.
2. The "Federal Heritage Building Policy" (2) was announced in 1982. It established the "Federal Heritage Building Review Office" (FHBRO) to coordinate all activity undertaken by any federal department owning heritage properties which are over forty years old. The Federal Government is the largest single owner of heritage properties in this country. The Policy states that the Government of Canada will apply available resources to: a) identify and evaluate its heritage buildings and maintain a Register of designated ones; b) manage its real property to promote conservation and continued use; c) provide federal heritage buildings with the degree of protection required by their architectural and design integrity, their urban setting and landmark value and their historic importance; d) recognize local, regional and provincial policies and encourage other levels of government and the private sector to conserve their own heritage buildings; f) attempt to provide continuing protection to federal heritage buildings which may leave federal government ownership; g) establish criteria and procedures to evaluate plans for "significant interventions", e.g. alterations, repairs or demolition.

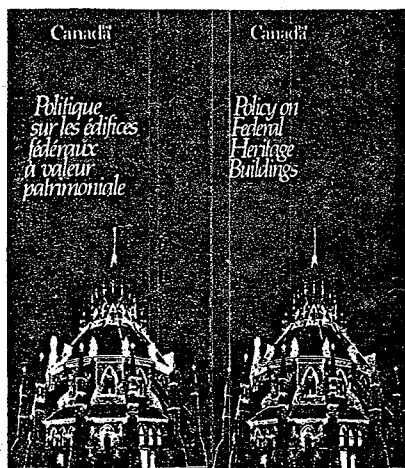
The policy identifies two categories of heritage properties: "Classified" as having the highest heritage significance, and "Recognized" as having the second-highest heritage significance. A total of forty "recognized" and "classified" buildings were listed on the Register of Federal Heritage Buildings when it was introduced in 1986. It should be easy to continue the listing, as each Federal Department has a detailed inventory of the properties under its jurisdiction.

The Canadian Inventory of Historic Buildings (CIHB) initiated in 1972, contains historical and architectural information on over 200,000 buildings and it is one of the most important endeavours of its kind in the world. It provides background information for the Register and could serve, in combination with provincial and municipal lists, as the data base for an all-encompassing Canadian Register.

The above policies include guiding principles, and recognize the International Charters and Conventions. However, a Canadian Charter has been in demand and two Canadian Charters were written in the last five years: "The Appleton Charter" (3) by the Anglophone Committee of ICOMOS Canada and the "Declaration of Deschambault" (4) by Quebec's Sites and Monuments Commission, in collaboration with ICOMOS Canada's Francophone Committee. As it can be expected, every set of principles has its advantages and disadvantages.

Jacques Dalibard, Director of Heritage Canada and President of ICOMOS Canada encouraged the establishment of a Doctrine Committee in 1985, with a view towards producing a comprehensive Canadian Charter. In time, the "process" of writing principles gained more importance than the production of the written material. It answered a pressing need for practitioners in this field to indulge in valuable philosophical discussions, a need that in other countries is usually filled by discussions held in academic circles. The work of this committee is expected to guide the eventual introduction of Conservation Legislation and tax incentives in Canada.

Julian Smith, the Committee Chairman, summarized the Committee's deliberations into an interim paper that is characteristically flexible. The participants who see a great advantage in this approach are those involved with vernacular architecture, historic towns, urban ensembles, landscape and settlement patterns. The participants who found less advantage in a flexible approach are those whose efforts are confined to specific areas of analysis or research.



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Note: Numbers appearing under the illustrations correspond to the items listed in the "Endnotes" at the end of the text.

**ICOMOS CANADA - DOCTRINE TASK FORCE
PRINCIPLES OF PRACTICE**

The concern: Our cultural inheritance - those combined creations of nature and of man which make up the environment in which we live.

The goal: To manage change in this environment in ways which protect and enhance its value.

I AWARENESS/DISCOVERY

1. Protection and enhancement depend on individual and collective awareness of value. Such awareness is a prerequisite and a goal of conservation.
2. All appropriate means of acquiring and developing this awareness must be encouraged. These means include education and training, interpretation, cultural tourism. Cultural resources must at the same time be protected against erosion or pollution by undue exploitation for tourism or other forms of accessibility.
3. Laws and regulations, and related financial and administrative mechanisms, must be based on awareness and designed to further the activities of protection and enhancement.

II UNDERSTANDING/PROTECTION

1. Assignment of cultural value is a prerequisite to intervention and a stimulus to awareness. It must be based on appropriate levels of identification, documentation and research.
2. The process of identifying and inventorying cultural resources must be as broadly-based and inclusive as possible.
3. Precise documentation must be prepared at every stage of the work in the form of analytical and critical reports, drawings and photographs. Every technical and formal aspect of the resource should be included.
4. Research, investigation and analysis must be carried out by multidisciplinary teams drawing on a full range of professional expertise as well as community representation and input.
5. Knowledge gathered about a resource must be widely diffused, as a means to greater awareness.
6. The cultural resource itself must be recognized as a historical document. Protection of this document and understanding of its message are fundamental to the conservation process.

III ACTION/INTERVENTION/ENHANCEMENT

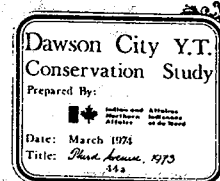
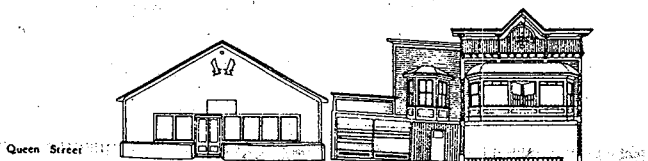
1. Any intervention must be rooted in the values assigned and documented. It must acknowledge its context in time, in place and in society.
2. Protection of those aspects of value must first be ensured through programs of on-going maintenance.
3. Protection in the form of interim or long-term stabilization/consolidation must have recourse to all materials and techniques for which the efficacy has been proven over time.
4. Protection and enhancement must be based on respect for the significant contributions of every historical period. They must avoid reconstruction based on conjecture.
5. Enhancement to meet contemporary functional needs and the objectives of social integration must be designed to minimize the impact on the values being protected.
6. All interventions must be legible, without being disruptive. They should contribute to awareness.

But what is wrong with all the existing International charters and conventions? Why write a Canadian charter? Because every country has distinct heritage characteristics that need special emphasis. In Canada, they are the following:

1. The immigrant factor: based on respect for the cultural expressions and contributions of newcomers. Perhaps half the Canadian population consists of first or second generation immigrants. The integration of the cultural values of new arrivals would perhaps be best served utilizing the principles of "integrated conservation" (5) that are broad enough to deal with situations that involve a process of change. This process includes the conservation not only of static objects such as the built heritage but also of the lifestyles that occupy these environments. This is called the "management of change" (6) in North America. Applying conservation principles to a product is different than applying the same to a process of change. Some Victorian era streets in Toronto are changed beyond recognition, vested in the traditional bright colours and building materials favoured by the Portugese community. (7) The Vietnamese community in Toronto is requesting the change of a nineteenth century Toronto street name "Grange" to "Saigon Street". Immigrant communities have the right to express their cultural values and to assert their identity. These are basic human rights which are set out in Canada's Constitution.

2. The climate factor: physically affects the durability of the fabric and shortens the life of built heritage to such a degree that it cannot be ignored. This issue is most obvious to newcomers from "Old Worlds". They notice the endless process of maintenance that takes place annually to retard - let's call it - change. "Management of change" takes a new dimension in this country! Roman military routes are still in use in parts of Europe. In Canada, we repair our paved roads every spring; it is labour-intensive and expensive. Starting plants anew every spring would sound very strange in some countries. Historically, the short summers have fostered some very flimsy architecture in this country, for example, "Goldrush" or mining towns in the north, were meant to be replaced as soon as the frost action deformed them, "transitory architecture!". Should we stabilize them in their deformed shape (8) which constitutes their present heritage character? Should we straighten them up and restore their appearance as it had been when newly built? or should we simply replace them as was originally intended? Which conservation principles would apply?

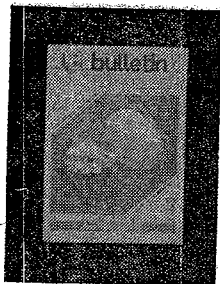
3. Nature and cultural landscape factor: the New World has contributed to the preservation scheme, the concept of conserving natural heritage including landscapes, settlement patterns and industrial heritage. North America established the unique "Parks Magazine" published by IUCN Conservation Monitoring Centre (9) promoting conservation of nature and other protected areas. 1985 marked the centennial year of the establishment of the first Canadian protected site: "Banff National Park" in Alberta.



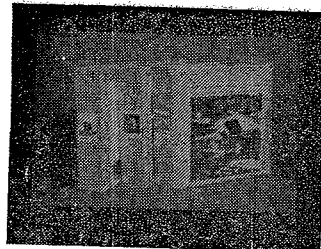
4. The native factor: the Inuit and Indian cultures are based on spiritual and oratorical rather than material heritage. The totem poles on the Queen Charlotte Islands in British Columbia are sacred monuments to the Indians; not to be touched. Would maintaining a favorable environment around the totem poles that delays their deterioration be an answer to their conservation? How would an Indian conservationist approach the issue? What would he/she add to our principles and code of ethics? The Navajo Indians in the United States paint transitory tapestry in sand. "Dry painting" (10) representing religious chantings which cure illnesses. These are created by the medicine man. No models exist except in his head. He spends hours designing a magic picture with crushed sandstone, pollen or charcoal. By sunset, its ephemeral beauty must be scattered to the wind. How do we conserve this art or the spirit of it?

5. The "do it yourself" factor: this North American cultural phenomenon is quite strong. Its overwhelming effect on architecture and consequently, on architectural conservation is mostly noticeable to conservationists coming from "Old Worlds". Marketing and consumerism are wholeheartedly dedicated to making one believe that with minor effort, namely buying their product, one can, in no time, do or teach oneself anything one may desire. This can be true and believable for many things, but imagine upgrading your nineteenth century house following directions listed on the renovation kit that you just picked up from "Sears". Would it also include a discussion on approach, philosophy or professional ethics? Perhaps heritage organizations could guide the marketing of a kit, "How to Renovate Your House According to Conservation Principles and Enjoy a Heritage Character"!

Standards and guidelines have also been the subject of debate at the provincial level. Of the ten provinces and the two northern territories, Quebec and Ontario could be singled out for their extensive efforts to establish principles and guidelines for heritage conservation. Other major efforts in this direction exist of which "Principles of Careful Conservation" should be mentioned, written by Marc Fram for the Ontario Heritage Foundation (11). The Government of Quebec's Ministry of Cultural Affairs produced an extensive document entitled "Principes et critères pour la restauration et l'incertion" (12). The City of Montreal and Quebec City have both developed parallel documents entitled "Arrondissements Historiques", which regulate their designated historic quarters.



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The Restoration Services Division in DOE - Parks was given a special mandate ten years ago, to undertake the production of an extensive series of publications under the general heading of "Architectural Conservation Technology" Reference System (ACT). The ACT illustrated manuals contain detailed technical information and specifications designed to provide a comprehensive reference collection for practitioners in the field of architectural conservation. (13) Originally developed for internal use by Parks' staff, the material is currently being revised and published for wider distribution. The 185-odd publications are grouped into seven major categories, summarized as follows:

- I PROJECT MANAGEMENT:** Project Phasing, Information Management; Use of Consultants; Health and Safety.
- II HERITAGE RECORDING:** Recording Techniques, Requirements and Services; Types of Records; Document Control.
- III HISTORIC SITE ANALYSIS:** Analysis of Architecture, Environment, Landscape, Engineering, Structural, Mechanical, Industrial, Marine and Special Analytical Techniques.
- IV HISTORIC SITE DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT:** Levels of Intervention; Interim Protection; Stabilization; Period Restoration; Rehabilitation; Period Reconstruction; Redevelopment. Including design standards, structural modifications, insulation, environmental controls, fire protection, access for the disabled, techniques of dismantling and reassembly and of moving historic structures.
- V HISTORIC SITE MAINTENANCE:** Inspection and monitoring; Cleaning, Preventive Maintenance and Repair; Engineering Measures.
- VI CONSERVATION OF MATERIALS:** Concrete; Masonry; Mortar; Metals; Wood; Woodwork; Plaster and Stucco; Paint; Wallpaper.
- VII PERIOD CONSTRUCTION TECHNOLOGY:** Sitework; Concrete Work; Masonry Work; Bricklaying and Tiling; Metal Work; Carpentry; Joinery; Roofing; Glazing; Plastering and Stucco Work; Painting, Varnishing and other techniques; Interior Decoration; Servicing; Landscaping.

Endnotes and Illustrations (*)

1. Parks Canada Policy, Ministry of the Environment, Ottawa, 1983.
- * 2. Policy on Federal Heritage Buildings, Ministry of the Environment, R62-124-1982.
3. Appleton, ICOMOS Canada, Ottawa, 1983.
4. Declaration of Deschambault, Quebec Sites and Monuments Commission, 1982.
5. Integrated Conservation: Waning Moon or Rising Sun? by Jacques Houlet, Education and Culture, Review of the Council for Cultural Cooperation of the Council of Europe No. 26.
6. Historic Preservation: Curatorial Management of the Built Environment by J.M. Fitch, USA, 1982.
7. Whose House is Home? by Liz Weier, Canadian Heritage Magazine, Aug.-Sept. 1986.
- * 8. Dawson City, Y.T. Conservation Study, Indian and Northern Affairs, 1974.
- * 9. IUCN Bulletin, CH-1196, Switzerland. Parks Magazine, IUCN Conservation Monitoring Centre, Cambridge, UK.
10. The World of the American Indian, National Geographic Society, Washington DC, 1974.
11. Principles of Careful Conservation by Marc Fram, Ontario Heritage Foundation, 1987.
12. Principes et critères, Commission des biens culturels, Gouvernement du Québec, 1986.
- *13. ACT Reference System, DOE - Parks, Restoration Services Division, 1987.

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SUMMARY

The Government of Canada is a member of ICOMOS and IUCN and an active supporter of Heritage Conservation. This paper discusses the accomplishment of Parks Program in the federal Department of Environment, and focusses on the two national policies managed by the Program:

1. The Parks Policy on Historic Sites issued in 1972 and revised in 1983.
2. The "Federal Heritage Building Policy" announced in 1982 establishing the "Federal Heritage Building Review Office" (FHBRRO) related to federally owned heritage properties over forty years of age.

The above policies include guiding principles and recognize the International Charters and Conventions. Nevertheless a Canadian Charter has been in demand, and two Canadian Charters have been written in the last five years. Further more ICOMOS Canada established a Doctorine Committee in 1985, with the view towards producing a comprehensive Canadian Charter.

The results of the Doctorine Committee's work are presented under the heading "Principles of Practice". This paper also discusses the factors which create the need for a special Canadian charter that is different than the existing charters. These are:

1. The immigrant factor: based on respect for the cultural expressions and contributions of newcomers.
2. The climate factor: physically affects the durability of the fabric and shortens the life of built heritage to such a degree that it cannot be ignored.
3. Nature and cultural landscape factor: the New World has contributed to the field of conservation the concept of conserving natural heritage.
4. The native factor: The Inuit and Indian cultures are based on spiritual and oratorial rather than material heritage.
5. The "do it yourself" factor: This North American cultural phenomenon is quite strong. Its overwhelming effect on architecture and consequently on architectural conservation is mostly noticeable to conservationists coming from "Old Worlds".

This paper then, briefly summarizes the situation with respect to heritage guidelines currently existing at the provincial level, in conclusion a detailed description is presented on the contents of the "Architectural Conservation Technology" manuals (ACT) developed by Restoration Services Division in the federal Department of Environment - Parks Program.

La Politique du Gouvernement, Appuie-t-elle la Conservation?

by Gouhar Simison

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RÉSUMÉ

Le gouvernement du Canada est membre d'ICOMOS et d'IUCN et appuie activement la Conservation du Patrimoine. Cet article discute les réalisations du programme des parcs au ministère fédéral de l'Environnement et se concentrera plus particulièrement sur les deux politiques nationales développées par le programme: il s'agit de

1. La politique des Parcs sur les Sites Historiques qui date de 1972 et qui fut révisée en 1983.
2. La politique sur les édifices fédéraux à valeur patrimoniale annoncée en 1982, établissant le Bureau d'examen des édifices fédéraux à valeur patrimoniale. Il s'agit d'édifices âgés de plus de 40 ans appartenant au fédéral.

Ces deux politiques comprennent des principes de base et reconnaissent les chartes et les conventions internationales. Deux chartes canadiennes ont été créées depuis 5 ans, de plus, ICOMOS-Canada a établi en 1985 un comité de la Doctrine afin de produire une charte canadienne très détaillée. Les résultats de ce comité sont présentés sous la rubrique "Principes de la pratique" en page trois (3).

Cet article discute des facteurs à la base de cette charte canadienne très particulière et différente des chartes déjà existantes. Ces facteurs sont:

1. L'immigration: elle est respectueuse des expressions culturelles et des contributions des nouveaux arrivants.
2. Le climat: il affecte physiquement la durabilité du matériaux et il peut réduire considérablement l'existence d'un édifice patrimonial.
3. Le paysage naturel et culturel: c'est le Nouveau Monde qui a apporté la notion de conservation du patrimoine naturel.
4. Les indigènes: le patrimoine des cultures Inuit et Amérindiennes ne repose pas sur le matériel mais plutôt sur le Spirituel et les traditions orales.
5. "Do it yourself"/"Faites-le vous même": ce phénomène culturel nord-américain est prédominant et ses incidences sur l'architecture et la conservation architecturale sont très remarquées par les conservateurs originaires du Vieux Monde.

Cet article aussi résumera la situation quant aux procédures existantes au niveau provincial. En conclusion l'article décrira en détail le contenu du Manuel "Technologie de Conservation architecturale (ACT) développé par la division des Services de Restauration au Ministère fédéral de l'Environnement, programme des parcs.