

PROCEEDINGS OF THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RAMMED EARTH
CONSERVATION, RESTAPIA 2012, VALENCIA, SPAIN, 21–23 JUNE 2012

Rammed Earth Conservation

Editors

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Cover photo: Rammed earth in the Bofilla Tower in Bétera (Valencia). Photo by Vegas & Mileto.

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Preface

The rammed earth technique, in all its variants, is widespread all over the world, although in some areas, such as the Iberian Peninsula and northern Africa, it is more commonly found than in others. The enormous prevalence of this building technique constitutes an important richness of varieties both in its application and in the materials used. For some time now, many varieties of this type of construction techniques (earthen, lime-crustrud, brick-reinforced, gypsum-reinforced, lime concrete, etc.) have been studied in depth and yielded important results, but it is interesting to take an overall look at the subject to demonstrate the diversity of this construction technique and how it is adapted to different territories, materials, climate conditions, etc.

Interventions on historic rammed earth buildings have also been carried out in all the geographic areas where these structures are found. This historic heritage has undergone diverse works of reconstruction, conservation, repair, substitution, structural consolidation, etc. The criteria followed have also been numerous: conservation of material authenticity, minimum intervention, compatibility, formal and volumetric retrieval, recuperation of the construction technique, expressive renewal, reversibility, etc. The different criteria applied require different techniques, materials or intervention works. The results of the interventions have also been manifold, regarding both the impact on the building and the technical and material durability.

In view of these issues, in the frame of the Instituto de Restauración del Patrimonio (Heritage Restoration Institute) of the Universitat Politècnica de València it has been organised RESTAPIA 2012—International Conference on Rammed Earth Conservation, which has taken place at that university on 21st, 22nd and 23rd June 2012. It is an international congress about rammed earth architecture and its restoration, and, in a more general way, about the construction techniques and restoration of all earthen structures. The aim of this event is to pool knowledge of building techniques (both rammed earth and earth in general), and to share experiences of restoration of monumental and non-monumental architectonic heritage carried out in the Iberian Peninsula and the rest of the world, so that we can all learn from this experience and draw conclusions and construct perspectives for the future. To this end, four major themes with different subsections were proposed: rammed earth architecture and construction (traditional and modern rammed earth building methods; rammed earth architecture the world over; rammed earth architecture in the Iberian Peninsula); restoration of rammed earth architecture (study cases; intervention criteria; intervention techniques); earthen architecture and construction (traditional and modern variants of building methods; earthen architecture in the world; earthen architecture in the Iberian Peninsula); restoration of earthen architecture (study cases; intervention criteria; intervention techniques).

The scientific committee is made up of the most notable researchers into the subject of earthen architecture, rammed earth architecture and architectural restoration from the Iberian Peninsula and abroad. All the contributions to the congress, both the abstracts and the final texts, have been subjected to a strict peer-review evaluation system by the members of the scientific committee or other external consultants. This volume contains more than one hundred of papers that were deemed worthy of publication, six of which are lectures delivered by guest researchers, prominent experts on the subject: Hubert Guillaud (CRAterre, École Nationale Supérieure d'Architecture de Grenoble, France); Mariana Correia (Escola Superior Gallaecia, Vilanova de Cerveira, Portugal); Frank Matero (University of Pennsylvania, US); Francisco Javier López Martínez (Universidad Católica de Murcia, Spain); José Manuel López Osorio (Universidad de Málaga, Spain) and Javier Gallego Roca (Universidad de Granada, Spain).

The congress is under the aegis of by institutions of great international prestige in this discipline, whose support and confidence we are most grateful for: UNESCO Chair Earthen Architecture, building cultures and sustainable development; CRAterre—ENSAG, Grenoble, France; ICOMOS—ISCEAH, International Scientific Committee for Earthen Architectural Heritage; Red Iberoamericana Proterra.

The organisation, publication and implementation of the congress have been possible thanks to the aids received from the former Ministry of Science and Innovation, currently the Ministry of Economy

and Competitiveness, the Generalitat Valenciana and the Universitat Politècnica de València. We have also received the support of other institutions such as the Escuela Técnica Superior de Arquitectura, the Máster Oficial en Conservación del Patrimonio Arquitectónico y la Cátedra Cerámica de la Universitat Politècnica de València and the Fundación Antonio Font de Bedoya, associations of companies like ARESPA – Asociación Española de Empresas de Restauración del Patrimonio Histórico, and companies such as Tarma – Restauración & Patrimonio, Antique – Conservación y Restauración, E.I. Artola s.l. Constructora and Rubiomorte – Restauración / Construcción.

Finally we would like to express our gratitude to all the authors of the texts who have presented their work for this congress, contributing to its success, for the special involvement of the researchers of the Res-Tapia project (BIA 2010-18921), both in submitting their work to the congress and in collaborating in its diffusion, for the important work of the Scientific Committee during the painstaking review process and the Organising Committee in setting up the congress, the language and style reviewers and all those collaborators who have worked hard to have everything ready in time.

C. Mileto, F. Vegas & V. Cristini
March 2012

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