

Professional Code of Ethics
For Conservators of Antiquities and Works of Art
History – Ethics

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When on 1/12/1998 in Vienna, during the European meeting of Conservators, in the frame of the FULCO-Project, in the Document of Vienna, was mentioned that Greece is the first country in Europe that has acknowledged by law the profession of Conservator, then the Pan-Hellenic Association of Conservators of Antiquities (P.A.C.A.) felt justified and successful.

In 1997 submitted an integrated proposal to the Ministry of Culture regarding the safeguarding-recognition of the Profession of Conservator of Antiquities and Works of Art, and succeeded, in cooperation with other agents, to have it voted by the Parliament, in the Law 2557/97, article 9, in paragraph 6, which describes the conditions and specifications of acquiring the work permit of the professional Conservator of Antiquities and Works of Art.

At a very early stage P.A.C.A. had realized during Conservators' meetings at European and International level, the need of the creation of a Code of Ethics in Greece, that would ensure better communication among the professionals and would be the point of reference for the young Conservators.

In section d,bb of paragraph 6 of the same Law, it is anticipated the setting up of a Code of Ethics for the profession of Conservator. (A steady demand of P.A.C.A.)

The text of the code of ethics was elaborated by the Union in collaboration with the Head of the Department of Conservation of Antiquities and Modern Monuments of the Ministry of Culture, Mr. N. Minos and the colleague Mr. A. Fountoulakis. This text was presented to Ministry of Culture with the approval and agreement of the Greek Sections of ICOM and IIC, and was accepted and approved by the then Minister of Culture Mrs. E. Papazoe, and by her decision it was published in the Government Gazette in March 2000.

For the drawing up of the draft of the Code the basic principles and rules present in the following texts were taken into consideration:

- “Conservator, Professional Definition”, ICOM, 1984
- “Code of Professional Ethics”, ICOM, 1989
- “Conservator of Artistic Works-Code of Ethics”, ECCO, 1993
- “Code of Ethics and Guidelines of Practice”, American Institute of Conservation, 1994
- “Unic code of Ethics and Rules of Practice”, U.K. Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works, 1996
- “Preservation of Cultural Heritage: Towards a European profile of the Conservator-Restorer”, the Document of Pavia, 1997

The Greek Code of Ethics, besides the General Guidelines that rule the profession worldwide (they consist of 5 articles), emphasized the need of creating a Chamber of Conservation of Antiquities and Works of Art (article 4) and also the following:

- a) Responsibilities of Conservators towards the Works (they consist of 13 articles)
- b) Responsibilities of Conservators towards the owner and legal possessor of a Work and towards special Work categories (they consist of 5 articles)
- c) Responsibilities of the professional field (they consist of 9 articles).

In the provisions of Law 3028/2002 “For the protection of the Antiquities and the Cultural Heritage in general”, PACA’s intervention at the Ministry of Culture, achieved to include in the articles of the Law sections important for the professional

field, like paragraph 6 of article 9 of Law 2557/97 for the safeguard of the profession, and of the ethics.

Later on, in 2003, in Thessaloniki during the International Scientific Meeting of Conservators of wall paintings that was organized by the Greek section of ICOMOS, our members presented proposals that included provisions of the above Laws which regard the general principles of the field and ethics. These proposals were seriously taken into consideration when preparing the text of the “Chart of Wall Painting Conservation”.

PACAA, being the trade union organ of the working Conservators of Antiquities at all the departments of the Ministry of Culture and the Museums in Greece, has displayed an important statutory work. Its active members are members of international organizations like the ICOM – ICOMOS – IIC – ICROM etc., that are dynamically working organizing international conferences, and are also actively participating in numerous international activities that regard professional and educational issues.

PACA is fighting not only for the benefit of its members, but mainly for the benefit of the Cultural Heritage of our country, daily meeting the fundamental role of a Conservator, which is the conservation of the Works of Art for the profit of present and coming generations.