

Associazione Geotecnica Italiana
AGI

THE CONTRIBUTION
OF GEOTECHNICAL ENGINEERING
TO THE PRESERVATION OF ITALIAN
HISTORIC SITES

INTRODUCTORY VOLUME

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<i>Foreword</i>	10
<i>Introduction</i>	13
Contribution to a systematic approach	15
<i>Monuments of the past</i>	17
<i>Safeguarding demand</i>	17
<i>Ground monument system</i>	18
<i>Actions</i>	19
<i>Problem</i>	21
<i>Gaps</i>	21
<i>Observational approach</i>	22
<i>Original design</i>	23
<i>Transformations</i>	25
<i>Present state</i>	26
<i>Mechanical models</i>	27
<i>Mechanical response</i>	29
<i>Design measures</i>	31
<i>Experiments and monitoring</i>	32
<i>Administration</i>	33
<i>Future</i>	34
Humanities and Geotechnics	37
<i>The grotto: Symbolic Imagery</i>	40
<i>The Iconography of the Rock: a brief excursus</i>	45
The Italian Case	51
<i>General Features</i>	53
<i>Case Histories</i>	59
Selected Italian Bibliography	137
List of the cases submitted	147

CASE HISTORIES

AGRIGENTO, Temples
AQUILEIA, Bell Tower
CACCAMO, Castle
CETARA, Tower
CIVITA DI BAGNOREGIO, Historical Town
FIORENZUOLA DI FOCARA, Castle
FRASCATI, Historical Town
LAURENZANA, Castle
MARETTIMO, Minor Remains
MATERA, Hypogea
MATERA, Tramontano Castle
MILANO, Cathedral
NAPOLI, Dell'Ovo Castle
ORVIETO, Historical Town
PAVIA, Towers
PIENZA, Cathedral
PIOVÀ MASSAIA, Church
PISA, Bell Tower
RAVENNA, San Vitale Basilica
ROMA, Cestia Pyramid
ROMA, Domus Tiberii
ROMA, Vigna Barberini
SAN LEO, Slope
SELINUNTE, Archaeological Site
SIRACUSA, Quarries
VENEZIA, Historical Town
VENEZIA, San Marco Bell Tower
VOLTERRA, Slope

Foreword

The Italian Geotechnical Society (AGI) and its members have always favoured the initiatives promoted by the International Society of Soil Mechanics and Foundation Engineering (ISSMFE) and have contributed with enthusiasm to the activity of its Technical Committees.

In particular, when the creation of a Technical Committee on Preservation of Historic Sites, (TC 19) was proposed in 1981, the interest of AGI was unusually suscitated, in view of Italy's enormous historical patrimony and the ever-increasing need to restore and protect it. The purposes of TC 19 can be summarized as follows: investigate geotechnical factors affecting historic sites, monuments and cities; report specific geotechnical techniques adopted to preserve ancient constructions; search for geotechnical criteria and methods employed by our ancestors.

In fact, AGI had effectively contributed to the development of the field by promoting in Italy a number of initiatives, culminating in the October 1980 Fourteenth National Congress of Geotechnics held in Florence, dedicated to *'the role of Geotechnics in the restoration of historic city centres, monumental complexes and single monuments'*, with significant contributions from the fields of Geotechnical and Structural Engineering, Engineering Geology, History of Architecture and Archaeology.

A few years later, a broad review on the subject edited by prof. Arrigo Croce was included in the AGI commemorative volume, published on the occasion of the ISSMFE Golden Jubilee (1985), and distributed among the Members Societies.

The TC 19 started its activity during the quadriennium 1981-1985, under the chairmanship of prof. Jean Kerisel, with the sponsorship of the French National Society and with active participation of Prof. Arrigo Croce as ISSMFE vice-president for Europe. In those years, attention was focused on the Mediterranean Countries, since the territory which surrounds the Mediterranean Sea presented favorable conditions for beginning the Committee's program. In 1984 a first international meeting was organized in Pompei on the occasion of the International Symposium held at the University of Naples, on Humanities and Physical Sciences.

During the quadriennium 1985-1989 both the French and the Italian National Societies kept the sponsorship of the Committee, while prof. Croce was appointed Chairman and Dott. Isnard, Secretary.

The Committee's work was then developed in Europe, North Africa, Central and South America, South-East Asia. A particular co-operation was established with the