

## THE HERITAGE CONSIDERATION OF THE CHESTE WORKERS UNIVERSITY: HISTORICAL REINTERPRETATION

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### ABSTRACT

This communication proposal is part of the Research Project "Conservation Management Plan: Cheste Worker University Auditorium-Paraninfo", of the Universitat Politècnica de València, directed by Professor Carmen Jordá, awarded and funded by the Getty Foundation of Los Angeles in its international programme "Keeping It Modern" Grant.

The subject of the project is framed within the field of the conservation of Modern Movement architecture as heritage and refers to the Universidad Laboral de Cheste, a 1967 project by the architect Fernando Moreno Barberá. It was built in 1969 as part of the Mutualidades Laborales plan, whose official propaganda boasted of the magnitude of the work in Cheste and its rapid execution, in a very short period of little more than a year.

The project sets out the archival and historical research carried out in order to achieve the heritage status of the complex. This paper will detail the main results obtained during the documentary research process. In addition, the comparison between the original project, the previous project, other contemporary works by the same author and the current state has been able to narrate the evolution of the project and the work, as well as highlighting the changes and transformations made over the years.

It should be noted that the research includes in the analysis documentation compiled through oral and visual testimonies that allow us to understand the value of the monument in its entirety.

### KEYWORDS

Modern Heritage; modern movement architecture; Fernando Moreno Barberá; Cheste Workers University.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

This communication proposal is part of the Research Project "Conservation Management Plan: Cheste Worker University Auditorium-Paraninfo", of the Universitat Politècnica de València, directed by Full Professor Carmen Jordá, awarded and funded by the Getty Foundation of Los Angeles in its international programme "Keeping It Modern" Grant.

The object of the project refers to the field of the conservation of Modern Movement architecture as heritage and refers to the Cheste Labour University, tackling the analysis of the Paraninfo, its most iconic building, as a model that can serve as a paradigm in the definition of a Master Plan that guarantees the rehabilitation and conservation of the entire complex, assuming parameters of heritage

consideration. The need is therefore defined to develop a specific Master Plan that recovers and preserves the original architectural values, systematically implementing the elimination of inadequate actions and inappropriate elements, establishing appropriate intervention criteria under technical premises and qualifying future actions.

The Cheste Labour University, designed by Moreno Barberá in 1967, was designed for a population of 5,000 people, larger than 88% of Spanish municipalities at the time. It was planned on a hill 23 kilometres from the city of Valencia, and was built in 1969 as part of the Mutualidades Laborales plan, whose official propaganda boasted of the magnitude of the work and its rapid execution, in a very short period of little more than a year. The different parts, grouped by function, are staggered on the slope, adapting to the topographical irregularities. The extensive complex appears as a synthesis of the experiences of modernity: the vibrant rhythm of Corbusier's concrete parasols, the Miesian delicacy of the buildings, the sculptural canopies - with a clear Latin American accent - and the Mediterranean and Californian appropriation of the exteriors.

This text sets out the archival and historical research carried out in order to achieve heritage status for the complex. This paper will detail the main results obtained during the documentary research process. In addition, the comparison between the original project, the previous project, other contemporary works by the same author and the current state has been able to narrate the evolution of the project and the work, as well as to highlight the changes and transformations carried out over the years.

## 2. ARCHIVAL RESEARCH

The main source of information during the documentation process of the project has been Fernando Moreno Barberá's personal archive, to which Professor Carmen Jordá Such had access several decades ago,

provided first-hand by the author himself, who even donated the original planimetry of the project for the Universidad Laboral de Cheste. The cordial and fruitful personal relationship with Moreno Barberá also resulted in a series of lectures and master classes that managed to capture his personal view of architecture and his reflections on his work, which are reflected in the document.

After the architect's death, his archival legacy was deposited at the Colegio Territorial de Arquitectos de Valencia, where it has been possible to empty and classify it, obtaining reproductions of all the planimetry of the Paraninfo and contrasting the rest of the documents conserved. Among the most significant information, the documents corresponding to the Basic Project phase are conserved, including the Planimetry and Project Report, as well as Measurements and Budget. Likewise, some plans of the Execution Project are also conserved, although in partial form and not as a complete single file. Other documents relating to the Works Management are also catalogued, such as various Modified Budgets, which include the justification of cost overruns derived from the readaptation of the project to its definitive location; or Minutes of reception of buildings. Of great value are the photographs preserved, both of the execution process and of the finished work, most of which have already been widely disseminated. Finally, this technical information is complemented by a large amount of correspondence -mainly institutional-, advertising and press clippings -true testimonies of the spirit of an era-, as well as manuscripts written by the architect for the preparation of the project's publications.

Despite this significant amount of information, it was considered relevant for the purpose of the research to locate the complete Execution Project of the Cheste Labour University which, according to the bibliography consulted, would have more than 700 plans. Although the material elaborated for the initial phases of the project reaches

a level of detail that allows its execution with sufficient solvency, the development of the Execution Project should include plans of installations, water evacuation and, above all, of structural definition, with specification of the dimensioning of the reinforcement. Equally important would be the annex with the calculation report, especially in the case of the Paraninfo, since the large fan-shaped beams were made of post-tensioned concrete and the stresses at which the reinforcement elements were requested are not known.

The architect did not keep in his personal archives the complete construction design, perhaps as a consequence of its voluminous size. In addition, it is very likely that most of the specific plans for the Construction Project were drawn up during the works with the support of technicians from the construction company that was awarded the contract: Agromán S.A., one of the main construction companies in Spain at the time. This hypothesis is based on the specific circumstances of the execution of the works, readapting the original project to a new location in a very short space of time, and is supported both by the numerous detailed plans made up of freehand sketches made on site - preserved in the archives - and by statements made by Moreno Barberá himself who, in personal correspondence, referred questions relating to the execution of the works to the engineers Mr Enrique Cebrián (Site Manager) and Mr José Díaz Palos (Works Coordinator). The information in the Specifications was complemented by a series of freehand construction details - also preserved in the Pando Archive of the Instituto de Patrimonio Cultural de España, together with a magnificent collection of photographs - prepared as additional documentation for the tender for the award of the works. Going to the construction company's archives was the first step in trying to locate the complete construction project, as well as the documents pertaining to the works management. However, Agromán was in a situation of

economic ruin in the 1990s, when it was taken over and refloated by Ferrovial, after the sale of a large part of its assets and the dismissal of a third of its workforce. Attempts have been made to contact Ferrovial, without success, although it is unlikely that the current company will retain the 1969 works project carried out by the absorbed construction company.

At the same time, an attempt has been made to locate the administrative file of the Cheste Labour University project. This would contain all its processing, with notifications, repairs, modifications, etc., as well as another copy of the Basic Project and, perhaps, of the Execution Project. The main problem lies in the fact that the Labour Universities ceased to exist as an institution in the 1980s, so it is not possible to contact directly with any responsible administration, having to locate the archive where this information would have been deposited.

First of all, the Arxiu Històric de la Comunitat Valenciana was approached, since the Cheste complex is currently managed by the regional administration, which is responsible for education. The archivist, Mr. Javier Sánchez Portas, provided the little information available, consisting of three dossiers of authorisation for the use of explosives during the work to prepare the land, and a series of photographs relating to the execution of the closure of the atrium of the Paraninfo in the 1990s.

It was also consulted the Archivo General de la Administración, where the Head of the Departamento de Referencias, Ms. Evelia Vega, confirmed that they did not have funds on Cheste, suggesting that we go to the archive of the Ministry of Education. There is generic material on the Workers Universities, specifically some photographs in the Delegación Nacional de Prensa, Propaganda y Radio del Movimiento, but this information is outside the scope of this research.

In the Archivo Central de la Secretaría de Estado de Educación, there are a few collections relating directly or indirectly to

the Workers Universities, but these mainly deal with economic and teaching staff management issues, and nothing related to the architectural projects of the educational centres built.

The archives of the Ministry of Labour were also consulted, as the Workers Universities initially came under the Ministry of Labour and not Education. In its archives there are references to the Labour Universities in the collection of the Dirección General de Promoción Social, which for a time was responsible for the Delegación de Universidades Laborales, but these references do not include architectural projects. The Head of Documentación Administrativa, Mr. Luis Casado de Otaola, directed the search towards the Delegación de Universidades Laborales which, although linked to the Dirección General de Promoción Social, had among its functions the "direction and management of the Workers Universities and other teaching centres dependent on the Ministry of Labour", with its own headquarters outside the Servicios Centrales del Departamento building in the Nuevos Ministerios. During the period in which it remained attached to the Ministry of Labour, the Labour Universities Delegation did transfer documentation to the Central Archive of the Ministry of Labour. However, in 1975, the Delegación de Universidades Laborales was integrated into the newly created Dirección General de Servicios Sociales, and in 1977 it became part of the new Ministerio de Sanidad y Seguridad Social (1977-1981). On this occasion, according to two letters dated February-March 1979, the following actions were carried out with the agreement of the Labour Universities Service and the General Archive of the Ministry of Labour:

- Elimination of 1306 numbered files of the Servicio de Universidades Laborales: 400-583, 585-941, 943-946, 949-1031, 1038-1090, 1105-1424, 1435-1521, 1524-1534, 1546-1692, 1726-1748 and 1759-1789 (12/02/1979).

- Transfer of the remaining 84 files selected by the Servicio de Universidades Laborales to its facilities in the Ministerio de Sanidad y Seguridad Social (register of departure no. 23 of 9/03/1979, numbered files 584, 942, 947-948, 1032-1037, 1091-1104, 1425-1434, 1522-1523, 1535-1545, 1693-1725, 1749-1758).

In 1978, the Workers University Centres came under the exclusive control of the Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia through an autonomous body called the Instituto de Enseñanzas Integradas. Thus, when the responsibilities for Social Security returned to the Ministry of Labour, those relating to the Workers Universities never returned, and therefore neither did the documentation. In 1980, the Instituto de Enseñanzas Integradas was abolished and the assets and resources of the Workers Universities passed to the State Administration through the Dirección General de Enseñanzas Medias. In 1982, all the staff working at the Workers Universities were integrated into the D.G. for the purposes of new postings, and the following year their facilities were handed over to the Autonomous Regional Administrations at the same time as educational powers were transferred.

This being the situation, it can be deduced that the file on the Cheste Workers University Project, if preserved, should be among the 84 boxes of documentation that were transferred to the facilities of the Ministerio de Sanidad y Seguridad Social. The archives of the current Ministerio de Sanidad were checked, where the archivist, Mr. Ignacio Anchuela Galán, confirmed that this archive was created at a later date and, therefore, nothing relating to the Workers Universities was preserved in its archives. The archives of the Ministerio de Fomento were also consulted, where the Head of Section, Aurelia Álvarez Cubero, indicated that they do not hold any information relating to the subject of this research.

The transfer of powers from the central state to the autonomous regions was accompanied,

in certain cases, by the transfer of the corresponding archival material. In the case of the Comunitat Valenciana, some of this material was transferred to the Arxiu del Regne de València. However, after consultation, the person in charge, Ms. Eva Soler, indicated that there is no file related to the Universidad Laboral de Cheste in their archives either. The same result was obtained in consultations with the Archive of the Caja de Ahorros de Valencia -the entity that financed the execution of the works-, the Arxiu General i Fotogràfic de la Diputació de València -neither in the Sección de Proyectos Técnicos de Patrimonio de la Diputación de Valencia-, or the Arxiu Històric de l'Ajuntament de València -the administration that owned the land ceded for the original site of the project-.

Some tangential information on the project has been obtained by consulting projects of contemporary educational facilities designed and built in Valencia by Moreno Barberá, all of which are kept in the Archivo de la Universidad de València. Information on the execution projects and construction management of buildings such as the Faculty of Law (1956-59), the School of Agricultural Engineering (1958-67) and the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters (1960-70) has provided data on suppliers and industrialists who regularly collaborated in the works of Fernando Moreno Barberá. Similarly, information of little relevance has also been obtained in the review of the Archivo Municipal de Cheste, limited to an activity licence to establish three LPG tanks in the Workers University of Cheste, dated 14 March 1969. According to the head of the municipal archives, Mr. Gabriel Herráiz, an application for a licence to sell churros during the course of the construction of the Universidad Laboral, dated 31 October 1968, was also found.

After this documentary search - largely unsuccessful-, it can be considered that all the information currently conserved in archival collections relating to the project to build the Cheste Labour University has been located and classified.

### 3. HISTORICAL APPROACH

#### 3.1. The cosmopolitan background of Fernando Moreno Barberá

The architect Fernando Moreno Barberá (Ceuta 1913-Madrid 1998) appears as a point of reference in Spanish modernity. The assimilation of the architectural culture coming from Le Corbusier unfolds as a splendid reference, manifesting itself in the vigorous plasticity entrusted to the expressive possibilities of reinforced concrete and in the powerful identity of an image associated with different systems of protection against solar incidence.

The open-plan layout of numerous buildings, the segregation of pedestrian traffic away from road traffic, and the coexistence of architecture with nature, with buildings scattered among the vegetation, are also immediately recognisable. His projects also show a conscious interest in bringing together architecture and the arts, with Javier Clavo being a regular collaborator: a recurring theme for modernity. Nor should we forget the media impact of the projects in Brazil, Mexico and Venezuela, where there were splendid examples of artists' participation in architectural works.

#### 3.2. Workers Universities

The Francoist phenomenon of the Workers Universities was inspired by a Belgian model, that of the Charleroi Labour University, devised by the philanthropist Paul Pastur for the technical training of miners and workers in the province of Henao-Haimut and inaugurated in 1911. (Jordá Such, 2005).

The educational establishments built were intended for the vocational, technical and human training of workers. To this end, active, constructive and functional teaching methods had to be introduced which would individualise theoretical and practical activities for the pupils. Workshops and laboratories were therefore needed, in order to develop,

in addition to cultural training, the necessary preparation for a trade.

Education was considered to be the activity that offered the greatest expectations for social improvement and progress, so the State - through the Mutual Labour Mutual Societies - covered the cost of the scholarship students with their corresponding board and lodging in the case of boarders, as well as the necessary material. The pupil's family was free of any direct or indirect burden that might arise from schooling.

The first labour university to come into operation was the one in Gijón (Luis Moya Blanco, 1946-1957), which was followed by another twenty centres built up to 1978 throughout the country. This educational project, which began under a Falangist philosophy, evolved over time, so that its ideology was diluted throughout the developmental stage of Franco's regime, until it became a pragmatic project with a rationalised training plan in which each centre had total autonomy.

### 3.3. Cheste Workers University

The Cheste Workers University was conceived as a "Workers Universities Orientation Centre", constituting an authentic school city with a capacity for five thousand inhabitants, more than double that of larger centres such as Seville or Gijón.

This large teaching complex came to signify the obligatory gateway to the teaching system of the labour universities, channelling all new students between the ages of eleven and fourteen, so that they could join one of the other centres, homogenising the educational level of students from all over Spain.

### 3.4. Project philosophy

Consequently, the programme required the provision of accommodation, care, teaching and recreational facilities for 4,800 pupils, aged between 12 and 14. As Moreno Barberá himself expressed, the life of this large

number of people had to be organised in such a way that the activities were divided into independent units of a maximum size of 200 people. (Moreno Barberá, 1969).

The architectural ensemble tries to reconcile, through the urban layout of the different parts, all the facets of life to be housed, introducing considerations of a sociological and psychological nature. Three areas of social relations are distinguished: a disciplined life, such as that of the schools; another ordered by the needs of the community, but in which the individual is not subjected to mental impositions, and a final one of free time or expansion, which must be developed in large, non-formalist spaces that are part of the landscape.

### 3.5. A project for El Saler

The original project to build a Workers University in Valencia was to be located on land in El Saler, on a plot of 243,700 m<sup>2</sup> owned by Valencia City Council. In May 1967, a group of teachers and psychologists drew up an outline of needs regarding the facilities, premises and services required for a centre of this type, which would serve as the basis for the preliminary architectural project, already commissioned to Fernando Moreno Barberá at that time.

The organisation of the initial proposal, adapted to a practically flat terrain, was linear and a zoning criterion was applied according to the different functions of the educational centre, following a longitudinal axis from north to south.

Perpendicular to the previous longitudinal axis, a transversal axis appeared where "eternal values and temporal power" were "represented" - according to the project report - through the oratory at one end and the management office at the other. Based on this scheme, the different buildings began to be designed in detail.

However, the site was not to the architect's liking. From the outset, Moreno Barberá warned that there was not enough space to carry out the ambitious programme he had

been commissioned to design. He stated that, if rational criteria of modern architecture were taken into account, the group of buildings would be too concentrated, even for an urban site.

On the other hand, the flat terrain, lacking perspectives, forced a solution where some buildings hid the views of others. In addition, the location next to the coastal lagoon of La Albufera caused other health problems, as the site is damp and has a large number of mosquitoes.

From a technical point of view, moreover, the poor quality of the subsoil meant that a costly pile foundation had to be built, as well as an extraordinary amount of earth to drain the site. Faced with so many problems, the Ministry of Labour decided to look for a new location for the future school. However, fearing that the educational complex would end up being moved to another province, in November 1967, the València City Council called a tender for the acquisition of new land, and the Cheste City Council's proposal was the winner.

### 3.6. Readaptation of the project to the new location.

With hardly any time to develop a new project, work had to be done on adapting the old one. Of course, the biggest advantage was the increase in the surface area of the site from 24 to 156 hectares and from 5.10 m<sup>2</sup> per pupil to a standard of 32 m<sup>2</sup>. Its height above sea level from 160 to 232 metres was presented as a health advantage compared to the situation at La Albufera. In addition, the site had steep slopes and promontories over most of its length, so that there were now wide views of the surrounding landscape in all directions.

Organisational improvements were to be tackled quickly, although the original El Saler project was considered functionally efficient. The main change affected the classroom and workshop buildings, which were split up and separated. In the rest of the buildings, the initial project remained practically unchanged.

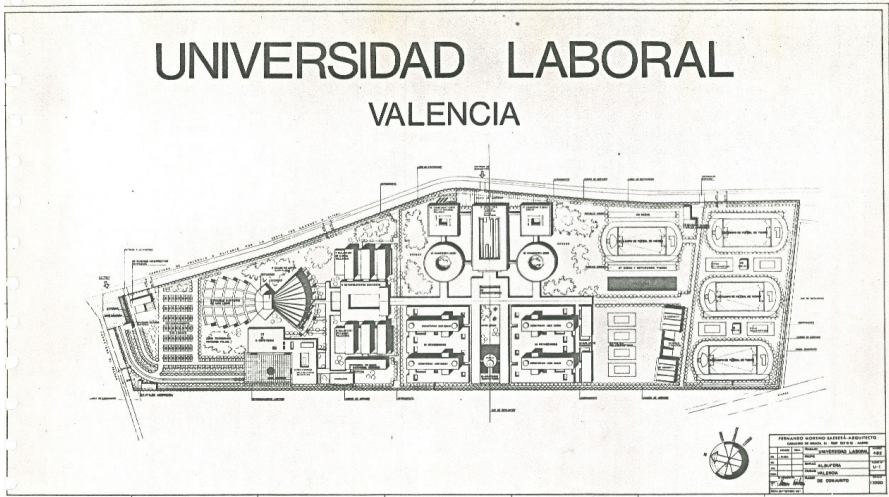


Figure 1. Valencia Workers University, Original Project for El Saler, Site Plan. Archivo Histórico del Colegio de Arquitectos de Valencia: (Fernando Moreno Barberá, 1967)

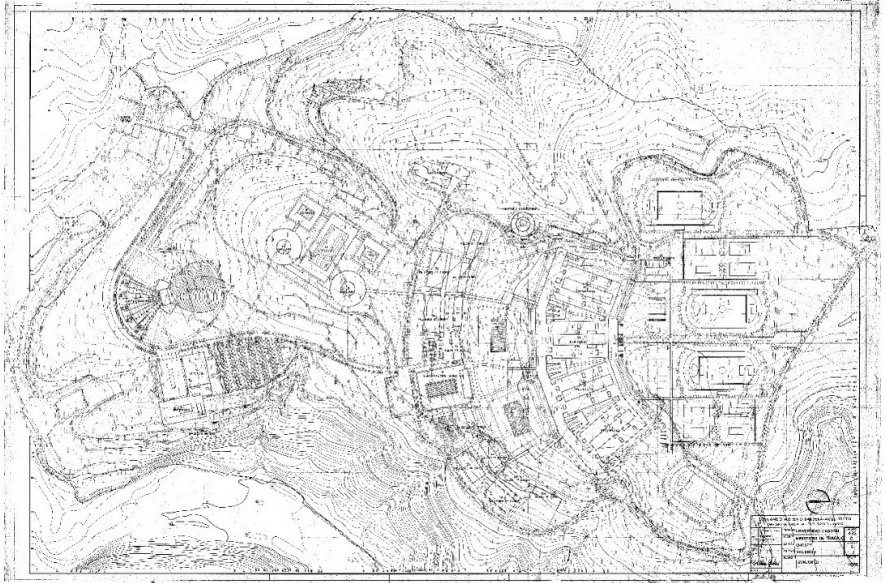


Figure 2. Cheste Workers University, Site Plan. Archivo Histórico del Colegio de Arquitectos de Valencia: (Fernando Moreno Barberá. 1968)

The plans for the modifications had to be drawn up at the same time as the work was being executed. Many of them consisted of hand sketches by Moreno Barberá himself, as urgency prevented him from instructing a draughtsman to redraw them.

### 3.7. Commissioning of the Works

On 16 February 1968, the Cheste project was awarded by auction to Agromán Empresa Constructora S.A., with a deadline for completion set for 15 December of the same year. The valuation was based on the budget of the project planned for El Saler, of which most of the projected buildings were to be preserved. The plot had grown from 243,700 to 1,485,828 square metres, with a completely different topographical configuration, which meant that a series of budget items not foreseen for a

flat terrain would have to be introduced, such as cuttings, retaining walls and the supply of the different installations, which still had to be studied by the architect.

The geotechnical survey report turned out to be an unpleasant surprise and a reason for an increase in the budget, as it revealed that the site, consisting of rocky ground, was perforated in all directions by galleries and caves that were difficult to locate. In addition, the terrain was made up of layers of stone of varying thickness, which could lead to differential settlement of the buildings. It was therefore decided to increase the size of the foundations planned for almost all the buildings.

Another important increase in the initial budget was the cost of the general urbanisation, both because of the need for additional facilities not foreseen in El Saler, and because of the greater extension of the Cheste site.



Furthermore, it should not be forgotten that a bridge of considerable size had to be built over the ravine to access the educational complex. The magnitude and complexity of the work are aspects that are constantly highlighted and which, of course, were exploited by the propaganda of the time, which referred to the Universidad Laboral de Cheste as the largest educational complex in the country and a record building in Spain, even calling it the "Valencian Escorial". The figures offered were overwhelming, which truly corresponded to a reality that involved an unprecedented mobilisation of men, machinery and materials. Suffice it to say that the total built

surface area represented some 170,000 m<sup>2</sup>, the number of workers amounted to 4,000 men, two concreting plants were installed on the site and 27 tower cranes worked simultaneously.

### 3.8. Paradigm of modernity

Seen as a whole, one observes, above all, a criterion of superior order, now not marked by the presence of strict axes and softened by topographical irregularities. The different parts of the building are grouped according to functions and take advantage of the small natural promontories.



*Figure 3. Cheste Workers University. Teaching blocks and workshops general view from the Services building. Fernando Moreno Barberá, 1968. Instituto del Patrimonio Cultural de España, Archivo Pando: (Juan Miguel Pando Barrero, 7th July 1969)*

But a condition that could not be missing in any self-respecting modern experience, having taken on board the lessons of the Athens Charter, would consist of an organisation of traffic based on the radical segregation of road and pedestrian circulations, so that the former follow the contour lines around the perimeter of the entire site. The pedestrian circulations are particularly well cared for and are transformed into architectural elements, or directly architecture itself, with their great presence in the Cheste educational complex. Again, one must think of Latin American experiences such as Oscar Niemeyer's long, undulating canopy in the Conjunto Ibirapuera (1951) in São Paulo, or even his earlier canopy in the Casino de Pampulha (1942) and, above all, Villanueva's sculptural covered walkways (1952-1953) in the Ciudad Universitaria in Caracas. But Moreno Barberá, more of a

builder than an artist, felt at ease working with simple rectilinear lines.

It is also worth commenting in this section on the delicate way in which the architect gave his buildings to the ground. It would seem that they are perched rather than cemented, with cantilevered sanitary wrought ironwork accessed by misionar staircases without risers.

The design ideas in the treatment of the landscape also show the architect's mastery of his craft. Taking advantage of the natural topography not only greatly reduced the cost of earthworks, but also integrated the new buildings into their natural setting as if they had been born there with the trees. Moreover, the coherent decision to introduce only native vegetation would ensure easy conservation and its subsequent growth would harmonise the built environment.



Figure 4. Cheste Workers University, Pergola and garden of the Cafeteria terrace. (Fernando Usó, 2021)

#### 4. CHANGES AND TRANSFORMATIONS

The change of political regime meant the transformation of the educational model and the immense Cheste complex was, with the consolidation of democracy, left empty of function.

Over the last decades, local, regional and state institutions have tried to fill the Cheste complex with content. In 1985, the Centro de Enseñanzas Integradas de Cheste was regulated, transforming it into an Educational Complex. In June 2012, the Directorate General of Sports of the Higher Sports Council classified the Cheste Educational Centre as a Sports Technification Centre of Cheste. Various educational and training uses have been incorporated, being managed by two departments: the Regional Ministry of Education, Research, Culture and Sport and the Regional Ministry of the Presidency of the Generalitat, through the Security and Emergency Response Agency. At the educational level, it is a public centre where medium and higher level training courses are offered, such as the School of Hotel Management, Aeronautics Degree, Agricultural Vocational Training, or sports, with the Sports Specialisation Plans (P.E.D.) that are taught in the IES nº1, as well as the Sports Technification Centre. The readaptation of the buildings to the new uses and the usual maintenance work - or lack thereof - without including considerations of a heritage nature, have over the years generated improper actions that detract from the original architectural image and jeopardise the aesthetic and material value of the work. In this sense, the modification of openings, the clogging of porticoed ground floors and the replacement of the original wooden joinery with aluminium or plastic joinery have been detected. Special mention should be made of the intervention carried out in the 1990s, consisting of a perimeter enclosure of the open atrium of the auditorium to adapt it to the standards of theatre premises. This

unfortunate action, which, moreover, has not solved any problems, needs to be reversed as soon as possible in order to restore the complex's main image of recognition.

Despite the efforts made by the institutions to make use of the colossal educational complex of Cheste, its scale and its conception of a single function mean that the diversification of uses that it currently houses does not manage to take advantage of the large public facilities, such as the Paraninfo or the Services Building, which have been left underused or abandoned.

#### 5. APPLICATION FOR THE INITIATION OF THE PROCEDURE FOR BIC DECLARATION

The work of historical and documentary review, as well as the analysis of the current state, have served as a theoretical framework and documentary support for the preparation of the preliminary report linked to the application for the declaration of the Universidad Laboral de Cheste as an Asset of Cultural Interest. Upon receipt of this letter, signed by the Rector of the Polytechnic University of Valencia, the administrative procedure began. The Dirección General of the Conselleria de Cultura will request reports from two external advisory bodies, probably the Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Carlos and the Consell Valencià de Cultura, which must deliberate on the proposal and issue their opinion in a collegiate manner. On the basis of these reports and the observations of the Dirección General's own technicians, the latter will take a decision that will finally be ratified by the signature of the Directora General de Patrimonio.

The monumental declaration of the Cheste Labour University complex would guarantee its protection by preventing demolitions, improper construction in the vicinity and, above all, by controlling minor maintenance work which, consciously or unconsciously, can seriously alter the image of the buildings.

From the point of view of the administration, there are two possible arguments for refusing the declaration. The first would be related to the valuation of modern architecture as a heritage site, a subject on which, however, there is a growing awareness. In this sense, the application report submitted refers to the guidelines of ICOMOS and UNESCO regarding the conservation of 20th century heritage, and the special interest shown in the Universidad Laboral in general and its Paraninfo in particular by important foreign institutions, such as International Do.Co.Mo.Mo and the Getty Foundation.

The second argument that could generate a negative response is the operational complexity of the General Directorate, through its Territorial Services, to manage an architectural, archaeological and ethnological heritage of great wealth. The protection of the Cheste complex, given its size and vitality of use, would multiply the bureaucracy of this administration when it comes to studying and resolving each of the small or large repairs or remodelling carried out on it. That is why, with very good judgement, José Ignacio Casar, the Administration's representative on the team, has suggested that the application for the declaration of the whole of the Universidad Laboral as an Asset of Cultural Interest should not be made under the category of Monument, but as a Historic Site. A Historic Site is defined as "the grouping of immovable assets, continuous or dispersed, clearly delimitable and with its own cultural entity and independent of the value of the singular elements that make it up". The main difference, in terms of management, is that the supervision and guardianship of the group can be delegated to the Town Council, provided that a Master Plan is drawn up which clearly guides or establishes the general criteria for action. We do not rule out proposing that the Paraninfo building in particular, as the most emblematic of the whole educational complex, could be declared an Asset of Cultural Interest under the category of Monument, under the

direct supervision of the General Directorate of Heritage. It would be the first example of Modern Movement architecture to obtain this distinction in the Comunitat Valenciana.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

With all the previously compiled information, a synthesis of that data is undertaken. The results of the various studies and investigations have been coordinated in one single document set up so that the building can be considered from the greatest number of viewpoints possible.

This will allow interventions to be made on the building in a rational and well-informed way. In short, the aim here is to establish the basic objectives that any intervention must follow. Lastly, proposals will be made, based on the information gathered and the data synthesis undertaken. Intervention proposals are understood not as single solutions, but as the programmatic and management basis that later interventions should reflect.

The Conservation Plan for the Paraninfo of the Cheste Worker University will include a Management Plan for the building that can serve as a model for the entire complex. This plan, just like the usage proposal, will be drawn up during the Conservation plan process, supported by the Participative Process that forms part of the Conservation Master Plan's Methodology.

Thus, a participative management proposal will be designed suited to the management model that the agents involved agree upon as being the most appropriate. One outcome of that plan will be an organizational chart headed by the Generalitat Valenciana (Valencia Regional Government, the owner of the property). Also forming part of that chart will be the Ayuntamiento de Cheste (Cheste Town Council), the surrounding towns and public agents, and private and public individuals interested in the conservation, management and exploitation of the center.

Commitments and responsibilities in drawing up the Plan will have to be agreed upon for the correct management, conservation, and use of the center, and management bodies will, when necessary, have to be created with their defined roles.

There is a total conviction that the setting up of our Conservation Management Plan will stimulate the appearance of other initiatives for future actions aimed at conserving other buildings belonging to the Cheste Worker University.

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