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The series aims to gather contributions on issues related to the theory, history, and practice of restoration, through the perspective of its key figures and the most significant interventions. From the earliest reflections in classical times, to the comprehensiveness of Renaissance treatises and the "modernly conceived" restoration, up to contemporary discussions on what constitutes heritage today and the processes of heritage-making. A collection of writings designed to provide scholars with useful tools to address the delicate and controversial issue of cultural heritage preservation.

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Little history of restoration

Breve storia del restauro

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Author's Note

The decision to translate the Italian term *restauro* as "restoration" in the title, with explicit reference to John Ruskin's words, derives from the core meaning of this volume's content. The work analyzes, though in a condensed manner, the evolution of the concept by referencing the terminology historically employed since its initial formulations.

> «Neither by the public, nor by those who have the care of public monuments, is the true meaning of the word restoration understood»
>
> J. Ruskin, *Chapter VI. The lamp of memory,* in Id., *Seven lamps of architecture,* London 1849

Nota dell'autore

La scelta di utilizzare nel titolo la traduzione del termine italiano "restauro" con l'inglese *restoration*, facendo un esplicito riferimento alle parole di John Ruskin, nasce soprattutto dal contenuto di questo volume, che ne analizza, seppur in modo sintetico, l'evoluzione riferendosi al termine storicamente utilizzato fin dalle prime formulazioni.

«Né il pubblico, né coloro cui è affidata la cura dei monumenti pubblici comprendono il vero significato della parola restauro»

J. Ruskin, *Capitolo VI. La lampada della memoria,* in Id., *Le sette lampade dell'architettura,* Londra 1849

Part one

Restoration before restoration

«Hoc unum scio: omnia mortalium opera mortalitate damnata sunt, inter peritura vivimus»

L.A. Seneca, *Epistulae morales ad Lucilium*,
Liber XIV, Epistula XCI, M. Mocci (ed.), Rome 1970

1.
«Restauration: le mot et la chose sont modernes» *

Il Vocabolario degli Accademici della Crusca [*The Dictionary of the Academy of the Crusca*] (1612), the *Vocabolario toscano dell'arte del Disegno* [*Tuscan Dictionary of the Art of Drawing*] (1681), and the *Dizionario Storico dell'architettura* [*Historical Dictionary of Architecture*] by Quatremère de Quincy (1832) all agree on the same definition of restoration: «to remake the ruined parts of something, as well as those that are missing due to age or accidents». Until E. E. Viollet-le-Duc's Dictionnaire (*Dictionnaire raisonné de l'architecture francaise du XI au XVI siècle* [*Annotated Dictionary of French Architecture from the 11th to the 16th Centuries*], 10 vols., Paris, 1854-1868) the verb "restore" indicated an operation of rebuilding and substituting the spoiled and deteriorated parts of a work. In its Latin etymology, the group of words restauratio restauro restaurator takes on meanings that include "renew" and "re-establish a prior state".

Within the great variety of these thematic in the classical period related to "restoration before restoration", which boast a vast bibliography (among the most recent contributions, see especially Romeo 2010), we have limited ourselves in the preceding chapters to giving the material an organization as clear as possible, in order to provide a guide for future research. Every theoretical contribution has therefore been reassumed in contents considered essential within the thematic framework, through sections accompanied by notes (in brackets) referring to books and essays chosen to orient possible further study, and also by a general selected bibliography of publications from recent decades.

In his *Dictionnaire*, Viollet-le-Duc affirms that «the Romans rebuilt, they did not restore, and the proof of this is that in Latin

* Restoration: both the word and the thing are modern (E.E. Viollet-le-Duc)

there is no word that corresponds to our word restoration, with the meaning given in our time. Instaurare, reficere, renovare do not mean restore but rather revive, make anew» (Romeo 2010). Since Roman times, various kinds of interventions have been carried out that can also be found in modern restoration: substitution, consolidation, rebuilding. Vitruvius' *De architectura* [*On Architecture*], Pliny's *Naturalis Historia* [*Natural History*] and Pausanias' *Periegesis Hellado* [*Description of Greece*] all show that maintaining works over time was a continual preoccupation. In these texts we can find some indications of kind of measures taken for maintenance, such as the use of protective varnishes and waxes for statues with decorated surfaces. In general, "restorations" were done by artists, because there was no distinction between the procedure of creating a new work and the "restoration" of a work from the past. The aim was to cancel damage produced by the passage of time or by men, in order to restore the integrity of the artwork.

In ancient Rome along with numerous reconstructions of monuments, there were also interventions that came closer to the idea of conservation. Many emperors encouraged the tutelage of the patrimony of monuments, including Vespasian "conserver of public buildings and restorer of private ones". In the late Roman period it was quite common to transform abandoned buildings that had lost their original function into quarries for building materials. The use of pieces (columns, capitals, architraves…) taken from older monuments and put into new buildings preserved an "ideal" reference to past culture. At times these were limited measures, as in the case of the fragment of cornice inserted into the Gate of San Frediano in Pisa; at other times the reutilized parts prevail, as with the Basilica of St. Mark in Venice.

The abandonment of buildings no longer in use could lead to their adaptation for other uses, as in the case of amphitheaters, where quoins were often turned into dwellings. The arrival of Christianity meant that pagan temples were transformed into churches, or else into quarries for building materials. The Church repeated what the Romans had previously done vis a vis Hellas in

the 2nd century B.C., transforming and reinterpreting the finest buildings of pagan culture. Thus, just as Roman temples rise out of earlier Greek buildings, so many early Christian basilicas were born out of the transformation of Roman temples (Romeo 2010).

Buildings from the past were adapted to new uses, at times with radical changes, other times with only slight adaptations. For example in Rome, with the edict of Constantine (313 A.D.), the *tituli*, the first churches where early Christians met in the years of persecution, became *titular basilicas* (house churches), replacing the old dwellings that had been destroyed. The destruction of the buildings of the past, i.e. the practice of pillage, met the opposition of those who wanted to demonstrate the importance of the transmission of memory to future generations. An emperor who was particularly interested in ancient monuments was Theodoric (493-526). Besides erecting new buildings to beautify the city, he ordered a series of restorations that included the Colosseum. That Theodoric supported conservation is reported in the work of Cassiodorus, the same author who suggested that the fallen parts of ruins should be rebuilt rather than allow the ancient stones to be lost. Another extremely important document for understanding restoration in the late Roman period is Belisarius' letter to Totila, in which he contrasts the "wise men" who adorn cities with new works of art to the "foolish men" who, on the contrary, denude them and plunder their monuments. Among the examples worthy of note is the Augustan restoration of the complex of the Porticus of Octavia and the Temple of Apollo at Didyma, rebuilt in 313 B.C., with a new edifice that incorporated the sacred part (Romeo 2008). In general if by restoration we mean a set of actions that aim to "re-render efficiency", without the wish to conserve pre-existing qualities that have recognized "value", then it has always existed. Its existence is linked to the need to repair buildings so that they can last in time, and to readapt them to meet new functions. These aims determine a series of actions intended to make works of the past functional to the needs of the present.

The aspiration to duration and continuity was guaranteed in the classical world by respect for certain rules, like perfect execution and constant maintenance, which guaranteed a long life

to the work of art. The purpose of these measures was to cancel the damage provoked by the passing of time, or by men: the work had to be intact for its significance to be understood (Settis 1984). However, economic factors were also important reasons for wanting to conserve a building. They often led to the choice of transforming a piece of architecture to fit it to the new needs that evolved over time. In every age, buildings have been adapted for new uses. When the survival of an artwork could not be assured, it was considered legitimate to make a copy. Substitution with a copy was a widespread practice, and it allowed many works of the archaic period to come down to us. Some examples are the Group of the Dying Gaul and the Gaul Suicide, today housed in Rome, which are copies of original bronzes from the Temple of Athena in the Acropolis of Pergamum in Turkey.

A reading of Pliny and Pausanias allows us to infer that the Romans habitually placed new elements alongside ancient buildings while respecting their historical memory and the antiquity of their materials. The practice of conserving materials is exemplified, according to Pliny, by the use of protective waxes and varnishes to conserve statues and the sculpted parts of buildings (Cagiano De Azevedo 1952). Though written testimony about the sorts of measures that were taken to maintain architectural works is rare, it was certainly the wish to honor historical memory that motivated the reconstruction of Athens after its destruction by the Persians. It is in this light that we can see the building of the new *propylaeum* in the pre-existing Acropolis.

With the Emperor Hadrian (117-138 A.D.) an intense new phase of development began, which was shared by Athens and the other Hellenic *poleis*, marking a real "Renaissance" of the Greece of the classical age. As Vitruvius tells us, the measures carried out on the Temple of Demeter at Eleusis were meant to enlarge the old sanctuary while at the same time conserving the oldest, most sacred part of the Temple. Of great interest is also the respect shown for the landscape as a site of memory and of the ruin itself. Ruins and landscape represent a vestige, an indelible trace of history – they are at once memory and record. Ro-

man buildings often underwent multiple reconstructions ab imis (from top to bottom): the Pantheon in Rome, commissioned by Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa in 27 B.C., was remodeled first by Domitian and then by Trajan, before being completely rebuilt by Hadrian in the 2nd century and then further modified by Settimius Severus and Caracalla in the following century. It is clear, then, that identifying the numerous transformations and stratifications that can concern a single building is a very complicated matter, for the new joins the old to give life to an original work.

In the late imperial period both the reutilization of old materials taken from existing buildings and the re-adaptation of entire buildings, as in the case of the complex of the Porticus of Octavia in Rome, became more frequent. The Temple to Jupiter, which had been built entirely in marble by Caecilius Metellus, was later (in 146 B.C.) joined by the Temple to Juno; afterwards they were both were enclosed by a colonnade. Between 27 and 23 B.C. Augustus had the complex restored and turned into a library. The portico was newly restored after a fire in 80 A.D. and then once again under Settimius Severus. The ruins, still visible today, belong to this last restoration: they consist in the *propylaeum* at the entrance and the section of the portico to its right, reaching to the southernmost corner.

Similar interventions are found in Rome all over the Forum (Romeo 2010; Melucco Vaccaro 2000). In the Temple to Apollo Sosianus near the Marcellus Theater, restored by Caius Sosius around 34 B.C., the sculptural decoration on the pediment had been adapted in imitation of the Temple of Eretria in Greece. The pediment was decorated with scenes of the Amazonomachy, with marble statues (some of which, including Athena, Hercules, Theseus and Amazons on horseback are conserved in the Capitoline Museums). Another example of the reutilization of sculptural groups taken from older monuments is represented by the Arch of Constantine.

The entire Arch is decorated with sculptures, mostly taken from works of earlier periods, especially the eight medallions, where the effigy of Constantine was replaced by that of Hadrian. In this context, Viollet-le-Duc remarks that it was barbarian to

use these fragments, calling it a real "act of vandalism". Another example of the substitution of an effigy is the equestrian statue now housed in the Museum of the Castle of Baia, on which the head of Nerva replaced the original representation of the Emperor Domitian, following the not infrequent practice of *damnatio memoriae*.

If it is difficult to spot later transformations in classical buildings, it is even more complicated to understand the techniques of consolidation that were used. However, an interesting group of examples can be seen in the work carried on in the area of Pompei after the earthquake in 62 A.D. Among these were "risarcitura", or joining of walled structures (for example, in the House of the Faun); chains of concatenations to strengthen the walls; and restoration by "filling in" the columns (anchoring the shaft to the base with liquid lead drippings). Besides these measures, and the transformation of buildings after their function had changed, there were interventions to re-plaster walls and repair floor mosaics. Cracks and losses suffered by mosaics were restored simply by using white stucco, anticipating the contemporary method of treating gaps with painting (Romeo 2010).

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