



Camillo Boito:
Restoration of monuments and cultural heritage
conservation in post-unification Italy

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Abstract

This dissertation considers the contribution of Camillo Boito (1836–1914) to the development of the theory and practice of architectural and monument restoration in Italy after the country's unification in 1861. It considers the part Boito played in addressing the problems that the new country faced in restoring and maintaining the immense number of historic monuments and buildings that represented the new nation. At the same time this research looks at the challenge of preserving monuments within modernising urban environments tracing the conservation debate that was also emerging in the rest of nineteenth-century Europe.

It examines the development of Boito's ideas about cultural heritage conservation that culminated in what was his greatest achievement: the Charter of Restoration of 1883. It was a charter that provided a set of principles for a scientific approach to monument restoration and conservation. In looking at these principles, the dissertation considers the extent to which he drew on the ideas of other architects such as Pietro Selvatico, Tito Vespasiano Paravicini, Alfredo d'Andrade and Errico Alvino. Likewise, this research project considers the mutual international influences of Boito and other contemporaries of the British and French School of restoration and heritage conservation.

In addition to considering Boito's theoretical contribution to restoration and conservation, the dissertation also investigates his practice as a restorer in order to assess the relationship between theory and practice in his work. It considers his restoration of Porta Ticinese in Milan (1861) and the church of Saint Anthony in Padua (1898), arguing that his interventions stem from careful art historical study, but combined with a methodology of historiographical interpretation that allowed him a degree of architectural and compositional creativity. In contrast to the opinions expressed in the existing literature, which tend to criticise the creative aspect of the architect's restoration, this dissertation reveals the objective and contextual motives behind the architect's choices

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Giulia Mezzi
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Declaration of original authorship

I confirm that this is my own work and the use of all material from other sources has been properly and fully acknowledged.

Giulia Mezzi

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Figure 1. Portrait of Camillo Boito, Studio Artico Monza, ca. 1880.

Introduction

At the Fourth Congress of Engineers and Architects in Rome held in 1883, Camillo Boito (1836–1914), architect, engineer, art critic and novelist, presented a document that provided a set of scientific principles for the restoration of Italy's architectural heritage. Known as the *Carta del Restauro*, this so-called Charter of Restoration was made up of seven detailed points on the procedures to adopt for the proper restoration of buildings. It was the end-product of a period of research and reflection that followed the unification of Italy and it is now recognised as a milestone in the history of architectural restoration and conservation in Italy, gaining for its author the status in Italy of father of 'modern restoration theory' (Figure 1).

In the years leading up to and beyond the publication of this charter, Camillo Boito was preoccupied with the complex challenges presented by reconciling correct procedures for the conservation and restoration of cultural heritage with the perceived demand for a new architectural style appropriate for a new political context, namely the new kingdom of Italy. Over a forty-year career as architect and lecturer at the Brera Academy in Milan, Boito participated and contributed to the heritage debate, both in terms of theory and practice. As a theorist on architecture, restoration and cultural heritage conservation, he wrote widely on the subject on topics ranging from the establishment of a style appropriate for a unified Italy to matters of how to conserve Italy's architectural heritage while allowing modern cities to grow and develop. For example, his *Architettura del Medioevo in Italia* of 1880 provided a set of guidelines for the development of an architectural style suitable for modern Italy, while his *Gite di un artista* of 1884 set forth his opinions on the treatment and maintenance of cultural heritage in post-unification Italy, drawing on his knowledge of developments in this field elsewhere in Europe. As a practising architect and restorer, Boito executed some significant architectural projects and undertook monument restorations in the historic hearts of major northern Italian cities where sensitivities to the historic urban fabric had to be married with the needs of the modern city. Among these, are the restorations of the medieval gate in Milan, Porta Ticinese of 1861, the construction of the Elementary Schools in Padua of 1880 and, possibly the most celebrated of his projects, the monumental restoration of the altar in Sant'Antonio in Padua in 1898.

The impact of his work in the fields of theory and practice was further fostered by his academic career, first as lecturer at (from 1861) and then as President (1893–1908) of

the Brera Academy of Fine Arts. It was further promoted by his strong network of connections that allowed his reputation to spread at the national level. In this way Camillo Boito became the most prominent of the protagonists in Italian debates about architecture and restoration in the period immediately after unification.¹

Literature review

Given Boito's reputation as the father of modern restoration theory in Italy, the literature devoted to the study of his work has grown significantly over the last sixty years. The first major study was Liliana Grassi's monograph of 1959.² Although concise, it presented the architect and his work through an introductory essay, a biography, a catalogue of works and a list of his publications. In the catalogue, each of his architectural projects and monument restorations is given a short commentary.

By structuring Boito's work in this way, Grassi's book established a pattern that dominated the literature until the 1990s. It treated his biography and his activities as an architect and restorer as two distinct and separate components, with the result that the relationship between theory and practice is not properly investigated. By way of example, in one of the passages dedicated to Boito's major monumental restoration in Sant'Antonio in Padua, Grassi simply asserts that Boito was not able to adapt his conceptually advanced ideas on cultural heritage conservation to suit his practice.³ Grassi's approach to the architect's work persisted for more than three decades until challenged by the work of later scholars (discussed below). She also pointed out that the architect's ideas did not arise in a vacuum but took account of a lively debate amongst his contemporaries and that his role was one of identifying and clarifying the principal ideas advanced by others in their writings, but she did not go on to analyse this debate in detail.⁴ Having said this, it would be wrong to see Grassi's monograph as shedding a negative light on the architect's work; rather it was a solid, dispassionate account that provided a complete overview of the architect's architectural accomplishments. Most importantly, this fine study established a standard view on which the subsequent critical

¹ Liliana Grassi. *Camillo Boito. Il Balcone*. Milano 1959:36-38

² Ibid.

³ Grassi 1959:125: 'I chiari concetti espressi dal Boito testimoniano la sua consapevolezza critica e la sua indipendenza intellettuale anche se, all'atto pratico, il linguaggio figurativo da lui adottato non arrivò ad un effettiva liberazione dell'equivoco dell'interpretazione stilistica.' (Grassi referring to Boito's controversial and mostly debated restoration of Donatello's fifteenth century altar in the Paduan Basilica di Sant'Antonio).

⁴ Grassi 1959:23

literature drew for many years, namely that Boito's architectural and restoration work was much less advanced and less significant than his theory.⁵

A more wide-ranging and to some extent, more sympathetic view of the architect's work was initiated only in the late 1980s with the volumes of Maria Antonietta Crippa (1988), Amedeo Bellini (1991), Maurizio Boriani (1991), Guido Zucconi (1997, 2000, 2002), Tiziana Serena (2000, 2002), Francesca Castellani (2000) and a few others that will be mentioned in the following paragraphs.⁶ What these studies all have in common is a tendency to view Boito's activities as a whole, without dividing them into sub-sections, and in doing this they more easily identify links between different aspects of his output, ranging from his ideas and his ability to implement and communicate his ideas at the national level in the field of restoration to his theories on the establishment of a national Italian style of architecture. This new approach aims to avoid the compartmentalisation of the previous scholarly literature that, for more than three decades, split Boito's work as architect from his theoretical contributions to the field of modern restoration. This new approach has raised new questions and perspectives about the importance of Boito's restoration theory, about his architectural work and, of course, about the primacy of his role in the modern discipline and theory of restoration.

This new wave of studies investigated the multiplicity of Boito's roles in the architectural culture of his time, exploring the architect's education and cultural milieu, and his theories on restoration, and on architecture and cultural heritage conservation. Perhaps the most important contribution – one that paved the way for the studies of other scholars – was that published by Zucconi in 1997.⁸ Zucconi analysed the way Boito approached monument restoration, working with local craftsmen and materials, trying to maintain the regional qualities of each artistic form in a post-unification context that was pushing towards industrialisation, standardisation and Central-European standards of artistic production. In his wide-ranging study, he also investigates Boito's interest in Neo-medievalism – a revivalist current that had a major impact on Boito's theory and

⁵ When commenting on Camillo Boito's restoration of the Palazzo delle Debite in Padua, Grassi writes: Ora come accadde alter volte, il Boito non seppe qui trovare l'equivalente espressivo delle sue chiare idee precorritrici. ['Now as on other occasions, Boito was not able to find the expressive equivalent of his revolutionary ideas'; author's translation], Grassi 1959: 110-111.

⁶ Among the most essential and relevant scholarly critiques on Camillo Boito, offering a novel perspective on the architect's work are the following volumes: Crippa, Maria Antonietta. *Camillo Boito. Il nuovo e l'antico in architettura*, Jaca Book, 1988; Bellini, Amedeo, Alberto Grimoldi, and Camillo Boito. *Omaggio a Camillo Boito*. F. Angeli, 1991.; Zucconi, Guido. *L'invenzione del passato: Camillo Boito e l'architettura neomedievale 1855-1890*. Marsilio, 1997.; Maderna, M., and Camillo Boito. "pensieri di un architetto del secondo Ottocento." *Documenti e frammenti per una biografia intellettuale di Camillo Boito militante e architetto*, Archinto, Milano (1998).; Zucconi, Guido, and Francesca Castellani, eds. *Camillo Boito: un'architettura per l'Italia unita*. Marsilio, 2000.

⁷ The topic of national architecture, to which Boito dedicated much attention, will not be discussed in this research paper. With that in mind, the most complete volume on the theme is the one edited by Guido Zucconi and Francesca Castellani, *Camillo Boito, Un'architettura per l'Italia unita*, Marsilio, Venezia, 2000.

⁸ Zucconi, Guido. "L'invenzione del passato." *Camillo Boito e l'architettura neomedievale*, Marsilio, Venezia (1997).

practice – and in particular Boito's proposal that a national style of Italian architecture could be based on Trecento architecture in Lombardy, tracing the emergence of this idea to the period between 1855 and 1880.⁹ He maintained that Boito considered the Trecento Lombard style to be the most appropriate for the new nation owing to its cultural associations, to its adaptability and to its widespread influence throughout the peninsula. According to Zucconi, Boito thought modern architecture should not only take into account the peninsula's past and traditions, but also be suitable for its own time, conscious of the benefits Italian society might derive from acknowledging its own rich history not only for the purposes of heritage conservation, but for the promotion of artistic creativity and a sense national identity. Boito's objective in architecture is to find points of commonality between tradition and the contemporary necessities of a modern national country, basing national architecture on a style that has symbolic content but at the same time is adjustable to functionality. Zucconi also suggests that Boito's ideas on national architecture partly influenced some of the architect's choices for his restoration projects.

Furthermore, in his studies Zucconi provides fundamental contextual and socio-historical information to help us understand some key motifs and influences that stirred Boito's thought.¹⁰ Zucconi recognised that considering Boito's cultural and social milieu is crucial for a full understanding of the architect's theory and practice. He brings together the many pieces of the contextual post-unification mosaic by establishing links between Boito and socio-historiographical dynamics that led the architect to become one of the most important exponents of Italian Neo-medievalism.¹¹ In doing so, he explores the culturally rich, late nineteenth-century Venetian and Milanese environments, the architect's education and the post-enlightenment historical and philosophical currents of thought that circulated in contemporary Italy and Europe.

One of the most thought-provoking aspects of Zucconi's writings on Boito is the recognition of Boito's cultural celebrity as an architect in his own day – despite the limited number of his architectural projects – and he argues that this is due to his fame in several fields at once. He was a scholar, a novelist, restorer and an art critic. As a consequence of this, Zucconi questioned whether it was appropriate to look at Boito's

⁹ Zucconi 1997 and 2000

¹⁰ The studies describing the neo-medievalist influence on Boito and his ideas on national architecture and cultural heritage in post-unification Italy can be found in Zucconi, Guido. "L'invenzione del passato." *Camillo Boito e l'architettura neomedievale*, Marsilio, Venezia (1997).

¹¹ Zucconi 1997 and 2000

activities in the sort of compartmentalised way adopted by earlier scholarly criticism.¹² Zucconi also went on to investigate specific aspects of Boito's architectural education that turned out to be central themes in Boito's work. Among the most important is, for instance, the role of the architect's mentor, Pietro Selvatico, which was almost parental. It was a relationship that marked the introduction of Boito into the Venetian academic and intellectual environment and that opened many professional opportunities for him in the decades that followed. Besides exploring the influence of Selvatico on Boito, he also investigated Boito's response to French and British precedents as well as Boito's role as lecturer and leading light in the Milanese academic and intellectual environment, which add considerably to understanding the wide range of themes that underpin Boito's thought and practice. By taking into account neo-medievalist currents in contemporary thought and Boito's desire to establish a new architecture and a national style, Zucconi creates a more unified picture of Boito's life and works, largely fragmented in the previous literature.

Other scholars considered parallel aspects of the architect's activity: M.A. Crippa (1988) and M. Maderna (1993, 1995, 1996, 1998, 2002) investigated the cultural environment in which Boito worked as well as his career as Dean and lecturer at the Brera Academy of Fine Arts in Milan. These studies also analysed the developments in the discipline of conservation and restoration outside Italy and how they related to Boito's stance on restoration, cultural heritage conservation and architecture in post-unification Italy.¹³

Of particular interest for Boito's approach to restoration in the period after unification is Francesca Castellani's essay of 2000, which focuses on the restoration of Sant'Antonio in Padua.¹⁴ In it, the author reconstructs the full extent and significance of Boito's role in the restoration campaign undertaken at the Paduan church from 1892. Through a careful analysis of the surviving documentation, she proves that Boito was the figurehead of the operation, deferred to by the other architects, the painters, the decorators and the donors associated with the project. In doing so she maintains that he created a microcosm of artisans and workshops in imitation of the medieval guild

¹² Zucconi 2002:3

¹³ Crippa, Maria Antonietta. *Camillo Boito. Il nuovo e l'antico in architettura*. Jaca Book, 1988; Maderna, Marco. "Camillo Boito: pensiero sull'architettura e dibattito coevo." (1995); Traduzione, testi e commenti di Maderna, Marco. Boito, Camillo. *Pensieri di un architetto del secondo Ottocento: documenti e frammenti per una biografia intellettuale di Camillo Boito critico militante e architetto*. Archinto, 1998.; Maderna, Marco. "L'ambiente post-risorgimentale milanese intorno a Camillo Boito." *Ananke* 13 (1996): 8-15. In addition there is Maderna's short essay published in Zucconi's and Serena's volume of 2002, *Boito e Zanella, fra letteratura critica e storiografia*, pp. 95 – 102.

¹⁴ Francesca Castellani, "Nel cantiere del Santo" in *Camillo Boito. Un'architettura per l'Italia Unita*. Venezia, 2000. See also by the same author "Boito nella Basilica del Santo: i disegni di 'cantiere'" in *Camillo Boito. Un protagonista dell'Ottocento italiano* ed. Guido Zucconi and Tiziana Serena, Venezia 2002.

system, which Boito believed to be a pioneering model for artistic production at that time.¹⁵

Amedeo Bellini's contribution to the work of Boito (1991) is more closely focussed on the late nineteenth-century debates about restoration and architecture. With conceptual and historiographical insightfulness, Bellini dissects Boito's theories using an approach that is at once critical and philological.¹⁶ In this study, Bellini argues that Boito's solution to the understanding of a monument and the application of a consequent restorative action primarily rests on his use of historical evidence. Bellini goes on to explain how Boito's approach is characterised by a close study of architectural forms combined with an historiographical interpretation, and also a careful selection of the restoration process; through the combination of these methodologies, the architect attempts to justify his interpretation. Boito worked in an epoch that could already be defined 'modern', and, as a consequence, he distinguished between the old and modern school of restoration, with the latter clearly embracing the value of mimicking the forms and style used roughly at the time the original monument was built, but also eliminating the architectural elements, which were seen as having no historical or artistic validity. Boito's approach was selective, and it clearly distinguished between 'good' restoration as delivered by a careful historiographical analysis, and 'bad'.¹⁷ Bellini's study is one of the first and best interpretations of Boito's approach. His work, together with that of Zucconi's, established the non-compartmentalised current of scholarly literature on Camillo Boito, countering the previous trend influenced by Grassi's monograph of the 1960s.

This recent approach that considers Boito's activity as a whole is particularly relevant for a fuller understanding of his work in the fields of restoration and architecture. Boito was not only an academic focusing on architecture and cultural heritage conservation, but he was also a novelist and had a considerable interest in photography. Boito first published a novel in 1876 and went on to produce his novel *Senso* [Sense] in 1883.¹⁸ His literary successes will remain rather marginal in this research project. His novels may reveal much about his personality and about the social and cultural context in which

¹⁵ *ibid.*

¹⁶ A. Bellini. Boito tra Viollet le Duc e Ruskin? In Bellini, Amedeo, Alberto Grimoldi, and Camillo Boito. *Omaggio a Camillo Boito*. F. Angeli, 1991, pp. 159-167.

¹⁷ Bellini 1991:166

¹⁸ With regard his activity as a novelist, Boito was attached to the literary Milanese movement of the 'Scapigliatura'. The adherents of this literary movement were drifting on the binaries of Romantic sentimentalism and nostalgic decadence, sentiments that may be considered customary for the modern turn of the century. 'Il Maestro Settivalvio' and 'Senso' are the most popular novels by Boito, the latter was even transposed into a movie in 1954 by the Italian regisseur Luchino Visconti. M.A. Crippa xxiv: 1988

Boito operated, but they do not actually affect his accomplishments in the field of restoration and architecture. Photography, on the other hand, played a relevant role in Boito's activities as both architect and scholar. He used photography as an aid for the documentation of monument restoration and the study of architecture, as also noted by Roberto Cassanelli. This scholar's research explored Boito's photographic collection housed in the Brera Fine Arts Academy.¹⁹ Boito's private photographic archive had long been considered lost, but Cassanelli discovered that a collection of photographs in the archives of Brera had belonged to the architect. Boito's photographs are of particular interest as they document his study trips to Germany and Poland. This visual material confirms the importance that Boito gave to photography during a still very experimental time for the new technique.

For Boito, photography in association with drawing was a fundamental instrument of analysis. With that in mind, Boito's fascination for photography goes beyond mere documentation. He gathered images that would also capture the particular aesthetic character and architectural spirit of the cities he visited on his travels. Boito's interest and use of photography is testified by the inclusion of photographic documentation in restoration in the sixth point of Boito's 1883 charter:

"Photographs of the monument should be taken before any repair or restoration even if the restoration is minor, and also of every stage of the work, and finally of the completed work. This series of photographs will be sent to the Ministry of Public Instruction together with the drawings of the plans, elevations and details, and watercolours if used, in which will appear with real clarity all the artworks that have been restored, made sound, remade, renovated, modified, removed or destroyed. A precise and methodical account of the reasoning and procedure used in the artworks, of every type and variety will accompany the drawings and the photographs. A copy of all the documents just mentioned should be deposited with the office of works of the restored churches, or with the office responsible for the care of the restored monument (Boito, *Carta del Restauro* 1883)."²⁰

¹⁹ Cassanelli's essay on Boito's photographic collection *Il fondo fotografico di Boito all'Accademia di Brera* has been published in Ananke, May 2009:100-109. The content of this short section has also been augmented by a personal meeting with Professor Roberto Cassanelli that occurred at the archive in Brera in Spring 2013. Access to the specific photographic section of the archive was not allowed due to new inventory re-organisation, however, Prof. Cassanelli briefly explained the influence of photography and the function that the new technique had in Boito's activity as architect and as specialist on cultural heritage conservation.

²⁰ Boito 1883, Charter of restoration: "Dovranno eseguirsi, innanzi di por mano ad opere anche piccole di riparazione o di restauro, le fotografie del monumento, poi di mano in mano le fotografie dei principali stati del lavoro, e finalmente le fotografie del lavoro compiuto. Questa serie di fotografie sarà trasmessa al Ministero della pubblica istruzione insieme con i disegni delle piante degli alzati e dei dettagli e, occorrendo, cogli acquarelli colorati, ove figurino con evidente chiarezza tutte le opere conservate, consolidate, rifatte, rinnovate, modificate, rimosse o distrutte. Un resoconto preciso e metodico

The use of photography for Boito is therefore an established component of his methodological approach of cultural heritage restoration and as soon as the archives in the Brera Academy are fully accessible, these photographs will aid scholarly research in regards to the architect's work (theoretical and practical) on monuments and architecture.

Aims and research questions

The topics mentioned in the previous sections, as for instance, Boito's position within the broader European conservation movement or specific cultural and political settings that affected his ideas on conservation inevitably raise new questions and subsequent aims of research. The first question posed when this research project was initiated, was to determine why it was necessary to reconsider Boito's work in the first place.

Without drawing too much from the subsequent section on the literature review, it is necessary to note at this stage that it has been a slightly longer than a decade in regard to the last significant volume on Boito. Hence, while minor publications on specific topics have come out (the latest in 2016, edited by the leading expert on Boito, Guido Zucconi, *Medioevo Fantastico. L'invenzione di uno stile nell'architettura tra fine '800 e inizio '900*) a new look at Boito's work would add to the corpus of scholarly literature. On a more analytical level, looking again at Boito's work when investigating cultural heritage conservation in post-unification Italy is necessary to position his theories and ideas with more specification within the Italian but also international scenario of the time. Direct comparisons of work and ideas with other contemporary scholars, a detailed setting of the cultural, social and political environment Boito was operating in and his placement within an international situation contribute to further understand his ideas.

As this research project about an exclusively Italian topic has been supported by a British institution, it is interesting to establish links and identify differences of cultural heritage conservation between Italy and the United Kingdom. This relationship will be discussed in the next sections, since both countries have a strong tradition of monument conservation with quite similar approaches but based on completely diverse motives.

delle ragioni e del procedimento delle opere e delle variazioni di ogni specie accompagnerà i disegni e le fotografie. Una copia di tutti i documenti ora indicati dovrà rimanere depositata presso le fabbricerie delle chiese restaurate, o presso l'ufficio incaricato della custodia del monumento restaurato.”

The Italian and British similarities within the conservation movement have not been fully acknowledged yet by scholarly literature. Therefore, this research project attempts to find a common thread between the concepts championed by Boito and the ones by British contemporaries. As for the French contribution to the conservation movement, it is an essential benchmark that transalpine currents strongly affected the Italian Ottocento restoration theories and in some ways, Boito's approach to monument conservation. The architect's acknowledgment of both the British and French currents of restoration opens new paths for the comprehensive analysis of his work.

It is possibly this proclivity for international dimensions, architectures and practices of heritage conservation that help to make Boito one of the most original scholars of his time. As a consequence it will be another general aim of this research project to determine the factors that make Boito's practice and theories stand out as compared to the ones of his peers. It is undeniable that Boito was in his ideas certainly inspired by his master Pietro Estense Selvatico, who, as it will be discussed in the third chapter of this research, set out the foundations of his student's cultural understanding of the monument and the study of architecture.

With this in mind, Boito belonged to a younger generation of architects approaching the turn of the century, looking at monuments and historical buildings through the lens of urban transformation and of a national conscience and calling for the necessity to preserve them. On the one hand this analysis will be conducted at a national level related to the Italian milieu. The assessment of Boito's work with that of selected contemporary colleagues operating in post-unification Italy will point to the contextual differences and diverse approaches used by the architects to preserve monuments in Italy. From the international point of view, it must be noted that compared to international peers in the United Kingdom and France, Boito had necessarily other priorities when restoring a monument. The differences between social, urban and cultural contexts in the three countries certainly affected the notion and practice of monument conservation in many ways, delivering at times controversial results of restoration. One further aim of this research is to recognise and illustrate these influential dynamics and relate them to Boito's ideas and projects.

Last but not least, this research will discuss selected restoration projects by the architect. Going beyond the mere observation of the architect's endeavours, the objective of this research is to understand Boito's methodology applied to monument conservation and

identify the contextual motives that lie behind the architect's decisions about restoration, composition and eventual alterations to the monument. The architect's methodology does not only follow guidelines but adapts to the different contextual and urban situations and to the contemporary function of the historical building. This ability of the architect to consider many different aspects when restoring a monument, is the reason that the majority of scholarly literature deems his restoration practice debatable.

As discussed in the previous section dedicated to literature review, the approach towards Boito's work underwent a major change of perspective in the last years. Boito's two careers as architect and restorer were not only considered colliding elements, but also factors that needed to be jointly contemplated in order to have a broader picture of his work. Attempting to further unfold this approach, this research will eventually discuss the methodology that Boito adopted for his restoration projects.

The aim is to validate how architecture and conservation in the architect's work featured as a harmonising means of contributing to the advanced understanding of the historical monument and of architecture. In this respect it is essential to investigate also Boito's use of photography both for the means of cultural heritage conservation as also for the study of architecture. Introducing and using the new technique as an essential part of his work, to the extent that its use was highly recommended in his guidelines of the Charter of Restoration, Boito proved to be one of the most forward-looking scholars of his time, nationally and internationally.

Hence, this research will present a brief excursus by including some of the photographs of the architect's personal collection that were accessible at the Archive of Brera. It will attempt to establish links that relate to Boito's methodology of monument conservation and also to other aspects that relate to the architect's cultural background and therefore the influence on his work as restorer.

It is through the analysis of these diverse factors that this research aspires to offer a novel perspective on Boito's practices of conservation and more specifically position him within the international scenario of monument conservation. It is no longer adequate to define Boito's figure as one of the fathers of restoration due to his achievement of the Charter of Restoration in 1883 or this work as an architect and restorer within the Northern Italian context. It is necessary to distinguish and identify the features and motives that made Boito a leading example among his Italian peers

while also identifying his uniqueness among contemporary international architect-restorers.

Methodology of research

Due to the varied nature of Boito's activities, this research will be conducted according to three different research methodologies that will be interwoven through the four chapters of this research project: comparison, associative and interpretative approach based on a historical contextual analysis. The combination of these methods should provide a full view of the historical and circumstantial factors that affected Boito's activities in the field of cultural heritage conservation. Each method will be adopted according to the nature of the material.

One of the initial tasks for gaining an understanding of Boito's work will be to devote attention to the ideas and theories that the architect expressed in his writings. Boito started writing and working on architectural projects almost at the same time. The dissertation will reconstruct Boito's thought and practice using the published anthologies, the scientific publications and the architectural reports.

At this stage, it is important to note that Boito recurrently uses the term "Lombard" in his writings. "Lombard" refers exclusively to the people and style of the modern region of Italy and not to the people (Lombard or Longobard) and their associated style that dominated Italy from the 6th – 8th century. The term will be used accordingly throughout this thesis, referring to the region, people and style of Lombardy.

With that in mind, these primary sources will provide the reader with an insight into Boito's theories, his main interests, as well as the positions he took and even the contradictions that arose as a result. In doing so the analysis presented here will take the arguments beyond the existing scholarly literature on Camillo Boito discussed above.

The scholarly literature has mostly concentrated on the main international representatives of restoration theory, outlining the differences, the similarities and the points of inspiration points that affected Boito's ideas. In this dissertation the focus will be on Boito's relationship with his contemporaries in Italy and cross-referencing will be employed throughout chapters II to IV to explore the links between them. It is undeniable that Boito was fully aware and partly influenced, even if unconsciously and

specifically in the initial phase of his career, by the French restoration theory of Eugène Viollet-le-Duc (1814–1879).¹

The transalpine theory was based on the principle of creating a reconstruction of the monument as they imagined it to have been. According to Viollet-le-Duc, restoration was an occasion to re-interpret a damaged monument, adding parts that had been damaged by time thus returning the monument to its pristine condition. The role of the restorer was almost turned into the one of the artist who originally conceived the monument: the originality of the monument was inevitably altered but at least it was complete again. This stance was highly criticised by Boito, yet when looking at his work, it nevertheless becomes evident that he could not always escape the temptation of employing the French restoration technique.

Opposed to Viollet-le-Duc's approach was the British critic and scholar John Ruskin (1819–1900), who championed minimal intervention on the monument. Boito, well aware of this position by the English scholar, agreed as far as the art-historical and historical respect of the monument went. However, the Italian architect was aware that material intervention in restoration was often inevitable in order to preserve a work of art or monument. As mentioned above, this dissertation will attempt to go beyond the Viollet-le-Duc-Ruskin-Boito triad and locate Boito's work in the context of other Italian contemporary architects who offered a range of different views on restoration theory and practice.

The literature on Boito has already suggested connections between Boito's work and the writings of Tito Vespasiano Paravicini (1833–1899), Alfredo d'Andrade (1839–1915) and Errico Alvino (1809–1872), but this has not been explored in depth.² The third chapter of this paper will further investigate the theories and practices of these architects in relation to Boito's oeuvre aiming to reconstruct a broader picture of restoration theory and practice in Ottocento, post-unification Italy. Considerable progress has been made in the discipline of restoration since the time of the early nineteenth-century pioneers. Nevertheless, this investigation may possibly confirm that some of the most relevant notions expressed by Boito (and some of his contemporaries)

¹ See Bellini, Amedeo, Marco Dezzi Bardeschi, and Alberto Grimoldi, eds. *Viollet-le-Duc: l'architettura del desiderio*. Dipartimento per la Conservazione delle Risorse Architettoniche e Ambientali, Facoltà di Architettura del Politecnico, Milano, 1980: 106-107

² See Bellini 1980 (above) and *Note sul dibattito attorno al restauro dei monumenti nella Milano dell'Ottocento: Tito Vespasiano Paravicini*, 1992

were milestones in the modern and ever-progressing discipline of restoration and cultural heritage conservation.

Lastly, the interpretative methodology based on the socio-historical context of the time will attempt to provide original insights into his work from a close analysis of Boito's restoration practice. In addition, approach will entail the analysis of unpublished material. Owing to the fact that Boito's personal archives in the Fine Arts Academy of Brera in Milan and the archive of Sant'Antonio in Padua (Archivio Moderno della Veneranda Arca) were inaccessible as a result of major re-organisations, not all the existing material could be consulted. The scholarly literature on Boito has agreed that the architect left almost no material after his death. In his will Boito instructed that his personal papers and correspondence should be destroyed. However, his instruction seems only to have been executed in part, as there is still a cluster of documentation that survived destruction at the hands of Camillo's younger brother, the celebrated librettist Arrigo Boito.³ By the time this research project was conducted, the Historical Archive of the Brera Academy was unfortunately closed as it was undergoing a major reorganisation process, yet I was granted access to Boito's personal library, the '*Miscellanea Boito*', thanks to the assistance of Prof. Roberto Cassanelli. The *Miscellanea* features his book collection, which includes a range of foreign books on architecture, thus providing a picture of his particular interests relating to art, architecture and restoration. These volumes from Boito's personal library, such as city guides of some of the major European cities in a variety of languages, or manuals of hygiene for urban development plans, fully reflect his range of interests.

Among the other sources consulted were manuscripts housed in the Historical Archives of the Politecnico, the Biblioteca Ambrosiana and the State Library and Archives in Milan, as well as in the Centro Studi Antoniani and the Archive of the Veneranda Arca di Sant'Antonio in Padua, the last preserving the project papers of the architect for the church's great makeover of the 1890s. Of equal importance for the realisation of this project, were the archives in Venice, especially the State archives the university libraries of IUAV (Istituto Universitario di Architettura Venezia) and the Historical Archives of the Museo Correr and the Biblioteca Marciana.

³ Cassanelli, Roberto. "Il Fondo fotografico di Boito all'Accademia di Brera." *Ananke* 57.2 (2009): 102

Outline of chapters

This research project is subdivided in four main chapters. The first chapter of this research project introduces the key figures in Boito's life as well as the key themes – beyond the ones of conservation and national architecture – which revolve around his work as a restorer and that necessarily need to be considered when looking at his work during the complex Italian post-unification period. As a brief introduction the topics covered in the first section of this dissertation include general challenges faced in monument conservation within modern urbanising environments and several social themes relating to heritage conservation and the role of the monument within the Italian post-unification society which was facing extreme cultural, social, administrative and legal discrepancies.

With that in mind, while Boito is considered to be one of the fathers of restoration, his work encompasses a broad spectrum of topics. Some of these themes and related aspects – essentially concerning Boito's engagement in the creation of a national style and his relation to Neo-medievalism or a critique on the architect's methodology and practice of restoration – have been excellently covered and analysed by modern scholarly literature (more specific references will be dealt with in the next section dedicated to the literature review).

Nonetheless, there are gaps in placing Boito's endeavours related to monument conservation and methodology of restoration within a framework that harmoniously merges both the theory and practice of the architect's work. Furthermore, maintaining the focus on cultural heritage conservation and monument restoration, this research project attempts to put Boito's topics into a new social and historical context and most importantly, launches an investigation into his international influence.

Therefore, the second chapter analyses the architect's ideas on conservation in relation to the methodologies of conservation in the United Kingdom and in France, bringing up connections and differences, which shaped the conservation movement of the nineteenth century at the European level as well as its contemporary principles which came to be adopted in modern cultural heritage and monument conservation.

After the British and French protagonists of the conservation movement are considered, the many roles of Italian architects must also be acknowledged. Among these for instance, the desire to set national guidelines for the conservation of monuments and the ability to understand the monument with regard to its conservation while considering the necessities of modern society, its purpose and its environmental or urban context.

Consequently, the third chapter of this dissertation investigates the work and theory of contemporary Italian architects with an interest in restoration. Focusing on the work of Tito Vespasiano Paravicini, Alfredo d'Andrade and Errico Alvino – all of whom are Boito's contemporaries, the chapter will discuss theories of monument conservation as well as their practice of restoration. The aim of this chapter is to provide a broader picture and understanding of the Italian conservation movement, which has been only partially provided by scholarly literature by taking into account specific achievements and endeavours of Boito's colleagues.

Last but not least, refocusing solely on Boito's work, the fourth chapter analyses three of the most relevant projects of monument restoration by the architect. These projects have been selected on the basis of the different challenges and approaches that the architect had to face throughout his long career. The first project of restoration of the cathedral of SS. Maria e Donato in Murano, a project that Boito himself in the end did not launch due to personal reasons presents both the over-confident and yet volatile restoration approach of the young architecture student.

The second project of the Porta Ticinese in Milan, a medieval gate that was targeted for demolition within the urban plans of unified Italy, is one of the many examples of Italian building heritage in modernising urban environments. Through compromise and a hint of historiographical interpretation, the architect managed to keep the monument in place and preserve a document of Northern-Italian medieval architecture.

The third project, concerning the re-composition of the High Altar in Sant'Antonio in Padua was directed by Boito in his mature years. Nevertheless, his maturity did not make the task less challenging: both for the vastness of the project and the importance of the monument itself – it is, as a matter of fact, one of Boito's most criticised and discussed works. The aim of analysing this venture within this section is to provide a new outlook on the architect's approach for the restoration of this complex monument.

When considering the approaches and methodologies adopted by the architect, it was necessary to address a relevant aspect that makes Boito one of the most open-minded and probing architects of his time: namely the use he made of photography in regards to monument conservation and restoration. While the specialist scholar on the topic of photography in relation to Boito is Prof. Roberto Cassanelli, whose work has been briefly introduced in the subsequent Literature Review section and in the fourth chapter, it was possible during this research to glimpse at some photographs that are part of the still disorganised personal archive of the architect. A visual and historiographical analysis of these photographs allowed me to uncover a new aspect and purpose of Boito's use of photography, which goes beyond the mere technical purposes of documentation.

The cross currents created by the above mentioned themes are a further confirmation of Boito's broad scholarly nature and his aim to seal his leading position within the complex world of monument conservation in post-unification Italy. It is the primary goal of this dissertation, alongside the recent scholarly critique discussed in the next paragraphs, to place Boito's figure and his contribution within a specific Italian context while strongly considering the international setting of the conservation movement.

Chapter I. Boito: biography and key themes

Camillo Boito's parallel careers as novelist, lecturer, architect and major exponent of cultural heritage conservation in post-unification Italy did not come about by chance. He owed a great deal to his family upbringing and its cross-cultural makeup, as well as to his connections with the most important academic institutions of Fine Arts in Venice and Milan. Given the importance of these factors for understanding the development of his theory and practice in the field of architectural restoration it is necessary to provide an outline here.¹

Born on 30 October 1836 in Rome, Camillo Boito was the son of an Italian miniaturist from Belluno in Northern Italy, and of a Polish Countess.² Silvestro Boito and Giuseppina Radolinska's primary concern for their two sons, Camillo and his younger brother Arrigo (born in 1842) was to provide them with a broad cultural education. The early years of their childhood were spent in Rome but the Boito family moved to Venice in 1842, and it was there, in the Doge's city, that Boito was enrolled at the age of fourteen in the Venetian Academy of Fine Arts, where he was to meet his great mentor Marquis Pietro Selvatico Estense (1803–1880).³

Selvatico, himself a pupil of Giuseppe Jappelli (1783–1852), an early exponent of Neo-Gothic architecture in Italy, had a profound influence on Boito's life, thought and professional development and will be encountered regularly in the following sections. Selvatico educated Boito in both art history and architecture, which became the foundation for his later historical study of specific monuments. In doing so he also impressed upon Boito the idea that modern architecture could only be understood in the light of monuments of the past.⁴

Boito's youth was significantly affected by his father's abandonment of the family. This resulted in the family moving first to Venice in 1842 and then his mother moving to Milan with his younger brother, Arrigo, in 1853. Arrigo was already demonstrating prodigious talent in music and his mother enrolled him in the Conservatory there. He was later to become one of the most renowned librettists of his time, closely collaborating with Giuseppe Verdi (as well as with Camillo) in musical and artistic

¹ See for instance the chapter "Ambiente e formazione" in Maderna, Marco. *Camillo Boito: pensiero sull'architettura e dibattito coevo*. 1995:39-47.

² The biographical information on Boito mainly stems from the Dizionario biografico degli Italiani, Miano Giuseppe and Emerico Giachery "Camillo Boito", Vol. XI, Roma, 1969:237-242 and Crippa, M.A., 1988: xx ff.

³ Crippa, M.A., Camillo Boito, *Il nuovo e l'Antico in Architettura*, Jaca Book, Milano 1988:xx

⁴ Maderna 1995:41

projects that remain major contributions to Italy's nineteenth-century culture. As for Camillo, he remained in Venice, in the care of Pietro Selvatico, who from this stage onwards became an almost parental figure for the young Boito. This life-changing encounter marked the beginning of Boito's introduction into the intellectual and professional milieu associated with the fine arts in Northern Italy. Selvatico was instrumental in this. He introduced his young protégé to the writings of a number of international scholars such as for instance William Morris (1834–1896), Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin (1812–1852) and John Ruskin (1809–1900), as also with the French scholars Ludovic Vitet (1802–1873), Prosper Merimée (1803–1870) and Eugène Viollet-le-Duc (1814–1879), providing Boito with the opportunity to acquire a solid knowledge of medieval art, architecture, restoration theories and the major cultural trends in Europe.⁵

Shortly after his *entrée* into perhaps the most exciting scholarly circles of art and architecture in Northern Italy, and after his graduation at the Accademia, Boito was appointed adjunct Professor of Architecture there in 1855 at the age of just nineteen. It is from this point that Boito began to formulate his ideas on both monument restoration and architecture. In this, especially the former, he was supported and influenced by Selvatico from the start, and this influence remained with him deep into his activity as lecturer and architect. Nevertheless, Boito was not hidebound by Selvatico's ideas. He was predisposed to independent critical analysis in all matters concerning cultural heritage conservation, restoration theory and architecture.

As will be shown, Boito seems to have embraced an almost dual attitude with regard to restoration theory and fine art practice in the decades after Italian unification. His ideas seem to have oscillated between adherence to traditional principles on the one hand, and seeing the needs of progress and a forward-looking culture on the other.

Ottocento notions of monument restoration and cultural heritage conservation

Boito moved to Milan in 1859, where he was reunited with his brother Arrigo to take up a position at the Brera Academy of Fine Arts.⁶ It was in Milan that Boito's earned his reputation on the national stage. He lectured there for more than forty years in the

⁵ Crippa 1988:xx ff.
⁶ Zucconi 1997:84

renowned Brera Academy, and was able to participate in the most important conferences and competitions associated with restoration and cultural heritage conservation.

Throughout his career at the Brera Academy of Fine Arts, Boito was devoted to the all-round study of architecture. As a lecturer, he stressed the importance of studying through drawing architectural styles from various countries and from various periods. His knowledge of history and expertise of architectural styles led him to become one of the most interesting theorists on the topic of Italian national architecture, as will be discussed in the last chapter of this dissertation. At the same time, his understanding of the history of architecture and its monuments extended the range of his interests to include the discipline of restoration and cultural heritage conservation.⁷ Boito's interest in both national architecture and monument conservation can be seen as charting a parallel course throughout his career and cannot be separated from one another.

It is important to note, however, that Boito's interest in monument conservation and restoration did not emerge by chance but was determined by the cultural and political events taking place during the crucial years of his formation. His interest in architectural restoration first emerged just after Italy had become a country in 1861. It was then that national attention was drawn to the elements that made regions of the Italian peninsula 'Italy', rather than a collection of independent states with different geographical characteristics, cultural traditions, languages and administrative organisation. Its collective identity, a collective history, could be found in the houses, monuments, churches, and public buildings, which despite their different dates and styles were a tangible reminder of the fact that in the past the Italian peninsula did have an identity that separated it culturally from the rest of Europe. These now, for the first time since antiquity, belonged under the same political umbrella, and their maintenance was fundamental in establishing the idea of a common past history, and in providing a solid foundation for a future one.

As Chirici argues in his study of the theory of restoration of 1994, the urge to restore monuments has been rooted in western civilisation for many centuries; in the monument, we distinguish values that belong to us and to our culture, hence the

⁷ Boito's expertise on monuments and architectural history is particularly identifiable in most of his writings dealing with national architecture, one of the most popular being Boito, Camillo. Introduzione. *Architettura del medio evo in Italia*. U. Hoepli, 1880 and in his writings focusing on restoration, one of the most relevant being Boito, Camillo. "Questioni pratiche di belle arti." (1893).

necessity to preserve it. At a first glance these values may seem extraneous to us; or they are only acknowledged at an unconscious level. Yet, subsequently they become part of our sense of *Volksgeist*. The desire to preserve these values and memories of our own culture is what underpins the desire to restore. Hence the aim is to preserve the monument intact, allowing the testimonies of time and history that we identify in it to endure.⁹

The idea of 'restoring' art historical objects in the modern sense really occurs for the first time at the end of the eighteenth century. Before that the idea of a scientific intervention on an artwork did not exist. Vasari, for example used the expression 'acconciare', which literally means 'to style' or to 'smarten up'.¹⁰ According to Chirici (1994), it is only during the Ottocento that the 'fracture' with the traditions of the past occurred, in conjunction with the increasing interest in restoring medieval monuments.¹¹ He maintains that the restoration of French medieval monuments damaged during the French Revolution – using an approach that attempted to mimic the original style and make them appear as they once originally were without any sign of an intervention having taken place ('stylistic integration') – was a methodology that aimed to overcome a chronological rupture caused by the technological progress that occurred from the nineteenth century onwards; but also from the first evident manifestations of capitalism and new social and political ideologies that were strongly opposed to tradition.¹² In the nineteenth century, restoration entailed the appropriation and the manipulation of the monument.

This process (or intention) would not necessarily delete the historical nature of the monument but attempted to include the monument within contemporary history. Nonetheless, the consequences of this approach aiming to restore the monument's original splendour and conception were that the traces of time were often obliterated. The consciousness of the past suddenly changed and scholars attempted to observe it from an objective and scientific point of view. History was to be scientifically investigated through the 'stylistic integration' of damaged monuments. At the same time, and in parallel to the Northern European Gothic revival, the study of the past went beyond the classical tradition of Mediterranean culture, and in Italy too, medieval

⁹ Chirici, Cesare. Chirici, Cesare. *Critica e restauro dal secondo ottocento ai nostri giorni*. Carte Segrete, Roma, 1994:13

¹⁰ Cristinelli, Giuseppe, "Monumenti, tecniche e restauro" in *Restauro : tecniche e progetto : saggi e ricerche sulla costruzione ed il restauro dell'architettura a Venezia*, Rubbettino Editore, Soveria Mannelli, 1994:9

¹¹ Vasari, Giorgio. 'Michelangelo Buonarroti,' *Delle vite più eccellenti, Pittori, Scultori et Architettori*, Terza Parte, Revised, expanded and illustrated version of the 1st edition, Florence : Lorenzo Torrentino, 1550, pp. 760-761

¹² Chirici 1994:19-21
¹³ ibid. 1994:19-21

architecture became the lens through which national ideals could be identified, thus becoming an alternative to classical art and architecture.¹³ In Italy, it was Boito who became one of the protagonists in the restoration debate as a supporter of a national model of architecture based on the premise of a medieval style.

What exactly were Boito's theories on restoration, cultural heritage conservation and architecture? As mentioned in the very first paragraph of this research project, the most relevant points of Boito's thought on restoration are manifested in his publicly and politically approved Charter of 1883. In his Charter of restoration, the architect demands a scientific investigation of both the materials and the history of the monument before initiating any restoration.¹⁴ He recommends intervention only if truly necessary for preserving the stability of the monument. In the case of monuments, paintings and mosaics, the restoration should not affect the original beauty of the object. He requires any additions deemed necessary in order to conserve the object be made clearly distinguishable from the original parts so that the original essence of the object in question remains intact and the beholder is able to recognise the later additions from the original parts.

This approach shall be considered in the following chapters in the context of a recently unified country, which did not have until then unified general guidelines for restoration. This lack of regulation resulted in monuments and objects of art being 'repaired' according to the subjective taste of any artist or artisan who called himself a restorer. Boito's principles provided restorers with a set of precepts based on understanding a monument in terms of its history and materials leading to a scientifically planned intervention.

At the same time, it is important to consider that the Charter only represents the pinnacle of Boito's position in matters of cultural heritage conservation. Before that, his active involvement in the culture and politics of restoration had already started in his early years as lecturer in the Accademia in Venice and then at the Brera Fine Arts Academy, as well as in other non-academic circles, such as commissions and architecture or monument restoration projects.

¹³ *ibid.* 1994:19-21

¹⁴ Pesenti, Serena. "Camillo Boito e la disciplina del restauro: quale eredità per il XXI secolo?" Conferenza *Camillo Boito moderno. Centenario Boitiano 1914 - 2014 Anniversario di Interesse Nazionale*. Accademia di Brera, Mercoledì 3 Dicembre, 2014.

From the 1860s onwards, Boito published many articles in the various periodicals such as *Il Giornale dell'Ingegnere, Architetto e Agronomo* (The Journal of the Engineer, Architect and Agronomist) and *Il Politecnico* (The Polytechnic), and the *Nuova Antologia* (New Anthology) that attest to his interest in the field and through which the development of his ideas can be followed.¹⁵ His role in the debate has been discussed by Serena Pesenti who has written about the Milanese dimensions of the debate, investigating in particular the importance of these journals for the diffusion of the debate on restoration in Italy.¹⁶

The Italian debate on restoration was initially conducted only at a theoretical level, relating to the value of the monument as a testimony of history, the conservation of documents and symbols of the Italian culture and so forth.¹⁷ This theoretical approach is reflected in the articles that appeared in scientific periodicals in the early decades of the Ottocento.¹⁸ Only later did the debate on restoration deal with issue of practice, that is to say how to restore monuments from a material and technical point of view. It is in this second more practical phase, that Boito's first contributions appeared. Modern scholarship suggests that Boito pursued three main aims in his publications: the first was the dissemination of his ideas; the second was to maintain a continuous presence in the debate; and the third was to make a real contribution to the topic of cultural heritage conservation.¹⁹

Boito's most important essays on restoration and cultural heritage conservation will be discussed in Chapter II. As an introduction to that, it is interesting to consider the social and cultural environment in which these periodicals and more specifically Boito's writings emerge. Apart from the monument restorations and architectural projects that the architect performed in Padua, most of Boito's intellectual activities and professional work as a restorer took place in Milan.

One of the most exciting European cities in the mid nineteenth century, Milan was the place where the political and cultural intelligentsia were determining the country's future as a modern nation at both political and, above all, cultural levels. In education, new schools of art and technology were being founded to keep up with the artistic developments and technological advances already underway in neighbouring

¹⁵ These two periodicals *Il giornale..* and *Il Politecnico* merged in 1869 under the name of *Il Politecnico*.

¹⁶ Pesenti, Serena. "Architetti e ingegneri: il restauro dei monumenti nel dibattito ottocentesco sulle riviste tecniche milanesi" in *Storia dell'Ingegneria*, vol. 1, Cuzzolin Editore Napoli. 2006:257-266

¹⁷ *ibid.* 2006:259

¹⁸ Pesenti 2006:259

¹⁹ Gallo, Paola. *Luigi Broggi: un protagonista dell'architettura eclettica a Milano*. Vol 15 Franco Angeli, 1992:31

countries.²⁰ The forward-looking nature of Milan's intellectuals overcame the many political difficulties of the post-unification country, and this was due to the fact that, well before unification, the Milanese intelligentsia were absorbing the pragmatic post-Enlightenment currents of Northern Europe.

This influence was transmitted through journals, which published essays by the cultural protagonists of the time on topics of cultural, scientific and technological importance.²¹ The main promoters of these editorial initiatives were mainly the members of the liberal bourgeoisie, inspired by the example of Northern European culture, especially France, Germany and Britain, who firmly believed in the power of economic and scientific information. They believed that these factors were fundamental for the political and cultural growth of the newly created Italian state, which, while geographically and politically united, remained still rather fragmented culturally. The efforts of the Milanese intelligentsia to document the cultural developments for the Italian and Milanese public proves their belief in the importance of the 'practical sciences', whose mastery was fundamental to the progress of Italy as a modern country.

It was this mind-set that prompted the appearance of independent magazines on the arts and sciences. The earliest was the *Annali Universali di Statistica*, founded in 1824 by Francesco Lampato, which was among the most popular publications on economics, statistics and politics. Among its main contributors was the philosopher and jurist Giandomenico Romagnosi and his pupil Carlo Cattaneo, who some decades later relaunched the technical magazine *Il Politecnico*, in which first Selvatico, and from the 1860s Boito too, published several of their most influential writings.

Boito recognised that this kind of scientific and technical press was the most powerful means of spreading his ideas. Themes associated with art and cultural heritage conservation became prominent in these periodicals' headlines.²² The *Giornale dell'Ingegnere, Architetto e Agronomo* mentioned above often discussed political and cultural matters of national importance associated with post-unification conditions and national cohesion, with Boito featuring as one of the major contributors on matters of restoration and monument conservation.²³ From his first publications in the early 1860s Boito awakened the public's concern for monument restoration. He promoted matters of cultural heritage conservation not just to the public but also to the relevant Fine Arts institutions at a time when the country was facing many political and social emergencies.

²⁰ Fontana, Vincenzo, *Il nuovo paesaggio dell'Italia giolittiana*. Editori Laterza, Bari, 1981:6-7

²¹ Ibid.

²² Pesenti, 2006:257-266

²³ Bellini, Amedeo. *Tito Vespasiano Paravicini*. Edizioni Angelo Guerini e Associati S.p.A. Milano, 2000:29

As it will be shown in the subsequent chapters, Boito's crusade was not only limited to an audience of elite scholars and politicians, as was customary in Italian society. His actions and statements aimed to rouse the attention of a wider public, raising their awareness of and interest in the new country's cultural heritage. In addition, the architect was aware that the time was ripe for restoration to take a more scientific approach. For him, not only did interventions on the monuments need to be respectful of their history (and not randomly performed on the basis of any subjective and haphazard interpretations), but restoration also had to find a means of reconciling itself with the needs of a changing urban, architectural and social environment.²⁴ The nation had to preserve but at the same time modernize.

So, these years mark the point where the link between restoration and architecture becomes ever more tangible and necessary, and yet the techniques of restoration still practised were still unruly. Boito, together with a few others, was a protagonist in a modern movement that saw intervention on the monument as an attempt to keep the monument's artistic value alive, yet locate it within a modern urban and cultural environment. Indeed, one of the notable aims in each of Boito's projects is that of preserving the monument and yet making it relevant to a living and changing society.

One of Boito's achievements was bringing an awareness of monument conservation into circles beyond the artistic milieu, making the topic an issue of debate at a political level. The following chapters will describe this process, which culminated in the architect's Charter of 1883. Unlike France, which already had a dedicated institution that cared for the restoration of monuments, the *Commission des monuments historiques*, founded in 1837, Italy had no equivalent. As a consequence in the first half of the nineteenth century restoration was merely discussed at a theoretical rather than technical level.²⁵

Nonetheless, as occurs in every process, there were tentative yet definite signs that the attention to national cultural heritage and its administration was growing exponentially a decade before Boito's Charter. One excellent example attesting to this interest was the General Artistic Congress held in Milan on 10 September 1872 (Congresso artistico

²⁴ These concepts and the other chief notions on restoration and cultural heritage conservation mostly feature in the Boito's writing of 1884 "I restauratori." *Conferenza tenuta all'esposizione di Marino il. Vol. 7. 1884.*, Boito, Camillo. *Gite di un artista*. U. Hoepli, 1884, (see also Appendix III) as also recurrently in *Questioni pratiche di belle arti: restauri, concorsi, legislazione, professione, insegnamento*. Hoepli, Milan, 1893.

²⁵ In regards to the transalpine situation of restoration, Michael Holleran argues that in other parts of the European, restoration movement arose not in reaction to restoration but in anticipation of it. Monuments were catalogued in order to rescue them from neglect and deterioration. The work of antiquarians in recording and describing historic structures became the work of official bodies listing structures deserving of protection. Holleran, Michael. "America's early historic conservation movement (1850-1930) in a transatlantic context." *Towards World Heritage. International Origins of the Conservation Movement 1870-1930*, edited by Melanie Hall, Routledge, 2011:188

italiano in Milano), which aimed to establish a policy of overseeing the care of historic monuments on the national territory.

The congress aimed at attempting to overcome the administrative fragmentation of the pre-unification states and most importantly to hinder the unchecked illicit export and dispersal of Italian works of art.²⁶ On this occasion, the statesman and scholar Cesare Cantù (1804–1895), himself one of the leaders in the heritage conservation debate, acted as Vice-director of the conference. Beside Boito, he sat on countless committees and attended many conferences during the earliest post-legislation phase between 1870 and 1880. Cantù, who was also a respondent at the conference, methodically listed the topics concerning legal measures and general systems of heritage conservation that needed to be addressed.

At the top of the list for the discussion panel were administrative issues. Do the archaeological councils accomplish their work properly? Does each province of the new Italian Kingdom need an archaeological council? Should the coordination of these councils be centralised, and should their activities be reported in a dedicated gazette? Boito addressed these topics in many of his writings (discussed in the next chapter).²⁷ Practical matters of restoration and heritage conservation were also tackled, in particular the lack of practical guidelines and appropriate supervision, which often led to negligence and irreversible damage. As for restorations of historic monuments, the Congress made a significant distinction between buildings that were still in use and ones no longer used. The former had to be conceived in functional terms, the contemporary needs of society had to be taken into account and addressed when performing the restoration. As for the latter, the approach was more focussed on respecting the artistic value and cultural significance of the monument's history for contemporary and future generations. In this case, the symbolic significance of the monument and the historical and sentimental values that are linked to the personal experience of the beholder were to be given priority. And, if any part of the building is missing, the restoration should be based on evidence only, in order to maintain the original qualities of the monument.²⁸ The pioneering principles presented in this document, do to some extent anticipate the content of Boito's Charter of Restoration of 1883. At the same time, they make clear the

²⁶ Relazione dei lavori della sezione di Archeologia artistica, letta nell'adunanza generale del congresso di Milano il 10 settembre 1872, *La Buona Novella*, 5 ottobre 1872, N° 79-80, Carte Cantù, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, R. 25 Inf. Fasc. 3

²⁷ Boito, Camillo "I nostri vecchi monumenti – Necessità di una legge per conservarli." Estratto dalla Nuova Antologia, vol. LI, fase XII – 15 giugno 1885; *Sulle Antichità e le Belle Arti*, Dalla Nuova Antologia, Vol. XXIV, Serie III (Fascicolo del 16 Dicembre 1889), Roma Tipografia della Camera dei Deputati (Stabilimenti del Fibreno); *Condizioni presenti dell'Architettura in Italia*, Dalla Nuova Antologia, Vol. XXV, Serie III, Fascicolo del 1°Febbraio 1890), Roma, Tipografia della Camera dei Deputati, Stabilimenti del Fibreno

²⁸ Relazione dei lavori della sezione di Archeologia artistica, letta nell'adunanza generale del congresso di Milano il 10 settembre 1872, *La Buona Novella*, 5 ottobre 1872, N° 79-80, Carte Cantù, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, R. 25 Inf. Fasc. 3

significant weaknesses in how the country's built heritage was being cared for. As a matter of fact, one of the first sources that best represent this transitional phase of restoration in modern Italy is Boito's project for the monumental restoration of SS. Maria e Donato in Murano (see Chapter IV).

At this stage it is useful to introduce a few issues that clarify the architect's position on restoration in his early career, and that reflect the complex situation of Ottocento restoration in Italy during the 1860s. The restoration project for the Church of SS. Maria e Donato allowed Boito to try out his abilities as a restorer for the first time. On this occasion, he presented a scheme that was essentially a compromise between the 'stylistic integration' concepts of the French tradition and the cautious methodologies of the British approach. His project was never executed but it represents a first emblematic milestone in the architect's position on restoration methodologies. Boito's careful report on the Church entails proposals for invasive interventions, which state that "all organic forms, the columns, the arches, the windows and the ceilings will be replicated according to ancient evidence (...)" and that "the altars will be renewed and recomposed in Byzantine manner, with tabernacles supported by columns made with various types of coloured marble with gilded capitals and some decorations."²⁹ In the later passages of the report, the architect seems to change his mind, revealing some doubts: "the cleaning and renovation of ancient monuments is a profanation that is ubiquitously used in our restoration tradition"; "intervention has to be limited to the minimum, just enough to preserve the material conservation of the monument; it is best to religiously respect every ancient shape and irregularity; respect every colour, every stain that time – a grand painter and harmoniser – left on the monument."³⁰

So to what extent did Boito's approach to monument restoration develop? In his Charter of Restoration of 1883, methodology and scientific proof are of described as being of paramount importance. For him, the modern approach to restoration left no room for any interpretative subjective input by the restorer. Yet the Charter was just one of the many positions on restoration that the architect expressed and applied throughout his career. The previously cited early restoration project for the church in Murano is one

²⁹ Tutte le forme organiche, le colonne, gli archi, le finestre, i tetti sono riprodotti sui resti e sugli indizi antichi (...) il tetto si ornerà con vari intrecciamenti geometrici, colorati a varie e vivaci tinte. Gli altari, tutti rinnovati, come s'è detto, e composti in modo bizantino, con tabernacoli sostenuti da colonne, si costruiranno in diversi marmi, e dipingeranno a varie tinte, dorandone i capitelli e alcuni ornamenti.' Boito, Camillo. "Relazione del progetto di restauro per la basilica di S. Maria e Donato in Murano, con tavole." Tipografia di Domenico Salvi e Comp., Milano, 1861:13

³⁰ Vuolsi sfuggire come profanazione stoltissima il pulire, il lavare, il rimodernare i monumenti dell'antichità; e purtroppo in questa profanazione stoltissima si cade spesso fra noi. Bisogna mettervi le mani solo quel tanto ch'è utile alla material conservazione di essi; ma rispettare conviene religiosamente ogni antica forma e irregolarità: rispettare ogni tinta, ogni macchia, di che il tempo – gran pittore e gran armonizzatore – colorì l'edificio. Ibid. 1861:14

example illustrating Boito's shifting stance. The next chapters aim to investigate these different approaches, both at the theoretical and practical level.

The scholarly literature on Boito has often considered his practice to be controversial. One major aim of this dissertation is to consider whether the architect's restoration practice was based on a rationale that took account of the monument's context. Regardless of its nature – social, cultural, historical or urban – the context in which Boito operated strongly affected his thought and accomplishments in matters of heritage conservation and restoration. With regard to the latter, it is interesting to consider one central aspect of Boito's restoration practice, namely that he undertook monument restorations within fast developing urban environments.

Boito's restoration projects were often located in urban areas that were at the centre of the social and cultural life of the city. In Milan, Boito operated within a prototype of what was becoming a reality for future European cities. In terms of architecture, the deep social and cultural transformations of the post-unification period entailed the formation of new infrastructures and the reorganisation of the city plan. The city was extensively adapted to accommodate demographic growth. Its buildings had to be tailored to technological progress (such as for instance heating, lighting and electrical appliances), but at the same time respect the historical fabric.³¹

Restoration had to take account of the fact that they were now part of a modern urban environment. Boito addressed these issues within the wider project of an Italian national renaissance, both addressing matters of cultural heritage conservation and national architecture. Ancient monuments could not stop the development of urbanisation. Both had to evolve in close relation with one another.³² From unification, architects, sanitation experts, engineers and economists, strong supporters of the expansion, all agreed upon the fact that the growth of the city could be translated into numerical formulas.³³

³¹ Gallo 1992:34

³² In Milan, the process of transformation of its centre from medieval city to commercial hub, already begun in the first decades of the 1800s. Also, due to the cautious yet powerful boost of industrial economy within the regional and the consequent expansion of the transformation system, Milan played an increasingly important role within the economy at the national level and this is clearly shown by the demographic surveys of the post-unification period. In 1861, year of the unification, Milan reaches 192 000 people, in addition to the other 48 000 that lived in the outer territory of the *Corpi Santi* (farmsteads and small agricultural villages located outside the Milanese walls, the 'Bastioni'). Only to decades later, in 1881, the Milanese population increased to 340 000 inhabitants and the residents in the outskirts, annexed to the city in 1873, grew up to 108 000 inhabitants. *ibid.* 1992:34. Also citing E. Dalmaso, *Milano Capitale economica dell'Italia*, Milano 1972, pp. 522-526

³³ Zucconi, Guido. *La città contesa. Dagli ingegneri sanitari agli urbanisti (1855-1942)*. Jaca Book, Milano 1999:93

The rapid development of Italian cities on the one hand and their ancient nature on the other soon led to differences of opinion within scholarly, academic and political circles. The enthusiasts for modernisation, mostly engineers and sanitation experts, clashed with conservationists, such as for instance the scholars who favoured retaining an artistic and historical component in the urbanisation process. The first phase of urban modernisation was primarily focused on matters of public hygiene, and civic architecture.

The general attitude was to disregard ancient buildings and monuments and substitute them with new structures. According to Zucconi, concerns about the conservation of historic monuments in the urban context became more prominent at the beginning of the 1880s. Such worries established a movement for their retention that became a fundamental principle of Italian urban renewal that was established in the decades that followed.³⁴ Still stronger opposition to the radical modification of the historical city centres occurred in the 1890s.

In Milan, some of the most vocal protestors against demolition were Camillo Boito, his pupil Luca Beltrami (1854–1933), Corrado Ricci (1858–1934) and Gaetano Moretti (1860–1938).³⁵ They stressed the importance of preserving ancient city centres and their buildings to safeguard not just the history of the town but also its cultural and civic identity. These scholars often identified the guilty parties as being the sanitation experts and engineers, as illustrated by Boito's writings. The divergence of opinions is so pronounced that there does not even seem to be a common battlefield. The paladins of progress despised the historical qualities of the city such as for instance narrow streets and ancient, sometimes, gloomy buildings. They considered the medieval period one of the lowest points of the artistic productions of Italian history.

Conversely, the supporters of heritage conservation emphasised the balance and beauty of the ancient city, criticising the vulgar and pretentious urban Ottocento architecture that in their view destroyed the memory of a civic culture.³⁶ This debate was not restricted to just Milan and Padua but took place in all major Italian cities that were

³⁴ *ibid.* Zucconi 1999:94

³⁵ *ibid.* Zucconi 1999:96

³⁶ *ibid.* Zucconi 1999:97

undergoing significant urban development, such as for instance, Rome (1886-1911), Naples (1885-1894), Florence (1864-70) and Venice (1891-1913).³⁷

The debate became so popular within the scholarly circles soon reaching the national political sphere. Where it had once taken the form of small references that infrequently appeared in specialised periodicals, it now became a major topic of debate about the future of Italy's cities.³⁸

The modernisation issue: heritage in the urban context

One of Boito's reflections on the pioneering subject of architectural conservation and its relationship with new architecture features in his essay on Venice's Sant'Elena and Santa Marta published in the anthology *Gite di un artista* (1884).³⁹ In this essay, Boito discusses the importance of heritage conservation that needed to be adopted in Italy. He harshly criticised the erection of 'ugly' modern houses and factories. Such buildings in his eyes should symbolise the new era of prosperity and industrialisation but according to Boito, their design completely disregarded the artistic beauty of the Venetian island.

For him, heritage conservation should not only be limited to the monument itself but to the surrounding environment too. This essay will be discussed more thoroughly in the following chapter, but it is important at this stage to stress the pioneering quality of Boito's idea, namely the concept of 'indirect protection', which – in modern legislation – safeguards both the monument and its adjacent spaces.⁴⁰

Also, in his later volume *Questioni Pratiche di Belle Arti* (1893) Boito pointed out further exemplary cases of monuments whose conservation involved their aesthetic harmonisation with the adjacent environment, as for example with the Palazzo di San Giorgio in Genoa, the Palazzo Ducale in Venice and the Palazzo Guastaverza in Verona.⁴¹ Likewise, the following chapter will discuss how restoration interventions on monuments that had been part of the people's social and cultural life for centuries, prompted lively debates among the local townspeople. Experts, architects and scholars,

³⁷ Fontana, Vincenzo. "Ampliamenti e sventramenti di città." *Profilo di architettura italiana del Novecento*. Marsilio, Venezia, 1999:41-50. The provided dates for each city do not encompass a single project of urban development but refer to a time span, which included the modernization of diverse parts of the cities.

³⁸ Zucconi 1999:94

³⁹ Boito, Camillo. "Sant'Elena e Santa Marta." *Gite di un artista*, Hoepli 1884:57-85

⁴⁰ The notion of "indirect protection" features in the article 46 in The General Dispositions of the Codice dei beni culturali e del paesaggio, ai sensi dell'articolo 10 della legge 6 luglio 2002, n. 137, Decreto Legislativo 22 gennaio 2004, n. 42, pubblicato nella *Gazzetta Ufficiale* n. 45 del 24 febbraio 2004

⁴¹ Boito, Camillo. *Questioni pratiche di belle arti: restauri, concorsi, legislazione, professione, insegnamento*. Hoepli, 1893.

such as Boito moderated these debates, often representing the interests of the public. It is on these occasions that topics concerning cultural heritage conservation overcame the boundaries of elite scholarly circles.

This confrontation gradually brought the debate about urbanisation and artistic and historical conservation a step further. Scholars and experts began to spot grey areas where conservation found a new value within the framework of urbanisation. This new aspect of conservation goes beyond the mere restoration of the monument for the sake of its symbolic memory; it may at times include the re-purposing of the monument or edifice for the use of the contemporary society. This is for instance the case of Boito's restoration of the medieval gate of Porta Ticinese in Milan (1861), which will be discussed Chapter IV.

Moreover, the debate increasingly moved toward the realisation that there was a need for a proper and comprehensive policy of conservation at the national level. If Boito aimed to establish national guidelines for restoration with his Charter of 1883, still a decade later in 1892 his pupil Luca Beltrami felt the need to refine the debate. Following the lead of his master in matters of 'indirect protection', Beltrami underlines how a harmonious continuum around the restored monument is essential to preserve the artistic environment of the city, but he goes further than this.⁴²

Addressing the topic of major interventions in urban development Beltrami argues that the category of monuments worthy of protection should go beyond renowned monuments and works of art. He believes that even buildings, which do not have as much aesthetic quality should be safeguarded from demolition as they represent an historic environment and are its legacy.⁴³

Beltrami was specifically referring to the Florentine urban development plan, the restoration of the façade of S. Maria del Fiore by Emilio de Fabris (1867–87) and the contemporaneous demolition of the nearby Mercato Vecchio (1885–1895) in favour of the creation of the Piazza della Repubblica.⁴⁴ For him, the approach of disregarding or ignoring the importance of 'minor' buildings would lead to a fragmented understanding of the major historic monuments, thus ignoring a broad spectrum of Italy's cultural

⁴² Beltrami, Luca. "La conservazione dei monumenti nell'ultimo ventennio." *Nuova Antologia*, Vol. xxxviii, serie III, 1892:2-26

⁴³ *ibid* Beltrami 1892:2

⁴⁴ *ibid* Beltrami 1892:2 and Fontana 1999:46-48

heritage.⁴⁵ This brief digression on Beltrami shows how the debate on urban development and cultural heritage had become a topic of fundamental importance for subsequent architects.

The discussion did not start with Boito and end with his retirement. Rather his contribution belonged to a wider debate, which might be described as the conservation movement.⁴⁶ This movement can be divided into two phases. In the first phase – dating from the 1850s to 1885 – conservationists carried out their work in the name of a nostalgic image of the city, which was slowly disappearing under a painful, yet necessary, modernisation.

The second began in 1885 with the condemnation of the new urban development plan for Naples. For the first time, the engineers responsible for the sanitary planning of Naples – working as part of the Urban Renewal Decree – are publicly identified and accused of environmental tampering. Thereafter sanitation plans and more generally urban development plans became the target of allegations, while campaigns against demolitions extend to cities ranging right across the country.

From this stage onwards, the argument becomes heated and more vicious. Reproaches and attacks escalated between conservationists and modernists.⁴⁷ The chief allegations concern the destruction of buildings of perceived artistic and cultural importance. Furthermore, the engineer as a professional figure was becoming vilified for his promotion of the construction industry, whose sole interest was to demolish historic city centres to add to their own fortunes.⁴⁸

At the same time, however, there were also successful proposals of urban development, conceived by architects or engineers, who like Boito, were aware of the need for urban modernisation, but also of the obligation to respect monuments and buildings of historic interest. A survey by Boriani of 1992 looks at the relationship between cultural heritage conservation and the development of the modern city in late nineteenth-century Italy. This study focuses on the General Development Plan for Milan by the engineer and architect Cesare Beruto (1835–1915). Compared to other contemporary urban development schemes, Beruto's plan dealt rather successfully with the historic buildings.

⁴⁵ Zucconi, Guido. *La città contesa. Dagli ingegneri sanitari agli urbanisti (1855-1942)*. Jaca Book, Milano 1999:93

⁴⁶ The term “conservation movement” is also the title of the volume by Miles Glendinning. *The conservation movement: a history of architectural conservation: antiquity to modernity*. Routledge, London, 2013, which is also used as literary source in this research project.

⁴⁷ Zucconi 1999:94

⁴⁸ Zucconi 1999:95

Boriani notes how modern scholarly studies rarely consider the outlook of Ottocento urbanisation towards historic edifices in Milan.⁴⁹ The buildings featuring artistic and historical value played a crucial role in the urban development of the city, both in transmitting symbolic meanings for a newly unified country and also, as mentioned above, in being re-purposed. Intervention criteria in the Lombard city were characterised by relentless attempts to reconcile the conservation of historic buildings with the functional needs of the modern city.⁵⁰

Throughout his career, Boito participated in the debate about urban renovation in many ways: as a scholar, as an honourable member of academic and municipal commissions defending historical monuments from demolition, and last but not least as architect, as demonstrated by his projects of the Elementary School in Padua (1880) and for the Nursing Home for Musicians in Milan (1899).

Boito's architectural projects will not be discussed in this thesis. Nevertheless, it is important to point out that monument conservation in nineteenth century Italy was closely related to urban modernisation plans which was inevitably linked to the themes of national architecture as well.

The dichotomy between conservation and modernisation in Italy became a long dispute between modernizers and conservationists, which ran parallel to the conservation debate. Throughout the nineteenth century, the balance between heritage conservation and urban modernisation remained precarious and predominantly unresolved, without winners or losers.

For the sake of completeness, it is worthwhile mentioning that next to his major commitment for monument conservation and restoration Boito dedicated much attention to the theme of national architecture throughout his career. He presented some of the most thought-provoking ideas of the time with regard to a unified style for the Italy, which can be found in the Introduction of his work *Architettura del Medioevo* in Italia of 1880.

Last but not least, it is relevant to note that all of Boito's monument restorations discussed in the following chapters should be examined within the context of urban modernisation of a recently unified country looking forward to turning its main cities

⁴⁹ Boriani, Maurizio. "Uso e abuso dei monumenti nella costruzione della Milano ottocentesca." *La Milano del piano Beruto: (1884-1889): società, urbanistica e architettura nella seconda metà dell'Ottocento*. Boriani, Maurizio, Augusto Rossari, and R. Rozzi. *La Milano del piano Beruto (1884-1889)*. Guerini e associati, Milano, 1992:385
⁵⁰ *ibid.* 1992:385-386

into efficient municipalities. At the same time, the parallel theme of national architecture and the fact that Boito was first and foremost an architect should be considered too when looking at his restoration work. Whether a small village or a large city, monuments in Italy mostly feature in populated and often areas around the centre of towns and cities.

Within the debate of conservation vs. modernisation monuments would be destroyed, re-used or maintained in order to have an ongoing presence for the citizens. Boito's understanding of the monument belies the fact that the monument has to remain part of the cultural life and of the developing urban community at the cost of undergoing modifications and adaptations.

These are the aspects that mostly distinguish Boito's methodology of restoration and approach to the monument. The next chapters will attempt to outline how Boito set a leading example for other contemporary Italian peers while distinguishing himself from international colleagues in France and the United Kingdom.

Historical roots and context: Italy and its monuments

Before concentrating on the question of contemporary heritage conservation and monument restoration in Italy that Boito was facing, it is necessary to examine the broader picture of the Italian pre-unification states. Despite being fragmented and partly under the foreign power of various European powers for centuries, the Italian states did have a tradition of protecting their building heritage.⁵¹

Even today, sculptures, monuments, historical edifices and churches are preserved in their original places. Moreover the interest in preserving them has not been tied to the status of the location. Their conservation has been largely consistent regardless of whether the object or monument was in a major city, in the countryside or in the

⁵¹ Settis, Salvatore. "Cultura ed etica della tutela: una storia italiana." *Paesaggio Costituzione Cemento, La battaglia per l'ambiente contro il degrado civile*. Giulio Einaudi Editore, Trento, 2010:84. Some of the fundamental principles of this tradition have been employed for the regulations of cultural heritage conservation today at the international level as implemented by organisations such as UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation). The first article of the 1970 Convention Text of Unesco lists all properties and art objects that can be defined as 'cultural property'; article two, follows with the regulation of illicit export, transport or transfer of ownership of cultural heritage. When looking at this regulatory convention text it becomes evident how these present-day measures were strongly inspired from the guidelines of papal bulls or edicts that Italian states promulgated many centuries before unification (*Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property* 1970. The General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, meeting in Paris from 12 October to 14 November 1970, 16th session). As of today, Italy leads the Unesco World Heritage List with 51 sites, with 47 sites being cultural and 5 being natural sites (See <http://whc.unesco.org/en/statesparties/it>). Regardless of this record, which does not by far represent the 'real' quantity of cultural heritage conservation in Italy, the most important aspect to note with regard to Italy's cultural heritage is the *quality* of its cultural property. Compared to other countries, Italy's cultural heritage most qualifying characteristic features in the harmonious integration of city and countryside, of cultural heritage and landscape and of nature and culture.

smallest village.⁵² The need to preserve their ancient past led the pre-unification Italian states to draw up provisions for the conservation of certain buildings many centuries before the Italian unification in 1861⁵³

Despite having independent administrations, it is safe to say that the Italian pre-unification states manifested a common desire and direction in terms of monument conservation. Regardless of the Italian State, the concept that the conservation of monuments and of places of cultural significance was not only a civic duty but one that had to be regulated by public institutions was very much the norm. Salvatore Settis has analysed cultural heritage in Italy from the point of view of its legal, cultural and historical frameworks. Referring back to the term 'public', he argues that the main idea behind cultural and architectural heritage is *demanio*, or 'public good'.⁵⁴

The long history of the notion of *demanio* in the Italian conventional tradition reaches back for at least two thousand years, starting from the Roman Empire. Since then, the concept of *demanio* enduring throughout history with more or less stable connotations has always been tied to the core idea of public responsibility through public administration.

The idea of a 'public good' that constitutes the very core of what community and society as such are was present in the Italian medieval communes and it means more than just public property: it is a concrete symbolic embodiment of communitarian principles. The understanding and self-interpretation of community and society in Italy, has always been linked to the very idea of common good, managed either by a kind of public administration or by the State.⁵⁵ The common good and therefore, cultural heritage, is a carrier of civil values and a guarantor of social and of associated life, bonding the different social experiences of diverse social classes, from the most educated to the humble parts of the population.⁵⁶

This relationship between cultural heritage and ethical, civic and political roots may explain why regulations and decrees related to cultural heritage law were rather similar on the territory of the Italic peninsula, long before unification. It might be interesting at this stage to look at some main institutional steps that were promulgated by the Italian

⁵² Ibid. 2010: 85

⁵³ Ibid. 2010:86

⁵⁴ Ibid. 2010:108-110

⁵⁵ Ibid. 2010:109

⁵⁶ Ibid. 2010:111. This situation is very different compared to other nations or societies, as for instance the Anglo-American one, which entails quite different connotations. In the United States or in the United Kingdom for example, public property has never played a crucial role in defining society – on the contrary, it is much more private than public property that defines nation, state and society.

states from the 15th century onwards for the conservation of places and monuments of cultural significance, evidencing that the concern for cultural heritage conservation and preservation developed with analogous features among the ancient independent Italian states.

In fifteenth-century Rome, the humanist Popes of the time had already felt the need to preserve the treasures and ancient vestiges from plundering. With the enduring crisis of the 'Babylonian captivity' of the papacy in Avignon and the religious schism still ongoing, the Popes aimed to reaffirm their authority and emphasize the greatness of the Papacy by creating a parallel with the glory of Imperial Rome by safeguarding their artistic heritage. So for instance, Martin's V (1417–1431) papal bull of 1425 *Etsi de cunctarum* forbade the demolition of public and privately owned buildings. In addition, he ordered the destruction of modern buildings which were too close to ancient monuments and he created a committee of 'Magistri viarium' modelled on the Roman *edili* (similar to Roman magisters) in order to monitor the decorum and appearance of the Roman streets and squares.⁵⁷ This edict mainly focused on the embellishment of the deteriorating urban environment of Rome. Nevertheless, by addressing the ancient monuments and buildings (the term ancient in this case refers to the pureness of classical art that needed to be freed from any vulgar posthumous additions or modifications) the edict initiated a line of thought concerning historical edifices or monument conservation that became recurrent in later edicts promulgated both in Rome but also in other Italian states.

A few decades later, in 1462 Pope Pius II Piccolomini's bull *Cum aliam nostrum Urbem* forbade the demolition or partial destruction of public as well as privately owned ancient monuments and buildings; the same policy was then reinforced by Pope Sixtus IV della Rovere's bull *Quam provvida*, which went a step further and prohibited the sale of monuments and ornaments belonging to Roman churches.⁵⁸

Unfortunately these decrees did not stop the plundering and illegal exportation of monuments from Rome, as the marbles continued to be traded from the city or, even worse, were turned into limestone. This distressing occurrence is also testified by a popular letter by Raphael of 1519 to Pope Leo X describing the city of Rome as one

⁵⁷ Levi, Donata. "The Administration of Historical Heritage. The Italian Case." In Fisch, Stefan. *National approaches to the governance of historical heritage over time: a comparative report*. No. 9. IOS Press, 2008:103-128

⁵⁸ Ibid. 2008:104-104

where not much of the ancient remains is left.⁵⁹ The letter conveys the writer's deep sorrow at seeing "quasi el cadavero di quella nobil patria, che é stata regina del mondo, cosi miseramente lacerate" (almost a corpse of that noble country, which once was queen of the world, so miserably ruined, author's translation) hence expressing the strong will to preserve the memory of ancient Rome. The letter continues with Raphael's exhortations to the Pope to ensure that what is left of the grand and glorious Italy should not be destroyed by malign and ignorant people.⁶⁰

Raphael was aware of the need to care for the sacred vestiges 'sanctae vetustates' and at the same time he supported the necessity for the Papal power to promote the idea of Christian Rome as the direct descendant of Imperial Rome. A popular historical anecdote tells that Raphael had been appointed Prefect of Antiquities (Prefetto delle Antichità) of Rome in 1515. The true version however, is that Pope Leo X put Raphael in charge of looking for marble up to 10 miles around Rome. This marble had to be used for the construction of St. Peter's that Raphael was directing at the time. By searching for marble, Raphael was told to spare the epigraphs, as they were useful for the study of the Latin language. The myth of Raphael as 'Prefect of Antiquities' was then nourished by later sources as the Chirography of Pius VII, which defines the artist's role as a precedent for a 'General director of Fine Arts.'⁶¹

Nevertheless, this role of vigilance acquired such importance to preserve monuments and historical edifices in Rome that also the Farnese Pope Paul III in 1534, almost two decades later, instituted another Commissary of Antiquities. The directorate of this institution included renowned figures such as the Italian Renaissance painter Giovan Pietro Bellori (from 1670–1694) and even by Johan Joachim Winckelman (1763–1668).⁶²

The organisation of cultural heritage conservation in Florence was also inspired by the Roman system, yet slightly different in its approach. Florence based its edicts on a dynastic cultural identity with strong connotations of political power. In 1571 the Grand Duchy of Tuscany issued a decree against the removal or destruction of architectural ornaments –as for instance coats of arms or inscriptions in the city of Florence; with this

⁵⁹ "ardirei dire, che tutta questa nuova Roma che hor si vede, quanto grande che ella vi sia, quanto bella, quanto ornate di palazzo, di chiese e altri edifici, sia fabbricata di calcina fatta di marmi antichi (...) con l'aiuto tuo mi sforcerò vendicare dalla morte quel poco che resta from di Teodoro, Francesco, P. Raffaello, Baldassare Castiglione e la lettera a Leone X. Nuova Alfa Editoriale, Bologna 1994.

⁶⁰ Ibid. : "Non deve adunque, Padre Santissimo, essere tra gli ultimi pensieri di Vostra Santità lo aver cura che quel poco che resta di questa antica madre della gloria e della grandezza italiana, per testimonio del valore e della virtù di quegli animi divini, che pur talor con la loro memoria eccitano alla virtù gli spiriti che oggi sono tra noi, non sia estirpato, e guasto dalli maligni e ignoranti; che pur troppo si sono infin qui fatte ingiurie a quelle anime che col loro sangue partoriscono tanta gloria al mondo."

⁶¹ Settis 2010:101

⁶² Ibid. 2010: 101

statute, Cosimo I de' Medici's intent was to preserve the appearance and the glory of the city as well as the historical evidence of splendour that ratified his role of Grand Duke.

The greater part of subsequent legislation in Florence concerned the prohibition to export precious stones: this was mainly due to the construction of the prince's private chapel in San Lorenzo, also known as Cappella dei Principi. This approach was also adopted by his successors, Francis I and Ferdinand I, as the decrees were mainly based on the family's patronage and precious collections.

Above all, Florentine legislation aimed to preserve dynastic cultural heritage, but at the same time, the civic value of art was not restricted to the elite only: work on the Uffizi Gallery began in 1560 under the supervision of the art historian Giorgio Vasari to offer the view of these treasuries for public enjoyment. Ultimately, a highly conservative policy for the protection of cultural heritage was promoted in 1602, when the export of paintings by the most important artists – among these Michelangelo, Raffaello Sanzio, Andrea del Sarto and Rosso Fiorentino – was prohibited outside the Grand Duchy of Tuscany.⁶³

Last but not least, the so-called *Patto di Famiglia* ("Family Pact") of 1737, drawn up between the last Medici princess Anna Maria Luisa (daughter of Cosimo de' Medici III) and the Habsburg-Lorraine family, the new dynasty taking over Florence the same year, stipulated that the Lorraine family was prohibited to export works of art and cultural heritage outside Florence and outside the Grand Duchy of Tuscany. The new reigning family should neither move "nor remove from the Capital of the Grand ducal State ... Galleries, Paintings, Statues, Libraries, Jewels and other precious objects ... of the succession of His Serene Grand Duke", so that they should remain "as ornament of the State, for Public utility and to attract the curiosity of Foreigners."⁶⁴

Many other edicts and bulls followed throughout the centuries up to the early nineteenth century, both in the Church State and also in the other independent Italian states. It may go beyond the scope of this thesis to enumerate all of them; however, it is important to stress how these became more legally refined, specific and complex in their conception. For instance, the private ownership of monuments and edifices of historical

⁶³ Levi 2008:104

⁶⁴ "La Serenissima Elettrice cede, dà e trasferisce al presente a S.A.R. per Lui, e i Suoi Successori Gran Duchi, tutti i Mobili, Effetti e Rarità della successione del Serenissimo Gran Duca suo fratello, come Gallerie, Quadri, Statue, Biblioteche, Gioie ed altre cose preziose, siccome le Sante Reliquie e Reliquiari, e loro Ornamenti della Cappella del Palazzo Reale, che S.A.R. si impegna di conservare, a condizione espressa ch'è quello [che] è per ornamento dello Stato, per utilità del pubblico e per attirare la curiosità dei Forestieri, non ne sarà nulla trasportato, o levato fuori della Capitale, e dello Stato del Gran Ducato." Valentini Anita, *Il testamento di Anna Maria Luisa de' Medici*, Polistampa, Firenze, 2006:9-10

value was firstly addressed in the bull of Pope Gregory XIII (Ugo Boncompagni 1502–1585) ‘Quae publicae utilia et decorae’ of 1574, putting restrictions on privately owned works of art – the exportation of certain works of art outside the boundaries of the Church State became prohibited.⁶⁵

Another legal improvement was a detailed categorisation of artistic items that went beyond the generic terms ‘historical edifices’ or ‘monuments’: rare books, illuminations, manuscripts and archaeological objects became subject to law, i.e. were subject to the prohibition of exportation thanks to the 1704 edict of Cardinal Giovan Battista Spinola.⁶⁶ This veto was subsequently reinforced in the 1733 edict of Cardinal Annibale Albani.⁶⁷ Both edicts are based on the concept of the *utilitas publica*, i.e. ‘public utility’, which in these edicts is always cited as the main purpose for the protection of cultural heritage.

The public and civic enjoyment of art is consistently linked to the intrinsic status of monument and history. As mentioned above, this conception is rooted in Roman law: the *legatum ad patriam* or *dicatio ad patriam*, namely the juridical concept according to which, whatever is displayed in public space, even by a private person, partly influences the legal condition of the citizens, hence becoming subject to public use and service.⁶⁸ Accordingly, this connotation of patrimony has been present in Italy for centuries.

Throughout the nineteenth century lawyers refined the notion of patrimony, which generated two diverse usages. One implication entails the property of the good, which can be private or public, whereas the other comprises historical and cultural values, which are in any case pertinent to the community. From this perspective, the very expression of cultural patrimony or heritage abolishes any individualistic undertone, thus involving social responsibilities that simultaneously strengthen a shared cultural background and shape a pact of citizenship. The civil function of monuments and places of cultural significance mirrored the *Volksgeist* of a population and became resilient factors within the history of Italian nation-formation.

Following the long tradition inaugurated by the Papal States in the 15th century, they continued to maintain their lead in the nineteenth century. There are two major documents that crucially upgraded conservation of cultural heritage at the legal and administrative level and both came from the Papal States. The first was the Chirography

⁶⁵ Settis 2010:108

⁶⁶ Levi 2008:105

⁶⁷ Settis 2010:108

⁶⁸ Ibid Settis 2010:108-109

of Pius VII in 1802, promulgated by the Cardinal Giuseppe Doria Pamphilij. This edict was inspired by the famous Italian archaeologist and art collector Carlo Fea (1753–1836), possibly strongly influenced by the artist Antonio Canova (1757–1822) whose thought was that the conservation of cultural heritage served as ‘nourishing for the Arts’.⁶⁹

In addition, Pius VII’s Chirography, firstly established Central and Peripheral Commissions of Fine Arts with appointed inspectors whose administrative functions ranged from the supervision of archaeological excavations to the issue of export licenses.⁷⁰ The edict of Cardinal Pacca of 1820, comprising sixty-one articles regulating the export, the care and the material restoration of monuments and objects of arts shortly followed the Chirography and was likewise a pioneering document for the conservation of cultural heritage. In one article of 2009 the scholar Settis stresses the timing in which these two key edicts were promulgated.

The Chirography of 1802 was issued a few years after the French despoiled thousands of art works from Rome. The Edict of Cardinal Pacca of 1820 was delivered shortly after Napoleon’s defeat and the winning powers – England, Prussia, Austria and Russia – forced France to return the majority of the spoiled objects of art to Rome. The double trauma of spoilage and restitution of works of art inevitably led to set up a more solid and coherent system to protect cultural heritage at many levels.⁷¹

These edicts are striking for the comprehensiveness of their measures and exactness of juridical language. Eventually, both edicts were to remain the milestones of Italian legislation after unification and formed the basis of the first systematic act concerning national art heritage. As mentioned above, both the Chirography of 1802 but also the Edict of 1820 stressed a novel interpretation with regard the role of antiquities: these served as nourishment to the arts and as a model and example for artists. So, as the Fine Arts, born in Greece had been transferred to and taken up permanent residence in Rome, it was the city’s duty to keep prototypes and examples of artistic beauty for ornament and for the education of the public. The concept of public utility justifies the strict care of all monuments, on both private and public property.⁷²

⁶⁹ Settis, Salvatore, La Chiesa, Sentinella dell’Arte. *Arteconomy*24, *l Sole 24Ore*. 12 March 2009

⁷⁰ The author of the Chirography of 1802 was the Italian archaeologist Carlo Fea (1753–1836). Since 1799 he was pontifical commissary of Antiquities. In the drafting of the text he was probably supported by the Italian artist Antonio Canova (1757–1822). Settis 2010: 98

⁷¹ Settis, Salvatore, La Chiesa, Sentinella dell’Arte, *il Sole 24Ore* 12.3.2009

⁷² Levi 2008:108

Approaching the end of the nineteenth century, the policies for the protection cultural heritage that had been adopted from the Italian independent states needed to take a new direction. This was mainly due to the process of nation formation throughout the nineteenth century. The necessity to protect local and national heritage within the national boundaries and safeguard it from foreign powers was now a matter that from an institutional point of view, had to be solved centrally, while at the same time reaching the most peripheral areas of the Italic peninsula. As mentioned in the first chapter, the need for a unified set of laws aimed at protecting the national art heritage arose immediately after the unification in 1861.

At the same time, the topic was obviously not on top of the crowded agenda so it appeared more prudent to follow the previous system for the conservation of art heritage by maintaining the legislation of the pre-Unitarian states. In 1832 King Charles Albert of the Kingdom of Sardinia had created the *Giunta di Antichità e belle Arti*. In several aspects, this decree was in line with the rulings of the other independent states.⁷³ The Giunta was made up of art and archaeology experts and featured connections with the Academies and with the University of Turin as also with peripheral bodies in Genoa and in the surrounding area of Savoy.⁷⁴ The regulations the Royal Decree of 1832 promoted the research and the conservation of artistic and ancient objects, yet with one peculiarity: each measure had to respect the right of private property.

In 1848, the Albertine Statute, specifically in article 29, ruled that the principle of private property was inviolable, automatically extending the concept to cultural heritage.⁷⁵ The reference to public interest is only mentioned in relation to a 'just indemnity' that the owner may receive for renouncing his property in case the public benefit surpasses the necessity of private enjoyment.⁷⁶ The procedures for executing the terms of the Statute however, remain very general. Made up of 84 articles, this Statute endorsed by King Charles Albert of Piedmont-Sardinia on March 4th 1848 also remained in force after the unification of Italy up to 1948, even if with some modifications throughout the decades. Its line of putting private property above everything created some friction in regard to a standardised ruling within the unified Kingdom of Italy.

⁷³ Settis 2010:110

⁷⁴ Ibid. The County and Duchy of Savoy incorporated Turin and other territories in Piedmont, a region in northwestern Italian borders of Savoy, which were also possessions of the House of Savoy.

⁷⁵ Art. 29 – Tutte le proprietà, senza alcuna eccezione, sono inviolabili. [All properties, without any exception, are inviolable.] in *Statuto fondamentale della Monarchia di Savoia pubblicato in Torino il 4 marzo 1848*. Text available on the official website of the Presidency of the Italian Republic, www.quirinale.it

⁷⁶ Ibid. Art. 29, part two: "Tuttavia quando l'interesse pubblico legalmente accertato lo esiga, si può essere tenuti a cederle in tutto o in parte mediante un giusta indennità conformemente alle leggi."

This phenomenon of the great influence of the Albertine Statue even in post-unification Italy may also be defined as the 'Piedmontization' of Italy. The old Piedmont constitution of 1849 was extended to the whole country, together with a code of laws, which was not conceived according to the needs of Italy as a whole but was based on the usages and customs of the Piedmont region. This operation was rather shortsighted in regard to many fields (taxation laws, forestry laws etc) as Piedmont, in Northern Italy had a completely different form of industrialization and climate compared to the Southern Italian regions.⁷⁷ The same discourse goes for cultural heritage and monuments: the Statute's approach, giving primacy to private property was contrasting with the rulings of the Pontifical States in matters of cultural heritage conservation, with public utility and the enjoyment of art being top of the list. This conflicting situation only augmented the administrative hurdles of monument conservation for the whole nation.

Nonetheless, the majority of post-unification decrees addressed the will to avoid the dispersal of cultural heritage, and they continued to emphasise the concept of cultural heritage, of what was to be considered 'worthy of protection' for the public benefit. It was necessary to talk about the idea of cultural heritage, but above all, it was necessary to manage it. This process, according to Boito could only start via political and financial measures issued by the new Italian Government. The innovation mainly concerned the historical monuments, which after unification, pertained to the idea of a shared culture, to memory and its transmission.

Boito realised that the recently unified country was united on paper only. This was due to the fact that Italy's unification had occurred very rapidly. Starting with the first revolutionary years of 1848–49 of the First Italian War of Independence and finishing with a successful war of independence against Austria in 1859, the first Italian Parliament finally met in Turin on 18 February 1861. One month later, on 17 March Victor Emmanuel (1820–1878), former king of Piedmont-Sardinia, was elected King of Italy. Nevertheless, this was not a complete unification. Rome was still part of the Papal States, and the Pope refused to give up temporal power, while Veneto and some provinces in the eastern part of the peninsula were still under Austrian domination.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ Andreucci 1983:239

⁷⁸ The process of Rome becoming the capital of the Kingdom of Italy began in 1870. Characterised by the taking of Rome by Italian troops on September 20th 1870, when Napoleon III was obliged to withdraw the French garrison from the city after the defeat in the Franco-Prussian war. Riall, Lucy. *Risorgimento: the history of Italy from Napoleon to nation state*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2009:147

This was seen as a striking token of national weakness. Eventually, Rome officially became the capital of the Kingdom of Italy in 1871.

Compared to other neighboring countries with which the Italian kingdom had been in closest contact during the nineteenth century, united Italy was quite poor and backward. Whereas Prussia emerged substantially richer from its victories in the war preceding German unification, Piedmont had spent a large part of its resources on the Wars of Independence and its annexation to the rest of Italy hardly improved its financial position. The completion of unification with the conquest of the Veneto and the complex conquest of Rome imposed a huge military expenditure. Secondly, the real unification of the country, on a level of administration, transport, infrastructures, required resources, which were beyond the means of the new kingdom.

Last but not least, the regions with which Piedmont combined to form the kingdom of Italy were poor and backward. While Piedmont and Lombardy had undergone at least in the first half of the century, some degree of economic and social revolution as had transformed the more advanced European countries, the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies and the Papal States, which, with Tuscany, made up the central and southern parts of the new nation, presented a desolate picture.⁷⁹ How could the conservation of cultural heritage, a national plan of monument restoration and administration ever be a priority in the full agenda of a unified country that was struggling under so many aspects?

Since the annexation of Rome in 1871, more than five decades passed for Italy to find an official and far-sighted unity in terms of cultural heritage law. Italy waited until 1939 for its first methodical legislation in the field of arts and archaeology, with the promulgation of the law n. 1089 of June 1st (Legge Bottai). This law operated efficiently for 60 years until the *Testo Unico delle disposizioni legislative in materia di beni culturali e ambientali* (Text concerning the legislative dispositions in matters of cultural and environmental heritage) of 1999. The new remit of the latter is implied in the very title of the law, which refers to environmental heritage, the “beni ambientali” (environmental heritage), but proved itself rather incoherent in many aspects, at times chaotically merging previous laws together yet still attempting to bring together and regulate the large quantity of cultural heritage in Italy.

⁷⁹ Andreucci, Franco. “Modern Italy: 1860 to the Present.” In *The Italians. History, Art, and the genius of a people*, John Julius Norwich (ed.). Harry N. Abrams, Inc., Publishers New York 1983:238

Eventually, the Italian legislators attempted to overcome the grey areas and other contradictions of the discipline with the *Codice dei Beni Culturali e del Paesaggio* of January 22nd 2004, whose principal new strategy is to regulate and put restrictions on movable and immovable cultural heritage regardless of private or public property; cultural heritage has to be preserved for the sake of future generations and comes first and above any private benefit to the owner. The terms ‘tutela’ (to safeguard in broad terms) and ‘valorizzazione’ (there is no literal translation for this word in English but it may be referred to as a combination of promotion, respect and value) are the two main recurrent pillars of the 2004 decree.⁸⁰

Compared to previous legislation we might safely state that the *Codice* is comprehensive in terms of cultural heritage categorisation and for the first time encompasses in a unique framework, cultural heritage and landscape, which as mentioned at the beginning, are often mutually coexisting elements in Italy.

Last but not least, it is safe to state that despite the difficulty of unification unity and at times the flawed judiciary system, Italy has a prolonged and concrete legal tradition of cultural heritage conservation that has been gradually adopted as a model by international law and smaller and larger international organisations aimed at the protection of cultural and natural heritage. It is one of the few and first countries in Europe, which mentions the protection of cultural heritage and landscape in its Constitution, specifically in article 9.⁸¹

Society, regionalism and cultural heritage

Next to the historical context that has been outlined above, in which Boito rather successfully shaped methodological guidelines of restoration at the national level, we shall now further investigate the social and cultural environment in which Boito was operating. A deeper insight into this topic that goes beyond the historiographical reading of Boito’s time may help to further understand the motives and origins of

⁸⁰ The second part of Article 1 states: “La tutela e la valorizzazione del patrimonio culturale concorrono a preservare la memoria della comunità nazionale e del suo territorio e a promuovere lo sviluppo della cultura.” [The conservation and promotion of cultural heritage mutually collaborate in order to preserve the memory and the territory of the national community and to promote the development of culture, editor’s translation] in *Codice dei beni culturali e del paesaggio* (testo integrato) Decreto legislativo 22 gennaio 2004, n. 42 recante il “Codice dei beni culturali e del paesaggio” ai sensi dell’articolo 10 della legge 6 luglio 2002, n. 137

⁸¹ Costituzione della Repubblica Italiana, Art. 9: “La Repubblica promuove lo sviluppo della cultura e la ricerca scientifica e tecnica. Tutela il paesaggio e il patrimonio storico e artistico della Nazione.”. See also Settis 2010:130-131

Boito's theory on restoration and cultural heritage conservation in post-unification Italy, which should not be treated in isolation.

As mentioned in the Literature Review section, contemporary scholarship has initiated a new approach to reading Boito's work encouraging scholars to consider the architect's operational decisions in monument restoration and architecture: this being the result of several contextual factors that may have influenced his work. With that in mind, while modern scholarship dedicated considerable attention to the effects of nation formation on Boito's theories of national architecture and his adoption of a medieval Lombard architecture as the chosen manner for a national style, not the same has been done with regard to Boito's restoration theory and methodological understanding of the monuments.

This is rather curious and brings out a paradox in the reading and criticism of Boito's work: his ideas on national architecture failed to become a standardised direction in post-unification Italy, although the architect's civil architectural projects dedicated to the new-born country (The Elementary Schools in Padua, 1880 and the Nursing Home for Musicians, 1899 for instance) were the most praised of his works.

At the same time, his monument restorations, mostly harshly criticised on different levels, led to the nationally acknowledged success with the Charter of Restoration of 1883. Hence, the aim of this chapter is to focus on Boito's theory and practice of cultural heritage conservation and understand to which extent the specificity of Boito's cultural, social and national environment must be considered in order to best comprehend his ideas on monument conservation.

It has been mentioned how Boito was chiefly based in Milan since 1859, maintaining throughout his career strong professional and sentimental ties to Venice and Padua. The city of Milan is located in the region of Lombardy and is considered together with Turin and Genoa a point of the industrialised triangle of Italy since as early as unification.⁸² Boito's decision was not casual; joining his brother in Milan was not only motivated by familial reasons.

Boito knew that Milan was culturally the liveliest city and that this verve could offer him way more opportunities than Rome or Venice. Milan had been highly active, financially

⁸² Andreucci 1983:237

and culturally, as its location, strongly connected to Northern Europe, was open to receive the most progressive philosophical and political transalpine ideas. One small yet significant proof of this open-mindedness that is strongly related to Boito's role in Milan is the fact that by the end of the 1850s, the Library of the Milanese Academy in Brera (unlike other libraries in other Italian provincial capitals) purchased several manuals and treaties of architecture and monument conservation in the German language. As the Director of the Milanese Academy and its academic studies of Architecture, Boito believed that these international volumes were outstandingly important for the formation of the architect.⁸³

Boito himself, like his master Selvatico, was an avid reader of international literature. His private library, today part of the Miscellanea Boito, featured several volumes on architecture, monument restoration, cultural heritage maintenance, engineering and hygiene in Italian, English, German and French.

It has to be noted also that the Academy of Brera in Milan played a central role in the conservation of cultural heritage and monuments in Milan and in the regional territory of the Kingdom of Lombardy-Venetia (which had been created in 1815 by the Austrians). Besides two Central Congregations – one in Lombardy and one in Venetia – and Provincial congregations (*Congregazioni centrali and Congregazioni Provinciali*), it was mostly local cultural institutions that managed and restored the monuments.⁸⁴

Hence the crucial responsibility of the Milanese Academia, which was the voice for all matters related to the fine arts but also fulfilled a role of care of the artistic patrimony of the region. Since 1807, technicians, experts and professors of the Brera Academy formed a *Commissione d'ornato pubblico* (Commission of public decoration/ornamentation), with the main aim of watching over the technical and artistic maintenance of public edifices.⁸⁵ It is thanks to this Commission that the awareness about the conservation of cultural heritage in Milan grew and that even before the country's unification, many monuments were spared unrestrained restoration.

⁸³ Maderna 1995:90

⁸⁴ This was especially the case before 1850. In regards to monument conservation, the Central Austrian Government had only issued decrees against the illegal exportation of works of art (more specifically stone, bronze and other antiquities). Bencivenni, Mario, Riccardo Dalla Negra, and Paola Grifoni. *Monumenti e istituzioni. Parte prima. La nascita del servizio di tutela dei monumenti in Italia, 1860-1880*. Alinea Editrice, Firenze, 1987:11

⁸⁵ *ibid.* 1987:12

This was for instance the case for the restoration of the Church of Santa Maria delle Grazie which occurred in 1823: after strong criticism about the intervention, the President of the Brera Academy asked for all the sculptures, monuments and antiquities to be examined by competent art historians before undergoing any restoration. Hence, a special commission specifically supervising the restoration in the Church was established as a consultative body.⁸⁶

These are only few precedents of rulings concerning monument and heritage conservation in the Brera Academy. Many other initiatives related to monument administration and restoration at the regional level were issued by the Central Commission of Vienna (like the peripheral establishment of inspectors). Starting in the 1870s these Austrian models were then replicated years later (although with less financial and material resources than the ones that were provided by the Austrian government) by members of the Italian government and even by Boito, as it will be outlined in the next chapter.

As the architect entered the Academy a few decades later he possibly found himself invested by this inheritance and tradition of monument conservation of the academic environment and was able to use the institutional power and the many resources of the Academy to eventually reach the highest political spheres.

Beyond the crucial role played by the academic institution of Brera in the realm of cultural heritage conservation, it was the Milanese aristocratic elite that cultivated and maintained the interest for international culture, already decades before the unification. At this stage it is necessary to briefly elaborate on the social and cultural environment of Milan, which was crucial for the development and success of Boito's work. Within the culturally vivid Milanese environment Boito (with many other contemporary intellectuals of diverse fields such as literature and music) was able to establish contacts and engage in intellectual exchange with the most significant intellectuals in the milieu of the fine arts. This occurred during the crucial decades after unification and undeniably benefitted Boito who was lucky enough to be in the right place at the right time, as his theories and his influence quickly became popular in academic and political circles.

⁸⁶ - *ibid.* 1987:13-15

The academic circles of Milan were particularly important to the development of post-unification Italy, especially with regard to the work of historians, art historians and archaeologists.⁸⁷ Along with Venice and Padua to which Boito was sentimentally attached mostly due to the connections with his master and mentor Selvatico, Milan became Boito's inspirational centre. The major role that Milan and its cultural environment played in Boito's professional and personal path is undeniable according to the most recent studies recurrently mentioned in this research.⁸⁸ Boito did not move to Milan for the sole reason of reuniting with his beloved family, who had moved there years earlier. In the second half of the nineteenth century Boito also took advantage of Milan's cultural, intellectual and industrial liveliness and embraced the city as the locus for his professional growth and as place in which to reveal his ideologies.⁸⁹

In the 1880s Milan appears as a capital striving towards economic and cultural growth, concentrating on its internal development as well as on establishing external cultural connections. More than any other city in Italy, Milan was looking forward to re-launch its future urban form by enhancing its architecture and restore its monuments with the aim of becoming a major centre of European culture.

According to Robuschi, this vigorous assertion was due to the role that the city decided to embody after being marginalised by Piedmontese centralism following unification. The city's intellectual and cultural liveliness and its manifestation as a thriving force within the new born country was a reaction of the Milanese ruling class to their unwanted relegation. Last but not least, its ideal geographical position featuring a point of confluence between central Europe and the Mediterranean was confirmed and enhanced between 1872 and 1882, with the opening of the Frejus and San Gottardo tunnels. As a consequence, Milan quickly became an avant-garde hub for trade and travel and a city of entrepreneurs who transformed small- and middle-sized factories into large industrial compounds.⁹⁰

This open-air construction site encouraged an intellectual dynamism and was now a cause of reflection for Boito.⁹¹ In 1889 for instance, the competition for the renovation of the façade of the Milanese cathedral was possibly Boito's best opportunity to prove his academic and professional influence and seek validation for his theories. The Brera

⁸⁷ Jokilehto 2007:200

⁸⁸ Zucconi, Maderna, Crippa among the most relevant ones.

⁸⁹ Robuschi, Luigi. "Alla ricerca di un'identità nazionale. La teorizzazione architettonica di Camillo Boito nella Milano post-unitaria." (2013)

⁹⁰ Robuschi (2013)

⁹¹ Zucconi 1997:241

Academy of Fine Arts launched the competition and Boito figured among the international jury charged with scrutinising projects that came from every corner of Italy and Europe.⁹² For the architect, this occasion was particularly important as the Milanese cathedral took its form from medieval Lombard architecture and therefore had the potential to be an example of Italian national style.⁹³

Another crucial aspect that contributed to making Milan a nucleus for Boito's career in the fine arts and cultural heritage conservation, was the city's well-established publishing activity in the field of art and architecture and the emerging printing business steered by Ulrico Hoepli and Francesco Vallardi. From the 1870s Hoepli and Vallardi produced manuals, plate collections, large-format catalogues of drawings and albums of models.⁹⁴ In Milan, Boito grasped the importance of publishing and print within the Milanese environment as a major way to disseminate his ideas and increase his fame.⁹⁵

It is therefore not a coincidence that Ulrico Hoepli published Boito's work, including the *Questioni Pratiche di Belle Arti - Restauro, Concorsi, Legislazione, Professione, Insegnamento* (1893, Practical Matters of Fine Arts – Restorations, Contests, Legislation, Profession) and the large-format illustrated restoration report on Sant'Antonio in Padua, *L'altare di Donatello e le altre opere nella Basilica Antoniana di Padova* (1897, The altar by Donatello and the other works in the Church of St. Anthony in Padua).

Next to the cultural relevance of the Academy mentioned above, one of the most active institutions keeping the interest for international culture alive while also discussing national matters, were the cultural salons. Boito and his brother Arrigo for instance, were, together with other most prominent personalities of the Milanese intelligentsia (for example Giuseppe Verdi), frequent guests of the Countess Clara Maffei, who hosted the most popular cultural salon of the Milanese post-unification period.⁹⁶

In the first monograph dedicated to Boito, Grassi suggested that the salon was possibly too conservative and rooted in the artistic currents of the past for Boito's innovative

⁹² Robuschi (2013) citing C. Boito, *Il Duomo di Milano e i disegni per la sua facciata* in C. Boito, *Il nuovo e l'antico in architettura*, ed. M.A. Crippa, Jaca Book Milano 1989, pp. 215-223 and p. 218

⁹³ Robuschi (2013)

⁹⁴ Robuschi (2013)

⁹⁵ Maderna in *Pensieri di un architetto del secondo ottocento*.. 1988:5

⁹⁶ “And among the professors: Camillo Boito, open and brilliant mind, Agostino Frapolli, chemist, and Vincenzo Botta, relative to the famous Piedmontese professor of philosophy at the University of Turin and in 1849, deputy to the Parliament” (author's translation. “E fra i professori: Camillo Boito, aperto e brillante ingegno. Agostino Frapolli, chimico, e Vincenzo Botta, parente dello storico piemontese, già professore di filosofia nell'università di Torino e nel 1849 deputato al Parlamento subalpino.”). Barbiera, Raffaello. *Il Salotto della Contessa Maffei e la società milanese (1834-1886)*. Fratelli Treves Editore, Milano, 1895:290

theories.⁹⁷ However, despite the salon's traditional approach the architect was able to establish meaningful personal and professional contacts with the most important scholars of the time. Alongside his principal role as lecturer and at the time Dean of the Brera Academy of Fine Arts, Boito engaged in many other, related activities, including writing. In addition, the architect built, gradually yet quickly, a solid network with the most relevant scholarly parties in the city and with the major exponents of the Milanese political and cultural circles. Boito's involvement in the key debates on cultural heritage conservation and restoration within the urban context led him to actively participate in the decision making processes and to the advisory bodies at an administrative and political level. Due to a combination of cultural dynamism, local patriotism and the city's makeover as a hub of European cultural exchange between Italy and the transalpine countries, it is in Milan that the conservation and restoration debate became particularly vivid.

On an administrative scale, Milan and its region Lombardy, were both culturally and commercially one of the strongest regions in post-unification Italy, to the extent that the Lombard élites (politically mostly divided into liberal moderate and democratic-republican against Austrian domination) wished for a regional-oriented organisation within the unified State. This articulation would allow Lombardy to maintain their financial autonomy without succumbing to the needs of the most financially weak regions of the South. Nonetheless, and as was the obvious consequence after the country's unification in 1861, new administrative decrees were issued in 1865. These regulations, created on the structure and idea of a unified country, led Lombardy to a period of puzzlement, as especially the cultural elite (and to some extent the political branch too) was experiencing a sense of disorientation – of its own traditions and of the relationship between society and institutions.

A sentiment of annoyance towards unification soon spread through specific branches of society in the region – from the intellectual and financial elite to political personalities, the same entities, who were actually the most excited about the unification. On the one hand, Lombard society could recognise the potential of unification: a free commerce within the nation, expansive production and a democratic participation to civil and

⁹⁷ Grassi 1959:37

political matters. On the other hand, there was this strong nostalgia for the social order and balance, which the Austrian government had guaranteed for the past decades.⁹⁸

This dualism between the excitement of unification and the strong local and regionalist sentiment that followed was and still is one of the most peculiar qualities that characterise Italy. As mentioned above, this contradiction reflected on many levels of the country's administration, including the policies and regulations of heritage conservation for which every region had its sovereign regulations. Even throughout the first decade of unification, regional and local bodies, which had been traditionally nominated as the ones responsible for the supervision of monuments – as for instance academies – operated independently. These local arts bodies were quite reluctant to give up their decision-making power to a centralised entity (at the time the Ministry of Education and the Italian Government) with which they did not identify at all.

With that in mind, Boito lived and operated within this (intellectual) society that was riding the transition between past tradition and future national structure. His 'national' achievement with the Charter of Restoration of 1883 became a reality, as he called out the reasons of knowledge and art, notwithstanding the society's political and intellectual proclivities. Boito appealed to the general consensus of the elite and of the larger public, regardless of region and social standing who were used to living with the monument, the historical building or the ancient cathedral as a concrete component of their daily life.

As discussed in the next paragraphs, the architect's practical and theoretical work on restoration and monument conservation mostly succeeded in overcoming factional preferences and other social or economic pressures of the newly founded country. It is unquestionable that next to Boito there were other contemporary politicians and scholars who influenced and directed the long path of a national system to preserve monuments.

With that in mind, the purpose of the next chapters will hopefully lead to the acknowledgement that Boito originally contributed to the complex transition between habits and rules of a liberal state of the nineteenth century to the new national

⁹⁸ Meriggi, Marco. "Lo <<Stato di Milano >> nell'Italia unita: miti e strategie politiche di una società civile (1860-1945)." In "La Lombardia" *Storia d'Italia. Le regioni dall'unità a oggi*. Bigazzi Duccio and Marco Meriggi. Giulio Einaudi Editore, Torino 2001:9-10

mechanisms of standardised guidelines for restoration and cultural heritage conservation.⁹⁹

Boito's influence and 'success' is not only due to the issuing of the Charter of Restoration in 1883, but he launched a modern and scientific understanding and intervention on the monument within the urban environment of Northern Italian cities. To this regard, it must be noted that even far into the post-unification period the Northern and Southern regions of Italy featured great economic and cultural differences: Northern and central Italy were covered by small and medium towns, each with its own proud history and traditions.

Within less than two decades, most of the Northern towns grew, some of them becoming important centres of industry. Conversely, the South saw an increase of people living in 'scattered houses' in the countryside, mostly due to the end of brigandage. Eventually, the North became more urbanised and the South more rural. Although it must be pointed out that the largest city in Italy was in the South, with Naples populated by almost twice as many people (415,000) as Rome and more than twice the figure for Milan and Turin.¹⁰⁰ Regardless of these differences, when looking at Boito's work on monuments in Milan or d'Andrade's work in Turin or Alvino's work in Naples, these enormous regional differences do not really come across, as these architects faced challenges of growing urban environments that were quite comparable from North to South.

It is mostly within cities that Italians, even before the Risorgimento, encountered the cultural inheritance of monuments and churches. Boito understood this aspect when working on restoration projects for medieval gates, historical buildings and other edifices, which risked demolition within the urban development plans of Italian Ottocento century cities. His main target when restoring, was to make sure that the monument could continue its existence within the community and the urban environment, sometimes at the cost of modifying some of its original features – not after accurate historical research and evaluation. This is eventually the aspect that has been mostly criticised about Boito's restorations: his alleged interpretative component in

⁹⁹ Maderna 1995:25 Other contemporary or slightly posterior figures of Boito's time to which Maderna is referring are Corrado Ricci, (1858-1934), art historian and archaeologist nominated general director of the Ministry of Education in 1906; Gustavo Giovannoni (1873-1947), student of Camillo Boito, engineer and architect, since 1916 member of the Superior Council of Antiquities and Fine Arts (Consiglio Superiore di Antichità e Belle Arti), one of the main protagonists of cultural heritage administration at the state level; last but not least, Giuseppe Bottai (1895-1959) Ministry of Education in the Fascist years from 1936-1943, main promoter of the homonymous decree of 1939, which organically regulated cultural heritage on the national territory by addressing the prohibition of exportation, the State's right of first refusal and the addressing of 'natural heritage' next to cultural heritage. (This latter element belonged to another law, which however was issued under Bottai in the same year).

¹⁰⁰ Clark, Martin. *Modern Italy*. (Second Edition). Longman, London and New York, 1996-31

restoration as in contrast to his proclaimed scientific methodology. This faultfinder approach however, does not fully take in consideration the material and urban context in which Boito was operating.

While the architect's restorations mostly occurred in a circumscribed regional and local area of Northern Italy, his sense of restoration within a national framework i.e. viewing the monument as an educational tool for younger generations or restoring monuments for political initiatives that could boost the cities' popularity on a national scale (imitating other larger European cities) – was quite strong. Hence the dualism of regionalism and nationalism in Italy in relation to monument restoration and cultural heritage restoration necessarily needs to be considered when critically analysing Boito's work.

More specifically on the subject of nation formation and nationalism, it might be worthwhile looking at the definition of nationalism and of a shared civic awareness in pre-and post-unification Italy given by Benedict Anderson: "(...) it is an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign.¹⁰¹ It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion."

When discussing cultural heritage conservation in post-unification Italy, the term 'imagined community' is strongly connected to the notions of urbanism, of society and of civic awareness around which the idea of monument and cultural heritage conservation in Italy existed throughout the centuries. In his study of Italy and cultural heritage conservation of 2010, Settis argues that it is striking how even in the pre-unification states – whose differences have been pointed out above – there was always a unified will to preserve cultural heritage and monuments on their territory.¹⁰²

This will was the resilient leitmotif within the complicated process of Italian nation-building, arising in spite of the many adversities that scholars like Boito encountered when attempting to administer monuments on the national territory or issue standardised guidelines for the restoration of monuments. Anderson argues that the motif and reason of nationalism especially in the last two hundred years, lies in cultural

¹⁰¹ Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*. Verso Books, 2006:6

¹⁰² Settis 2010:107

roots as also in religious ones.¹⁰³ However, in the case of Italy, this statement does only seem to apply partially, as the communities of the pre-unification states were different, with clear territorial and sometimes even religious distinctions. Clark even states that in relation to Italy 'regionalism' is too broad a term as there were plenty of economic and social differences even within the limited areas of the regions.¹⁰⁴ Still, these differences did not seem to have affected the community's understanding of the monuments and the need to preserve them at a larger national scale.

It is within these conglomerates of people in towns, in the *comuni* (municipalities) or cities that the concept of 'imagined community' might be applied; a cluster of people living, culturally and socially in city or village centres, being confronted on a daily basis with the presence of a monument (regardless of epoch and style), of a historical building or of a church or cathedral. It is within these realities that the regulations concerning cultural heritage conservation in the pre-unification states developed independently but with similar structures and content.

Finally, it is within these communities that Boito and his contemporaries were implicated in the restoration of monuments. Eventually, the link between community and urbanisation becomes fundamental to Boito's monument restorations. Most monuments in post-unification Italy were centrally located in the midst of the cultural and social life of the village, town or city and this status fully reflects on the monuments that Boito restored.¹⁰⁵

In Padua, Venice and Milan Boito always operated in the central social and economic hub of the city, thus applying parameters that might have differed from his principles mentioned in the Charter of Restoration of 1883. With that in mind, he remained faithful to a scientific methodology that succeeded as a national guideline.

The next chapters will highlight how Boito's restorations were performed with the purpose of maintaining the monument as a living component of the growing city, avoiding its demolition during a period that favoured urban development plans with a tendency to destroy monuments that 'stood in the way' of larger, modern, projects.

¹⁰³ Anderson 2006:8

¹⁰⁴ Clark 1996:30

¹⁰⁵ The monuments restored by Boito (excluding de novo architectural projects) are: Pusterla di Porta Ticinese (Medieval Gate of Porta Ticinese) in Milan (1861), Palazzo delle Debite, Padua (1873), Entrance and main stair of the civic museum in Padua (1879), Central stair of Palazzo Franchetti in Venice (1882), Recomposition of Donatello's Altar and other restoration works in the Basilica of St. Anthony in Padua (1898)

Conversely, the situation in other transalpine countries, concerning monuments and their restoration was quite different, especially within the city. Without going beyond the scope of this thesis and analyzing the urban development throughout the centuries in France, Germany or the United Kingdom, it is necessary to point out few specific topographical differences featuring in these countries.

First of all, the diverse territorial relationship between city and country landscape. Unlike Italy, where the above-mentioned *comuni*, specifically in central and northern regions, favoured a rather harmonious transition between urban hub and countryside, the topographical situation was quite different in the rest of Europe. In Italy the city or municipality is a spot of political and administrative power, of commercial activities that are not related to agriculture; its surrounding countryside supplies agricultural products to itself and to the city, while being, within delimited borders, subject to the jurisdiction of the city.

In Germany or France for instance, city and countryside were two realities that were not related to each other. The isolation of the city – administratively, politically and socially – contrasts with the fragmentation of the countryside, with extremely small and dispersed units of houses.¹⁰⁶

These differences between the Italian and transalpine city-countryside landscape also emerge in Boito's writings, as for instance in *Gite di un artista* when he describes the order and tidiness of the German countryside, with identical houses aligned like Prussian soldiers.¹⁰⁷ Inevitably, these differences also reflected on the positioning of monuments, churches or cathedrals within the urban environment. While specific components, such as walls or gates were common elements similarly and logically placed in Italian, French, or British and German cities from the eleventh century onwards, the monument emerged in very different forms, locations and sizes. As mentioned in the previous paragraphs, monuments in Italy were chiefly located in the central area of the city, often quite close to private houses even if these were of 'poorer' manufacture.

The urban condition also worsened throughout the centuries (up to the nineteenth century) in Italian cities, with houses in different architectural styles and sizes

¹⁰⁶ Guidoni, Enrico. *La città europea*. Electa Editrice, Milano, 1978:17

¹⁰⁷ Boito: 1884: 93.

anarchically developing attached to or even inside the monuments, often altering or adapting the internal rooms of the gate or ancient theatre into housing units. As it will be discussed in the fourth chapter, this is a situation with which Boito was confronted when restoring the medieval gate Porta Ticinese in Milan.

Conversely, monuments or cathedrals in Northern European cities were moderately detached from the compact mass of private houses. In general terms, the reasons for this separation is related to the size of the monument (often larger than monuments or cathedrals in Italy), in the major expenses necessary to erect the monument and in the space that was required for the maintenance of the monument.¹⁰⁸

The partial isolation of the monument (which was more an operation of freeing the monument from an accumulation of buildings), also within the urban environment, occurred in Italy on a larger scale only in the nineteenth century and way into the twentieth century (up to the 1930s) with the application of smaller-scale lookalikes of urban development plans in the style of Haussmann, i.e. promoting larger streets and 'breathing buffer zones' around the monuments. Nevertheless, regardless of these procedures the monument always remained within the urban centre.¹⁰⁹

This is the topographical and urban condition that affected Boito's theory and practice of cultural heritage conservation in the second half of the nineteenth century: the monument placed in the midst of the ancient urban conglomerate¹¹⁰, needed to be rescued from demolition, artistically preserved and structurally made safe in order continue its original function or being adapted to a new purpose.

Even the British scholar John Ruskin expressed concerns with regard to the maintenance of old towns and historical monuments – especially with reference to Italy. He was apprehensive about the new development in urban areas with old buildings being destroyed to make space for larger streets and squares, thus causing a loss of identity in old towns. Ruskin drew attention to the values in the old districts, arguing that a historic city did not only consist of single monuments but was an ensemble of

¹⁰⁸ Guidoni 1978:22

¹⁰⁹ To this regard it is interesting to clarify that the urban development plan by Georges Eugène Haussmann (and his followers) which was applied to Paris in the second half of the nineteenth century aimed to overcome the differences between the ancient and the modern city. The urban plan incorporated the technical and economical necessities of the modern society with the formal models of the past. More on the relationship between urban transformation and ancient city can be found in "Trasformazione urbana e permanenza della città antica", by Benevolo, Leonardo in *Anastilosi, L'antico, il restauro, la città*. Edited by Francesco Perego, Editori Laterza, Roma, 1987, pp. 74-80

¹¹⁰ The definition of ancient urban conglomerate or ancient city centre refers to the status of the city before the industrial revolution. (Benevolo 1987:74) This definition is valid also for this research project, more specifically, with the term ancient mostly referring to historical buildings or monuments that have been built between the 10th and the 14th century.

different type of buildings, spaces and details. The interest in historic towns in countries like Italy or even France would not depend on the richness of some isolated palaces but rather on the ensemble and the harmony with the smaller ancient historic buildings.¹¹¹

This propensity to isolate the monument in transalpine countries mostly may have had an influence on the ideas of restoration and more broadly within the conservation movement expressed for instance by Ruskin or the French architect Eugène Viollet-le-Duc in the nineteenth century. As anticipation to the topics that will be discussed in the following chapters, it is safe to state to some extent, that the British and French approaches to monument conservation in the nineteenth century, although quite conflicting in terms of content, were quite torn between the social, cultural and functional purpose of the monument within the community and material existence as a self-standing testimony of the past.

Specifically with regard to the English relationship between cultural heritage and community there is a study by Chris Miele analysing how the Church of England used medieval parish churches to articulate ideas of community at the local level.¹¹² A brief excursus on this aspect is interesting as it provides some correspondences that paved the way for the nineteenth century conservation debate in England and Italy and inevitably on the protagonists of the debate, including Boito.

The author argues that heritage has always had a special relationship with community. Referring again to Benedict Anderson's pioneering analysis of cultural identities, monument provides an opportunity for groups to imagine themselves beyond the bounds of daily face-to-face social and economic relationships. Hence, the power of heritage shaping shared identities extends beyond national boundaries. This was particularly true of the English Gothic Revival, which provided a sense of common purpose far outside the geographical boundaries of the United Kingdom, amongst English speaking peoples united by the Anglican (Episcopalian) Communion in the far flung corners of the Empire.¹¹³

With that in mind, the relationship between heritage and its communities was not predetermined.¹¹⁴ As a matter of fact, selected communities gradually decided to adopt

¹¹¹ Jokilehto 1999:180. Ruskin concerns are expressed in his chapter "The Lamp of Memory", *The seven lamps of architecture*, 1849, pp. 162-182

¹¹² Miele, Chris. Heritage and its Communities: "Reflections on the English Experience in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries." In *Towards World Heritage. International Origins of the Conservation Movement 1870-1930*, ed. Melanie Hall, Ashgate, Farnham, 2011, pp. 155-179

¹¹³ Miele 2011:155

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

heritage for the sake of their purposes (ideological, civil, political, religious). Historically, heritage in England appears first as the leisure activity of the elite, which served the interests of a small and very narrowly defined community. The monuments of English antiquity only gained a wider appeal in response to the French Revolution, when antiquaries and artists in England came to think of their native historic buildings (parish churches, cathedrals, abbeys and castles) as symbols of national identity.¹¹⁵

Nonetheless, throughout the nineteenth centuries several heritage cultures promoted monument conservation (municipalities, the elite and the clergy) as they had an explicit ideological agenda. It is interesting to note however, how the Victorians – among the many – came to assert its right to act on behalf of the community in a more neutral and even-handed way, manifesting a specific proclivity for the ‘public interest’.¹¹⁶ Hence the author queries what kind of interest or agenda the Victorians had when protecting historic buildings.

One starting point might be found in the work *Contrasts* by A.W.N. Pugin (1812–1852). Pugin describes the archetypal English town in 1540 as compared to the same town three hundred years later, stressing the changes brought to medieval cities by industrialization as evidence for a morally bankrupt system. Based on materialism and modern money economy, this type of world had broken the traditional ties of the community and replaced them with relationships based on class and material interests. Pugin’s solution to this problem was to restore the monuments and design new ones according to ancient principles. The periodical *The Ecclesiologist* promoted this vision from an Anglican perspective and so did the Tory Young England movement of the Victorian era. Eventually, the Gothic Revival in architecture – with parallel expressions in Victorian literature and painting – was also inspired by Pugin’s critique.¹¹⁷

With that in mind, Victorian ideas of community life directly affected the way that historic buildings were preserved, studied, used and interpreted in all media. Victorians gradually opened up their historic houses to the public as part of a wider strategy that sought to maintain class privileges and power in a time of progressive democratic reform. The elite expanded access to their private domains in order to persuade a wider constituency that their interests aligned with the national interests. Ancient country

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ It might be interesting to recall at this stage that in the pre-unification States in Italy the strongest link at the legal and administrative level between cultural heritage and public interest was practiced by the Papal States through their various edicts. At the same time however, the strongest bonds between heritage and community were practiced at the legal and political level by the ‘Comuni’, the municipalities of the twelfth and thirteenth century.

¹¹⁷ Miele 2011:158

houses were a perfect symbolic opportunity: over the nineteenth century their owners remade these buildings as images of national identity and permeated them with an aura of common and cultural property without actually ever ceding ownership. Buildings were opened for the enjoyment of genteel tourists for occasional leisure visits. The message was that these private houses were not bastions of reactionary power but part of a common national identity illustrating traditional English values.¹¹⁸ It is safe to state that this narrow class promoted heritage as a shared community resource in order to effectively disguise their interests and preserve their power and prerogatives.¹¹⁹

A similar process affected the care and appreciation of historic churches, abbey and cathedrals in Britain, with a widespread interest in religious monuments as sites of national commemoration emerging in the second half of the eighteenth century. There is abundant evidence for this early heritage movement in the pages of *The Gentleman's Magazine*, a literary and political miscellany. Cultural tourism began to emerge during this same period at Westminster Abbey.

On a broader scale, these interests spread rapidly across a wider segment of society through periodicals, books, journals and mass-produced images of ancient parish churches, abbey and cathedrals, which were finally made 'accessible' to a heterogeneous wide audience. This new information provided the opportunity for the educated public to understand more about the role of their local church; at the same time, the public finally appreciated the church's linkage to the wider currents in regional and national history.

In a first stage, the styles of British architecture were presented as tied to the reigns of British monarchs but the publications soon related the history of particular buildings to notable people and events of the local district or region. In this way the two narratives of national and local were combined in single buildings used for communal worship.¹²⁰ This was rather convenient as Victorian churchmen sought to reassert the centrality of religious buildings in community life and they managed to do so much more easily than the Victorian elite. Churches were legally open to all being obvious symbols of community life.

¹¹⁸ *ibid.*

¹¹⁹ Miele 2011:159

¹²⁰ *ibid.*

In England churches have a very direct association with national identity: during the Reformation the Crown appropriated church buildings and estates, creating a national church, the Church of England, which was headed by the monarch. Anglican bishops took a hand in shaping public life and communities by direct involvement in the legislative process though ex officio seats in the House of Lords.¹²¹ Anglican bishops made several endeavours on both the social and political level to make churches more democratic and accessible as a mean of conducting other wider institutional reforms. At the same time, it has to be noted that this was partly a strategy to provide an apparent 'opening' to the whole community. As a matter of fact the Church of England had a strong hierarchy and was everything but democratic, being the preserve of Oxbridge-educated classes.¹²²

It would go beyond the scope of this research project to thoroughly describe the Church's efforts that were made at the local level to make their community identify with the religious structure. Nevertheless, it is safe to state that the Church in England succeeded in establishing an association between history, identity and visual appearance through a set of initiatives (diocesan training, re-introduction of offices such as Rural Deans and Archdeacons to carry out regular inspections and comment on the physical improvements necessary to improve the Church's profile within the community and media (paintings, education, publications etc) which created a sense of shared identity and community.¹²³

Working in parallel with the Church were local and voluntary organizations, which gathered independent historians, archaeologists, antiquarians, clergy, architects and Anglican oligarchs into a tight cohesive unit. Many county or regional based architectural societies were founded during the two decades between the 1840s and 1860s to promote the study of medieval antiquity at the local level. These societies often extended their tasks to church restoration according to the rules of medieval style and church archaeology as it was then emerging as a distinct discipline.

The members of these groups gradually transformed the smallest and most out of the way church into a 'meaning-creating experience' (as defined by Benedict Anderson) through periodical publications, church visits, activities and monographs. This meaning was established though a combination of local uniqueness and historical continuity.¹²⁴ Slowly however, these societies, also aided by increasing tourism, 'took over' the

¹²¹ Miele 2011:161

¹²² Miele 2011:164

¹²³ Miele 2011:165-172

¹²⁴ Miele 2011:172 citing Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 2006, p.53

cultural patrimony of the medieval churches – which the Anglicans had originally claimed as their domain – through their approach to a more generalised interest in art, local topography and history. The result was a move against the practices of Victorian church restorers, with this opposition claiming that they were acting in the interests of a wider community, of the nation at large and also on the future of the yet unborn generations. Consequently, Anglican groups also began to form their ‘architectural societies’ to promote the (re-)appropriation of medieval churches for their own benefit together with other societies that took a less ideological view of the antiquities.¹²⁵

It is interesting to note that between 1840 and 1873 approximately seven thousand medieval churches in England and Wales were restored, rebuilt or enlarged. This number was almost three times the number of new churches built over the period and the total bill for restorations was far higher than that for new church construction. These statistics featured in the *Survey of Church Building and Restoration* published in 1874. Anglicans used these figures as a proof of the inroads that the Church of England, which was the legal owner of virtually all the country’s consecrated medieval remains, had made against secularism.¹²⁶

Eventually, the territorial debate over the appropriation of medieval churches by either the Anglican, independent or Victorian factions then blurred into the broader conservation debate of the nineteenth century in England. In England and Italy the relationship between cultural heritage and community (or communities) was present before the process of nationalisation – although in Italy this was based on its ties to the medieval municipalities starting from the twelfth century whereas in England it was based on the religious establishment of the Victorian period. In France on the other hand, cultural heritage became a ‘public’ asset after only after the nationalisation of cultural assets, strongly bound to the political situation after the French Revolution.¹²⁷

There were two English scholars within the modern approach to monument conservation, who sought to position cultural heritage in relation to generalised notions of community and public benefit during the debate of the nineteenth century: John Ruskin (1819–1900) and Edward A. Freeman (1823–1892).¹²⁸ The former has been for many years confined in a radicalised position of the anti-restoration movement by

¹²⁵ Miele 2011:173

¹²⁶ Miele, Christopher. “A small knot of cultivated people: William Morris and Ideologies of Protection”. *Art Journal*, Vol.54, No.2, Conservation and Art History, College Art Association, Summer 1995, pp. 73-79

¹²⁷ Glendinning 2013:67, “International revolutions and national heritages 1789-1850” in *The Conservation Movement*, pp.65-115

¹²⁸ Miele 2011:173

scholarly critique, whereas recent studies offered a more in-depth and original view of Ruskin's thought on restoration. This new position, closely ties in with Boito's thought on monument conservation to the one of the British scholar, as will be further investigated in the next chapter.

Freeman, on the other hand, offered a novel understanding of monument restoration in relation to the use that the community made of it. Oxford University Professor and Liberal MP, Freeman categorised approaches to ancient buildings based on their social utility and appeal to specific communities in his work of 1874, *Principles of Church restoration*.¹²⁹ According to him, buildings still in use had to be adapted for practical reasons; it would be wrong for these cases to take a strict antiquarian approach to preserve the authentic fabric. At the same time he also considered that there were specific buildings and structures, particularly disused or ruined ones that were of no value to artists, poets or historians. Accordingly, these could be restored with a more conservationist approach.¹³⁰

Such similarities, highlighted in the next chapter, also emerged in the Italian conservation debate with the terminology of 'monumenti vivi' ('living' monuments) and 'monumenti morti' ('dead' monuments) in the 1870s, once again stressing the many similarities that can be identified between the Italian and English restoration approach during the nineteenth century.

The positioning of Boito's ideas on cultural heritage conservation and monument restoration between the British and the French school of thought during the conservation debate of the nineteenth century will be examined in the next paragraphs. The content and originality of Boito's theories will be considered in light of regionalism, urbanism and community in post-unification Italy mentioned above, while keeping in mind that the architect's theory and practice of monument restoration were always the result of the monument's documentary and cultural testimony for the benefit of contemporary (and future generations) of the community.

¹²⁹ Miele 2011:174

¹³⁰ *ibid.*

Chapter II. Boito's ideas on monument restoration

The socio-historical complexity, the hurdles in identifying a path to safeguard monuments and cultural heritage within the national territory in the earliest decades after unification are accurately revealed in the large assortment of Boito's writings as presented in the following paragraphs.

In order to establish to what extent Boito's ideas on restoration were original, but also to understand his restoration practice for monuments of different styles and epochs, it is essential to identify the sources of his ideas. At the same time, when looking at Boito's views on monument restoration, it is necessary to position his ideas within a broader framework. This context does not only relate to the debatable doctrines and practices of monument restoration of the time, but also to other aspects that are linked to Boito's education and to specific aspects of the Italian administrative structure of the decades following the unification of the country (1860s–1890s).

As pointed out in the previous chapter, Boito's ideas on monument restoration (and architecture) were mostly shaped and refined in the Milanese academic milieu. This influence was very much a result of the architect's high-ranking position as Dean of the Brera Academy of Fine Arts for four decades. The architect's role as lecturer will not be investigated in detail in this dissertation. With that in mind, it is necessary to stress the importance of the academic environment for the development of Boito's ideas about matters of cultural heritage conservation as also the role of the architect in matters of monument restoration at the time.

Boito's later education, first as student and then as lecturer, begins in the Venetian Academy of Fine Arts between 1849 and 1856.¹ Boito was only 13 when he became the student of Pietro Estense Selvatico (1803–1880), the first important exponent of the Gothic Revival in Italy. While much of Camillo Boito's thought on national architecture and national style can be attributed to the influence of Selvatico, the same cannot be said with regard to restoration. With the exception of Boito's interest in medieval architecture and his subsequent appointments in Murano and Milan dealing with medieval monuments, scholarly literature did not yet examine Boito's emulation of his master's ideas in regards to monument restoration.

¹ Ciapparelli, Pierluigi. "Boito docente all'Accademia di Venezia." In *Camillo Boito: un protagonista dell'Ottocento italiano*. Zucconi, Guido, and Tiziana Serena, Istituto veneto di scienze, lettere ed arti, 2002:61

The young Camillo Boito was quickly identified as the *enfant prodige*, skipping to third year student classes and participating in academic project competitions with excellent results.² Boito's arrival at the Venetian Accademia coincided with two major developments in the Venetian academic world. One was a liberalisation of the academic programmes that now embraced styles of architecture besides the customary classical one. Another was a reform launched by his master Selvatico in 1850, which emphasised the study of all architectural styles of all major civilisations, set out to overcome the dominance of classicism.

Selvatico's focus on medieval styles, ranging from French and German Gothic manner to the Italian *Stile dei Comuni* of the twelfth and thirteenth century was also evident in his academic reform. Years later, his pupil Boito recalled how during the time of this academic reorganisation, Vitruvius and Palladio, the two great symbolic exponents of classical architecture were discarded. Suddenly, the students faced an exceptional freedom and were invited to broaden their horizons by looking at Byzantine and Muslim art, as well as Italian, French and German medieval art.³

Boito's lecturing career in the Venetian Accademia began in 1854, one year before his graduation.⁴ A few years later, in 1856, in his speech for the "Introduction to the technical lectures of architecture for graduated engineers" Boito underlines that students should study all architectural styles, thus avoiding becoming experts in one approach only.⁵ Furthermore, he recommends maintaining the purity of these styles and of their application in modern architecture, anticipating speculations on stylistic unity.⁶ Boito's course is subdivided into three sections: the history of material construction, the aesthetic history of various medieval and modern styles, and finally a comparative history of ancient and modern buildings.⁷

Boito's didactic exercise aimed to guide the students through the broader understanding of the style's make-up, of the methods employed and of their construction techniques. Boito reinforced his belief that the value of architecture cannot reside in an uncritical assemblage of styles of the past, as this approach only leads to sterile eclecticism that is

² For a further insight in Boito's academic path see Ciapparelli, Pierluigi. "Gli anni all'Accademia di Venezia." *Camillo Boito: un'architettura per l'Italia unita*, edited by Zucconi, Guido, Marsilio, Venezia, 2000:9-30

³ Zucconi, Guido. "L'accademia di Selvatico" in *L'invenzione del passato*, Marsilio Venezia 1997:77. This testimony was collected by Alfredo Melani (1859-1928), in "Camillo Boito et son trentenaire d'enseignement." *La Construction moderne*, July 30 1982.

⁴ *ibid.* 1997:75

⁵ Boito, Camillo. "Prolusione alle lezioni tecniche di architettura per gli ingegneri laureate, letta nell'I.R. Accademia di Belle Arti in Venezia il dì 15 gennaio 1856 dall'aggiunto Camillo Boito." *Lo Spettatore*, anno II n. 16, April 20 1856:184-186.

⁶ Boito, Camillo. "Prolusione alle lezioni tecniche di architettura per gli ingegneri laureate, letta nell'I.R. Accademia di Belle Arti in Venezia il dì 15 gennaio 1856 dall'aggiunto Camillo Boito." *Lo Spettatore*, anno II n. 16, April 20 1856:184-186.

⁷ Zucconi, Guido. "Boito e Selvatico in Zucconi" in *L'invenzione del passato*, Marsilio Venezia 1997:81.

unsuitable to express the demand for renewal in contemporary society.⁸ As nineteenth-century monument conservation in Italy was strongly related to the development of national styles – often featuring the addition and clearance of architectural components – this widening of horizons strongly affected the scientific approach that Boito applied to shape his theory and practice of monument restoration.

Selvatico and Boito lectured at the school of architecture together for only a short time, between 1855 and 1856. The latter continued his educational path travelling to Rome and Florence while the former gradually loses his leading position within the Venetian Accademia.⁹ Boito arrives in Milan in 1859, where he is appointed Professor of Architecture at Accademia delle Belle Arti di Brera.¹⁰ From this point onwards, Milan becomes Boito's main residence, providing him with major opportunities of studying, publishing and lecturing. In terms of academic programmes, and possibly following the example of his master Selvatico in Venice, Boito fully committed from the very beginning of his activity as lecturer to reforming the courses for architects and engineers at the Brera.

At the time, the term 'architect' was one of the most ambiguously named professions. It could be used to describe not just what we would not think of as an architect but also an engineer or any other student with little expertise in *disegno* (drawing).¹¹ To qualify as an architect all that was needed was a diploma in architectural drawing and mathematics. So the architect could practically be an engineer who occasionally dealt with artistic matters (ornamentation or distribution of an edifice for instance), despite not having any competence in the field.

Boito was aware of this discrepancy between education and professional role, as he observed in several of his essays. Not only did this lead to poorly executed restorations on historical monuments – which in Italy was almost a daily occurrence given the huge quantity of art and cultural heritage found throughout the peninsula – but also to the construction of precariously built, ugly architecture. In 1890 Boito writes: "There is no clear distinction between the discipline of the architect and that of an engineer: as a consequence, many students chose the path of the engineer, due to the many scientific

⁸ Gallo, Paola. *Luigi Broggi: un protagonista dell'architettura eclettica a Milano*. Vol. 15. Franco Angeli, 1992:25 ff.

⁹ Zucconi 1997:76. The author stresses that archival documents of the Venetian Accademia do not feature official signs of Selvatico's resignation, however starting from January 1857 his signature in matters of academic administration is substituted by a triumvirate of other professors of the operating 'in the function of..'. See Zucconi 1999:76n

¹⁰ Zucconi 1997:76. Boito is appointed Professor of Architecture replacing Friedrich Schmidt (1825-1891). Schmidt was a popular architect educated in Vienna and active Cologne, who in 1859 decided to leave the Milanese Accademia in conjunction with the retirement of the Austrian troops who lost their power in the Northern Italian territory during the Second War of Independence.

¹¹ Zucconi, Guido. *La città contesa: dagli ingegneri sanitari agli urbanisti (1855-1942)*. Jaca book, 1989:114

examinations in the programmes. They do that in order to gain a safe career in the *Genio Civile*, but they also have other options, such as a career in architecture. At the same time, many engineers find themselves practising as architects, knowing little or nothing about the subject. This situation results in buildings that could crumble after a year, but above all look awful. With regard to this last point, the Municipality or the *Commissioni d'Ornato* (Commissions of Ornamentations) will be asked for support.”¹²

It should be noted that although Italian law established a rigid distinction between engineers and architects, a distinction that lasted throughout Boito's professional and academic career, engineers, graduating from the *Scuole d'Applicazione* (Applied Schools) were officially allowed to practise as both architects and engineers. Their technical and scientific education was comparable to the training of a civil engineer. Due to their versatility, the competence of these 'architect-engineers' was in great demand in this period of architectural and infrastructural transformation. By contrast, the students who graduated as architects were considered a less important category. These students usually graduated from the Academies of Fine Arts and their preparation in architectural drawing – a mere copying of monuments on paper – was not enough to pursue a career as an architect, hence limiting their competence to interior decoration, and the design of home furnishings.¹³ One consequence of this situation was professional confusion resulting in poorly executed restoration of historical monuments.

In trying to find a remedy to this situation, several schools of architecture provided their students with a licence, and with a complete education by reforming their educational programmes. From 1885 to 1910 the Ministry of Education proposed many decrees regulating the professional status of the architect. Nevertheless, these measures were destined to remain unsuccessful due to the obstruction of deputies who were either engineers or were major figures in their fields.¹⁴ Boito contributed with fervour in the debate about the architect's education from the time he was appointed as lecturer at the Brera School. He participated in the drafting of countless decrees and published several

¹² Boito, Camillo. “Condizioni presenti dell'Architettura in Italia”, *Nuova Antologia*, Vol. XXV, Serie III, Fascicolo del 1°Febbraio 1890, Roma, Tipografia della Camera dei Deputati, Stabilimenti del Fibreno, 1890:5-6. “Non esiste una chiara scissione tra la disciplina dell'ingegnere e quella dell'architetto; di conseguenza, molti studenti, dovendo comunque affrontare la pesante mole di esami scientifici, alla fine prendono la strada dell'ingegnere che apre l'accesso ad impieghi del Genio civile, ma che volendo offre molti altri sbocchi professionali, compreso quello dell'architetto. Allo stesso tempo, molti ingegneri poi si ritrovano anche a coprire il mestiere di architetto, sapendo poco o nulla della materia. Il risultato sono edifici che dopo un anno cadono o potrebbero cadere a pezzi e soprattutto, molto brutti esteticamente – per quanto riguarda quest'ultimo aspetto, all'occorrenza ci si adopera della consultazione dei Municipi o delle Commissioni d'Ornato.” The Genio Civile is an institution whose task is to deal with Public Works (Opere pubbliche) at the national level. The Commissioni d'Ornato, were governmental bodies historically established in 1807 with a Napoleonic Decree. (Decree of January 9 1807). See Della Torre, Stefano. Formazione e primi anni di attività della Commissione d'Ornato a Como. Nuova Serie, No. 55/56/57, *Civiltà neoclassica nell'attuale territorio della provincia di Como*, 1980:201-211

¹³ Zucconi, Guido. *La città contesa: dagli ingegneri sanitari agli urbanisti (1855-1942)*. Jaca book, 1989:115

¹⁴ Ibid.1989:116

essays in the major contemporary cultural and scientific periodicals, commenting on the laws issued by Parliament.¹⁵ Boito was determined to solve the problem of the inadequacy of architectural education and lend the architect a new professional dignity. He firmly believed in the role of the architect as a specialised professional able to understand and relate to the particular historical changes that Italy was undergoing and capable of combining manual and up-to-date technical skills.

In 1860 Boito wrote: "The architect has to be an expert builder and be intimately acquainted with the habits of civil society; he has to be a skilful and creative artist. If he only lacks one of these qualities, then we have an engineer, a decorator, but not an architect."¹⁶ Boito wanted the architect to be a professional figure that was able to enhance the creative process, while being acquainted with the necessary understanding of construction materials. It was the artistic dimension that made the difference between the engineer and the architect. Boito believed that the architect, as artist, was a genuine interpreter of contemporary society.¹⁷

These points raised by Boito inherently relate also to monument conservation and restoration as performed by architects. The problem of badly executed interventions on historic monuments would depend on the training of these architects, their knowledge of the different styles of the past, their acquaintance with using suitable materials. At the same time, since monuments were mostly located in city or village centres as also a living part of a growing community, the architects had to shape a deep understanding of their contemporary urban environment while considering the territorial historical and artistic roots.

It is possibly with the intent of solving these ambiguities that Boito instituted a School for Civil Architects at the *Istituto Tecnico Superiore* in Milan, today the Politecnico. Founded three years earlier by his colleague Francesco Brioschi (1824–1897), a politician and famous mathematician, the *Politecnico* was inspired by German and Swiss models of providing a cultural, technical and scientific programme devoted to the

¹⁵ Since 1860, Boito produced numerous writings dedicated to the teaching of Architecture. Among the most relevant are: "L'architettura odierna e l'insegnamento di essa" in *Il Giornale dell'ingegnere-architetto ed agronomo*, vol. VIII, 1860, June. "Sulla necessità di un nuovo ordinamento di studi per gli architetti civili" in *Giornale dell'ingegnere-architetto e agronomo*, vol. IX 1861, pp. 744–745. "Condizioni presenti degli architetti in Italia" in *Questioni pratiche di belle arti. Restauri, concorsi, legislazione, professione, insegnamento*, Hoepli, Milano 1893.

¹⁶ "L'architetto dev'essere adunque peritissimo costruttore; deve conoscere intimamente le abitudini della società in cui vive; deve sapere ciò ch'è non solo necessario, ma utile e conveniente negli edifici che innalza; dev'essere inoltre sapiente e immaginoso artista. Se difetta di una sola di tali qualità, s'ha un ingegnere, un ornatista, un decoratore, non già un architetto." Boito, Camillo. *L'architettura odierna e l'insegnamento di essa*, *Giornale dell'ingegnere, architetto e agronomo*, Parte prima, 1860 pp. 269–289, 1860:275

¹⁷ Gallo, Paola. *Luigi Broggi: un protagonista dell'architettura eclettica a Milano*. Vol. 15. Franco Angeli, 1992:33

development of the country.¹⁸ Boito, who directed the school until 1908, introduced a rigorous five-year programme that included the study of scientific subjects including geometry, drawing, art history and finally, a course in architectural restoration.¹⁹

Despite Boito's reforms, which he developed in parallel with his teaching activities at the Brera Academy of Fine Arts, many students continued to prefer the faculty of engineering to the courses on architecture. Yet Boito's numerous academic and didactic writings provided a new awareness among the younger generation of architects committed to the process of urban renovation and conservation of historic monuments in Milan.²⁰

Most of the archival documentation associated with Boito that is still extant today relates to his academic activity. It is the only part that Boito's brother did not destroy.²¹ The writings that possibly survived, as also some photographs that will be discussed in the last chapter, are still in the Historical Archive of Brera, waiting to be re-organized, thus currently not accessible for scholarly study. Fortunately, the absence of a consistent archival *corpus* is compensated for by Boito's range of publications, which run to more than 200 essays published from the early 1860s well into the first decade of the 1900s.

It is from these publications that we can learn today about the profound influence of the architect on the development of a scientific methodology in the field of restoration, cultural heritage conservation and architectural theory. Boito's publications are the solid evidence of the architect's role as all-round expert on the arts in the Italian post-unification environment.

Notwithstanding Boito's versatile nature as architect, writer and lecturer, the architect's primary interest concerned restoration and cultural heritage conservation. Boito is justly defined as the father of modern restoration in Italy as, regardless of the originality of his thought, he was the first scholar who succeeded in pushing the matter of monument restoration to the highest political spheres and approval. Also, the fundamentals of his ideas shaped the subsequent approaches of modern Italian cultural heritage conservation.

¹⁸ Bottazzini, Umberto. "Tutti all'asilo Brioschi." *Il Sole 24Ore Domenica*, March 17th 2013, n. 75, p. 25

¹⁹ Gallo, Paola. *Luigi Broggi: un protagonista dell'architettura eclettica a Milano*. Vol. 15. FrancoAngeli, 1992:34

²⁰ *ibid.* 1992:34

²¹ Zucconi 1997:17-18

The next paragraphs will discuss Boito's most important writings on restoration, assessing the principles of cultural heritage conservation in the newly unified country as well as the administration, maintenance and supervision of monument conservation.

The aim of this research is to put forward a new perspective on Boito's ideas that has not yet been identified in scholarly literature, attempting to reconcile diverse scholarly interpretations with regard to the originality of the architect's thought. At the same time, the next paragraphs aim to elucidate some of the architect's most pioneering concepts, which may have not been fully considered by recent scholarly literature. The reasons for Boito's success and standing as an innovator are not only to be found in the substance of his ideas, but also in the way in which his ideas were spread.

As briefly mentioned in the previous chapter, Boito's ideas found a wide audience through the growing range of his published writings. Books, newspaper articles, essays and pamphlets were all part of an expansion in scientific publishing eventually reaching an ever wider public. Before this spread of publications, such topics as cultural heritage conservation and methodologies of restoration had been confined to a readership consisting of a restricted elite. Boito fully exploited this opportunity. One specific example of Boito's popularity with the public will be mentioned later in this chapter, illustrating one instance in which cultural heritage conservation became a topic of public debate. The lively and direct language that the architect used in his writings, fully contributed to increasing the interest and involvement of the readership, including for instance both citizens and politicians.

As the architect dealt with a variety of themes dedicated to cultural heritage conservation in his writings, a first section will be dedicated to his theories on cultural heritage conservation in post-unification Italy. What we would define as 'management' today Boito addressed on many levels: administration, cataloguing, control, maintenance, material conservation, financial and budgeting coordination between government and regions.

A second section is dedicated to his ideas on restoration: possibly the most debated aspect of his career both from the practical to the theoretical point of view. On the one hand Boito's success with the Charter of Restoration, giving him the title of father of modern restoration, on the other, a counter analysis of national and international

sources that clearly inspired Boito in his ideas, possibly partly undermining the originality of his thought.

Boito's ideas – part I: the conservation of cultural heritage for Italy

As introduced earlier, cultural heritage conservation and architectural, i.e. infrastructural renovation at the national level are parallel topics that cannot be parted, especially in the case of Camillo Boito and particularly in the context of Italy during the years after unification.

The dispersal of cultural heritage and historical monuments in the constant changing yet harmonising scenario of city and landscape, presented an ever present situation, which only became more multifaceted with the modernisation process that Italian cities underwent from the earliest years of the nineteenth century. In Boito's writings, not only did the architect express his thought on the best way to preserve the great amount of cultural heritage in the new-born nation, but he considered – and often criticised – the governmental and cultural situation as a whole. He delivered crucial observations that questioned institutional actions, which often failed to cope with the reality of cultural heritage on the Italian territory.

One most encompassing and descriptive image of Italy's complex situation in terms of cultural heritage, historical setting and the necessity of modernisation, is provided by Boito in his volume *Gite di un artista* of 1884.²² This anthology, almost recalling a personal traveller's diary gathers some of the most important writings of the architect that were published in the periodical *Nuova Antologia* through a span of two decades (1860s–1880s).²³ This work delivers an insight into contemporary problems related to cultural heritage in the first decades of Italian post-unification: protecting cultural heritage (in particular historical edifices) from the growth and modernisation of the urban environment.

As a matter of fact, this situation featuring monuments suffocated by modern and often unsightly structures was one of the major obstacles for Italy's cultural heritage conservation in the post-unification years. Boito's identification of this problem clearly shows his pioneering responsiveness to the matters of cultural heritage in a changing

²² Boito, Camillo. *Gite di un artista*. U. Hoepli, 1884.

²³ Mazzi, Maria Cecilia, editor. Introduction. "Nota introduttiva." *Camillo Boito, Gite di un artista., Nota introduttiva e apparato iconografico*, De Luca Edizioni D'arte, Roma, 1990:XXVI

environment, both topographical and cultural. With the measured and informal tone of a traveller, Boito illustrates his impressions on cultural heritage and landscape throughout his journeys in Northern Italy, Germany and Eastern Europe. His critiques, praises and comparisons accompany the reader as if he were joining the scholar in his tour. Sticking to the Italian theme, the second chapter of the anthology is particularly poignant. Dedicated to the Venetian islands of Santa Elena and Santa Marta, the chapter is dated December 1882.²⁴

Boito here assesses the condition of the peculiar urban environment of Venice in relation to the developing industrial architecture. It is the lack of harmony between pre-existing historical architecture with the industrial structure that provokes one of Boito's harshest critiques in his writings. In the chapter on Santa Elena and Santa Marta the author reports how modern buildings and constructions have tarnished the splendour of the lagoon city. Boito criticises how these edifices have been built without an aesthetic criterion, ruining Venice's historical and most elegant architecture. A factory for the manufacture of railway carriages had been constructed on Santa Elena and a cotton mill had been erected on the lagoon island of Santa Marta. Boito defines these edifices as 'miserable' and 'horrible' as their structure clashes with the delicate city landscape of the islands.²⁵ These remarks are followed by a comparison with German and Swiss cityscapes, where the author acknowledges a grace in the shapes of the new buildings that mitigates the monotony and rigidity of industrial constructions.²⁶ He remarks that in those countries, "The mechanical engineer [the designer of industrial buildings], almost without noticing, helps the artist."²⁷ Conversely, argues Boito, in Santa Elena and Santa Marta the mechanical engineer erected structures without considering the aesthetics of pre-existing historical architecture. This professional figure, according to Boito, acted like a 'tyrant' mocking and squashing the artist.²⁸

Despite heartfelt critiques towards the inappropriateness of these structures in a historical and artistic architectural environment, the author's observations remain pragmatic. Boito is aware and welcoming of the growing industry that will boost the economy of the city and of Italy. He acknowledges the benefits that such industries were

²⁴ Boito 1884:57-85

²⁵ Boito 1884:58

²⁶ Boito 1884:58-59

²⁷ Boito 1884:58 : "L'ingegnere meccanico, quasi senza avvedersene dà la mano all'artista."

²⁸ Boito 1884:59: A Venezia, all'incontro, peggio ancora a Sant'Elena che a Santa Marta, l'ingegnere meccanico ha spadroneggiato da despota, canzonando e schiacciando l'artista,"

bringing to the population.²⁹ Industry has its priorities, remarks the architect, however, ‘a little of art wouldn’t hurt, especially for a city where people visit from the farthest countries in order to view its attractiveness.’³⁰ At the same time, Boito’s distress remains unavoidable, as he believes that the beauty of the two lagoon islands has been recklessly damaged. This discourse about the clash of industrial edifices leads to the topic of preserving not only the monument itself, but also the environment around it. In a historic city as Venice, states Boito, the conservation of the monument alone is not enough. The surrounding ambience needs to be safeguarded too, according to the natural and historical structure of the urban environment.³¹

From an institutional and administrative point of view, Boito believes that it should be the municipality’s task to oversee the conservation of cultural heritage and its environment. At the same time, he acknowledges that this mission is challenging, especially for the city of Venice with its particular features.³² It is especially in a city like Venice that nature, featuring in the lagoon, sea and islands, and architecture, developed a unique and harmonious ensemble for many centuries. It is no surprise, regardless of its style of execution, that the emergence of industrial or modern edifices throughout the nineteenth century becomes intrusive.

As a matter of fact, identifying buffer zones specifically designated for the construction of industrial buildings was and is still a widespread issue in Italy. Due to the distribution of monuments and ancient architecture working in harmony with the landscape-city-village-landscape topography as mentioned above, it was always difficult to identify areas that could be entirely dedicated to industrial or factory developments, or in general, to modern architecture. Again Boito addresses the issue a few chapters later, referring to the ‘new’ and ‘incongruent’ architecture framing the lakeside in Como in the north-western region of Lombardy.

Other than in Venice, where the critique pointed at industrial edifices, the discourse is now addressed to modern constructions clashing with the surrounding landscape and with pre-existing monumental architecture.

²⁹ Boito 1884:57-59 “Noi vediamo bene che in Venezia (...) un vastissimo cotonificio, una vastissima officina di carrozze da ferrovia, dove migliaia di operai potranno trovare lavoro e pane, sono un raro beneficio; e queste e altre siffatte industrie alimenteranno, ravviveranno il commercio; e, impresso un savio ed efficace impulso all’attività d’una popolazione, al quale ha tanto bisogno di muoversi, il benessere generale crescerà senza fallo.”

³⁰ “Boito 1884:58: “L’industria ha i suoi supremi diritti, si sa; ma un poca d’arte non avrebbe sciupato nulla in una città dove la gente corre dai più lontani paesi a bearsi non d’altro che di bellezza.”

³¹ Boito 1884:59

³² *ibid.* Boito 1884:59

“Where the only goal is the new” Boito writes “three things are impossible to obtain: reasonableness, convenience and innovation.”³³ Indeed, Boito’s battle against modern eclectic architecture is a leitmotif throughout his career as architect. Next to monument conservation Boito is committed to the shaping of a modern Italian architecture that is not only unified in its style but also complements the surrounding artistic and natural ambience. While Boito’s dedication to national architecture will not be discussed in this research project, it is necessary to consider that the harmonious interrelationship between monument and national modern architecture is an aspect that the architect never failed to overlook in his restoration projects.

With regard to the situation of Lake Como Boito further criticises: “There is a tedious Doric frontispiece, resting on four heavy columns, then a gallery sustained by horrific tiny iron pilasters and next to it features a Moorish loggia, a Gothic portico, an Egyptian chapel and the pink tone coating next to the Indian yellow and red ones; and everything, with a few exceptions, is excessive. There is no other guide or reasonableness than the bizarre mood of the owner here as also the vain and narrow-minded genius of the architect.”³⁴

On the same note, the architect argues how ancient architectural styles and new materials are mixed without criteria, shaping a garish eclectic pattern that ruins the natural beauty of the environment. According to Boito, architecture’s aim should be to embrace nature and create new, beautiful sceneries. The balance of artificial and natural beauty with the natural environment should be the architect’s main goal. The architect’s statements in *Gite di un artista* concerning monument conservation and landscape harmonisation are indisputably pioneering, especially considering the landscape and monument conservation to related topics. Boito’s ideas in this field anticipate the major concerns of the compatibility of modern and pre-existing architecture characterising a debate of innovation and conservation that lasts throughout the nineteenth and twentieth century.

Further advanced aspects in the field of cultural heritage conservation emerge in the essays that Boito published in the periodical *Nuova Antologia* in the decade between 1880 and 1890. Not only did he address the environmental impact of new or industrial

³³ Boito 1884:195: “Ma dove l’unico fine è il nuovo, tre cose non s’ottengono affatto; la ragionevolezza, la convenienza, la novità.”

³⁴ Boito 1884:196: “Qua un uggioso frontispizio dorico, poggiato su quattro gravi colonne, lì una galleria sorretta da smilzi pilastrini di ferro e accanto una loggia moresca, un portico gotico, una cappella egizia e le dipinture color di rosa vicine a quelle di un giallo indiano o di minio; e tutto, salvo qualche bella eccezione, tutto spropositato, Non v’è altra guida, altro raziocinio che l’umore bizzarro del proprietario ed il vano e pettegolo genietto dell’architetto.”

architecture on the bucolic landscapes of Venice or Lake Como, but he also proposed that measures should apply at the political and administrative level for the new country.

In order to provide a more comprehensive picture of the value of Boito's proposals within the institutional context of post-unification Italy it might be helpful to look at one further writing by the architect. In *I nostri vecchi monumenti – necessità di una legge per conservarli* of 1885 (Our ancient monuments – The necessity of a law to preserve them. Author's translation), the architect depicts the complex and difficult picture of the 'condition' of monuments on the national territory a few decades after the country's unification.³⁵

In this article the author portrays the challenging administrative situation of cultural heritage in Italy that he committed to solve throughout his activity as architect and lecturer. As a matter of fact, in this writing Boito suggests a law for the conservation and administration of cultural heritage in Italy. Italy's vast quantity of cultural heritage is well understood by Boito, who also observes that many foreigners come to Italy to spend their money in order to view and study the monuments. Unfortunately, notes the author, this quantity of monuments is not well preserved or protected. The article clearly suggests it is the government's fault.³⁶ In the last two decades of unification, the Italian government was not able to promulgate enough regulations to protect its own cultural heritage.

Also, one of the greatest issues is the lack of funds, which worsens the situation and does not allow for the implementation of measures. This financial deficiency was due to the full agenda of priorities that the Italian government had to face in the years of post-unification, which eventually pushed culture to the bottom of its to-do-list. Italy is comparable to France: the transalpine country has fewer monuments (almost half the monuments, indicates the author) than the Italian peninsula, however the French have a better government for their cultural heritage, and above all, more money available.³⁷ How was the French administration of monuments in the nineteenth century more able to function than the Italian one? First, one needs to take into account that France's difficult times of revolution and unification were far in the past (end of the eighteenth century) while Italy, as previously mentioned, was undergoing a highly complicated

³⁵ Boito, Camillo. "I nostri vecchi monumenti. Necessità di una legge per conservarli." *Nuova Antologia*, vol. LI, fase XII – 15 giugno 1885, pp. 640-662.

³⁶ The essay is written in the form of a dialogue between two people, one of them is probably Boito himself. These kind of colloquial essays were often used in the nineteenth century or more generally in critical literature about diverse topics. The dialogue form allowed the author to be specifically critical while maintaining a witty and light tone.

³⁷ Boito 1885:4

process of cultural and administrative unity that was still adjusting two decades into unification. Also, unlike Italy, France's politics, hence also its cultural heritage administration was all centralised in its capital, Paris, thus in certain aspects easier to administer internally.

Moreover, France decided to put the conservation of monuments at the top of its agenda of national politics (and pride) as it will be further discussed in a subsequent chapter dedicated to the relationship of Boito and the French school of restoration.

The author argues that France allocated a grand sum of money – 16 and a half million lire – in the last two years (1883–1885) for the administration and conservation of its cultural heritage; another six millions were ready for national and religious monuments. Italy on the other hand, had at its disposal barely one and a half million.³⁸ Next to these financial differences, the author highlights institutional structures that France established for the supervision and conservation of monuments. There were for instance institutional bodies such as the *Architectes des monuments historiques* (Architects for historical monuments) or the *Ingénieurs des ponts et chaussées* (Engineers for bridges and roadways, i.e. Department of civil engineering), which were respectively under the umbrella of the Ministry of Public Works and the Ministry of Culture.³⁹

The above-mentioned *Architectes* were specifically trained to deal with historical monuments; also, they were members of the *Commission des Monuments Historiques* (The Commission of Historical Monuments) founded in 1837, whose main task was to assist the *Inspecteur général des monuments historiques de la France* (The Inspector General of the historical monuments of France), a position that had been established by François-Pierre Guillaume Guizot (1787–1874) in 1830. The role of the *Inspecteur* was to coordinate a complete list of all buildings and monuments deserving of attention by the French government. Likewise, the *Inspecteur* was responsible for the control of restoration, administrative guidance of local authorities and contact with local representatives.

The first appointed *Inspecteur* was Ludovic Vitet, who was then succeeded by Prosper Mérimée in 1834.⁴⁰ The conservation of cultural heritage in France did not only rely on official institutions. The article points out that there were also independent associations

* The author indicates no difference in currency, but we may assume that his numbers represent the amounts in Italian Lire. Boito 1885:4

* Boito 1885:11

*Azima, Vida. "Des vandales et des vestales: Les Paradoxes du patrimoine en France." Fisch, Stefan, editor. *National Approaches to the Governance of Historical Heritage Over Time: A Comparative Report*. No. 9. IOS Press, 2008, pp.63-82 and Jokilehto 1999 :129

supporting the conservation of monuments. These were for instance the *Société française d'archéologie pour la conservation et la description des monuments* (The French society of archeology for the conservation and description of monuments), founded in 1834 and the *Bulletin monumental* (Bulletin of monuments), whose members paid an annual fee to support its continuity.⁴¹

With regard to this specific point the author reports one greatest flaw that affects cultural heritage and monument conservation in Italy: namely, that the people serving in the Italian administrations and commissions of monuments were working for free. These people are usually aristocratic people or professionals engaged in other activities, who exercise their interest in monuments during their free time.⁴² The architect argues 'that a person does not have the sense of responsibility when working for free, when the thought of the future does not influence the present. (...) Experience taught us that we can't expect an excellent work from people who work for free.'⁴³

Eventually Boito proposes a solution aimed to regulate the administration of cultural heritage and the relevant institutions on the national territory.⁴⁴ According to the author the administration of cultural heritage should be subdivided among regional offices. The administrative headquarters could be placed in the following cities (each city belongs to a different region, from North to South): Rome, Naples, Palermo, Florence, Bologna, Venice, Milan and Turin. 'Our history of art is not suitable for a subdivision in dioceses or provinces' writes Boito, 'therefore, a regional subdivision is the most appropriate'.⁴⁵ Each office featuring professional staff should comprise a chief architect ('Architetto Ispettore'), an associate architect and a draftsman. Each office, argues the author, would be able to compile the catalogues of art objects that should be preserved by the State.⁴⁶ Boito notes that previous attempts for the drafting of a national catalogue had been already made in the past.

The proposal came from Minister Michele Coppino (1822–1901), who at the time was strongly in favour of this initiative. Catalogues for the regions of Piedmont, Liguria and

⁴¹ Boito 1885:11

⁴² Boito 1885:9-11: "(...)La massima parte o sono gente agiata, che, non sapendo come ammazzare il tempo, crede, in buona fede d'intendersi d'anticaglie, o sono professori, professionisti, persone occupate in altri e differenti uffici, le quali, a ore perse, si diletano di roba vecchia."

⁴³ Boito 1885:15 "Non c'è vera responsabilità quando si serve gratis, quando il pensiero dell'avvenire non influisce sul presente (..) L'esperienza ci ha dimostrato, che da persone le quali gratuitamente si prestano, non si poteva pretendere un'opera di sommo rilievo."

⁴⁴ Boito's proposal became a law on June 20th 1889. This law is specifically discussed in his article "Sulle Antichità e le Belle Arti", *Nuova Antologia*, Vol. XXIV, Serie III (Fascicolo del 16 Dicembre 1889), Roma Tipografia della Camera dei Deputati (Stabilimenti del Fibreno)

⁴⁵ Boito 1885:19 "La nostra storia dell'arte non si confà né alla suddivisione in diocesi, né a quella in provincie, quindi la divisione in regioni è la più giustificata."

⁴⁶ Boito 1885:17

Emilia were on the agenda. Too bad the (only two!) appointed architects were paid 1000 Lire only, working without having stipulated a previous agreement or schedule. The chief architect, suggests the author, could be supported by the academies as also by the institutes of fine art, by the professors and by the libraries. The author continues 'Eventually, the chief architect, a remunerated authority, would become the reference for these dispersed studies. He would be able to provide a practical methodology for the best knowledge of monument and for their most faithful and longsighted conservation.'⁴⁷ This professional role, argues Boito, would ultimately serve as a go-between with the Government, keeping the State updated about the conservation status of monuments and restoration plans and strategies.⁴⁸

With that in mind, the author underlines that a *Commissione Permanente di Belle Arti* (Permanent Commission of Fine Arts) already existed in Italy.⁴⁹ The Commission is made up of twelve artists, four painters, four sculptors and four architects headed by one general director of antiquities and fine arts. This body operates rather well, continues Boito. However its tasks are too broad, ranging from the organisation of academic institutions to matters related to modern art (*arte moderna* – supposedly the author refers here to contemporary artistic productions).⁵⁰

The picture that emerges from this article in matters of cultural heritage conservation and administration in post-unification Italy is the following: a government that is fully aware of the great quality and quantity of cultural heritage present on the national territory, which however, does not yet have the means or the bureaucratic structure to operate efficiently. By the time Boito publishes *I nostri vecchi monumenti* in 1885 almost two decades had passed since unification. His concept of cultural heritage administration is highly structured and in certain aspects is inspired by international models, as for instance the French one. It has to be noted however, that the architect adapts these transnational models to the Italian geographic and artistic condition.

France's centralised system cannot be applied to Italy, as in this case a regional system of heritage administration is more suitable for the regional and geographic nature of that country. Boito understands that the complex historical and political situation of the

⁴⁷ Boito 1885:19: "Così l'ispettore, pagato e autorevole, diventerebbe il centro degli studi sparsi e imprimerebbe ad essi un indirizzo pratico per la migliore conoscenza dei monumenti e per la loro più fedele e più lunga conservazione."

⁴⁸ *ibid.*

⁴⁹ Firstly called Giunta di Belle Arti and since 1881 Commissione permanente di Belle Arti (Permanent Commission of Fine Arts), this institution was founded in Italy in 1867 (Royal Decree October 20th 1867, n. 4008). The Commission worked closely under the Ministry of Education. Initially the tasks were mainly executive and administrative while the issues related to monuments and heritage, were still ruled by the reminiscent pre-unification policies of Fine Arts in the broader sense. Bencivenni, dalla Negra, Grifoni 1987:192

⁵⁰ Boito 1885:21

country does not allow cultural heritage matters to be at the top of the governmental agenda. At the same time however, he does not spare critical observations toward the inadequacy of the system. He believes that a country with the quality and quantity of cultural heritage as Italy should provide way more attention and care to its own treasures.

Unfortunately, the reality was that lack of funding and a bureaucratic and administrative disorganisation accompanied by the absence and or sluggishness of national regulations, were permanent factors to the hindrance of cultural heritage conservation in Italy. One example for this kind of lethargy can be seen on the assessment of Boito's proposal of a decentralised system for cultural heritage conservation mentioned above.

The Ministry of Education as a matter of fact, promulgated Boito's argument on June 20th 1889 – four years after the architect first suggested his idea in his writing of 1885. The architect provides a journalistic and critical update about the decree in his article of 1889, *Sulle antichità e le belle arti*.⁵¹ In this article Boito comments on the recently approved Decree of June 20th proposed by the Minister of Education Paolo Boselli⁵².

After the rather centralised program endorsed by the Minister Ruggero Bonghi between 1874 and 1876 with the establishment of a Central, i.e. Direzione Centrale degli Scavi e dei Musei del Regno (General directorate for excavations and museums of the Reign), the administrative system of cultural heritage conservation in Italy tended to expand in networks and regional systems effectively only in 1891, with decrees firstly sponsored by Minister Paolo Boselli (1838–1932) and later by Pasquale Villari (1827–1917).⁵³ The decree of 1889 might be seen as a first step towards a regional organisation of cultural heritage in Italy. In this article of 1889 Boito discusses the appointment of an Officer for Antiquities and Fine Arts in each of the twelve Italian regions to improve the administration of archaeological and artistic cultural heritage as dictated by the new decree. Once again, as in many of Boito's writings the tone is analytical and sharp at the

⁵¹ "Sulle Antichità e le Belle Arti", *Nuova Antologia*, Vol. XXIV, Serie III, fascicolo del 16 Dicembre 1889, Roma Tipografia della Camera dei Deputati, Stabilimenti del Fibreno

⁵² Cultural heritage conservation and administration in Italy has been since unification a competence of the Ministry of Education and remained so until 1974, as the Ministero per i Beni e le Attività culturali had been instituted by Giovanni Spadolini. (Decree December 14th 1974, n. 657) Bencivenni, Dalla Negra, Grifoni 1992:200

⁵³ Pasquale Villari, became Minister of Education after Paolo Boselli in 1892. He partly revolutionised the concept of cultural heritage conservation at the political level (even though the idea of cultural heritage as a document and testimony of art history had been already floating in the scholarly circles for a few decades – more about this matter will be explicated in the following paragraphs). The Minister's approach further endorsed Boito's points in the Charter of Restoration of 1883. He conceived the monument as a document and not as an example to emulate through the production of contemporary art. His idea remained valid for the entire later development of cultural heritage legislation and interpretation. M. Bencivenni, R. Dalla Negra, P. Grifoni, *Monumenti e Istituzioni*, Prefazione, p. XXV For a complete overview of the legislation of cultural heritage conservation in Italy from 1880 to 1915, detailed information has been gathered from Miarelli Mariani, Gaetano. "Istituzioni: un riflesso delle idee. Appunti per una prefazione." *Monumenti e Istituzioni. Parte Seconda Il decollo e la riforma del servizio di tutela dei monumenti in Italia 1880-1915*, edited by Bencivenni, Mario, Riccardo Dalla Negra, and Paola Grifoni. Alinea Editrice, Firenze, 1992,

same time. With that in mind, it is relevant to stress again that the architect's intent is on the one hand, to involve and inform the public on the political matters of cultural heritage conservation – as a matter of fact, Boito's talent in including the mass in matters related to cultural heritage was manifested throughout his career on many occasions as will be highlighted below. Considering the relevance of Boito's professional figure in the political and scholarly circles by the late 1880s, the aim of his article might also have been to accelerate the law's endorsement that had been wavering for months at the time his writing was published.⁵⁴

The essay begins with the architect's complaint and concern about the absence of funds to preserve the immense patrimony of monuments present in Italy. The reader's impression while going through Boito's text is that the lack of budgetary funds seems the origin of most of the problems related to cultural heritage conservation in post-unification Italy. "Italy", writes the author "has the luck and misfortune of having the greatest and most diversified collection of cultural heritage."⁵⁵ As a benchmark of comparison, the author mentions the French Government had recently allocated the equivalent of thirteen million Italian Lire per year for the administration of its cultural heritage and all related fine arts matters. Conversely, Italy only allotted a little more than four million for its national cultural heritage. The author comments that the country could rely on its characteristic system of municipalities, on dioceses and private societies to fund its cultural heritage, but neither the Italian Government, nor other institutions are willing to assign more funds for cultural heritage.⁵⁶

Boito mentions the Government's lack of funds for national cultural heritage in several of his articles. Therefore, one of the objectives of the architect's article is to illustrate the benefits the decree might have on the state of affairs of cultural heritage in Italy. The decree is compounded of twenty-six articles that set the parameters of cultural heritage administration at the regional level. This law empowers Italy's municipalities and their academies of fine arts with the mission of governing and promoting the arts. The municipalities are according to this ruling, able to manage cultural heritage in their regional area.

⁵⁴ The author argues that the decree should have been in force since October 1st 1889; the article dates December 1889. By that time the ruling had passed through the Parliament and the Senate, however due to bureaucratic matters, the decree was not official yet. Boito 1889:3

⁵⁵ Boito 1889:3: "Il nostro, fra i paesi civili, ha questa fortuna e disgrazia insieme, di possedere il maggior numero di monumenti, i più belli, i più varii d'età e di maniere...."

⁵⁶ The lack of funds and the comparison with France's system for cultural heritage conservation are recurrent topics in many of Boito's articles. As also seen in the previous article "I nostri vecchi monumenti – Necessità di una legge per conservarli." *Nuova Antologia*, vol. LI, XII, 15th June 1885

According to Boito, there are three main advantages this decree brings to Italy's heritage administration: first, the organisational partition of cultural heritage administration; second, the regulated and compulsory involvement of technically competent professional figures in consultative bodies and third, the improved coordination of various institutions involved in the arts. These may range from museums, to archaeological excavation enterprises and schools thus creating mutual beneficial effects on each other.⁵⁷

At this stage, it is interesting to note that the concept of a monument in Italy, at least at the legal level, is still defined as a model that has to be interpreted and imitated by artist or student, in order to guarantee the development of the arts, and not as a document testifying to the history and culture of a nation, as it will occur from the first half of the 1890s.⁵⁸ As mentioned above, the true novelty of this decree is the establishment of a Commissary for Antiquities and Fine Arts in each of the twelve Italian regions. Accordingly, competent and heterogeneous teams made up of professionals with technical and artistic backgrounds, should, according to the new ruling, assist the Chief Commissary in his work. The teams comprise two architects, two painters, two sculptors, one archaeologist and one engineer whose nomination should be renewed every three years. This sensible division according to regional clusters with headquarters in the major capital cities of Italy, from Milan to Palermo and Florence, and of course Rome, will, from the author's point of view, lead to the demise of the existing Commissions of Conservation, eventually becoming "little academies of small-talk".⁵⁹

Boito supports the need of a centralised administration of cultural heritage at the national level. However, he is aware that Italy's heterogeneous pre-unification structure and also topographical constitution were hindering the formation of an official headquarters. Several local politicians refused to let go of their regional authority to eventually relegate power to the Italian government. Unfortunately, the struggle between centralisation and peripheral administration remained an unresolved issue for many decades. Yet as in many things in politics, finding a compromise is often the solution, hence Boito sustains the formula presented in this decree, ruling the establishment of regional offices in the major artistic capital cities of the country. A

⁵⁷ Boito 1889:5

⁵⁸ Ibid. see also n65

⁵⁹ Boito 1889:11 The author writes "Questo sistema farà morire di morte naturale le Commissioni Conservatrici che diventeranno accademie di ciarle inconcludenti." ['This system will naturally eradicate the Conservation Commissions, which will turn into small talk academies. Editor's translation'] Boito's critique is mainly supported by the fact that up to that stage, i.e. 1890s, most of the consultative bodies had been compound of artists only, who would permanently re-elect themselves for their own personal interests; this aspect is further discussed by the author in the later paragraphs of his article.

noticeable deficiency of coordination among the contemporary commissions leads to confusion and an overlap of work in the administration of cultural heritage, further comments the architect.

From July 1887 to the beginning of 1889, reports Boito, the *Direzione Generale*, i.e. the General Directorate (previously *Direzione Generale per gli Scavi e i Musei*, General Directorate for Excavations and Museums, then renamed *Direzione Generale per le Antichità e le Belle Arti*, the General Directorate for the Antiquities and Fine Arts by Ministry Giuseppe Fiorelli in 1881) was caring for approximately two hundred monuments.⁶⁰ In terms of art historical eras that need to be covered by the regional commissaries, this entails monuments dating from the Medieval to the Renaissance period. This large quantity in addition to the stylistic variety of these monuments is, with the current organizational status, evidently not manageable, comments the author.⁶¹

Boito reports that at the time his article is being published, eight edifices, including the dome of Brescia Cathedral and the Church of San Michele della Chiusa, were 'still' being buttressed. The complexity and the concurrent timing of these interventions led to a much prolonged period of restoration.⁶² 'The funds are missing, the funds to properly preserve our monuments and restore them within reasonable time' were the words uttered by the then Minister of Education Paolo Boselli, reports the architect.⁶³ Boito agrees with the Ministry's statement, yet he is also cognisant that intervention should be targeted and performed with specific criteria, as targeting and coordination are the only ways to preserve the large quantity of cultural heritage in Italy with the few available funds. The State, Boito resumes, should have saved its finances to intervene on monuments that can barely stand, rather than undertake a few, insignificant restorations on buildings that did not necessitate immediate intervention.⁶⁴

One of the main points of Boito's restoration theory that will be discussed more in depth below, is that structural intervention on a monument is the first step to undertake in matters of restoration in order to prevent its crumbling. The consequences of misdirected use of funds, argues the architect, reflects in the senseless and invasive

⁶⁰ See: Tavola riassuntiva dei provvedimenti riguardanti l'organizzazione del servizio di tutela dei monumenti dal 1881 al 1915, *Monumenti e Istituzioni*, Vol. II, 1992

⁶¹ Boito 1889:12

⁶² ibid.

⁶³ Boito 1889:12 citing Boselli's words: "Mancano i danari, soggiungeva in tono lamentevole il ministro, mancano i danari a conservarli adeguatamente i nostri monumenti, e a restaurarli in tempo."

⁶⁴ Boito 1889:13 "Lo Stato avrebbe dovuto risparmiare i fondi per intervenire su monumenti che si reggono debolmente in piedi e non rimetter completamente a nuovo delle strutture di cui mancava solo qualche parte."

restoration of historical monuments that have been performed in Italy, resulting in damaging the monument's originality, integrity and aesthetics.⁶⁵ The poor coordination of Italy's cultural heritage administration system also reflects in the organisation of its workforce.

Fortunately, one further section of the 1889 decree determines the tasks of staff positions in galleries, museum and archaeological excavations sites, as also the duties of the personnel responsible for the conservation of monuments. As mentioned above, Boito had already criticised the staff involved in the administration and maintenance of cultural heritage in Italy, both in terms of their (lack of) professional preparation but also referring to broader bureaucratic related matters.

The absence of regular terms of employment and the biased systems of re-election between political and scholarly circles hampering the participation of competent professional figures to the myriad of advisory bodies and commissions were issues that the architect would address and openly criticise in his publications. On this occasion however, the decree sets out instructions for the nomination of twenty-nine experts, both architects and technicians specifically competent in cultural heritage and monument conservation, who are supposed to work in coordination with the regional commissaries.⁶⁶

Last but not least, Boito considers another crucial topic of cultural heritage conservation in post-unification Italy, which features in the last article of the decree: the necessity to draft a general catalogue of the artistic and archaeological national patrimony. The issue of designing a national catalogue became increasingly prominent in the 1890s and can be regarded as the main task of the regional authorities within the framework of this decree.⁶⁷ Boito argues that the regional commissaries and the General Directorate should establish nationally valid criteria for the compilation of the catalogue, amending the fallacious current list of monuments "correcting the unfair omissions and also the

⁶⁵ Boito 1889:13 In regards to invasive and unnecessary restorations Boito's words are the following: "Lo Stato avrebbe dovuto risparmiare i fondi per intervenire su monumenti che si reggono debolmente in piedi e non rimetter completamente a nuovo delle strutture di cui mancava solo qualche parte. (...) Dei restauri così condotti ecco le conseguenze: chi vuol studiare un edificio o riceverne la giusta impressione deve non più guardarlo restaurato, ma cercarne le fotografie, i disegni i rilievi, precedenti ai nuovi troppo dotti ed arguti lavori."

⁶⁶ Boito 1889:11: According to the decree, the nominated architects and technicians will replace the Genio Civile, which usually flanked the Ministry of Education in interventions concerning cultural heritage conservation; Boito considers the involvement of the Genio Civile highly unsuitable for works on monuments and historical edifices as their competences do not relate to restoration interventions, often causing more harm than good.

⁶⁷ It should be noted that before Boselli's decree of 1889, regional delegates had been already appointed in 1884 with the reforms of Ministry Giuseppe Fiorelli; Decree, of 27th November 1884. See Tavola Riassuntiva dei provvedimenti riguardanti l'organizzazione del servizio di tutela dei monumenti dal 1881 al 1915, Monumenti e Istituzioni, Vol. II, 1992

unworthy listings; so that we might finally be able to own what we may call the Golden Books of Italian Monuments.”⁶⁸

In the conclusive part of his essay, Boito hints at a few errors contained in the decree. These faults mainly relate to the distribution of the scarcity of funds allocated among the regions.⁶⁹ Other mistakes are connected with the general political structure of Italian administration, where some provinces were still legally not bound to any governmental ruling, thus escaping their obligations within this decree of 1889.⁷⁰

At the time this article by Boito was published, Minister Boselli had been delaying the implementation of the reform for over two months. The reasons for this delay, comments Boito, might only be due to the lack of funds and to the difficulty in finding the right people without the strain of parliamentary influences and personal interests.⁷¹ Nonetheless, Boito's final remark is positive, as from his point of view the decree addresses the major issues of coordination, administration and cataloguing of the Italian monuments thus enabling full control and administration of the national cultural heritage.

Unfortunately, Boselli's decree, especially in terms of regional operability, was never implemented due to practical and bureaucratic difficulties of all kinds and also to political instability.⁷² Yet, Boito possibly viewed this regulation as a closer step to his vision of a functional superintendence for the conservation and promotion of cultural heritage at the national level.⁷³

Out of the many publications that Boito accomplished throughout his career, this selection of writings provides an all round understanding of the many issues that challenged the Italian situation of cultural heritage conservation in the nineteenth century. Boito was an outstanding connoisseur of monuments in Italy during the post-

⁶⁸ Boito 1889:14: “S'intende che venga invocato con viva impazienza un catalogo delle ricchezze nostre del passato, il quale corregga l'abborracciato elenco presente, così nelle ingiuste omissioni come nelle molte immeritate iscrizioni; talché ci riesca una buona volta di possedere quello che potrebbe chiamarsi il libro d'oro dei monumenti italiani.”

⁶⁹ Boito 1889:16

⁷⁰ Boito 1889:17. The author does not go into details, however he only mentions that a new law promised by Ministry Boselli should be able to solve these legal blunders.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Miarelli Mariani, Gaetano “Un riflesso delle idee.” Appunti per una Prefazione. In *Monumenti e Istituzioni*, Vol.2, 1992, p. XXIII

⁷³ Boito suggested his vision of a regional administration already in 1882 and later, in 1885. See Commissione Permanente di Belle Arti. Conservazione dei Monumenti. Progetto Boito. Seduta del 20.11.1882, see the Appendix of *Monumenti e Istituzioni*, Vol.2, 1992, p.43. In this project Boito dictates the establishment of eight regional offices with competent and remunerated staff in the major capital artistic cities: Rome, Naples, Palermo, Florence, Bologna, Turin, Venice and Milan for to the conservation and restoration of Italian architectural monuments. Boito, will reiterate his proposal in the other article published in 1885 on *Nuova Antologia*, also previously mentioned in this chapter, “I nostri vecchi monumenti – Necessità di una legge per conservarli.” Vol. LI, fase XII – June 15th 1885, in *Un decennio di transizione (1881-1890): I delegati regionali e i commissariati per le Antichità e Belle Arti. Monumenti e Istituzioni*, Vol. II, 1992:11

unification period. In regards to the topics of administration and organisation of monument conservation, his knowledge went beyond any preference of artistic or architectural style. Boito spoke out at a national level, beyond the local commissions spread across the regions, which were merely operating independently and without coordination.

Boito's ideas – part II: a methodology for restoration

Although improvements happened, the faultless administration of cultural heritage in Italy seemed very difficult to achieve before the turn of the twentieth century. Conversely, the promulgation of guidelines for the restoration of monuments and historic edifices succeeded in being officially attained – at least on paper. In connection with this, there is one document more than others that merits specific attention, distinguishing Boito as one of the fathers of modern restoration.

The Charter of Restoration drafted in 1883 is – as mentioned in the opening line of this research project – a milestone in the national political and cultural scenario of cultural conservation in post-unification Italy. The text features the conclusive vote of the Fourth Congress of Engineers and Architects that took place in Rome in January 1883 (Appendix I). As a matter of fact, the Charter of Restoration made its mark in 1882, when Boito officially presented the document to the Permanent Commission headed by the Ministry of Giuseppe Fiorelli, appointed Director of Antiquities and Fine Arts. It was first circulated as a provisional guideline and then it was addressed to all prefects nationwide when it was officially presented in 1883.⁷⁴

The document is made up of seven points and aims to regulate the restoration methodology for architectural monuments at the national level. These practical guidelines support a scientific methodology of intervention that aims to establish a respectful and cautious approach when performing restoration on a monument. By following these guidelines, the restorer considers the monument's history and its actual condition, while safeguarding its physical stability and its art historical value. For the sake of clarity and due to its importance, the whole text (author's translation) is set out below:

⁷⁴ Bencivenni, dalla Negra, Grifoni 1992: XXI

“Considering that architectural monuments from the past are not only valuable for the study of architecture but contribute as essential documents to explain and illustrate all the facets of the history of various times and peoples, and therefore have to be religiously and scrupulously respected as documents, whose alteration, even if of slightest nature, could be misleading if appearing as part of the original, eventually giving rise to erroneous assumptions.⁷⁵

1. Architectural monuments have to be consolidated rather than repaired, only once it has been ascertained that it is absolutely necessary to intervene on them. They have to be repaired rather than restored, thus avoiding any additions or renovations.
2. In the case where these additions or renovations become absolutely indispensable due to structural solidity or other causes that cannot be overcome, and where they concern parts that never existed or that do not exist anymore, of which we lack knowledge of their original shape, they have to be executed in a manner different to the style of the monument, possibly considering that in terms of future appearance these do not clash too much with the artistic appearance of the monument.
3. When dealing with destroyed parts or parts that were originally never finished for accidental reasons, or with parts that are so ruined that may not last while the work is in progress, and if there is no original type of this part that can be thus reproduced with precision, then it might be convenient to intervene on the additional or renovated components, even if formed in the original style, in a different material, or also mark them with a precise sign or date of the restoration, so that the observer shall not be led to erroneous assumptions. In the case of ancient monuments, or other monuments for which the archaeological value is of particular importance, the parts that are indispensable for the structural solidity and conservation have to be maintained in a simple form or according to the simple geometric outlines of the design, even if these will appear as the continuation or as the unquestionable matching components of the ancient modelled and decorated parts.

⁷⁵ Risoluzione IV Congresso degli ingegneri ed architetti, Roma 1883 (prima sezione): “Considerando che i monumenti architettonici del passato, non solo valgono allo studio dell’architettura, ma servono, quali documenti essenziali, a chiarire e ad illustrare in tutte le sue parti la storia dei vari tempi e dei vari popoli, e perciò vanno rispettati con scrupolo religioso, appunto come documenti, in cui una modificazione anche lieve, la quale possa sembrare opera originaria, trae in inganno e conduce via via a deduzioni sbagliate.” See Boito, Camillo. “Processo verbale della terza seduta del giorno 26 gennaio 1883, Carta del Restauro.” Atti del quarto congresso degli ingegneri ed architetti italiani radunati in Roma nel gennaio del 1883, Tipografia Fratelli Centenari, Roma, 1884:121

4. With regard to the monuments whose beauty, peculiarity, poetry of their appearance is enhanced by the variety of marbles, mosaics, painting, from the colour that derives from material ageing and from the unusual circumstances and conditions in which they are kept or even from their spoiled status, consolidation works have to be limited to the least possible and they should not diminish, even at all if possible, any of the above mentioned intrinsic and extrinsic features for artistic enjoyment.
5. Any additions of modifications that may have been added throughout the ages on the original edifice will be considered as monuments and treated as such, except for the case in which they might have an obvious minor artistic and historical importance compared to the edifice itself, deflecting or masking certain noteworthy parts of it; in this case, their removal or demolition is recommended. In all cases, whenever possible or whenever the expense might be worth it, the above mentioned parts will be either preserved together or only those parts that are essential, possibly next to the monument from which they were removed.
6. Before performing any reparation or restoration work, even if minor, pictures of the monument have to be taken, in conjunction with further pictures documenting the various stages of the work in progress up to the completion of the work. These series of photographs will be transmitted to the Ministry of Education together with the plans, the architectural projects and the details, as also with coloured watercolours, in which all preserved, consolidated, remade, renovated, modified, removed or destroyed parts will be represented. A precise and methodical report of the reasons and of the procedures of the works and variations of any kind that have been performed, will have to be sent to the Council of Maintenance of the restored churches or to offices responsible for the conservation of the monument.
7. A commemorative stone will be placed on the edifice, with the dates of when the main restoration work was carried out."⁷⁶

⁷⁶ 1. I monumenti architettonici, quando sia dimostrata incontestabilmente la necessità di porvi mano, devono piuttosto venire consolidati che riparati, piuttosto riparati che restaurati, evitando in essi con ogni studio le aggiunte e le rinnovazioni.

2. Nel caso che le dette aggiunte o rinnovazioni tornino assolutamente indispensabili per la solidità o per altre cause invincibili, e nel caso che riguardino parti non mai esistite o non più esistenti e per le quali manchi la conoscenza sicura della forma primitiva, le aggiunte o rinnovazioni si devono compiere con carattere diverso da quello del monumento, avvertendo che, possibilmente, nell'apparenza prospettica le nuove forme non urtino troppo con il suo aspetto artistico.

3. Quando si tratti invece di compiere cose distrutte o non ultimate in origine per fortuite cagioni, oppure di rifare parti tanto deperite da non poter più durare in opera, e quando non di meno rimanga il tipo vecchio da riprodurre con precisione, allora converrà in ogni modo che i pezzi aggiunti o rinnovati, pure assumendo la forma primitiva, siano di materia evidentemente diversa, o portino un segno inciso meglio la data del restauro, sicché neanche su ciò possa l'attento osservatore venire tratto in inganno. Nei monumenti dell'antichità o in altri, ove sia notevole la importanza propriamente archeologica, le parti di compimento indispensabili alla solidità e alla conservazione dovrebbero essere lasciate coi soli piani semplici e coi soli solidi geometrici dell'abbozzo, anche quando non appariscano altro che la continuazione od il sicuro riscontro di altre parti anche sagomate ed ornate.

In 1893, Boito published a revised version of the Charter adding an eighth point, establishing that the fragments that had been removed from the monument had to be exhibited nearby.⁷⁷

The principles listed in the Charter are self-explanatory when considered within today's panorama of cultural heritage conservation. However, in view of the nineteenth-century scenario in Italy, where restoration of monuments and historic buildings were performed without following national standard guidelines and mostly according to the skills and taste of the appointed restorer or architect, these points were revolutionary.

The components of art historical research combined with the modern application of photography did not feature in any guideline of monument restoration decreed at the national level.⁷⁸ The document promotes the scientific and careful restoration of the monument, which should primarily prevent the monument from crumbling down. Any additions, unless necessary, should be avoided; in addition, all modifications should be reported.

These guidelines should be considered within a scenario that saw the discipline of restoration as a procedure performed by artisans, artists and architects according to their own taste and without any criteria of previous study of the monument or parameters. This practice characterised restoration for many centuries before Boito's Charter, thus making the promulgation of the document at the national level unprecedented. Inevitably, the success and political endorsement of this document conveyed to Boito the title of one of the 'fathers of modern restoration'.⁷⁹

4. Nei monumenti, che traggono la bellezza, la singolarità, la poesia del loro aspetto dalla varietà dei marmi, dei mosaici, dei dipinti oppure dal colore della loro vecchiezza o delle circostanze pittoresche in cui si trovano, o perfino dallo stato rovinoso in cui giacciono, le opere di consolidamento, ridotte allo strettissimo indispensabile, non dovranno scemare possibilmente in nulla coteste ragioni intrinseche ed estrinseche di allettamento artistico.

5. Saranno considerate per monumenti, e trattate come tali, quelle aggiunte o modificazioni che in diverse epoche fossero state introdotte nell'edificio primitivo, salvo il caso in cui, avendo un'importanza artistica e storica manifestamente minore dell'edificio stesso e nel medesimo tempo svisando e smascherando alcune parti notevoli di esso, si ha da consigliare la rimozione o la distruzione di tali modificazioni o aggiunte. In tutti i casi nei quali sia possibile, o ne valga la spesa, le opere di cui si parla verranno serbate, o nel loro insieme o in alcune parti essenziali, possibilmente accanto al monumento da cui furono rimosse.

6. Dovranno eseguirsi, innanzi di por mano ad opere anche piccole di riparazione o di restauro, le fotografie del monumento, poi di mano in mano le fotografie dei principali stati del lavoro, e finalmente le fotografie del lavoro compiuto. Questa serie di fotografie sarà trasmessa al Ministero della pubblica istruzione insieme con i disegni delle piante degli alzati e dei dettagli e, occorrendo, cogli acquarelli colorati, ove figurino con evidente chiarezza tutte le opere conservate, consolidate, rifatte, rinnovate, modificate, rimosse o distrutte. Un resoconto preciso e metodico delle ragioni e del procedimento delle opere e delle variazioni di ogni specie accompagnerà i disegni e le fotografie. Una copia di tutti i documenti ora indicati dovrà rimanere depositata presso le fabbricerie delle chiese restaurate, o presso l'ufficio incaricato della custodia del monumento restaurato.

7. Una lapide da infiggere nel monumento restaurato ricorderà la data e le opere principali del restauro.

⁷⁷ Jokilehto, Jukka, "Restauro filologico." *A history of Architectural Conservation*, 1999: 202; For reference, the revised version of Boito's charter has been also published in "I restauri in architettura, Dialogo Primo" in *Questioni Pratiche di Belle Arti*, 1893, p. 24.

⁷⁸ A more in-depth discussion in regards to Boito's use of photography will be provided in the fourth chapter of this research paper.

⁷⁹ Boito's attribution as one of the fathers of restoration especially emerged in Italian scholarly literature on restoration in the 1950s. Pesenti, Serena. "Camillo Boito e la disciplina del restauro: quale eredità per il XXI secolo?" *Camillo Boito moderno. Centenario Boitiano 1914 - 2014 Anniversario di Interesse Nazionale*. Accademia di Brera, Mercoledì 3 Dicembre, 2014.

With regard to this attribution it is interesting to note that one party of recent scholarship argues that Boito has erroneously been defined as the pioneer of cultural heritage conservation. As a matter of fact, there were other contemporary scholars of Boito's time who addressed the topics of monument restoration, cultural heritage conservation and archaeological excavations with a scientific approach, while strongly criticising the lack of laws and regulations to administer monuments and cultural heritage on the national territory.⁸⁰

The Italian historian Cesare Cantù (1804–1895), mentioned in the first chapter, did to some extent anticipate Boito's concepts on restoration and cultural heritage conservation. As demonstrated by the report of a Congress of 1872 in Milan on the procedures to adopt for archaeological excavations and architectural restoration, this scholar (nominated President of the Sezione di Archeologia Artistica), expresses several ideas that can also be found in Boito's writings.⁸¹

Cantù writes: "Following up on other debates, we were wondering: which measures shall we adopt in the restoration of edifices? We shall distinguish the ones of current use from the others. With regard to the former, it is necessary to adapt them for their destined use. With regard to the latter, we shall not restore them, but only preserve them; we shall not renovate them, but only repair them. In case some parts have to be supplied or added, we should make sure there are previous drawings, or clear evidence, without incurring the danger of modifying or spoiling the edifice with additions that will lead the scholar to erroneous conclusions; the new parts should never be merged with the ancient parts; we shall preserve, except for the defections, the additions that have been made throughout the ages, and that represent an historical testimony. Above all, we have to make sure that nothing alters, even in a better way, the character of the edifice."⁸²

The differentiation between 'living monuments' (*monumenti vivi*) i.e. monuments that are still in use and 'dead monuments' (*monumenti morti*), the monuments that are not in

⁸⁰ Bencinvenni etc. argue that Boito is erroneously defined as the pioneer of cultural heritage conservation in Italy; his merit, argues the author, is based on the fact that he enumerated and codified the principles for conservation and restoration in norms 'of good sense'. Gaetano Miarelli Mariani in *Istituzioni: un riflesso delle idee. Appunti per una prefazione*. in *Monumenti e Istituzioni*, Vol. II, 1992:XXI

⁸¹ Relazione dei lavori della sezione di Archeologia artistica, letta nell'adunanza generale del Congresso di Milano il 10 Settembre 1872. *Estratto dal N° 79-80 del periodico La Buona Novella*, 5 ottobre 1872, Carte Cantù R.25 inf. Fasc. 3.

⁸² Ibid. "Seguitando nelle nostre discussioni, ci chiedemmo – Quali norme tenere ne' restauri degli edifizii? Si distinguono quelli di uso attuale dagli altri. Quanto ai primi, è necessario adattarli in modo che non manchino alla loro destinazione. Quanto agli altri, nessun restauro, ma soltanto conservarli.; non ripristinarli, ma solo ripararli. Quando occorra supplire alcuna parte o rimetterla, possa farsi allorchè v'abbia o disegni precedenti, o indizi sicuri, senza pericolo di alterare o deturpare l'edificio con aggiunte che ingannino lo studioso: in nessun caso confondere le parti nuove colle antiche: conservare anche, salvo le deformità, le aggiunte che massime negli edifizii religiosi, vennero fatte nell'andare dei secoli, e che formano anche esse una testimonianza storica. Soprattutto badare che nulla alteri, foss'anche in meglio, il carattere dell'edificio. "

use anymore but need to be preserved for their cultural, symbolic, historical and artistic value, possibly appears for the first time in official documents of cultural heritage administration in the Italian post-unification period. It is also interesting to note that the document fundamentally acknowledges the correlated situation of monuments, – for civil use and within the local environment, which characterized the situation in Italy in the nineteenth century where historic buildings and monuments were often still actively used within urban everyday life.

This differentiation further suggests a methodology for restoration that has to be adapted according to the nature of the monument, hence entailing a scientific study and approach that takes into consideration the contemporary conditions and environment in which the monument is situated. This idea also links to a new awareness of the monument in its present time, eventually marking the beginning of a modern era dealing with monument restoration according to their purpose and usage.

Specifically relating to the practice of restoration, Cantù refers to ‘repairing’ monuments rather than renovating them, evidently anticipating Boito’s notions listed in the Charter of 1883. It is difficult to establish whether Boito and Cantù ended up having the same conclusions at the same time. In any case, the post-unification period starting from the 1870s marks an attention to monuments nationally that is both practical (realization of the vast amount of cultural heritage present across the whole country) and sentimental (the monument seen as a symbol of Italian culture in its many regional artistic and architectural variations).

Furthermore, recent scholarship has identified other sources that Boito might have closely re-interpreted for his Charter of Restoration. In her study of 1999 Jokilehto claims that Boito’s fundamental ideas of the Charter of 1883 came from Tito Vespasiano Paravicini (1832–1899), art historian and restoration archaeologist, whose role within the Italian conservation movement of the nineteenth century will be further discussed in the third chapter. The scholar argues that Boito merely developed Paravicini’s ideas and brought them forward at the legal and governmental level.⁸³

Mizuko (1996) on the other hand, argues that Boito was inspired by transalpine sources for the drafting of the Charter of Restoration in 1883. One of these is, according to the scholar, the French art historian and archaeologist, member of the *Comité des arts et*

⁸³ Jokilehto 1999: 202

monuments, Adolphe Napoléon Didron. In the *Annales archéologiques* of 1845, Didron stated with regard to ancient monuments: "(...)it is better to consolidate than to repair, it is better to repair than to restore, it is better to restore than to remake, and better to remake than embellish; in no case add anything, and above all, suppress anything."⁸⁴ Another foundation for Boito's Charter can be identified in the *Comité's* instruction draft of 1840, which featured the same concept of restoration approach mentioned above.⁸⁵

Last but not least, Mizuko also mentions J.P. Schmit's *Nouveau manuel complet de l'architecte des monuments religieux* (New complete manual for the architect of religious buildings), likewise dating 1845. Schmit was also a member of the *Comité*. The French scholar underlines similar principles stressing total respect for the monument, ruling out any possibility of modification or demolition of any components of the monument.⁸⁶ Similarities between the principles that Boito lists in the Charter of Restoration and the above-cited texts also emerge in other aspects.

These likenesses relate to the treatment of later additions to the monument, to the preparatory and scientific study and the drafting of reports documenting the restoration carried out. Similar to Cantù, Schmit also divides monuments in two categories: monuments that are purely historical and monuments destined for public usage. Accordingly, both scholars emphasise one crucial point, namely the conception of the monument as document. This assessment goes beyond any possible differences of interpretation or restoration methodology as argued by Schmit: "Regardless of practical motives and taste, each monument deserves the same respect, simply based on the value of its historical testimony."⁸⁷

These essays clearly indicate the primacy of Boito in matters of modern restoration, revealing that the architect possibly borrowed specific ideas from other scholars. At the same time, without wanting to detract from Boito as a figure who contributed to the many facets of cultural heritage conservation, it is realistic to consider Gritti's stance. In

⁸⁴ Mizuko, Ugo. Note sulla <<Carta del Restauro>> di Camillo Boito. Tema, Fasc. 2, 1996, Franco Angeli, Milano, 1996:42 citing Renato Fusco "Il restauro architettonico: ricchi apparati e povere idee "(1980) reporting Adolphe Napoléon Didron, Réparation de la Cathédrale de Paris in *Annales archéologiques*, August 1845, vol.3 p.125. The original text is as following: « En fait de monuments anciens, il vaut mieux consolider que réparer, mieux réparer que restaurer, mieux restaurer que refaire, mieux refaire qu'embellir; en aucun cas, il ne faut rien ajouter, surtout rien retoucher. » See also Bocchino (1996:147) identified strong similarities between Didron's Réparation de la Cathédrale de Paris and Boito's Charter of Restoration

⁸⁵ Ibid. p. 42, citing from the Rapport contenant des instructions relatives à la conservation des monuments, 4 Mai 1849 (extract) in Xavier Charmes, *Le Comité des travail historiques et scientifiques (histoire et documents)*, Imprimerie national, paris 1886, pp. 570-571)

⁸⁶ Ibid. p. 42, also citing from Schmit's original text: « En fait de monument délabrés, il vaut mieux réparer que restaurer, mieux restaurer qu'embellir. En aucun cas il ne faut supprimer. » J.P. Schmit. *Nouveau manuel complet de l'architecte des monuments religieux ou traité d'application pratique de l'archéologie chrétienne à la construction, à l'entretien, à la restauration et à la décoration des églises, à l'usage du clergé, des fabriques, des municipalités et des artistes.* » Librairie encyclopedédique de Roret, Paris, 1845 74.

⁸⁷ Ibid. p. 43, citing J.P. Schmit, 1845 :16 : « Tout ce qui est monument, mérite le mêmes respect, si ce n'est toujours comme objet de convenance et de goût, au moins come document historique. »

his article on Cantù (2006) Gritti argues that in order to avoid the attribution of achievements that cannot be really determined, we must consider topics on restoration measures as growing rapidly; as ideas that were current within cultural circles, preparing the ground for lively debates, which were happening in Italy but above all, at the European level.⁸⁸

It is within this context that Boito's ideas and practices on cultural heritage restoration must be assessed. Regardless of his primacy in the modern theories of restoration, Boito's work proved to be a point of reference in the field of monument restoration with a specific eye on the Italian context of monuments to be preserved within densely growing urban environments (as will be discussed in the fourth chapter).

In conclusion, it must be noted that the principles listed in the Charter of 1883 reappear in many of his literary contributions, slightly adapted, revised or modified according to the age of the architect and to his historical and artistic understanding of the monument in question.

There is an episode that highlights Boito's commitment to the conservation of monuments within a specific contextual situation that occurred in the 1890s. More specifically, it is interesting to look at the chapter *Questioncelle Architettoniche* (Minor matters of Architecture) featuring in Boito's volume of 1893 *Questioni Pratiche di Belle Arti – Restauro, Concorsi, Legislazione, Professione, Insegnamento* (Practical Matters of Fine Arts – Restorations, Contests, Legislation, Profession).⁸⁹

Questioncelle Architettoniche comprises three subchapters, each one dedicated respectively to a historic building in three northern Italian cities of Italy: the Palazzo delle Compere di San Giorgio in Genoa, the Palazzo della Zecca in Venice and the Palazzo Guastaverza in Verona. Boito's critique on all of the three case studies targets architectural interventions or lack thereof in conservation procedures related to these historical monuments. The faulty work is related to poor adaptation to the modernising urban environment. The figures and commissioners sponsoring these interventions vary from private owners to municipal administrations. Out of the three scenarios portrayed by Boito, it is possibly the one concerning the Palazzo delle Compere di San Giorgio that is mostly exciting.

⁸⁸ Gritti, Jessica. *Cesare Cantù e l'età che fu sua*, Atti del Congresso di Brivio, Milano, Varenna 2005, Monduzzi Editore Cisalpino, Bologna 2006, p. 607

⁸⁹ "Questioncelle Architettoniche" in Boito, Camillo *Questioni Pratiche di Belle Arti* 1893

It is within the Genoese setting that a novel aspect related to monument conservation breaks into the elitist scholarly circles of art and restoration. For the first time a new relationship between matters of restoration and public opinion is being established, featuring the direct involvement and participation of the citizens to determine the fate of a historic building that is considered to be a living component of the community.⁹⁰

The Palazzo delle Compere di San Giorgio was built in the second half of the thirteenth century as part of a highly ambitious political project conceived by the Capitano del Popolo (Captain of the People), Guglielmo Boccanegra. Eventually, the Cistercian friar and engineer Oliviero turned the project into an architectural enterprise. The Palazzo was destined to become an independent seat of the Comune and of its principal Ghibelline representative, that is the Captain of the People. The edifice lost its political importance rather quickly as only a few years later after the date of construction the Guelph faction seized power and Boccanegra was forced to flee the city.⁹¹

The building soon became an administrative centre for port customs and maritime commercial activities. In 1451 the edifice needed major restoration and the Comune lacked the funds for these interventions. Hence, the '*compere*' (commercial guilds) offered to fund the restoration in exchange for more space within the edifice, which was partly already taken by other judiciary offices. The *compere* then acquired ownership of the palace that had been also named Palatium Maris for its fundamental role of financial and mercantile entrepreneurship. In the same year, the building became the official headquarter of the Banco di San Giorgio.⁹²

Due to the various changes of intended use, the original pre-Renaissance structure of the Palazzo underwent several modifications until the early nineteenth century. These changes to the original structure ended up hindering the traffic of the adjacent road, the strada del commercio (road of commerce). This street was the only connection between the Palazzo and the Porte (gates) of the city opposite and to the sea. According to the official report of the nineteenth century, even before the restoration carried out by the architect Alfredo d'Andrade (1839–1915), disputes were ongoing between 1822 and 1835 and rose again in the early 1860s and 1870s.

⁹⁰ The relationship between restoration and public opinion has also been brought forward by Paolo Farina in his essay of 1991 "Osservazione sopra le <<Questioncette Architettoniche di Camillo Boito.>>" *Omaggio a Camillo Boito*, edited by Alberto Grimoldi. Franco Angeli, Milano, 1991, pp. 111–124.

⁹¹ Ferrando Cabona, Isabella, editor. *Palazzo di San Giorgio, Pietre, Uomini, Potere (1260-1613)*, 1998:39
⁹² 1988:34–35

The debates primarily concerned the medieval structure of the Palazzo obstructing the crucial passage used by carriages and for commercial purposes.⁹³ Ultimately in 1889, acknowledging the urgency of the matter, the Minister of Education, Paolo Boselli (at the time responsible for the national artistic and cultural issues), brought together a commission comprising architects, historians, engineers and politicians to evaluate the conditions of the Palazzo as well as the possibilities of the conservation of the monument.⁹⁴

The commission was headed by the Italian politician Francesco Genala (1843–1893). The defence of the restoration of the Palazzo was represented by two scholars respectively from the point of view of its history, its value as art and its value to commerce. As a member of the evaluating body representing the value of the monument as art, Boito participated in the historical assessment of the edifice: in his account on the Palazzo di San Giorgio in Genoa, the architect offers a realistic and entertaining version of the controversy, including events and voices that do not feature in the official report: “This is the matter indeed: some people request the demolition of the part of the Palazzo di San Giorgio that juts out in order to widen the Strada del Commercio by five and a half meters and that a new façade shall be reconstructed in its original ancient style on the remaining part of the palace. On the other hand, others believe that this national monument, of highest value for the national history and for Art, shall be preserved and that new measures should be taken to meet the present and future needs of Genoese commerce.”⁹⁵

In conjunction with the study and the scientific analysis concerning the nature and condition of the Palazzo, the commission was engaged in four day of meetings listening to the local authorities and to the citizens (more than a hundred notes Boito!) who were directly and indirectly participating in the dispute.⁹⁶ The contents, the characters, the recipients, but also the form of Boito's essay, mark the new approach of the Italian public to the matters of restoration and cultural heritage. Insiders, connoisseurs, experts and amateurs, suddenly flanked the scholars involved in the issues of restoration; a heterogeneous public gradually becomes the protagonist of the event. This peculiar

⁹³ Genala, Francesco. *Il Palazzo di San Giorgio in Genova. Demolizione o Conservazione. Relazione del Deputato Francesco Genala, in nome della Commissione nominata dal Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione Boselli*. S. Landi, Firenze, 1889.

⁹⁴ Di Dio Rapallo, Maria. “Palazzo di San Giorgio in Genova.” *Alfredo d’Andrade. Tutela e restauro*, edited by Cerri, Maria Grazia, Biancolini Fea, Daniela and Pittarello, Liliana. Vallecchi, Firenze, 1981:419

⁹⁵ Ibid. Relazione di Francesco Genala: “La questione, infatti è questa: gli uni chiedono che si demolisca l’Avanrpo del Palazzo di S. Giorgio per ampliare di cinque metri e mezzo la Strada del Commercio e si ricostruisca, addossata alla rimanente parte del palazzo, la facciata, ripristinandola nell’antico suo stile. Gli altri oppongono non doversi mutilare questo monumento nazionale di alto pregio per la Storia patria e per l’Arte, doversi invece provvedere con nuove vie ai bisogni presenti e futuri del Commercio genovese.”

⁹⁶ Di Dio Rapallo 1981:419

contingency between matters of restoration and the public was also braced by the new growing means of 'mass' media communication, as the development of facts was regularly reported in newspapers, periodicals and gazettes.⁹⁷ The extent of Boito's public persona alone becomes glaring in the case of the Palazzo di San Giorgio. On this occasion, the architect's ability to convert the scholarly exclusivity of restoration a matter for the people comes out in all its intensity.⁹⁸

The architect's active participation in many institutional events and to many other non-formal commitments has been already pointed out. His undisputed authority was supported by his vast literary production, which again augmented Boito's ascendancy in the matters of restoration and conservation. The huge number of Boito's publications contributed to determine a new relationship between restoration and public opinion in nineteenth century Italy, spreading the knowledge and awareness of monuments to a broader educated public.

The case of the Genoese Palazzo possibly features the greatest participation of the public to a matter of monument conservation in the last decades of the Ottocento, although considerate is also important to consider that the involvement of the emerging middle class in cultural heritage conservation issues was contemporaneously developing in other Italian cities too.⁹⁹ Boito's powerful and highly detailed description of the variety and quantity of people, characters, relevant political personalities, deputations and worker's associations involved in the controversy, both underlines the public's participation in an issue concerning cultural heritage conservation and monument restoration and reflects a civic consideration for historic national monuments that was absent in those years of early unification.

Eventually, Boito reports how the safety issue of the passageway for carts and carriages was going to be solved with an appropriate restoration based on available scientific documentation that was going to be carried out by the Italian-Portuguese architect Alfredo d'Andrade. D'Andrade presented a restoration plan on 4 October 1889 entailing the opening of the pedestrian passageway of the Palazzo's portico, thus allowing the conservation the '*avancorpo*' [forward-facing part]. The consulting body acknowledged the national and historical value of the Palazzo di San Giorgio, as it was the only existing

⁹⁷ Farina, Paolo, already mentioned above by reporting the unprecedented involvement the public in matters of restoration: *'Restauro architettonico e pubblica opinione alla fine dell'800. Osservazione sopra le 'Questioncelle architettoniche' di Camillo Boito.'* in *Omaggio a Camillo Boito*, ed. Alberto Grimoldi, Franco Angeli, Milano, 1991.

⁹⁸ The importance of Boito as a figure of reference has been pointed out by Paolo Farina (1991), who specifically refers to the Commemoration for the one-year anniversary of Boito's death held on Jan. 15th 1915 at the Brera Academy of Fine Arts.

⁹⁹ Other cases of great building sites in Milan, as for instance the "neverending" Fabbrica del Duomo, the Castello Sforzesco, S. Maria delle Grazie, awoke the interest of the bourgeoisie public too. Farina 1991:111-113

public building of the harbour city, displaying a unique medieval façade. It was an exceptional undamaged example of this kind of Genoese public architecture.¹⁰⁰

The primary aim of d'Andrade's intervention was to restore the building's façade returning it to its ancient grandeur. D'Andrade's restoration of the Palazzo will be thoroughly discussed in the fourth chapter. Considering Boito's text of *Questioncelle Architettoniche*, it is relevant to note that Boito considered d'Andrade's intervention partly intuitive, at the same time as highly praising the architect's work.¹⁰¹ The Roman architect believes the restoration of the Palazzo achieved the right combination between the historical requirements of faithful restoration preserving the original character of the façade and a modern, non-invasive restoration.

This latter aspect leaves a margin to the kind of interpretative restoration that Boito strongly counters in his Charter of 1883. Nevertheless, this compromise allowed the prevention of the demolition of a historic palace of national artistic value. "At least for once" concludes Boito in his essay "an agreement has been found between the interests of art and the material needs of modern society."¹⁰²

As is the case in other restoration executed by Boito or as in this case, in which he was indirectly involved, many scholars have pointed out the contrasts between theory and the actual practice of the architect, to the extent that this juxtaposition has now become almost obsolete. Nevertheless, it might be worth considering that possibly Boito, from his primary point of assessment as an architect, considered d'Andrade's intervention the ideal compromise between modern architecture and art historical conservation. As will be discussed in greater depth in the third chapter, Boito figured that the peculiarities of d'Andrade's project would make it a case in point for a modern cultural project and for the history of contemporary restoration.¹⁰³

¹⁰⁰ Boito, Camillo. "Il palazzo di San Giorgio in Genova" *Questioncelle architettoniche* in *Questioni Pratiche di Belle Arti* 1893:277

¹⁰¹ Boito refers edifice's upper cornice. According to a drawing by the architect Allegro the battlements were 17. D'Andrade on the other hand, made references to contemporaneous edifices in conjunction with a painting by an anonymous artist that was hanging in the municipal palace, from which he deducted the shape of the battlements. Also, the painting was thought to be of 1597, but finally turned out to be a copy of another painting of 1410, due to a Latin inscription featuring on the canvas. Ibid. p. 1893: 279

¹⁰² Boito 1893:283: "(...) e così, una volta almeno, gli interessi materiali e quelli dell'arte sono andati d'accordo."

¹⁰³ D'Andrade's nineteenth century restoration brought to light the various surviving remnants considered of medieval style, but as of today, it is not an easy task to identify the parts that have been restored 'in stylistic manner throughout the ages. Likewise, it is not possible to identify the mimetic integrations that d'Andrade performed to recover the formal coherence of the building. This does not mean that the architect simply ignored the previous transformations of the building, as many of his drawings, reports and testimonies demonstrate the opposite; yet despite the merit of having preserved a historical edifice up to our days, D'Andrade referred to both authentic medieval elements and to other compatible stylistic elements of later dating for his additions. This procedure may have deviated the architect's interpretation from the original reality of the thirteenth century Palazzo. Finally, the major critique of contemporary scholars, does not address the eighteenth century stylistic restorations but rather D'Andrade's demolition or walling-in of original components. Ferrando Cabona 1998: 50-52

In his essay highlighting the relationship between restoration and public opinion, Farina argues that this is probably the reason that made the restoration of the Palazzo di San Giorgio outstandingly popular and central within the Italian post-unification restoration debate since it featured the establishment of a distinguished consulting body, the involvement of several people and the drafting of a highly precise study and restoration report. According to Boito, the Genoese palace was part of those medieval buildings whose study might have been highly resourceful for future Italian architecture, serving as an example to the public for a harmonious merging of the two sides of modern architecture and restoration: preserving medieval, civic and traditional style and creating modern functionality at the same time (Figure 2).¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁴ Farina 1991:120-121



Figure 2. 1913 Postcard illustrating the Palazzo di San Giorgio in Genoa as restored by d'Andrade.

After the Charter of Restoration of 1883, Boito's other writings can be easily considered a gift for posthumous scholarship on cultural heritage conservation and architecture.

Not only do his essays provide a comprehensive picture of the origins of cultural heritage conservation at the beginning of the national restoration debate. They are also a testimony to the strong interest in cultural heritage, in historic buildings and in the ancient arts that was unexpectedly awakened within the public of the recently unified country. In this regard, it is worth pointing out that Boito underlines this awakened awareness for the conservation and knowledge of the cultural heritage of past epochs in his conference speech of 1884 *"I restauratori"* (The restorers, Appendix II) held at the Universal Exposition of Turin in 1884.¹⁰⁵ The architect believes that his time is one of the most fortunate, as during the last five decades all monuments and art of the past were considered and studied without discrimination.¹⁰⁶

According to Boito, it is from this curiosity and willingness that the study and the conservation of monuments of the past is embracing all epochs. At the same time it is also due to this desire to preserve monuments that restoration was carried out for the past centuries on the most diverse of art objects without scientific criteria and guidance. In his speech Boito addresses restoration on the three following categories: sculpture, painting and monuments and architecture – and many points that are featured in the Charter of 1883 are explained in detail, also featuring an eloquent introduction which made the architect famous for being a highly convincing debater throughout his career. Where is our language in art? What is the artistic mark that will distinguish us from our ancestors?

Boito revives interlocutory questions and argues that one of the strengths of the contemporaneous artistic period is the ability to perfectly reproduce the art from the past. Hence it must be challenging not to intervene on antiquities featuring missing parts. Nonetheless, the speaker warns, the restorer has to desist and leave monuments as they are. Intervention on monuments has to happen only if really necessary and if the monument can be 'liberated' by older, badly executed restorations.¹⁰⁷ Even the copies of the ancient times have to be respected as originals and be freed from intervention that may damage their aesthetic and value. This statement might sound contradictory, as freeing the monument from badly executed restoration counters with the statement of leaving monuments as they are. However, Boito possibly intended to further support a

¹⁰⁵ Boito, Camillo. *I restauratori*. Conferenza tenuta all'Esposizione di Torino il 7 giugno 1884. Firenze, G. Barbera Editore 1884

¹⁰⁶ Boito 1884:5-6: "Non voglio tardare un minuto a dirvi, signori, per vostro conforto, che noi, rispetto a codeste cose, viviamo in una età fortunatissima; anzi, da che mondo è mondo non ce n'è mai stata una più fortunata della nostra. S'ha un bel frugare nella storia del passato, moderna e antica, di tutti i paesi, di tutti i popoli: questi ultimi cinquanta o sessant'anni portano il vanto nello stimare e nel conoscere imparzialmente tutto ciò che è stato per lo innanzi in fatto d'arte e di bellezza."

¹⁰⁷ Boito 1884:10: "(...) lasciarle in pace, o, quando occorra, liberarle dai più o meno vecchi, dai più o meno cattivi restauri."

methodology of restoration where the educated restorer is able to intervene on the monument according to scientific and art historical criteria.

As a matter of fact, argues Boito, the restoration 'fury' that occurred from the sixteenth century onwards is a deceitful practice: this philosophy of restoration and adjoining of missing parts affected many statues. One of the most significant examples for this practice is "The Ercole Farnese" or "The Laocoon", whose limbs were re-shaped by the restorer for the sake of re-creating a complete work of art.¹⁰⁸ This misleading practice remains such even if the restorer is an outstanding artist, because the physiognomy of the restored statue will, according to Boito, never be comparable to the original one. Eventually, the architect concludes the section on sculpture with the following quite radical statement: "No restoration and discard right away all the restorations that have been done up to now, both recent and older ones."¹⁰⁹

Compared to the Charter of Restoration of 1883, the architect's ideas tend to be less tolerant with respect to restoration and additions that were carried out on the monument in later stages. Boito puts forward his uncompromising position on the basis that additions lead to doubt, even if these have been made by the most skilled architect or restorer.

In the above-mentioned conference Boito eventually summarises his thought in the following two unequivocal sentences. These represent the fundamental ideas of the architect's writings and discourses of his later career:

1. It is necessary to do the impossible, to perform miracles in order to preserve the original artistic and picturesque aspect of the monument.
2. If interventions are absolutely necessary, if these are indispensable, as also additions that cannot be avoided, then these have to look as contemporary works and not as ancient parts.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁸ Boito 1884:12: From the fifteenth century onwards – the time featuring the earliest attempts of restoration – painters, architects or engineers without specific knowledge on restoration felt compelled to perform archaeological, architectural and pictorial restoration; unfortunately, these operations often induced more harm than mend on the monument. The Laocoon Group, mentioned by Boito in several of his writings and speeches on restoration, is an exemplary case of Cinquecento restoration performed by the most outstanding artists of the time (Baccio Bandinelli and Michelangelo Buonarroti for instance), which the architect strongly criticizes.

¹⁰⁹ Boito, Camillo. *I restauratori*, Conferenza tenuta all'Esposizione di Torino il 7 giugno 1884, Firenze G. Barbera Editore, 1884:11-18: "Restauri niente; e buttar via subito senza remissione, tutti quelli che sono stati fatti sinora, recenti o vecchi."

¹¹⁰ Boito, Camillo. *I restauratori*, Conferenza tenuta all'Esposizione di Torino il 7 giugno 1884, Firenze G. Barbera Editore, 1884:33; the original points by Boito in Italian are as follows: "1° Bisogna fare l'impossibile, bisogna fare miracoli per conservare al monumento il suo vecchio aspetto artistico e pittoresco; 2° Bisogna che i complementi, se sono indispensabili, e le aggiunte, se non si possono scansare, mostrino, non di essere opere antiche, ma di essere opere d'oggi."

The construction of these necessary additions in the contemporary style, also with the use of different materials, will help the viewer or whoever is studying the monument to differentiate between the original components and the additions.

This latter point is the one that is particularly in contrast with the French position on monument restoration as practiced by Viollet-le-Duc. A more in depth discussion about the relationship between the theories of Boito and Viollet-le-Duc will be presented in a later chapter. With this in mind, it is useful to take a brief look at Viollet-le-Duc's views on restoration as considered by Boito.

It has to be noted that Boito was himself a follower and *étudiant* of the French architect's work, especially in the early stages of his professional development. Boito was aware of the enormous influence that Viollet-le-Duc's historical and critical studies had on medieval art in Italy as well as France.

The main criticism that Boito has with regard to the French architect's theory of restoration concerns the additions of architectural components on a monument. These additions are performed in an architectural style that aim to complete the unity of the historic building but at the same time deliver a completeness that is not original: "Restoring an edifice means re-integrating it in its completeness, which might not have ever existed in the past. (...) This approach is not an option" argues Boito, "as the restorer should not put himself in the position of the original architect, guessing what he might have done. It is an arbitrary theory full of risks, a theory that does not entail scholarship or genius; it is a trap for posthumous generations." And the architect's discourse continues in this eloquent style: what would we think of an antiquary, who just a discovered a damaged and unreadable manuscript by Dante or Petrarch and tries to fill the gaps with such skilful manner that we would not be able to differentiate the original parts from the newest parts anymore? Wouldn't we condemn the ability of this forger?¹¹¹ Boito goes on to mention two other renowned French scholars – Ludovic Vitet (1802–1873) and Prosper Merimée. Vitet was the first inspector of Historical

¹¹¹ Boito1884:31: "Restaurare un edificio vuol dire reintegrarlo in uno stato completo, che può non essere mai esistito in un dato tempo. Come si fa? Ci si mette al posto dell'architetto primitivo, e s'indovina ciò che avrebbe fatto se i casi gli avessero premesso di ultimare la fabbrica. Questa teoria è piena di pericoli. Con essa non c'è dottrina, non c'è ingegno, che valgano a salvar dagli arbitrii: e l'arbitrio è una bugia, una falsificazione dell'antico, una trappola tesa ai posteri. Quanto meglio il restauro è condotto, tanto più la menzogna riesce insidiosa e l'inganno trionfante. Che cos direste, signori, di un antiquario, il quale, avendo scoperto, mettiamo, un nuovo manoscritto di Dante o del Petrarca, monco ed in gran parte illeggibile, si adoperasse a riempierne di suo capo, astutamente, sapientemente, le lacune, per modo che non fosse più possibile distinguere dalle aggiunte l'originale? Non maledireste all'abilità suprema di questo falsario? (...)"

Monuments (Inspecteur Général des Monuments Historiques) an institution founded in 1830. Merimée was his follower and became inspector in 1834.¹¹²

Similar to the mentor-pupil relationship between Selvatico and Boito, Merimée was the tutor of Viollet-le-Duc, guiding his pupil through the most important stages of his career.¹¹³ Despite the strong personal bond, Merimée and Viollet-le-Duc developed different ideas with regard to monument conservation throughout their careers.¹¹⁴ Boito cites Mérimée's words: "It's never too much repetition, in matters of restoration, stating that the first and inflexible principle is not to renovate (...). It is safer to leave all that is incomplete and not perfect as incomplete and not perfect. We should not dare to correct the irregular parts, or to align the deviations, because irregularities and the defects of symmetry are facts featuring interesting historical events, which often provide us with archaeological criteria to reflect an epoch, a school or a symbolic idea. Neither additions nor suppressions."¹¹⁵ This statement partly corroborates the point made above relating to the extent of Boito's primacy in terms of restoration but also points to the fact that the French school of restoration underwent different phases throughout the nineteenth century. Even this aspect will be addressed more in depth in the subsequent sections, yet as of now it is necessary to stress that Merimée endorses a respectful approach to restoration in France as early as the 1830s.

Referring back to Italy, Boito questions what happened in the fifty years between Merimée's statements of the 1830s and the 1880s. Not much unfortunately – as the architect reckons that the Italian Government could have improved many things with regard to the discipline of restoration by starting to apply the policy suggested by Merimée fifty years previously.

Boito's perspective on the restoration technique featuring additions – largely practiced in Italy in the first half of the twentieth century – is further addressed in *Questioni Pratiche di Belle Arti*, specifically in the section *Restaurare o conservare* (Restoration or conservation). He considers this question more precisely in the text *Restauri in*

¹¹² Jokilehto 2007:129

¹¹³ More in depth study between the parallel connection of Selvatico and Boito and between Merimée and Viollet le Duc has been conducted by Rosa Tamborrino in "Boito, Viollet-le-Duc e il metodo storico" in *Camillo Boito, un protagonista dell'ottocento italiano*, edited by Zucconi, Guido and Serena, Tiziana. Venezia 2002:23-36

¹¹⁴ The *Commission des monuments historiques* was established in 1830 by the Minister of Public Education François Guizot with the aim of cataloguing all the national monuments present in France. Ibid. Tamborrino 2002:24

¹¹⁵ Boito 1884:32 citing Prosper Mérimée: "Non si ripete mai abbastanza che, in fatto di restauri, il primo e inflessibile principio è questo, di non innovare, quand'anche si fosse spinti alla innovazione dal lodevole intento di compiere o di abbellire. Conviene lasciare incompleto e imperfetto tutto ciò che si trova incompleto e imperfetto. Non bisogna permettersi di correggere le irregolarità, né di allineare le deviazioni, perché le deviazioni, le irregolarità, i difetti di simmetria sono fatti storici pieni d'interesse, i quali spesso forniscono i criterii archeologici per riscontrare un'epoca, una scuola, una idea simbolica. Né aggiunte, né soppressioni."

Architettura (Restorations in Architecture), which is divided in two 'dialogues', i.e. writings in the form of conversations between two fictional speakers.

The first dialogue (Dialogo primo) reports some crucial topics of Boito's battle: he is against the French school of restoration adopted by Viollet-le-Duc and against unsupervised procedures of restoration. "It is a shame to deceive the people of today, but it is even worse to deceive the future generations!" is the opening line of Boito's writing.¹¹⁶ The liveliness of Boito's writing style is worth noting, especially as he describes the meaningful episode of an illustrator in front of a thirteenth century church: "from afar, the draughtsman thinks, his impression of the church was right, but then as he got closer to the building he noticed that some architectural components were made of modern material. These restorations were so well executed that the difference in style and colour was almost unnoticeable. The draughtsman approaches the church and he is stricken by doubts and frustration – he is now helpless, unable to distinguish the modern from the ancient pieces. No previous drawings could testify for the original structure of the church, the young priests would not know anything about the edifice's original appearance, the older priests could not remember."¹¹⁷

One of the speakers, possibly Boito's fictitious alias, continues: the monument is like a book and the beholder has to be sure to read everything in the style of the author.¹¹⁸ The speaker continues by stating that undoubtedly it would be better if architecture and monuments did not need any intervention at all; but if the aim is to preserve these works of art for the future generations as well, avoiding them from crumbling away yet keeping their original spirit as intact as possible, the restorer has to aim for conservation instead of restoration.

As a case in point, one of the speakers mentions the Venetian Palazzo Ducale as "the most marvellous palace in the world." Boito describes the Palazzo as the most beautiful building of the world in many of his writings.¹¹⁹ The Palace was close to collapsing reports the narrator, so an intervention was necessary. Nevertheless, the speaker argues, instead of introducing renovation using lots of external iron support elements, some direct intervention on the structure and the stones of the Palace would have been an

¹¹⁶ I restauri in architettura, Dialogo primo in *Questioni pratiche di Belle Arti*, 1893:3 "Vergogna ingannare i contemporanei; vergogna anche maggiore ingannare i posteri."

¹¹⁷ Ibid. 1893:5

¹¹⁸ Ibid. 1893:8: "(...) il monumento dunque è un libro, che io intendo di leggere senza riduzioni, aggiunte o rimaneggiamenti. Voglio sentirmi ben sicuro che tutto ciò che vi sta scritto uscì dalla penna o dallo stile dell'autore."

¹¹⁹ Ibid. 1893:9: "(...) il più meraviglioso palazzo del mondo". Also in his volume *Gite di un artista*, 1884 Boito describes the supreme beauty of the palace: "Non può esserci cosa più solenne e varia, più robusta e ardita, più ragionevole e più singolare.." C. Boito in *Gite di un artista*, 1884 edited by Cecilia Mazzi, 1990:43

option to avoid the crumbling of the structure. A reasonable solution would have been to substitute the old capitals with new ones in order to maintain the structure. At the same time, the ancient capitals could have been exhibited in a room close-by, where all scholars would be able to admire and study them in their original form. The primary target of the restorer reckons the speaker, is to keep the edifice standing – any other accomplishment, referring to the ‘romantic’ restoration technique established by Viollet-Le-Duc, would become a fake public monument.¹²⁰

Despite the diverging views on monument restoration between the Italian and French school, the speaker notes that the French hold the merit of initiating the scientific and methodological study of medieval and Renaissance monuments.¹²¹

As will be discussed in the following chapters, Boito developed diverse positions with regard to architectural and monument restoration throughout his career. His position occasionally shifted between more or less uncompromising stances according to the specific case in question but also according to his age at the time. After an initial phase featuring to some extent the influence of the French School of Restoration, which showed the architect’s relative openness with regard to intervention on the monument (both in theory and practice), Boito gradually tended toward a more radical elimination of later additions and integration, drawing the conclusion that all traces that spoil the monument’s original status have to be removed.

One further interesting section of *Restaurare o Conservare* (Restoration or Conservation) is Boito’s chapter *I restauri in Pittura e Scultura* (Restoration in Painting and Sculpture). As the title suggests, there is a specific focus on restoration in paintings and sculpture. Historically conveying how the interest for Classical art increased during the Italian Renaissance, with archaeological excavations bringing back to light ancient Roman and Greek statues, Boito recounts how artists and members of scholarly circles fantasised about the recreation of the original splendour of these statues through the addition of the missing parts – and how consequently, this practice became almost a sport. “If we were able to attach the arms to the Venus de Milo, as beautiful as the original ones, would we find her more seductive? Aren’t the Torso Belvedere or the Torso del Bacco

¹²⁰ Ibid. 1893: 9-11

¹²¹ Ibid. 1893:13

still admirable even if broken and maimed? The first being an example of natural vigorousness, the second a model of elegant softness?"¹²²

New interpretations of invasive restoration deceive the viewer's imagination, raising doubts in the viewer and partially erasing the history of the monument. As excellent as this restoration can be, the restorer, will according to Boito, always provide a subjective interpretation of the monument, which irreversibly clashes with the original spirit and conception of the monument itself.¹²³

Nevertheless and almost surprisingly, Boito makes one exception for which restoration or structural and architectural additions might be acceptable, even desirable. That is in the case of the existence of an identical statue or painting, so that the restorer could take that model as a reference.¹²⁴ The author does not further discuss this last point.

However, this concession eventually opened a whole new discourse on the limits and duties of restoration, reinforcing the grey areas of nineteenth century restoration in Italy. How these points and unresolved topics were challenged by Boito and other architects of the day in their architectural projects and monument restorations, will be discussed in the third chapter.

It is important to note that although Boito's main domain was architecture and related restoration of historical buildings, he did not disregard the importance of restoration in painting. In this regard, Boito asserts a comparable approach limiting the intervention of the restorer to the least possible extent. In his writing *I restauri in pittura e scultura* Boito is conveniently citing Giorgio Vasari's words: "It would be better to keep things partly damaged but made by excellent men, rather than having them retouched by unskilled people, "thus reiterating the principle of applying conservation instead of restoration."¹²⁵

Boito argues that the flaws on the painting, caused by man, time, humidity or other environmental conditions should be treated as components of the original work of art. Accordingly, this method demands total respect for restoration made to paintings in

¹²² Boito in *Questioni Pratiche di Belle Arti* 1893:55-56. "Se alla Venere di Milo si potessero riappiccicare le braccia belle quanto le antiche, diventerebbe forse più seducente? Non sono ammirabili così rotti e monchi il Torso dell'Ercole detto il Belvedere, il Torso del Bacco detto Farnese: il primo uno stupore di vigoria grandiosa eppur naturale, il secondo uno stupore di morbidezza elegante?"

¹²³ Ibid. 1893:58

¹²⁴ Ibid. 1893:58

¹²⁵ Ibid. 1893: 64. "Sarebbe meglio tenersi le cose fatte da uomini eccellenti piuttosto mezze guaste, che farle ritoccare a chi sa meno."

earlier times, even if these were poorly executed. The reason for this lies in the very nature of colour of the paint layers of the painting itself, explains the author: when the restorer removes one of the layers to restore the original luminosity of the image, the risk of taking off too many coats of colour – going back to the original layer – is highly probable, and above all, will cause irreversible damage to the painting.¹²⁶ Nevertheless, Boito understands the necessity of restoration when this is unavoidable, in order to both preserve the status of the painting and avoid complete obliteration:

1. Treat all blackened or smoked spots with scrupulous respect, taking the damage of time and man in favour of the risk of peeling off the original painting.
2. Determine the importance and limits of previous restoration with absolute certainty.
3. Valuate, through cautious trials, whether previous restoration hides or masks the original painting, even if this is damaged.
4. Take off the old restoration with extreme caution, but always favour the old restoration, even if poorly executed, than a new restoration, even if excellently performed.¹²⁷

“Stopping in time” concludes Boito “is the true skill of the good restorer.”¹²⁸

Compared to restoration on monuments, Boito dedicated a shorter section to restoration of painting. However, despite the conciseness, the above-mentioned principles are no less influential in terms of validity and re-elaboration within the modern discipline of restoration of the twentieth century.

Specifically, in the *Teoria del restauro* (Theory of Restoration, 1963), Cesare Brandi (1906–1988) adopts a conservation philosophy that is similar to Boito’s theory, stressing the respect for the object itself and the understanding of its aesthetic and historic values. Like many idealist philosophers of the twentieth century, Brandi railed against the presumption that the restorer could reinsert himself into the process of creating a work of art, as it is an attempt at cancelling the passage of time.¹²⁹

¹²⁶ Ibid. 1893:64 (...) Ma nel togliere i vecchi ritocchi e restauri, per cura che cis si metta, non si è sempre certi di non levare un tantino del primitivo colore. E quando il restauratore capisce di avere spellato, come si dice, il dipinto, e teme il biasimo, sa egli sempre resistere alle facili tentazioni del suo mestiere? Si tratta di una velatura; ma come la pulitura di una parte tira la pulitura di un'altra parte, così l'una velatura tira l'altra velatura, e il velare obbliga spesso a ridipingere. Dove si va a finire?

¹²⁷ Ibid. 1893:64–65 1) Trattare con religioso rispetto anche le affumicature e gli annerimenti, preferendo le ingiurie del tempo e degli uomini al rischio di spellare il dipinto originale. 2) Determinare con sicurezza assoluta l'importanza e i limiti dei precedenti restauri. 3) Giudicare, per via di cauti assaggi, se i restauri precedenti nascondono o mascherano il dipinto originale, anche sciupato che sia. 4) Levare con infinita circospezione il resaturo vecchio; ma preferire sempre il restauro vecchio, anche pessimo alla necessità di un nuovo restauro, anche ottimo. (...) Fermarsi a tempo; e qui sta la salvezza: Contentarsi del meno possibile.

¹²⁸ 1893:65: “Fermarsi a tempo; e qui sta la saviezza: Contentarsi del meno possibile.”

¹²⁹ Brandi, Cesare. *Teoria del Restauro*. Piccola Biblioteca Einaudi.2000:308. First published in 1963.

Born in Siena, Brandi began his career in 1930 with the *Soprintendenza* (Supervisory Body, author's translation) of Monuments and Galleries. He continued his career in the Administration of Antiquities and Fine Arts and finally became the director of the *Istituto Centrale del Restauro* (Central Institute of Restoration) in Rome in 1939 – the leading institution of its kind founded in the same year. Brandi held this post until 1959, in the mean time lecturing in art history at the universities of Palermo and Rome while also publishing several essays as an art critic on the history, theory and practice of restoration.¹³⁰

Brandi's popular essay on the theory of restoration is, according to Melucco Vaccaro (1996), mainly inspired by the idealist philosophy of Benedetto Croce (1866-1952), who argued that every restoration is always marked by the cultural climate during which it was executed, regardless of its poor or excellent quality.¹³¹ A particularly obvious link between Boito and Brandi's theories features in the latter's approach to painting restoration, strongly promoting the total respect of the colour layers, the so called '*patina*'.

In Annex 5 of the *Teoria del restauro* dedicated to the cleaning of paintings in relation to patina, varnish and glazes, Brandi argues that once a picture has been totally cleaned through all layers except for the paint in full impasto, it is impossible to judge whether glazes have really been removed, whether there existed at least patches of old varnish, and finally whether the patina, even if dark, was not preferable to the raw, brutal surface of paint laid bare by the cleaning.

The essay develops as a long discourse presenting three diverse study cases of restoration in depth and illustrating the types and importance of pictorial surfaces. Reporting these case studies in their entirety would possibly go beyond the scope of this thesis. However, the similarities between Boito and Brandi's restoration theory on painting are evident in the critical and methodological approach to monuments. Possibly more so than Boito, Brandi was able to introduce and clarify the dual aspect of the monument, rooted in how the monument is perceived by our consciousness.

On the one hand there is the historical instance as a product of human activity, strongly related to the place and time qualifying the monument as such. On the other hand, there

¹³⁰ Jokilehto 1997:228

¹³¹ Melucco Vaccaro, A. "Introduction to Part VI: Reintegration of losses." *Historical and philosophical issues in the conservation of cultural heritage*. Eds. Nicholas Stanley Price, Mansfield Kirby Talley Jr., Alessandra Melucco Vaccaro. Los Angeles, Getty Conservation Institute 1996:328

is the aesthetic component, determining the exact artistic categorisation of the monument.¹³² This distinction between the perception of the monument and the historical context does not yet feature clearly in Boito's theory of restoration. Nonetheless, he established the methodological criteria for the comprehension and study of the monument, which is the very first step of what can be defined as a critical approach to restoration.

As a conclusive note on Brandi, his methodology has consistently influenced nearly every modern restoration method in Europe. At the same time, it is important to note, that at least at the conceptual level, Brandi's theory can be truly considered a further step deriving from Boito's cautious and scientific approach to painting restoration, hence unconditionally delivering the pioneering quality of the theories of the nineteenth century architect.

Alongside modern Italian restoration methodology, scholarly literature has also attempted to position Boito's ideas on restoration in relation to the British or French school of thought. This assessment often resulted with the placement of Boito's methodology in an almost compromising position that partly adopted the conservative (and cautious) principles of the British restoration school and the French methodologies of restoration, which, as practiced by Viollet-le-Duc, are deemed to be more invasive as they tend to replace the missing parts of the monument.

With that in mind, we need to consider that these international approaches to restoration changed course and tendencies throughout time. During the nineteenth century they developed into many ideas that present both similarities and differences within Boito's theories. Modern scholarly literature did not discuss yet, in a selective and comparative way, the influences between Boito's ideas and the transnational methodologies of restoration.

Hence, the following chapter will first investigate and assess the content of Boito's thought on restoration in relation to some of the most relevant ideas of monuments conservation in England. Subsequently, a further chapter will consider Boito's ideas against the main notions of monument conservation and restoration as spread and practiced in France with the aim of eventually offering an original placement of Boito's ideas within the European conservation movement of the nineteenth century.

¹³² Bonelli, Renato. "Restauro dei monumenti: teorie per un secolo." in *Anastilosi, L'antico, il restauro, la città*. Edited by Francesco Perego, Editori Laterza, Roma, 1987, pp.62-66

Boito's ideas – part III: a comparison with the British school

Within a broader European context scholarly literature often attempted to position Boito's ideas on restoration in relation to the British or French school of thought. This assessment often resulted in Boito's methodology being placed somewhere halfway between the transalpine (French) and the insular (British) school. With that in mind, the reasons that lie behind this intermediate positioning of Boito's thought within the European scenario, need to be further investigated. By bringing out parallels, events and theories that occurred and developed in England during the nineteenth century the next paragraphs will attempt to determine the links between Boito and the British contemporaries within the conservation movement.

In his study of 1991 Bellini attempted to define the position of Boito between conservation and restoration theories of John Ruskin and Viollet le Duc.¹³³ Firstly taking into consideration the British part of this equation the author argues that Boito emphasizes the distinction between restoration and conservation, although revealing contradictions when it comes to applying these principles on monuments (the author specifically refers to the main altar of the Santo in Padua and to Boito's restoration project for the Church of SS. Maria e Donato in Murano).

Likewise, Bellini believes that Boito's practice needs to be assessed within the historiography of restoration, which has been mostly produced by restorers. Since the nineteenth century the historiography of restoration was defined by a gradual growth, establishing specific milestones: stylistic restoration (as in the French school of restoration, by adding missing sections to the monument and returning it to the appearance of its pristine condition), structural restoration (a combination of technical and operational measures on the monument aiming to intervene on historical pre-existing features while trying to maintain most of their authenticity – a process mostly applied by Boito) and critical restoration (overcoming the structural approach by the sole application of science and methodology to intervene on the monument).¹³⁴

With regard to this tripartite development it is essential to consider Bellini's scholarly critique of the theories of John Ruskin, which according to Bellini, tend to overestimate Romantic positions and the considerations related to the inevitability of loss of

¹³³ Bellini, Amedeo. "Boito tra Viollet-Le-Duc e Ruskin?." *Omaggio a Camillo Boito*, 1991, pp. 159-167

¹³⁴ Bellini 1991:159

testimonies. As a matter of fact, it is curious to note that Ruskin never wrote a theory on restoration or on conservation; however his ideas are automatically included in the modern historiography of restoration. This is based on the fact that he identified the values and the significance of historic buildings (and objects) more clearly than anyone before him hence providing a foundation for modern conservation philosophies.¹³⁵

Recent studies have actually interpreted the theories of the British scholar as a positive conservation approach that simply refuses to endorse the French stylistic methodology of restoration. This consideration, focussing on the conservation of the monument, strongly binds Boito's theory to the ideas of Ruskin.¹³⁶

As mentioned above, Boito pointed out the importance of conservation, thus putting his theories conceptually closer to the British school than to the French school. Ruskin refers to restoration in the chapter "The Lamp of Memory" in his work *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* (1849). He outlines the importance of preserving civil and domestic buildings "for it is in becoming memorial or monumental that a true perfection is attained by civil and domestic buildings".¹³⁷ In these passages it becomes clear that his position with regard to restoration was not that different from Boito, as the maintenance and conservation of the monument was the first aspect to consider when approaching the monument.

Ruskin believes that the passing of time on a monument improves the quality of the monument itself: "(...) those styles of architecture which are picturesque in the sense above explained with respect to sculpture (...) do not suffer, but commonly gain in richness of effect when their details are partly worn away; hence such styles, pre-eminently that of French Gothic, should always be adopted when the materials to be employed are liable to degradations, as brick, sandstone or soft limestone (...)".¹³⁸ More particularly on restoration Ruskin continues: "Neither by the public, nor by those who have the care of public monuments, is the true meaning of *restoration* understood. It means the most total destruction which a building can suffer: a destruction out of which no remnants can be gathered: a destruction accompanied with false description of the thing destroyed. Do not let us deceive ourselves in this important matter; it is *impossible*, as impossible to raise the dead, to restore anything that has ever been great or beautiful in architecture. That which I have above insisted upon as the life of the

¹³⁵ Jokilehto 1999:175

¹³⁶ Bellini 1991:160

¹³⁷ Ruskin, John. *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*. Smith, Elder & Co., 65 Cornhill, London, 1849:164

¹³⁸ Ruskin 1849:178-179

whole, that spirit which is given only by the hand and eye of the workman, never can be recalled. Another spirit may be given by another time, and it is then a new building; but the spirit of the dead workman cannot be summoned up, and commanded to direct our hands, and other thoughts. And as for direct and simple copying, it is palpably impossible. What copying can there be of surfaces that have been worn half an inch down? The whole finish of the work was in the half inch that is gone; if you attempt to restore that finish, you do conjecturally; if you copy what is left, granting fidelity to be possible, (and what care, or watchfulness or cost can secure it) how is the new work better than the old? There was yet in the old *some* life, some mysterious suggestion of what it had been, and of what it had lost; some sweetness in the gentle lines, which rain and sun had wrought. There can be none in the brute hardness of the carving. (...)

“Do not let us talk then of restoration.” stresses Ruskin: “The thing is a Lie from beginning to end. You may make a model of a building as you may of a corpse, and your model have the shell of the old walls within it as your cast might have the skeleton, with what advantage I neither see nor care: but the old building is destroyed, and the more totally and mercilessly than if it had sunk into a heap of dust, or melted into a mass of clay (...) But, it is said, there may come a necessity for restoration! Granted. Look the necessity full in the face, and understand it on its own terms. It is a necessity for destruction. Accept it as such, pull the building down, throw its stones into neglected corners, make ballast of them, or mortar, if you will; but do it honestly, and do not set up a Lie in their place. And look that necessity in the face before it comes, and you may prevent it. The principle of modern times, (a principle which, I believe, at least in France, to be systematically acted on by the masons, in order to find themselves work, as the abbey of St. Ouen was pulled down by the magistrates of the town by way of giving work to some vagrants) is to neglect buildings first, and restore afterwards. Take proper care of monuments, and you will not need to restore them. A few sheets of lead put in time upon the roof, a few dead leaves and sticks swept in time out of a water-course, will save both roof and walls from ruin. Watch an old building with an anxious care; guard it as best you may, and at any cost, from every influence of dilapidation. Count its stones as you would jewels of a crown; set watches about it as if at the gates of a besieged city; bind it together with iron where it loosens; stay it with timber where it declines; do not care about the unsightliness of the aid: better a crutch than a lost limb; and do this tenderly, and continually, and many a generation will still be born and pass away beneath its shadow. Its evil day must come at last; but let it come declaredly and openly,

and let no dishonouring and false substitute deprive it of the funeral offices of memory.”¹³⁹

The similarity between Boito's and Ruskin theories on monument conservation can be backed up in view of this last section about the importance of fortifying and stabilising the monument in due time. As indicated in the first point of the Charter above, consolidation and the maintenance of the stability of the monument or historic building, are Boito's paramount considerations. Ascertaining the condition of the monument is the first step to avoid material decay and eventually proceed with other measures according to the state and function of the given monument.

Obviously, there were many British architects who on different levels contributed to the development of a conservation movement in Britain. While it goes beyond the limits of this research project to list them all in great detail, the next paragraphs will attempt to compare the most relevant aspects between the Italian and British conservation debate and some of its key figures in relation to Boito.

This ensemble of protagonists and events related to the conservation movement, which often also overlap chronologically, show that the conservation movement in Europe was not a phenomenon that emerged out of nowhere, but rather a gradual development and awareness.

As a matter of fact, before Ruskin, there were other scholars in England who expressed their thoughts quite strongly about the dangers of restoration or rather the necessity to apply a cautious and meticulous approach when preserving the monument. Hence, Ruskin's attitude towards restoration was to some extent anticipated by these scholars and events featuring in the British Romantic conservation movement. The heavy restorations made by the British architect James Wyatt (1746–1813) to Salisbury Cathedral in 1787–92 (restoration that aimed at the unification of the whole internal space thus featuring the removal of any hindering obstacles – screens, fonts and opening of chapels) were the first to provoke a debate about the principles of conservation.¹⁴⁰

A few years later the same architect was invited to restore, or actually improve and repair, Durham Cathedral. The invitation was confirmed in 1794 and Wyatt presented

¹³⁹ Ruskin 1849:181

¹⁴⁰ Jokilehto 1999:104

his drawings for the alterations in 1795. The works began and, as soon as the news spread, John Carter (1748–1817) presented a set of unfinished measured drawings to the Society of Antiquarians; these drawings had been commissioned by the same Society the previous summer.

The Society of Antiquaries was founded in 1717 to promote the study of antiquities and classical studies. Firstly, the interest was mainly oriented towards classical studies but later, the Society also became interested in antiquities of Britain itself, with its members playing an important role in their conservation.¹⁴¹ Carter also prepared drawings of other historic buildings: among these St. Stephen's Chapel at Westminster, the Cathedrals of Exeter and Durham and the Abbey Church of Bath.¹⁴² With regard to Durham Cathedral the architect emphasised the original design of the church before the alterations made by Wyatt using old prints and drawings for a truthful reconstruction. He clearly objected to the modifications initiated by Wyatt and subsequently sought to convince the authorities to adopt a more sensitive approach to restoration by limiting the repairs in the chapels achieving relative success.¹⁴³

Carter also published several volumes on English medieval art and architecture. His best known literary work is probably the series of 212 articles *Pursuits of Architectural Innovation* that he published under the pseudonym 'An Architect' in the *Gentleman's magazine* from 1798 until the year of his death. The *Pursuits* were first intended as a critical survey of the restoration of medieval buildings, but gradually developed into a history of English architecture.¹⁴⁴ Jokilehto points out that the architect travelled extensively to several parts of the country usually describing one building in each article. With regard to the conservation of Salisbury Cathedral, Carter wrote "(...) let me once more shed a tear in pity for the innovated and modernized architectural state of the service part of the arrangement, and sepulchral relicks remaining therein; where new-fangled decorations have been set up, utterly irrelevant to the style of the fabric, without order or propriety; where monuments have been either destroyed, removed or their particular parts huddled together, to the confusion of Architectural design and historical evidence (...)." ¹⁴⁵

¹⁴¹ Jokilehto 1999:48

¹⁴² Jokilehto 1999:107

¹⁴³ *ibid.*

¹⁴⁴ Jokilehto 1999:108

¹⁴⁵ *ibid.* citing *Gentleman's Magazine* 1810:511

The architect's vocabulary contained such concepts as: alteration, beautifying, damage, destruction, improvement, innovation, repairing, and restoration, which all in the end meant different degrees of negative or destructive treatment of historic buildings. Jokilehto points out that Carter's reluctance to accept restoration resulted partly from his detestation of the early forms of Gothic Revival architecture of his time.

Throughout the years of the first decade of the nineteenth century, Carter insisted that the imitation of original architectural details should be properly studied so that the work would "become of consequence from its historic reference, and continue as example of genuine taste and true imitation".¹⁴⁶ Carter anticipated the criticism that a few decades later were to emerge with regard to Gothic Revival and to any restoration made according to an anachronistic and artificial architectural style, although from a purely antiquarian and aesthetic point of view. He wrote: "when Restoration come –why then the original will be no more. From my part, I am for no restoration of the building; I am content with it even as it is. For repair, indeed, I am ready enough to agree to that; such as carefully stopping open joints, making good some of the mullions of the windows, putting the glazing of the windows in proper conditions; but no further would I go."¹⁴⁷

At the time, monument care that focused strictly on the conservation of authentic fabric or the elucidation of authentic style was referred to as 'antiquarian', reflecting a degree of detachment seen to characterize an older historical tradition.¹⁴⁸ It must be noted that the antiquarian current had already originated at the end of the seventeenth century with diverse interpretations of antiquity and religious conflicts that damaged cultural heritage in Europe (as for instance the Thirty Years War of 1618–48).

Antiquarians in Britain earlier than elsewhere tended to criticise iconoclasm and modernity. They anticipated the nineteenth-century fierce attacks against demolition of old buildings and the bewildering fluctuations of opinion about whether restoration was a creative or a destructive practice.¹⁴⁹ The reactions mentioned above with regard to Wyatt's alterations made to Salisbury Cathedral are defined by scholarly literature as the antiquarian debate.

¹⁴⁶ *ibid.* citing *Gentleman's Magazine* 1801:310

¹⁴⁷ *ibid.* citing *Gentleman's Magazine* GM 1804:739

¹⁴⁸ Miele 2011:173

¹⁴⁹ Glendinning 2013:42

As compared to Italy or France for instance, it is interesting to note that the antiquarian debate did not have similar developments among the European countries. In these countries the conservation movement originated almost seven decades later and was initiated by few scholars – like Boito – but then developed through other, public channels such as political circles and academies.

In France for instance, the blame for bad restoration was given to the centralised system, which with its complicated administration, often failed to preserve monuments in the most outlying areas of the country. Conversely, on a broader administrative level, restoration and conservation in England was mainly supported by the efforts of scholars, individuals and societies.

In Britain the creation of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings in 1877 was fundamental in sanctioning the ‘private’ endeavour for the conservation of monuments. Other important institutions for monument conservation were the Ancient Monument Society, the Georgian Group, the Victorian Society, the Council for British Archaeology, many of them subsequently grouped under the cover of the Civic Trust, founded in 1957.¹⁵⁰ Likewise, there were also early attempts to establish official institutions on the model of the French centralized system.

One of the most important efforts was the one suggested by Sir George Gilbert Scott in 1841, to establish an Antiquarian Commission, to oversee restoration work. The suggestion was raised again a few decades later, though unfortunately with no success.¹⁵¹ In England the period from the 1840s to the 1860s was marked by an increasing practice of restoration, as well as an intense debate on the principles of conservation for historic structures, which went beyond the material restoration of cathedrals.

A significant role in this debate was played by the Cambridge-Camden Society, which was founded by two Cambridge Graduates, John Mason Neale (1818–69) and Benjamin Webb (1819–85) in 1839. The aim was to promote Catholic ritual, proper church building and knowledgeable restoration. This approach soon provoked a reaction, leading to the dissolution of the Society – accused of conspiring to restore popery – and its re-establishment as the Ecclesiological Society in 1845.

¹⁵⁰ The Civic Trust ceased to exist in 2009 due to the lack of funds

¹⁵¹ Jokilehto 1999:156

With that in mind, one of the new key objectives was to restore English churches back to their former glory, their best and purest style rather than preserving each part in its own form. Their main operating principles were announced in their monthly journal *The Ecclesiologist* in 1842 (*The Ecclesiologist* was founded in 1841)¹⁵². They focussed on the demolition and the reconstruction of the church's elements for example, galleries, pews etc. were removed or replaced with new designs; existing floors would be renewed and roofs would be taken down and rebuilt with new tiles; changes would also be made to the plan, with the enlargement of aisles or the widening of arches.¹⁵³ The interesting aspect is that architects in England, France and Germany were in touch with the editors of the principal journals of the Gothic Revival (*The Ecclesiologist*, *Annales archéologiques* and *Kölner Domblatt*) – all established in the early 1840s) via their exchange of correspondence. They published reports on experiences in the other countries, and also met during travels.

The discussion on the principles of conservation and restoration of historic buildings divided scholars into two opposing groups. On the one hand there was the anti-restoration faction and on the other, the supporters of invasive restoration, which entailed the alterations of the structure.¹⁵⁴ Jokilehto points out that in broader terms the two sides seemed to have much in common. The basic difference was in the definition of the object. The restorers aimed to achieve a faithful restoration and if necessary, a reconstruction of an earlier architectural form. The anti-restoration scholars were deeply conscious of the 'historic time', arguing that each project or construction belonged to its historic and cultural context. Therefore, it was not possible to recreate lost or damaged parts with the same significance in another, i.e. later, period. From their point of view, the only option was the protection and conservation of the actual material of the original object. As in Italy (although some time later) the public gradually became more aware of the debate about the practice of restoration.

One of the main protagonists of this debate was the above-mentioned George Gilbert Scott (1811–1878). He was one of the most successful Victorian architects with a massive practice which partly specialized in church restoration. Scott's practice in

¹⁵² *ibid.*

¹⁵³ Cole, 1980:229, Jokilehto 1999:157

¹⁵⁴ Jokilehto 1999:158

architecture and restoration extended to more than 800 buildings, including the Foreign Office, St. Pancras Hotel and the Albert Memorial in London.¹⁵⁵

Scott was very interested in Gothic architecture and in 1842 he joined the Cambridge-Camden society.¹⁵⁶ Scott has often been compared with the French architect Viollet-le-Duc and worked in all parts of England and Wales on more than twenty cathedrals, abbeys and dozens of parish churches making a great impact on the development of restoration policies. Likewise, he travelled to France, Germany and Italy (in Italy in 1851, where he met Ruskin in Venice). One of Scott's most renowned works, which is worth mentioning here to provide a picture of his approach, was the restoration of Durham Cathedral in 1859. The architect's first proposal was to build a spire over the central tower (similar to St. Nicholas at Newcastle). However, his proposal was not accepted on the grounds of structural stability. Instead, Scott made several other changes and additions: the tower was restored to the form before the works by William Atkinson (1773–1839), who executed the works on the Cathedral between 1804 and 1806.¹⁵⁷

Scott reinstated earlier removed figures to their original niches and added new ones in the empty niches. He also rearranged the choir, closing the 'long vista', which no longer pleased the church authorities, designed a three-arched open screen in the Lombardian Gothic style; he finally re-designed a pulpit decorated in a kind of 'Cosmatesque' mosaic work. The architect also made other alterations, which would be too comprehensive to list in this research; however, generally he operated according to the above listed principles of the Camden Society, which always entailed – at least to a certain extent – the modification and destruction of specific historic features in the buildings.¹⁵⁸

Inevitably, Scott's restoration encountered many critics from the beginning. However, similar to Boito, Scott's approach to restoration and to the monument stressed the importance of the monument as historical and cultural testimony. In broad terms, Scott valued historical alterations and repairs, yet most importantly he distinguished between ancient structures and ruins, which had lost their original function and could be seen as testimonies of a past civilisation, and ancient churches which were still in use. As a consequence these latter had to be presented in the best possible form, as they served as

¹⁵⁵ Jokilehto 1999:159

¹⁵⁶ Scott was inspired by the work of Augustus Charles Pugin (1762-1832), one of the key figures in the development of the Gothic Revival in England, his most important works featuring in the new Houses of Parliament. In his first book *Contrasts* published in 1836, Pugin made a comparison of medieval and present-day buildings, providing a brief history of the neglect and destruction of medieval churches in England.

¹⁵⁷ Jokilehto 1999:109

¹⁵⁸ Jokilehto 1999:159

the 'House of God'. These churches which were still in use had to maintain their religious and social function for the community by altering and embellishing their appearance.

At this stage it might be useful to note that the conservation debate in England features many similarities with the conservation movement in Italy, although this latter occurred three decades later due to the historical and political circumstances mentioned in the previous chapter. The first aspect in common, is the distinction between 'living' and 'dead' monuments, which seems to be fundamental in order to decide on the restoration intervention approach.

Especially in Italy, the purpose of the historic monument or of the church – whether this was still to be used in the same or new function or left as testimony of the past – almost automatically established the extent to which eventual modifications were acceptable and feasible. Secondly, there is the general publicity that the conservation movement was able to achieve: this was partly due to the spread of the press, to the international communication enabled by travelling possibilities and international events (such as competitions, conferences, exhibitions etc.), which encouraged the exchange of ideas between scholars. As previously outlined, the press played a fundamental role – journals, publications and independent manifestos – in the spread of the conservation issues to a heterogeneous and international public.

As anticipated above in relation to Boito's writings, this was also the case with a few debates on conservation in Italy with which Boito was involved and that are to be discussed later in this research project. Thirdly, on a more specific note, there are further parallels when considering Scott's intervention on Durham Cathedral and the restoration work performed by Boito on two churches, the church of SS. Maria e Donato in Murano and the church of St. Anthony in Padua.

The Italian architect planned several rearrangements for both of these churches with a view to rebuilding and returning them to their original splendour, at times favouring and adding specific architectural elements at the cost of other pre-existing features. The specifics of Boito's interventions will be considered in the fourth chapter. With that in mind it is important to note that the restoration projects on the two churches were chronologically distant from another, the Muranese Church being his first project in the early 1860s and the restoration of the Paduan Cathedral occurring in the mature years of his career in the late 1890s. Although a difference in maturity and finer development

of the architect's approach with regard to monuments restoration is clearly visible between the first and the second project, both ventures are strongly dictated by the necessary continued use and function of the two churches.

This aspect focusing on the continued function of the church, possibly also reflects in the intent of the British Victorian architect, thus delineating a similar approach of intervention of the Italian and British restoration methodology when it comes to 'living monuments'. Last but not least, it is quite conceivable that Boito was fully aware of the works by the British architect in Durham and in other churches of England and Wales, although unfortunately no correspondence or proof of such between Boito and the British architect has been found (yet).

Unfortunately, Boito's private library was not accessible by the time this research was conducted. However, from a brief glimpse that was allowed into the architect's 'Fondo, it could be deduced that his volumes were varied both in terms of language (Italian, English, French, German and Slavic) and topics, ranging from manuals of engineering to the renowned writings by the French architect Eugène Viollet-le-Duc or the British Ruskin.¹⁵⁹

On the same note, a volume the Sessional Papers of the Royal Institute of British Architects dating 1864 could also be seen among the architect's books. The RIBA was founded in 1834 and established guidelines for the conservation of historic buildings in Britain as also for the actual study of architecture (as for instance architectural style and educational tools and methodologies for architecture students). In 1865 the RIBA published a set of rules and suggestions bearing the title *Conservation of Ancient Monuments and Remains*. The guidelines were divided in two parts, one more theoretical ("General advice to promoters of the restoration of ancient buildings") and a second one more practical ("Hints to workmen engaged on the repairs and restoration of ancient buildings"). These recommendations mainly included a careful archaeological and historical survey of the historical monument – entailing drawings and photography – before making any alterations. The document still featured reminders of previous practices of restoration such as the removal of obstructions (walls, pavements, galleries etc.), which may have concealed ancient work.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁹ Once access will be permitted, it would be extremely interesting to identify and discuss what Boito was reading his volumes may unveil new aspects of his work that have not been investigated yet. This same point will be highlighted in the Conclusions chapter of this research project.

¹⁶⁰ Jokilehto 1999:182

According to the architect George Edmund Street (1824–81) it was essential for these guidelines to be respected, that the architect be present in every step of the way, from the initial inspections to the latest restoration. Street often travelled to Europe. He published his observations on medieval architecture in *The Ecclesiologist* but especially in *Brick and Marble Architecture in the Middle Ages: Notes on Tours in the North of Italy* (1874) where he also critically refers to the restoration made to the Church of SS. Maria e Donato in Murano (the passage will be entirely reproduced in the fourth chapter). Street believed that the personal involvement of the architect in the complete supervision, measurement and drawing of the building would avoid many mistakes. Nevertheless, the emphasis on the archaeological and architectural investigations as also the use of photography in *Conservation of Ancient Monuments and Remains* as a mean of documentation strongly recalls Boito's points of the *Charter of Restoration*, hence strengthening the links between the Italian and British thought within the conservation debate.

The debate in Britain about restoration and anti-restoration found its peak between the 1860s and the 1870s. In this respect, the establishment of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) in 1877 is one of the most important examples of the conservation movement not only in England, but given its influence, on the international community. As a matter of fact the members of the SPAB were in correspondence with the scholars of several countries and received reports on their restoration practices.

Among the most important members were the above-mentioned John Ruskin and the scholar (writer and poet) William Morris (1834–96) elected as honorary secretary together with many other distinguished personalities of the British scholarly circles.¹⁶¹ The primary mission of the SPAB was to protect ancient or historical buildings from conjectural restoration.

Its Manifesto written by Morris and other founding members in 1877 became the formal basis for modern conservation policy.¹⁶² The Manifesto was published in the British journal on literature, science and fine arts *The Athenaeum* on 23 June 1877. Without reporting the entire text in this chapter, it will be sufficient to point out some of the main principles of the Manifesto to fully comprehend the aim and impact that this document had on the modern subject of cultural heritage conservation. The document realistically

¹⁶¹ Jokilehto 1999:184

¹⁶² Jokilehto 1999:185

acknowledges the interest that monuments have awakened in the last fifty years. This attention however, soon turned into destruction, through restoration that was executed as the result of counterproductive enthusiasm that aimed to return the appearance of the monument to its alleged original state. This necessity of intervening on the monument was mainly caused by the fact that the nineteenth century had no style of its own but a very thorough knowledge of the styles of other centuries.

The very interesting aspect of the Manifesto is that it does not condemn restoration totally, but only the kind of restoration that misleads the eye, the one that aims to 'bring back a building to the best time of its history' thus resulting in a forgery of the monument. While restoration has always been done in the past, it was carried out in the fashion of the time. The builders of the previous centuries did not have the knowledge or the desire to return the monument to its original state through the stripping of original material features. Hence their repairs of the past centuries offer indeed a very interesting and instructive history of the monument through time as the various 'strata' of restoration are recognisable. The appearance of antiquity should not be removed though a process of destruction and addition and repairs should be made in the most limited way possible.

Eventually, the Manifesto encourages applying the protection of the monument through daily care and maintenance instead of restoration. Reference is also made to the issue of living monuments or buildings: if these become inconvenient for current use then it is best to erect a new building than to tamper or enlarge an old one. One final reference is also made to future generations, who should have the chance to study and inherit the monument in its most truthful condition.

The magnitude of the SPAB's international influence on the methodology of cultural heritage conservation has been briefly pointed out above. With that in mind, the reception of the Manifesto's principles in Italy was facilitated through the international correspondence among selected scholars.

As will be discussed in the third chapter Tito Vespasiano Paravicini (1832–1899) was the scholar who was most interested in the approach of the SPAB, to the extent that he became the SPAB's 'official' representative in Italy. This position eventually caused him to be exiled from the Italian scholarly and political circles. Nonetheless the concepts that

he gradually developed through the SPAB and through the readings of Ruskin, were taken up, although with some modifications, by Boito too.¹⁶³

Although the position and approaches of the SPAB were known in Italy, thanks to scholars such as Paravicini, there is no proof of correspondence that has yet been uncovered between Boito and British scholars or institutions such as the SPAB.

Nevertheless, Boito's Charter of Restoration, although quite dissimilar in form (written in guideline points as opposed to the epistolary format of the Manifesto), features many similarities in terms of the content of the SPAB Manifesto. Among the most obvious ones, is the preference to consolidate and preserve monuments when necessary, rather than intervene with reparations and restoration. Also, the concept of 'deceit' features in both documents: a (badly executed) restoration renders the monument fraudulent and misleads the eye of the viewer. The monument is a cultural and historical testimony and its age must therefore not be faked through restoration that aims to return the monument to its original state – a state that can actually never be as it was originally again. As pointed out previously, Boito describes the situation of a draughtsman misled by a restoration in his Dialogue on Architectural Restoration (*Questioni Pratiche di Belle Arti*), hence reiterating the same notion in several of his writings.

Last but not least, a further parallel between Boito's Charter and the SPAB Manifesto is the idea of the respect that needs to be given to modifications and additions that have been made in past centuries. These reflect the fashion of the time while not faking antiquity, automatically becoming part of the history of the monument.

As it will be pointed out in the last chapter, this aspect is the one that raised more criticism with regard to Boito's restoration practice and, more generally, was never really solved in the Italian Ottocento debate of restoration. Where does the necessity to preserve and adapt the monument to contemporary purposes start and where can the art historical line of respect for ancient additions – regardless of their importance or value (cultural or material) – be drawn? In any case, the fact that this aspect features in both the Italian and British documents, points out that this matter was quite unsettled in both countries.

¹⁶³ Jokilehto 1999:200. It is necessary to stress that the circulation of ideas within the Italian conservation movement can only be alleged through the periods and dates of the scholars. There are no writings by Boito, as far as I was able to see, that clearly state looking at Paravicini to further develop his theory of restoration.

The similarities between the SPAB Manifesto of 1877 and the later Charter of Restoration of 1883 again raises the issue of the originality of Boito's ideas and deserves one further attempt to be solved. In this respect, it is necessary to halt the scholarship, which simply addresses the primacy of the ideas and practices promoted by Boito. There are other factors that make Boito's theories and approaches innovative.

Recent scholarly literature defined Boito as one of the most high profile protagonists of the Italian conservation movement at the end of the century.¹⁶⁴ The attention that the architect was able to give to the issue of monument restoration and conservation during the Italian post-unification period remains unparalleled. For one thing, the fact that Boito succeeded in making the conservation debate an important component of the political situation of post-unification Italy reinforces his originality. With regard to the content of Boito's ideas, the question as to whether Boito's theory of restoration is essentially original or inspired by other contemporary scholars (national or international) needs to be addressed from a different angle.

The fact that Boito was aware of international currents of cultural heritage conservation in England (and also in France) does not undermine his originality of thought, but rather proves that he was receptive and able to elaborate on the transalpine principles and transpose them into the Italian environment. Boito's theories are unique as they apply in particular to the contemporary historical, cultural and also political situation highlighted in the previous paragraphs that was specifically Italian.

With regard to this aspect of international exchange concerning restoration approaches, Jokilehto points out that Italian scholars were in contact with Central Europe and Britain through numerous cultural tourists from Chateaubriand to Viollet-le-Duc and Ruskin. The author maintains that it took Italy a long time before deeper interest was shown in the protection and conservation of medieval or later buildings. In relation to this, it is important to note that this statement might be only partially valid: Italy had an interest in the conservation of its monuments for many centuries as also underlined by Settis (2010) in the previous chapter. However, due to the political situation and the difficult processes of nation formation, which occurred later than in other central European countries, we might argue that the lateness of Italy is solely due to the joining of the conservation debate and its institutional application to the national country as a whole.

¹⁶⁴ Jokilehto 1999:201

More interestingly, the scholar further argues that due to this relative lateness, Italy was able to draw on the experience of other countries, such as Britain, France and Germany, which had all gone through the nation formation process many decades earlier. According to the author, the Italian approach emerged as a result of the different principles being introduced in the country at the same time.

Hence the modern Italian approach of cultural heritage conservation and monument restoration in the nineteenth century is seen as a combination of principles established earlier for the restoration of ancient monuments as related to German Romanticism and historicism, the French restoration principles according to Viollet-le-Duc and the approach of John Ruskin and the SPAB.

While it is true that Italian scholars and architects drew inspiration from the restoration policies of other countries, restoration practices and theories in post-unification Italy were also dictated by other factors, such as the recollection of architectural fashions of the pre-unification states, by pre-existing (i.e. pre-unification) traditions of conservation dictated by the respective religious or political rulers, by the occasion and purpose of the restoration or by the size and location of the monument. In this respect, Boito proved to have a vast understanding of these factors and operated according to the interests of the monument; his practice and theory resulting in the many elaborations that will be discussed in the next chapters.

The different variations will be described in the third chapter with a comparative investigation of the theory and practice of other contemporary architects.. With that in mind, the next paragraphs will investigate similarities and disparities between the French ideas of monument conservation and the Italian developments of the conservation movement in the nineteenth century.

While scholarly literature has occasionally pointed out parallel thoughts between Boito and the French approach to restoration, it has been done only in relation to selected ideas of Viollet-le-Duc disregarding the broader picture of the transalpine movement. These ideas, which developed in France, echoed in the Italian conservation debate and in specific phases and circumstances of Boito's ideas on cultural heritage conservation.

Boito's ideas – part IV: a comparison with the French school

As outlined at the beginning of this chapter, scholarly literature briefly suggested the existences of links between the conservation theories of Boito and the ideas of selected representative figures of the French school of restoration in the nineteenth century. As mentioned above, this comparison was initiated by Mizuko (1996) and aimed to establish the fact that Boito was inspired by the ideas of other French scholars to draft his Charter of Restoration in 1883. With that in mind the purpose of the next paragraphs is to further investigate Boito's position in respect to the transalpine theories of monument restoration and determine to what extent and how these ideas were absorbed and applied by Boito.

Before initiating this analysis, it is necessary to briefly address the importance that France had in the launch of the conservation movement in Europe.

An understanding of ancient monuments in France had already emerged from the early decades of the eighteenth century, yet it has always remained somewhat amateurish and sentimental.¹⁶⁵ Nevertheless, it is in the final years of the same century that political and economic modernization led the French conservation movement to acquire a political significance that placed monuments in a central position within the scenario of nation-formation.

This new dominant role of the monument was sanctioned by the dramatic ruptures of the French Revolution – an event that had conflicting effects on the conservation movement.¹⁶⁶ On the one hand, the concept of universal fraternity freed people and the community from specific religious ties that they had in relation to monuments. This relationship between the people and the monuments was no longer characterised by the dominance of emperors, popes and the clergy. Accordingly, the new long-term effect was to foster an idea of collective responsibility for the conservation of historical monuments, transcending national and social boundaries.¹⁶⁷

The emphasis on equality and fraternity fuelled the belief in national community, while the stress on liberty empowered ideas of local identity and diversity often based on supposed medieval precedents. It is in this respect that Glendinning brings out the

¹⁶⁵ Glendinning 2013:65 "International revolutions and national heritages"

¹⁶⁶ Glendinning 2013:65

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

concept of the *genius loci*, which consequently led European countries to develop different forms of cultural heritage conservation within the conservation movement.¹⁶⁸

On the other hand, an opposing effect was the emerging bond between monuments and nationalism, which strongly affected the development of the conservation movement in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Especially through Napoleon's conquests, France took the lead in developing the idea of nationalism as the driving force for cultural heritage conservation.

Glendinning argues that the national cohesiveness of the French conservation system ensured it was widely imitated abroad. In this respect, Italy, and more specifically Rome, did not jump on the frenzied wagon of nationalism due to a different political situation that delayed the country's unification. At the same time, it is interesting to note how France (and also Britain, as mentioned in the previous subchapter), starting from the eighteenth century developed parallel approaches in exploiting the monuments as agents of political and social stabilisation.¹⁶⁹

In both countries, castles or cathedrals were appropriated for new purposes, substantiating the monument's position for political, economic and also social objectives. It is also important to consider that restoration in nineteenth-century France, but also in Italy, was closely interconnected with the system of eclecticism of historical styles within contemporary architecture, conveying different meanings and purposes. Within growing national competitiveness, restoration was strongly related to the potential to show the superiority of the art of the nation in question. The feelings of condescension were in France, but also in other Northern European countries, anchored in the supposed medieval golden age and the special Romantic status of Gothic architecture.¹⁷⁰

In Italy on the other hand, these feelings of 'national belonging' were associated with the social balance and sobriety of the *Italia dei Comuni* period with the development of these Communes in central and northern Italy from the eleventh century onwards.

It is possibly due to the fact that the monument was a reflection of the nation's superiority and *Volkgeist* that restoration methodology in France gradually took quite an invasive turn, especially in the second half of the nineteenth century.

¹⁶⁸ Glendinning 2013:77. Guido Zucconi, leading expert on Boito, uses the same term to describe Boito's focus for the study of Lombard architecture in Italy as a model for a national architectural style.

¹⁶⁹ Glendinning 2013:67

¹⁷⁰ Glendinning 2013:78

As will be discussed in the following paragraphs, a specific ideology of restoration in France during the nineteenth century aimed to return the monument to a condition of completeness. According to this approach, a monument might exist not as an object or as a material substance but as an abstract ideal removed from historic reality, whose modern recreation (or creation in its new form), might answer the demands of the nation more effectively than the authentic 'old' substance.¹⁷¹

It was not enough to restore the monument by preventing its material decay, but it was necessary to return it to a splendid condition reflecting the political and cultural supremacy of France. With that in mind, the nationalistic practice of restoration was not only confined to the reconstruction of buildings already admired but included the selection of forgotten buildings or monuments featuring a "potential" of becoming cultural heritage.

This procedure occurred both in France and also in Italy, with the reappraisal and rescuing of monuments and historical buildings, mostly medieval, which were undergoing a process of great decay within the setting of urban development. As will also be discussed in the next chapters, these monuments were eventually 'saved' by Boito and other contemporary architects from demolition through restoration. Their intervention was more or less altering the original nature of the monument, which at the same time enabled the continued use and purpose of the structure.

Referring back to France, it is within this process of appropriation that the nineteenth century French conservation movement developed an ideology of restoration from the mid-nineteenth century, with the chief architect-restorer Viollet-le-Duc tracing the guidelines of restoration in France that were closely linked with the removal of later additions and repair of the monument (Figure 3).

Unlike the other architects that have been discussed in this thesis, it is interesting to note that Viollet-le-Duc did not have a traditional education as an architect or art historian, but rather developed his professional career 'in the field'. He never entered an official school of architecture. He made his own studies practising in architectural studios, working for the Directorate of Public works as well as touring in both Central Europe and Italy. On his return from Italy in August 1838 Viollet-le-Duc attended the meetings of the Council of Historic Buildings as an observer. He was nominated assistant

¹⁷¹ Glendinning 2013:77

inspector to the construction works at the royal archives for which he drafted reports that made an impression on the commission, but above all on Merimée, the *Inspecteur général* of the *Service des monuments historiques* (Office of Historic Monuments).¹⁷²

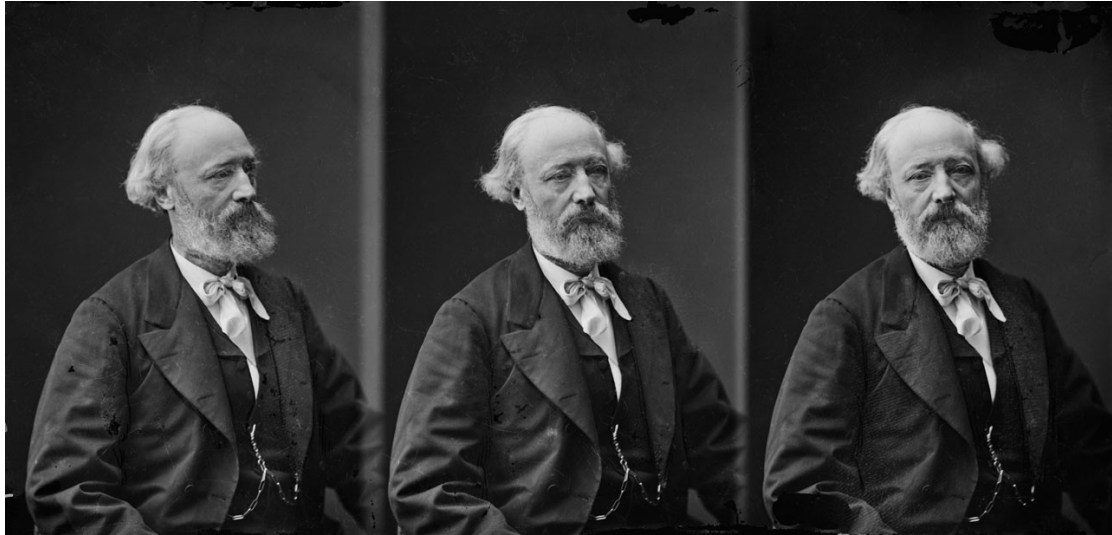


Figure 3. Eugène Viollet-le-Duc photographed in three poses by Félix Nadar, ca. 1870s

Consequently, Viollet-le-Duc was recommended for the work on the church of La Madeleine at Vézelay, one of his most significant projects on which he continued to work until 1859. After his employment for La Madeleine in 1840 he rapidly advanced in his career and was nominated Chief of the *Service des monuments historiques* (Service of historical monuments) in 1846. Two years later he became a member of the *Commission des arts et édifices religieux* (Commission of arts and religious buildings). In 1853 he was appointed General Inspector of Diocesan Buildings and in 1857 Diocesan Architect.¹⁷³

His studies in art and architecture and his interests in other fields such as his observations of mountains and geology gave him material to write a great number of articles in dozens of periodicals, including the *Annales Archéologiques*. From 1854–68 he published the ten volumes of the *Dictionnaire raisonné de l'Architecture française du XI au XVI siècle* (Dictionary of French Architecture), possibly the architect's most popular work, which led to his worldwide influence in the field of monument restoration and architecture all over Europe (Figure 4). In the years after the publication of the

¹⁷² Jokilehto 1999:140.

¹⁷³ Viollet-le-Duc's countless works on monuments will not be discussed in detail in this research paper, but as brief overview: his main restoration projects included the Cathedrals of Paris, Amiens, Reims and Clermont-Ferrand, the churches of Saint Just in Narbonne, La Madeleine in Vézelay, Saint-Père-sous-Vézelay, Beaune, Saint-Denis, Saint Sernin of Toulouse and Eu as well as the fortified Cité of Carcassonne, the Synodal Hall of Sens, the Castle of Coucy, the Castle of Pierrefonds and the ramparts of Avignon. In addition he was involved in numerous other schemes in France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Switzerland. Jokilehto 1999:141

Dictionnaire he wrote several other pieces on the history of architecture and related themes.

However, it is in this work that Viollet-le-Duc offers the most exhaustive definition (of over twenty pages) of restoration according to his principles of research, architecture, art historical time and duties of the architect when restoring an ancient building. Unfortunately, it is not feasible to transpose the whole text in this this, despite the numerous interesting aspects that would lead to questions about the many alleged contrasts between the Italian, British and French approach to nineteenth century restoration. Nonetheless, the next paragraphs will highlight a selection of the most important passages that may shed a new perspective on the relationship between Viollet-le-Duc's and Boito's methodology of restoration.

The opening sentence of the chapter "Restauration" sets out clearly Viollet-le-Duc's approach to restoration: "Restoring an edifice, does not mean maintaining, repairing or remaking it, but returning it to a state of completeness that might have never existed."¹⁷⁴ In this statement, the architect illustrates the fundamental principles that characterise his methodology of restoration: restoration needs to the return the monument to a stage of completeness that might have never existed in the first place.

To back up his statement, Viollet-le-Duc mentions that the Romans did not even have a Latin word for restoration. "*Instaurare, reficere, renovare*" – meaning reinstate, remake from scratch.¹⁷⁵ With that in mind, the architect mentions other examples of restoration that occurred in the past. This intervention on the monuments, or rather reconstructions as he defines them, was carried out according to the current fashions of local people. Among these examples, Viollet-le-Duc mentions the Temple of the Sun in Baalbek, and also the Ptolemaic dynasties who did not respect the forms of the monuments of previous Egyptian dynasties, remaking them according to the fashion of the time.¹⁷⁶

From this statement, describing builders and architects restoring monuments according to the architectural style of their own time derives the term 'stylistic restoration', which

¹⁷⁴ Viollet-le-Duc 1866:14 "*Restaurer un édifice, ce n'est pas l'entretenir, le réparer ou le refaire, c'est le rétablir dans un état complet qui peut n'avoir jamais existé à un moment donné.*" Viollet-le-Duc, Eugène Emmanuel. *Dictionnaire Raisoné de l'architecture française du XI au XVI siècle* par M. Viollet-le-Duc. Tome Huitième, Paris A. Morel, Editeur, 1866, pp. 14-34.

¹⁷⁵ Viollet-le-Duc 1866:14
¹⁷⁶ *ibid.*

is often used in Italian and less often in British scholarly literature. As the term 'stylistic restoration' may be ambiguous in English, it may be useful to briefly clarify its meaning.

According to Viollet-le-Duc, every building and each of its components has to be restored in a suitable manner and with its own style, both with regard to appearance and structure. The concept of style is independent from the object and it would vary according to the contemporary culture. The French architect believed that architecture was not an art of imitation but a production of man. Form and proportion existed in the universe and it was man's task to find them and consequently develop principles of construction according to the necessities of his cultural context.¹⁷⁷

In medieval France for instance, builders had no style to choose from for their buildings; with that in mind, it was the cultural development of the time, which produced diverse characteristic forms that varied according to region. Thus, architectural forms were a logical consequence of the structural principles, which depended on building materials, on functional necessities and on the purpose of the building in question.¹⁷⁸ It is in this sense that Viollet-le-Duc's concept of restoration needs to be understood, featuring an addition, alteration or repair of the monument, which the architect executes according to the style and requirements of the time.

¹⁷⁷ Jokilehto 1999:151

¹⁷⁸ Jokilehto 1999:152 citing Viollet-le-Duc 1866:15

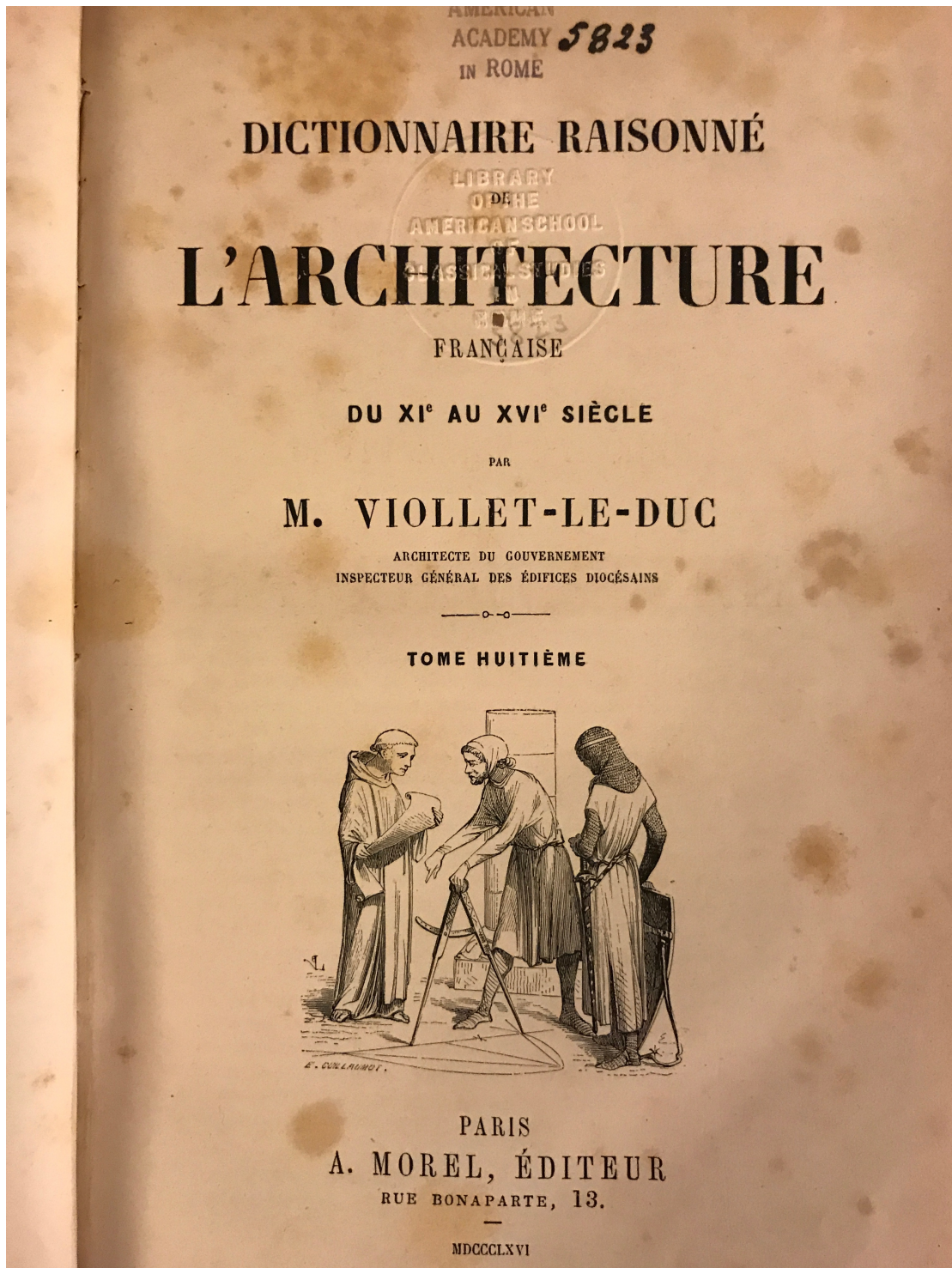


Figure 4. Original cover of *Dictionnaire Raisonné de l'architecture française* by Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc, 1866

Based on this concept of style the architect vehemently criticises restorations that were made on the basis of mingling pieces of different times and monuments. He argues that the construction of a triumphal arch such as the one of Constantine, made with the remains of the Arch of Trajan as occurred in Rome, is neither a restoration nor a

reconstruction, but an act of vandalism. The same consideration goes for the covering of the architecture with *stucchi* on the Temple of the Fortuna Virilis, which Viollet-le-Duc defines as a mutilation.¹⁷⁹

After these deliberations, it is interesting to note how Viollet-le-Duc rejects the concept of a restoration that stems from the inventive proclivities of the restorers.

In this respect, the ideas of the French architect are quite close to the Italian and British approach to restoration. The architect underlines the importance of historical investigation of the monument. Viollet-le-Duc's programme does not promote the architect's non-binding creative approach to restoration, but rather a historical investigation that is followed up by a style that is appropriate to the architecture of the monument: "This programme proposes that each monument or each part of the monument has to be restored according to their suitable style, not only in terms of appearance but also in terms of structure. There are not many edifices, above all medieval ones, that were built all at once or that were not subject to major alterations, additions, transformations or partial modifications. Therefore, it is essential, before initiating the restoration work, to determine exactly the age and the character of each section, and compose a sort of verbal process based on documents, notes and graphic surveys."¹⁸⁰

Accordingly, the architect continues, since France has many different styles according to region, there should be different schools for each area: "Therefore, if the fourteenth century art of Northern Normandy is quite close to the style of the Ile-de-France of the same century, the Renaissance style of Normandy is quite different from the Renaissance style of Paris and its surrounding areas."¹⁸¹ This observation does not only concern medieval monuments, notes Viollet-le-Duc, but also Roman and ancient Greek monuments present in France, as the Roman monuments of the Antonine era (in the centre of France) are quite dissimilar from the Roman monuments of the same period.¹⁸²

¹⁷⁹ Viollet-le-Duc 1866:14-15: "Elever un arc de triomphe comme celui de Constantin, à Rome, avec les fragments arrachés à l'arc de Trajan, ce n'est ni une restauration, ni une reconstruction; c'est un acte de vandalisme, une pillerie de barbares."

¹⁸⁰ Viollet-le-Duc 1866:22-23: "Ce programme admet tout d'abord en principe que chaque édifice ou chaque partie d'un édifice doivent être restaurés dans le style qui leur appartient, non-seulement comme apparence, mais comme structure. Il est peu d'édifices qui, pendant le moyen âge, surtout, aient été bâtis d'un seul jet, ou, s'ils l'ont été, qui n'aient subi des modifications notables, soit par des adjonctions, des transformations ou des changements partiels. Il est donc essentiel, avant tout travail de réparation, de constater exactement l'âge et le caractère de chaque partie, d'en composer une sorte de procès-verbal appuyé sur des documents certains, soit par des notes écrites, soit par des relevés graphiques."

¹⁸¹ Viollet-le-Duc 1866:23: "Ainsi, par exemple, si l'art du XIV^e siècle de la Normandie séquanais se rapproche beaucoup de celui de l'Ile de France à la même époque, la renaissance normande diffère essentiellement de la renaissance de Paris et de ses environs."

¹⁸² Viollet-le-Duc 1866:23: "Ce n'est pas seulement pendant le moyen âge que ces différences s'observent; le même phénomène apparait dans les monuments de l'antiquité grecque et romaine. Les monuments romains de l'époque antonine qui couvrent le midi de la France diffèrent sur bien des points des monuments de Rome de la même époque."

Nonetheless, when it comes to restoration, the architect points out that difficulties dealing with medieval monuments are greater. Few buildings in the Middle Ages had been completed all at once and these often consisted of different types of styles resulting from modifications and additions made throughout the ages. These monuments had been restored in different epochs and on several occasions; in addition, this restoration was carried out by artists of different areas that referred to diverse schools of restoration.¹⁸³

While raising the question on how it is best to proceed on one of these monuments bearing the signs of diverse restoration of different epochs it is striking to note how Viollet-le-Duc likens the role of the architect to that of an archaeologist. The architect needs to be a skilful builder aware of the construction techniques that were used throughout the ages: "First and foremost, before being an archaeologist, the architect appointed to restoration needs to be a skilful and experienced builder, not only from a general point of view but also from a specific point of view; this means that he has to be aware of the construction procedures of different ages and of different schools"¹⁸⁴

In the subsequent paragraphs Viollet-le-Duc reiterates the importance of research that presents many likenesses with Boito's approach to the investigations that need to be executed before initiating any kind of restoration. The focus lies on the art historical and stylistic study of the monument as also on surveys and drawings related to each component of the historical building. It is at this stage necessary to point out the crucial difference between Boito's and Viollet-le-Duc's aim of art historical research: while Boito's pre-restoration investigation is aimed to limit as much as possible any intervention on the monument, Viollet-le-Duc's foundation of research features the opposite intent.

The French architect understands research as the fundamental step to the reconstruction of the monument: through the analysis of fragments and the history and style of the monument the architect aims to fill the gaps and reconstruct the lost parts of the monument. Failing to carry out accurate research will lead to a hypothesis, and nothing in restoration, argues Viollet-le-Duc, is as dangerous as a hypothesis: "In

¹⁸³ *ibid.* "Mais pour nous en tenir ici au moyen âge, les difficultés s'accroissent en présence de la restauration. Souvent des monuments ou des parties de monuments d'une certaine époque et d'une certaine école ont été réparés à diverses reprises, et cela par des artistes qui n'appartenaient pas à la province où se trouve bâti l'édifice"

¹⁸⁴ Viollet-le-Duc 1866:24: "Avant tout, avant d'être archéologue, l'architecte chargé d'une restauration doit être constructeur habile et expérimenté, non pas seulement à un point de vue général, mais au point de vue particulier; c'est-à-dire qu'il doit connaître le procédé de construction admis aux différentes époques de notre art et dans les diverses écoles."

matters of restoration, one aspect that can't be dismissed, is keeping track of a composition. The architect cannot be completely satisfied and begin the works, until he has figured out the best and most suitable combination with regard to the traces that are still visible. Decide for a structure a priori without having all the necessary information is like falling into a hypothesis, and nothing is more dangerous in restoration than falling into a hypothesis. If you have the bad luck of dealing with a composition that is far from the truth, from the one that was originally conceived, then you will be stuck to a line of deductions based on a false path from which you will no longer be able to exit. Therefore, before completing a building that is partly ruined, before starting, it is necessary to research everything, examine everything and gather the fragments while identifying the spot where they have been discovered, and not proceed with the works until all the fragments have been logically appointed to their right spot and place, like the pieces of a patience game (...) While adding the new construction, one has to replace these ancient fragments, even when altered; it is a warranty that the architect provides, as also a confirmation for the exactitude of his research."¹⁸⁵

The French architect again stresses the importance of correct and comprehensive historiographical research, as the misunderstanding of the architectural traces may lead to a line of wrong deductions, which will gradually (yet inexorably) alienate the architect from the truth.

With this in mind it is useful to point out the different meaning that Viollet-le-Duc and Boito give to the word 'truth' in relation to a monument and its restoration. The former sees the 'truth' of the monument in the definition of its artistic essence and in the recovering of an ideal that will enhance the present. On the other hand, Boito understands the 'truth' of a monument as the conservation of a historical truth. The monument is a testimony of the past. Without disregarding issues of structural stability, the Italian architect believes that the monument needs to be delivered to the present and future generations bearing the material traces caused by the passing of time and people throughout the centuries.

¹⁸⁵ Viollet-le-Duc 1866:33-34: "Il est, en fait de restauration, un principe dominant dont il ne faut jamais et sous aucun prétexte s'écarter, c'est de tenir compte de toute trace indiquant une disposition. L'architecte ne doit être complètement satisfait et ne mettre les ouvriers à l'œuvre que lorsqu'il a trouvé la combinaison qui s'arrange le mieux et le plus simplement avec la trace restée apparente ; décider d'une disposition à priori sans s'être entouré de tous les renseignements qui doivent la commander, c'est tomber dans l'hypothèse, et rien n'est périlleux comme l'hypothèse dans le travaux des restauration. Si vous avez le malheur d'adopter sur un point une disposition qui s'écarte de la véritable, de celle suivie primitivement, vous êtes entraîné par une suite de déductions logiques dans une voie fausse dont il ne vous sera plus possible de sortir, et mieux vous raisonnez dans ce cas, plus vous vous éloignez de la vérité. Aussi, lorsqu'il s'agit, par exemple, de compléter un édifice en partie ruiné, avant de commencer faut-il tout fouiller, tout examiner, réunir les moindres fragments en ayant le soin de constater le point où ils ont été découverts, et ne se mettre à l'œuvre que quand tous ces débris ont trouvé logiquement leur destination et leur place, comme les morceaux d'un jeu de patience. (...) En remontant les constructions nouvelles, il doit, autant que faire se peut, replacer ces débris anciens, fussent-ils altérés: c'est une garantie qu'il donne et de la sincérité et de l'exactitude de ses recherches."

The short glimpse allowed into Boito's personal library at the Brera Academy of Fine Arts showed that the architect owned a copy of Viollet-le-Duc's *Dictionnaire*. At some point of their careers the paths of the two architects even crossed: in the third contest for the façade of Santa Maria del Fiore in Florence, between 1866 and 1867 Viollet-le-Duc and Boito were both participants (neither won the competition).¹⁸⁶ Although probable, it remains unclear whether the two architects ever met personally.

It can however be safely stated that Boito's awareness of the transalpine methodology of restoration went beyond the mere reading of the *Dictionnaire*, with these principles finding ways of application in the architect's restoration practice. As discussed in the third chapter there are specific practices and methodology approaches in Boito's restoration projects – as for instance the tracing of architectural elements that lead to the completion of specific missing parts of the monument – which recall the French ideas expressed by Viollet-le-Duc.

Accordingly, in her volume of 1961, Grassi mentions Boito's first monument restoration of the Milanese Porta Ticinese as a project accomplished 'à la Viollet-le-Duc', endorsing a decade long proximity between the restoration methodologies of the two architects.¹⁸⁷ While modern scholarly literature has significantly revisited this position, the extent to which Boito applied the transalpine conservation methodology in his restoration practice, remains quite contradictory.

We have already mentioned how the Italian architect vehemently rejects the restoration practices of his French colleague in his writings. On the other hand, it must be noted (as will be discussed more in depth in the fourth chapter) how the monuments that Boito restored at times necessarily involved the removal (of later additions) or the addition of certain architectural components. This situation was mostly dictated by the conditions, use and purposes of these monuments. When it came to the restoration of the medieval Porta Ticinese in Milan, Boito's work entailed 'freeing' the monument from the adjacent barracks enabling 'breathing' and a space for transport. In a different example – the reassembly of Donatello's altar of the Church of Saint Anthony in Padua – the aim of the restoration was to gather several statuary elements that had been distributed across the

¹⁸⁶ Pane, Andrea. "Da Errico Alvino a Lamont Young: Percorsi del neomedievalismo a Napoli tra invenzione e restauro." In *Medioevo Fantastico, L'invenzione di uno stile nell'architettura tra fine '800 e inizio '900*, edited by Alexandra Chavarria and Guido Zucconi. All'insegna del Giglio, 2016:65

¹⁸⁷ Grassi 1961:76

church throughout the centuries. In this case, visibility and religious decorum were the priorities that the architect had to consider for this work.

Although this last operation came at the cost of demolishing a Baroque altar, thus defying specific conservation principles addressed by modern conservation theory, it is necessary to stress that Boito operated with a specific intervention in mind. The principal aim in this case was to enable the congregation to view the poignant statues of the fifteenth century master Donatello during celebrations related to the dedicatee of the church.

In this respect, Boito's theory of restoration cannot be simply viewed as a compromising measure of two international schools of restoration, but rather as a judicious assessment of notions and practices, which suited the necessities and artistic manners of his time.

While a rather invasive approach to restoration linked with the completion of the monument features as a characteristic of the French methodology of restoration in the nineteenth century, it is helpful to note that this was not the only practice advocated in France. Just as in Italy and in England, the restoration debate was dominated by the incessant, cyclical battle between cautious and radical-invasive approaches.¹⁸⁸

As a matter of fact, restoration methodology in France was not always operated according to the principles of stylistic restoration, but became a consolidated practice thanks also to the well-organised governmental structure supporting the conservation of monuments. Glendinning notes that in the 1840s monument restoration in France was rather cautious and then was gradually followed by a more assertive and all-encompassing approach to restoration starting from the 1850–60s. Next to Viollet-le-Duc was another significant French scholar of a slightly older generation with opposing views on monument restoration: Jean-Baptiste Antoine Lassus (1807–1857).

While Lassus was an enthusiastic promoter of the Gothic Revival in France, he was also a supporter of a scientific methodology of restoration, which features strong similarities with the conservation principles listed in Boito's Charter. Jokilehto describes Lassus's approach as 'scientific and positivistic', which are the same terms that modern

¹⁸⁸ Glendinning 2013:91

scholarly literature uses in relation to Boito's methodology of restoration and understanding of architecture.¹⁸⁹

According to Lassus, restoration must have a strong link to science and to archaeology. Before an architect could intervene on a monument he had to master the comprehensive scientific knowledge of the structure. By forgetting his own taste and preferences developed as architect, the aim must be solely to conserve and consolidate. Additions shall be limited to the minimum possible and only when there is a definite necessity. The architect stresses the importance of the respect of historic truth with regard to restoration. In addition, he underlines the role of the architect, a sort of research scientist of materials, who has to operate on the monument 'without leaving traces of his passage'.¹⁹⁰

In this respect, it is noticeable how the positions on monument restoration tended to be blurred among French scholars as well, reiterating a situation that featured also between Boito and his contemporaries in Italy. While again it might not be relevant to attribute the primacy of a scientific methodology of restoration to Boito, the use of the same terms as 'scientific knowledge', 'consolidation' and 'conservation' by both scholars proves a mutual influence and strong circulation of ideas between the countries.

The nineteenth century in Europe was characterised by the continued debate on the principles of restoration, trying to determine how far restoration should go and whether the damages or mutilations on monuments caused by time and other external elements should be repaired or not. A general trend during this period is noticeable both in France and Italy: monuments tended to be subject to alterations and additions, whenever they were still serving a purpose or destined to new or continued use. It was therefore the judicial and art historical assessment of figures like Boito that steered the practices and ideas of monument conservation, often encountering obstacles surrounding the historical and functional nature of the monument.

¹⁸⁹ See for instance Vincenzo Fontana *Il nuovo paesaggio dell'Italia giolittiana*, Editori Laterza, Bari, 1981

¹⁹⁰ Lassus, Jean Baptiste-Antoine in the « De L'art e de l'archéologie »; *Annales archéologiques* 1845:199 "Lorsqu'un architecte se trouve chargé de la restauration d'un monument, c'est de la science qu'il doit faire. Dans ces cas, ainsi que nous l'avons déjà dit ailleurs, l'artiste doit s'effacer complètement: oubliant ses goûts, ses préférences ses instincts, il doit avoir pour but unique et constant, de conserver, de consolider et d'ajouter le moins possible et seulement lorsqu'il y a urgence. C'est avec un respect religieux qu'il doit s'enquérir de la forme, de la matière, et même des moyens anciennement employés pour l'exécution: car l'exactitude, de la vérité historique, sont tout aussi importantes pour la construction que pour la matière et la forme. Dans une restauration il faut absolument que l'artiste soit constamment préoccupé de la nécessité de faire oublier son œuvre, et sous ses efforts doivent tendre à ce qu'il soit impossible de retrouver la trace de son passage dans le monument. On le voit, c'est là, tout simplement de la science, c'est uniquement de l'archéologie." See also Jokilehto 1999:139

This recurrent debate can be summarised – taking both factions of respectful and invasive restoration into consideration – by the French archaeologist Jean Jacques Bourassé (1813–1872), correspondent of the *Comités des travaux historique et scientifiques* (Committee of historical and scientific works), in charge of the French city of Tours. The scholar's main query when approaching the restoration of a monument was to determine to what extent repairs and structural safety of the building were essential to return the structure to its normal use after a disaster or any other accident.¹⁹¹

As a general rule, Bourassé believed that a damaged edifice or monument should be repaired as quickly as possible in order to prevent its crumbling. In his essay of 1845 published in the *Annales Archéologiques* "Conservation des monuments" (The conservation of monuments) Bourassé discusses the general options of restoration, keeping a focus on the medieval monuments in France. He states: "It would be a crime to allow a monument to decay out of respect for art (...) We must not treat the relics of our Christian and national architecture violently or sacrilegiously, but neither should we hesitate to act with respect and kindness. Prosperity will render us just as responsible for inaction as for too hasty action."¹⁹²

It is therefore interesting to stress that, at least at the theoretical level, less invasive ideas on restoration (as compared to the ones of Viollet-le-Duc for instance) were being put forward alongside the more radical approach for which the nineteenth century school of French restoration is known for. According to Bourassé there are two lines of thought that need to be addressed when carrying out a restoration. The first relates to urgent repairs on which the stability of the monument depends. In the same category, argues the scholar, there may also be other kind of additions or alterations. These fill the gaps of architectural features, which were possibly lost by time or political and artistic fashions. Although they may not be crucial for the survival of the monument, they are necessary for the regular functioning of the building. With regard to this first approach, the architect believes, there is no margin left for interpretation: this intervention needs to be performed in the swiftest and best way possible.¹⁹³

¹⁹¹ Jokilehto 1999:149

¹⁹² Bourassé, Jean Jacques, "Conservation des monuments", *Annales Archéologiques*, Tome Deuxième, Paris, 1845:272 "Ce serait un crime que de laisser périr un monument par respect pour l'art. Ne serait-ce pas une ridicule retenue que celle qui s'abstiendrait de porter secours à un édifice menacé dans sa vie même, sous le sol prétexte qu'il ne faudrait pas gâter l'œuvre de nos devanciers ? Ne portons pas des mains violentes et sacrilèges sur les reliques de notre architecture chrétienne et nationale, mais aussi n'hésitons pas à y porter des mains respectueuses et amies. La postérité nous demandera compte aussi bien de notre inaction que d'un empressement trop hâtif." See also Jokilehto 1999:149

¹⁹³ Bourassé 1845:275 "Pour répondre à ces questions, il est nécessaire d'établir une distinction. Il y a des réparations urgentes, qui remédient à de graves accidents, propres à compromettre la solidité même de l'édifice. Il y a aussi des réparations qui ont pour but de remplacer des parties importantes, quel es tempêtes du temps ou les orages des passions politiques et religieuses ont

The second, yet not secondary consideration, presents more complications as ideas may go in different directions: shall, for instance, churches be preserved as a testimony of study and observation or should they be 'healed' from the 'cruel mutilations and bleeding injuries'?¹⁹⁴ Bourassé's considerations are therefore bipartite: there is a first group of restorers who believes that medieval monuments should be preserved as they are. These monuments are documents and testimonies of the past and no hand should be allowed to insert additions and modifications. These monuments are 'maps of the past' set in stone and if new forms are added to the monument then the ancient traits will be lost forever.¹⁹⁵

On the other hand, there is a second group that supports a more radical approach to restoration. This party wants monuments of the past – referring specifically to churches – to be an ongoing feature of contemporary society. These churches should continue to serve their purpose as one of Christian celebration of the time. These architects are conscious about the importance of the past; however, they are also very sensitive to the actual necessities of the cult, and more broadly speaking, of society.¹⁹⁶ They were not simply adding parts to churches just because they fancied doing so but were much more concerned with the continued use and purpose of the monument in question.

Last but not least, this party considers churches as 'living monuments' that need to be protected against the ravages of time and not regarded as dead testimonies ('mummies' as the author defines them) of past times.¹⁹⁷ While Bourassé recognised that architects in France had done great damage to ancient medieval churches in France, he had a major understanding for the ideas of this second faction.

emportées: ces parties ne sont pas indispensables à l'existence des monuments, mais elles sont nécessaires à sa régulière organisation."

¹⁹⁴ Bourassé 1845:274: "Quant aux réparations du second genre, quelle conduite tenir? Considérons-nous nos églises come un objet d'art qu'il faut conserver intact aux études et à l'observation? Ou bien chercherons-nous à les guérir de leurs cruelles mutilations, de leurs blessures saignantes?"

¹⁹⁵ Bourassé 1845:274: "Les uns veulent que nos édifices du moyen âge soient absolument conservés, tels qu'ils sont arrivés jusqu'à nous, à travers les siècles et les agitations des hommes. Ils les regardent comme des monument historiques, qui ne seront des témoins irrécusables qu'autant qu'une main étrangère ne viendra pas y insérer des mensongères additions et des interpolations funestes. Ce sont des chartres authentiques en pierre, dont la signification n'est pas moins important que celle des chartes en papier ou en parchemin; ce que nul ne permettra jamais pour les unes, qui osera le souffrir pour les autres? Il y d'ailleurs un parfum d'antiquité qui s'exhale des unes et des autres et qui disparaîtra pour jamais, si des formes nouvelles remplacent les caractères anciens."

¹⁹⁶ Bourassé 1845:275: "Ceux-ci ne considèrent pas uniquement nos vieux édifices comme des monuments historiques des âges passés; ils les voient toujours servant à la célébration du même culte, abritant les mêmes cérémonies, prêtant asile à des chrétiens que lient des traditions non interrompues aux auteurs de ces grandes ouvres architecturales. Vivement émus par les souvenirs de l'histoire, ils n'en sont pas moins sensibles aux besoins actuels et quotidiens du culte.(...)"

¹⁹⁷ Bourassé 1845:275: « Ils se persuadent facilement que nos cathédrales et nos belles églises sont vivantes et qu'elles ont besoin qu'on les protégé contre les ravages du temps, mais non comme on garde un momie descendue depuis des siècles dans la tombe. »

This last passage in particular features quite a solid resemblance with notions of the Italian conservation movement: a few decades later, the notion of approaching the restoration of monuments according to their nature of a 'living monument' or a 'dead monument' also featured in the artistic congress of Milan of 1872 discussed in the first chapter.

With regard to the restoration of churches, which according to the French scholar should be restored to maintain their purpose and functionality in the most decorous manner, there is as strong link to Boito's restoration practice too. Both in his civil and religious restoration projects, the architect operated considering the reasons of history and the motives of contemporary society at the same time.

While this point of view does probably not solve the eternal debate of nineteenth-century restoration, it offers a new key to reading with regard to Boito's restoration projects within the framework of an international context. The architect's focus of keeping the monument 'alive' is a dominant theme that strongly affected his restoration programme. Graphically, this statement may be represented as a cyclical structure, with functionality, maintenance and purpose of the monument on top flanked by the architecture of the monument and the setting of the urban environment (Figure 5). The architecture of the monument needs to be understood on the basis of scientific and art historical research, which again further leads the restorer to consider the art historical and artistic components of the monuments.

Last but not least, these need to be inline with the history and present condition and necessities of the surrounding urban environment. The components of purpose and functionality of the monument as also of scientific research are very similar in the Italian, French and British notions of nineteenth-century restoration. The other elements, such as urban environment or art historical and artistic components are mostly affected by local settings and artistic styles of each city and country.

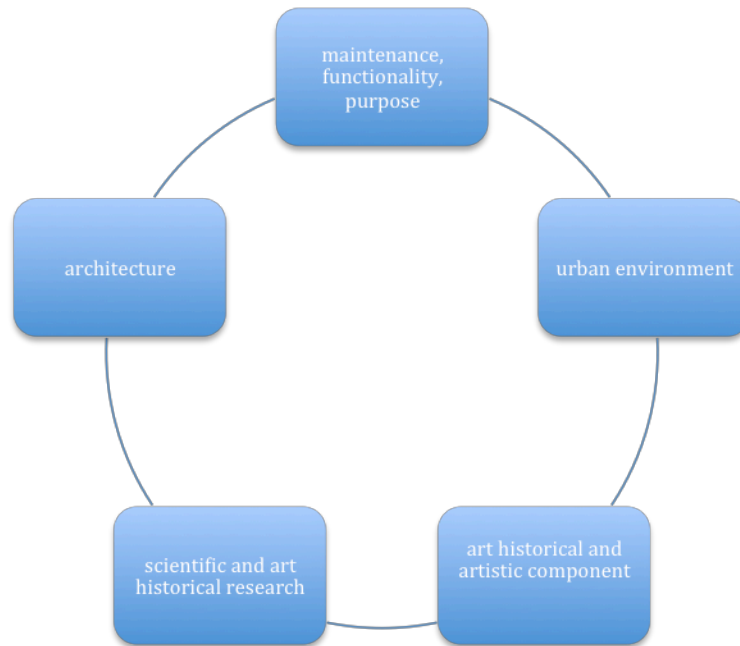


Figure 5. Graphic representation of components of monument restoration according to Camillo Boito

While this figurative representation of Boito's practice and theory of restoration sets out a broad view of the architect's ideas, it is only indicative of the more detailed practices of Boito and of other contemporary architects within the Italian post-unification scenario. Like Boito, these architects faced the same challenges of monument restoration in nineteenth-century Italy, as they sought a compromise between the importance of the historical monument and the necessities and purposes of the modern environment and its society.

Focusing the lens on the world of conservation in Italy, the next chapter will consider some of the most important figures of the nineteenth century who were working at the same time of Boito.

Chapter III. Boito and the conservation movement in Italy

This chapter examines other contemporary architects that are strongly connected to Boito's ideas and theories in the field of restoration and conservation of monuments. The next paragraphs will discuss the theories and architectural projects and restorations by Tito Vespasiano Paravicini (1830–1899), Alfredo d'Andrade (1839–1915) and Errico Alvino (1809–1876) and investigate their relationship – both practical and theoretical – with Boito's work.

An examination of the restoration and architectural projects by each of these architects will serve to illustrate various aspects of the Italian restoration and conservation movement in the nineteenth century and will reveal the way in which their ideas were sometimes taken on and further developed by Boito in his theory on restoration. Each of the following subchapters will be dedicated to one architect, providing a comprehensive view of the debate on restoration in nineteenth-century Italy. Exploring and discussing the ideas of Paravicini, d'Andrade and Alvino and also their architectural achievements will help to position Boito's ideas and practice within the national intellectual context of post-unification Italy.

The following paragraphs will attempt to answer these questions: did these architects embrace Boito's work or imitate his approach? Alternatively, did the work of these architects interpret the restoration of historical buildings in a completely different way to that of Boito, and if so, to what extent? Did these architects, like Boito, absorb international influences of restoration and apply them to their projects in Italy?

These characters were selected as case studies for this thesis because their work traces a variety of aspects that were crucial for the nineteenth-century Italian conservation movement. Their work provides a wide-ranging perspective of the common issues facing those involved in monument conservation, which these architects attempted to overcome (and indeed often succeeded in doing so). Chronologically, their work runs parallel to that of Boito and their ideas often developed on the basis of similar scientific methodologies or approaches to restoration. With that in mind, we need to consider that these architects operated in diverse cultural and social backgrounds, as in the case of

Alvino in Southern Italy; hence their work resulted in a distinct interpretation of restoration and cultural heritage conservation.

Therefore, in order to gain a full understanding and positioning of Boito's ideas within the national, post-unification context, the following paragraphs will include a comparative assessment of the ideas and practices of these architects. While scholarly literature has investigated the broader context in which Boito operated, considering several factors, which may have influenced his theory of restoration and national architecture, it did not investigate Boito's theory in respect to specific contemporary examples. The comparative assessment in the following paragraphs aims to delineate a thread that both points out the mutual influences but also Boito's impact in the development of the Italian conservation movement.

Next to the examples of nineteenth-century restoration, there will also be a brief mention of contemporary architecture (since it is intrinsic to the topic of restoration). With that in mind, and without shifting the focus from the central topic of monument conservation in the nineteenth century, it is always important to remember that the conservation movement in Italy was closely connected to the conservation of historical buildings and to the development of a national style in architecture.

Boito and the other architects who are discussed in the following paragraphs are defined by the scholarly literature as adhering to the 'philological' restoration methodology (*restauro filologico*). Philological restoration aims to intervene on a monument by using scientific criteria that lead to the re-establishment of the authenticity of the monument, respecting its art historical and symbolical values.

This approach also features a hierarchical scale of intervention, which through scientific and historical research, considers the relevance and possible removal of later additions that have been identified on the basis of the historical investigation. At the same time, as ancient monuments may often be in a precarious material situation, philological restoration allows the inclusion of additions. These have to be however, as also recommended in Boito's Charter of Restoration, recognisable – i.e. made with different materials etc.

In addition, the concept of philological restoration is analogous with linguistic studies. The term philological is connected to the Latin definition of a monument "monimentum",

which translated means not only 'monument' but also 'testimony', 'memory', 'document' and 'proof'.¹

As it will be pointed out in the following paragraphs, the goal and struggle of Boito and his contemporaries, was to find a point of balance between the clear traces left on the monument conveying a structural and artistic restoration that would preserve the art historical meaning and testimony of the monument. At the same time, these two aspects had to harmonise with the usability of the monument within the contemporary, ever-changing urban environment.

The monument is conceived as a bearer of a message and as a resource for the verification of history and therefore needs to be analysed and interpreted, but not falsified.² Likewise, the examples of restoration pointed out in the paragraphs below convey the historiographical perception of the monument in nineteenth-century Italy, which looks at its cultural heritage both as an evidence of the past and as a treasure to adapt and render valid according to the contemporary needs and purposes.

The international voice: Tito Vespasiano Paravicini

Tito Vespasiano Paravicini (1830–1899) was an art historian and architect who studied at the Brera Academy of Fine Arts in Milan (1850–54) (Figure 6). He operated within various areas of the Milanese fine arts environment where he expressed a strong interest in the restoration, conservation and study of ancient monuments.³ As an architect Paravicini accomplished few works and also drafted projects that were never built.⁴ Without disregarding his architectural oeuvre which Bellini covers extensively, the following paragraphs will discuss selected writings by Paravicini that provide a comprehensive idea of his critique of nineteenth-century Italian and European restoration.

As a matter of fact, it is safe to state that more than his architectural accomplishments it was his ideas and writings on monuments and restoration that were more influential within the Italian conservation movement. Paravicini was, alongside Boito, one of the

¹ Jokilehto 2007:200

² *ibid.*

³ Bellini, *Tito Vespasiano Paravicini*, 2000:14

⁴ Among Paravicini's architectural works are the Pelanda tomb at the Milanese Cimitero Monumentale (1872) and Casa Viganò in Besana Brianza (1877-78). Other projects that remained only on paper are the restoration of the Palazzo dei Giureconsulti (1871), the restoration of the façade of Abbey of Chiaravalle and the triumphal arch for the monument to Victor Emmanuel II (1878). Bellini 2000:99 ff. and 2000:113 ff.

most valuable exponents of the philological method of restoration. Most importantly, he was a contrasting voice within the Milanese debate on restoration, introducing international trends – specifically British ideas – in restoration within the Italian context of monument conservation.



Figure 6. Portrait of a self-portrait of Tito Vespasiano Paravicini. Unknown artist, Oil on canvas, 90 x 130 cm; 19th century. Raccolte d'arte dell'Ospedale Maggiore, Milan

Like Boito, whose writings had to some extent a stronger impact on the discipline of monument conservation than his architectural projects, Paravicini's theories and interpretation of authenticity of a monument are thematically very comprehensive. His first publications appeared in the early 1870s and in these essays Paravicini sets out his ideas on restoration and cultural heritage conservation.

Initially in line with the stylistic restoration practice that was customary in Italy at the time, Paravicini's position on restoration changed a few years later in adherence to a strict conservative theory that was inspired by the principles of John Ruskin and William

Morris. As mentioned above, within Milanese circles he was one of the most receptive intellectuals towards international currents in restoration theory and it was through his involvement with the British Society for the Protection for Ancient Buildings (SPAB) that he imported the ideas of Ruskin to Italy.

According to the scholar Bellini, Paravicini's approach was highly innovative and was based on understanding and preserving the monument's authenticity. From this specific point of view, Paravicini's idea of cultural heritage conservation may in certain aspects precede the ideas of Boito, even if closely sticking to the British concept of monument conservation.⁵

This approach can be clearly related to the strong influence of the SPAB, which had been founded by Morris in 1877. The aims and the Manifesto of the SPAB have been already mentioned in the second chapter of this research. The architect had such close ties to the British organisation that he sent reports to the SPAB in which he strongly criticised the measures on monuments taken by Italian institutions. In these reports, Paravicini often mentioned the names of those responsible gradually leading him to be 'intellectually banished' from the Italian architectural and scholarly circles.⁶

A letter published in *The Times* dated 12 April 1882, which was signed by Morris, Honorary Secretary of the SPAB, basically endorsed the international effects of Paravicini's criticisms. The letter, entitled "Vandalism in Italy", refers to a missive by Paravicini in which he denounces a series of invasive and destructive restoration work carried out on Milanese monuments, such as the demolition of the portico by Bramante in the church of Sant'Ambrogio because it clashed 'with the style of the basilica' and the alterations to the churches of San Calimero and San Babila, which were executed shortly after the letter was published.⁷

"The Cav. Paravicini" concluded Morris in his letter, "dwells upon the sad fact that it is the Commission for the Conservation of Ancient Monuments and the Academies of Fine Art that have been committing the worst acts of vandalism – a fact that makes it difficult or impossible for any private Italian to get a hearing when he protests against such deeds. It is on this account that he appeals to the English people to assist him in the struggle to preserve what remains, and surely this appeal will not be without response

⁵ Bellini 2000:42

⁶ Bellini 2000:45

⁷ Bellini 2000:58. A section of the original letter is reported in the next paragraph.

in England when men reflect how important is the issue, and how irreparable a loss is being suffered by the whole civilised world as one link after another in the history of art is cut away to feed the vanity of some modern designer or the greed of some contractor eager for a job."

Inevitably the Ministry and the Commission saw Morris's accusations as an offence to national pride and Paravicini's role in denouncing the errors of the institutions definitely did not aid the architect's popularity in Italy. It is probably due to this nonconformity that Paravicini was never wholly accepted among the 'official culture' of architects and restorers of the time.⁸

Despite being intellectually ostracised, Paravicini was able to publish his writings in some of the most influential periodicals of the time. The periodicals that allowed Paravicini's publication underlined however that the opinion of the author did not necessarily reflect the ideology of the publisher. Nevertheless the very possibility of being able to publish in these periodicals (for example in the *Politecnico*), gave the architect enough space to broadcast his ideas to the relevant intellectual circles. At the same time, like Boito, Paravicini changed his point of view and theories on restoration throughout his career.

A selection of his writings discussed in the next paragraphs will investigate these different phases. There is also a concise article by Bellini that channels Paravicini's changing approaches to restoration chronologically through the architect's writings.⁹ In this article the author clearly highlights certain aspects that link Boito and Paravicini although it is not clear if there was a personal relationship between the two architects.

However, Paravicini's behaviour towards his colleague fluctuates, at times strongly criticising Boito's restoration of the Porta Ticinese in Milan: according to Paravicini, the architect had destroyed and rebuilt the medieval towers flanking the Porta in a manner that was dubious and made it look like a fake ruin. Yet on other occasions Paravicini praised him: for example he commended Boito's speech on *I restauratori* at the Exposition of Turin in 1884, in which Boito criticised restorers whose work he defined as 'superfluous and dangerous'.¹⁰

⁸ Bellini 2000:59-60. For the complete text see the William Morris Internet Archive <https://www.marxists.org/archive/morris/works/index.htm>

⁹ Bellini, Amedeo. "Un ruskiniano a Milano: Tito Vespasiano Paravicini." *Ananke* 11 1995: 10-15

¹⁰ Bellini 2000:78; the author indicates that the words Paravicini was probably referring to are the following in Boito's conference speech *I restauratori*. "Bella gloria! (...) altro é conservare, altro é restaurare, anzi molto spesso l'una cosa è il contrario

The restoration theories of both scholars show similarities and differences, all of which emerged from the same intellectual environment. When considering the restoration theories of both architects, it must be acknowledged that they belonged to the same generation and were receptive to and, as discussed in the second chapter, exposed to international ideas on restoration and cultural heritage conservation.

In the early years of his activity, Paravicini's interpretation of restoration throws up similarities to the theories of Viollet-le-Duc and also a standard restoration practice in Italy, which may have entailed the removal or addition of architectural components on the monument.

Likewise in his early professional years, Paravicini tends towards a restoration methodology that promotes quite an invasive restoration approach. This attitude comes through in the architect's writings of the early 1870s, as for example in the *Albo dell'Architetto* (Bulletin of the Architect), a periodical of which he was the sole author and editor and whose aim was to publish surveys and drawings of all monuments worldwide (Figure 7).¹¹ The drawings in the *Albo dell'Architetto* served as a study aid and model for architects, not only for their architectural knowledge, but above all for restoration, which necessitated a good understanding of different architectural styles. At this stage, Paravicini's approach can be compared to Boito's attitude towards restoration in the 1860s, during the early part of his career when he was working on the restoration project for the Church of SS. Maria e Donato on the Venetian island of Murano in 1861.

dell'altra: e la mia cicalata s'indirizza, non ai conservatori, uomini necessari e benemeriti, bensì ai restauratori, uomini quasi sempre superflui e pericolosi." In Boito, Camillo. *I restauratori, Conferenza tenuta all'Esposizione di Torino il 7 giugno 1884*, Barbera Editore, 1884:11

¹¹ Bellini 1995:10



Figure 7. Cover of the first series of Paravicini's *Albo dell'Architetto*, 1874

Paravicini's theories on restoration took a new turn from 1879 to 1884, marking a second phase in the development of his theories on restoration that features a more conservative and respectful approach towards the monument. In this particular phase Paravicini's work cannot be compared to that of Boito, but is instead characterised by an Italian version of Ruskin and Morris, which demonstrates the limits of the Italian methodology derived from positivist culture and deeply rooted in philology and historiography.¹²

¹² Bellini 1995:10

A first hint of this change can be traced in an 1879 article by Paravicini about the Milanese Church of Santa Maria della Grazie, *Considerazioni sulla chiesa di Santa Maria delle Grazie in Milano* (Considerations on the Church of Santa Maria delle Grazie in Milan). In his article Paravicini criticises the excessive level of intervention made on the church, which had been justified by the need for structural stability. By contrast he argues for the value of the degradation of materials in the monument as part of the historical authenticity of the monument. In this way, the architect strongly recalls John Ruskin's romantic approach to restoration, by representing the monument as a living creature that speaks words underlining the historical value of its deterioration:

“Do not destroy my large cracks, these enormous fractures in which ivy and thousand generations of musk and lichens grew, they tell you my history [...] These decorations, that you view as so consummated and that the centuries almost completely cancelled, they convey the patient fatigues of the artists who left traces of their lives before mingling with dust.”¹³

Paravicini is however aware of the fact that the church has been constructed over a long period of time, featuring different styles and different levels of conservation. The architect does not completely disregard the need to restore the monument, rather he acknowledges a midway point between respecting the current level of degradation and the need to take necessary actions to control further decay and to resolve previous errors made by man:

“[...] it is necessary for us to care about the proceedings of this restoration, in order to fulfil the static and constructional requirements, as well as the artistic and archaeological ones so as to guarantee the stability of the building and to preserve the form that the diverse additions throughout time gave to the monument and that recall, in a way, the history of this outstanding monument.”¹⁴

There are three aspects to consider in the above citation: the fracture between the romantic appreciation of the monument, its expressiveness of the signs of age and the judgment of the technical aspects of degradation that can be controlled through intervention. This dual approach between sentimentality and science leads us back to

¹³ “(...) non mi guastare queste larghe fenditure, questi informi crepacci, fra i quali si abbarbica l'edera e mille generazioni di muschi e di licheni si sono succedute e sovrapposte, ti narrano la mia storia, ti dicono che queste mura han sorvissuto allo splendore delle Corti (...) Questi ornamenti che tu vedi corrosi, che i secoli hanno del quasi tutto cancellati, ti narrano le pazienti fatiche di artisti che qui han lasciato traccia della loro vita prima di confondersi nella polvere.” Paravicini, Tito Vespasiano, “Considerazioni sulla Chiesa di Santa Maria delle Grazie in Milano.” *Il Politecnico*, vol. xi, Fasc. 3, 1879:213, see also Bellini 1995:10

¹⁴ Paravicini 1879:217: “(...)importa che noi ci occupiamo del modo col quale si possa precedere nel suo ristauo, affinché esso soddisfi pienamente a tutte le esigenze statiche e costruttive ed a quelle artistiche ed archeologiche, per modo che, mentre da una parte sia assicurata la stabilità della costruzione, non venga dall'altra menomamente alterata quella forma che le diverse modificazioni le hanno imposta e che riassumono in certo qual modo tutta la storia di questo insigne monumento.”

the above-mentioned ambiguity that can be seen in the theories of almost all nineteenth-century restorers.¹⁵

After outlining the architectural history of the church, Paravicini concludes his piece by listing suggestions for the method of restoration and, above all, the need to recover the expressive significance of the monument. The task for the restorers may be challenging, but the structural, archaeological and artistic needs must all be satisfied, Paravicini therefore appeals to the relevant professionals and political figures to call upon a commission of experts to overcome the difficulties of this restoration.¹⁶

In his theory of restoration Boito generally argued for the removal of later additions that mask some parts of the monument, specifically the ones he considered may disrupt the artistic value of the monument. Despite Boito's emphasis on avoiding any intervention without scientific proof, this approach gives a certain amount of interpretative power to the restorer. By contrast, as can be seen in the writings discussed above, Paravicini features a more cautious and respectful attitude towards restoration that shows a full awareness of the complex history of certain monuments, such as Santa Maria delle Grazie.

In his essay of 1880 *Considerazioni sul ristauero dei monumenti architettonici* (Considerations on the restorations of architectural monuments) Paravicini expresses general observations on the methodology for the restoration of ancient monuments.¹⁷ In this work the architect depicts the monument as a document that reflects the virtues and faults of every epoch and architectural style, highlighting the peculiarities of the people who built it.

The relationship of these two aspects, the material presence of the monument and its position within the historical context bring historical relevance to the monument, thus rendering it a historical document. The importance of the "document" therefore varies and is dependent upon its state of conservation. If this state of conservation is being altered through modifications or additions, then the historical significance of the monument disappears.¹⁸

¹⁵ Bellini 2000:45

¹⁶ Paravicini 1879:217

¹⁷ Bellini 1995:10

¹⁸ Paravicini, Tito Vespasiano. "Considerazioni sul ristauero dei monumenti architettonici." *Il Politecnico*, vol. xxviii, Feb.1-, Fasc. 1-2, 1880:73: "L'importanza quindi di questi monumenti varia a secondo i casi, ed é subordinato al loro stato di conservazione, principalmente per quanto riguarda la forma originaria delle parti e degli ornamenti, cangiati od alterati i quali, ogni importanza storica svanisce." see also Bellini 1995:11

Therefore Paravicini states: “A badly executed restoration damages history, falsifies the document and impedes the identification of previous interventions which might lead to the erroneous understanding of the monument. [...] this also concerns the smallest parts of the monuments, which may apparently have no significance; when these are not respected, preserved in their original condition, without additions, without corrections and forgeries [...] if the conservation of the monument is the cornerstone of history, then a good restoration represents its vivification.”¹⁹ Compared to the previous text, which placed Paravacini neither as a follower of Boito nor as an adherent of Viollet-Le-Duc, the architect’s ideas are in this case more in line with Boito’s theories.²⁰

The concept of a misinterpretation of a monument when performing invasive restoration recalls Boito’s critique of Viollet-le Duc’s methodology of restoration in *Questioni pratiche di belle arti* as he described the scenario of an artist seeking to portray a medieval church yet unable to do so because of previous invasive restorations.²¹ Like Ruskin, in this essay Paravicini considers restoration as an episode worse than destruction, because it falsifies the document and leads to a deterministic conception of history, where man changes the history and testimony of a document.²²

In *Considerazioni* Paravicini emphasises the need and duty to preserve the particularities of a monument in its current condition. Yet at the same time he queries, to what extent is it possible to identify these parts, with all their additions, variations and damage? And all these interventions made by man over time, how do they fit into the history of a monument? This query was fundamental for the philological approach to restoration. Not even Boito in his Charter was able to completely overcome this hurdle, while considering limited restoration and the understanding of the monument within its historical context.²³

With regard to restorers, Paravicini divides them into two categories: on the one hand, the visionaries who believe they can reconstruct the whole of the monument from one single element and, on the other, the archaeologists who only look to history and to the monuments for guidance. The archaeologists appreciate the monument in its historical

¹⁹ ibid. “Un danno, forse anche maggiore si reca alla storia, quando un monumento viene poco giudiziosamente e scrupolosamente restaurato; quando le più piccole particolarità, in apparenza anche di nessuna importanza, non sono rispettate, non vengono conservate nella loro originalità, senza aggiunte, senza correzioni, senza adulterazioni (...) Se la conservazione dei monumenti é il cardine ella storia, un ben eseguito restauro ne é la vivificazione.”

²⁰ Bellini 2000:46

²¹ Boito 1893:5

²² Bellini 2000:747

²³ Bellini 2000:48

and ageing condition and do not attempt to carry out renovations. If they need to preserve the stability of the monument, then they do it in a manner that does not mislead the unexperienced or scholarly eye.²⁴ Paravicini argues that by adopting this methodology the monument becomes a living page of history that anybody can read without the fear of being misled.²⁵

The marks of time on the monument are a positive, intrinsic aspect that reveal the history of the monument, they are unavoidable and do not compromise its authenticity, rather they legitimate its historicity and are a component of the monument itself. Up to this point, Paravicini does not appear to either oppose or agree with Boito.²⁶ Both architects share the same starting point, conceiving the monument as a document within the historiographical context in the tradition of philological restoration.

Nevertheless, towards the later years of their careers their ideas start to take different paths. Boito stuck to the compromising approach combining scientific and historical investigation with architectural edditions. Paravicini's theories underwent further developments that moved him closer to the conservation theories of Ruskin.

In a later essay of 1881 *Appunti sul restauro dei monumenti architettonici* (Notes on the restoration of architectural monuments) Paravicini further investigates the notion and purposes of monument restoration.

Bellini outlines the importance of the periodical *Il Politecnico*, in which the article was published.²⁷ As mentioned above, despite Paravicini's generally contrasting voice among the scholarly debates on restoration, the architect was able to secure himself a place in the most popular print periodicals in order to disseminate his ideas. In this article Paravicini accuses the institutions dealing with the restoration of the monuments, equating their idea of restoration to destruction: "To me it seems that in the last fifty years, more has been done for their [the monument's] destruction, than in the previous centuries of ignorance, barbarity and devastation."²⁸

²⁴ Paravicini 1880:74

²⁵ Paravicini 1880:74: "Con tale sistema un monumento ristaurato diventa una pagina vivente di storia ove ognuno può leggere senza tema d'essere ingannato." See also Bellini 11:2005

²⁶ Bellini 1995:11

²⁷ Paravicini, Tito Vespasiano. "Appunti sul restauro dei monumenti architettonici." *Il Politecnico*, vol. xxix, Nov. I. Fasc. 10-11, 1881, pp. 577-584.

²⁸ Paravicini 1881:577: "Mi pare che in quest'ultimo mezzo secolo, si sia fatto più per la loro distruzione, che non si fece nei precedenti secoli d'ignoranza, di barbarie e di devastazioni."

According to Paravicini, the idea of restoration itself implies in its very name the possibility of removing certain parts of the monument with the sole intention of taking the edifice back to its best material condition in history; a condition that possibly never existed. This process can be solely dictated by the taste of the restorer, who will try to fill in the gaps by imagining what the first builders originally had in mind. This method inevitably destroys the surface of the edifice, as it eliminates the appearance of the 'ancient' from the original, still existing, parts.²⁹

The architect states that the stratified lines of history visible on the monument should be preserved as an intrinsic part of the monument itself because they testify the historical and cultural value of the monument. Particular emphasis is given to the quality of the material of a monument: regardless of whether it is the original material used in construction or material used for later restoration, its nature clearly indicates the period when these interventions may have been carried out. Later additions made to the monument throughout the ages, even in their roughest manner and in the style of the time, can be very interesting and informative. Restorers, notes Paravicini, do not dedicate enough time to the study of these material strata. The restorers of the past were not aware of previous architectural styles; hence, their interventions were executed in the contemporary manner as subjectively known by the artist or by restorer.

This state of ignorance was a feature of the last fifty years (hence from the 1830s to the 1880s, author's note) with restoration that was done in the presumed original style of the edifice and which hindered the identification of the original material and the modern intervention.³⁰ It is in this respect that Paravicini mentions the recently founded SPAB, which 'lies behind' the ideas on conservation mentioned above.³¹

In line with the position of the British institution, whose position was to prevent monuments from being 'altered or forgotten' Paravicini denounced three cases of 'restoration-destruction'.³² This restoration had been executed around the 1850s on various architectural monuments and did not consider the importance of preserving the original material. Among these, Paravicini names the destruction of the ancient brick basement of the churches of S. Satiro and S. Maria delle Grazie in Milan, which in both cases was substituted with grey granite, and the complete restoration of the floor of the Certosa in Pavia, which had originally been made of coloured bricks and was restored

²⁹Paravicini 1881:578

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ *ibid.*

³² *ibid.*

using new coloured marble.³³ The annihilation of the original material of an architectural monument in favour of a seemingly more resistant and 'adequate' material conveys Paravicini's conception of restoration as a sort of destruction.

This provocative, radical position may be explained by the increasing influence of the SPAB on Paravicini. In the 1881 essay, Paravicini made it clear his intention to establish a similar institution to the SPAB in Italy.³⁴ Paravicini writes: "The SPAB has been founded in London on the basis of the previous considerations a few years ago, with the sole aim of preventing monuments of historical, artistic or archaeological importance from being tampered with, altered and deformed, hence making them fake and unusable for the sake of history."³⁵

Paravicini believes that this kind of institution would be more useful in Italy than in any other country, as the Italian government was unable to coordinate the action of the *Commissioni conservatrici dei monumenti* (Commissions for the conservation of monuments, author's translation), which for their part, are unable to follow general guidelines and do not have a solid organisational structure. The resemblance to Boito's words in his critique of Viollet-le-Duc's method of restoration and to the lack of organisation of Italian bodies for the conservation of monuments in this article is particularly evident both in its cynical tone and its content.

With that in mind, it is worth noting that Boito never likened restoration to destruction, either in theory or in practice, thus adhering less to international currents of restoration and very much adapting his restoration theory to his own environment. According to Boito, the approach of non-intervention on a monument was evidently not feasible within the Italian urban context made of historical buildings and gates. These needed to be used and preserved within a changing urban environment, while also maintaining their artistic and symbolic value.

Elsewhere in his writing, Paravicini exemplifies the thought processes of a nineteenth-century restorer who imagines the original ideas of the architect of the monument, thus initiating the dangerous process of an interpretative restoration. Likewise, in his *Restauro in architettura*, Boito strongly criticises the French method of restoration used

³³ Paravicini 1881:579

³⁴ Paravicini 1881:578, see also Bellini 2000:58

³⁵ Paravicini 1881:578 "Dietro tali considerazioni due anni fa fondavasi in Londra al Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (Società per la protezione degli antichi monumenti) al solo scopo d'impedire che i monumenti d'importanza storica, artistica od archeologica, non vengano menomamente manomessi, alterati svisati, e resi quindi bugiardi ed inservibili alla storia."

by Viollet-le-Duc, who intervened on monuments by ‘imagining what this man [the architect] would do if, back on earth, he would have to complete or restore his monument [...]’³⁶ Given that Paravicini published his article in 1881 and that Boito’s period of activity is slightly later than Paravicini’s, one may deduce that the Roman architect must have been inspired by Paravicini’s ideas.³⁷

With that in mind, the circulation of opinions and theories within the Milanese intellectual circle makes it impossible to attribute these original theories securely to one scholar. The issue of pre-eminence with regard to theories on cultural heritage conservation and restoration, particularly during the period of post-unification period, examined above, means that it is problematic to try to name the scholar who first promoted this sensible, new approach to restoration.

In correspondence with Jokilehto, Bellini defines Boito as the ‘*presunto maestro*’ (alleged master) in relation to Paravicini, therefore suggesting, with an ironical tone, that the two scholars were developing these theories in parallel with one another. Later, in 2000, Bellini argued that in some aspects Paravicini seems to precede Boito, particularly in his criticism of the French method of restoration.³⁸

Putting aside the matter of pre-eminence, Boito and Paravicini stemmed from a common Milanese intellectual environment and their ideas were typical of the controversy surrounding the conservation movement in post-unification Italy. The two architects also convey similar ideas in their theories, which are typical of Ottocento restoration. On the one hand they are inspired to work with a scientific approach, ‘controlling’ the level of conservation of the monument, while on the other they still looked at the monument from a romantic point of view, focusing on the symbolic value and on its unique aesthetic qualities.³⁹ The evaluation of the restoration theories of the two scholars presents both similarities and differences, which deliver stimuli and ideas that make the restoration debates of the nineteenth century in Italy so special in comparison to other historically and politically more stable periods.

Unquestionably, the codification of theories on restoration can be fully accredited to Boito. With that in mind the aim of this paragraphs is to demonstrate the Italian debate

³⁶ Boito, Camillo. “I restauri in architettura. Dialogo Primo” *Questioni pratiche di belle arti*. Restauri, concorsi, legislazione, professione, insegnamento. U. Hoepli, Milano, 1893:4’ “Supposer ce qu’il ferait, si, revenant au monde...”

³⁷ Jokilehto 2007:200. There is no proof of personal correspondence between the two scholars, but they sat a few times in the advisory commissions for monumental restoration projects, as it will be also pointed out in the later paragraphs.

³⁸ Bellini 2000:46

³⁹ Bellini 2000:45

on restoration was nourished by diverse positions and theories. Through Paravicini, the complexity of the Italian debate reflected an awareness of international approaches was down to many different and important advocates of the fine art and restoration environment.

Like Boito, Paravicini's interest in restoration was not only limited to theories of restoration, but also included an interest in the current administrative situation in Italy with regard to the conservation of cultural heritage.

This topic is specifically discussed by the architect in his writing of 1883 *Gli ingegneri del Genio Civile e la conservazione dei monumenti* (The engineers of the Civil Engineering Department and the conservation of monuments).⁴⁰

As we have seen in the previous chapter, Boito suggested the decentralisation of the managing offices for monument conservation at the national and political level. In his article Paravicini writes about a 'suggestion made a few years ago by an esteemed Professor, of instituting regional offices headed by a chief architect and few professional collaborators', presumably in reference to this regional plan.⁴¹ The purpose of this decentralisation was not only to lighten the bureaucratic burden but also to prevent the *Genio Civile* (mainly composed of technicians and engineers) from becoming the chief organisation responsible for the restoration of monuments.

Within this administrative context Paravicini reports the final conclusions of the most recent congresses on art, which deemed the *Genio Civile* as an incompetent institution when it came to the task of preserving cultural heritage. Lacking an education in art history, the engineers of the *Genio Civile* were keen on performing vulgar additions, also known as 'integrazioni in stile' (architectural additions copying the original style of the monument), vast structural substitutions and heavy intervention, which generally disregarded the artistic quality of the monument.

Compared to Boito, who did not see the role of civil engineers as the most adequate for monument restoration, Paravicini had a different opinion about their role in the

⁴⁰ Paravicini, Tito Vespasiano. "Gli Ingegneri del Genio Civile e la Conservazione ed il restauro dei monumenti architettonici." *Il Politecnico*, Fasc. 1-2., vol. xxxi, 1883, pp. 73-77.

⁴¹ Paravicini 1883:73 : "la proposta fatta qualche anno fa da un egregio Professore, quella cioè che si istituissero degli Uffici regionali con un architetto capo ed alcuni dipendenti [...]"

conservation of national monuments.⁴² The Milanese architect acknowledges that the 'crusade' against the *Genio Civile* is merely a result of a generalised approach towards the conservation and restoration of ancient monuments.

The categorisation of engineers and architects as defined by the congresses put the former in the position of scientists, who should direct their energies towards the construction of bridges, streets and other civil works. On the other hand, the architect is simply compared to an artist, whose aim is to create and add beauty to any given construction. Based on the nature of his studies, the architect automatically becomes the sole appointed professional able to comprehend the beauty and the artistic importance of architectural monuments.⁴³

Having illustrated this traditional subdivision Paravicini does not provide specific indications with regard to which category of professional should be appointed to conduct restoration, but he draws conclusions by means of logic. However, the most important aspect of monument conservation, argues the architect, is to maintain a structural stability and not to include any artistic additions.⁴⁴ Therefore, the architect concludes that if the restorer's role does not include artistic interventions, then engineers must be the most suitable professionals to uphold the solidity of a monument.

The aim of the conservation of an architectural monument should therefore be to safeguard the edifice with its historical, artistic and archaeological value in its present state, impeding modifications by invasive fantasies of architects and archaeologists. Restoration should only focus on keeping the monument stable and this objective can be accomplished by a professional figure that is closely acquainted with construction techniques and the laws of statics, that is, an engineer. The importance of a professional grounding in construction, the laws of physics and statics is even more relevant when dealing with the most ancient monuments, whose materials may at times feature defections and flaws that are intrinsic to the construction itself. This thought process, according to Paravicini, makes the engineer the only professional figure able to cope with these conditions. The authenticity of the monument is, above all, safeguarded by avoiding its crumbling.

⁴² Boito's position in regards to the interventions of the *Genio Civile* on monuments clearly features in *Boito, Camillo. "I nostri vecchi monumenti. Necessità di una legge per conservarli."* *Nuova Antologia*, vol. LI, fase XII – 15 giugno 1885, pp. 640-662. The architect acknowledges the unfortunate administrative situation, in which all parties involved in monument conservation were not able to properly operate

⁴³ Paravicini 1883:73-74

⁴⁴ Paravicini 1883:74

Last but not least, Paravicini argues that by determining stability as the primary target of restoration, the Ministry of Education is able to establish a national standardisation of restoration procedures (which at the time was inadequate or non-existent).⁴⁵ If, however, the restoration of a monument is only based on maintaining its stability, then the whole restoration debate of the nineteenth century would be almost non-existent. Paravicini is himself fully aware of the complexity that certain monuments may present: historical, artistic and conservation factors which often clash with his proposed archaeological restoration. In this case, the intervention of experts with other competences, i.e. historical and art historical may be of support.⁴⁶

Hence Paravicini suggests the participation of these experts in the form of consulting bodies, the *Commissioni Conservatrici* (Commissions of Conservation), while at the same time upholding the supremacy of the *Genio Civile* (Civil Engineering Service) in final decisions. Paravicini therefore recognises the interdisciplinary nature of restoration and believes that every historical and artistic study of the monument must also take account of the identification of relevant technical data and quality of materials.⁴⁷

It is possible that these theories were developed in the light of the conference of Italian architects and engineers held in Rome in 1883, where Boito presented his popular document on restoration. Paravicini did not participate in the conference, but it is not clear why; Bellini suggests that he may have been deliberately excluded from the event.⁴⁸ As mentioned above, this marginalisation was due to Paravicini's strong criticism of Italian institutions for conservation, which probably made him unpopular among many scholars, who were directing or involved with these institutions. This aspect however, did not stop Boito, as a member of several advisory bodies and a participant agree with Paravicini's highly respectful conservative approach to monuments.

In the second half of the nineteenth century there are two main currents of restoration developing with Boito and Paravicini: Paravicini promotes the respectful, almost reverential conservation of the monument; on the other hand, Boito advocates a more proactive line based on scientific and historical investigation.⁴⁹ This development indicates that a greater awareness of the complexity of restoration and cultural heritage

⁴⁵ Paravicini 1883:75

⁴⁶ Paravicini 1883:75

⁴⁷ Bellini 2000:64

⁴⁸ *ibid.* 2000:64

⁴⁹ Bellini 2000:65

conservation emerged from the 1880s onwards, which expanded the debate into other topics beyond the conservation of monuments.

In this text of 1884, entitled *Considerazioni archeologiche sul castello feudale del X secolo all'Esposizione nazionale di Torino* (Archaeological considerations on the feudal castle of the tenth century at the National Exhibition of Turin), Paravicini discusses the major restoration of the Castello del Valentino by the architect Alfredo d'Andrade for the 1884 Turin Exhibition (discussed at length in the following paragraphs).⁵⁰ In the article, Paravicini introduces new concepts: he addresses the issues of de-contextualisation of art works in museums and the acceptance of copies within the realm of cultural heritage conservation.

According to Paravicini, the restoration by d'Andrade was able to overcome both challenges successfully. The text begins with Paravicini's criticism of the nature of museums, particularly with regard to the de-contextualisation of their objects, which does not facilitate an understanding of the history of a monument.

Paravicini's criticism of the 'musealization' of objects and works of art is already mentioned in the previous article of 1881, in which Paravicini recounts how a dear friend invited him to see the small museum of ancient objects that he had established and how this friend showed him the objects with naïve complacency.⁵¹ Since Paravicini was an international scholar, he reported on his journey to Egypt in 1871 to study its ancient monuments. While this journey allowed him to identify the purpose and original positioning of ancient works among the Pharaonic ruins, he was not able to establish a link between what he had seen in Egypt and the many Egyptian objects dispersed across European museums.⁵² Therefore, once back in Cairo, Paravicini visited the Boulak Museum to complete his notes and drawings in order to gain a precise and comprehensive idea of the appearance of Egyptian tombs. The results of this visit were, however, disappointing because the funerary objects were not classified according to the location where they were found, but according to their size and to the preciousness of their material. Standing in front of the neatly arranged collection, Paravicini was clearly overwhelmed with a sense of the futility of his objective, as 'for whoever studies

⁵⁰ Paravicini, Tito Vespasiano. "Considerazioni Archeologiche sul Castello Feudale del XV Secolo all'Esposizione Nazionale di Torino, 1881." *Il Politecnico*, Fasc.11-12, vol. xxxii, 1884, pp. 612-617. See also Bellini 1995:13.

⁵¹ Paravicini, Tito Vespasiano. "Appunti sul restauro dei monumenti architettonici." *Il Politecnico*, vol. xxix, Nov.1. Fasc. 10-11, 1881, pp. 577-584.

⁵² In another monograph dedicated to Paravicini, Bellini clarifies that Paravicini went to Egypt as a collaborator for the Italian construction company Zucchi & Dani to plan and lead the constructions made for the Turkish Prince Mustafâ Fâdil Pascià, Bellini 2000:16-17n

monumental archaeology', he stated, 'museums as they are now are to a great extent, useless'.⁵³

This introduction about the relevance of museums for the study of art objects paved the way for one of Paravicini's most provocative theories. From then on, Paravicini took up a position against the positivist approach of museums that feature a collection of items that are classified according to their aesthetic qualities. Paravicini argued that the contextualisation of an object is the primary way to understand its original function. Furthermore, using drawings as a model for the study of a monument might be misleading, because of the level of interpretation of different scholars over the years.

Instead, according to Paravicini, the monument itself has to be viewed and examined, its additions have to be distinguished from the original parts and, above all, the monument or object has to be compared to other monuments which belong to the same time as the one under examination as well as to examples of the same typology. Archaeologists had observed that a monument that is taken out of its context could not provide a true idea of its artistic and cultural value. Thus, a church, a cloister, a communal palace or a feudal castle may be considered on their own as 'types' but are insufficient on their own and cannot give a full impression of the period in which they were made. "The house of the rich without comparison to that of the poor (...)" argues Paravicini, "becomes almost incomprehensible (...)." ⁵⁴

In the example of the restoration of the Borgo Medievale in Turin, Paravicini believes that d'Andrade brilliantly overcame these issues by recreating the original ambiance of the medieval castle without harming the art historical and archaeological authenticity.

According to Paravicini, d'Andrade managed to recreate the original setting through the use of archetypal objects or copies of them, thus documenting the full artistic value of each component of the castle. Accordingly, the beholder was able to compare the original items with their copies, which are created in the same materials and in the same conditions of the medieval originals. Paravicini suggests that this methodology of reproducing copies is in its concept far more historically correct than intervening on the

⁵³ Paravicini 1884:612-613: "Mi convinsi allora che per chi studia archeologia monumentale i musei come sono ora ordinate diventano pressochè inutile, e facile mi sarebbe il dimostrare che poco vantaggio possono portare anche agli altri rami delle scienze archeologiche."

⁵⁴ Paravicini 1884:615: "Gli archeologi moderni si sono accorti che un monumento senza tutto quel contorno che, dirò così, forma l'ambiente del tempo non può dare una giusta idea dell'esser suo; si sono accorti che una Chiesa, un Chiostro, un palazzo Comunale od un Castello Feudale presi isolatamente possano interessare come tipi ma sono insufficienti a dare una giusta idea del tempi. L'abitazione del ricco senza il confronto di quella del povero, un sistema di difesa senza gli attrezzi e le macchine di offesa riescono pressoché incomprensibili."

original monument. "If I am restoring an original monument" the architect states, "I can alter it according to my own taste, because there is no way of recognising the difference between the ancient parts I destroy and the new parts I construct; hence, the scholars who come after me, will just have to trust my conscience and that is what scrupulous archaeologists reject."⁵⁵

On the other hand, Paravicini believes that d'Andrade's reproductions, i.e. copies for the medieval castle, represent a valid alternative to restoration. Not only are the copies the same size and made of the same materials as the originals but they are also juxtaposed next to them. Hence, the viewer can judge whether the reproductions are truthful reproductions of the originals. More importantly, the architect states that if the originals deteriorate with time, the copies may acquire the same value as the originals. This does not imply that copies automatically replace the originals, but rather that the exactness of the reproduction enables the historical and archaeological study of the object, even more than a photographic image would do.⁵⁶

Nevertheless, while Paravicini's acceptance of copies in restoration is justified by the need to preserve the particularities and details of a monument, it is an approach that still strives for the recreation of the monument and its environment. Both on a theoretical and practical level, this principle goes against the anti-restoration theories that Paravicini had previously strongly supported in his writings, which again underlines just how contentious the Italian nineteenth-century restoration debate was. Paravicini's theories are puzzling to a certain extent as his Ruskinian attitude towards anti-restoration becomes partly annihilated by the legitimacy of the copy and the 'remaking' of the historical setting.

In this respect, Paravicini's approach contrasts with Boito's thought as it places the copy of a monument and all its components under the umbrella of the historical document. Similarities between the theories of the two architects include the importance of preserving the material quality of the monument, in terms of the historical layers and the rejection of additions. Both architects advocate the efficient drafting of

⁵⁵ Paravicini 1884:616: "Quando io ristauro un monumento originale posso alterarlo a mio piacimento, perché fra l'antico che distruggo ed il nuovo che faccio non c'è più emzzo di confronto, ed i posteri e gli studiosi bisogna che si affidino alla mia coscienza, ciò che agli archeologi scrupolosi ripugna."

⁵⁶ Ibid. "Ne viene di conseguenza che chiunque può giudicare se quelle riproduzioni sono esatte, e se coll'andar del tempo gli originali per legge di natura andranno distrutti, le copie potranno valere quanto gli originali, nel senso che tutti sapranno essere una riproduzione certamente più esatta di quanto possa avere colla stampa."

documentation, research and the collection of data, including the photographic documentation of the various phases of restoration.⁵⁷

As mentioned above, Paravicini introduced the theories of Ruskin to the Milanese environment and developed the approach of modern restoration, as exemplified by the Borgo Medievale, moving beyond just historical and scientific research in favour of a complete recreation of the monument and its surroundings.

As we have seen above, Paravicini himself embraced d'Andrade's project of the Borgo Medievale, but even more importantly the project also gained significant appreciation by the public, the press and major experts on heritage conservation, including Boito. It would seem that Boito was able to understand d'Andrade's success on both a national and European level better than others, as is testified by one of his articles, which appeared on the periodical *Nuova Antologia* in 1884:

"There are many things to learn here, even for the artistic practice of architecture and decoration. So many sophisticated details, both in construction and decoration! No other place makes one aware of how pitiful is other art today in the midst of the exaggerations of the nineteenth century."⁵⁸

Boito's theories in practice: Alfredo d'Andrade

Also defined by modern scholarly literature a 'restoration architect', Alfredo d'Andrade (1839–1915) was a close friend of Boito.⁵⁹ The study of his architectural and restoration projects may facilitate a better understanding of how Boito's theories would come to fruition in practice.⁶⁰ In addition, the projects by d'Andrade discussed in the following paragraphs point to the many themes of the Italian restoration debate that have already been investigated in this thesis. These embrace the topics of monumental restoration, of art historical study and research, of the value of cultural heritage and also of architecture.

⁵⁷ Besides featuring in the sixth point of the Charter of Restoration of 1883, the photographic documentation of restoration also features among the eight rules (seventh point) of Boito's recommendations for restoration in architecture mentioned in "I Restauri in Architettura, Boito 1893:24

⁵⁸ Boito, Camillo. "Il Castello Medievale all'Esposizione di Torino." *Nuova Antologia*, Vol. LXXVII, Settembre 1884, pp. 250-270.: "Qui c'è da imparare tante cose, anche per la pratica dell'arte architettonica e decorativa. Quanti avvedimenti sottili di costruzione e di ornato! (...) In nessun luogo più che in questo castello si avverte la povertà pietosa dell'arte d'oggi, in mezzo alle pome del secolo XIX." See also Maggio Serra, Rosanna. "Uomini e fatti della cultura piemontese nel secondo Ottocento intorno al Borgo Medievale del Valentino." *Alfredo d'Andrade. Tutela e restauro*, edited by Cerri, Maria Grazia Biancolini Fea, Daniela and Pittarello, Liliana. Vallecchi, Firenze, 1981:37

⁵⁹ Ferreira, Teresa Cunha. "Alfredo d'Andrade tra Torino e il Portogallo: città restauri e architetture." In *Medioevo Fantastico, L'invenzione di uno stile tra fine '800 e inizio '900*. edited by Alexandra Chavarria and Guido Zucconi, All'insegna del Giglio, 2016:51

⁶⁰ Jokilehto 2007:203

Alfredo d'Andrade was of Portuguese descent and was bilingual – like Boito (who was half Polish). Also like Boito, yet in a different way to Paravicini, he was institutionally very active and involved in Italian commissions for cultural heritage and conservation. D'Andrade was well aware of Boito's theories and often applied them as guidelines, but when it came to restoring medieval monuments he followed certain principles of the French current of restoration, namely the removal and addition of architectural features.⁶¹

Born in Lisbon in 1839, only three years after Boito, d'Andrade and his brother were sent to Genoa at a very young age in order to be introduced to the world of commerce and finance with which their wealthy family were associated (Figure 8). D'Andrade's natural inclination, however, clearly differed from the plans his father had laid out for him: from a very young age d'Andrade demonstrated a strong interest in figurative art and attended from 1861 the *Accademia Linguistica di Belle Arti* (Language Academy of Fine Arts) in Genoa, from which he graduated in 1864 with a degree in architecture. In the academic environment d'Andrade was introduced to the most important Genoese and Piedmontese circles of artists and intellectuals and he was able to practice his interest in the figurative arts, especially architecture and archaeological and landscape drawing.⁶²

His passion for painting and his excellent drawing skills, which he acquired in these early years plus his attention for detail came to the fore throughout his career as an architect and restorer.

⁶¹ Jokilehto 204-205

⁶² At the time of d'Andrade's enrolment, the Academy of Fine Arts in Genoa stood out compared to the other Fine Arts Academies in Italy, as it offered specific courses in decoration, architecture and engraving that were strongly connected to professional activities. On the other hand, the classes in other Fine Art Academies were merely based on painting. Palmas Devoti 1981:405



Figure 8. Portrait of Alfredo d'Andrade by the Italian painter Vittorio Corcos, 1901. Private Collection

When d'Andrade's involvement in the project for the Borgo Medievale in Turin began in 1882, he already had a long-established relationship with the region of Piedmont, having visited the area in the late 1860s in the company of other renowned Italian contemporary painters from Liguria and Piedmont.⁶³

During this journey d'Andrade produced small oil paintings that meticulously portray the forms of Piedmontese castles such as Fenis, Verrès and d'Issogne and which demonstrate his interest in medieval castle architecture as well as his attention to detail.⁶⁴ D'Andrade's interest in castle architecture, specifically medieval architecture, thus began when he was still interested in painting. Accordingly, it is not surprising that d'Andrade's first and official appearance in the Piedmontese national scene of art and architecture is related to the project for a medieval castle.

The *Borgo Medievale* is one of d'Andrade's most important projects, not least because it was produced for the National Italian Exhibition of 1884, a national event with international influence (Figure 9). In the period before and after unification, Italian national exhibitions were particularly important events for the newborn country as they

⁶³ Among these painters were Ernesto Bertea, Federico Pastoris, Carlo Pittara etc, all significant exponents of the nineteenth century Italian schools (Scuola grigia, Scuola di Rivara) of Northern Italian landscape painting. Maggio Serra, Rosanna.

"Uomini e fatti della cultura piemontese nel secondo Ottocento intorno al Borgo Medioevale del Valentino." *Alfredo d'Andrade. Tutela e restauro*, edited by Cerri, Maria Grazia, Biancolini Fea, Daniela and Pittarello, Liliana. Vallecchi, Firenze, 1981:32

⁶⁴ Leonetti Luparini, Matteo. "Alfredo d'Andrade: una metodologia di restauro nella difesa del patrimonio storico-artistico della Valle d'Aosta." Leonetti Luparini, Matteo. "Alfredo d'Andrade: una metodologia di restauro nella difesa del patrimonio storico-artistico della Valle d'Aosta." *Alfredo D'Andrade: l'opera dipinta e il restauro architettonico in Valle d'Aosta tra il XIX e il XX secolo. Catalogo della mostra omonima tenutasi al Castello di Ussel 3 luglio -19 settembre 1999, Quart (Aosta)*, edited by Leonetti Luparini, Matteo and Lia Perissinotti, Musumeci Editore, 1999:19

served to inspire a sense of unity and balance in the development of art, architecture, artisanship and craftsmanship in the different regions.⁶⁵

With that in mind, this project was selected for this research, as it is an example of architecture and restoration that illustrates many aspects of cultural heritage conservation in post-unification Italy. As discussed in the following paragraphs, d'Andrade's project embraces several other views on monument conservation that go beyond the mere notions of monument restoration examined until now.



Figure 9. View of the Borgo Medievale and of the Rocca from the River Po. Drawing (ink on paper) by Alfredo d'Andrade 1883. Galleria Civica d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, Turin

D'Andrade's direct involvement in the project formally began in 1882 coinciding with the preparations for the Exhibition. This event was particularly important for Turin, which aimed through the Exhibition to regain the prestige and identity it had lost as a capital after the unification.

The *Borgo Medievale* was a collaborative project, featuring the work of a group of artists, artisans, architects and engineers who all participated in the complex theme of the *Esposizione d'arte antica* (Exhibition of ancient art), which was to be held in the *Parco del Valentino* (Gardens of the Valentino) in Turin.⁶⁶

⁶⁵ Palmas Devoti, Clara. "L'Attività del d'Andrade in Liguria." *Alfredo d'Andrade. Tutela e restauro*, edited by Cerri, Maria Grazia, Biancolini Fea, Daniela and Pittarello, Liliana. Vallecchi, Firenze, 1981:403

⁶⁶ Cerri, Maria Grazia. "Alfredo d'Andrade: dottrina e prassi nella disciplina del restauro." *Alfredo d'Andrade. Tutela e restauro*, edited by Maria Grazia Cerri, Daniela Biancolini Fea, and Liliana Pittarello. Vallecchi, Firenze, 1981:19. The Parco del Valentino; close to the city centre (less than 1km) the park is the most ancient and reknowned green area of Turin.

The papers and documents produced over a span of almost three years of meetings held by the *Sezione di Storia dell'Arte* (Division of Art History) show that d'Andrade played a crucial role in the planning of the project from the first meetings in 1882. Apparently, even before d'Andrade was called to become part of the project in 1882, the commission had decided to adopt a new approach to this section of the Exhibition: instead of gathering together all the art objects and displaying them outside their context, the members proposed the idea of creating a contextualised setting made of a "group of buildings, which would be connected in a number of ways with each other in chronological order, starting with the Lombardesque style [...] and continuing to the fifteenth century, with part of the building copied from one of the best works by Palladio."⁶⁷

The general aim of the Borgo Medievale was to always maintain a strong connection with the didactic objective of the project: the taste for beauty (*'il gusto del bello'*) had to be reawakened through copies of models of objects of art and architecture of great artistic value.

Previous exhibitions had lacked an overall concept that would help the visitor to understand the significance of the objects and their original context. However, setting up a journey through eight styles of architecture, as initially planned by the committee, would have been quite a grand project to realize. This led Vittorio Avondo (1836–1910), painter and friend of d'Andrade and member of the committee, to suggest focusing the *Borgo Medievale* project just on the existing castles of Piedmont, while still maintaining the didactic objective. The committee, however, rejected this proposal because it was considered too limited in its regional scope for a national exhibition.⁶⁸

Eventually, after a few months of unsuccessful proposals, the committee agreed to the following new aims: the first objective was to showcase the development of decorative arts in Italy from the twelfth to the eighteenth centuries through the construction of a variety of buildings. These were to be arranged, decorated and furnished on the exterior

⁶⁷ "(...)un gruppo di edifizii variamente collegati tra di loro in ordine cronologico (...) a cominciare dallo stile Lombardo con arco a pieno centro, venendo poscia all'arco a sesto acuto, allo svolgimento dello stile gotico, al rinascimento toscano e finalmente al pieno sviluppo del cinquecento, con una parte di edificio copiata da una delle migliori opere del Palladio." This description was reported in the first meeting of January 17th 1882. *Esposizione Generale Italiana 1884 – Commissione d'Arte – Sezione Storia dell'Arte*, Verbali delle adunanze (redatti da Cesare Cantù, segretario della Sezione), Museo Civico di Torino, Archivio Borgo medievale. Bartolozzi, Carla. "La Rocca e il Borgo Medioevale di Torino (1882-84): Dibattito d'idee e metodo di lavoro." *Alfredo d'Andrade. Tutela e restauro*, edited by Cerri, Maria Grazia, Biancolini Fea, Daniela and Pittarello, Liliana. Vallecchi, Firenze, 1981:189 and 193fn

⁶⁸ Bartolozzi 1981:189

and interior according to the styles of the above-mentioned periods. Secondly, a museum should be erected that would bring together objects and fragments from the twelfth to the nineteenth centuries.

Finally, a collection of decorative arts should gather old original drawings, engravings, plaster casts, mouldings and photographic reproductions that illustrate the history of decorative arts for the period in question. The goal was to illustrate to the public the conceptual thread that linked cultural heritage, art, architecture and artisanal work. The connection between these elements would represent a unified style for each historical period.⁶⁹ The second, yet no less important aim was to invite the representatives of Italian industrial production to understand and bring back a style drawn from the ancient techniques that apparently had been lost in the eclectic architectural currents of the nineteenth century.

Despite establishing these clear targets, the fact that the committee planned to represent such a broad variety of periods meant that the contextual aim of the *Borgo Medievale* project could be easily missed, therefore leading to a pastiche, which was just what the commission wanted to avoid in the first place.

In a meeting on 8 May 1882 d'Andrade, possibly following Avondo's line of thought, proposed that the *Borgo Medievale* project be limited to the representation of just one century, by focusing on the concept of a medieval Piedmontese village in the fifteenth century towered over by the castle. This proposal was very different from the other proposals: it focused on the civil and military architecture also including a display of traditions, customs and life of that time.

Despite some initial friction within the commission, the architect's plan was fully approved. Scholarly opinion testifies that the commission's endorsement also came thanks to d'Andrade's acknowledged international competence and the emphasis he put on the educational, didactic and functional aspects of his project.⁷⁰ More importantly, the architect outlined certain aspects of his project that would also demonstrate the study of cultural heritage of the region and its conservation.

⁶⁹ Bartolozzi 1981:190

⁷⁰ Maggio Serra 1981:35

The project of the *Borgo Medievale* was, according to d'Andrade, a momentous opportunity for the public to discover a type of art and architecture that was unknown to the majority of visitors and therefore shed some new light onto medieval Piedmontese architecture. Thanks to d'Andrade's project, regional medieval styles of architecture were officially considered worthy of being the principal focus of an important national exhibition for the first time (Figure 10).⁷¹

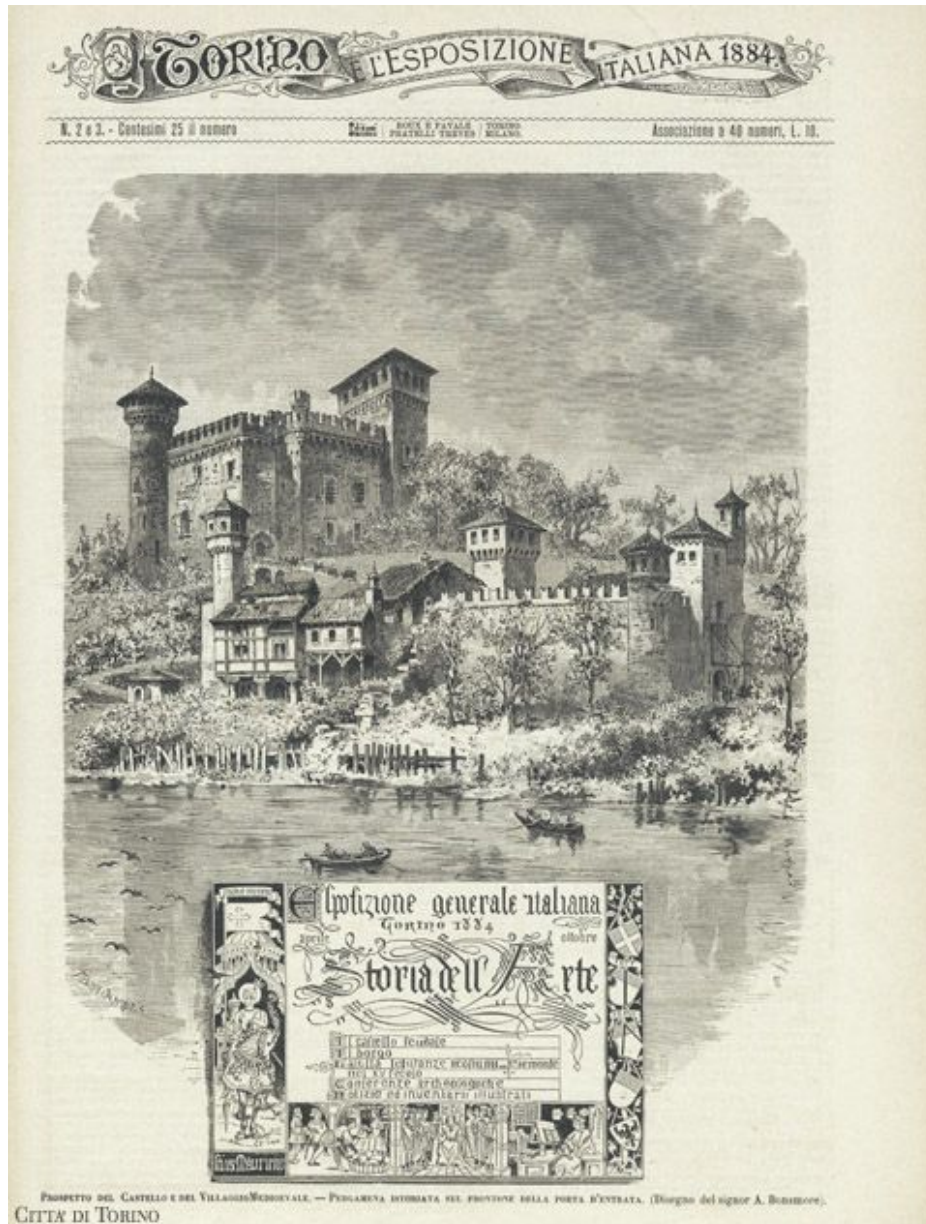


Figure 10. Leaflet cover of the National Exhibition of 1884, Division of Art History, representing d'Andrade's *Borgo Medievale* in the foreground and the Rocca in the background

As stated in the official catalogue for the Exhibition drafted by the Italian poet and writer Giuseppe Giacosa, the *Borgo Medievale* project specifically aimed to preserve the

⁷¹ Bartolozzi 1981:90

tradition of medieval monuments and architecture. Following the expansion of the urban centres, the general transformation of the territory in conjunction with industrial development, the abandonment of artistic legacies which were not considered worthy of conservation had steadily increased causing the destruction of many medieval monuments in Piedmont.⁷²

Within the framework and ideal of conservation that characterised d'Andrade's project, the *Borgo Medievale* in Turin was able to offer an incredibly rich repertoire in terms of monument and artistic production, becoming the means by which the special and unique artistic value of Piedmontese monuments could be finally studied, viewed and acknowledged by Italian scholars and the public.⁷³

This focus on the conservation of regional cultural heritage led to one of the greatest outcomes of Italian initiatives in the field of cultural heritage protection: the survey and evaluation of hundreds of drawings, studies and previous restoration projects, which was initiated by d'Andrade. This comprehensive study was then also adopted by the whole commission, which manifested great sensitivity and launched several subsequent studies on the art and architecture of Piedmont and their restoration and maintenance.⁷⁴

D'Andrade's deep knowledge of the territory gained through his many study visits to Piedmont had inspired his project for the National Exhibition. The detailed drawings of castle architecture with their meticulous attention to detail that the architect produced during his travels through the region formed a solid and comprehensive base for the realisation of the *Borgo Medievale*.⁷⁵

D'Andrade's project based on the comprehensive representation of artistic traditions, architecture and art brought the Exhibition in line with other major international exhibitions, thus augmenting the prestige of the event. Also, for the first time the exhibition was set up within an urban environment that aimed to recreate the historical and cultural image of the region. This scheme was so successful and innovative that it was copied by other exhibitions outside of Italy in later years.⁷⁶

⁷² Maggio Serra 1981:35-36

⁷³ Maggio Serra 1981:36 citing Giacosa 1884:14

⁷⁴ Bartolozzi 1981:193

⁷⁵ This material is today kept at the Museo Civico di Torino, Fondo d'Andrade, in the folders that are organised according to the names of the places visited by the architect. Bartolozzi 1981:190

⁷⁶ Among the international expositions that adopted the same scheme was the one in the Netherlands of 1887 and in France in 1900. Maggio Serra 1981:35

D'Andrade and his collaborators (a team of historians, engineers, architects and artists) started to produce and work on the scientific documentation of all the items that would form part of the *Borgo Medievale* project. Boito wrote in 1884: "D'Andrade and his collaborators wanted to prove themselves as scientists and became archaeologists; at the same time they are architects and painters and landscape architects full of fervid and dynamic imagination."⁷⁷

The commission proved to be highly rigorous in the scientific study and reproduction of art objects and this discipline was encouraged by the idea of conservation of the local and regional cultural heritage, which had become a key aspect of the project and was analysed throughout the *Borgo Medievale* exhibition.⁷⁸

One further objective of the *Borgo Medievale* project was to demonstrate the value of craftsmanship and artisanship in Piedmont. These skills were passed from generation to generation, across the centuries and formed a unique understanding of cultural heritage that d'Andrade aimed to restore for the nineteenth century with a similar educational intent that was very similar to the goals of Boito's restoration theories and projects.⁷⁹

The project of the *Borgo Medievale* was completed on the 27 April 1884, in time for the inauguration of the Exhibition. Compared to the other stands and edifices at the National Exhibition, which would be removed after the event, the fortress was conceived as a permanent edifice from the very start. It is now part of the Civic Museums of Turin and represents one of the major positivist cultural manifestations of nineteenth-century Italy.⁸⁰ Even today the project faithfully represents the medieval Piedmontese village in the fifteenth century, with its construction techniques and artistic style authentically reproduced, gathering together the most characteristic elements of various castles in Piedmont and the Aosta valley to create a synthesis of medieval Piedmontese castle architecture (Figures 11-12).⁸¹

⁷⁷ "Il d'Andrade e i suoi compagni vollero mostrarsi scienziati, e sono stati archeologi sì: ma nello stesso tempo e soprattutto architetti e pittori prospettici e paesisti pieni di fervida e volante immaginazione." Boito, Camillo, "Il Castello Medievale, ricordo dell'esposizione di Torino" in *Nuova Antologia* vol. LXXVII 16 sett. 1884, p. 252 citing from Leonetti Luparini 1999:28

⁷⁸ Bartolozzi 1981:190

⁷⁹ Bartolozzi 1981:193

⁸⁰ Official Website Borgo Medievale di Torino. *Borgo Medievale di Torino*. "L'Esposizione Generale del 1884: la Sezione di Arte Antica." www.borgomedievaletorino.it

⁸¹ Donadono, Laura. "Alfredo d'Andrade." *La cultura del restauro: teoria e fondatori*, edited by Stella Casiello. Marsilio, Venezia, 1996:166



Figure 11. Alfredo D'Andrade. View of the Borgo Medievale today



Figure 12. Borgo Medievale, view of the courtyard

Indeed, the faithful imitation of the urban character of the place and its scenery means that it resembles in particular the Castle of Fenis, located in the Aosta Valley.⁸²

With regard to d'Andrade's project for the castle, Boito writes in 1884:

⁸² Leonetti Luparini 1999:27

“This accomplished fiction helps the fantasy: we are in front of one, actually a thousand theatre scenes [...] with the objects [...] made of solid material, without caring for frugality, just like the furnishings of four centuries ago.”⁸³

D’Andrade’s comprehensive knowledge of architecture and Piedmontese art, as well as his art historical and archaeological ability enabled him to formulate a theme that was fully in line with the cultural and artistic themes that the 1884 Exhibition aimed to promote and that caught the interest of a wide public. The architect did not leave behind any writings on restoration theory, but the *Borgo Medievale* project can be viewed as an expression of his theories on restoration and cultural heritage conservation. Recalling Viollet-le-Duc, d’Andrade defined his work of the *Borgo Medievale* as his *Dictionnaire*.⁸⁴

Through this project, d’Andrade was able to produce the physical manifestation of his ideal of restoration and creation of a medieval fortress. He achieved this through his knowledge of history and architecture with the faithful interpretation of archaeological data as well as creative expression.⁸⁵ In the catalogue of the 1884 Exhibition d’Andrade writes: “Each fact, each event has been taken from documents, which scholars were able to authenticate; nothing was added to this project that cannot be fully justified and if the castle as a whole does not recall any existing castles, each detail and the order in which these are arranged stems directly from all the castles, providing full knowledge of them.”⁸⁶

For d’Andrade, the *Borgo Medievale* project marks a milestone in his career and was a great accomplishment that enhanced his skill and activity as researcher and paved the way for his future projects: the restoration of Palazzo di *San Giorgio*, Genoa, 1883; the restoration of *Palazzo Madama*, 1884; and his major appointment in the regional office of Cultural Heritage Conservation for Piedmont and Liguria in 1885.⁸⁷

⁸³ Boito 1884 in *Il Castello medievale all’Esposizione di Torino*, 1884: “La compiuta finzione aiuta la fantasia: siamo innanzi ad una scena, anzi mille scene da teatro, con i fondi e con le quinte e i praticabili, invece che dipinti sulla tela o su carta, alzati in muro e in legno stabilmente, e gli accessori, anziché fatti di lustrini e di princisbecco, eseguiti in solidi, senza risparmio, tali e quali le supplettili e gli arredi di quattro secoli or sono, e ci s’aggira e ci s’interna nei ripostigli del palco scenico.”

⁸⁴ Leonetti Luparini 1999:28

⁸⁵ Leonetti Luparini 1999:27

⁸⁶ “Ogni fatto, ogni accidente vi è ricavato da documenti dei quali gli studiosi potranno accertare agevolmente l’autenticità; nulla fu compreso nell’opera, di cui non si possa dare piena ragione, e se l’insieme del castello non riproduce nessuno dei castelli esistenti, ogni particolare e l’ordine in cui questi sono disposti discendono direttamente da tutti e ne danno intera conoscenza.” Giacosa, Giuseppe, d’Andrade Alfredo and P. Vayra. *Esposizione generale italiana Torino 1884. Catalogo ufficiale della sezione di storia dell’arte. Guida illustrata al castello feudale del secolo XV*. Diacenza Bona Tipografo, Torino, 1884: 21-22, see also Leonetti Luparini 1999:28

⁸⁷ Bartolozzi 1981:193

Compared to Boito, who left a great deal of writing on his theory of restoration and cultural heritage administration practices, we have no original writing by d'Andrade. The absence of written documentation makes it rather difficult to assess his ideas on the broad discipline of cultural heritage conservation. His position on the subject can only be deduced through his countless drawings and his actual restoration projects, an analysis of which forms the basis for a set of monographs and studies that appeared in the 1950s and again in the 1980s.⁸⁸ Nevertheless, recent scholarship has identified some parallels between Boito and d'Andrade, which might help us to understand the wider context of cultural heritage protection in post-unification Italy.

We have already examined in this chapter Boito's reaction to d'Andrade's project for the *Borgo Medievale* and in the second chapter we have seen how Boito saw d'Andrade's restoration of the *Palazzo di San Giorgio* in Genoa as a combination of restoration and modern Italian national style.

Likewise, in terms of mutual understanding, there is one specific passage in Boito's *Questioni Pratiche di Belle Arti*, which successfully summarises the peculiarities of d'Andrade's character and his outstanding competence through the lens of strong personal affection. This passage is worth quoting at length: "Ancient buildings have no secrets for the acumen of his mind; his eye penetrates inside the thick walls, under the earth: if he does not see, he estimates. The most vulgar details guide him: while he touches the walls of ancient stones in the dark, he often knows their age from the traces left by the scalpel or the chisel. He relives through the traditions of old masters, as he grew up among them. His studies recall those of a geologist: under the architecture of Filippo Juvarra [the archaeological excavations under Palazzo Madama, Turin], he finds ancient Roman ruins, he uncovers them, measures them, draws and recovers them, but in a way that the scholar can easily spot them and verify the exactness of facts; then

⁸⁸D'Andrade's material is spread in the following archives: Archivio della Soprintendenza per Beni Ambientali ed Architettonici del Piemonte, Archivio della Soprintendenza Archeologica per il Piemonte (Turin), Archivio della Soprintendenza per i Beni Ambientali e Architettonici della Liguria (Genova), Archivio della Soprintendenza ai Beni Culturali della Regione Valle d'Aosta (Aosta), Archivio Storico del Comune di Torino, Archivio del Museo Civico, Galleria D'Arte Moderna di Torino, Archivio della Società Piemontese di Archeologia e Belle Arti (Torino), Archivio Storico del Comune di Genova, Archivio Storico del Comune di Genova, Archivio dell'Accademia Linguistica di Belle Arti, Genova, Carte di Alfredo d'Andrade, Castello di Pavone (Private Archive). Cerri, Maria Grazia, Daniela Biancolini Fea and Liliana Pittarello, editors. *Alfredo d'Andrade. Tutela e restauro*. Vallecchi, Firenze, 1981. In terms of scholarly literature on Alfredo d'Andrade, a first monograph on the architect was written in the 1950s (M. Bernardi and V. Viale, Alfredo d'Andrade, La vita, l'opera e l'arte. In Atti della Società Piemontese d'Archeologia e di Belle Arti', Torino 1957) and comprehensive, yet deductive studies have been accomplished in 1981 by Maria Grazia Cerri and other scholars. (Donadono 1996:170) What clearly emerges from these studies is d'Andrade's positivist vision of history, which primarily considers the work of art or monument as a testimony of life and work of man. This interest for analytical and philological research on the monument is expressed through the means of drawing, which d'Andrade, like Boito, considers as the primary and most important instrument to understand the motives of architecture. Donadono 1996:170 and Biancolini Fea 1981:63 also refer to Boito's description of d'Andrade in *Questioni Pratiche di Belle Arti*, 1893: "il rilievo o meglio lo schizzo a matita o a penna costituisce il mezzo più fedele e più rapido di documentare un sopralluogo, una 'gita' (...) il disegno diventa così un vero linguaggio parlato, con tutte le sue snellezze concise, con tutte le sue audaci varietà, le quali salgono dallo stile umile allo stile dignitoso, senza smarrirsi mai nell'affettato o nel cospicuo."

between the Roman ruins and the medieval remains, and between the medieval vestiges and the baroque ones, he identifies the transitions, the passages, and remakes in twenty-six plates the map of Palazzo Madama in overlapping sections, similar to architectural remains, with astounding clarity.

In the same way, he studies the furniture of 1400 to 1700 in the same palace, examining layer after layer, methodically, patiently, a black abandoned pit, where crocks had been dropped across the centuries [...] His love lies in castles. To d'Andrade we owe the first concept and the best part of the Feudal Fortress and the *borgo*, which were the main attractions at the Turinese Exhibition of 1884; the fortress is still intact in the gardens of the Valentino on the bank of the Po, featuring a beautiful synthesis of northern Piedmont art of the fourteenth century. In the Exhibition of Turin we could see the studies that were used for those picturesque and erudite reproductions, almost like resurrections: some parts of the Castle of Manta close to Saluzzo, of Malgrà, close to Rivarolo, of Cly, of d'Issogne, and mural paintings in the priory chapel of Sant'Orso in Aosta Valley and so on [...]

One noteworthy aspect of this restorer is his drawing. For him, draughtsmanship goes beyond the gracious and conventional exercise: it is the simplest and quickest complete representation of an object. He uses everything. He grabs what he needs [to draw] right next to him. [...] He adds colours when necessary and to the necessary degree. He is able to depict gracious watercolours; he was a great landscape painter before becoming an architect; yet he despises superfluous seductions.

The many exhibited drawings of locks for doors and windows, of iron works from the fourteenth to the seventeenth century in Piedmont and Liguria, of gates and other details, are explained in such a comprehensive manner that a blacksmith, a carpenter or a craftsman of mediocre intelligence would find in these drawings all the information needed to faithfully reproduce the objects with their own character.

Hence drawing becomes a true spoken language, with all its accuracy, with all its bold variations, which go from the humble to the dignified, without ever getting lost in the forced or the remarkable. It is surprising that this researcher and as someone who is contemptuous of fatigue, who as soon as he receives his stipend as director of the regional office for the conservation of the monuments in Piedmont and Liguria, spends it all to buy an Aostan castle in decay, saving it from destruction and donating it to the

state; it is surprising that this man of Italian affections, genius, traditions and language, but foreign of birth, who passionately loves our old buildings, protects them, safeguards them, repairs and re-enlivens them, exhibits hundreds of drawings in Turin while no one else even presented a third of that; it is truly surprising that this scholar was neither mentioned in the catalogue nor among the winners. His name is, praise be to God, Alfredo d'Andrade."⁸⁹

In terms of ideas on monument restoration, d'Andrade seemed to favour and, to a greater extent, follow Boito's guidelines for restoration in his historical restoration projects. It is perhaps due to the influence of Boito that d'Andrade demonstrated a marked cautiousness in his restoration of the *Palazzo di San Giorgio* in Genoa, begun in 1889.⁹⁰ As mentioned in the previous chapter, Boito and other scholars (i.e. members of the advisory committee who decided whether to demolish or restore the palace) considered the *Palazzo* as one of the best examples of civic medieval architecture in the region. In this project, d'Andrade faces the difficulty of preserving ancient pre-existing architecture while reconciling the motifs of a developing urban environment.

Commissioned in 1260 by Guglielmo Boccanegra to serve as headquarters for his government, the palace changed function several times over the centuries and eventually became a hub for financial and commercial affairs. As a result of these different functions, the structure of the palace underwent several modifications,

⁸⁹ Boito 1893:390-392: "I vecchi edifici non hanno segreti per l'acume della sua mente; il suo occhio si caccia per entro ai grossi muri, penetra sotto terra: se non vede, indovina. Le più volgari minuzie gli servono di guida o di indizio: palpando con la mano al buio le pareti di vecchie pietre conosce spesso la loro età dalle tracce che vi lasciarono lo scalpello o la gradina. Rivive nelle consuetudini dei maestri antichi, come se fosse cresciuto fra loro. Ha del geologo nelle sue ricerche: sotto all'architettura di Filippo Juvara, sotto alle torri del fiero castello, trova l'opera romana, la svizzera, la misura, la disegna e la ricopre, ma in modo che lo studioso possa facilmente vederla e verificare la giustezza dei fatti; poi fra la costruzione romana e quella del medio evo, fra la costruzione del medio evo e quella barocca scorge le transizioni, i passaggi, e rifà in 26 tavole la carta del Palazzo Madama a sezioni sovrapposte, come sedimenti architettonici, con una evidenza palmare. Nello stesso modo studia le stoviglie dal 1400 al 1700, esaminando a strato a strato nel medesimo palazzo, metodicamente, pazientemente, un pozzo nero abbandonato, ove, durante i vari secoli furono gettati i cocci. (...)

Il suo amore sta nel castello. A lui di deve il primo concetto e la migliore parte nell'attuazione della Rocca feudale e del Borgo, che furono la principale attrattiva nella Esposizione torinese del 1884, e che rimangono ancora intatti lì nei giardini del Valentino sulla sponda del Po, a figurare in una sintesi stupenda l'arte dell'alto Piemonte nel secolo XV. E nella Esposizione di architettura si vedevano gli studi, che servirono a quelle pittoresche e dotte riproduzioni, quasi dicevo resurrezioni: alcune parti dei castelli della Manta presso Saluzzo, di Malgrà presso Rivarolo, di Cly, d'Issogne e dipinti murali nella cappella del priorato di Sant'Orso in Val d'Aosta, e via via. (...)

Una cosa notevole in questo restauratore è il modo con cui disegna. Per lui il disegno non è un esercizio grazioso e convenzionale: è la rappresentazione più semplice, più rapida e più completa di un oggetto. Tutto gli serve. Piglia quello che trova sotto mano. (...) Tocca di colore quando bisogna e quanto bisogna. Sa fare gli acquerelli architettonici graziosamente: fu geniale pittor di paesaggi prima di diventare architetto; ma disprezza le seduzioni superflue. I tanti disegni esposti di serramenti per usci, porte e finestre, di ferramenta dal secolo XIV al secolo XVII in Piemonte e in Liguria, di cancelli e di altri particolari, son spiegati in modo così pieno, così evidente che un fabbro ferraio, un falegname, un magnano di mediocre intelligenza vi troverebbero tutte le indicazioni per potere fedelmente riprodurre gli oggetti e riprodurli con il loro proprio carattere. Il disegno diventa così un vero linguaggio parlato, con tutte le sue snellezze concise, con tutte le sue audaci varietà, le quali salgono dallo stile umile allo stile dignitoso, senza smarrirsi mai nell'affettato o nel cospicuo. E' strano che questo cercatore e spregiatore della fatica, il quale, come pigli il suo stipendio di Direttore dell'Ufficio regionale per la conservazione dei monumenti piemontesi e liguri, così lo spende nel comperare un cadente castello valdostano, che salva intanto dalla distruzione e regalerà poi subito allo Stato; è strano che questo italiano di affetti, d'ingegno, di costumi, di lingua, ma straniero di nascita, il quale ama con passione i nostri vecchi edifici, li protegge, li difende, li risana, li ravviva, e pose alla Mostra di Torino, oltre il rimanente, centinaia di disegni, mentre nessuno ne aveva presentato neppure il terzo: è veramente strano che non sia stato nominato mai e poi mai né il catalogo, né fra i premiati. Si chiama, grazie al cielo, Alfredo d'Andrade."

⁹⁰ Palmas Devoti 1981:406

including the additions of a loggia facing the sea (which functioned as an unloading area for wares) and the opening of a gateway in 1444.⁹¹

Other changes, which were made in the same period, involved the substitution of the wooden ceilings with vaults and the replacement of the original columns in both the external and internal portico in the upper floor, which were needed to reinforce the structure. The three- and four-light gothic windows were also walled up and the ancient mullioned windows were substituted with regular, rectangular windows according to typical Renaissance taste. Last but not least, the palace underwent further additions in the sixteenth century, which entailed the doubling of its size.⁹²

From this stage up until the eighteenth century, the palace remained unchanged, apart from the internal organisation of the building, which featured a series of offices that belonged to both private and public entities. After the suppression of the *Banco di San Giorgio* (Bank of Saint George) in 1795, which had acquired the palace in the fifteenth century, most internal spaces were taken over by the customs offices leading the edifice through a phase of neglect.⁹³ These rooms were open to the public and therefore became subject to vandalism and tampering.⁹⁴ Further changes then occurred in the eighteenth century as warehouses and shops were built adjacent to the palace, which contributed to the cultural and artistic decline of the building.⁹⁵ It is in this context of decay within an urban scenario undergoing modernisation that the project to restore the palace occurs.

The most challenging and discussed topic was the restoration of the palace's façade, which was also the oldest part of the building. Erroneously known as the *avancorpo* (that is, the part of the palace that projects forward), this section of the palace was considered an impediment to passing traffic in view of the plans to modernize the urban environment (Figure 13). In addition, there were several aspects to consider and problems to face. These included the complexity of the structure in terms of its history and culture and the need to achieve a restoration that would be in line with the wider

⁹¹ Di Dio Rapallo, Maria. "Palazzo di San Giorgio in Genova." *Alfredo d'Andrade. Tutela e restauro*, edited by Cerri, Maria Grazia, Biancolini Fea, Daniela and Pittarello, Liliana. Vallecchi, Firenze, 1981:417.

⁹² Di Dio Rapallo 1981:418

⁹³ The Banco di San Giorgio ended under the French dominion in 1795, with the Republic of Genoa loosing its independence Ferrando Cabona 1998:28-31

⁹⁴ Ferrando Cabona 1998:26

⁹⁵ Di Dio Rapallo 1981:418. Genala's Report of the Advisory Commission traces a brief history of the Palazzo delle Compere di San Giorgio: the 'compere' was the fusion of several private financial institutes, with which the Comune was in debt. In order to absolve this debt, the Comune had granted, first for a limited time, then for unlimited periods, special fiscal measures. As the major governmental financial institute of Genoa, the Banco delle Compere di San Giorgio, soon became the boosting centre of the financial and political life of the Republic. Di Dio Rapallo 1981:n424

renovation of the city. These issues created the premise for one of the most vivid post-unification debates on cultural heritage conservation in Italy.

Throughout the debate between those who wanted to preserve the *avancorpo* and those who wanted to see it demolished, it is worth noting that Boito, who actively participated in the debate, passionately supported the conservation of the palace in its integrity as recounted in a chapter of his 1893 publication, *Questioni Pratiche di Belle Arti*.⁹⁶

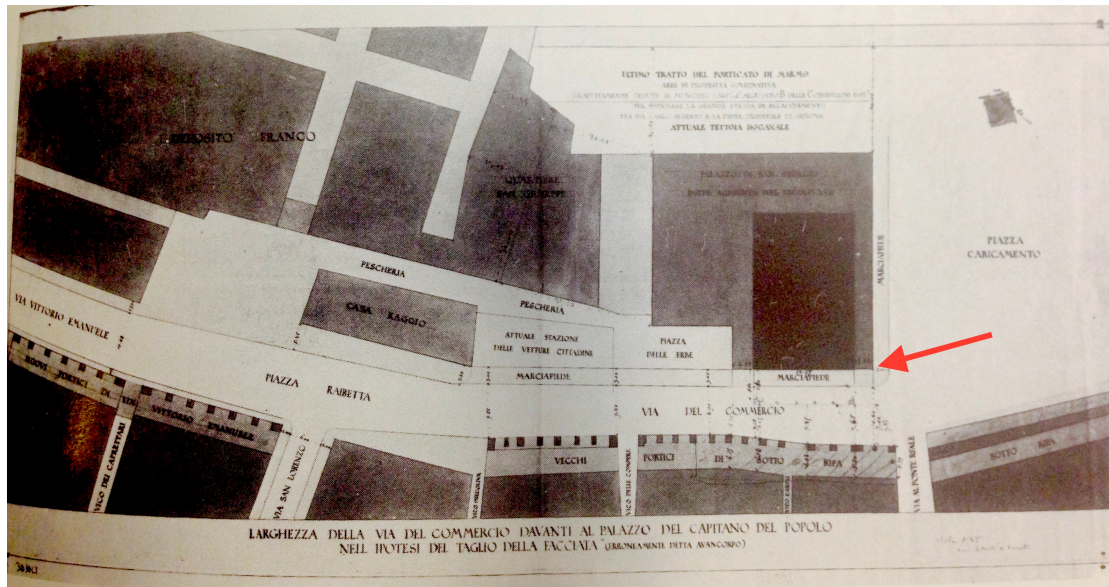


Figure 13. Plan of the Palazzo di San Giorgio and the Via del Commercio. Projecting part (most ancient section of the building) indicated by the arrow, 1889

D'Andrade's long restoration of the Genoese palace lasted for more than a decade. There had also been previous initiatives to restore the palace, which were started and then interrupted throughout the first half of the nineteenth century. D'Andrade was eventually appointed in 1888 by Prime Minister Boselli (1838–1932) to draft a project for a comprehensive restoration of the palace. D'Andrade's intervention, however, went beyond the mere restoration of the '*avancorpo*-façade' to include several architectural internal re-arrangements and external renovations. The actual restoration works did not, however, start until 1891 due to various administrative issues, including the consultations of the committee, who finally in 1889 decided to vote in favour of the conservation of the *avancorpo*.⁹⁷ At this time Minister Boselli funded the first phase of restoration work and only two years later the government passed a law that appointed

⁹⁶ Boito 1893: 267–283 "Il palazzo di San Giorgio a Genova" in *Questioni Pratiche di Belle Arti*

⁹⁷ Di Dio Rapallo 1981:419, see also Fernando Cabona 1998:26

the *Palazzo di San Giorgio* as a national monument acknowledging the palace's artistic and cultural importance at a national and political level.⁹⁸

The goal of the approved project was to present an alternative to demolition, demanding a respectful restoration of the edifice. At the same time, the project aimed to restore the value and symbolic importance of the palace, while also taking into consideration the needs of the surrounding area.⁹⁹ As introduced above, one of the chief problems that the project had to solve was the longstanding issue of the viability and widening of the street connecting the western and eastern parts of the port in accordance with the artistic conservation of the *avancorpo*.

Already known for his expertise and dedication to the conservation of monuments, d'Andrade's first task was to call for the assistance of the regional conservation office for monuments in Liguria. At the same time, Minister Boselli gathered a special commission headed by Minister Francesco Genala (1843–1893) featuring representatives who favoured the conservation of the edifice as well as representatives in support of more modern interests, such as traffic and trade.

On 4 October 1889, d'Andrade presented his project to the committee, which was fully approved due to the comprehensive nature of the restoration programme. In a letter to one of the engineers involved in the project, d'Andrade thoroughly explained the details of the restoration plan, which entailed some demolition work as well as elements of reconstruction. More specifically, his project targeted the demolition of interventions on the building dating after the period of the original construction. These included for instance a fifteenth-century staircase, which was thought to be hiding traces of the original thirteenth-century stairway.¹⁰⁰

With Boito's guidelines of restoration in mind, d'Andrade tended to agree. On the one hand d'Andrade applied a respectful and scientific investigation of monument based on historical research. On the other hand contrary to his duties as restorer, the architect demolished later additions that may have had historical value to the monument. As a matter of fact, Boito's Charter of Restoration of 1883, specifically the fifth point, suggested preserving later restorations as these have the same importance as the monument itself. However, d'Andrade's aim with this project was to bring back to light

⁹⁸ Di Dio Rapallo 1981:420

⁹⁹ Di Dio Rapallo 1981:420

¹⁰⁰ Di Dio Rapallo 1981:420. The mentioned letter was written by d'Andrade to the engineer Germano, dating April 20- 1892 and is kept in the Soprintendenza per i Beni Ambientali e Architettonici della Liguria, cartella 50 bis Ge-Molo, 1892

the medieval character of the Genoese palace, which eventually entailed the demolition of later additions.

The first phase of the project fulfilled the expectations of the committee's two factions: the opening of the portico served as a passage for people and carriages and contributed to the conservation of the *avancorpo*, the ancient part of the palace and, at the same time, it improved the street as a thoroughfare for traffic (Figure 14). The portico was freed of cumbersome architectural features, except for a staircase that led to the upper floor, which was one of the most contentious elements of d'Andrade's project.

The project also required the demolition of an earlier Renaissance restoration that had been carried out on the staircase, as well as d'Andrade's excavation of the ground floor in order to find the opening of the original medieval staircase and uncover the original medieval floor. These excavations revealed traces of the earliest staircase, which did not block the external portico as the later Renaissance versions of 1444 and 1571 did. At the same time, d'Andrade realised that the dimensions of the original medieval staircase of 1260 would not serve the needs of the whole palace. Therefore, after some hesitation, he took the decision to completely rebuild the staircase.



Figure 14. Opened portico of the Palazzo di San Giorgio after d'Andrade's restoration in 1892

Further restoration work included re-laying the floor and the replacement of barrel vaults with a wooden ceiling featuring decorations inspired by other Gothic Genoese ceilings. In addition, the original three- and four-light windows of the walls of the *avancorpo* were also restored. As a result of the work on the floor of the upper palace, the roof also had been renovated and completed with nine generously spaced battlements.¹⁰¹

Despite some bureaucracy and disagreements and with the exception the above-mentioned staircase that was completed later, the work proceeded swiftly. The first phase of the restoration was completed in 1892, just in time for the visit of Queen Margherita on 12 September.¹⁰²

Boito's favourable attitude towards d'Andrade's restoration has been suggested above, but more specifically, in a dedicated passage in *Questioni Pratiche di Belle Arti*, the

¹⁰¹ Di Dio Rapallo 1981:420 and Boito 1893:280, fig. 16

¹⁰² Di Dio Rapallo 1981:420

Roman architect illustrates d'Andrade's restoration approach with reference to the parapet of the palace (Figure 15). According to Boito, the architect Allegro had previously restored the upper floor and façade of the palace (although Boito does not say when), and placed seventeen battlements of rather small size on the cornice. Resting on this cornice Allegro added another twenty-nine small arches.¹⁰³

According to Boito, d'Andrade's approach to the restoration of this upper section of the palace was based on an interpretative and deductive logic. This methodology is in line with Boito's theory on restoration, which features the typical investigative and at the same time experimental character of restoration in the Italian nineteenth-century approach to monument restoration: "D'Andrade [...] was able to look at these battlements from a higher perspective and he found it obvious [...] from some of the remains of the very simple cornice that there were no small arches; he determined the height of the missing battlements and deduced their shape from other contemporaneous buildings and from a painting portraying a great section of Genoa and its harbour, as also of the Palazzo del Capitano del Popolo [...]. Basically, the battlements went from being seventeen to nine, and therefore they are much larger and spaced between each other, providing a very different physiognomy to the façade compared to the one conceived by Allegro, way more austere in its outlook."¹⁰⁴

¹⁰³ See Boito's drawing, Figure 15 in *Questioni pratiche di Belle Arti* 1893:278.

¹⁰⁴ Boito 1893:279 : "Il D'Andrade invece, il quale pote' frugare anche all'alto, trovò chiaro lampante (...), qualche resto nella cornice semplicissima e priva affatto di archetti; trovo' l'altezza del vuoto dei merli, e dedusse la loro forma da edifici contemporanei e dal dipinto che, figurando una buona parte di Genova e del suo porto, adombra il palazzo del Capitano del Popolo. (...) In conclusione, i merli da diciassette son diventati nove, e quindi assai più grandi e spaziosi; sicché l'intera fisionomia del prospetto apparisce diversa da quell'ache ideò l'Allegro e molto più austera."

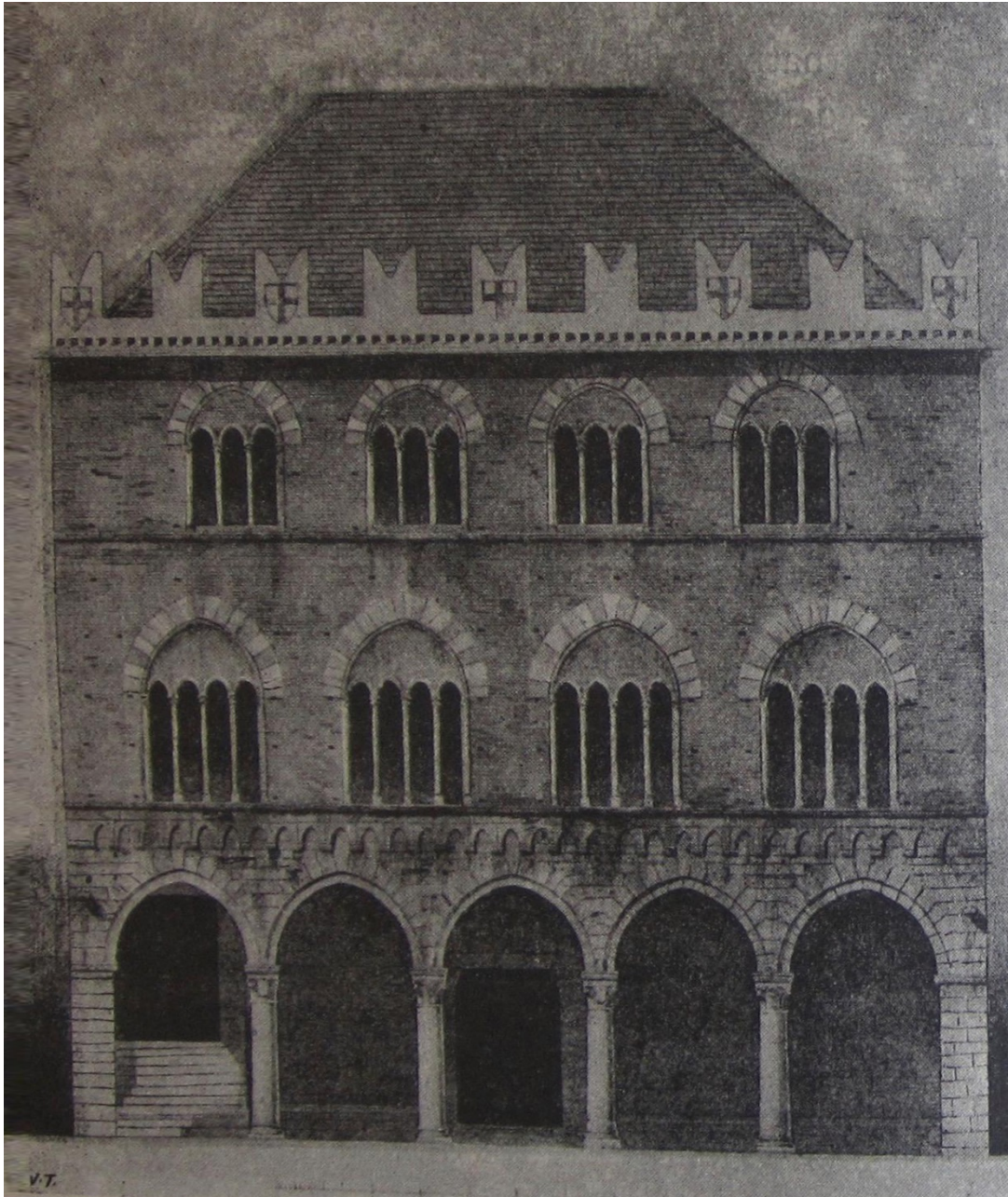


Figure 15. Illustration of Alfredo d'Andrade's façade of the Palazzo di San Giorgio in Genoa (source: Camillo Boito, *Questioni Pratiche di Belle Arti*, 1893, p. 280)

This first phase of restoration of the interior and exterior of the *Palazzo* continued until 1895. Of particular interest for its revealing nature is the restoration of the internal courtyard. In this respect, d'Andrade's restoration work was quite substantial, as the architect turned the existing columns into Neo-gothic pilasters, re-opened the three-light windows that according to him existed on the *cavaedium* (light well providing illumination to secondary or internal rooms) and demolished two small sacristies which had previously been photographed and sketched. D'Andrade also placed benches along the wall – of which there was no trace at all. In addition, he also positioned a fresco of

Saint George fighting the dragon on the western façade of the palace facing the sea, above the central entrance.

The commission for this fresco was given to the most famous artist of the time, Lodovico Pogliaghi (1857–1930).¹⁰⁵ This fresco was like a fresco in the medieval castle of Fenis, in the Aosta Valley, but which again had not featured in the original plan of the palace.¹⁰⁶ If 'playing safe' has been suggested with regard to d'Andrade's restoration of the *Palazzo di San Giorgio*, it should also be considered, as suggested by Di Dio Rapallo, that in this case d'Andrade adopted the role of architect and designer according to the nineteenth-century Neo-medievalist current of architecture. D'Andrade's project for the Genoese palace involved strong elements of restoration, but also featured several creative components that aimed to shape an harmonious architectural and artistic whole recalling the original period and style of the building.¹⁰⁷

The second phase of the palace's restoration is marked by many administrative quarrels and issues with funding that lasted until the conclusion of the restoration works on 29 October 1905 on the occasion of the visit by the Italian royal family.¹⁰⁸ Similar to Boito's restoration of Sant'Antonio in Padua, which will be discussed in detail in the following chapter, the restoration of the *Palazzo di San Giorgio* involved a broad audience, a wide-reaching public opinion, several institutions and an assortment of professional figures.

This important event raised the civic and national awareness for the conservation of the local historical cultural heritage, proving that restoration and monument conservation was now a topic that concerned both professionals and common citizens. Similar to Boito, d'Andrade also had a comprehensive interest in all matters concerning the conservation of cultural heritage, which he nourished and demonstrated throughout his rich career as an architect, restorer and officer within the first administrative bodies for the conservation of monuments in post-unification Italy. In the specific case of the *Palazzo di San Giorgio*, d'Andrade clearly surpassed the notion of restoration, but by doing so, he put an end to the improper use of the building, whose internal spaces had previously been misused in a struggle between private interests and public offices.¹⁰⁹ The lack of any writing on restoration theory by d'Andrade means that it is difficult for modern scholars to provide a complete and objective appraisal of his ideas.

¹⁰⁵ "Lodovico Pogliaghi", Bosio, Paola. *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 2011. Vol. 84, pp. 501-505

¹⁰⁶ Di Dio Rapallo 1981:421

¹⁰⁷ Di Dio Rapallo 1981:421

¹⁰⁸ Di Dio Rapallo 1981:422-423

¹⁰⁹ Di Dio Rapallo 1981:421

Nevertheless, the study of his work is possible through the vast amounts of documentation produced by d'Andrade for his projects: this includes his drawings, as well as an examination of the contents of his personal library in his residence, the Castello di Pavone Canavese near Turin.¹¹⁰ This material reveals a similar open-mindedness and attention to restoration and cultural heritage conservation that place d'Andrade, alongside Boito, as one of the most important figures in the fine arts in the period after unification. His restoration projects entailed alterations and creative work.

With that in mind, d'Andrade's work had the objective of maintaining the artistic and historical value of the monument and preserving the monument against demolition. At the same time, d'Andrade's restoration works are also the result of a close attention to the art historical and structural past of the monument. His examination of a monument is guided by scientific, art historical and documentary studies, which form a legitimate argument to reconstruct, where necessary, an architectural element or addition.¹¹¹

It is worth recalling here that Boito's restoration theory also made a distinction between an invasive and creative restoration and philological restoration; the latter would usually not include additions, but does legitimise the removal of previous restoration that has no historical or artistic importance according to scientific and historical examination of a site.¹¹²

This ideological process goes a long way to countering the major criticism levelled at Boito by contemporary and later scholarship, which drew attention to his alleged inability to match theory with practice. As discussed on the basis of d'Andrade's projects, this critique that scholarly literature made of Boito may also apply to other nineteenth-century restorations. In order to comprehend the challenges of nineteenth century restoration in Italy, D'Andrade's restoration of the Genoese palace can therefore be considered from the following perspective: d'Andrade performed his interventions in

¹¹⁰ For a complete list of the archival resources where the material, drawings and documentation produced by Alfredo d'Andrade throughout his career in Piedmont see Gentile, Guido. "Vicende di Archivi. Note per una ricerca documentaria." *Alfredo d'Andrade. Tutela e restauro*, edited by Maria Grazia Cerri, Daniela Biancolini Fea and Liliana Pittarello, editors Vallecchi, Firenze, 1981, pp. 127-133

¹¹¹ Donadono, Laura. "La fortuna critica ed il confronto con i contemporanei." *La cultura del restauro: teoria e fondatori*, edited by Stella Casiello. Marsilio, Venezia, 1996:171

¹¹² Bellini 1991:166

the interest of art and, when all is said and done, what is really important is that a decaying palace that was about to be demolished was returned to its former glory.¹¹³

Before undertaking the project of the *Palazzo di San Giorgio*, d'Andrade had already been involved in the conservation of cultural heritage at an institutional level. In Liguria, he had dealt with some important monuments in and outside Genoa, for example the church of *S. Agostino* in Genoa and the Church of *S. Paragorio* in Noli, a small commune on the western coast of Liguria.¹¹⁴ It is also worth noting that Liguria had a rather advanced system of cultural heritage administration. Already in the 1860s and 1870s the academies of the region featured advisory and surveillance offices for the conservation of fine arts, boosting a local awareness of restoration and conservation. The establishment of the regional commissions in 1886, for which d'Andrade was the official delegate, endorsed his role as Officer for Fine Arts and Cultural Heritage Conservation.¹¹⁵

Despite the fact that d'Andrade's architectural projects and monument restoration were rather complex and drawn out enterprises, the architect was involved in other scientific and administrative projects. One of d'Andrade's parallel activities entailed his collaboration in the shaping of the first law of the new century on cultural heritage conservation.¹¹⁶ This law, n. 185 passed in 1902, was far from perfect, but it marked an historical moment in the conservation of cultural heritage at a national level. It was composed of thirty-seven articles, which addressed several important challenging matters related to the administration of monuments in Italy. Among these were for instance the illegal exportation of art objects and the need for a national catalogue of historical monuments and buildings.

D'Andrade's activity within the movement for cultural heritage conservation is of particular importance within the context of cultural heritage conservation in post-unification Italy, as he became an Official in the first offices for the conservation, survey and maintenance of monuments to be established in post-unification Italy. Like Boito, d'Andrade actively participated in the on-going scientific, artistic and political debate on cultural heritage conservation and restoration. Hence, it is not by chance that Boito and d'Andrade occasionally sat on the same advisory bodies and participated in the same

¹¹³ Di Dio Rapallo 1981:423

¹¹⁴ Palmas Devoti 1981:406

¹¹⁵ Palmas Devoti 1981:405

¹¹⁶ Ricci Massabò, Isabella. "Problemi legislativi per la tutela del patrimonio artistico." In *Alfredo d'Andrade. Tutela e restauro*, edited by Cerri, Maria Grazia, Biancolini Fea, Daniela and Pittarello, Liliana. Vallecchi, Firenze, 1981:45 and Bencinvenni, Dalla Negra, Grifoni 1992:183

restoration projects. Instances featuring this collaboration of the two scholars include for example Boito's membership of the consulting body for the Palazzo di San Giorgio, where he supported d'Andrade's restoration project; in addition, in 1891 both architects were nominated by the Ministry of Education to become members of a special commission for the redevelopment of Venice.¹¹⁷

As mentioned above, one of the chief challenges for the administration of cultural heritage in Italy was identifying and cataloguing all the (important) monuments on the national territory. The scholar Giovanni Battista Cavalcaselle (1819–1897) was slightly older than Boito and d'Andrade, but was one of the major art historians of the time and deeply committed to the conservation and administration of cultural heritage at a national level.¹¹⁸ In a letter of 1863, just a few years after Italy's unification, Cavalcaselle acknowledged the major problems in cultural heritage conservation and administration on a national level with great clarity.¹¹⁹

A first issue was that the quantity and quality of cultural heritage in Italy was at that time unknown. More specifically, there was little awareness of the large quantity of monuments in Italy, which were not comprehensively listed in an official catalogue that would have enabled both the survey and administration of the monuments. As we have seen in the previous chapter, Boito addressed the need for a national catalogue in several of his writings and d'Andrade also advocated the practice of cataloguing monuments. In a letter of 3 August 1883 sent to the Division of Ancient Art in the Ministry of Education d'Andrade writes:

“The catalogue of monuments may have a great value for their conservation, as it may call for the attention of the municipalities, which as of now, completely ignore that certain monuments need to be protected; they do not respect them, nor do they encourage others to respect them; they do not even inform the authorities when these monuments are in danger or may be somehow damaged.”¹²⁰

The job of cataloguing the monuments required suitable organisations and experts. Specific governmental organisations working at a national level to preserve cultural heritage were basically non-existent, as also acknowledged by Cavalcaselle. This lack of

¹¹⁷ Nivolo, Roberto. "Biografia." *Alfredo d'Andrade. Tutela e restauro*, edited by Cerri, Maria Grazia, Biancolini Fea, Daniela and Pittarello, Liliana. Vallecchi, Firenze, 1981:172

¹¹⁸ "Giovanni Battista Cavalcaselle", *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 2011, Vol. 21, pp. 640-644

¹¹⁹ "Sulla conservazione dei monumenti ed oggetti di belle arti e sulla riforma dell'insegnamento accademico" G.B. Cavalcaselle to the Ministry of Education 1863:8 ff, cited from Ricci Massabò 1981:45

¹²⁰ cited from Leonetti Luparini 1999:20-21 "L'elenco dei monumenti può avere grandissimo valore per la loro conservazione, poiché si può sopra di essi chiamare l'attenzione dei Comuni che, ignorando ora appieno, che tali altri monumenti meritino di essere curati, né li rispettano né li fanno rispettare, né informano le autorità superiori quando detti monumenti corrono il pericolo di essere in qualche modo guastati."

organisation was due in particular to the decade-long debate on the centralisation or decentralisation of cultural heritage administration. The former aimed to create standardised rules that would be controlled by a central office, possibly located in Rome, and that would be rolled out to all regions. However, the heterogeneous features of cultural heritage at both a local and regional level validated the decentralisation option for a regional administrative subdivision.¹²¹

D'Andrade's formal involvement in the institutional and political sphere of cultural heritage conservation first occurred in 1882, when he was called to attend a meeting of the *Sezione Storia dell'Arte* regarding the *Borgo Medievale* project discussed above.¹²² Besides the success of the impressive architectural project of the *Borgo Medievale* at Valentino, the outcome of d'Andrade's participation in the *Sezione Storia dell'Arte* was the extent to which he made people aware of the importance of the study and conservation of monuments in Piedmont.

Similar to the educational objectives that always emerged in Boito's projects and writings, D'Andrade's scientific and didactical approach is manifested in his intent of bringing the skills of craftsmanship of the past to the attention of the public. Like Boito's monumental restoration of Sant'Antonio in Padua, as discussed in the following chapter, d'Andrade's *Borgo Medievale* became a popular venture that awakened the public's awareness of the medieval castles of Piedmont, for their artistic techniques and as examples of cultural heritage of national importance.

Last but not least, thanks to the countless drawings, documents and studies that d'Andrade made available to the artistic commission for the *Borgo Medievale* project, his sound expertise on the architectural history of Piedmont became known to both the wider public and to contemporary scholarly circles across the country. From his first visits to the Aosta Valley in the 1860s to his subsequent journeys to more than fifty sites in Piedmont and Liguria, D'Andrade gathered a rich collection of drawings and studies of castles and other monuments, demonstrating his interests as a painter, archaeologist and, later, architect, as well as his interest in the techniques used in the past and how to make different materials. D'Andrade's interest in this latter aspect links the architect with Viollet-le-Duc as well as Ruskin and Morris who were all interested in the 'minor

¹²¹ Ricci Massabò 1981:45

¹²² Biancolini Fea, Daniela. "L'attività di Alfredo d'Andrade tra il 1884 e il 1915: da regio delegato a soprintendente. *Alfredo d'Andrade. Tutela e restauro*, edited by Cerri, Maria Grazia, Daniela Biancolini Fea, and Liliana Pittarello. Vallecchi, Firenze, 1981:57

arts'. D'Andrade's work on the *Borgo Medievale* also included remaking the same tools that were originally used to produce the medieval objects.¹²³

Due to his prolific production of drawings and the extent of his attention to detail, recent studies have suggested that d'Andrade's research and interest in safeguarding cultural heritage had already started with these first on-site visits. The architect's commitment anticipates the modern programme of regional, i.e. local, re-evaluation of cultural heritage as we may view it today. Through his studies d'Andrade highlights the touristic and economic features of the Aosta Valley. In addition, while he was engaged in the research of cataloguing and analysing restoration projects, he actually also rescued some monuments using his own financial resources. For example in 1895 d'Andrade lent 20,000 lire to the state for the acquisition of the Aostan Castle of Fenis as it could not afford to make the purchase by the deadline set by the vendor.¹²⁴

Only a few years after d'Andrade's appointment in 1885 as *Regio delegato per la conservazione dei monumenti del Piemonte e della Liguria* (Delegate for the conservation of monuments in Piedmont and Liguria), the administration of cultural heritage in Italy underwent a major change. Following the establishment in 1889 of twelve regional commissions for fine arts and antiquities, the *Commissariati per le Antichità e le Belle Arti* (Commissaries for Antiquities and Fine Arts), D'Andrade became the head of the Turin office in 1891.¹²⁵ From this point onwards he collaborated with a selected team of assistants, draughtsmen and architects, formally ending a pioneering phase in the conservation of monuments in favour of a more authoritative and efficient machine of cultural heritage conservation and restoration.¹²⁶

The workload of the Turin Commissary was immense, extending over two vast regions and including the city of Pavia.¹²⁷ A sense of the range of duties performed by the office headed by d'Andrade is provided by the *Relazione dell'Ufficio regionale per la conservazione dei monumenti del Piemonte e della Liguria* (Report of the regional office for the conservation of monuments in Piedmont and Liguria). This report lists nearly all the interventions that the regional office carried out between 1883 and 1894. Each monument (castles, churches, medieval towers etc) was accompanied by a thorough historical description and was also illustrated through drawings and photographs. Each

¹²³ Leonetti Luparini 1999:23

¹²⁴ Leonetti Luparini 1999:20

¹²⁵ The Commissariati were then reduced to eleven offices after less than a year.

¹²⁶ Biancolini Fea 1981:58

¹²⁷ Biancolini Fea 1981:59. Pavia was put under the supervision of the Turin office, as according to the council, its location on the eastern side of the Ticino river bound the city to Piedmont

intervention and restoration was backed up by documentation entailing costs, reasons and length of the intervention. In addition d'Andrade and his team also compiled a catalogue of the monuments located in the regional territories.¹²⁸

Another document for the Turin office is a legal corpus of measures that were adopted by the regional office. The *Norme per la conservazione dei monumenti* (The regulations for the conservation of monuments) is an appendix to the *Regolamento per il servizio degli Uffici regionali* (Regulations for the services of the regional offices). It lists in detail the tasks of the regional offices covering the period from 1891 to 1904 as well as the composition of the technical staff.¹²⁹

These regulations demonstrate several ideological parallels with Boito's ideas. Featuring similar content and structure to Boito's Charter of 1883, this guideline for monument restoration and cultural heritage conservation is composed of twenty-three points that specify the guidelines for monument restoration and maintenance.

The first part of the *Norme* comprises guidelines on the reconstruction of parts of a monument, which can be only executed in extreme cases: "The renovation or substitution of parts of an architectural monument, even the minor ones, will be adopted as an extreme remedy to salvage the remaining parts, and therefore will have to be limited to those parts which are no longer stable and cannot be consolidated in any other way."¹³⁰

In certain aspects the *Norme* may seem more advanced and complete compared to Boito's *Carta del Restauro*. For example, and most obviously, the *Norme* covers twenty-three different points, far exceeding the number of articles in Boito's Charter of Restoration, which contains just seven. It must be noted however that Boito's document covers the fundamental principles of restoration with an equal amount of care and depth. This is the case, for instance, with regard to his attitude towards reconstructing parts of a monument. In his text Boito is equally as thorough on this point, specifying that reconstructions, if necessary, have to be carried out in a different style to the

¹²⁸ Biancolini Fea 1981:61

¹²⁹ Biancolini Fea 1981:62

¹³⁰ *Norme per la conservazione dei monumenti*, Appendix of the *Regolamento per il servizio degli Uffici regionali per la conservazione dei monumenti*, article 2: La rinnovazione o sostituzione di parti, anche secondarie, di un monumento architettonico, sarà adottata solo come rimedio estremo per salvare le rimanenti, e quindi dovrà essere limitata a quelle parti che non potessero più rispondere al loro ufficio statico e non fossero suscettibili di consolidamento' in *Norme per la conservazione dei monumenti*, published in the appendix to Ricci Massabò, 1981:55

original parts in order to make clear that they are later in date, while at the same time not excessively harming the aesthetic quality of the monument.¹³¹

Points of similarity can also be found between Boito's attitude towards stylistic integrations and structural additions on monuments and point eight (8.) of the *Norme*. This point states that in case of aesthetic or structural damage, intervention shall be made to the monument. However, in doing this, the restorer's duty is to accurately report the extent, as well as the reason and purpose for the renovation. The restorer will therefore take care to use materials that are the same as or compatible with the original and will adopt a simpler way of working that is in harmony with the style of the monument. At the same time however, these additions have to be visible to the viewer, so that he can differentiate between the original parts of the monuments and the later intervention.¹³²

A further section of the *Norme* illustrates the necessary documentation and study to be undertaken prior to a restoration. This phase entails gathering complete information, both historical and art historical, on the monument in order to trace previous restoration work that has been made on the monument. The study also includes an examination of materials, construction methods, the decorative style of the monument, and, last but not least, a comparative study with other contemporaneous monuments.¹³³ This point clearly conveys the scientific approach taken by d'Andrade and his team in the Turin office proving their commitment to an absolute understanding of the monument.

The second section of the *Norme* concerns the maintenance measures that should be carried out on a monument. Compared to the procedures to safeguard the aesthetic and cultural value that we have seen until now in Boito's Charter of Restoration, the measures in the *Norme* entail an apparently less grand upkeep and repair that a monument may require over time. The remaking of windows, floors and buttresses play an important role in maintaining the artistic qualities of a monument. The care and preparation needed in performing these operations, which favour the use of more

¹³¹ See the articles 2 in Boito's Charter of Restoration (Table II) and articles 2 and 3 in the *Norme per la conservazione*

¹³² "Quando per stabilità o per conseguimento di uno special risultato estetico si deva ricorrere al completamento di alcune parti di un monumento, si avrà ogni cura perché, a lavoro compiuto, risulti nettamente l'entità, la ragione e lo scopo del rinnovamento eseguito. Per questo, mentre si procura di adottare, ogni qualvolta sarà possibile, materiali di natura eguale od affine a quella degli originari, si adotterà pure una lavorazione semplificata, la quale possa concorrere all'effetto d'insieme senza lasciare incertezze sulla estensione dei lavori di rinnovamento." In *Norme per la conservazione dei monumenti*, Appendix to Ricci Massabò 1981:55

¹³³ Biancolini Fea 1981:63 and Ricci Massabò, Appendix 1981:55, article 6: "Innanzi di procedere a lavori di restauro occorre: raccogliere le notizie scritte o figurate che si riferiscono al monumento, tenendo calcolo dell'aiuto che può essere fornito dallo studio di edifici congeneri e coevi a quello da restaurare. Studiare i materiali e i metodi costruttivi e decorative propri dell'edificio. Ricostituire in base alle notizie storiche ed alle indagini fatte le vicende subite dal monumento."

enduring materials in long-term restoration work, clearly demonstrates the changes to the approach of cultural heritage conservation in the last decades of the nineteenth century.¹³⁴

One final aspect is the compilation of a catalogue of monuments in Piedmont and Liguria, called the *Elenchi degli edifici monumentali* (List of monuments). The issue of creating a national catalogue was of such urgency and major importance that Boito himself advocated the drawing up of a list of national monuments in the articles he published in the late 1880s in the *Nuova Antologia*.¹³⁵

The *Elenchi* drafted by d'Andrade's regional office were compiled in accordance with the previously mentioned law n. 185 of 1902. Explicitly referenced in article twenty-three of the *Norme* the catalogues were composed of two sections: the first comprising public properties, the second privately owned cultural heritage. The *Elenchi's* objective was not only an instrument to quantify and identify cultural heritage sites in Italy, but also, and most importantly, to survey these sites. Both for public and privately owned cultural heritage, the illegal exportation of listed monuments would be subject to severe fines and possible confiscation by the State. The 1902 law, which marked a new era in cultural heritage conservation in Italy was not flawless, but some of the fundamental concepts in these legal measures would later be repeated in modern legislation on the protection of cultural heritage, such as the 2004 *Codice dei Beni Culturali e del Paesaggio* that is in force in Italy today.¹³⁶

Ultimately, the *Elenchi* show that the Turin office operated with an attention to detail that goes beyond the monuments considered of valuable artistic significance. The work of administration and cultural heritage conservation led by d'Andrade also included gates, bells and altars, once again demonstrating how he also paid attention to a variety of artistic productions that were usually considered as belonging to the 'minor arts'.¹³⁷ The accuracy and the governing approach with which d'Andrade ran the Turin office were greatly praised by contemporary scholars and political entities, such as the Ministry of Education. On the other hand, some criticism was made following an inspection in 1897, which stated that the restoration work reported by the office did not correspond to the interventions that had actually been carried out. In response to this,

¹³⁴ Norme, article 21: Le puntellature dovranno essere eseguite con materiale di resistenza proporzionata alla durata del tempo necessario alle opere di restauro. Sarà quindi raccomandabile, anche per considerazioni economiche, l'impiego di materiali laterizi o di pietrame ogni qualvolta si preveda per i lavori un periodo di tempo abbastanza lungo, durante il quale non offra sufficienti garanzie l'impiego del legname. Ricci Massabò 1981:56

¹³⁵ The writings in which Boito advocates the necessity of a national catalogue are "I nostri vecchi monumenti, Necessità di una legge per conservarli" (1885) and in "Sulle Antichità e le Belle Arti." (1889)

¹³⁶ Codice dei beni culturali e del paesaggio, ai sensi dell'articolo 10 della legge 6 luglio 2002, n. 137, Decreto Legislativo 22 gennaio 2004, n. 42, pubblicato nella *Gazzetta Ufficiale* n. 45 del 24 febbraio 2004

¹³⁷ Biancolini Fea 1981:63

d'Andrade defended his work with as supported by facts and pointed out the incompetency of the inspector. The architect argued that it is impossible to determine exactly the extent of interventions on a monument prior to starting a restoration project, as new discoveries or problems may emerge as the work progresses.¹³⁸

Cerri, a key source on d'Andrade who in 1981 curated the most comprehensive volume on the architect, provides a definition of Boito and d'Andrade's contribution to the theory and practice of restoration in post-unification Italy. The author suggests that Boito might be considered the 'mind' behind restoration theory, whereas d'Andrade was 'the arm'. Cerri possibly implies that d'Andrade effectively operated according to Boito's principles of monument restoration by putting the architect's ideas into practice, both in his restoration and architectural projects.¹³⁹

The Southern response to the Italian conservation movement: Errico Alvino

As we have seen until now, Boito's field of operation was confined to the area between Milan, Venice and Padua. With that in mind, the northern part of the peninsula was not the only part of the country concerned about its cultural heritage. Italy had become a nation despite the late annexation of Rome and the Papal States to the Kingdom of Italy in 1871, delaying the true cultural unification of the country. Thus, the conservation of cultural heritage, the restoration of historical buildings and their adaptation to new purposes was also a concern for the southern cities of the country. Like the northern metropolitan centres, the southern cities were carrying out extensive urban development plans (for instance the *Piano di Risanamento e Ampliamento di Napoli* 1888, Restoration and Enlargement Plan of Naples, 1888).

In Naples, Errico Alvino (1809–1876) was one of the most prominent architects carrying out significant art historical restoration in the city.¹⁴⁰ Acutally born in Milan but brought up in Naples (his parents were from Naples but escaped to Milan after the 1799

¹³⁸ Biancolini Fea 1981:64

¹³⁹ Cerri, Maria Grazia. "Alfredo d'Andrade: dottrina e prassi nella disciplina del restauro." *Alfredo d'Andrade. Tutela e restauro*, edited by Maria Grazia Cerri, Daniela Biancolini Fea, and Liliana Pittarello. Vallecchi, Firenze, 1981:13

¹⁴⁰ Similar to Boito and d'Andrade, the revalidation of Alvino's figure occurred in the 1960s in the attempt of filling in a major gap of nineteenth century architecture to which the historiography of the first half of the twentieth century was notably adverse. The comprehensive biography on the architect by Giuseppe Bruno and Renato de Fusco features a complete investigation and illustration of the architect's work. Nevertheless, in terms of restoration critique and historiography, there are other recent works that consider the Alvino's works in light of the progress (theoretical and practical) that restoration underwent in the last four decades; these include the work by Giuseppe Fiengo (1991) and Giuseppina Pugliano (2004 and 2007). See also Pane, Andrea. "Da Errico Alvino a Lamont Young: Percorsi del neomedievalismo a Napoli tra invenzione e restauro." In *Medioevo Fantastico, L'invenzione di uno stile nell'architettura tra fine '800 e inizio '900*, edited by Alexandra Chavarría and Guido Zucconi. All'insegna del Giglio, 2016:56

Revolution in Naples), Alvino was a few generations older than Boito yet actively participated in the same restoration debate as the younger architect. His approach to restoration in both theory and practice can be linked to Boito's methodology of restoration, despite the different regions and cultural contexts in which the two architects operated.

The presence of figures like Alvino in Southern Italy to a certain extent supports Settis's theory with regard to Italy's collective inclination to preserve its own cultural heritage throughout the centuries. Settis argues that even centuries before unification, there was an established shared desire across the Italian regions to preserve cultural heritage, despite clear cultural, political and administrative differences. This phenomenon also persisted after unification, when the country was officially united but still far from functioning properly as a nation.¹⁴¹

Alvino is considered to be one of the most important figures within the Neapolitan post-unification world of restoration and architecture. When he started working in Naples, the city was the capital of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies. The city was still under Bourbon domination, after a decade of French control; despite these political changes, a sort of continuity at the institutional and administrative level was maintained.

Alvino's and Boito's paths crossed at some of the major national restoration events, such as the Competition for the façade of the Florentine Santa Maria del Fiore (1861-1865), which will be briefly discussed later in this chapter. By exploring the relationship between Boito and Alvino and comparing both their theory and practice in architecture and cultural heritage conservation, it is possible to identify some of the key aspects of the restoration debate comprising nationally important themes. Up until now, this dissertation has focused on Northern Italy, particularly Milan, Venice and Padua, which were the major centres of the debate on architectural restoration and cultural heritage conservation. This was due to their geographical closeness to the rest of Europe but also to their cultural and economic advantages. In these northern Italian cities Boito rose to success as an architect-restorer and undertook his most important projects. With Alvino, the geographical focus completely shifts to Naples, providing a southern counterpoint to the Italian conservation movement.

¹⁴¹ Settis, Salvatore. "Cultura ed etica della tutela: una storia italiana." *Paesaggio Costituzione Cemento, La battaglia per l'ambiente contro il degrado civile*. Giulio Einaudi Editore, Trento, 2010:107

Municipal architect, lecturer on architecture and member of various local institutions that dealt with urban development and cultural heritage conservation, Errico Alvino occupied a significant role both within the cultural environment of Naples, but also in the wider scene of architectural and monument restoration in Italy. His active participation in events of national and European importance, such as conferences attended by engineers and architects, national exhibitions and competitions, allowed Alvino to be directly involved in the lively debate on restoration and cultural heritage led by Estense and Boito and others who followed in the wake of transalpine architects such as Viollet-le-Duc.¹⁴²

Alvino's studies were shaped in the classical environment of the Neapolitan *Reale Istituto delle Belle Arti* (Royal Institute of Fine Arts). From 1830–34 the young architect held the *Pensionato Romano* scholarship and pursued an academic career. A few years later he was appointed Head of the School of Architecture at the same institution. The *Pensionato Romano* awarded to Alvino was the equivalent of the French *Prix de Rome*, and enabled young students of art and architecture to pursue a period of study in Rome. It is possible that during this Roman sojourn Alvino made contact with the French Academy, where he absorbed the transalpine attitude toward restoration, specifically the ideas of Viollet-le-Duc, but also others such as Antoine Chrysostome Quatremère de Quincy, author of the *Dictionnaire historique d'Architecture* (1832).¹⁴³

Alvino's early career as an architect coincided with the coronation of Ferdinand II Bourbon. Among Ferdinand's main objectives for his reign was a comprehensive policy of urban development, focusing on public and civic works. His project entailed an economic re-awakening of the area, but also industrial production, the construction of a modern transport system and the development of the port.¹⁴⁴

The launch of a plan for urban development of the city featured in the 1839 *Appuntazioni per lo abbellimento della città di Napoli* (Annotations for the improvement of the city of Naples) and the establishment of the *Consiglio Edilizio* (Construction Council) in 1840 to supervise the urban and artistic aspect of the development plan, are

¹⁴² Pugliano, Giuseppina. *Errico Alvino e il restauro dei monumenti*. Quaderni dell'Accademia pontaniana, Vol. 37, Napoli, 2004:6

¹⁴³ Pugliano 2004:12, see also Zucconi 1997 and 2002. The *Dictionnaire* by Antoine Chrysostome Quatremère de Quincy (1755-1849) was published in France in 1832 and translated in Italian between 1842 and 1844. It is a dictionary comprising the most important terms of art and architecture and is considered one of the pillars of the French neo-classicist early nineteenth century literature on architecture. Selvatico and Boito were well acquainted with the *Dictionnaire* too.

¹⁴⁴ Bruno, Giuseppe, and Renato De Fusco. *Errico Alvino: architetto e urbanista napoletano dell'800*. L'Arte Tipografica, Napoli, 1962:9

the milestones that characterise Alvino's early activity as a town planner and architectural restorer.¹⁴⁵

Within this Bourbon context Alvino was appointed as architect to two of the city's quarters (*Chiaja and S. Ferdinando*) and in 1850 he became a member of the above-mentioned *Consiglio Edilizio*. The new development plan did not only focus on the construction and expansion of Naples, but also took into account other aspects linked to monuments, pre-existing architectural structures and matters of cultural heritage conservation. A Bourbon law of 31 May 1853 also placed a strong emphasis on the preservation of landscape and on the priority of the needs and rights of the local community over the entitlements of a private owner or other entity.¹⁴⁶ This marked a general approach of Naples's urban development, which for the first time considered the importance of cultural heritage and landscape for the community while making sure that the urban development of the city would not excessively harm pre-existing historical architecture.

Alvino's first attendance, and subsequent appointment as lecturer, at the military school *Nunziatella*, just before the Italian Wars of Independence which started in 1848 (and lasted until 1866), further pushed the young scholar into the lively cultural ferment of Ottocento Naples. At the *Nunziatella* military school, Alvino made the acquaintance of other important intellectuals such as Francesco de Sanctis (1817–1883) and Giuseppe Fiorelli (1823–1876), who became General Director of Antiquities and Fine Arts and Minister of Education respectively.¹⁴⁷

It seems likely that through his connection with these intellectuals and his attendance at the most important Neapolitan academic institutions, Alvino was able to identify the key aspects and challenges of nineteenth-century architecture and restoration in Italy.

Alvino's appointment as technical delegate to the *Consiglio Edilizio* of Naples in 1852 and his appointment as lecturer at the school of architecture in 1859 also made him popular locally.

The Royal Academy of Fine Arts had been founded by Charles III of Spain in 1762; its headquarters were in the city's National Museum. In the first two decades after

¹⁴⁵ Pugliano 2004:13

¹⁴⁶ Bruno, de Fusco: 1962:22

¹⁴⁷ Pugliano 2004:15. Francesco de Sanctis was one of the major exponents of the Romantic literary and artistic critique; he was also a politician of liberal approach. He was appointed Minister of Education of the first Italian legislation under Cavour in 1861 and again from 1878 to 1891. On the other hand, Giuseppe Fiorelli, Italian politician in the first decades of unified Italy, was nominated General Director of the Antiquities and Fine Arts from 1875 to 1891 and throughout his career he promoted several initiatives to implement the surveillance and the organisation of Fine Arts and archaeological excavations in Italy.

unification the institution was subject to several changes and reforms that were headed by the liberal Francesco de Sanctis, who at the time was Minister for Education, in collaboration with Alvino and many other important Neapolitan nineteenth-century artists.¹⁴⁸ One major aspect of the reform included the establishment of a joint degree programme, which involved the study of the 'major arts' and the study of the new 'industrial arts' by specialised professionals.¹⁴⁹

By 1861 the students of the Academy were still working in the small rooms of the National Museum, the inadequacy of which had been already communicated to the Ministry of Education.¹⁵⁰ The dual degree programme and the planned renovation of the Academy, which aimed to turn it into a vibrant centre of the arts in Naples, meant that they required more space. Consequently, in 1863 the Ministry of Education donated the former monastery of *San Giovanni Battista delle Monache* to the Academy, to serve as its new headquarters.

Alvino was selected to direct the restoration and conversion of the Academy's new headquarters. This project occurred within the framework of the major urban redevelopment of the centre of Naples, covering the area between the National Museum and *Piazza del Mercatello*.¹⁵¹ Alvino's restoration work mainly entailed the internal rearrangement of the building, but significant intervention also needed to be done on the exterior. Alvino's project included the detachment of the building from a pre-existing section on via Costantinopoli, which was achieved by opening up several new streets: via Bellini, via Broggia and via Conte di Ruvo.¹⁵² Similar to the case of the *Palazzo di San Giorgio*, the restoration process involved not only the historical building itself, but also the adaptation of the building for a new purpose, the respectful conservation of historical elements of the building as well as taking into consideration the wider framework of urban development.

The main challenge for Alvino in this project, was adapting a pre-existing historical building to the surrounding urban environment, while maintaining the historical character and the modern purpose of the building. The new headquarters of the Academy was built around a large internal rectangular courtyard. The arrangement of the interior space is clearly dictated by the structure of the earlier building, which can be

¹⁴⁸ Bruno, de Fusco 1962:101

¹⁴⁹ *ibid.*

¹⁵⁰ Belli, Gemma. "L'Accademia di Belle Arti di Napoli." *Architettare l'Unità: architettura e istituzioni nelle città della nuova Italia 1861-1911*, edited by Mangone, Fabio and Mariagrazia Tampieri, Paparo Editore, Napoli 2011, 2011:159

¹⁵¹ *ibid.*

¹⁵² Bruno, de Fusco 1962:101 and Belli 2011:161

seen in particular in the wide gallery that encircles the courtyard and that leads to the halls around its edge.

The main intervention Alvino made on the historical structure of the Convent was the opening of three adjacent streets around the building, the consolidation of the perimeter walls (which initially were to be demolished), and the renovation of the internal rooms and the façades. These comprise three superimposed modules of arched windows. Yellow tufa rusticated bands on the ground floor, Tuscan semi-columns on the first floor and Corinthian semi-columns on the second floor characterise the external structure of the building.

The exception is the façade of Via Bellini, with its dynamic structure that juts forward and recedes and the emergence of a unique upper floor to overcome the different ground levels of the various streets (Figure 16).¹⁵³ With regard to the creation of the wing on Via Bellini, Alvino organised a 'barter' of space between the Institute and the municipalities enabling the surrounding streets to be redesigned and the acquisition of land necessary for the construction of the wing. The final plan in the shape of a square was eventually approved in 1873.



Figure 16. Façade of via Bellini after Alvino's restoration

¹⁵³ Belli 2011:164-165

The fact that from the beginning of the restoration work focus was placed on maintaining the basic square of the original structure, both externally and internally, and demonstrates the architect's concern for acknowledging the past history and architecture of the building (Figure 17).

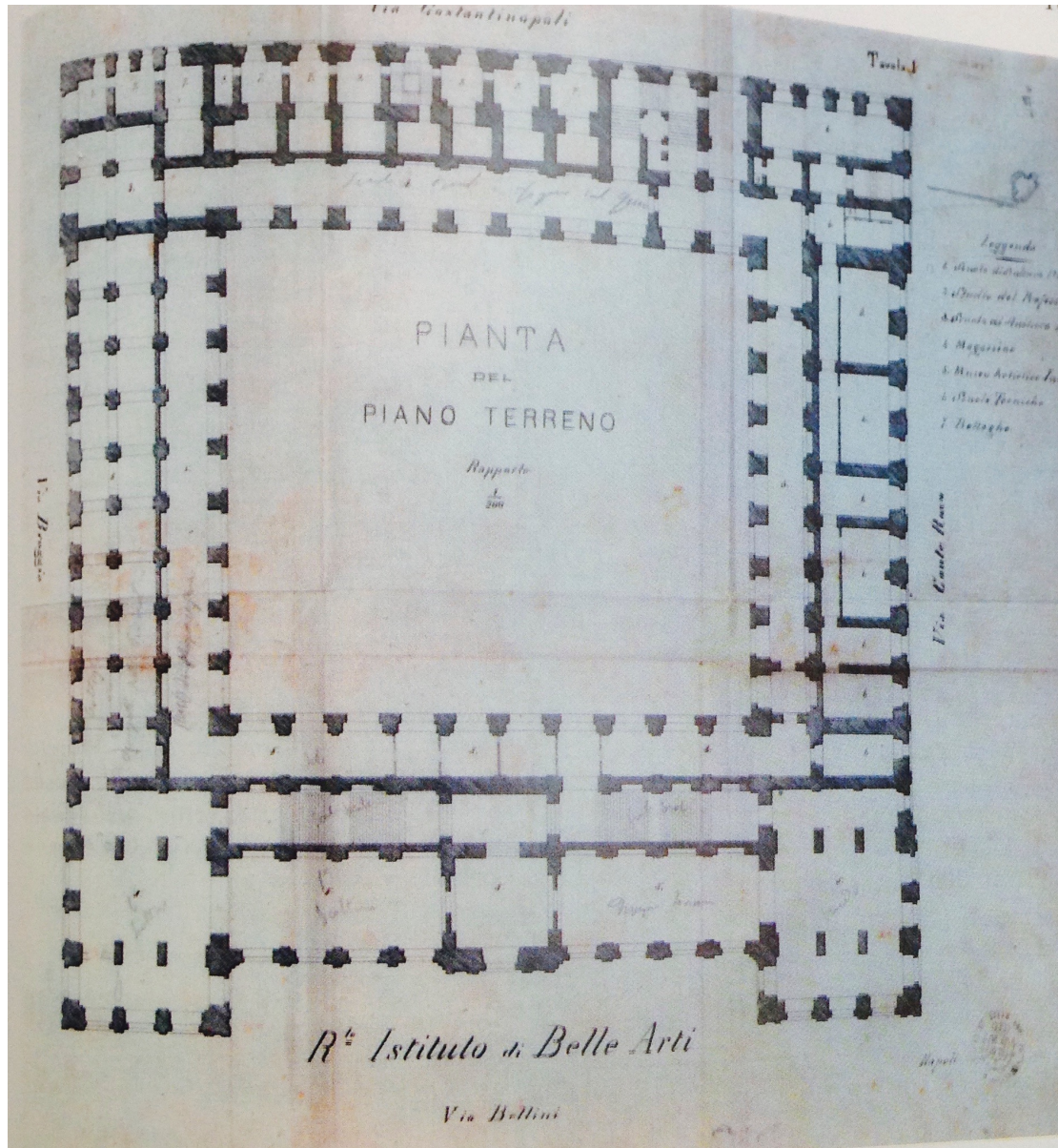


Figure 17. Later architectural plan for the adaptation of the Convent into the new venue of the Academy of Fine Arts dating 1882, following d'Andrade's original project. Plan designed by Giuseppe Pisanti, Pasquale Maria Veneri and Achille Catalano featuring the inclusion of the façade on Via Bellini (bottom of the image)

The need to preserve the structural stability of the former convent was a practical concern that led the architect to restore the building on the basis of its original form and

floorplan. The recovered material featuring in various drawings made by Alvino's pupils demonstrates that he understood all the complicated historical layers of the building, whose origins date back to the fifteenth century.¹⁵⁴ Unfortunately, neither the architect's preparatory drawings, nor the final plans have been found.¹⁵⁵ Hence, the process of the restoration is mainly deduced from the study documents and drawings produced by the architect's students.¹⁵⁶ We can, however, be certain that Alvino's work on the restoration of the former monastery dates from 1864 to 1876 – 1876 being the year of the architect's death, and was finished by Alvino's student, Luigi della Corte.¹⁵⁷

As mentioned above, the material employed for the exterior of the building is yellow tufa. Tufa is a material of volcanic origins that was locally sourced, thus showing the architect's intent in shaping a building that would fit within the urban and natural environment of the city. At the same, the very nature of the material – thick and grainy – emphasises the plasticity of the building: the design aims to show the truthfulness of the structure and the material, while at the same time providing a detailed visual account of historical facts.¹⁵⁸ It is possible that Alvino's concept for this project was the idea that the search for truth in a place dedicated to the education of the artists could be symbolised with a façade and a structure that emphasised the knowledge of the 'ancient' and of history, achieving a result of outstanding visual impact.¹⁵⁹

One further particular aspect of Alvino's restoration work on the Royal Academy of Fine Arts, is its successful synthesis of restoration and adaptation of an historical building to a new purpose. Alvino achieved a balance between the 'ancient' and the 'new', which served its new civic purpose but remained compatible with the conservative requirements of the building.¹⁶⁰ In his project, the architect effectively dealt with the

¹⁵⁴ Pugliano 2004:107

¹⁵⁵ Modern scholarship had difficulties in investigating the history of Alvino's restoration project of the Accademia, as some of the autograph documents of the Neapolitan architect are missing. Nevertheless, the crucial presence of the architect has been ascertained by his proposals dating 1865, 1868-69 and 1873. Testimonies of this major intervention are also provided by the rich epistolary exchanges between Alvino, the directorate of the Institute of Fine Arts and the Ministry of Education, who was a major financial supporter of the project. Other valid sources feature in the monitoring reports of the works in progress, which were already at an advanced stage when Alvino died in 1874. The latest works on the convent concern the opening of the three streets adjacent to the monastery, the consolidation of the perimeter walls, the opening of three large windows in the pre-existing prospects and the renovation of the ambiances on the ground floor and of the second floor in via Bellini. The restoration of the façades, which more than other aspects characterise the whole projects, represented a major obstacle for the completion of the works. The continuous lack of funds led to the procrastination of the works, allowing the completion of the façades in the 1890s. Pugliano 2004:109. Only recently, Massimiliano Savorra found a drawing of the façade dating 1868 that can be considered a preliminary solution – different from the façade that was accomplished. Belli 2011:162 The plan features three layouts and shows the edifice with a central section made up of two floors, flanked by two aisles that are characterised by windows of three different orders and with a sloping roof. The document has been found in the State Central Archive, ACS, Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione, Direzione Antichità e Belle Arti, Pianta e tipi di edificio 1891-1895, B2 f. 14. Belli 2011:166

¹⁵⁶ Belli 2011:161

¹⁵⁷ Pugliano 2004:157-60. Interestingly, Luigi della Corte proposed his own project for the completion of the work, which was rejected due to cost and he was urged to continue the project according to Alvino's plan with only a few modifications.

¹⁵⁸ Belli 2011:165 citing Mangone, F. *L'Architetto come turista, Mete e miti della provincial napoletana nella formazione dei progettisti europei 1815-1914*, in de Seta, C. and Buccaro, A. *I centri storici della Provincia di Napoli: struttura, forma, identità urbana*, Napoli 2009, pp. 61-89

¹⁵⁹ Belli 2011:166

¹⁶⁰ Pugliano: 2004:108

conservation of a 'living monument' within the urban milieu. The transformation of *San Giovanni Battista delle Monache* into a building with a modern, teaching function is a quintessential example of a *monumento vivo* in the context of Italian post-unification.¹⁶¹ In this project Alvino embraced the wider context of urban development, which mostly and inevitably included the demolition of historic parts of the city, while preserving the artistic value of the edifice and the area. He created a harmonious co-existence between sober and classical taste and a new articulation of the building.¹⁶²

Alvino's lecturing position at the Academy of Fine Arts in Naples and his restoration of the Academy's new headquarters was a springboard, which allowed him to expand his field of work on a national level. Between 1862 and 1867 he participated in the national competition for the façade of Santa Maria del Fiore, the Cathedral of Florence often referred to as the '*Duomo*'. Like Venice, Florence occupied a primary place in the study of cultural history and was host to a wealth of art, which made both cities highly regarded but at the same time very different from each other.¹⁶³

The establishment in Florence of cultural institutions, such as the *Cabinet Vieusseux*, which were dedicated to the study of Italian art, culture and science, as well as the revival of interest in using the Florentine archives, made Tuscans aware that the history and popularity of their culture could be improved by the documents found in their collections. In the second half of the nineteenth century Florence aimed to turn itself into a culturally receptive city and was prepared to absorb international currents.¹⁶⁴

It is within this cultural context that the competition for the façade of Santa Maria del Fiore took place; a project that was of interest at the national and international level due to the importance of the monument in question.¹⁶⁵ The original unfinished façade by Arnolfo di Cambio had been torn down in 1587 and many schemes were submitted redesigning it in a classical style (Dosio, Cigoli, Passignano).¹⁶⁶ Project proposals continued to be submitted during the early seventeenth century but all failed to get off

¹⁶¹ The distinction between 'living' monuments and 'dead' monuments has been originally devised by the Belgian architect Louis Cloquet (1849-1920); within the Italian context it is a chronologically posthumous term to Alvino's and Boito's period, as it was coined by the Italian architect Gustavo Giovannoni (1873-1947). Giovannoni was a follower of Boito's thought in several aspects of his restoration and cultural heritage conservation theory that he promoted throughout his career as architect and scholar and lecturer at the University of Rome "La Sapienza". "Gustavo Giovannoni", Zucconi, Guido. *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, 2011, Vol. 56, pp. 392-396

¹⁶² Bruno, de Fusco 1962:104. Fusco defines the classical style of the building as 'neorinascimentale', which literally translates into 'neo-Renaissance' style.

¹⁶³ Rocchi Coopmans de Yoldi, *Giuseppe. S.Maria del Fiore. Teorie e storie dell'archeologia e del restauro nella città delle fabbriche arnolfiane*. Alinea Editrice, Firenze, 2006:370

¹⁶⁴ Rocchi 2006:370, citing A. Salvestrini. Qualche appunto sulla Restaurazione in Toscana. In *Cultura neoclassica e romantica nella Toscana granducale*. Soprintendenza alle Gallerie Firenze 1972, p.17 ff

¹⁶⁵ Rocchi 2006:370

¹⁶⁶ Cozzi, Mauro. "La facciata del Duomo di Firenze." *Architettare l'Unità. Architettura e istituzioni nelle città della nuova Italia 1861-1911*. Paparo Editore, Napoli, 2011:121

the ground. With the first Romantic currents of the neo-medieval revival in the nineteenth century, the idea of completing the façade became a possibility once more. The idea of completing it was promoted by the Florentine Academy of Fine Arts.¹⁶⁷

In 1822, Giovanni Battista Silvestri, pupil of the Academy, proposed a project inspired by the style of the Florentine shrine of Orsanmichele. Other projects followed. An association ('Associazione Toscana') was founded in 1842 for the express purpose of designing and building a new façade.¹⁶⁸ But no proposal satisfied them.¹⁶⁹ Only in 1859, under the Grand Duchy of Leopold II, did the *Associazione per la nuova facciata di Santa Maria del Fiore* (Association for the new façade of Santa Maria del Fiore) launch an international competition, which was then postponed until 1862 because of political issues related to unification. At this stage, the association changed its name to the *Deputazione promotrice dell'Opera del Duomo* (Delegation for the promotion of cathedral works), but maintained their total control over the cathedral works.¹⁷⁰

The competition's commission counted among its number high-profile exponents of nineteenth-century art and architecture, including Selvatico and Boito.¹⁷¹ Both scholars exercised a great influence over the commission, not only because of their reputations, but also because they came from Venice and Milan respectively, cities which in comparison to the narrow-mindedness of the Grand Duchies of central Italy were culturally advanced and more exposed to international currents.¹⁷²

It is in this context that Alvino and Boito first met. Both architects were members of the competition jury from 1862 and they contributed to the complex and long dispute concerning the façade. Factions were divided between those who felt the façade should be rebuilt according to a three-gable design and those who argued that it should follow a scheme that reflected more closely the church's roofline silhouette. Supporters of the former solution, which included Selvatico, who had considerable influence over members of the judging panel, justified the three-gable arrangement because it reflected the style of the rest of the Cathedral, which had been built at a time when Gothic architecture prevailed.¹⁷³

¹⁶⁷ *ibid.*

¹⁶⁸ Cozzi 2011:121-124

¹⁶⁹ Bruno, de Fusco 1962:106

¹⁷⁰ Rocchi 2006:375

¹⁷¹ The commission was formed by architects lecturing in the seven major Academies of Italy; Alvino representing the Academy of Naples and Boito the Academy of Milan. It is worth noting that each of the members was strongly affected by the traditions of their own institutions. Rocchi. 2006:375. These cultural differences possibly were at the motives that made the decisional process for the cathedral's façade very difficult and slow spanning for almost two decades.

¹⁷² Rocchi 2006:371

¹⁷³ Bruno, de Fusco 1962:109

The opposite faction, including Boito and Alvino, promoted the employment of a façade silhouette that matched the shape of the roofline. Their position was based on the fact that this is how the church appears in a fresco by Simone Memmi that faithfully represents Arnolfo di Cambio's original design. Also, considering the recent unification of Italy, they maintained that this format represented a more Italian style of architecture in contrast to the gabled sort, which they considered to be 'Nordic' or German.¹⁷⁴

The first competition of 1861–62 requested that projects should reflect in their architectural style and decoration the styles employed by the building's original designers of the fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries – Arnolfo di Cambio, Giotto and Filippo Brunelleschi. Therefore, the new façade had to be designed in accordance with the pre-existing structure, which should be reflected in the main elements and the decorative style of their façade designs.¹⁷⁵

Despite the large number of submissions in this first competition, which drew the attention of international architects, the commission was not able to select a winner.¹⁷⁶ A second contest was therefore launched and it was at this point, in 1864, that Alvino, formerly on the judging panel, presented his first project for the façade of the cathedral (Figure 18). Executed in tempera and watercolour, Alvino presented his proposal on a canvas twice the size of his competitor's projects. In addition, the painting was accompanied by a commentary illustrating Alvino's *modus operandi*, which he entitled 'Memoria illustrativa'.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁴ *ibid.* Bruno, de Fusco 1962:109: In occasion of the second competition for the Florentine façade of 1865, in which his project lost against the project by de Fabris', Alvino wrote a critical essay 'Gli orbi e il quadro di Simon Memmi', author's translation: The blinds and the painting by Simon Memmi' Florence 1865, in which he expressed his disappointment, justifying his choice for the 'basilica' scheme. Bruno, de Fusco 1962:106)

¹⁷⁵ Pugliano 2004:38

¹⁷⁶ Pietro Selvatico was initially called to participate as president of the commission, but he rejected the offer due to precarious health reasons. Nevertheless, as mentioned above, he strongly sustained the three-gable scheme for the façade. Emilio de Fabris, the architect who won the competition in 1865, as also proposed the same pseudo-gothic scheme. Selvatico advocates the three-gable arrangement as follows: 'sebbene le tre cuspidi costituiscono un fatto, speciale delle due cattedrali di Orvieto e di Siena, pur essendo tale fatto, coevo ad Arnolfo, mostra come esso fosse una caratteristica de'sacrij edificj, surta appunto in quell tempo e determinante lo stile religioso secondo i sistemi inventati ed adottati da Arnolfo stesso. Laonde, se egli avesse potuto alzare anche la facciata della Cattedrale fiorentina, l'avrebbe foggia come quella di Orvieto e di Siena, cioè con tre cuspidi.' Bruno, de Fusco 1962:106

¹⁷⁷ Pugliano 2004:42. The tempera on canvas project of Alvino measures 207x271cm and is kept today in the Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Florence.



Figure 18. Project for the Florentine Façade of Santa Maria del Fiore by Alvino, 1864

Alvino's project drew on a thorough study of the Cathedral, which featured a detailed survey of both the architecture that was still in place and available archival resources. The architect was mainly concerned with ornamentation and structural stability. He planned an initial phase of consolidating the façade based on the previously existing pilasters on the sides of the cathedral. The arrangement of these pilasters across the façade served to emphasise the internal division of the building, which was composed of a central nave and two side aisles, but these pilasters also served to buttress the façade. Within his plan for the façade Alvino maintained the size of the three entrances and kept the three round windows that were located above each entrance.¹⁷⁸

For the top of the façade Alvino selected the silhouette that corresponded with the slopes of the roofs that lie behind, in contrast to the three-gable design. He did so because he believed that it was more in line with the pre-existing form of the cathedral and that it recalled the Tuscan and, more importantly, Italian style of architecture, which

¹⁷⁸ Pugliano 2004:47

was in keeping with the spirit of unification of the time.¹⁷⁹ Alvino's principal idea for his project was to preserve the decorative unity of the cathedral, which featured grand proportions and a wealth of decorative elements. Indeed, his project was not based on the imitation of other façades, as Alvino believed that he had to consider the *fabbrica* (structure) itself as the principal reference point for the façade project. He believed that the façade needed to reflect the pre-existing geometric shapes found on the Cathedral.¹⁸⁰

As the cathedral had been built over a long period, it did not have one single architectural style. Alvino's aim therefore was to extract from his study of the building one style for the façade, which would harmonise the old with the new. He attempted to create a style that fused the cathedral's pre-existing features, which range across two centuries from the time of Arnolfo di Cambio to Brunelleschi. His ambition was to achieve a 'harmonisation of the whole' according to a Hegelian organic unity, a concept that was reiterated in Boito's writings and restoration theory.¹⁸¹ Compared to the French school of restoration, which aimed to achieve consistency within a single historical style, Alvino's restoration projects, and in particular his project for the cathedral façade, aimed to achieve harmony based on a fusion of the monument's styles from different periods.¹⁸²

Although Alvino's project was well received by both fellow contestants and the jury, he did not win the competition. His loss was mainly due to his choice of the silhouette that mimicked the skyline of the church that lay behind – strongly criticised by Selvatico. Boito also praised Alvino's project for the care with which he had conducted his research, for the artistic sensitivity and for the façade's monumental presence. However, the jury deemed the Neapolitan's architect façade as 'too heavy' and not adequately related to other parts of the church.¹⁸³

Alvino also presented a second project (now lost), which according to the jury recalled too much the style of the Neapolitan Spanish-gothic churches. At the Universal Exhibition of Vienna of 1873 Alvino presented another third and last project.

¹⁷⁹ *ibid.*

¹⁸⁰ Pugliano, Giuseppina. "L'opera di Errico Alvino fra antico e nuovo nel dibattito ottocentesco sul restauro." *Antico e nuovo. Architetture e Architettura*, edited by Alberto Ferlenga, Eugenio Vassallo and Francesca Schellino, Il Poligrafo, Padova, 2007: 211

¹⁸¹ Pugliano 2007:212, see also Pugliano 2004:20: As mentioned in the previous chapter, Hegel's partition of architecture was reiterated by Boito in the introduction of *Architettura del medioevo in Italia*, 1880. Organism and symbolism in architecture must represent the synthesis of structural and functional necessities; there is a mutual influence of these elements that work towards a unique 'whole' architectural structure and style and cannot be considered isolated one from another.

¹⁸² Pugliano 2007:207

¹⁸³ Cresti, Carlo, Mauro Cozzi and Gabriella Carapelli. *L'avventura della facciata: Il Duomo di Firenze, 1822-1887*. Il Bossolo, Livorno, 1987:121-22

This third design also failed to win. After a long debate, the three-gable façade project by the Florentine architect Emilio de Fabris was chosen. Under the strong influence of Selvatico, the jury expressed their desire to change some aspects of de Fabris' final project. In fact, the final project by de Fabris abandoned the three-gable scheme and opted instead for a skyline more like Alvino's original plan.

Boito's participation in the competition of the Florentine *Duomo*, as well as his opinions about the project are discussed by Maderna.¹⁸⁴ He was appointed as a member of the competition commission in 1862, at the same time as Alvino.¹⁸⁵ From the start, Boito was against the gothic three-gable solution suggested by Selvatico and in favour of a silhouette that matched the roofline. On the basis of extensive historical studies with the support of the scholar Cesare Guasti, Boito believed that the three-gable solution would be a mistake for the Florentine façade. For him, the three-gable design featured too many discrepancies with the structure that lay behind it. Guasti, who worked alongside Boito (as his researcher) for the restoration of the Paduan pilgrimage church of Saint Anthony (discussed later in this dissertation), supported Boito's position by maintaining that the church was not exclusively late medieval in style but included early Renaissance features. Boito, too, realised that the church's design has been modified at different times. In particular he understood that Arnolfo di Cambio's project of 1296 was adapted and enlarged in 1367, before Brunelleschi designed the dome in 1418.¹⁸⁶ Despite Boito's sensitivity of approach, he was not successful. The first competition, which ended in 1863, represented a temporary victory for the three projects that had the three-gable solution.

Boito, like Alvino, participated in the second competition of 1863/64, this time not as a member of the jury but as a competitor. His project avoids the triple gable, opting instead for one central gable and two lower flat-topped screen walls hiding the slope of the aisle roofs (Figure 19). In a letter of 1864 to his collaborator and friend Cesare Guasti, Boito explains his decision. He says that he included the gable because its steeply sloping sides harmonise better with the slender lines of the façade, the dome and the pinnacle-like tabernacles that crown the skyline. He also states that these tabernacles are not necessary at the sides, but they are on the façade, as they provide unity to the whole design. In addition, he also states that the lower gables over the side doors recall

¹⁸⁴ Maderna, *Camillo Boito. Pensiero sull'architettura e dibattito coevo*..1995:61

¹⁸⁵ The three-gable solution had been already proposed by the architect Nicola Matas (1798-1872) in 1842 – Boito defines Matas as the 'head' of the faction in favour of the three-gable solution. Zucconi1997:120 in *L'invenzione del passato*

¹⁸⁶ *ibid.*

the classical style of the Renaissance. He also suggests that the idea of a façade with a silhouette that imitated the roofline was more of a Renaissance idea, pointing out that there are no examples of churches built between the eighth and fourteenth centuries featuring gables that are parallel to the slope of the roofs; they always have sides steeper than the roofs behind. Boito concludes his letter by restating his aim of combining the various styles present in the existing structure.¹⁸⁷



Figure 19. Boito's project for the façade, 1864

Boito did not win this competition – critics stated that his project did not show a clear architectural concept and thought there were discrepancies between the upper and

¹⁸⁷ Cresti, Cozzi, Carapelli 1987:113-114

lower part divided by the balcony in between. They thought the gable was too pointed and the decorative part too crowded, without any relief.¹⁸⁸ As mentioned previously, in 1865 the jury decided to award the three-gable project of Emilio de Fabris.

A third competition was launched in 1867, with de Fabris's project once again beating Alvino's project as mentioned above. On this occasion, Boito presented a second project – now lost – that featured a three-gable design, with the central gable flanked by two lower ones.¹⁸⁹ It seemed at this point that Boito tried to comply with the position of Selvatico. Nevertheless his solution was not convincing to the jury, as they argued that Boito's project had a funereal quality.¹⁹⁰

With his project for Florence Cathedral Boito implicitly criticises the common nineteenth-century practice of designing facades that have no formal relationship with the church that lies behind. Boito believes that limiting the contest to the façade alone is a superficial intervention that does not conform to the whole of the structure and does not consider its functional and organic quality.¹⁹¹ His approach was to be put into effect by his pupil, Giuseppe Brentano, who designed the façade of Milan Cathedral in 1884.

No further competitions were held for the Duomo of Florence. Although the de Fabris project was approved, the vicissitudes of the remaking of the Florentine façade went on for almost two decades. Finally on 6 December 1883 a referendum voted in favour of the roofline silhouette for the façade, construction of which was now headed by the architect Luigi del Moro following the death of de Fabris earlier in 1883.¹⁹²

It is the remaking of another façade within a broader restoration project that characterises another major venture by Alvino discussed in the next paragraphs: the restoration of the cathedral of Amalfi, *Cattedrale di Sant'Andrea*. Alvino may have not won the competition for the Florentine cathedral, yet thanks to the contest his name had acquired major importance within the national debate about monument restoration. Indeed, the fact that his project had been involved in the long run off with the winning

¹⁸⁸ Cresti, Cozzi, Carapelli 1987:113 citing a critique that was published in the national newspaper "La Nazione", August 14th 1864.

¹⁸⁹ Boito's project of 1867 dated January 15th 1867 and was exhibited in the third room of the *Museo dell'Opera del Duomo* in Florence, a salso mentioned in the museum's catalogue of 1904. For information on Boito's project see comments from personal letters by Cesare Guasti dating 1866-1867 in the "Carte Guasti" kept in the *Biblioteca Roncioniana* in Prato. Cresti, Cozzi, Carapelli 1987:145

¹⁹⁰ Cresti, Cozzi, Carapelli 1987:145

¹⁹¹ Zucconi 1997:122 in *L'invenzione del passato*

¹⁹² Cozzi 2011:127

project by de Fabris made Alvino very popular, leading to his appointment as head of the restoration works for the Amalfi cathedral.¹⁹³

In 1862 the municipality decided to demolish the Baroque façade of the eighteenth century. This decision was also taken in view of a collapsing part of the façade that happened the year before. Hence, the demolition started in 1862. The first studies by the engineer Lorenzo Casalbore already revealed traces of the tenth century medieval façade made up of crossed arches, which would feature in Alvino's project. After Casalbore, another architect, Federico Travaglini, directed the works for few months in 1865; at last, Alvino was eventually appointed to direct the projects in May 1870.¹⁹⁴ Alvino handed in the first project in 1871. His proposal is based on the medieval traces that were recovered after the demolition of the Baroque façade. Alvino's growing interest for the study and re-creation of pre-existing architectural elements is evident – at the same time the scientific research does not hinder the architect in finding solutions for recreating the original style of the cathedral (Figure 20).

It is interesting to note that modern scholarship considers Alvino's work for the Amalfi cathedral as merely the work of architectural composition rather than restoration. With that in mind, the same scholarship acknowledges that the methodology employed by Alvino is remarkable, especially in terms of his study and scientific research of the cathedral's history and materials.¹⁹⁵

The goal of Alvino's project was to get rid of the Baroque alterations in the church and return it to a unified architectural style. He analysed the whole original plan of the church first and concluded that the major necessary works had to be executed around the area of the façade and in adjacent parts of the interior.¹⁹⁶ He worked on the traces of the previously demolished atrium and rebuilt it according to a stylistic comparison of other local styles, which included the Duomo of Salerno, the Duomo of Ravello and the Church di Sant'Angelo in Formis, Capua.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹³ Fiengo 1991:59 and Pugliano 2004:58

¹⁹⁴ Pane 2016:67

¹⁹⁵ Pugliano 2004:58

¹⁹⁶ The interventions in the interior of the cathedral will not be discussed in depth in this paper. However, for a detailed account see Fiengo, Giuseppe. *Il Duomo di Amalfi: restauro ottocentesco della facciata*. Centro di cultura e storia amalfitana, 1991 and Pugliano, Giuseppina. *L'opera di Errico Alvino fra antico e nuovo nel dibattito ottocentesco sul restauro*. In *Antico e Nuovo, Architetture e Architettura*. Il Poligrafo, Venezia 2007.

¹⁹⁷ Fiengo 1991:66

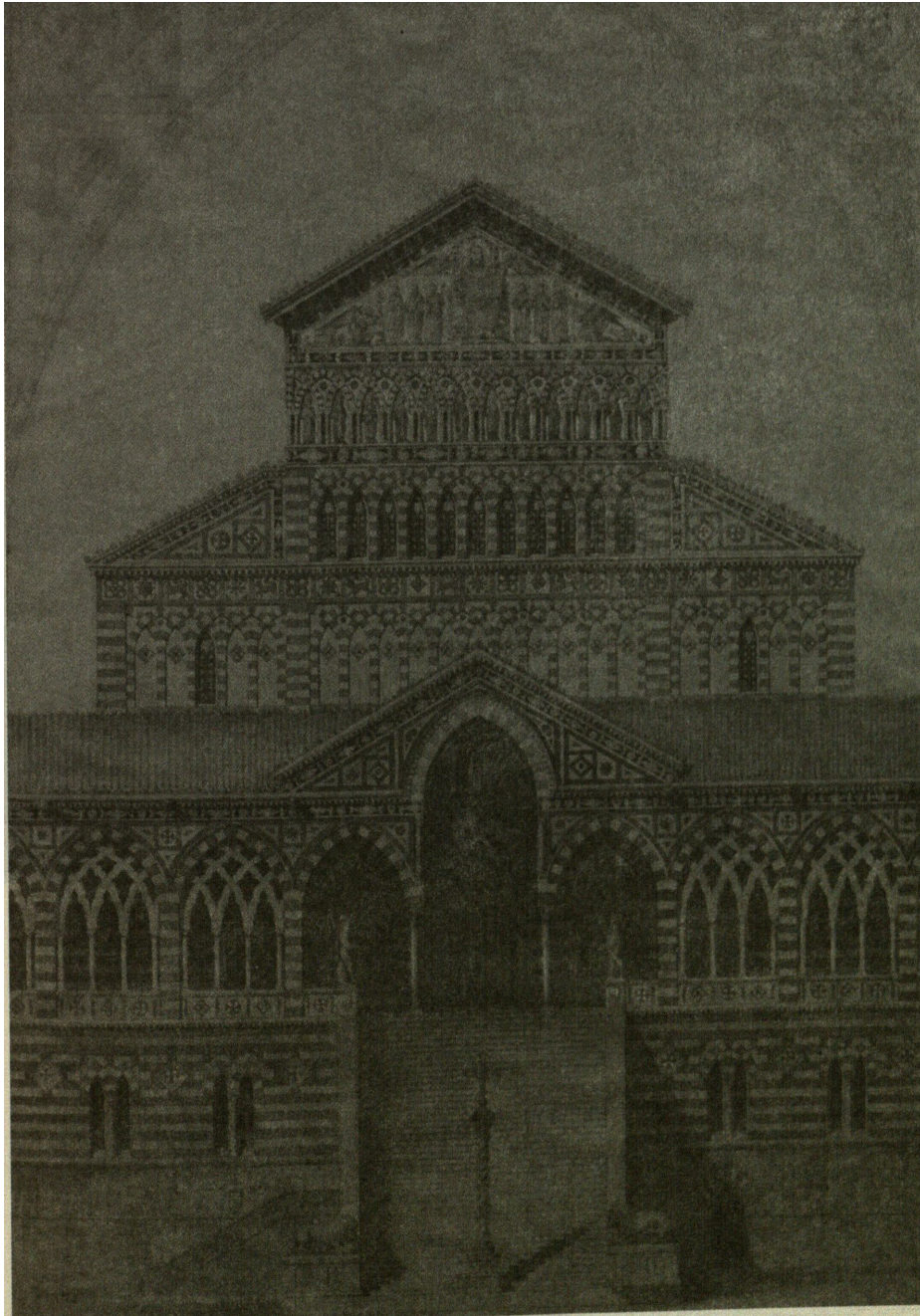


Figure 20. Restoration project for the façade of Amalfi's cathedral by Errico Alvino, 1871, watercolour on paper

Alvino was unable to finish his restoration as he died in 1876; at the time he had only built the atrium and the elevation of the walls. The project was however completed in

1891 by the architect Guglielmo Raimondi.¹⁹⁸ The final result of the façade is a medieval Norman style inspired by the architecture of the Italian southern regions.

The many on-site visits made by Alvino, as well as his study of the site and the lengthy correspondence written between Alvino and Andrea Camera, Mayor of Amalfi from 1870 to 1871, speak of the changes that occurred within restoration over the course of the Ottocento. In one letter to Camera, Alvino writes: "I studied the plan of the edifice, I measured its dimensions, taking into consideration the amount of historical elements that I was able to identify on this occasion, and I was glad to observe from up close the importance and the beauty of the early decoration, which may provide standards for positive results (...) I carried out the necessary studies in order to work out from the whole complex of the building the arrangement of the façade in question. I treasured the few things that have remained in place, comparing them with other buildings of the same period and that still exist in our southern regions, so that afterwards with no small difficulties of an aesthetic and artistic nature, I drew the project, which I had the honour to present to the municipality of Amalfi."¹⁹⁹

From the beginning of the project the architect clearly expressed his goals, which were to reinstate the cathedral's original appearance; his restoration would liberate the church from the Baroque modifications that 'spoiled and misinterpreted' the structure of the church, which featured 'a unique style' in terms of its 'configuration as a whole and also in its decorations that are truly stupendous' (Figure 21).²⁰⁰ The fact that Alvino treasured the pre-existing artistic and historical elements of the building, which he examined through historical, critical and iconographic research, distinguishes both his methodological approach and the quality of the results.²⁰¹

Eventually, Alvino's position in terms of his approach to restoration can be placed between the stylistic method of Viollet-le-Duc and the philological method established by Boito.²⁰² With regard to the similarities of the French architect, Alvino's project

¹⁹⁸ The project was given to the architect Guglielmo Raimondi (1849-1923), who completed the restoration with a few modifications. The triangular mosaic on the tympanum was made on the basis of a drawing by the painter Domenico Morelli (1826-1901). Pane 2016:66

¹⁹⁹ "Rilevai la distribuzione della pianta generale del tempio, ne misurai la dimensione delle fabbriche, tenendo conto di quanti vestigi delle antiche forme potevansi rinvenire; e fui lieto in tale occasione di osservare da vicino l'importanza e bellezza delle primitive sue decorazioni, le quali possono dar norme evidenti a positive divinazioni (...) mi occupai degli studi necessari per trarre dal complesso di tutto l'edificio la esterna configurazione della facciata di che si tratta. Feci Tesoro del poco che è rimasto al posto, confrontandolo con altre fabbriche dello stesso tempo, e che tutto'ora esistono nelle nostre regioni meridionali, per modo che, dopo non lievi difficoltà estetiche e artistiche, formai il disegno che ho avuto l'onore di rimettere al Municipio di Amalfi."G. Pugliano 2004:62; see also G.Fiengo, 1991:64-65

²⁰⁰ This was a statement of the Giunta per le Belle Arti after viewing Alvino's project, Fiengo 1991:65-66

²⁰¹ Pugliano 2004:62

²⁰² Pugliano 2007:212

features a strong willingness to recreate and recover the lost style of the monumental religious edifice that had been allegedly lost under Baroque stucchi. Harmonious style and completeness are among the chief goals to fulfil through restoration. As for the parallels with Boito's methodology of restoration, Alvino also follows a thorough procedure of scientific research and comprehensive art historical study of the monument throughout the ages.

The juxtaposition between the theory and practice of restoration in nineteenth-century Italy remained for several decades until the arrival of the theories of Gustavo Giovannoni and Cesare Brandi, which were developed well into the twentieth century. With that in mind, Alvino, D'Andrade, Paravicini and Boito represent the beginning of a conscious and scientific approach to restoration and cultural heritage conservation that marks the foundation of the modern discipline of monument restoration.

At the same time these architects operating in the nineteenth century had a strong awareness of the harmonious inclusion of ancient architecture into new urban arrangements.



Figure 21. Façade of the Amalfi Cathedral today

Alongside the conservation of monuments as a way to conserve, value and study the history of national cultural heritage, their restorations projects always feature the functional aspect of re-adapting ancient monuments to contemporary civic use. In Alvino's case, this is particularly evident in the previously discussed project for the new headquarters of the Academy Fine Arts in Naples, but also in the more artistic and monumental enterprise of Amalfi. As mentioned above, Alvino's activity as both an urban planner and architect coincides with the Bourbon initiatives to promote urban and public development and is bound to various trends in architecture that accompany the development of building in the second half of the Ottocento.²⁰³

The adaptation and adoption of ancient monuments and buildings to contemporary civic use was due to the structure and topography of Italian municipalities: mostly urban, crowded with buildings which often comprised structural strata dating back to different ages. Therefore, the harmonisation of this pre-existing architecture with modern urban plans was the main challenge for nineteenth-century architects. For example, the destruction of the Mercato Vecchio in Florence in 1884, Naples' urban development plan of 1884–85 for the Rettifilo (today's Corso Umberto I, a large avenue that cuts straight through the historical city centre), or the Milanese Piano Beruto of 1884, mentioned in the previous chapter, characterise the context in which the monument restoration projects cited in this research occur.

The adaptation of ancient monuments and edifices for contemporary functions made the process of conservation very complicated and required compromise between the conservation of art historical value and modernisation of the monument or historical building and its surroundings. The original features of the monument had to be preserved, but at the same time these had to meet with the contemporary needs of a society that was striving to become modern and that required, alongside the conservation of aesthetic elements, functionality and structural solidity.

Projects such as Alvino's adaptation of the monastery of *San Giovanni Battista delle Monache* in Naples and d'Andrade's restoration of the *Palazzo di San Giorgio* in Genoa convey a careful balance between demolition, conservation and renovation. Other monumental projects, such as the above-discussed venture of Santa Maria del Fiore, determine the national interest in cultural heritage as also the complexity of the restoration debate.

²⁰³ Bruno, de Fusco 1962:72

Opposing techniques of restoration, as well as ideological and methodological approaches were occurring within an unprecedented urban context. As a matter of fact, the status of monuments in developing urban environments during the years of post-unification Italy is something that differentiates Italian nineteenth-century monument restoration from any other current of restoration in European history. It is from this historical moment onwards that restoration and structural intervention on a historical monument consider both the conservation of the monument itself but also its value and purpose within a developing urban environment.²⁰⁴

In their restoration projects Paravicini, d'Andrade and Alvino had to challenge the clash between the 'ancient' and the 'new', between the pre-existing ancient environment and the necessities and use of monuments and buildings within modernising cities. Like Boito, these architects were faced with the challenging task of filling the turn of the century gaps between history and modernity, combining scientific studies and architectural creativity.

More in depth investigation on the relationship between monument, context and surrounding urban setting will be examined in the next chapter by the means of a selection of Boito's most significant monument and architecture restorations.

²⁰⁴ Concerning the investigation of Alvino and the relationship between the 'ancient' and the 'new' see also Serena Pesenti, "Antico Nuovo, Nuovo Antico. La difficile convivenza con la memoria. Riflessioni sull'identità storica della disciplina del restauro." *Antico e nuovo. Architetture e Architettura*, edited by Alberto Ferlenga, Eugenio Vassallo and Francesca Schellino, Il Poligrafo, Padova, 2007, pp. 353-354 and Torsello, Paolo. "I restauratori e la storia." *Antico e nuovo. Architetture e Architettura*, edited by Alberto Ferlenga, Eugenio Vassallo and Francesca Schellino, Il Poligrafo, Padova, 2007, pp.85-91.

Chapter IV. Boito's monument restoration: projects and methodology

The aim of this chapter is to discuss selected restoration projects by Boito and investigate how these can be positioned in relation to his ideas on monument restoration. The following paragraphs will convey a new reading of Boito's work in the context of post-unification Italy and within the broader current of the Italian and European conservation debate.

The final section of this chapter is dedicated to Boito's knowledge and use of the new technique of photography, which was introduced in Europe in the second half of the nineteenth century. The discovery of several photographs within the scattered personal archive of the architect at the Academy in Brera, offers relevant additional information on how Boito examined monuments and historical buildings within urban environments and how he used such technique for documentation and study.

Over the course of his long career, Boito undertook projects that comprised both restoration and architectural constructions. While, as it has been already mentioned in this research, restoration and architecture in nineteenth-century Italy were strongly connected through many practical and historical factors, this chapter will focus on the architect's restoration projects. Boito's monument restoration occurred in quite a complex political and organisational context: administrative and cultural differences in Italy stalled the development of a coordinated programme of cultural heritage conservation across the whole country.

At the same time, it is important to note that Boito's restoration enterprises occurred in central parts of cities, on buildings and monuments that required both the artistic and symbolic conservation and an adaptation which would meet the contemporary purpose of the building or monument. It is in this respect that Boito's projects often resulted as hybrids of monument conservation and architectural creations that inevitably cannot fully correspond to standardised guidelines of restoration.

Without disregarding scholarly critique that in specific cases tended to undermine Boito's practical skills in monuments restoration, the next sections will attempt to offer a comprehensive and original analysis of the architect's projects by considering the above-mentioned challenges and contextual factors.

Starting with the unrealised, yet first restoration project for the Church of SS. Maria e Donato in Murano, the following sections will then analyse the architect's restoration of the medieval gate of Porta Ticinese in Milan. Lastly, the chapter will discuss Boito's major restoration project (and re-composition as the architect defines his intervention) for the main altar in the Church of Saint Anthony in Padua.

The different types of these projects testify to the architect's flexibility in dealing with civic and religious themes, demonstrating a deep understanding of the context and purpose that, regardless of the more or less disputed results, always lies at the basis of his endeavours.

Monument restoration – part I: SS. Maria e Donato in Murano

Boito's restoration project for the Church of SS. Maria e Donato in Murano represents a milestone in Boito's approach to restoration. The project was never actually realised, but it was the architect's first formal undertaking in monument restoration.

As with other projects for which Boito was appointed, the architect's engagement for the restoration of the Muranese church was linked to Selvatico's prominent institutional position within the circles of fine arts as President of the *Commissione per la conservazione dei monumenti artistici e storici delle provincie venete* (Commission for the conservatoin of the artistic and historical monuments of the provinces of Veneto).¹ The Muranese church featured in Selvatico's census of the Monuments of the Veneto of 1859 (discussed later in this chapter); Boito was engaged for the project and this offered him the opportunity to demonstate his capabilities in the field of monument restoration.

Boito's restoration plan for Santa Maria e Donato is articulated in a letter written by Boito to Marquis Raffaele Pareto (1812–1882) (Appendix III).² In his letter to the Marquis, the architect reports how he was appointed to restore the Murano church in 1856 by the *Ufficio delle Pubbliche Costruzioni in Venezia* (Office for Public

¹ Zucconi 1997: 92-93

² Boito, Camillo. "Relazione del progetto di restauro per la basilica di S. Maria e Donato in Murano, con tavole." Tipografia di Domenico Salvi e Comp., Milano, 1861. More specifically concerning the addressee of the letter: Raffaele Pareto was the director of the *Giornale dell'Ingegnere Architetto e Agronomo* since 1860. Of noble origins, Pareto is member to many scientific, literary and artistic associations as also Minister of Agriculture, Industry and Commerce (from 1862-69). Pareto, contributed himself with several articles to the *Giornale* and in the new program, he declares his intention to look for contributors who are able to awake the attention and curiosity of engineers, architects and agronomists by publishing the reports of the projects they are working on. See "Indice delle testate. 399. *Giornale dell'Ingegnere, Achitetto, Agronomo*." , from the official website of Cultural Heritage in Lombardy, www.lombardiabeniculturali.it

Constructions in Venice). This same institution, as Boito reported in his letter, would go on to accuse him of withholding the project without completing the restoration within the agreed deadlines. The architect writes: “I had work to do, but family matters forced me to go to Poland, where I stayed for some time.³ When I returned to Venice, the political situation forced me to leave again until things changed. In the meantime, some accused me of taking the project with me and not respecting the deadlines.”⁴

As a matter of fact, in 1859 Boito joined the Austrian Military. However, he soon deserted due to patriotic motives and went first to Venice and shortly after to Milan, escaping the police and joining his brother Arrigo.⁵ Boito explains that he withheld the project as he feared that it might end up in the hands of the public administration, which may have misunderstood and ruined the project, causing irreversible damage to the ancient church.⁶

In the first paragraphs of Boito’s letter to Marquis Pareto, which from here on will be referred as the restoration project, the architect reports historical information about the Muranese Church. Boito correctly recounts that the church was first consecrated sometime before 999 as *S. Maria Assunta da Buono* (Boito’s research does not provide a precise date), only to be rededicated to the Virgin and *San Donato* in 1125.

Boito informs us that the vestiges of the first construction can be clearly identified, which means that the restoration can be executed on the basis of actual remains, particularly regarding the internal arrangement of the church. Boito believes that the walls of the aisles may not be as old as the apse because they are in a different style. The church, reports Boito, features architectural elements that fall between the Byzantine and Lombard style, with Arab references (Figure 22).⁷

³ As for family matters that forced Boito to return to Poland, the architect refers to the death of his mother.

⁴ Boito 1861:4: “Ebbi del lavoro; ma certe faccende famigliari m’obbligarono appunto allora a portarmi nella Polonia russa, dove rimasi qualche tempo. Ritornato a Venezia, alcune cause politiche fecero sì che dovetti abbandonare il paese, dove, finché le condizioni non mutino, non posso rimetter piede. Intanto alcuni mi fecero una colpa dell’avere portato meco il progetto della basilica, e di non averne compiuti gli sviluppi nel tempo prefisso.”

⁵ Crippa 1988:XXII

⁶ Boito 1861:4

⁷ Boito 1861:5



Figure 22. The Church of SS. Maria e Donato today, view from the apse.

In contrast to the interior, Boito argues that the façade does not feature any trace of the ancient structure as this was covered over in the seventeenth century during the Baroque period; a time when, according to Boito, neither antiquity nor beauty was able to save monuments from being treated with disrespect. The lack of original elements induces the architect to separate the façade from the early parts of the building that should be left intact and, as far as possible, free from the intervention of restoration.⁸

Already at this stage, Boito draws a clear line between the value of the early church and the later additions. This approach becomes clearer in the later passages of the report and is the reasoning behind Boito's process of selection between the original, i.e. ancient parts of a monument that will not be touched by restoration, and the later additions that may be cautiously removed.

According to the report, the façade was not the only part of the building that was so severely modified, eliminating any trace of the original design. Boito describes how the church was subject to further heavy Baroque modifications, such as the closing of irregular windows across the transversal walls of the right and left wing of the cross-shaped church. These had apparently been replaced with large semi-circular lunettes,

⁸ Boito 1861:6 "E dico che gl'indizi è soltanto dato trovarne, perché nel secolo barocco – secolo in cui né antichità, né bellezza valevano a preservare i monumenti dalla stolta profanazione (...)"

which according to Boito: “alongside their horrid aspect, were probably the cause of the church’s decay”.⁹

The Baroque restoration also included a barrel vault roof in the apse, the raising of the floor of the apse by three steps, which resulted in the covering of the bases of the columns and the marble floor, while leaving the original mosaic in the apse that features the Madonna on a golden background untouched.

Boito illustrated the state of conservation of the various architectural elements, meticulously providing the exact dimensions of the internal distribution of space. With the exception of the above mentioned aisle roof that was subject to Baroque restoration, Boito actually praises the beauty of the church’s roof. He believed it was finely built and probably dated to the fourteenth century or the first half of the fifteenth century and was in an excellent state of conservation.¹⁰

Nonetheless, the architect notes that the overall condition of the building was not great: the walls of the aisles leaned severely to the right. The structure, argues Boito, was basically being held together by the roof. The walls are also crooked and Boito judged that it may not be possible to restore them due to the *eplectum* technique with which they had been built (with bricks on both sides of the walls but filled with broken up pieces of stone, bricks and lime).

The architect is severely critical of the later Baroque additions, especially when comparing them to the older parts of the church. For example he described the altars of the church, which were Baroque reconstructions, as ‘ugly, yet rich in valuable marbles’ and therefore suggested they should be used for new altars or sold in order to acquire new ones.¹¹

This stance on later additions on the moment seems a long way from the declarations made by Boito in his Charter of Restoration of 1883, which he presented to the public two decades later. As mentioned in the second chapter of this research, the Charter clearly states that the historical layers of a building should be respected regardless of style and taste and that this should be a fundamental aspect of the methodology of

⁹ Boito 1861:6

¹⁰ Boito 1861:6

¹¹ Boito 1861:9 :“Gli altri son tutti dell’eta’ barocca, brutti, ma ricchi di di pregevoli marmi. L’altar maggiore ha due statue di marmo e il tempietto: due grandi stanno nelle braccia traverse, due minori nelle cappelle presso l’abside: altri nelle navi laterali. Di questi altari si puo’ trarre profitto pei nuovi, o adoperandone il materiale o vendendoli.”

scientific restoration. The creative intention of the architect, which does not necessarily follow the evidence found in the remains of the ancient building, comes across even more in the subsequent paragraphs of the report. For example, the planning of five new altars in the “Byzantine” style demonstrates that Boito was moderately influenced by a more ‘creative’ approach to restoration that was widely adopted in the 1860s in Italy. Also, it demonstrates that the architect, in this first restoration project, was not yet adopting a methodology exclusively or based mainly on scientific evidence, but rather on an explanatory and interpretative reasoning: “The necessities of the Church obliged me to plan five new altars, where I would have wanted only the ones in the apse and the ones in the side chapels. These three altars will be covered by a marble baldachin, in Byzantine manner; the main altar will be elevated by five steps from the ground, behind that will be the *martyrium*, where the bodies of S. Donato and S. Lorenzo will be deposited.”¹²

With regard to the façade, Boito reports that unfortunately the studies he had conducted on Romanesque Lombardesque buildings (buildings featuring an architectural style that was typically adopted in Lombardy, between the eleventh and the thirteenth century) as well as the Byzantine structures of Ravenna and Venice and buildings dating from 1000AD in the Papal States and Tuscany were not of much use for this specific case. The style of the Muranese church is so untypical that the architect could only make a humble attempt and imagine its original prospect.¹³

Despite the little value that Boito placed on the existing Baroque façade, he emphasised the effort that he had made to preserve as much as possible of the ancient structure, maintaining the rectangular shape of the entrance gate and the low-relief sculpture representing Saint Donato and an adoring believer.¹⁴ However, given that almost none of the original remains of the façade could be traced, Boito’s intention was to rebuild the façade from scratch and erase the traces of the Baroque version.¹⁵

Boito suggests rebuilding entire sections of the church even where traces can be found of the original building. This approach is motivated by the need to preserve the

¹² Boito 1861:10: “Le esigenze della chiesa m’obbligarono a progettare cinque nuovi altari, mentre io non avrei voluti che soltanto quelli dell’abside e delle cappelle laterali. Questi tre altari verran coperti da un baldacchino marmoreo, a guisa de’bizantini; il maggiore sarà rialzato da terra cinque gradini, e di dietro avrà il *martyrium*, dove si deporranno i corpi di S. Donato e di S. Lorenzo. (...)”

¹³ Boito 1861:11

¹⁴ Boito 1861:11

¹⁵ Boito 1861:12

structural stability of the church and to endow the building with an appearance of unity. In his report Boito states that the exterior and interior of the church will be recreated following the style of the ancient remains.¹⁶ The interior restoration was to be carried out in the Byzantine style, featuring a comprehensive intervention, including the total repainting of the roof “with geometric patterns, coloured with various and lively tones”¹⁷. The new altars would also be arranged in a Byzantine style, made in diverse and multi-coloured marbles.¹⁸

After providing a thorough description of his comprehensive restoration plan, Boito seems to take a sudden U-turn and the architect’s enthusiasm is reined in: “The restoration should be performed slowly and by a few experts only [...] renovating the monuments of antiquity is a foolish profanation’ (...) Unfortunately this appalling profanation happens frequently these days...”¹⁹ This changing and more cautious attitude is finally sanctioned by the following statement: “We should only intervene as far as the monument’s material conservation is concerned; every ancient shape should be respected religiously, as should every irregularity, every colour, every stain, which time – a great painter and harmoniser – has made the monument a living entity.”²⁰

Boito’s report can be seen as an indicator of the binary and often opposing tendencies of nineteenth-century restoration in Italy. On the one hand, the tendency is to approach the monument with a scientific methodology based on tangible facts and historic traces. However, the identification of ancient remains and the intention to preserve them coexists with the established practice and desire to renovate the monument and make it pristine. This process partly stems from a desire to revive the ancient past that lasted throughout the nineteenth century; a century that marked the beginning of the modern era, but which was also characterised by revivals in art and architecture that featured anastylosis (the reassembling of monuments from fallen or decayed fragments, which also incorporated new materials when necessary) and often resulted in anachronisms.

¹⁶ Boito 1861:13: “Tutte le forme organiche, le colonne, gli archi, le finestre, i tetti sono riprodotti sui resti e sugli indizi antichi.”

¹⁷ Boito 1861:13 Il tetto si ornerà con intrecciamenti geometrici, colorati a varie e vivaci tinte. Gli altari, tutti rinnovati, come s’è detto, e composti nel modo bizantino, con tabernacoli sostenuti da colonne, si costruiranno in diversi marmi, e dipingeranno a varie tinte dorandone i capitelli e alcuni altri ornamenti.

¹⁸ Boito 1861:13: “Gli altari, tutti rinnovati, come s’è detto, e composti nel modo bizantino, con tabernacoli sostenuti da colonne, si costruiranno in diversi marmi, e dipingeranno a varie tinte, dorandone i capitelli e alcuni altri ornamenti.”

¹⁹ Boito 1861:10: “Vuolsi sfuggire come profanazione stoltissima il pulire, il lavare, il rimodernare i monumenti dell’antichità”; e purtroppo in questa profanazione stoltissima si cade spesso fra noi.” Boito 1861:13

²⁰ Boito 1861:14: “Bisogna mettervi le mani solo quel tanto ch’è utile alla materiale conservazione di essi (dei monumenti, n.d.r.); ma rispettare conviene religiosamente ogni antica forma e irregolarità; rispettare ogni tinta, ogni macchi, di che il tempo – gran pittore e armonizzatore – colori l’edificio.”

Both the addition of architectural features as well as the removal of later additions that were not considered historically and artistically relevant, frequently featured in Boito's later restoration projects. As seen above, scholarly literature has been mostly critical of Boito's activity as a restorer, accusing him of contradicting his own methodology. Yet in this regard, we should consider the different historical and artistic values that Boito (and generally nineteenth architects) gave to medieval art and architecture dating from the tenth to thirteenth century as compared to other styles of later centuries, e.g. Baroque.

For example, Romanesque architecture was praised in the wake of the medieval revival for its symbolic, spiritual and cultural meaning. This appreciation was also due to the component of nationalism, which the country was experiencing and seeking especially during and after the period of unification in the 1860s. Scholars were looking at artistic models of reference in order to define a common national style, mostly appreciating styles bearing strong symbolic and cultural values.

By contrast, nineteenth-century architects considered the Baroque style as frivolous, which evidently could not be a characteristic worthy of conservation. Nineteenth-century restoration was therefore influenced by this conception of architectural styles. As discussed below, Boito's activity as a restorer should also be considered from the point of view of his nature as an architect and to a certain extent, his biased conception of architecture.

Throughout his career Boito developed his knowledge and methodology of restoration, which changed according to his maturity.²¹ At the same time, his understanding of Italian medieval architecture and his conception of architecture as a field that had to be both symbolic and in accordance with the local style and culture remained unchanged during the four decades of his activity.

Boito measured the worth and significance of past architectural styles according to a value provided by specific parameters, such as the artistic and the symbolic ones. For example, as seen above, in the eyes of the architect, additions or renovations in the Baroque style were not worth preserving due to its cultural associations with frivolity and fussy artistic and architectural style. Baroque additions clashed with the original

²¹ Calebich, Emma. "Boito a Murano: contraddizioni e coerenze nella pratica del restauro." *Camillo Boito. Un protagonista dell'Ottocento italiano*. Marsilio, edited by Zucconi, Guido, and Tiziana Serena, Venezia, 2002:79

medieval style of the monument as well as with the symbolic religious message. It is therefore through the lens of these parameters that nineteenth century restoration, and more specifically Boito's work on monument conservation, needs to be looked at.²²

Boito regarded the architecture of the church of Murano as an outstanding and significant example in the history of Italian architecture. The architect's notion of the value of medieval architecture, which according to the architect is exemplified by the church of *SS. Maria e Donato*, is the basis on which he lays out his project.

Among the many elements of Boito's approach to restoration there are two main ones that he seems to follow in his scheme for the church in Murano: firstly the state of conservation of the church and secondly the structural soundness of the existing architectural elements. According to Boito, the apse of the church appears to be well built, well preserved and 'beautiful'.²³ The roof is also well constructed and preserved, hence Boito clearly states in his report that this section will remain unspoiled by the restoration work.²⁴ Again, he underlines that the Baroque façade needs heavy intervention in order to comply with the original style of the Muranese church. Finally, the architect opts to transform the façade rather than just simply demolishing it, for reasons of structural stability.²⁵

In his report Boito often uses the word 'remake', specifically with regard to the façade, which he aims to recreate in a way that is 'freely inspired by the special features of the building' in order to create a unified building.²⁶

In the subsequent paragraphs of the report, the architect comments about the condition of the interior and exterior walls of the church, which are in a bad state of repair.²⁷ The church's architectural and artistic value is of great importance to Boito. His choices in terms of restoration are based on the acknowledgment of the artistic

²² In regards to these concepts of parameters see Calebich 2002:80

²³ Boito 1861:14: "Se in questa bellissima abside di Murano avesse col restauro a scemare l'artistica appariscenza e l'importanza archeologica, io consiglierei di lasciarla come al presente s'ammira."

²⁴ Boito 1861: 14, see also Calebich 2002:83

²⁵ Calebich 2002:83

²⁶ Boito 1861:11-12: "che si ispiri liberamente ai caratteri speciali della chiesa". Also, the term 'freely' acquires in Boito's context an ambivalent connotation: to this regard, Calebich establishes a connection with Boito's writing of 1884 (more than two decades later than the restoration project of the Chiesa) *I restauratori*. In this text of 1884 architect states that restorations can be implemented in two ways: on the one hand there are restoration projects that are developed from scratch, on the other there are restorations that are performed on ancient art with the sole purpose of conservation – and these cannot be defined 'real restorations' concludes the architect. The consecution to this statement is that Boito considers the validity of restoration or lack thereof, for motives that are completely opposed to one another.

²⁷ Boito 1861:7-8 and 1861:11-12

and construction values of the building, and a technical assessment of the state of conservation of the architectural elements.²⁸

Boito's restoration plan for the Murano church pivots on the idea that restoration had to reveal the original medieval style of the monument. Boito is not afraid to attempt a complete reconstruction of elements of the church and he planned to eliminate all the chapels in the right aisle, and to remove the Baroque altars and Palladian windows in order to reopen the original ones in the transept and central nave. In addition, he planned a new altar with a ciborium to be located in the presbytery, between the transept and the choir.

Once restored, the interior space was to be decorated with frescoes on a golden or yellow background to match the mosaic in the apse.²⁹ The appreciation that Boito held for the ancient apse comes across in the last paragraphs of his report, in which he suggests leaving the apse untouched: "If restoration would harm this beautiful apse in Murano, ruining its artistic appearance and archaeological relevance, then I would suggest leaving it in its current condition."³⁰

The original state of the apse and its beauty, which had remained untouched over time, prompted Boito to change his approach and leave the medieval parts of the building as they were because they are part of the original structure of the church. Boito's restoration methodology is respectful of the elements that are original and intrinsic to a monument such as the distribution of the space and the structure of the building itself as well as the original decoration. He deems these as fundamental for the conservation of the monument's originality and may only modified if they threaten the stability of the edifice.

At the same time, Boito maintains different approaches towards elements of a monument that he considered as extrinsic, such as the function of the monument and the historical context.³¹ These vary according to time and circumstances and therefore he does not deal with them in a 'standardised' manner but rather adapts his restoration projects according to contextual requirements.

²⁸ Calebich 2002:83

²⁹ Fontana, Vincenzo. *Il nuovo paesaggio dell'Italia giolittiana*. Laterza, 1981:52

³⁰ Boito 1861:14: "Se di questa bellissima abside di Murano avesse col restauro a scemare l'artistica appariscenza e l'importanza archeologica, io consiglierei di lasciarla come al presente si ammira."

³¹ Calebich 2002:80

Even in his early restoration projects, Boito did not make interventions on the main elements of a monument, but adjusts his plan according to the contemporary surroundings and the urban, social and historical context, as he did for the Porta Ticinese in Milan.

This consideration of the monument's context explains why, despite the many renovations planned by the architect in his restoration projects, Boito succeeded in remaining consistent in spite of his seemingly opposed statements. By considering both the historical value of the monument as well as the contemporary purpose of the church, Boito's project for *SS. Maria and Donato in Murano* is a hybrid project: his restoration is not just a question of pure conservation as he also suggests new interventions: he does not aspire to completely destroy and rebuild the church from scratch but takes into account the original style and history of the building.³²

It is this flexibility that is the innovative aspect of Boito's approach to restoration; the ability to change the level of intervention required according to the purpose of the building and its context. One further aspect that becomes evident from Boito's restoration plan for the Muranese church is that the line between restoration and renovation is quite fine. This blurred line becomes particularly clear when the building is unstable and had been subject to modifications throughout the ages – with alterations that do not comply with the original style of the monument.

One of the main features of Boito's restoration projects was his use of local artisans and artists. Not only would these people profit economically from restoration of monuments; above all they would be able to contribute to the restoration due to their familiarity with the local materials and knowledge of the local artistic styles. In addition, the sourcing of restoration material would also be a beneficial factor for the local economy. In his projects Boito envisioned bringing together the various techniques of craftsmanship based on the models of medieval artisans.³³

Selvatico had already identified the above-mentioned themes: between 1852 and 1853 the first institutions for cultural heritage conservation were established in the Lombard-Veneto region. Following the French model, these institutions responded to

³² Calebich 2002:89

³³ Zucconi 1997:86. This aspect of re-unification of craftsmanship and artisanship based on medieval guild-like models emerged in many of Boito's projects and will be further discussed within the framework of the monumental restoration of the Basilica del Santo in the last paragraphs of this dissertation.

a central commission composed of local art historians and experts on conservation. Within this administrative framework Selvatico, together with Cesare Foucard, was appointed as supervisor of the most important monuments in the Veneto. Between 1858 and 1859 these two scholars compiled and published the first census of the monuments, the *Monumenti artistici e storici delle provincie venete* (Artistic and historical monuments of the Veneto regions) (Appendix IV).³⁴

It is not by chance that the Murano church appears in that first report drafted by Selvatico and Foucard in 1859, where it is listed as among the four most important monuments that were of interest to the royal institution, which had been established under the rule of the Austrian Emperor Ferdinand Maximilian I (1832–1867) the governor of the Lombard-Veneto Kingdom until unification.³⁵

The census document precedes Boito's restoration project at *SS. Maria e Donato* in Murano and is a testimony to the earliest measures of restoration and conservation drafted for the church by two officials during the pre-unification period. The document also illustrates the *modus operandi* in the area of restoration and cultural heritage conservation in the years before Boito and his philological and scientific methodology.

Furthermore, by comparing Boito's report to that of Selvatico it is clear that in this first endeavour, the student imitates his master's approach. Selvatico's account begins with a detailed description of the church, citing the antiquity of the church and its value, which featured monolithic columns made of Greek marble, as well as chapels and pictorial and architectural elements. At the same time, without hesitation, he identifies the different additions and historical layers of the building, which demonstrate the church's history: "(The church)...takes the form of a basilica with three aisles, at the end of which are three apses. The division between the main nave and two side aisles is articulated through the middle by two pilasters, which close off each side, interrupting the wall that serves to divide the apses. These columns are probably taken from other ancient edifices and are all in Greek marble and are connected by brick arches [...]." ³⁶

³⁴ Selvatico's competences were limited to Padua only from the 1860s onwards. Zucconi 1997:87

³⁵ The other relevant monuments comprised in the report are St. Mark's Basilica in Venice, the Palazzo della Ragione in Vicenza and Mantegna's Eremitani Chapel in Padua. Murano's cathedral and St. Mark's Basilica however, are the sole monuments illustrated with relief plates, as also conveyed by Zucconi. 1997:90fn

³⁶ Selvatico, Pietro, and Cesare Foucard. *Monumenti artistici e storici delle provincie venete, descritti dalla Commissione istituita da Sua altezza i. r. il serenissimo Arciduca Ferdinando Massimiliano Governatore Generale*. Imperiale Regia Stamperia di Stato, Milano, 1859:1: "L'iconografia ha la forma di basilica a tre navi, chiusa da tre absidi. La divisione delle tre navi nel braccio maggiore si forma a mezzo di due piloni per parte, chiudenti fra loro da ogni lato, interrompono

Selvatico also points out the additions that he considers to be very tasteless, such as the decoration in the apses and the Baroque altar that he describes as a 'horrible Baroque altar'; an attitude, which was clearly adopted by Boito.³⁷

It is beyond the scope of this dissertation to analyse in full the second part of Selvatico's in-depth history of the church, but it is perhaps worth noting that the master did undertake a fully cross-referenced search of all the available historical sources on the church, identifying that it was already in existence before 999AD; a piece of information that Boito would use in his own report. Furthermore, Selvatico suggested that the church had been erected in the second half of the tenth century, although he does concede that some scholars believe that the church was entirely rebuilt in later times. However he believes some parts of the building, such as the aisles, cannot possibly be later additions, as they are connected to the apse and are therefore part of the original construction of the church.³⁸

The fourth, fifth and final sections of Selvatico's report are the most relevant to this chapter, as he discusses the conservation status of the church as well as the restoration measures that are needed in order to stop the building from collapsing. However, according to Selvatico the apse of the church was still quite solid; an assessment that was later repeated by Boito. In contrast to Boito's more discursive style, Selvatico clearly describes in detail the condition of the church, stating that all the walls have large cracks that stretch from the bottom to the top, that the bonding points in the corners are severely decayed, the dividing walls on the left side of the church are severely slanted as are the columns. Selvatico believes the church would soon crumble if it weren't for the right wall, somewhat still solid, as well as the vaulted ceiling which was also holding the walls together.³⁹

Selvatico decides that given the condition of the church it is not possible to not carry out a full restoration and so provides instead a series of steps that should be taken to restore and conserve the building. The aim of simply conserving the building and respecting the traces of the original building is balanced against the possibility of totally renovating it and Selvatico acknowledges that the gap between the two

il muro che serve a spartire fra loro le tre absidi. Queste colonne, tolte evidentemente da piu' antichi edificj, sono tutte di marmo greco, ed unite fra loro a mezzo di archi laterizj emisferici ad alto peduccio."

³⁷ Selvatico, Foucard 1859:1-2: "Fu rialzato di tre gradini l'abside, e ingoffito da un brutto altare barocco."

³⁸ Selvatico, Foucard 1859:12

³⁹ Selvatico, Foucard 1859:13

approaches is marginal.⁴⁰ As a consequence, he suggests demolishing the damaged section of the apsidal wall and reconstructing the three aisle walls in their original form. The thorough study and evaluation of the church's structure is the first fundamental step in this intervention, suggests Selvatico.⁴¹ He also believes that the ceiling does not need restoration due to its excellent conservation status; a conclusion also shared by Boito in his report.

Among the seventeen points of restoration outlined in Selvatico's report, is the suggestion to demolish a chapel that was a later addition, 'out of respect' for the church's original medieval style.⁴² This statement is a clear example of the somewhat invasive restoration approach that was practiced in Italy before the development of a scientific methodology, and which, as we have already seen, continued to be used well into the beginning of the twentieth century, even decades after Boito issued the Charter of Restoration in 1883.

More importantly however, it is proof of the great disparity in value that the Ottocento restoration movement placed on architectural styles of the past. In this particular case we see the appreciation for medieval art and architecture and the destruction of other architectural elements executed in different styles. The parameters within which a building was assessed for restoration was therefore biased according to the value the architect placed on one style or another. Due to the fact that it was often too late to recover the original remains of a building, restoration was not only about freeing the original parts from later additions, but also recreating the medieval style in order to give the [false] impression of a harmonious whole.

This comes across clearly in Selvatico's and Boito's reports on the Murano church. In the last sections of his report, Selvatico lists several areas which are to be restored using a 'cut and paste' method, removing and adding certain architectural elements such as the altars according to necessity and selective artistic criteria that aim to return the church to a pristine condition; that is, the church's condition at the time of its construction in the tenth century.

⁴⁰ Selvatico, Foucard 1859: 15

⁴¹ Selvatico, Foucard 1859: 15-16 : "Conviene dunque, a parer nostro demolire tutta la parte guasta fino al muro absidale, e poi ricostruire le tre navi esattamente con nuova muratura, nello stato primitivo in cui esser doveano al momento della loro costruzione (...) Bisogna fare un rilievo esatissimo, sia dentro che fuori dello stato attuale delle tre navi nella ossatura lor primordiale, tracciando diligentemente le bifore e i triforij che si vedono esteriormente e che vennero murati."

⁴² Selvatico, Foucard 1859: 16: "E' debito di reverenza all'arte del medio evo demolire la cappella che fu aggiunta negli ultimi anni, dissonante, per ogni ragione al carattere della chiesa."

It must be noted that the very existence of Selvatico's report marked the determination to classify, monitor and preserve cultural heritage within the regional, i.e. national territory. Although Italy was not yet a unified country in 1859, it becomes clear that the conservation of monuments would be an essential consideration within the governmental policies of the new country. Compared to Germany and France, where cultural heritage protection policies developed alongside the movement for nationalism and patriotism even before unification, Italy only made the 'monument' a central topic of its politics in the late 1860s, after unification.⁴³

It is in the wake of the newly acquired significance of the monument that Boito obtained this first professional appointment. In his report, Boito describes the church in Murano as one of the most beautiful monuments in Italy and it was probably his first opportunity to turn the ideas he had learnt from his master Selvatico from theory into practice.⁴⁴

Referring back to Boito's report, 'observation' seems to be the key word: the examination of the church via various different methods of study, from preliminary drawing to on-site examination, is Boito's method of working.⁴⁵ However, the truly important aspect of Boito's restoration project lies in the identification of historical and artistic coordinates that serve as markers throughout his restoration procedure.⁴⁶ In a second stage, the architect began his process *ad excludendum*, leading, as recommended by his master Selvatico, to the re-creation of the fourteenth-century façade and the demolition of the later additions of the sacristies and chapels.⁴⁷

Following the steps of his master, Boito focused on the symbolic and quintessential style of the church. In addition, thanks to stratigraphic examinations and extensive research, Boito casts light on the most important early remains of the church: the apse and the floor made of marble tiles.⁴⁸ As a last step concluding his restoration plan, Boito extended the decorative stripes along the sides of the church, making it a unifying architectural feature.⁴⁹

Recent studies have established the degree of Boito's intervention at the site and have argued that the central nave acted as a focal point for the restoration project to which

⁴³ Zucconi 2002:89

⁴⁴ Boito 1861:3 "(...) bellissimo e singolare monumento dell'architettura fiorita in Italia nel cadere de decimo secolo."

⁴⁵ Zucconi 1997:90

⁴⁶ Zucconi 1997:91

⁴⁷ *ibid.*

⁴⁸ *ibid.*

⁴⁹ *ibid.* See also Boito's statement: "Questo ornamento, cavato dall'abside ha ufficio di legare tutta la facciata, e di darle insieme unita' e movimento." Boito 1861:11

all the other elements were related, including the side aisles.⁵⁰ According to Zucconi the project threw up many issues of how to harmonise the old with the new, but Boito did manage to coordinate the two.⁵¹

Zucconi reveals a new perspective on Boito, which looks at the many aspects of Boito's career as architect and restorer that are inevitably co-dependent on one another and therefore reflect the architect's work on many levels as will be discussed in the next paragraphs. This approach to Boito's work is quite different from Liliana Grassi's 1959 study. Despite being the first wide-ranging monograph on Boito, Grassi categorised the architect as someone whose ideas were advanced but whose practice was mediocre.⁵²

Boito's restoration project for the Murano church was never carried out the way the architect intended and many of his proposals remained only on paper. This was due to two main reasons, firstly the death of his mother took him back to Poland for a period of time and, secondly, political factors prevented him from being able to realise his project. In 1862 the *Ufficio provinciale delle pubbliche costruzioni* (Provincial office of public works) decided to limit Boito's restoration project to the most essential work. This included the apse, which was reconstructed between 1864 and 1868.⁵³

G. E. Street's 1874 publication, *Brick and marble in the Middle Ages: notes of tours in the north of Italy*, provides an indication of the way in which the church had been restored in the 1860s, after Boito had abandoned the project: "Farther on Murano is passed, and a halt made for a visit to the church of San Donato – once a building of the highest interest and well known to all readers of Mr. Ruskin's books.

Unfortunately my first visit to this church was after it had been in part "restored", in the largest and worst sense of the word. The old brickwork was being renewed, plastered, and painted up, till most of its interest had vanished; and now I fear, only those who saw San Donato some ten years ago can have any idea of its architectural value and interest.

⁵⁰ Zucconi 1997:92, 121fn. The recent studies to which the author refers to are *Possibili apporti della lettura stratigrafica al restauro architettonico. Osservazioni sul caso del Duomo di San Donato a Murano, del Ponte Pietra a Verona, del Duomo di S. Andrea a Venzone* 2. Vols. A Quendolo, tesi di laurea, relatore, F. Doglioni, 1990-1991, Istituto Universitario di architettura di Venezia, a.a. 1990-91

⁵¹ Zucconi 1997:92

⁵² Grassi 1959. Zucconi cites the exact words by Grassi: "in Boito convivono un teorico anticipatore e un progettista incoerente, oltre che mediocre." Zucconi 2002:3. Zucconi observes, that even if consistent scholarly critique has been published on Boito's work since Liliana Grassi's monograph on the architect of 1959, this latter still represents the most complete oeuvre illustrating the architect's activity. Zucconi 1997:177

⁵³ Zucconi 1997:93

This was chiefly centred in the east front, where there is a central apse with a lean-to end to the aisle on either side. The wall is divided into two stages, by a bold string-course and double line of chevrons formed by recessing brickwork and inserting panels of coloured and carved white marble. The lower stage is arcaded mainly in red brick, whilst the upper has a wall deeply recessed behind arcades under the eaves, with delicate balustrades between the columns, which carry the arcades. This upper part of the building is mainly buff coloured bricks, with thin lines of red to mark the pattern of arches, and it is curious that the light bricks are much larger than the red. The pavements here are very fine examples of *Opus Alexandrinum* with a more than usual proportion of black marble, and there is a grand mosaic in the apse, of the B.V. Mary and Our Lord on a gold ground [...].⁵⁴

In terms of Boito's approach and methodology, he followed the path of science, derived from a historical and stylistic investigation of the building, rather than arbitrary guidelines.⁵⁵ Boito's awareness that he is following a scientific path comes across clearly in his letter to Marquis Raffaele Pareto written in reply to the criticisms of Federico Schmidt (then professor at the Brera Academy of Fine Arts, Milan), which had offended him. Schmidt was critical of Boito's removal of the main altar from the apse, but in his letter Boito claims that he did so in order to comply with the character of medieval Italian churches.⁵⁶

Boito's restoration project for the church of *SS. Maria e Donato in Murano* is a testimony of Italian monument conservation and restoration theory during the nineteenth century and includes some key points that the architect will go on to develop in his later works. Next to the conservation measures of the building, the architect aims to respect and preserve the historical layers of a monument, which however contrast with his desire to return the building to a unified style. These contrasts will however become less evident in Boito's later restoration projects. As discussed in the next paragraphs with his restoration project of the medieval gate *Porta Ticinese* in Milan, the architect developed more refined approaches to restoration throughout his career, successfully dealing with the purposes of the monument and its adaptation to the surrounding environment. With that in mind, the

⁵⁴ Street, George Edmund, *Brick and marble in the Middle Ages. Notes of tours in the North of Italy*. Second Edition. John Murray Albemarle Street, London, 1874:172

⁵⁵ Zucconi 1997:94

⁵⁶ *ibid.* and Boito 1861:4-5: "La s'immagini, signor Marchese, che io aveva collocato l'altar maggiore fuori dell'abside, come fu comune uso nelle chiese italiane del medio evo, e costante in quelle di forma basilicale; ebbene, lo Schmidt asseriva che l'abside in ogni chiesa cristiana e' e fu sempre destinata ad accogliere l'altar maggiore."

unvaried element in Boito's restoration process remains scientific investigation and historical examination.

Monument restoration – part II: the Porta Ticinese in Milan

In 1861, five years after the Murano church project, Boito was engaged with the restoration of the Porta Ticinese in Milan. This project was quite different from the project of the Church of SS. Maria e Donato in Murano: the focus was now on civic medieval architecture in a rather busy spot of the city, presenting different requirements and challenges as compared to the restoration of a religious place.

The Porta Ticinese is located in the south of Milan and originally stood at the beginning of the road leading to Pavia. It is part of the city walls, which encircle Milan and were erected after Federico Barbarossa destroyed the city in 1162.⁵⁷ According to Grassi in his monograph on Boito, the gate dates to 1117 and belonged to a type of gate that featured a single archway, flanked by towers. It was restored by Boito in 1861, who got rid of the shanty houses that at the time had been incorporated into the walls of the gate and opened two further pointed arches through the gate, one in each tower. More specifically on Boito's restoration Grassi writes: "The crossbow windows and the Guelf pattern battlements belong to Boito's restoration. His work was carried out according to the principles of Viollet-Le-Duc, despite the modern criteria he had already expressed several times in his writings. [...] The pointed archway opening on the sides go against the rounded style of the central arch. This difference may testify to Boito's preoccupation that the two archways should be shown to be later additions, or at least that they should have an independence from the 'original' style of the monument."⁵⁸

Unfortunately, it was impossible to trace any original drawings by Boito that may have documented the restoration of the Porta Ticinese.⁵⁹ There is, however, a report written by the architect on 13 September 1861 to the technical commission for the

⁵⁷ Bevacqua, Vincenzo. "Pusterla e pusterle." *Formazione.eu*. Direzione scientifica regione Lombardia. 2005:37

⁵⁸ Grassi 1959:76-77 : "Fu un restauro alla Viollet-le-Duc nonostante i criteri già moderni espressi più volte negli scritti (...) la finestra e la balestriera, le merlature di forma guelfa - di fantasia - appartengono al restauro (...) le aperture laterali aperte dal Boito secondo le linee dell'arco acuto, seppur contraddicono allo stile dell'arcata central a pieno centro, potrebbero tuttavia testimoniare la preoccupazione di dimostrare con evidenza che tali arcate furono aperte posteriormente o, quanto meno, testimoniano una indipendenza verso l'originario 'stile' del monumento."

⁵⁹ However, Mauri mentions three watercolour plates by Engineer Nazari of 1858 bearing the title *Sistemazione del Voltone di P.a. Ticinese, Ortografia verso il Dazio di P.a. Ticinese and Iconografia del Nuovo Ponte* kept in the Civica Raccolta delle Stampe Achille Bertarelli, P.V. that outline the project's intentions, such as the reconstruction of the eastern tower and the demolition of the adjacent houses, which present many similarities with Boito's final and accomplished project. Mauri, Chiara. "Porta Ticinese a Milano: stato di fatto, dibattito, progetti. Appunti per la storia del restauro." *Omaggio a Camillo Boito*, edited by Alberto Grimoldi. Franco Angeli, Milano, 1991:87

restoration of the Porta Ticinese, in which Boito assesses the stability of the monument.⁶⁰

As in the above-discussed project of the Church of SS. Maria e Donato, the observation and critical analysis of the monument's condition is the architect's first step in the restoration process.⁶¹ The following two steps of Boito's restoration entail historiographical interpretation – i.e. an intervention on specific architectural elements of the gate – and adaptation to the surrounding environment.

In his report Boito acknowledges the stability of the gate's walls and the central arch, which according to him, are both structurally sound. On the other hand, the walls of the two towers are in a severe state of decay, one of which is just a stump.⁶² In addition, Boito provided historical and architectural information about the Porta Ticinese, which clarified his intentions: he aimed to preserve the medieval architectural elements and renovate the monument as a whole. The architect believes that preserving the remains of the gate as they are, that is the central arch with the two remains of the towers on the flanks, wouldn't do much to provide the idea of the original edifice.⁶³

As we previously discussed in relation to the Palazzo di San Giorgio in Genoa, the major debate was characterised by the conflict of conservation against demolition and modernisation. Within the city centres ancient buildings and monuments could be regarded as a hindrance to the rapid development and modernisation of Italian cities. Boito's project to restore the Porta Ticinese in Milan is one major and first examples of this contrast within the Italian nineteenth-century restoration debate. Supporters of modernity and conservationists argued as to whether or not the gate should be restored or demolished.

⁶⁰ Mauri 1997:79-85

⁶¹ As reported in Cassisi, Rita. "Il restauro di Porta Ticinese, Milano 1861-65." *Omaggio a Camillo Boito*, edited by Alberto Grimoldi. Franco Angeli, Milano, 1991, pp. 97-104, the situation with Porta Ticinese had already been outlined for the first time by an official municipal meeting in 1860. However, the first project coordinated by the municipal engineer Agostino Nazari was rejected by the Milanese Administration, which considered the engineer's proposal of Lire 48.000 too inflated. A new technical commission was then nominated in 1861 and it is in this occasion that Boito becomes the executor of the medieval gate's restoration project. Boito's proposal of conservation was approved with enthusiasm. Nevertheless the technical commission remained divided in two factions for the entire duration of the restoration process. On the one hand, was a radical party of conservationists, disagreeing with any proposal of addition of modification; on the other was a group embracing comprehensive intervention in order to resume the medieval gate to its original appearance through stylistic integrations. Cassisi 1991:100-101

⁶² Mauri 1991:79. Boito's report has been entirely published in Mauri's text 1991:79-85, *Verballi delle sedute del Consiglio Comunale della città di Milano del 13 settembre 1861*

⁶³ "Ed, invero, il serbare i resti di quella porta, vogliamo dire l'arco centrale con due mozziconi di torri ai fianchi l'uno piu' basso dell'altro, non gioverebbe punto a dare l'idea dell'edificio primitivo; cioe' non varrebbe .al fine che si propongano i restauri, allorché' né la molta antichità né la somma importanza artistica consigliano di fare altrimenti." Boito 1861 reported in Mauri 1991:80-81

Boito's proposal entailed the opening of two arches, one for each tower. It was hoped that this measure would appease those critics who wanted to demolish the gate because it was an impediment to traffic – a point that was often discussed in cases of the conservation of monuments in urban locations during the development of infrastructure in the nineteenth century.⁶⁴ With that in mind, most of the medieval gates in Milan featured a very simple design and had often been subject to alterations over the years; thus they were not considered to be of particular historical or monument value. These gates were therefore a well-known target for the modernists who supported the development of the modern city and who wanted to see them demolished.⁶⁵

Before Boito's restoration the Porta Ticinese featured a single arch of 4.40m wide, which already since the first half of the nineteenth century had been considered as inadequate and obstructing the passages of carts. The worsening problem of access combined with other issues such as hygiene and decorum that were typical for a densely populated and commercial area, contributed to the desire to demolish the gate (Figure 23).⁶⁶

⁶⁴ To this topic see Fontana, Vincenzo. *Profilo di architettura italiana del Novecento*. Marsilio, 1999, specifically chapter 2. "L'insegnamento di Boito: Architettura, Restauro e "Arte Urbana". Gaetano Moretti." (p.20) and Chapter 7. "Ampliamenti e Sventramenti di Città" (p.41.)

⁶⁵ This attitude with regard to medieval gates in Milan is opposed to the fact that actually these gates were a rather significant component of the city. These gates were at time also called "pusterle" and indicated the major entrance and exit paths to the city. In his article Bevacqua mentions the definition by Francesco Cherubini from the Vocabolario Milanese-Italiano. Imperial Regia Stamperia, Milano 1839, defining *pusterla* as originally being a second smaller gate that usually divided the space from the street entrance to the internal courtyard entrance of homes. The term was also transferred on the minor city gates, 'piccola porta di città' (small city gate), as in the case of Pusterla di Porta Ticinese, which signposted the minor city routes as opposed to 'porta primaja e principale' (primary or principal gate). Vincenzo Bevacqua. "Pusterla e pusterle" 2005:36 and 44n source: Also, see Boriani 1992:388. In his study of 1992, "Uso e abuso dei monumenti nella costruzione della Milano ottocentesca." *La Milano del piano Beruto:(1884-1889): società, urbanistica e architettura nella seconda metà dell'Ottocento*, Boriani points out that Porta Venezia, on the northeastern side of Milan, had already been demolished before unification in 1819. Porta Ticinese becomes the centre of the restoration/demolition debate together with Porta Nuova in the 1860s.

⁶⁶ As a matter of fact, the demolition of the gate was already suggested in 1801 by the architect Luigi Cagnola within a project of urban development entailing the area from the Colonne di S. Lorenzo, next to Porta Ticinese, to the city quarter of the Navigli. There were also other later suggestions, which entailed the partial demolition of the gate and its surroundings. On the contrary, in his project for the construction of the new station in 1836, Carlo Cattaneo supported the gate's conservation. Cassisi 1991:98

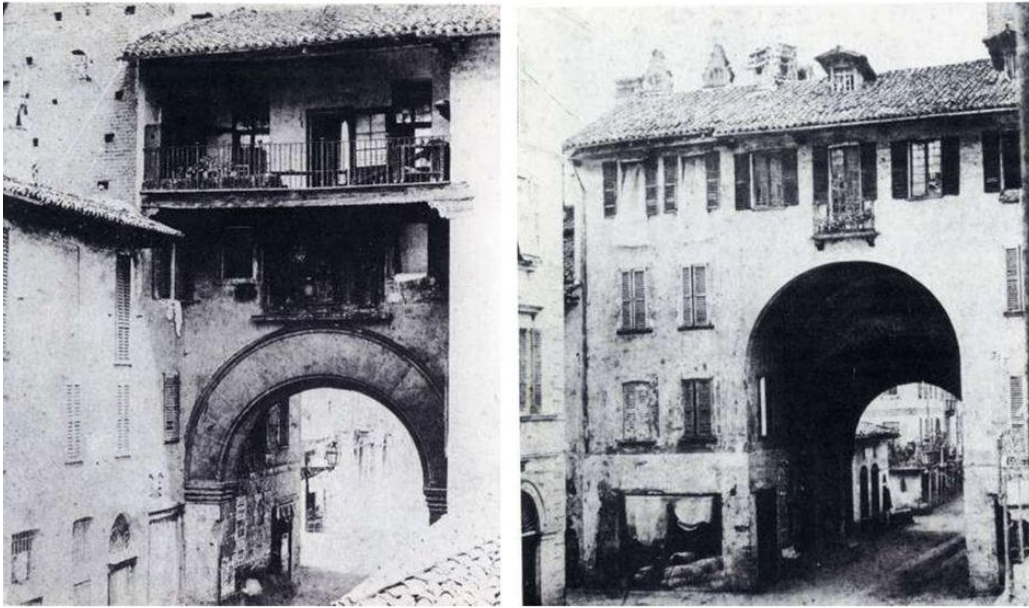


Figure 23. Pictures of the Porta Ticinese before Boito's restoration, 1860; southern and northern side

A painting of 1858 by Cesare Chapon (1815–1898) provides another visual documentation of the gate's condition before Boito's restoration (Figure 24). Although the scene does not show any carts it depicts quite a number of figures performing their daily chores suggesting that the Porta was located in a densely populated area and was a focal point of the city. Both the pictures and the painting testify to the structural concentration of houses adjacent to the gate, more or less completely concealing its medieval style.



Figure 24. La Porta Ticinese a Milano nel 1858 (The Porta Ticinese in Milan in 1858). Cesare Chapon, oil on cardboard, 36.5 x 26.5 cm. Civiche Raccolte Storiche, Milan.

In the second half of the nineteenth century Milan was becoming a modern industrial city: it was growing in size and undergoing changes in terms of its function and image. It is at this time that we see demolition work, streets and pathways being altered. The aim of urbanists was to make the historical centre of the city as accessible as possible to people and traffic. This meant developing various roads that went through the gates in the medieval (central) areas and around the *Bastioni Spagnoli* (Spanish Walls) of the city, resulting in much demolition.⁶⁷

Fortunately, there was also an acknowledgement by the city's municipality about the need to preserve and value certain important monuments. Whenever possible, the trend for the conservation of monuments in urban environments was to isolate them. In this way, the viewer could enjoy the monument from favourable point of views.⁶⁸ Minor constructions were demolished, placing more important monuments in a position where they could be better viewed.⁶⁹ However, due to the formation of Italian city centres, which were characterised by a density of structures attached to each

⁶⁷ Cassisi:1991:97. The Bastioni spagnoli were erected in Milan in the sixteenth century. These are located close to several gates in today's central part of the city, adjacent to Porta Sempione and Porta Magenta. Eventually one section of the Bastioni was demolished by the urban development plan Piano Beruto of the late 1880s, later mentioned in this research.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

other, isolation of the monument or historical buildings was only feasible on rare occasions, presenting many challenges and concerns to architects and urbanists.

As has been previously mentioned in this research, one of the most significant aspects of Boito's activity is his involvement and approach to urban monument conservation.⁷⁰

Unlike his predecessors, who in their conception of restoration sought to isolate the monument, Boito aimed to keep the monument as a living component of the city, regardless of its purpose. In a study of 1992, Boriani examined the importance of ancient monuments and buildings for the development of Milan into a modern city in the nineteenth century, focusing on the central and most historical part of the city.

Boriani suggests that the process of re-adoption, correction and restoration of historical structures might seem less important in comparison to the grand construction projects that were shaping the city following unification.⁷¹

However, it is the more common but less imposing interventions made to ancient buildings and monuments (such as the opening of arches on a gate or the demolition of one single wall or building to enlarge a street) that had a major impact on the city's shape.⁷²

Unfortunately for both the municipal authorities and the population, the Porta Ticinese did not fall into the category of monuments considered worthy of conservation. Supporters of modernism and radical urban renovation focused on the decorum of the city and believed that when monuments are in decay or reduced to little more than ruins, they are not only a hindrance to accessibility, but also to the aesthetic appearance and aspirations of a modern city. Architectural testimonies of the past were considered as useless impediments to the renovation of the city.

This stance often raised, as in the case of the Porta Ticinese, many questions as to whether to restore or demolish: is demolition the right approach? Should restoration and conservation prevail over the needs of modernisation? How is it possible to determine which parts of the city are worthy of rescue and conservation and which ones can be demolished without damaging artistically relevant cultural heritage?

⁷⁰ Boriani, Maurizio. "Uso e abuso dei monumenti nella costruzione della Milano ottocentesca." *La Milano del piano Beruto: (1884-1889): società, urbanistica e architettura nella seconda metà dell'Ottocento*, edited by Boriani, Maurizio, Augusto Rossari and Renato Rozzi. Guerini e associati, Milano, 1992, pp. 385-404.

⁷¹ With regard to greater construction enterprises for the modernisation of Milan, Boriani mentions the building of the Galleria Vittorio Emanuele by the architect Giuseppe Mengoni. Still today the Galleria is the commercial and shopping fulcrum of the historical centre of Milan. In addition, the author remarks the complete restructuring and clearing of the area around the Duomo and concerning technological progress, the infrastructural and transportation development featuring in the central historical part of the city. Boriani 1992:385

⁷² Boriani 1992:385

What are the standards to assess the artistic importance of historic buildings and monuments?

Boito appears to have had the answer to these many questions: he argued that the city quarter would benefit from the restoration of the city gate because of the 'grandiose presence' the restored gate would give to the population and the architecture next to it. "If at the present moment," the architect argues, "the people are protesting against this ruined gate, the same people will change their minds once they see the ruined monument brought back to its original splendour."⁷³

Boito also argued that the monument is a key example of Lombard medieval military architecture, as there are no other surviving examples of this kind in Milan.⁷⁴ Finally, Boito underlines the historical and cultural value of the monument, arguing that monuments, as old as they are, and even if they do not present outstanding aesthetic features, always testify to the culture of a civilisation; if they are destroyed, "one page from the history of art and from the history of a culture and civilisation is ripped out."⁷⁵

Historical and art historical research on the monument is the foundation of all Boito's work, from his earliest restoration projects in the 1860s to his last works some four decades later. Boito looked back to the architecture of past in the belief that the knowledge and application of ancient models and techniques would enable him to develop a better methodology for current and future projects taking place in cities that were being modernised. Boito drew inspiration from the ancient and sought to reconcile it with the 'new'. This approach is particularly clear in the case of the restoration of the Porta Ticinese, which he believed required a knowledge of the historical truth ('la verità storica') of the monument. As will be seen below, this idea forms the basis of every restoration project undertaken by Boito over his career.⁷⁶

⁷³ "Risposto così alle lagnanze di chi teme che Porta Ticinese possa rimanere un dannoso ingombro alle vie circostanti fa d'uopo accennare che la bellezza e il decoro di quel quartiere verranno con il restauro dell'edificio antico a guadagnare molto (...) Dall'altra parte la presenza severamente grandiosa dell'edificio e l'importanza sua varranno ad appagare questa popolazione la quale mentre ora grida contro ad una rovina di cui non capisce l'antico uso e forma, comprenderà ed ammirerà invece il monumento restituito al suo stato primiero." Boito 1861, cited in Mauri 1991:83

⁷⁴ "Si pensi al decoro che trarrà Milano dall'assennato restauro di un monumento, il quale sarà l'unica porta della città che rimanga compiuta in Lombardia, sarà un modello prezioso della vecchia architettura militare, e riempirà quindi una lacuna della nostra storia architettonica." Boito:1861, Cassisi 1991: 101-102

⁷⁵ "...la storia è gran parte della vita di un popolo, gran parte del suo avvenire. Ma gli edifici son pur essi documenti degni di rispetto e di amore; distruggendone uno strappate una pagina alla storia dell'arte, alla storia delle culture e della civiltà." Boito 1861, cited in Mauri 1991: 84

⁷⁶ Cassisi 1991:102

A technical commission was formed in order to initiate the restoration of the Porta Ticinese and to coordinate the practical aspects of the project, but Boito and four other experts were left to decide on the specific procedures of restoration.⁷⁷

Although the overall aim of the technical commission was to deliberate on the process and to initiate the restoration, there were many differences of opinion on what the restoration process should be. Boriani's 1992 text, *La Milano del Piano Beruto* (1884–1889), provides the most detailed account of the debates that occurred within the technical commission. From Boriani we know, for example, that Giovanni Brocca (1803–1876), one of the Milanese architects who was a member to the commission, fully supported a very conservative and respectful method of restoration that clearly recalled Boito's principles as laid out in his writings from the 1880s, cited above: "preserve as much as possible the ancient remains and repair them in order to prevent decay. [...] add nothing, avoid integrating any unfinished part".⁷⁸

This respectful attitude towards the monument seems to be rather modern for this time when viewed in comparison to the method of stylistic restoration supported by the rest of the commission, including Boito. Brocca's comments, however, do not detract from the originality of Boito's later ideas. Rather it demonstrates, as seen in the previous chapter, that a more respectful approach to restoration can be found in isolated cases before Boito sanctioned the Charter of Restoration of 1883.

Brocca was alone in taking this position and he reported his impressions of the other members of the commission: "It seems that the others were truly willing to restore the ancient monument, resuming the original aspect of the gate at the time of its construction".⁷⁹

Despite the fact that a limited restoration intervention, i.e. conservative restoration primarily aimed at preserving the stability of the gate, would be economically

⁷⁷ Boriani 1992:389. The other four members of the commission were the architects Giovanni Brocca, Giuseppe Balzaretti, Fermo Zuccari and the painter Giuseppe Bertini – all of them were architects mainly operating in Milan. As briefly mentioned above, the first meeting to establish guidelines for the restoration of Porta Ticinese was held on November 27th 1860 as testified by a Municipal report, thoroughly summarised in Boriani's volume of 1992. At the time, a specialised commission had to be yet nominated, yet the divergent opinions on the extent and approaches of restoration were already showing. (See Boriani 1992: 417-18, Archivio Municipale di Milano 1860-1861, meeting of November 27th 1860, IV, pp. 13-15). In the mentioned volume of 1992, Boriani also summarised the crucial meeting of September 13th 1861, whose crucial aspects are mentioned in the body of this research. Boriani 1992: 418.

⁷⁸ Citing from Boriani 1992:389, Giovanni Brocca's words: "conservare il più possibile dé resti antichi, riparali in guise che fossero preservati da ruina; ma non (...) aggiungere nulla, niuna cosa incompiuta finire." The reports are direct sources in the Atti del consiglio Comunale kept in the Archivio Storico del Comune di Milano/Municipal Historical Archive of Milan. Meeting on September 13-1861. Boriani 1992:389.

⁷⁹ Boriani 1992:389 "Sembrava agli altri che fosse necessario di far davvero il restauro del vecchi monument, ritornando cioè a quell'aspetto che doveva presentare al tempo della sua costruzione."

advantageous in comparison to a restoration entailing the addition and removal of some of the gates architectural components, the commission finally agreed to Boito's proposal, setting a budget of 50,000 *Lire*.⁸⁰ It could be argued that Boito's approach was not as modern as that suggested by Brocca, which aimed to keep the restoration of the monument to a minimum.

However, Boito convinced the other members of the commission of the benefits of his project based on two main factors: the art historical importance of the gate that needed to be preserved and not demolished and the didactic function that his idea of restoration on the gate may provide for the people of Milan, setting an example of how an ancient, mainly disregarded structure, could maintain its role as a testament of its architectural and artistic past if properly restored.

The majority of the members of the commission supported Boito's point about the art historical importance of the gate and clearly wanted to launch a type of restoration, which aimed to return the monument to a supposed original medieval style. Thus, a double standard was applied to the monument and dominated the discussion: the jury, now led by Boito, believed that this decision was legitimate, for according to them the gate was of no particular art historical value.

However, this stance contradicted the above-mentioned statement about the gate being an outstanding example of medieval Lombard architecture. The prospect of a restoration according to Boito's plan, i.e. featuring some alterations to the gate in order to maintain its original medieval style but also to adapt it to the surrounding urban plan, was also supported by the fact that the architects on the commission were very familiar with similar medieval monuments, as they had already carried out several such restorations.⁸¹

It is by now evident that Boito's aim is to carry out a restoration that would highlight were concerned with the restoration of an ancient Greek statue or a sculpture by Michelangelo that any intervention would be a profanity. However, Boito argues "the age of the gate is not that distant" from his own time and there are clear traces of the original gate, which means that during the restoration there will be little need to make additions. What is more, the gates, and particularly their towers, had such a

⁸⁰ *ibid.*
⁸¹ *ibid.*

well-known and common form that the architect, after the work had been completed, will be able “to assert with a clear conscience: this is how the gate looked in past centuries”.⁸²

Boito considered the gate as a model of medieval architecture. At the same time, its authenticity could be at least in part forfeited for the sake of didactics, i.e. for the education of future generations of architects.⁸³ Maintaining the stance of an uncompromising conservative restoration without alterations or adaptation of the gate, would have probably led to the demolition of the gate. Boito’s argument about didactics and education for the coming generations is the strongest reason for applying his restoration scheme, which reinstates the monument in its entirety, thus impressing and educating the population. Last but not least, the architect argues that his restoration aims to overcome the unresponsiveness of an old ruin that people might not be able to understand.⁸⁴

As anticipated above and similar to his project for the Muranese church, Boito cleverly applied two different standards to the gate with regard to its artistic and historical importance. On the one hand, he does not consider the monument as outstandingly valuable in terms of its artistic qualities, especially in comparison to Classical art. This gave him a wider field to work within. Yet, on the other hand, he strongly supported the documentary importance of the medieval gateway, which saved it from demolition. While he argued for the need to restore the gate according to its medieval appearance, he was in favour of allowing for the adaptation of the gate by opening up the two side arches.

As regards the two side arches in particular, there was a faction of the commission that argued against this aspect of Boito’s project. They believed that too many additions might ruin the antique aspect and the original form of the *Porta*, even if these additions were in line with the medieval style of the gate.⁸⁵ However, despite his

⁸² “Quando si tratta di una scoltura greca, l’appiccicarvi un restauro, fosse pure di Michelangelo, é una profanazione; (...) Ma in questo voltone di Porta Ticinese l’età non é poi tanto remota, benché il merito artistico sia molto considerevole (...) se ridotto alla forma prima, accenna evidentemente all’uso primiero e mostra intiero e compiuto l’originario disegno. Giova fare per l’edificio di cui discorriamo come si fa dappertutto per gli edifice dell’evo medio come fanno, senza dire degli stranieri, a Firenze a Roma, a Venezia; giova trarre degli indizi che restano il concetto e le forme del monumento antico, e con questi dati compierli intieramente. Se tali indizi fossero pochi ed incerti l’opera non sarebbe facile, né riuscirebbe al fine volute – e noi stessi non la consiglieremmo. Ma qui pochissimo, quasi nulla resta da aggiungere; anzi tutto si reduce ad ideare il coronamento delle torri, le quali al secolo XIII avevano forme tanto comuni e or tanto note, che l’architetto, al quale s’affiderà il restauro, potrà, dopo finita l’opera, gridare con coscienza sicura: eccovi l’edificio di sei secoli addietro.” Boito 1861, cited in Mauri 1991:81

⁸³ Cassisi 1991:101

⁸⁴ Boriani 1992:389

⁸⁵ As reported by Mauri this opinion is specifically coming from an engineer named Ponti, member of the commission. Mauri 1991:85

young age and the fact that the Porta Ticinese was his first restoration project after his move from Venice to Milan, Boito refused to change his mind. According to him, emphasising the gate's twelfth-century style was the safest path to follow.

Boito's first step in the restoration was to demolish the houses that were built around the gate.⁸⁶ The two pointed side arches were also opened at the base of each tower, to facilitate the flow of traffic. Today, the east tower remains unfinished and is only just taller than the central arch, but the west tower and the central section of the arch were finished, completed with Guelf battlements covered by a small, flat roof that gives a marked horizontality to the monument.⁸⁷ The Guelf battlements, which rest on a marble cornice, strongly contrast with the brick construction of the wall and clearly indicate that they are a later addition by the architect.⁸⁸

Boito also added the cornice running across the west tower and the central section; yet the reason for this addition is not clear. Mauri suggests that it may convey the idea of 'sporti' (small windows used in medieval architecture used to scout for possible enemies on the outside), or it may function to further underline the presence of the adjoining battlement.⁸⁹

The west tower features three single lancet windows on the second floor. Mauri (1991) who did focused research on Boito's restoration of the Porta Ticinese, reports that as it can be seen from a photograph of 1859/1860, the first lancet window on the right already existed before Boito's intervention. The same scholar also suggests that Boito possibly added the other two windows to provide symmetry to the building.⁹⁰

In addition, on the third floor there are three more single lancet windows facing north and east, the central one of which is walled up. The fourth floor has two taller single lancet windows on the east side. Access to the rooms inside the tower is gained from under the pointed arch at the bottom of the tower. A *voussoir* (wedge-shaped element usually in stone) highlights the shape of the arch, a frequent motif used in medieval Lombard architecture.⁹¹ In addition, Boito opened another two-metre wide passage through the arches, specifically for the use of pedestrians.

⁸⁶ Mauri, Chiara. "Porta Ticinese a Milano." *Architettura fortificata in Lombardia*, Atti del Seminario 1987, edited by P. Sergio Allevi and Luciano Roncai, Editrice Turris, Milano, 1990, 1987:55

⁸⁷ Mauri 1991:89

⁸⁸ Mauri 1990:56

⁸⁹ Mauri 1990:56

⁹⁰ Mauri 1991:89. The photographs can be found in the Archivio Fotografico Civico, Milan.

⁹¹ Mauri 1991:90

The restoration work was completed in 1865, when Boito was just twenty-five.⁹² The young age and lack of experience possibly opened Boito to criticism, which related to both the restoration project, but also to the wider cultural debate on conservation. The criticism often became satirical in nature. For example, an illustration of the time showed the Porta Ticinese flanked by two crenelated towers that were placed under a huge glass window. A clock replaced the central archway, which was clearly a reference to the desire for unconditional conservation despite the new requirements brought on by modernisation that occurred throughout time.

Another contemporary drawing, showed the highest tower with Ghibelline battlements surrounded by darkness and blackbirds, with the inscription: *La torre di Porta Ticinese utlizzata* ("Making use of the tower of Porta Ticinese").⁹³ As a matter of fact, Boito's decision to include Guelph battlements was defined as 'highly questionable' by both contemporary and later critics, making the architect's project the subject of many satirical opinions in the periodicals of the time. It has been suggested that the intentional lack of fake medieval decoration on the eastern tower might be a visual invitation for the viewer to imagine its ideal completion, leaving them wondering how the tower might have looked.⁹⁴

Most scholarly criticism tends to underline the fact that the current appearance remains irresolute and discordant. In addition, criticism was also made of the fact that Boito did not follow strictly the historical remains in his restoration of the gate and rather provided interpretations that were only partly based on alleged historical and material traces.

Boito's critical approach to the restoration of the Porta Ticinese features at the very beginning of the report that the architect, as a member of the technical commission reads on 13 September 1861 in the municipal meeting discussing the restoration to be carried out to the Porta Ticinese in Milan: "restoration lies in taking [the monument] back to that which it was meant to be." The foundation of this statement is Boito's belief that complete historical research is fundamental if one is to achieve a good restoration that aims to return a unified and harmonious style to the monment.⁹⁵ With

⁹² Mauri 1990:55

⁹³ *ibid.*

⁹⁴ Mauri 1991:93

⁹⁵ Mauri 1991: 90 citing Boito's words in the above mentioned report of 1861: "Ridurre a ciò che esser dovea è restaurare."

that in mind, an iconographic analysis of the gate demonstrates that the original aspect of the Porta Ticinese differed from Boito's version.

A key document of the original medieval aspect of the gate can be found in the sculptural group, attributed to Giovanni di Balduccio of Pisa (1300–1349) placed above the central arch on the southern side of the gate, in which saints Eustorge and Peter Martyr offer to the Virgin a model of the city.⁹⁶ In this sculpture the gate is shown with a single rounded arch and one tower, both crowned by battlements (Figure 25).⁹⁷

The use of the gate's internal rooms as a residence was not original either, but was a practice that had developed over the course of the centuries. However, Boito promoted the construction of the east tower in order to make the monument complete and to obtain new interior space that could be rented out. It is possible that the decision to create revenue from renting the space was made in order to reimburse the municipality for the restoration costs.⁹⁸



Figure 25. Sculptural group by Giovanni di Balduccio da Pisa on the Porta Ticinese, southern side

Next to the many criticisms of Boito's restoration of the gate, there are other scholarly interpretations that address the architect's intervention with a different attitude. In a 1987 publication, Mauri states that every step of Boito's intervention was intentional, countering the image of an architect executing his first restoration that would result in many stylistic irresolutions. Despite the negative criticism launched by Grassi in 1959, which was picked up by renowned modern scholars who highlighted the discrepancies between Boito's theory and his practice (see Puppi in 1991 for instance),

⁹⁶ Mauri 1990:56

⁹⁷ For a comprehensive description of the iconographic images of Porta Ticinese, see Mauri 1991:90-92

⁹⁸ Mauri 1991:93

Mauri considers the fact that the architect carried out the restoration that was mostly in line with his Charter of Restoration of 1883.⁹⁹

She argues that in Boito's restoration of the Porta Ticinese the viewer is able to distinguish the original structure from the later additions made by the restorer, especially in the insertion of the marble cornice, which strongly contrasts with the brown bricks. The cornice separates the gate's upper section from the added battlements from the lower original section.¹⁰⁰

These additions were actually inserted in order to preserve the monument's stability on the one hand and on the other, to convert the monument to serve a new function. In this way the architect overcame the major problem with quite a conservative restoration, as there is no deceit in the eye of the beholder.¹⁰¹

Also Cassisi in her 1991 study addresses Grassi's criticism of the passageways through the pointed arches, viewing them as an invention of the architect that differs from the round-headed central arch in order to suggest that they are a later addition. At the same time, Cassisi believes that these additions demonstrate Boito's determination to recreate a historical model and an architectural stereotype of the Porta Ticinese.¹⁰²

Boito's method, Cassisi outlines, could be compared to that of an historian, rather than the approach of an architect or restorer, for the architect clearly put the historical importance of the monument above its architectural authenticity and integrity.

For Boito a complete restoration of the gate was necessary for the sake of history; a unified style, even if featuring additional architectural components would facilitate the understanding of the past and it was something that would act as a testimony of history in the future.¹⁰³

The result of Boito's restoration therefore raises the question about whether his methodology of restoration for the Porta Ticinese is reliable in his commitment to convey the monument's authenticity and documentary function. Undoubtedly, Boito

⁹⁹ Puppi, Lionello. "La ricostruzione dell'altare di Donatello a Padova. Un'ambiguità di Camillo Boito restauratore." *Omaggio a Camillo Boito*, edited by Alberto Grimoldi. Franco Angeli, Milano, 1991, pp.125-156.

¹⁰⁰ Mauri 1987:56. The author also suggests that Boito might have inserted the contrasting marble cornice in order to bring the viewers attention to three small horizontal windows.

¹⁰¹ Mauri 1987:56

¹⁰² Cassisi 1991: 103-104

¹⁰³ Cassisi 1991:102

was facing a very demanding task: the Porta Ticinese was a project that required the architect to contend with various different issues, most notably the art historical value of the site as an example of a medieval gate, its function within a developing and demanding modern urban environment and finally, the need to protect the monument from being demolished.

The acknowledgment that Boito actually saved the Porta Ticinese from demolition features in one isolated piece of nineteenth-century criticism by Romussi, in his 1913 work, *Milano ne' suoi monumenti*. In his text Romussi admits that although the Guelf battlements and other components of Boito's restoration do not harmonise with the gate, as they look like "newly fabricated antiquities", this same restoration project actually saved the monument.¹⁰⁴

Boito's restoration of the gate also appeased the wishes of many: his methodology should therefore be seen as tactical. In this project Boito is trying to preserve the monument, as required by the supporters of the restoration, while also returning the gate to its original (but adapted) state in order to satisfy the modernists, whose wishes are granted by the opening-up of the two side arches that would enable a smoother flow of traffic.

Boito's restoration might appear ambiguous and primarily aimed at pacifying the two contrasting factions, but it is important to stress again that the most successful aspect of the project lies in the fact that at a time of urban modernisation and demolition, when the nature of medieval gates proved to be a real hindrance to the growing traffic, Boito understood that the adoption of his specific restoration policy was the only way to save the gate from demolition.¹⁰⁵ Still today, the medieval Porta Ticinese is one of the most important geographical references for Milan, with its passages used by pedestrians, cars and trams (Figures 26-27).

¹⁰⁴ Romussi, Carlo. *Milano ne' suoi monumenti*. Vol. II. Casa Editrice Sonzogno, Milano, 1913:115

¹⁰⁵ Boriani 1992:388



Figure 26. View of the Porta Ticinese, northern side



Figure 27. View of the Porta Ticinese today, southern side

In addition, Boito's method of restoration clarifies his understanding of aesthetics and organic unity as one of the primary principles of restoration. The restoration of the Porta Ticinese figures as one of the first 'romantic' restorations of a historic civic monument.¹⁰⁶ In Murano, the restoration of the church focused solely on the monument and the conservation of its artistic value and liturgical character and did not involve other possible functions.

As for the Porta Ticinese, the restoration aimed to preserve the art historical value of the monument, but the project is also strongly influenced by modern requirements. Boito's method of restoration is in fact strongly influenced by this aspect, which determined the extent of his additions and modifications to the monument. These are justified in part by the need to adapt the gate to a modern civil and urban environment, but also by the documentary and didactic function that Boito attributes to the monument.

This particular approach to restoration emerges in the first years of Boito's activity and continued as a standard throughout his career, featuring only minor changes

¹⁰⁶ Boriani 1992: 417

according to each situation. In the specific case of the Porta Ticinese the architect underlined both the gate's relevance as documentary evidence for the history of Northern Italian Lombardesque architecture and the inevitability of certain modifications required by changing times and progress.

It is on the basis of these two notions that Boito's methodology emerges in contrast to other contemporary national and international restoration practices that were applied in Italy and neighbouring countries. In both civic and religious projects, these principles of understanding and adaptability will also feature in Boito's most mature endeavours, as for instance during the 1880–90s with the restoration of the high altar in the Paduan Church of Saint Anthony in Padua.

Monument restoration – part III: The high altar in the Church of Saint Anthony in Padua

Boito's monumental restoration of the high altar at the Church of Saint Anthony in Padua, also called Basilica del Santo (Basilica of the Saint), is possibly the architect's most well-known project, due to the art historical importance of the monument as also for the resonance that the architect's intervention had in the realms of scholarly critique. As will be discussed in the following sections, Boito's restoration of the high altar is considered one of the most complex and sophisticated interventions of the nineteenth century. With that in mind, it is also one of the most criticised enterprises by the architect.

The restoration of the high altar occurred within a comprehensive renovation scheme that included diverse sections of the church, including the bronze doors, the choir, the presbitry and the church's pulpit. One of the most precise accounts of the history of the altar and its restoration by Boito features in Johnson's study of 1999 "In the 1440s, Donatello designed and, with his assistants, executed an imposing high altar complex for the great Paduan pilgrimage church of S. Antonio, a building also known simply as the Santo.

The significance of Donatello's project lies not only in its intrinsic technical and artistic merits, but also in its location and the types of beholders who would have visited it. Due to the presence of the tomb of Saint Anthony (died 1231), an early Franciscan saint, the Santo is one of this order's most prestigious churches and a key destination

for pilgrims, as well as one of the most important monuments in the city of Padua. Most of the remains of Donatello's ensemble are now displayed on the Santo's high altar. The original project, however, included not only the seven nearly life-size bronze statues and over two-dozen reliefs seen in the present reconstruction, but also an elaborate architectural framework."¹⁰⁷

Built between 1447 and 1450, the altar originally comprised thirty-one statues and reliefs (seven statues of the saints, a crucifix, four reliefs illustrating the miracles of Saint Anthony, an Ecce Homo on the ciborium, a Pietà, twelve angels, four sculptures depicting the symbols of the Evangelists and a Deposition executed in *pietra di Nanto*, the greyish, beige stone that came from the small municipality of Nanto in the Veneto). This first arrangement was lost when the altar was replaced in 1579–82 by the architects Girolamo Campagna and Cesare Franco (Figures 28-29).¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁷ Johnson, Geraldine A. "Approaching the Altar: Donatello's Sculpture in the Santo." *Renaissance Quarterly*, The University of Chicago Press, Vol. 52, No. 3, 1999, pp. 627-666.

¹⁰⁸ Crova, Cesare. "Camillo Boito al Santo: Progettista o restauratore?" *Il Santo Rivista francescana di storia dottrina arte*. Centro Studi Antoniani Padova, XLVI, fasc.3., 2006:414

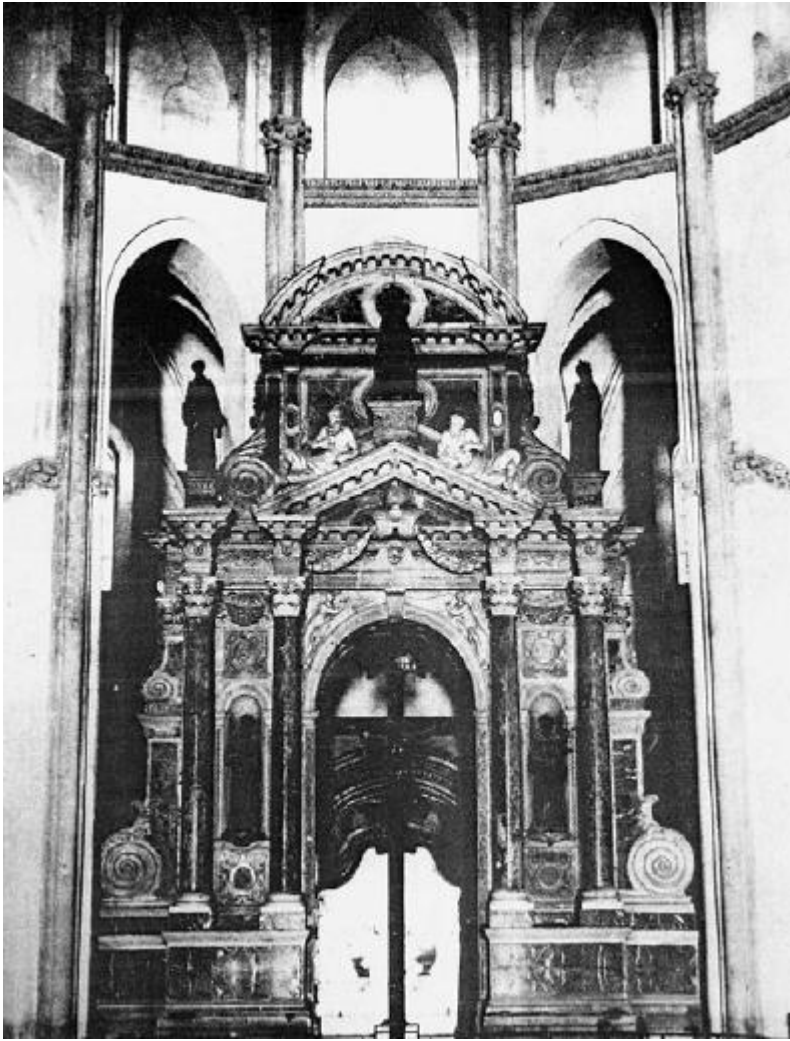


Figure 28. The high altar in the Church of St. Anthony in its Baroque version, 1895

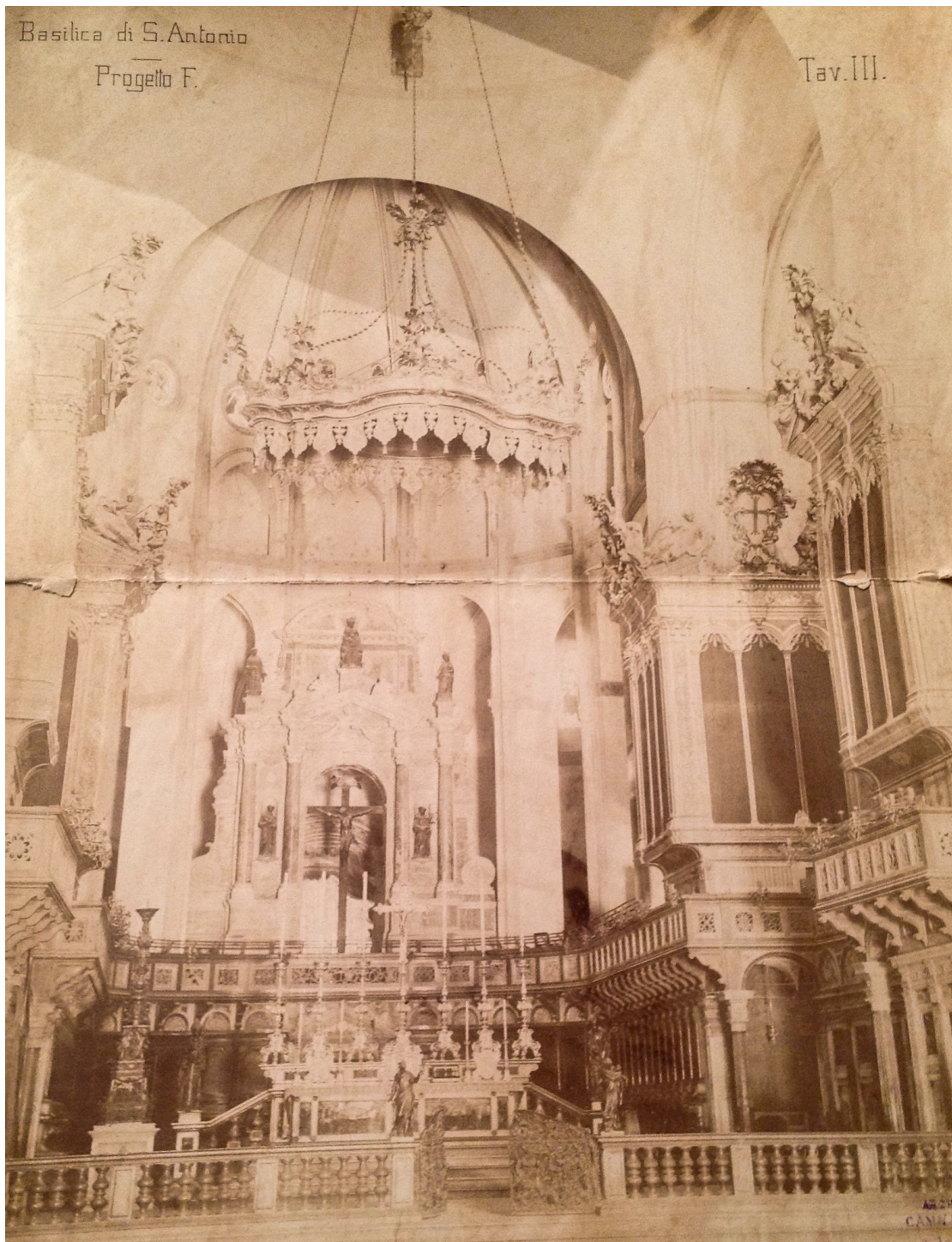


Figure 29. The high altar in the Church of St. Anthony before Camillo Boito's restoration. Camillo Boito, *Proposta di alcuni lavori nella cappella del coro e nel presbiterio, Basilica di Sant'Antonio in Padova, Lavori Centenari*, Tav. III. Archivio moderno della Veneranda Arca, cat. III, 1897

Almost all the sculptures were used in the new seventeenth-century composition, but many of them were moved in later centuries to different parts of the church.¹⁰⁹ By the time Boito began working on the high altar, he was faced with a Baroque composition

¹⁰⁹ Grassi 1959:124

that had lost almost all the original features of the Renaissance arrangement designed by Donatello.

The restoration project was launched in 1865 by the president of the *Veneranda Arca di Sant'Antonio*, the institution aimed to preserve and take care of all the monument components of Saint Anthony's Church, to commemorate the 700th anniversary of the birth of Saint Anthony – another element that added to the fame and popularity of the project.¹¹⁰ The intention of the *Veneranda Arca* and the municipal authorities was to increase the profile of Padua, as testified by the appointment of architects who were well known throughout Italy.¹¹¹

Boito was already named among the possible architects in 1877, when he was engaged with the construction of the Elementary Schools at the Reggia Carrarese in Padua.¹¹² However, more than a decade passed before work could be started on the Basilica del Santo. Hence in 1893 Boito was officially appointed to direct the major restoration project; by that time the *Veneranda Arca* had finally managed to reach a consensus in relation to restoration of the church.¹¹³ The restoration plan for the church was comprehensive and lasted until 1903: it was directed by Boito who engaged a wide network of artisans, collaborators and institutions whose role will be discussed later in this chapter.

Boito's grand project included various structural interventions, particularly in the Gattamelata Chapel, today's Chapel of the Holy Sacrament, as well as the restoration of the pulpit, the presbytery, the radial chapels, the bronze doors of the façade and the high altar.¹¹⁴ With that in mind, this research will focus on the restoration of the high altar, which serves as an excellent example through which to explore Boito's restoration theory and practice.

¹¹⁰ The Veneranda Arca established in 1396 is still today, the entity managing and preserving the artistic, spiritual and cultural heritage of the cathedral.

¹¹¹ Federico Berchet and Carlo Barberi were among the first renowned architects summoned by the Veneranda Arca for the restoration of the Cathedral. Berchet was at the time director of the Regional Office for the public monuments in Veneto and Barberi was a central figure in relation to the important (and very debated) restorations of Modena's Cathedral. Both architects presented projects that were in line with the intentions of the Veneranda Arca, i.e. a restoration that would recall the original medieval style of the Basilica. The official choice finally falls on Berchet, mainly for institutional role than for his *modus operandi*; supposedly Berchet was also favoured over Barberi due to a conjectural slowness of this latter. Nevertheless, Berchet's project was blocked by the Ministry of Education; this obstruction consequently led to a fracture between the architect and the Veneranda Arca as well, paving the way for Boito's appointment. Zucconi 2000:112 and Crova 2006:408-409

¹¹² Boito's project of the Elementary Schools at the Reggia Carrarese in Padua will not be discussed in this project, however in terms of architectural design it is considered by scholarly literature one of the most succeeded projects by the architect. As for the architect's first engagement for the restoration in the Basilica of Saint Anthony, in 1877, the superintendent and friar of the basilica, Valentino Schmidt established a first contact with architect to conceive a project for the restoration of the pulpit. Castellani, Francesca. "Boito nella Basilica del Santo: i disegni 'di cantiere'." *Camillo Boito: un protagonista dell'Ottocento italiano*, edited by Guido Zucconi, and Tiziana Serena, Istituto veneto di scienze, lettere ed arti, Venezia, 2002:111

¹¹³ Castellani 2002:112

¹¹⁴ Castellani 2002:128

A few elements that contributed to the fame of this project have been mentioned above. More importantly however, this restoration is known for Boito's methodological approach of monument re-composition, which has been thoroughly analysed by scholarship since the 1960s.¹¹⁵ The vast quantity of literature available on the restoration of the altar provides a comprehensive understanding of Boito's methodology, but also questions the use of the term 'restoration' in relation to Boito's intervention on Donatello's altar.

The restoration of the Santo and in particular the re-composition of the high altar is the only restoration project to be documented and published by Boito. The resultant volume *L'Altare di Donatello e le altre opere nella Basilica Antoniana di Padova*, published in 1897, comprises contemporary photographs of the altar taken before and after the restoration, as well as several drawings by the architect.¹¹⁶

In his publication Boito describes in detail the procedure used to reconstruct the high altar of the Santo, as well as the other interventions planned for the church, such as the new bronze doors and the liturgical furnishings. With regard to the high altar, the reader is able to understand the *modus operandi* used by Boito to put the many different pieces together. It is no coincidence that the description of the high altar project occupies more pages in the volume than any of the other interventions performed by Boito in the church of the Santo. This is due to the many architectural and sculptural components involved in the project, as well as the difficulty of harmonising the existing elements into a new arrangement.

The overall complexity of the reasoning behind the project is manifested through the architect's cross-referencing of historical and architectural traces, documentary sources kept in the Archives of the *Veneranda Arca* and of course, the purpose of the altar, which had to be returned to its best condition possible for the occasion of the anniversary of the birth of the Saint.

¹¹⁵ The available literature that was used in this paper with regard to Boito's restoration of the major altar in the Basilica del Santo is the following: Boito (1897), L.Grassi (1959), White (1969), Puppi (1984), Mazzariol Dorigato (1989), Rosenauer (1993), Johnson (1997), Castellani (2000), Castellani (2002), Crova (2006), Gilbert (2007)

¹¹⁶ The complete title is *L'Altare di Donatello e le altre opere nella Basilica Antoniana di Padova: compiute per il settimo centenario dalla nascita del santo. Boito, Camillo, and Veneranda Arca di Sant'Antonio*, Hopeli, Padova, 1897. The publication was preceded by a thorough preparation as shown by the quantity of documents on the project kept in the Archivio Moderno Veneranda Arca, Pauda. See for instance the *Proposta di alcuni lavori nella cappella del Coro e nel Presbiterio* of 1897 by Camillo Boito,

As of today the altar's composition and appearance is the one made by Boito (Figure 30). The altar itself is composed of a base with bronze low-relief panels, above which rises an upper section, slightly narrower than the base below, which creates the effect of two tiers. Along the top of the altar are arranged various freestanding bronze sculptures, including, at the centre, a Virgin and Child, above which rises a tall bronze Crucifixion. On either side of the Virgin and Child we find the figures of Saint Francis (right) and Saint Anthony (left), as well as Saint Justyna, a Paduan martyr, and Saint Daniel. On the lower section of the altar, at the level of the base, we find the sculpted figures of Saint Prosdócimo, on the right, and Saint Louis, on the left.

Included among the reliefs that feature on the upper front section of the altar, on the far left and right, are two scenes representing the miracles of Saint Anthony: the Miracle of the Repentant Son and the Miracle of the Avaricious Man's Heart. On the back of the altar are two other reliefs representing the Miracle of the Ass and the Miracle of the Newborn Child.

At the centre of the lower section of the altar there is a bas-relief of a dead Christ supported by two putti. On either side of the image of Christ we find six panels, again in bas-relief, of putti. This is followed by bas-reliefs of the four Evangelists, with Matthew and John displayed on the front of the altar and Mark and Luke on the back. Finally, the rear of the altar features a deeply moving relief executed in a chalky stone, known as *pietra di Nanto*, representing the Entombment.¹¹⁷ Boito placed the altar at the centre of the presbytery, where the later, Baroque altar by Campagna and Franco had been located. From Boito's point of view, this new arrangement sought to reunite the sculptures in a solution that was in keeping with the manner of Donatello.¹¹⁸

Boito's premise and intention for the restoration of the altar is clearly stated in the first lines of his 1897 publication about the comprehensive restoration scheme: he is not pretending to return the altar to its original state, as this would be presumptuous. His goal is a re-composition of the altar, which entails the inclusion of all statues by Donatello – which allegedly were part of the original fifteenth century altar. Nonetheless, Boito stresses that because there are no traces of the original structure of the Renaissance altar, the difficulty of the task was greatly increased.¹¹⁹ Indeed, rather

¹¹⁷ Mazzariol, Giuseppe, and Attilia Dorigato. *Donatello: le sculture al Santo di Padova*. Edizioni Messaggero, Padova, 1989:13-32

¹¹⁸ Crova 2006:414

¹¹⁹ 'Intendiamoci. Bisognerebbe dire: la ricomposizione, o meglio, la riunione delle opere di statuaria, le quali figuravano già nell'altare di Donatello. Pretendere di rifare l'altare nelle sue forme architettoniche originarie sarebbe una goffa vanità

than making an identical altar to that designed by Donatello, which again would be impossible due to lack of documentation, Boito's aim was to place all the sculptures in their appropriate location. In order to do so, he would follow the lines of perspective of the existing reliefs and sculptures, thereby reproducing the general composition that may have been conceived by the Renaissance artist. The result would allow the viewer to worship and admire the bronze statues as a whole:

"(the aim is not) to remake Donatello's altar as it was, which would be impossible to do, but to place all the statues in their right projection spot, reproducing the general composition that was originally conceived by the master."¹²⁰

di artista presuntuoso. Manca persino il più logoro frammento di modanature e di ornato; manca persino il più sdrucito document grafico (...) Quanto ai documenti contemporanei scritti, sempre insufficienti, quando son soli, ai bisogni dell'architetto, riescono nel caso del nostro notevoli e curiosi per lo storico e per il critic, ma per chi tenga l compass e la matita in mano non servono davvero a nessun costruttore. (...) ' Boito 1897:5, also cited by Grassi 1959:124

¹²⁰ Boito 1897: 11: "non rifare l'altare di Donatello tale e quale, che non si potrebbe, ma di collocare tutte le opere statuarie nel loro giusto punto progettico, riproducendo per esso la composizione generale ideate dal maestro antico."

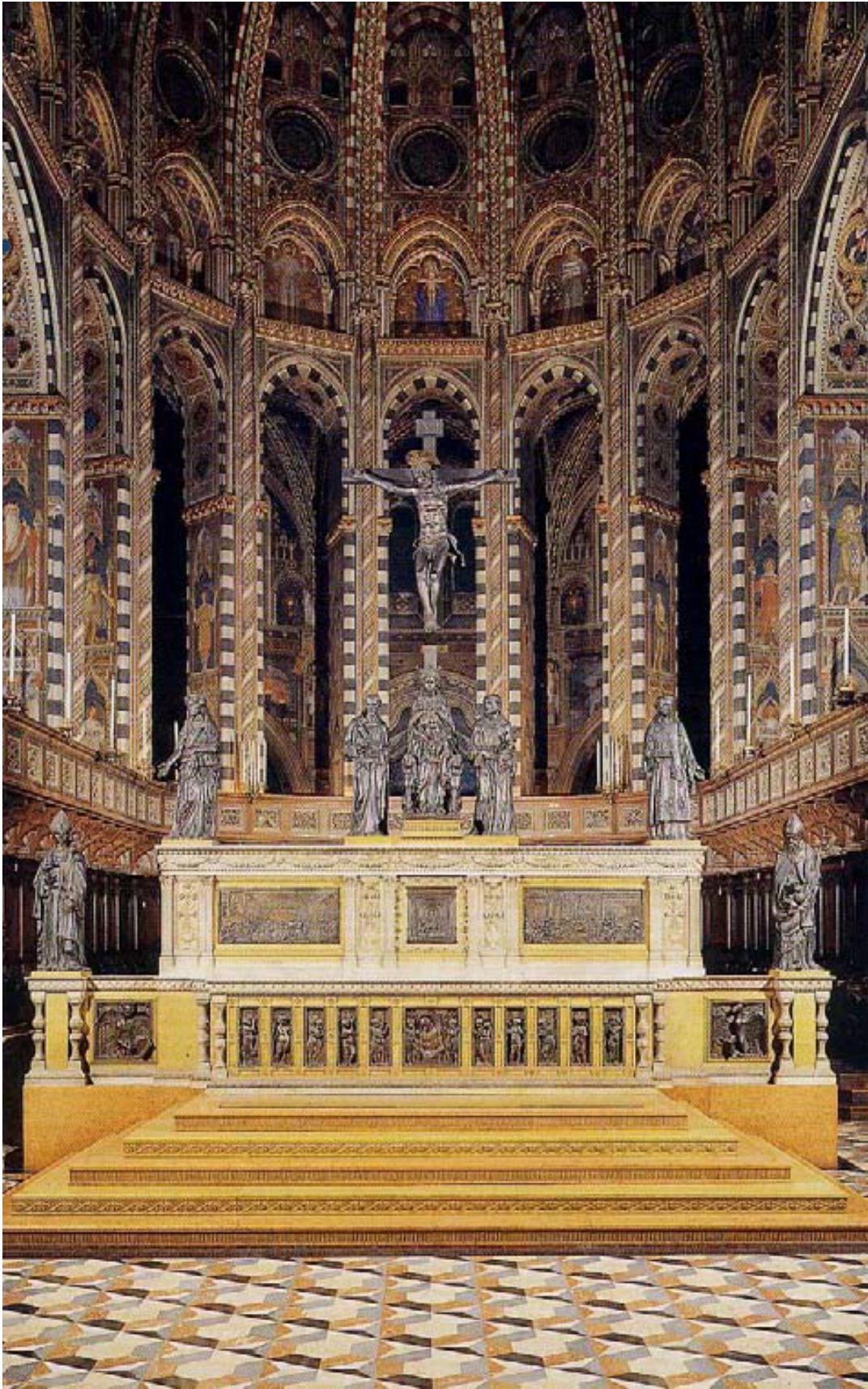


Figure 30. The high altar today as recomposed by Camillo Boito

Boito's points of reference for the recomposition of the altar were based on calculations about the proportional relationship between the sculptures and the surrounding architectural environment, about perspective and, last but not least, about careful observation of the illumination, which would allow the viewer to admire the sculpture without missing the details and facial features of the saints.

Step by step, Boito's investigation for the restoration of the altar proceeded on the basis of historical research and deductive interpretation, resulting in a combination of scientific evidence, historiographical research and the creation of new artistic and architectural elements. To support his research of the high altar, Boito studied the *Quaderni dell'Arca* (The journals of the Arca) and a fifteenth-century description of the high altar by the so-called Anonimo Morelliano, identified as Marcantonio Michiel, a nobleman from the Veneto.¹²¹

According to Boito, in the first half of the fifteenth century Michiel wrote several commentaries on sculpture, painting and monuments. The manuscript was found in 1800 and published by the Abbot Jacopo Morelli, the custodian of the *Biblioteca Marciana* in Venice. In his account of 1897 Boito states that the *Quaderni* and the writings of Anonimo Morelliano were fundamental documentary sources for his recomposition.

Boito was assisted in his research by one of the most important historians and palaeographers in Padua, Professor Andrea Gloria who sourced further information from the account books held in the archives of the *Veneranda Arca*. These books illustrate the payments made to Donatello for his work and occasionally hinted at the original positioning of the sculptures within the church. In addition, Boito also referred to a drawing kept in the Uffizi Gallery in Florence, which prompted him to look for the foundations of the high altar under the floor of the presbytery (Figure 31).¹²²

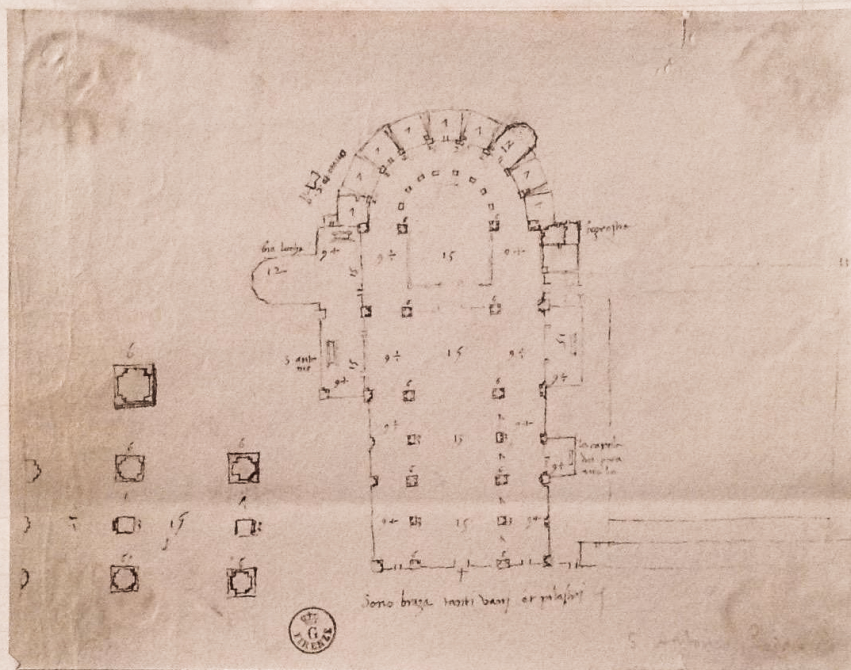
Boito's eventual arrangement of the high altar was therefore based on this research, as well as a close examination of the sculptures and remaining architectural elements

¹²¹ Unfortunately, the *Quaderni dell'Arca* were not accessible at the time I visited the archives in November 2012 and March 2013.

¹²² The position of the high altar will be discussed in the following chapters.

that once comprised the altar. The new arrangement aimed to place the sculptures in a way that recreated as best as possible the original fifteenth-century arrangement, while also presenting the sculptures in a way that could be read coherently by the viewer.

disegno, dalla misura delle altre;
e in fatti il muro di testa è
tutto posteriore al secolo XVI.



La Cappella di mezzo, quella di
S. Francesco, non era ancora
diventata il vestibolo del
barocco Santuario. Le altre,
anche guardandole in costruzione,
rimasero quel che erano all'in-
terno nei piloni, nell'arco di
ingresso, nella volta a crociera,
e all'esterno nei contrafforti.

Figure 31. Fifteenth century drawing of the Church of St. Anthony, from Camillo Boito, *Proposta di alcuni lavori nella cappella del coro e nel presbiterio, Basilica di Sant'Antonio in Padova, Lavori Centenari*, Archivio Moderno della Veneranda Arca cat. III, cl. 1, b. 14, f.3, 1897

How then did Boito come up with his solution of recreating the altar? He started by following the description by the Anonimo Morelliano, who described the altar as follows: "In the Church of the Santo above the bronze altar, all around Our Lady are four figures (...) below these figures are the two bronze reliefs as well as two on the back (...) and behind the altar, below the pedestal is the relief of the dead Christ surrounded by figures (...)"¹²³

The description however was only a starting point; despite the information provided by the Anonimo Morelliano, Boito asserts that he still does not know which reliefs were placed on the front and which were on the back of the altar. Boito therefore decided to take the lines of perspective visible in the relief panels as guiding points.

The architect's explanation goes as follows: "in the scenes of the Miracle of the Foot (...) (that is, the Miracle of the Repentant Son, author's note) and in the Miracle of the Avaricious Man's Heart, the line of the horizon is at the eye level of the standing figures within the reliefs, whereas in the scenes of the Miracle of the Ass and the Miracle of the newborn Child, the horizon line corresponds to the bottom of the reliefs."

¹²⁴ As a consequence Boito decided to place the first two reliefs on the front of the altar where they would be viewed from the vantage point of the step in front of the altar. Likewise, the other two reliefs were placed on the back because they would be viewed from floor level.

Another passage that illustrates Boito's approach to the recomposition of the altar concerns the placement of the bronze sculptures. According to Boito, contemporary original documents from when the altar was first made, clearly report that there were seven sculpted figures of saints on the altar. These correspond to the seven surviving bronze statues (not including the Crucifix) that Boito had to arrange in his recomposition of the altar. However, the Anonimo Morelliano only wrote about five figures (four bronze figures surrounding a sculpture of our Lady).

With regard to this inconsistency Boito suggests that the nobleman was not a notary compiling an inventory and that 'in his sheets he reported the things that caught his

¹²³ Boito 1897:15: "Nella chiesa del Santo sopra l'altar maggiore le quattro figure de bronzo tutte tonde attorno alla nostra Donna, e la nostra Donna, e sotto le ditte figure nello sgabello le due istoriette davanti e le due da dietro pur de bronzo e de bassorilievo; e li quattro Evangelisti nelli contorni, due davanti e due de dietro, de bronzo e de basso rilievo, ma mezzefigure; e da dietro all'altar sotto il sgabello il Cristo morto con le altre figure a circo, [...]"

¹²⁴ Boito 1897:15-16: "Nei due Miracoli del *Piede*, riappiccato dal Santo al figliuolo, che se l'era tagliato per punirsi d'aver dato un calcio alla madre, e del *Cuore dell'avaro*, trovato nello scrigno, anziché nel petto sparato del morto, l'orizzonte sta a livello degli occhi delle figure ritte; nei due Miracoli della *Mula* che s'inginocchia innanzi al Sacramento, e del *Neonato*, che parla per testimoniare in pro della madre, l'orizzonte corrisponde alla linea di terra."

attention [...] Perhaps he did not mention the other two figures because these were placed on the sides of the altar [...]'¹²⁵

Referring to this last passage in particular, the architect's intention to adapt the interpretation of contentious documentary sources to his goal of recomposition becomes quite obvious. When the evidence features gaps or does not reflect the current state of the sculptures, Boito relies on his historiographical interpretation. The ultimate goal, however, remains unchanged throughout the process: a harmonious composition of the altar. The neatness and accuracy of his composition can be appreciated in his drawings of the altar (Figures 32-34).

In maintaining this dual goal of re-unification of the Renaissance bronzes and recomposition of the altar the architect could shield his work from negative criticism by contemporary and later critics. These reviews on Boito's restoration of the altar, again addressed the fact that the architect did not comply in practice with his ideas on restoration.¹²⁶

With that in mind, there are many other readings in regard to Boito's restoration of the altar. According to the scholar Crova, Boito 'reunited' Donatello's bronzes within a modern structural frame, which however, is stylistically compatible with the classical style of the Renaissance master. Illumination, perspective and readability of the bronzes and of the bas-reliefs are the guiding lights of Boito's recomposition of the altar. This process occurred within the boundaries of a respectful attitude towards the past, imitating the style of Donatello with prudence and skilful originality according to a methodology that is basically in line with a museographic installation of the sculptures.

Even if the recomposition of the altar is to a certain extent based on a historiographical interpretation, the architectural language adopted by the architect is a tribute to the Florentine master.¹²⁷ As is repeatedly indicated in various passages of Boito's 1897 report illustrating the Paduan project, in order to complete his work the

¹²⁵ Boito 1897:18: "Veniamo alle statue. S'è visto che i documenti sincroni ci parlano di sette figure, alloggiate a Donatello ed a' suoi discepoli; e ci dicono i nomi dei santi che rappresentavano. Non si può sbagliare. E sette statue di bronzo ci sono infatti rimaste, senza contare il Crocifisso. Ma ecco che l'Anonimo Morelliano annota nel proprio taccuino: Sopra l'altar maggiore le quattro figure de bronzo tutte tonde attorno la nostra Donna, e la nostra Donna ...furono de mano de Donatello. Le statue dunque erano cinque? Innanzi tutto l'Anonimo o il nobil uomo Marcantonio Michiel, se era lui, non s'ha a confondere con un notaio che stenda un inventario: eegistrava ne' suoi fogli le cose che lo coprivano di più, quelle che in quel giorno, in quell'ora gli parevano più belle, più singolari o più in vista."

¹²⁶ See for instance Lionello Puppi's study of 1991:125-156 "La ricostruzione dell'altare di Donatello a Padova. Un'ambiguità di Camillo Boito restauratore." But also Liliana Grassi, 1959:124-125 "Padova: Basilica del Santo. Ricomposizione dell'altare di Donatello, alzata posteriore."

¹²⁷ Crova 2006:415

restorer took inspiration from works by Donatello that relate to the features of an altar and that were produced at about the same time as the sculptor was working on the Paduan Church (from 1446–53).

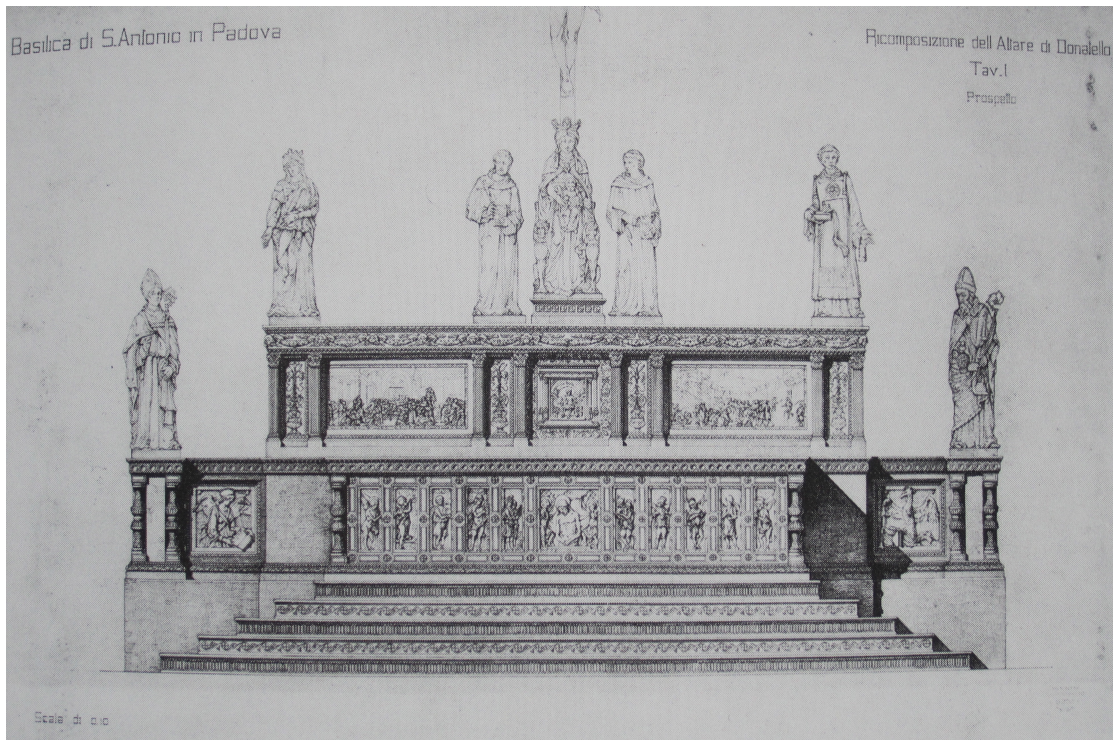


Figure 32. Camillo Boito, Recomposition of Donatello's altar, front, 1893. Basilica di S. Antonio in Padova, Ricomposizione dell'altare di Donatello. Tav. I. Archivio Moderno della Veneranda Arca, Padua, cat. III, cl. 1, b. 14

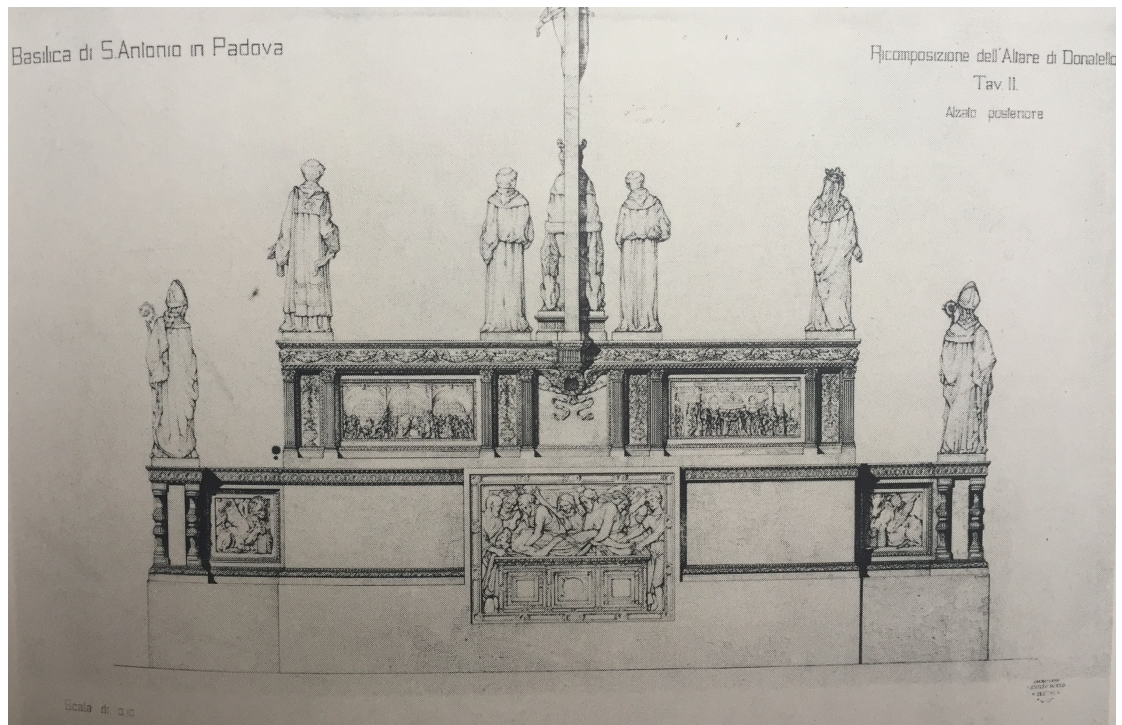


Figure 33. Figure 13. Camillo Boito, Recomposition of Donatello's altar, rear, 1893. Basilica di S. Antonio in Padova, Alzato posteriore, Tav.II. Archivio Moderno della Veneranda Arca, Padua, cat. III, cl.1, b. 14

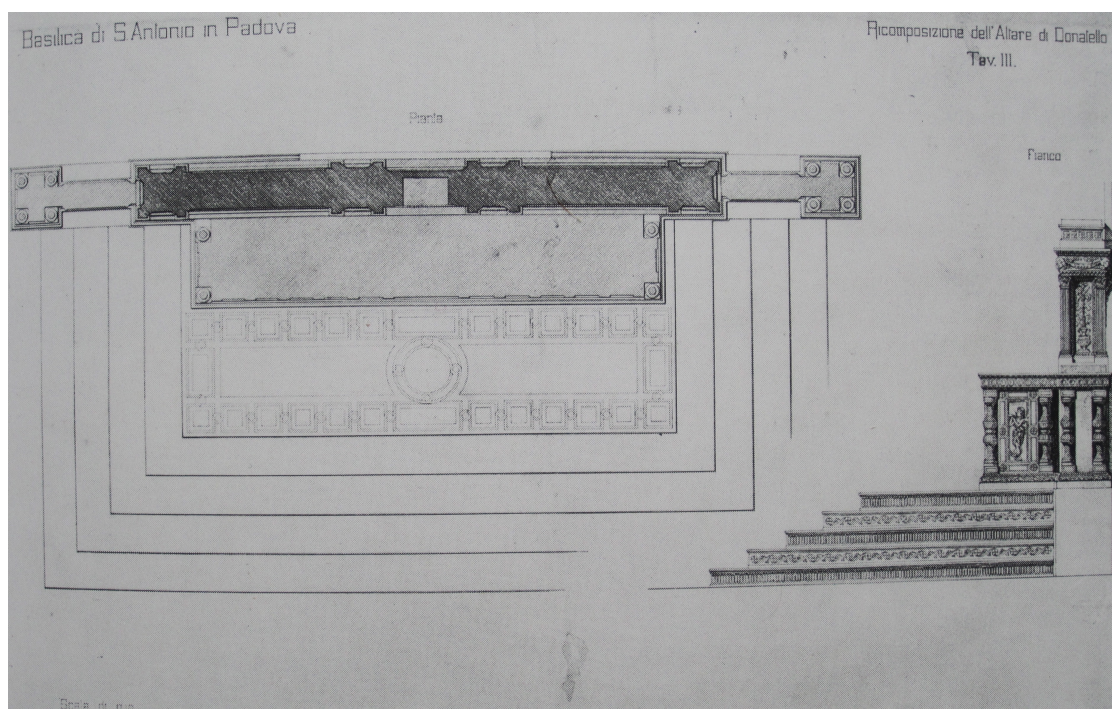


Figure 34. Camillo Boito, Recomposition of Donatello's altar, floor plan, 1893. Basilica di S. Antonio in Padova, Pianta, Tav.III. Archivio Moderno della Veneranda Arca, Padua, cat. III, cl.1, b. 14

As has been recognised by modern scholars, Boito's method for the reconstruction of the altar is revealed through the study of the decorative details that the architect added to his composition in order to unify the work stylistically. His intention was to link these new elements to Donatello's style by borrowing from other works by the sculptor, as he also clearly states in his publication of 1897 about the recomposition of the altar.¹²⁸

For example, the frieze with cherubs, the festoons and the shell motifs all recall the decoration of Donatello's choir loft *Santa Maria del Fiore*, Florence, today kept in the *Museo dell'Opera del Duomo* (Figure 35) and the winged crown that decorates the base of the cross on the rear of the altar may be inspired by the Annunciation in Santa Croce, Florence (Figure 36).

Finally, the fluted Corinthian pilasters may stem from the pulpit of Prato's *Cattedrale di Santo Stefano* by Nicola Pisano.¹²⁹ Scholars have also suggested that the structural elements of Boito's recomposed altar recall the *Pala di San Zeno* by Andrea Mantegna (Figure 37) made for the church of the same name in Verona between 1457 and 1459. Similarities between the *Pala* and Boito's high altar of the Paduan Church can also be found in the composition of the cornices, with the presence of a cusp in the shape of a lowered arch that crowns the scene and in the treatment of space as a unified whole despite the tripartite division in which the Virgin is enclosed by the saints.¹³⁰ Further suggestions with regard to models that may have inspired the architect point to the *Pala* by Niccolò Pizzolo in the Ovetari Chapel in the Church of the Eremitani in Padua because of the way he divided the scene with pilasters.¹³¹

¹²⁸ Boito 1897:36-38

¹²⁹ See Castellani 2000:128. Also, in her monograph of 1959 on Boito, Grassi states that the Choir of Santa Maria del Fiore was Boito's main inspiration for the decorative motives of the altar. The Choir dates between 1433 and 1438, only a few years before Donatello made the altar. Grassi 1959:125. Also, in his study on the altar of 1961 Fiocco underlines that there are strong similarities between Donatello's Annunciation in Santa Croce, also known as Cavalcanti Annunciation, and the original Renaissance altar of the Santo. The Annunciation, made in golden and polychrome *pietra serena* dates 1436 ca., less than a decade before the Paduan altar. It is conceivable that Boito also looked at Donatello's Annunciation too in regards to the polychrome nature of his nineteenth century altar and the strong similarities of the winged crown on the rear of the altar. See Fiocco 1961:28.

¹³⁰ Rosenauer, Artur. *Donatello*. Mondadori Electa, Milano, 1993:204

¹³¹ *ibid.*

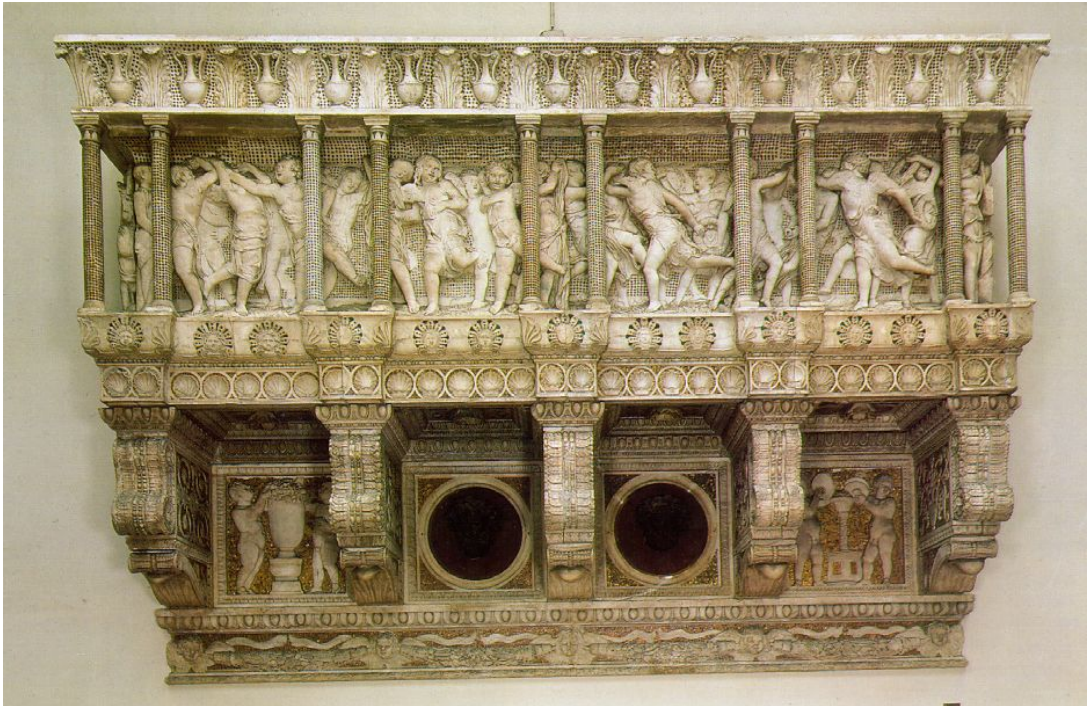


Figure 35. Choir loft by Donatello, 1433–39, Museo dell’Opera del Duomo, Florence.



Figure 36. Annunciation by Donatello, c.1435, Santa Croce, Florence



Figure 37. Pala di San Zeno by Andrea Mantegna (detail of the tripartite spacial division), 1459, San Zeno, Verona

These comparisons can help us to understand how Boito came up with the design for the altar for it seems that he may have looked at these elements and used them as an inspiration for the new configuration.

The architect's methodology for the recomposition of the altar is therefore also based on the investigation of artistic analogies within other works that were produced by Donatello and more generally, in the same chronological context. Boito's procedure is fuelled by an interpretive way of thinking that has to overcome the lack of solid evidence but still finds ground in his solid architectural and art historical knowledge. Throughout the process however, Boito never lost sight of the compositional logic of the monument, its function and aesthetic value that he aimed to emphasise through the placement of the sculptures.

While Boito looked at Renaissance oeuvres for the recomposition of the altar, it is likely that his methodology was inspired by other architects. One likely example is the altar in the Florence Baptistery, restored on the basis of a drawing by the architect Giuseppe Castellucci (1863–1939) in 1912 (Figure 38). Castellucci's dedication to restoration and monument conservation was sanctioned by his appointment in 1892 as architect of the *Ufficio regionale per la conservazione dei monumenti della Toscana* (Regional office for the conservation of monuments of Tuscany). In 1901 he was appointed director of the Opera del Duomo in Florence.¹³² His work in this field was

¹³² "Giuseppe Castellucci", Miano, G., *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 2011, Vol. 21, pp. 805-809

strongly influenced by Boito, whom he met only once in 1901 when they were members of the *Commissione per il riordinamento della città di Firenze per il collegamento dei quartieri d'Oltarno* (Commission for the planning of the city of Florence and its connection of the city quarters beyond the Arno river).¹³³ His career mainly developed in Tuscany, specifically in the cities of Arezzo and Florence and their surrounding areas.

With regard to the above-mentioned altar in the Baptistery of Santa Maria del Fiore in Florence, several parallels can be drawn between Castellucci's 1912 restoration project and Boito's work to restore the high altar of the Santo in Padua. First, both altars were planned to replace eighteenth-century Baroque altars. In the specific case of the Baptistery, the altar to be replaced was a neo-Romanesque work of 1731 by the sculptor-architect Girolamo Ticciati.¹³⁴

Ticciati's altar replaced an earlier fourteenth-century altar, whose composition was known of thanks to the precise notes and drawings made by Anton Francesco Gori (1691–1757), a specialist in etruscology and scholar of the Florentine Baptistery. Through this documentary resource Castellucci was able to trace original pieces of the Trecento altar and, according to him, to reconstruct the altar with exact forms and measures.¹³⁵

¹³³ *ibid.* 2011:806

¹³⁴ Onnis, Francesco. "Il sogno rinascimentale di Giuseppe Castellucci." *Commentari d'arte: rivista di critica e storia dell'arte*, anno VI, nn. 15-17, gennaio-dicembre 2000:113

¹³⁵ In a letter addressed to the "Marchese Commendatore Carlo Ridolfi Senatore Deputato Residente dell'Opera di S. Maria del Fiore" of November 10th 1910 Castellucci writes: 'Per tale ricostruzione abbiamo tutti gli elementi sicuri [...] Tutti questi precisi elementi mi hanno reso facile delineare un disegno grande al vero del prospetto e del fianco, disegno che mi onoro di sottoporre all'esame di codesta Onorevole Deputazione.' Firenze, Archivio dell'Opera del di Santa Maria del Fiore, Deputazione Secolare, serie XI, 8-9, Onnis 2000:115fn



Figure 38. Neo-romanesque altar in the Baptistery of Florence by Giuseppe Castellucci, 1912

In his restoration of the altar in the Florentine Baptistery Castellucci pursued the same aim as Boito: restoring the monument in such a way as to emphasise its own architectural and harmonious presence within a pre-existing environment, while attempting to preserve the artistic and symbolic values. Indeed, one of the first steps undertaken by Castellucci in re-constructing the Baptistery altar was the removal of Ticiati's elaborate (*'macchinoso'*) Baroque altar.¹³⁶

¹³⁶ This is mentioned in a letter of Castellucci addressed to the Marchese Commendatore Carlo Ridolfi Senatore Deputato Residente dell'Opera di S. Maria del Fiore of November 10th 1910: "prima di tutto s'impone la rimozione del macchinoso altare maggiore costruito insieme al coro curvilineo nel 1731 da Girolamo Ticiati e la ricostruzione dell'altare antico che fu demolito dallo stesso Ticiati per far posto al nuovo." Firenze, Archivio dell'Opera del di Santa Maria del fiore, Deputazione Secolare, serie XI, 8-9, Onnis 2000:115fn

Similarly, in his 1897 volume, Boito argued that before his intervention the Baroque altar, which had been in place for 130 years, was a disproportioned ensemble. The sculptures were positioned more than nine to thirteen meters high off the ground and therefore sank into the darkness. They were impossible to view from a standing position on the floor and were clearly not appropriately placed.¹³⁷

It becomes evident from Boito's observations that the parameters according to which Baroque art was not considered worth preserving (see also the Church in Murano discussed above) were quite spread within the Italian artistic setting. At the same time, referring back to Boito, it is worth noting that the architect expressed lucid and objective concepts in the 1897 volume illustrating the restoration enterprise of St. Anthony's Church.

These testify to his advanced critical awareness and his intellectual independence, which despite negative critique on his restoration, had been already acknowledged by Grassi in 1959.¹³⁸ The passages of Boito's text of 1897 that are not fully supported by traces or documentation, and that may therefore remain doubtful, are supported by his eloquence and argumentative skills. As a result, despite the skilful adoption of a figurative language for the recomposition of the altar that enabled all the sculptures to be fully visible, Boito's work has long been considered a product of stylistic interpretation and restoration.¹³⁹

While Boito has clearly detached himself from attempting to restructure the altar as originally conceived by Donatello, he also questions why no other architect had previously attempted, at least on paper, to reunite the bronze sculptures dispersed in the church.¹⁴⁰ However, in the early twentieth century, several art historians theorised on the original arrangement of the fifteenth-century altar.¹⁴¹ As a matter of fact, the original Renaissance composition of the altar by Donatello is a topic that engaged most

¹³⁷ Boito 1897 and Mazzariol, Giuseppe, and Attilia Dorigato. *Donatello: le sculture al Santo di Padova*. Edizioni Messaggero, Padova, 1989:6

¹³⁸ Grassi 1959:124

¹³⁹ See for instance Grassi, 1959:125, the first scholar in modern critical literature who argued that Boito's composition was very close to a stylistic interpretation rather than a restoration.

¹⁴⁰ Boito 1897:6

¹⁴¹ There are more than a dozen hypothetical reconstructions of Donatello's altar: already in 1969, John White named eleven hypothetical reconstructions including the one accomplished by Boito. The main differences among the reconstructions feature in the possible presence of a baldachin casing all or part of the statues. See White, John. "Donatello's High Altar in the Santo at Padua. Part One: The Documents and Their Implications." *The Art Bulletin*, College Art Association, Vol. 51, No. 1, March 1969, pp. 1-14. Among the most recent theses feature the hypothetical reconstruction by Johnson, Geraldine A. "Approaching the Altar: Donatello's Sculpture in the Santo." *Renaissance Quarterly*, The University of Chicago Press, Vol. 52, No. 3, 1999, pp. 627-666 and Gilbert, Creighton, E. "The Original Assembly of Donatello's Padua Altar." *Artibus et Historiae*, Vol. 28, No. 55, Part 1, 2007, pp. 11-22.

scholarly debate throughout the twentieth century, starting with Boito's 1895 work. Terms such as 'original', '*ricomposizione*' (recomposition) and '*Rekonstruktionsversuch*' (attempt of reconstruction) appear in the titles of scholarly essays about the high altar in Padua.

All of these theories are directly or indirectly relatable to Boito's composition, as the architect's recomposition of the altar is the 'accomplished fact' in front of our eyes. Indeed, scholarly essays mostly point out the structural differences between Boito's final work and the original fifteenth-century altar. With the exception of a few hypothetical reconstructions, most scholars assume that the altar was placed at the centre of the church with a canopy, i.e. baldachin, to go over the sculptures.

As suggested by McHam, the altar would therefore have resembled a grand stage fenced by columns and pilasters, which supported the canopy in the form of an arched vault, in the manner of Mantegna's San Zeno altarpiece in Verona built between 1457 and 1459.¹⁴² In his study of 1993, Rosenauer argues that the key difference between Boito's altar and the original by Donatello lies in the lack of a canopy that originally was placed above the sculptures. The canopy was also mentioned in one of the main documentary sources that Boito used as a reference for his reconstruction, the *Quaderni dell' Arca* and in the writings of Marcantonio Michiel of 1520.¹⁴³

According to documents regarding payments made to Donatello, the altar included eight columns that supported the canopy, four of them on a round base and four on a square base. It is also possible that this original canopy featured a wide cusp with a lower arch that carried a sculpted relief of God.

Hence why didn't Boito include the canopy in his arrangement, since this was mentioned in the writings of the Anonimo Morelliano that he used as one of the documentary sources for his arrangement? Perhaps we will never know. In his report Boito does not explain why he left the canopy out. As with other parts of the altar, there were no physical remains of the canopy, so possibly Boito decided not to build it, given that it was not essential to the correct recomposition of the rest of the altar.

¹⁴² McHam, Sarah Blake. "Donatello and the High Altar in the Santo, Padua." IL60. *Essays Honoring Irving Lavin on His Sixtieth Birthday*, edited by Marilyn Aronberg Lavin, Italica Press, New York, 1990:77; See also Rosenauer 1993:204, also supporting McHams theory and arguing that the Pala di San Zeno decisively influenced the composition of the altar, especially with regard to the cornice, to the probable presence of the cusp and to the treatment of open space as a (balanced) unity.

¹⁴³ Boito 1897:19; see also Rosenauer 1993:203

Today, the most credible reconstructions are those produced by Janson in 1957 and John White in 1969 (Figure 39).¹⁴⁴ According to both scholars, the altar was intended to be viewed from both the front and the rear. This is also confirmed by the back of the Virgin's throne which is decorated with a relief of the Original Sin; in addition, a description provided by Michiel indicates that two of the narrative reliefs were positioned on the back of the altar.¹⁴⁵

Assuming that there were originally four pilasters and four columns, scholars suggest that the altar had a rectangular shape with one pilaster at each corner and paired columns on each side.¹⁴⁶ The four reliefs of the Evangelists, the four reliefs of episodes from the life of Saint Anthony, the twelve reliefs of putti, and the relief of the Dead Christ are all approximately the same height and therefore may have formed a single band running along the basement, as seen in Boito's re-composition.

¹⁴⁴ Gilbert 2007:11 "Today it is normal to cite just two proposals: Janson's which offered the most thorough survey and arguments, in 1957; and White's, which made the most forceful critique of his and other approaches." Also, for the best figurative representation of the various hypothetical reconstructions, see Rosenauer's scheme 1993:239.

¹⁴⁵ Gilbert 2007: 12

¹⁴⁶ See D. von Hadeln 1909, R. Band 1940m H.W. Janson 1957, G. Fiocco 1961, A. Parronchi 1963 and J. White 1969

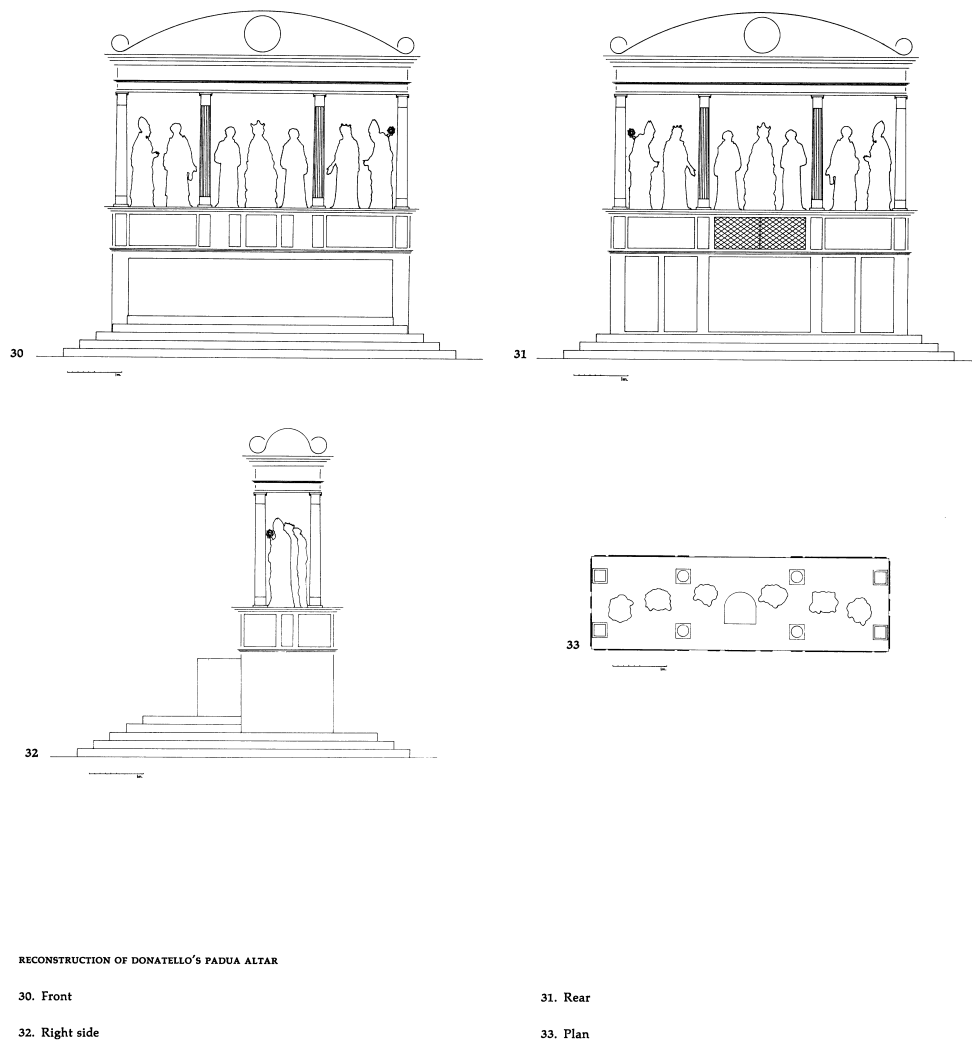


Figure 39. The recomposition of Donatello's altar by John White. In "Donatello's High Altar in the Santo at Padua Part Two: The Reconstruction." *The Art Bulletin*, College Art Association, Vol. 51, No.2, June 1969, p. 16

In his 1969 study, White also suggested on the basis of the few available sources the exact location of each relief: the miracles of St. Anthony may have been placed on the edge of the long sides on the front and back of the altar and were flanked by two reliefs featuring putti. In the central section of the base on the front of the altar was the image of the dead Christ, while the short sides of the altar were decorated with the symbols of the Evangelists.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁷ White 1969:12

With regard to the arrangement of the sculptures, most scholars agree that these were placed according to their different heights. The bishops, Prosdocimo and Lodovico, are the tallest sculptures and were probably each placed on the most outward sides of the altar (left and right) in a position at the front, while the smallest figures, St. Francis and St. Anthony, flanked the Madonna in a slightly receding position. In the middle were St. Daniel and St. Justyna.¹⁴⁸ White argues that all of the figures were plainly visible and did not overlap one another (Figure 39).

By contrast, Rosenauer suggests that it is exactly due to Donatello's interest in the study of perspective that we might think of the figures as being framed by the columns creating an optical effect that may have enhanced the optical illusion of three dimensions of the space. Boito positioned the sculptures in such a way that there was space all around them without any overlapping. He did however place the freestanding sculptures on two different levels, locating saints Prosdocimo and Louis on the lower external wings of the altar.

The position of the Crucifix is possibly the most debated issue within the scholarly literature when discussing the original arrangement of the high altar, both in terms of its history and in regard to Boito's arrangement of the altar. In her 1997 study dedicated to this topic, Johnson reports that the Crucifix is the first documented work by Donatello in Padua and dates to 1444.¹⁴⁹ Johnson argues that: "The original placement [of the crucifix] is much less clear than the history of its making."¹⁵⁰

As with the other sculpture, the Crucifix has been moved around the church several times: in 1651 it was inserted in the Baroque altar by Girolamo Campagna and Cesare Franco, before it was finally included in Boito's nineteenth-century arrangement. Several scholars have argued that a text of 1446 which records the production of a pedestal for the Crucifix destined for the high altar proves that it was always destined to be placed at that location.¹⁵¹

Boito himself decided to include the Crucifix within his 1895 rearrangement of the altar following detailed research. The following passage in Boito's 1897 publication, in

¹⁴⁸ *ibid.*

¹⁴⁹ Johnson, Geraldine A. "The Original Placement of Donatello's Bronze Crucifix in the Santo in Padua." *The Burlington Magazine*, The Burlington Magazine Publications Ltd, Vol. 139, No. 1137, Dec. 1997, pp. 860-862

¹⁵⁰ *ibid.* 1997:860

¹⁵¹ *ibid.* 1997:860 The document dates July 1st 1446 and was first published by Professor Andrea Gloria, who supported Boito during the preparatory studies for the re-composition. By unknown author, the document is now kept in the Archivio Sartori, Documenti di storia e arte francescana, ed. G. Luisetto, Padua 1983. The scholars attributing this Document to Donatello's Crucifix are H.W. Janson. *The Sculpture of Donatello*, Princeton 1963, pp.147-48; Hartt, F. *Donatello: Prophet of Modern Vision*, New York 1973, p. 319; Parronchi, A. *Donatello e il potere*, Bologna 1980, p. 158, B.A. Bennett and D.G. Wilkins: *Donatello*, Oxford 1984, p. 61. Also cited from Johnson 1997: 860fn.

which he describes his decision to raise the Crucifix above the altar, is worth presenting in its entirety because it provides a summary of the architect's methodology and his critical process in rearranging the altar: "If the Crucifix was made for the old high altar of the basilica, why shouldn't it go back on the high altar of the basilica? Why shouldn't it complete the series of celebrated bronzes? The sacred rite demands a crucified Christ over the altar of the sacrifice and here we have one executed by an important master, the same size as the other statues, if we consider that the Saviour has to dominate above the Mother and the Saints. Beneath the horizontal arms of the cross, gather the Madonna, Saint Francis and Saint Anthony – the two grand friars; and the imposing figure of the Crucifix completes the religious expression of the altar and the magnificence of the statuary composition."¹⁵²

With regard to the positioning of the Crucifix, Johnson also argues that a careful reading of the documentary evidence and the discovery of a new text, suggest a different original destination for the cross. According to this document, it is possible that the Crucifix was originally destined to stand in the central part of the nave, which indicates a further flaw in Boito's composition when it is viewed in comparison to the original fifteenth-century arrangement.

The evidence to which Johnson refers is a document written by Gabriele Capodilista, a member of a prominent Paduan family, in which he recounts his trip from Padua to the Holy Land in 1458. In his personal account, Capodilista points out several similarities between the Paduan Church and the church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. One such similarity is the placement of a Crucifix in the centre of the church facing the choir. Furthermore, Johnson suggests that the 1446 source used by Boito in his research may not refer to Donatello's crucifix at all, but to an older, painted, wooden crucifix, which is the *Crucem Magnam* mentioned in an earlier document of 1377.¹⁵³

The position of the altar within the church also presented a challenge for the architect. There were no traces of foundations left of the fifteenth-century altar under the

¹⁵² Boito 1897:29: "Oh se era fatto per il vecchio altar maggiore della basilica, perché non avrebbe dovuto tornare nell'altar maggiore della basilica? Perché non avrebbe dovuto compiere la serie dei bronzi insigni? Il rito sacro esige un Cristo in Croce sopra l'alra del sacrificio, e qui lo abbiamo eseguito da un tanto maestro, e della misura per l'appunto delle altre statue, se si tien conto che il Redentore deve dominare la Madre e i Santi. Sotto le braccia orizzontali della croce si raccolgono la Madonna, san Francesco, sant'Antonio – i due grandi frati; e la imponente figura del Crocifisso compie la espressione religiosa dell'altare e insieme la grandezza della composizione statuaria."

¹⁵³ Johnson 1997:861

apse.¹⁵⁴ As for the placement of the sculptures mentioned above Boito looks to available ancient literary sources and to the fifteenth-century drawing mentioned above kept in the Uffizi Gallery, which clearly shows that Donatello's altar was placed in the presbytery.

It is in this spot that Boito decides to conduct further excavations, eventually locating traces of the altar's foundations. However, these were so scarce that no indications regarding the measurements or form of the altar were noticeable.¹⁵⁵ Despite having identified the position of Donatello's altar it was not possible to replace it in the presbytery due to the plan of the church: this would have entailed the destruction of many sculptures of the seventeenth century that occupied the space.¹⁵⁶

Boito therefore decided to place the altar further forward from the remaining traces of the original altar in order to enhance the legibility of the sculptures. Eventually, the fact that the altar is not similar to Donatello's original work cannot be considered a fault or point of criticism of Boito's work, as he did not ever attempt to imitate the original Renaissance altar. As far as he was concerned, the recomposition of the altar had to make Donatello's bronze sculptures clearly legible for the viewer – by looking at the altar today it is evident that the architect succeeded in this.

Indeed, Boito's work should not be viewed in a compartmentalised manner, separating his career as architect from his work as a restorer or lecturer, but rather as a whole with each element of his work influenced by his broad knowledge of various disciplines related to architecture, cultural heritage conservation, practical and theoretical restoration.¹⁵⁷

On 1 August 1894 Boito presented a series of new drawings to the committee of the *Veneranda Arca*. Every detail of his work was included, ranging from the religious furniture to the monumental recomposition of the altar.¹⁵⁸ The architect's accurate methodology can also be seen in the 'minor' parts of the restoration project, for

¹⁵⁴ Boito 1897:32 Boito reports that excavations to locate the foundations of the altar in the apse were conducted under the supervision the Secretary of the Veneranda Arca. Despite excavating 1.70m in depth and 4.50 in width no traces of foundations were identified. The excavations were conducted according to the information provided by Father Bernardo Gonzati, most popular historian of the Basilica. His most popular publication is Gonzati, Bernardo. *La Basilica di Sant'Antonio di Padova*. Vols. 2. Coi Tipi di Antonio Bianchi, Padova, 1852.

¹⁵⁵ Boito 1897:32

¹⁵⁶ Boito 1897:33

¹⁵⁷ As mentioned in the previous paragraphs, this novel perspective on the architect's works emerged in the last few decades; it was launched through the studies of Guido Zucconi in the late 1990s; studies that have been frequently mentioned as a reference throughout this research project.

¹⁵⁸ Castellani, Francesca. "Nel cantiere del Santo." pp. 111-118, and "L'altare di Donatello." *Camillo Boito, Un'architettura per l'Italia unita*, edited by Zucconi, Guido and Francesca Castellani, Marsilio, Venezia, 2000, pp.128-132.

example the chandeliers and other items where Boito demonstrates his creativity as an artist and architect.¹⁵⁹

Further aspects of Boito's *modus operandi* are revealed when seen in the light of a rival bid to take over the direction of the project in 1893. Boito's attitude towards members of the commission and other institutional bodies proved to be faultless, especially from a technical point of view. For example, the architect used models of the altar to assess the likely effect his project would have in terms of illumination, space and possible conflicts of style between the altar and the surrounding structure of the church. For the time, this was a very rigorous approach that surely increased Boito's popularity within the various institutions.¹⁶⁰

It is therefore no surprise that the *Veneranda Arca* and the Ministry of Education gave almost complete operational freedom to Boito. Nevertheless, a few obstacles still stood in the way of the architect's plan. For instance, Boito requested a periodical monitoring of the work in progress by the institutional bodies, but the members of the presidency of the *Veneranda Arca* never acknowledged this request. The Commission of the *Veneranda Arca* convened a meeting on 9 November 1893 and conditionally approved Boito's projects, but at the same time the committee's members also suggested that they hear the opinion of the sculptor Luigi Ceccon. At this point Ceccon suddenly becomes a possible rival to Boito, threatening the architect's position as director of the works.

In her studies Castellani uncovered an unpublished report that Ceccon addressed to the commission on the day of the meeting (Appendix V). Ceccon's report does not directly question the legitimacy of Boito's project and the sculptor agrees with the architect's chosen style and decoration, but he questions the distribution of the bronze sculptures on the altar. Ceccon believed that Boito was giving too much credence to the primary sources, that is, the writings of Marcantonio Michiel: 'The respectable Commander Boito, possibly too impressed or rather bound to the memory of the Anonimo Morelliano, in his artistic conscience, wanted to follow to the letter [the words of Morelliano]'.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁹ Castellani, *Boito nella Basilica del Santo*, 2002: 111-131

¹⁶⁰ Castellani 2000: 113-114

¹⁶¹ "L'egregio Com. Boito, forse troppo impressionato, anzi legato dalla completa memoria del Morelliano, nella sua coscienza d'artista ha voluto seguirla alla lettera (...)" Castellani 2000:128

According to the words of Marcantonio Michiel, Boito had already planned to place two bas-reliefs (two scenes of miracles by saints and two panels depicting the symbols of the Evangelists) on the back of the altar, as indicated in the literary source. Ceccon however, promoted the distribution of the bronze statues according to the principle of musealisation, whereby all the statues and bas-reliefs are displayed on the front of the altar, regardless of their original location.

It almost goes without saying that Boito was against Ceccon's proposal, which he considered too removed from the history of the church. Boito wanted to create a lively rearrangement of the altar, which was suitable in terms of aesthetics and practical, so that the liturgical function of the altar could be maintained.¹⁶² Eventually the Ministry, possibly due to political pressures as well as a preference for the architect, fully approved Boito's project.

Next to his commitment to the recomposition of the altar and other restoration works in the church, Boito also dedicated his attention to other aspects of his 'construction site'. The choice of local craftsman, to the use of technical innovations made possible by progress and the modernisation of craft techniques were the mechanisms that guaranteed the successful functioning of his enterprise.

Castellani reports that Boito paid great attention to the supervision of the project and to his responsibilities as architect, restorer and modern master. For the comprehensive monument restoration of the church Boito chose to employ local craftsmen of the region. Boito's use of artisans according to the organic system of medieval guilds at the local level is unique, especially when considering that during his time, on the verge of the twentieth century, Europe was going through a period of technological and industrial progress and was not featuring the value of local craftsmanship among its priorities.

Boriani, however, in his 1991 study on artisans and decorative arts argues that confidence in technological sciences, which had been high during the first decades of the industrial revolution, gradually decreased over the last decades of the nineteenth century, thus facilitating the re-emergence of craftsmanship.¹⁶³ This process is

¹⁶² Castellani 2000:115

¹⁶³ Boriani, Maurizio. "Artigianato, arti decorative e industriali, restauro nel pensiero di Camillo Boito." *Omaggio a Camillo Boito*, edited by Alberto Grimoldi. Franco Angeli, Milano, 1991, pp.169-181.

indicative of the historical fracture that contemporary society was sensing at the turn of the century and which Boito was very mindful of.¹⁶⁴

Boito's awareness of the time he was living through emerges in all of his projects and demonstrates the architect's total commitment to the empowerment of local cultural and artisanal heritage and regional arts. It is therefore not surprising that at this stage Boito grasped the great economic possibility for local artisans presented by the grand restoration of the Church. Boito was aware that the restoration project would engage many local artisans and their companies, whose excellence was proven by their long tradition and their ability to use local materials that they had worked with for centuries.¹⁶⁵

However, Boito aimed to have the best quality for each artisanal sector involved in his monument restoration. Therefore, participation in the great restoration project was not given automatically to local businesses and artisans: they needed to enter competitions in order to win a contract. So the white marble of the altar came from Carrara, the yellow marble from South Tyrol and the parchments for the furniture from Jesurum (one of the most prominent fabric producers in Venice, which is still known today).¹⁶⁶

At the Santo, Boito created a microcosm of artisans based on local artistic knowledge and tradition that he valued. By describing Boito's commitment in bringing back the value of local art through regional artisan and craftsmanship Zucconi uses the term 'genius loci'. The *genius loci* and the importance of harmonisation between the old traditional arts and the new methodological approach to monument restoration and working techniques, come together in the architect's project for the Church.¹⁶⁷

Boriani suggests that Boito's attention to past techniques and crafts is based on the need to comprehend a historical truth, meaning a history that is not biased by interpretations but is subjective and concrete; its understanding is based on the linearity and tradition of artisanship. At the same time, Boito understood that it would have been a waste to restrict the application of these past techniques in artisanship to the conservation of cultural heritage or to pure theoretical knowledge of ancient

¹⁶⁴ Boriani 1991:170

¹⁶⁵ Castellani 2000:114-115

¹⁶⁶ Castellani 2000: 128

¹⁶⁷ Zucconi 1997: 47ff. For a thorough illustration of these concepts in relation to Boito and Selvatico, see Zucconi's chapter "Venezia 1855. Selvatico, Boito e le radici romantiche del neomedievalismo," specifically the subchapters "Caratteri tipicamente italiani," pp.47-51, and "Genius Loci e strumenti di rappresentazione," pp. 52-61. In *Camillo Boito L'Invenzione del passato*.

practices. The architect believed – and with the monumental restoration of the Santo proved – that this knowledge and these techniques could also be extended to the imitation and re-creation of the ancient arts, while considering the modern value of scientific evidence.¹⁶⁸

Boito's approach to the monumental restoration of the altar has been investigated from various perspectives, including his own. As mentioned above, the earliest literature on Boito relating to his recomposition of the altar in the Santo was not without criticism. Nonetheless, Boito's monument restoration of the church's high altar can be objectively viewed as positive. His recomposition technique may not have been entirely based on scientific traces and was accompanied by a subjective interpretation, which however, was always based on a thorough study of art history and artistic styles.

The aim of a harmonious composition, which would return Donatello's sculpture (including the low reliefs) to a position where they could be seen properly, was accomplished. These works of art could be finally admired in their entirety, an aspect, which to some extent adds a minor museographical quality to the final work. Boito's recomposition of the altar is as a matter of fact distant from the modern concept of restoration as we define it today.

The architect removed a previous eighteenth-century altar, obliterating an art historical phase. This liability however is convincingly balanced by the contemporary idea of monument recomposition, stylistic unification of the monument and validity that the architect was able to provide to the altar and to its sculptures.

Innovation in Boito's restoration methodology: the use of photography

This last section might seem thematically detached from the topic of monument restoration as discussed until now in this thesis. However, it aims to complete this research project with one further innovative aspect of Boito's practice of cultural heritage conservation and study of architecture, namely his use of photography. This new visual technique is surely one of the most groundbreaking inventions of the nineteenth century.

¹⁶⁸ Boriani 1991:177

Therefore, in line with his innovative and scientific approach to monument restoration, Boito quickly embraced photography as part of his methodological approach of restoration in order to make an accurate record of the conditions, the stylistic details and the eventual modifications to monuments.

Introduced as a new technique of representation at the end of the 1830s (in France with Louis Jacques Mandé Daguerre and in England with William Henry Fox Talbot) photography soon won over several sectors of the European intellectual community.¹⁰⁰ The initial popularity of photography was characterised by the *Grand Tour* depictions of the Italian peninsula, yet soon photography loses its picturesque quality of the panoramic view of a landscape to shift to an objective and often detailed image of architecture.

From the very beginning of its invention, the two great themes of photography were architecture and portraiture, with architecture and the recording of the urban environment being the area of the greatest creative focus.¹⁰¹ Accordingly, Boito quickly understood that photography was the most functional and precise tool to document the existence of monuments in a modernising and rapidly changing urban environment.

Progressively, the depiction of architecture and monuments becomes more and more purposeful to an objective and critical reading by the viewer. Especially in the realm of architecture, photography achieved its 'technical' purpose with the detailed photographs of architectural and monument details.¹⁰² In this discipline, forward-looking scholars soon consider photography the best mean of documentation due to its truthfulness and precision, a sort of 'warranty for objectivity' in the portrayal of buildings, monuments and other civil structures, such as bridges and gates. It is due to these qualities that photography became fundamental for the activities of architects; it was an instrument for any science based on observation.

More specifically in Italy but also in France and other European countries, it became auxiliary in relation to the work of conservation and restoration of cultural heritage,

¹⁰⁰ For an introduction in the history of photography see: Pare, Richard. *Photography and architecture 1839-1939*. Centre Canadien d'Architecture/Canadian Centre for Architecture, Callway Editions 1982, Montréal

¹⁰¹ Pare 1982:13

¹⁰² Maffioli, Monica. *Il Bel Vedere. Fotografi e architetti nell'Italia dell'ottocento*. Società Editrice Internazionale Torino, 1996:13

thus becoming another essential point of discussion within the cultural heritage conservation debate of the nineteenth century.¹⁰²

When looking at all of Boito's work on monument restoration, his use of photography is one of the few areas among many cross currents that has an undisputed presence but at the same time has been little researched. Modern scholarship acknowledges the architect's strong interest in the employment of this modern technology for the study and observation of monuments; Cassanelli's contribution (2009) that will be discussed in the later sections is the most thorough of all on this particular aspect of Boito. In addition the use of photography is clearly indicated in Boito's Charter of Restoration (point 6), as a mean of documentation for any kind of restoration on the monument.

With that in mind there are two aspects with regard to Boito's use of photography that still need to be revealed: the first is the discovery of Boito's photographs in the Historical Archive of the Brera Academy. In connection with this, the next sections will focus on a selection of photographs that belonged to Boito and that were the sole ones accessible at the time of this research. The second aspect relates to understanding these photographs, which surely had a functional purpose of study and documentation but eventually reveal other facets that are more closely linked to the architect's character and subjective understanding of the monument and of architecture.

In the past century the Academies of Fine Arts in Italy were the first institutions where photographers and architects met, discussing the pedagogical use of the new technique of representation. Academies began to collect and gather photographs as a reliable mean of representation and documentation. Today, these photographic collections of the past 150 years are emerging thanks to the reorganisation of historical archives. These records can be considered depots of images describing cities and monuments that are actually still existing but not viewable anymore as they used to be in the nineteenth century, belonging to a past that is however historically not too far away.¹⁰³

Boito's photographic collection is the reason we know about the architect's pioneering interest for the new technique of representation featuring in a series of photographs that have been uncovered and partly organised by Professor Roberto Cassanelli at the Historical Archive of Brera. The archive is currently still undergoing a major

¹⁰² Maffioli 1996:57

¹⁰³ Brunetti, Federico. "Metodologia di catalogazione della raccolta fotografica del Fondo Camillo Boito presso la Biblioteca di Belle Arti di Brera in Milano." *Camillo Boito. La raccolta fotografica, una selezione*, ed. Cassanelli, Roberto, Brunetti Federico and Giacomo Agosti, Printing on the Road, by Giovenanza, 1996

restructuration and many manuscripts, books, and possibly papers and photographs need yet to be catalogued. As Cassanelli states, the fact that Boito's archive does not exist any more is a myth (apparently the architect commissioned his brother Arrigo to destroy his personal papers after his death). The archive still exists (or at least part of it) although it is fragmented and dispersed in the many archival files of the Brera Academy.¹⁷⁴

A thorough analysis of the materials contained in the archives at the Brera Academy allowed Cassanelli to identify some scattered documents including the photographs, which are kept in the *Cartella n.44 Fotografie varie, Lascito Camillo Boito* (File n. 44, Miscellaneous Photographs, Bequest Camillo Boito). Cassanelli and two other scholars, Giacomo Agosti and Federico Brunetti, selected some of the most important photographs from Boito's archive for an exhibition created for the occasion of the first scholarly conference on Boito "*Camillo Boito e il sistema delle arti*" (Camillo Boito and the system of the Arts) held at the Brera Academy in Milan 23–24 May 1996.

These photographs could be placed chronologically between 1850 and early 1900s and almost certainly belong to Boito as most of them bear the signature of the owner or the dedications by his students and colleagues. It has to be noted however, that these photographs were not taken by Boito himself or cannot be directly attributed to him as no proof had yet been provided about the architect's interest in taking photographs.¹⁷⁵ Most of the recovered photographs relate to study trips that Boito took in central Europe (Germany and Poland); others illustrate the buildings that the architect designed ex novo or restored.¹⁷⁶

The file contains 48 photographs and multiple photographic plates. An additional 150 negatives also belong to the photographic collection. Most of these pictures are identifiable through Boito's signature on the back (ownership signature). Regrettably, not much in terms of photographic details could be recognised from the negatives.¹⁷⁷ Nevertheless, through careful examination of these mostly unpublished items, which are for the most part accompanied by their respective black and white photocopies, it is possible to distinguish some of the buildings undergoing restoration or pictured

¹⁷⁴ Cassanelli Roberto. "Premessa." in *Camillo Boito. La raccolta fotografica, una selezione*, ed. Cassanelli, Roberto, Brunetti Federico and Giacomo Agosti, Printing on the Road, by Giovenanza, 1996

¹⁷⁵ Carrera Marianna. "Boito e il suo tempo: la fotografia agli albori del restauro." In *Rileggere Camillo Boito*, Ananke57, Maggio 2009, Alinea Editrice, Firenze, pp. 110-118

¹⁷⁶ Cassanelli, Roberto. "Il Fondo fotografico di Boito dell'Accademia" di Brera, in *Rileggere Camillo Boito*, Ananke57, Maggio 2009, Alinea Editrice, Firenze, pp. 100-109

¹⁷⁷ During my visit in the Historical Archive of Brera there was no projector available to view the negatives.

before and after their restoration. This is the case for Boito's restoration of the Palazzo delle Debite of 1873 in Padua (Figure 40), or the restoration of the dome of the Chiesa della Salute in Venice (Figure 41) and the restoration of the Fondaco dei Turchi (Figure 42), also in Venice, carried out by Luca Beltrami (Boito's pupil) in 1869.¹⁷⁸

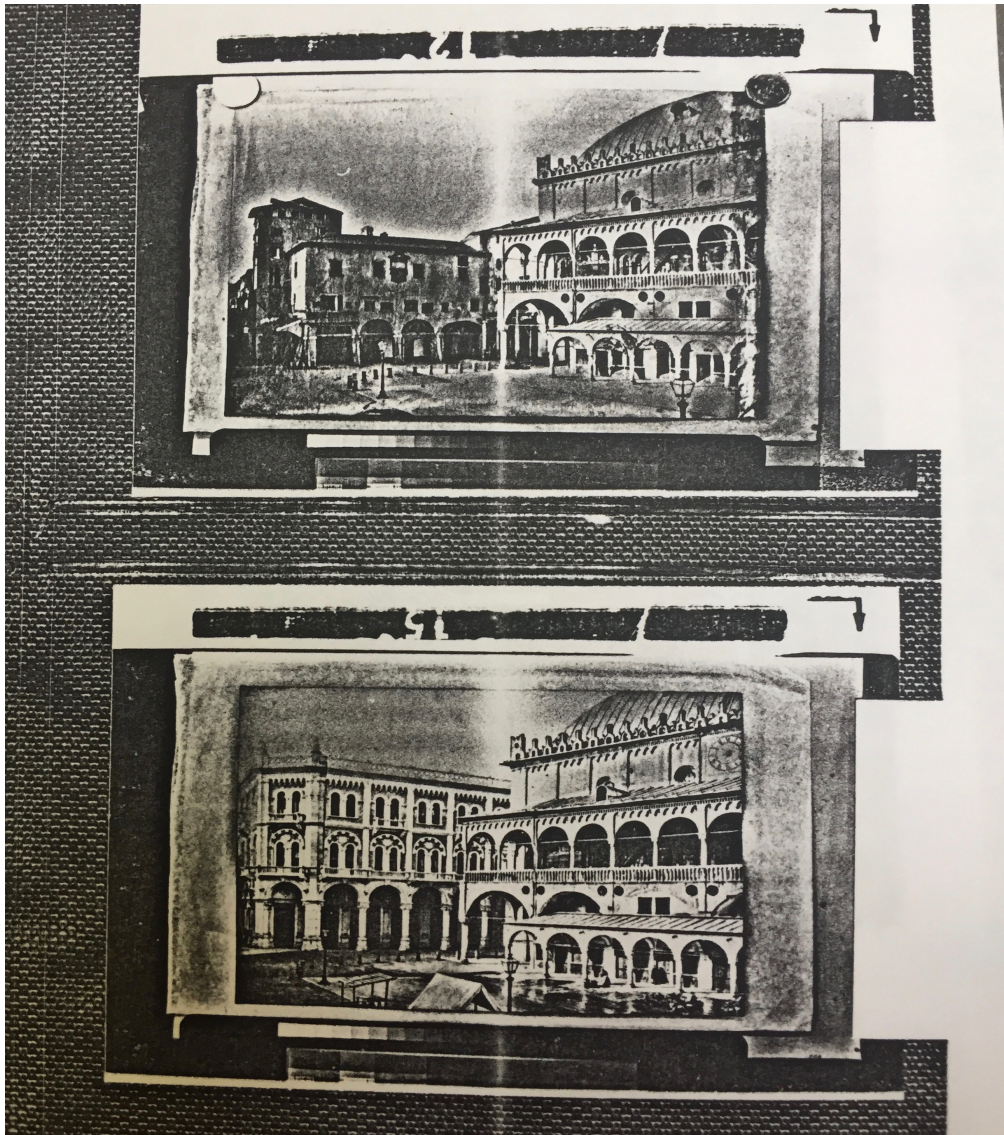


Figure 40. Palazzo delle Debite, Padua before and after Boito's restoration

¹⁷⁸ In regards to the negatives on the restoration of the dome of the Chiesa della Salute it was not possible to identify the date indicated on the lower left. However, the picture must have been taken between 1865 and 1876 when the dome underwent a major restoration. Piana, Mario, "La cupola di S. Maria della Salute e i suoi restauri." *Storia e restauro. Studi, ricerche, tesi*. Dipartimento di Culture del Progetto, Aracne Editrice, Ariccia 2014, pp. 114-141

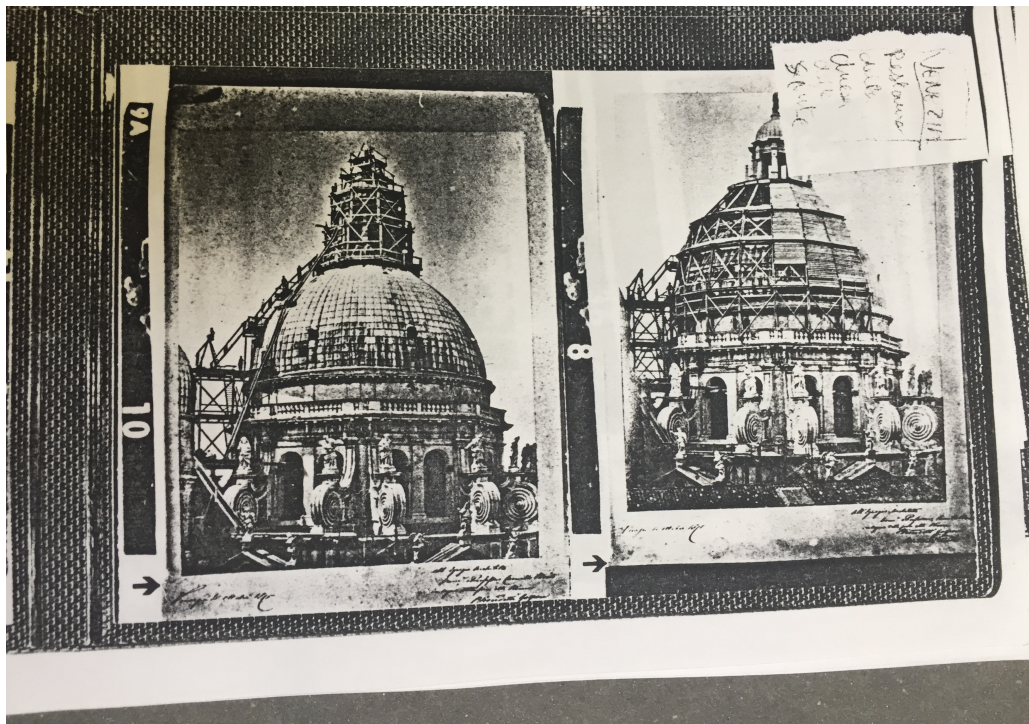


Figure 41. Restoration of the dome of the Chiesa della Salute (1865-1883), Venice

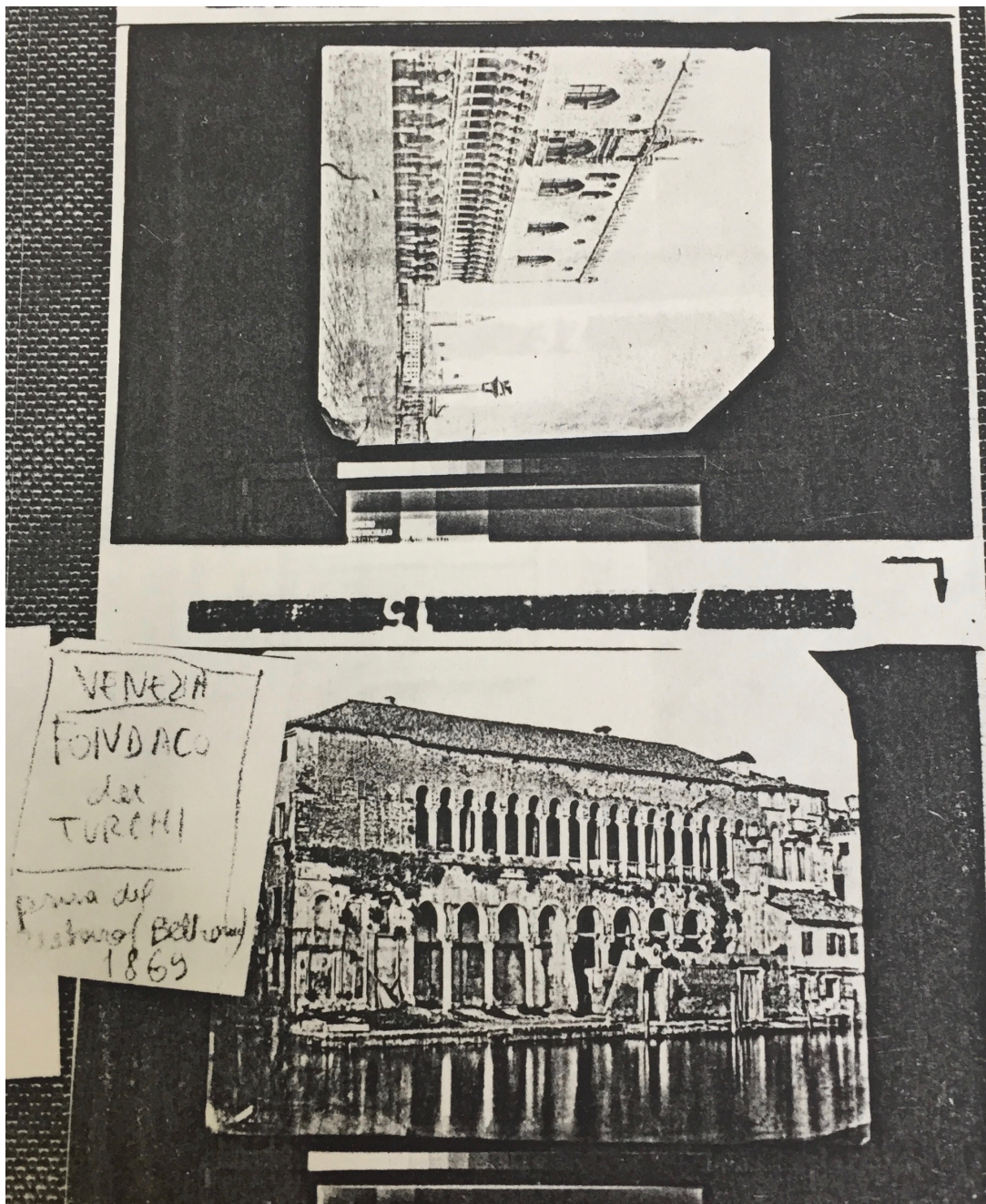


Figure 42. Restoration of the Fondaco dei Turch by Luca Beltrami, Venice

Although the negatives could be not viewed in the form of a picture at the time of this research, it becomes clear that Boito did not have any geographical or conceptual constraints on the theme of architecture: there are negatives featuring monuments and monumental details in Italy, Germany and Poland. There are also negatives of the work of other architects such as the ones relating to the previously discussed project of d'Andrade in the Borgo del Valentino.

In addition, there is also large section (more than a few hundred negatives) dedicated to church façades, testifying to the architect's interest in Lombardesque and Northern European Gothic architecture. As mentioned in the previous chapter Boito was very much engaged on different levels (thematically and as a jury member and as contestant) in national architecture and in the wave of competitions relating to the restoration of church façades.

It is acknowledged, argues Cassanelli, that photography was fundamental to Boito especially in relation to the study and documentation of monuments. The scholar also observes that the architect was less sensitive with regard to the use of photography as a mean of aesthetic expression or purpose. As introduced above, the *Cartella n. 44* (Figure 43) features different types of photographs: ranging from religious buildings to civil architecture and further architectural details such as church façades and domes and also smaller components such as decorative sculptural elements.

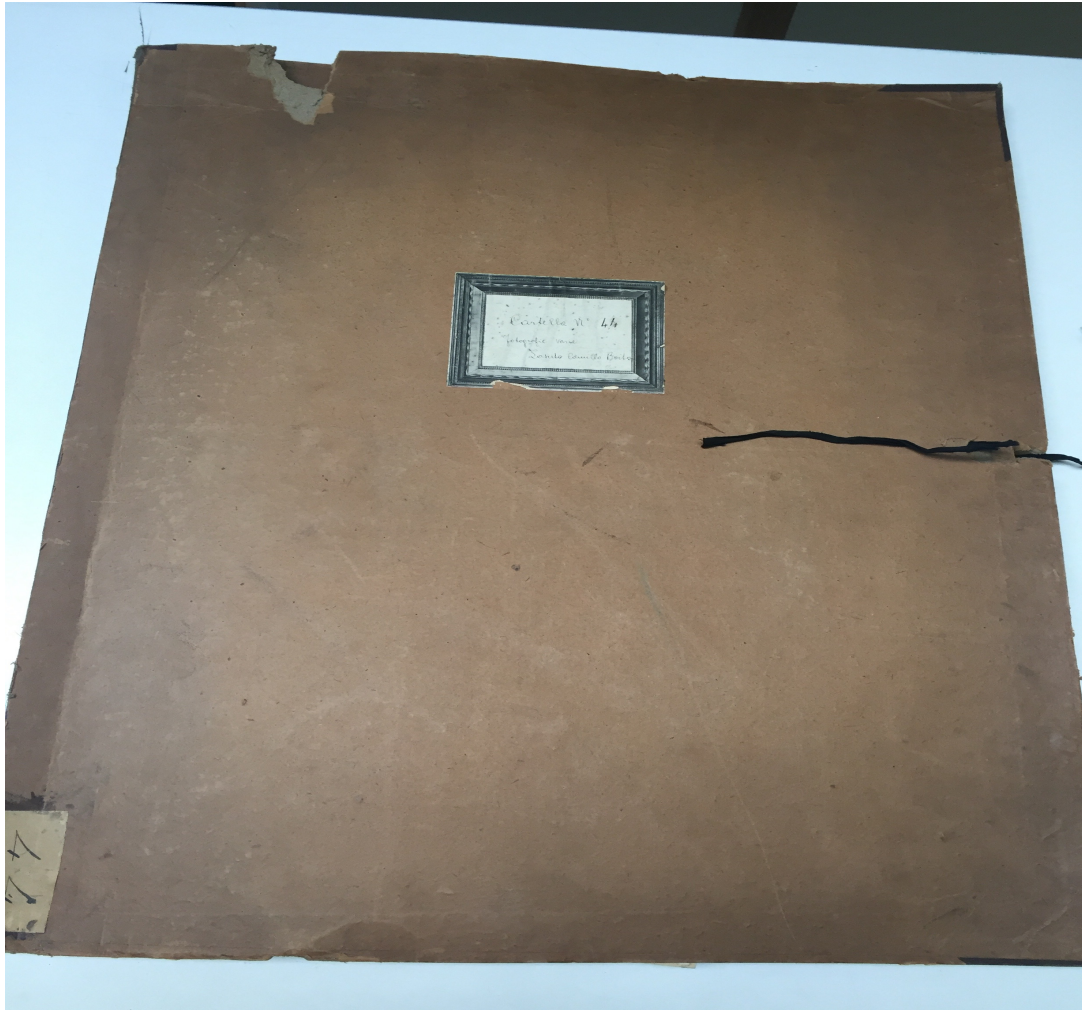


Figure 43. File in the 'Miscellanea Boito' (Archivio Storico di Brera/Historical Archive of Brera), Cartella N. 44

There is one photograph (Figure 45) that illustrates a civic medieval building, namely the Veronese *Domus Mercatorum*, the House of Commerce and Arts (named on the photograph: Palazzo della Camera di Commercio ed Arti in Verona) dated 19 June 1880. Like many other medieval monuments in Italy after the unification, the *Domus Mercatorum* was subject to a major restoration imitating its original medieval style.¹⁷⁶

Freed from the many additions that were made throughout the centuries and that allegedly suffocated the primitive fourteenth-century communal style of the building, the result, although seemingly artificial, must have been of interest to Boito as he applied quite similar principles of stylistic imitation for his restoration of the medieval gate of the Porta Ticinese of 1861. In the same series of a communal 'fortified' style are

¹⁷⁶ Spadi, Silvio and Dusi, Mattia. *Provincia di Verona, Regione Veneto. Palazzo Sclaigero - Interventi vari finalizzati al restauro, alla manutenzione straordinaria e all'ottenimento del certificato di prevenzione incendi. Relazione storica*, Giugno 2010:41

also photographs with different views of the Castle of Pavia, today the location of the Civic Museums of the city (Figures 45-50).



Figure 44. Domus Mercatorum - Palazzo della Camera di Commercio ed Arti in Verona



Figure 45. Castle of Pavia, nr.23



Figure 46. Castle of Pavia, nr.24



Figure 47. Castle of Pavia, nr.25



Figure 48. Castle of Pavia, nr.26



Figure 49. Castle of Pavia, nr. 27



Figure 50. Castle of Pavia, nr. 27bis

Further photographs show architectural details from the bronze doors of the Milanese Dome by Ludovico Pogliaghi (Figure 51) as well as details of a non-identified funerary monument (Figure 52) and another bronze portal (Figure 53).



Figure 51. Ludovico Pogliaghi, Cathedral of Milan - detail of the doors



Figure 52. Detail of a funerary monument



Figure 53. Bronze portal, non-identified

Scholarly literature agrees that Boito employs photography as a mean of observation of reality and of architectural styles, as a valid support for his study trips and as the most reliable tool for the documentation of monuments, especially when subject to restoration interventions. The architect deemed photography enormously relevant for

the investigation of architecture and monuments to the extent that in 1899, together with Gaetano Moretti (Director of the Regional Bureau of Monument Conservation in Lombardy) and Corrado Ricci (Director of the Brera Pinacoteca), he tried to establish a photographic archive in the Brera Academy with the purpose of collection, study and consultation of photography.

The outcome of this project remains unknown, as there is no documentation mentioning Boito's proposal after 1907. It is however, next to the inclusion of photography in the Charter of Restoration, Boito's last known effort to introduce photography as an official tool within the academic milieu.¹⁰⁰

Notwithstanding the aspect of Boito's employment of photography for didactical purposes only, there is also a separate set of photographs portraying cityscapes and landscapes of Polish cities that may partly suggest that his use of photography went beyond the merely technical intent of architectural detail. The views presented in these photographs have a sentimental and aesthetic quality that may have been a mean for the architect to observe the harmonious correlation of cityscape and landscape (or of monument and nature) that he describes in his journey volume *Gite di un artista*. In connection with this, it is important to note that Dezzi Bardeschi dedicated an essay to the cross-referencing of some of Boito's photographs with his journeys in Italy (Venice, Florence, Milan) and in Poland between the 1860s and 1870s.¹⁰¹

In her study, the scholar refers to some extracts of letters that Boito wrote to his brother and mother, citing passages of the architect's correspondences indicating time, date and place.¹⁰² In addition to Dezzi Bardeschi's study it is worth noting that Boito's photographic collection reflects a strong sentimentality, i.e. a purpose that went beyond the mere technical but was more concerned with aesthetics, possibly harking back to his Polish origins. Hence, there appears to be a new romantic quality in Boito's photographs, which runs parallel to the didactic and scientific purposes of his collection of images.

¹⁰⁰ Carrera 2009:118

¹⁰¹ Dezzi Bardeschi, Chiara. "Boito in viaggio: frammenti di un discorso autobiografico" *Ananke* 57, Numero Monografico: *Rileggere Camillo Boito oggi*. Edited by Dezzi Bardeschi, Marco. Alinea Editrice, Firenze, N. 57, Maggio 2009, pp. 6-15.

¹⁰² The letters feature in Marco Maderna's *Pensieri di un architetto del secondo Ottocento: documenti e frammenti per una biografia intellettuale di Camillo Boito critico, militante, architetto*. Archinto, Milano, 1988. (Volume in bibliography of this research)

The first photograph of this Polish set of images illustrates a cityscape of Krakow (Figure 54), featuring a striking amount of countryside in the foreground. In a similar vein with its portrayal of architecture and nature is a photograph of the bridge on the Vistula River near the area of Tczew (Figure 55). Another picture represents a view of the Castle of Malbork, (Figure 56) which even more than the previous image, offers a vivid rendition of water – thus adding a further visual element to the ensemble of architecture and nature.

Of particular interest in relation to Boito's study of civil architecture is also a picture representing the municipal building of Krakow close to the Cloth Hall (Sukiennice) (Figure 57) or of the Gdansk Municipal building (Figure 58). One further example of city architecture features the sixteenth-century upper gate in the old city of Gdansk, the Wysoka Brama (Figure 59).



Figure 54. Cityscape of Krakow 'Krakow od Zwierzyńca'



Figure 55. Bridge over the Vistula in the area of Tczew



Figure 56. Castle of Malbork, Poland



Figure 57. Krakow municipal building, Rathaus Sukiennice



Figure 58. Gdansk municipal building *Ratusz Głównego Miasta* and Artus court

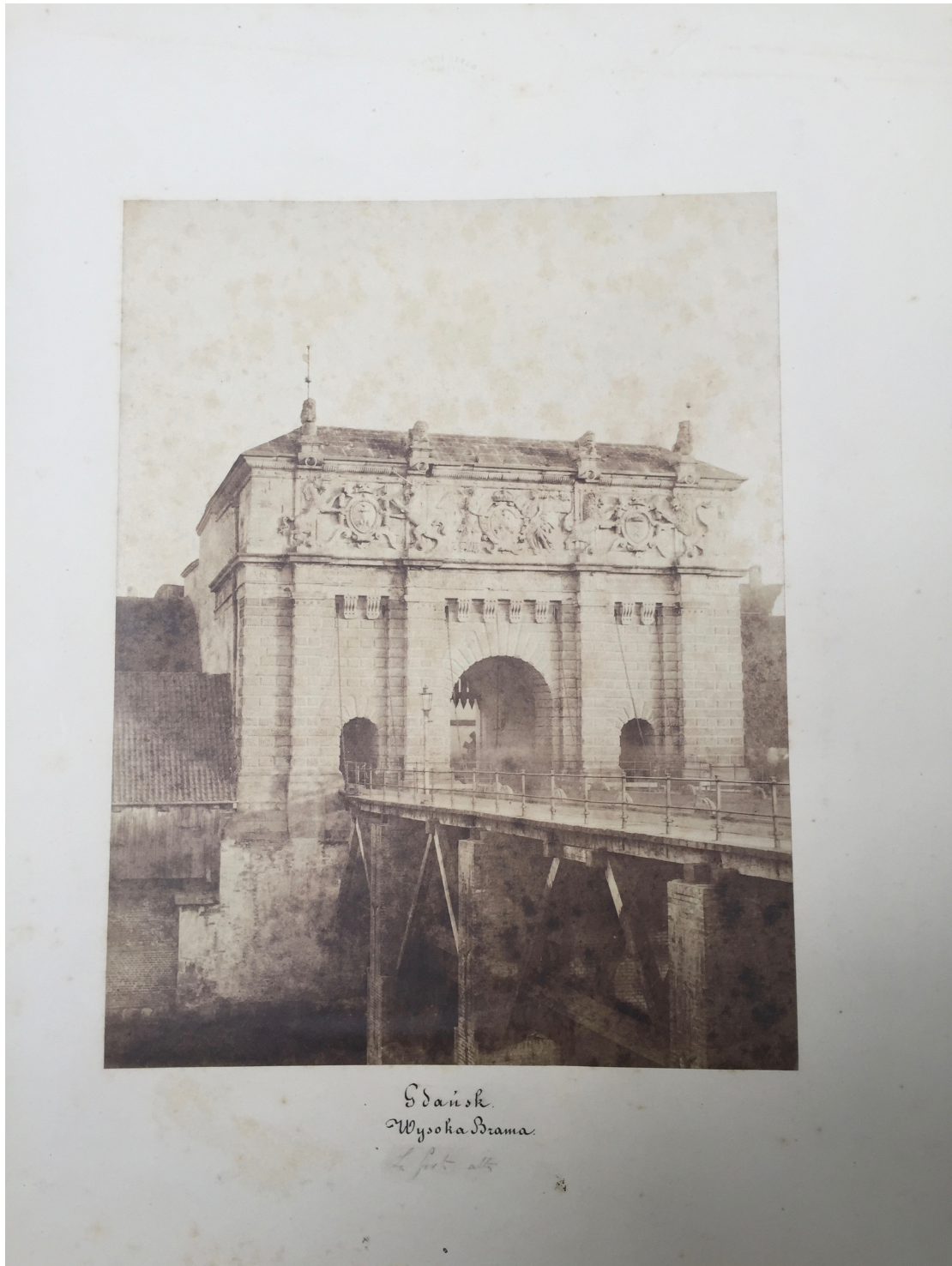


Figure 59. Gdansk Wisoka Brama, Upper gate in the Old City

Boito was very interested in the conservation of city gates; as mentioned in the previous chapter concerning his restoration of the Porta Ticinese in Milan, these structures were pivotal in the conservation debate of urbanisation versus conservation in nineteenth-century Italy. Hence, it is not surprising to find the photograph of an old city gate in the nineteenth-century Old City folder of Boito's photographic collection. In terms of cityscapes reflecting Boito's appreciation for the

clean lines of modern contemporary buildings are two photographs portraying the Frauenthor in Gdansk (Figure 60) and a panoramic view of the same city, featuring the soaring height of the Frauenthor building (Figure 61).

Last but not least, there is also a picture of Saint Mary's Cathedral in Gdansk (Figure 62), one of the largest brick churches in the world. Although the topic of Boito's contribution to the creation of a national architectural style is not discussed in this research project, it is important to note that Boito dedicated much attention to the brick construction technique in his writings on the theory and style of national architecture.



Frauenthor, Gdańsk, Towarzystwo Badaczy Natury.

Frauenthor - Gdansk, 20. 10. 1880.

Figure 60. Frauenthor, Gdansk



Figure 61. City landscape of Gdansk



Figure 62. St. Mary's Cathedral, Gdansk

It is through these photographic images depicting views, monuments and landscapes of Polish cities that Boito's transnational origins and his attentiveness to Northern European architecture become tangible. Cassanelli suggests that Boito's excursion to Poland was evidently encouraged by the Polish origins of his mother.¹⁸³

This is confirmed in the sentimental tone, quite different from the journalistic and critical accounts of the *Gite*, that the architect uses to describe Krakow Cathedral: "Little by little I started to distinguish a black mass, standing in front of me, the walls, the towers of an ancient fortress, the bell tower of a church, the castle, the cathedral of the city, located on a raised level, dominating the city. My soul was invaded by a sense of veneration, almost scary, for those ruins of the splendid residence of the Polish kings."¹⁸⁴

As previously mentioned, these photographs cannot be attributed to Boito himself; however, the distinct quality of the images can be accredited to various sources and photographers (some of them with an international reputation, such as Fratelli Alinari or the German photographer Moritz Lotze, who founded his renowned photographic studio in Verona).¹⁸⁵ Each photograph looks at the subject in a different manner, featuring various compositions, angles or details such as architectural details or panoramic views.¹⁸⁶

Accordingly, the purpose of Boito's photographic collection is diverse as it presents a strong distinction between 'technical photographs' (i.e. devoted to the study and documentation of architecture and monuments, occasionally portrayed before, during and after restoration) and 'pleasure photographs' (panoramic, city landscapes of Polish cities).

It is this miscellaneous quality of Boito's photographic collection, dedicated to a more simply aesthetic and sentimental purpose that fully emerges in this selection of photographs. The monument details, the documentation of buildings during, before and after restoration, as well as the detailed portrayal of architectural styles remain principal subjects of Boito's photographic collection. Nonetheless, the aesthetic study

¹⁸³ Cassanelli 1996

¹⁸⁴ Boito 1884: "Un po' per volta cominciai a distinguere nella massa negra, che mi stava dinnanzi, le mura e le torri di un'antica fortezza, il campanile di una chiesa, il castello, insomma, e la cattedrale della città, che piantati sopra un ampio rialzo del suolo, la dominano. Mi sentii l'animo invaso da un senso di venerazione quasi paurosa per codeste rovine della splendida residenza dei re polacchi." See also Cassanelli 1996 "Le radici polacche di Boito!"

¹⁸⁵ Maffioli 1996:47

¹⁸⁶ Agosti, Giacomo, introductory note in *Camillo Boito. La raccolta fotografica, una selezione*, ed. Cassanelli, Roberto, Brunetti Federico and Giacomo Agosti, Printing on the Road, by Giovenanza, 1996

of a city landscape, the understanding of architecture and of the location of a monument or historic building in the nineteenth-century city are crucial components of these images. These broaden the use that the architect made of photography, which clearly goes beyond the technical aspect of reliable and objective representation. In this respect it is interesting to compare briefly Boito's attitude to photography with other important scholars and architects who like Boito, were active protagonists of the cultural heritage conservation debate of the nineteenth century.

It is very interesting for instance to see how Viollet-le-Duc appreciated the introduction of photography in the field of monument conservation and restoration. Like Boito, he believes that photography is the best tool for documentation, albeit with a completely different purpose. According to Viollet-le-Duc, photography is an instrument to document the architect's work of restoration and architectural additions on the monument.

Photography is a testimony of the monument's original status but also a proof of all succeeding interventions on the monument that have been done by the 'architect-restorer.'¹⁰⁷ From the didactical point of view, the French architect believes that the truthfulness of the image will encourage architects to be more scrupulous when intervening on an ancient monument.

Thanks to photography, Viollet-le-Duc argues, architects will be more respectful of the original distribution and of the original architectural features, at times, leading them to discover details that they would not notice on the monument with the naked eye. Last but not least, he considers photography to be the means of providing incontestable historical evidence that even more justifies and supports integrations and additions on the monument.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁷ The 'architect-restorer' is a term that is used very often by Viollet-le-Duc/in scholarly literature when referring to Viollet-le-Duc's theory of restoration. It defines the range of action of an architect within the realm of restoration, i.e. as a professional figure who, while restoring the monument, includes additional elements to the building and/or monument according to a creative and historical style that he deems to be in line with the original style of the monument or building.

¹⁰⁸ «< La photographie, qui chaque jour prend un rôle plus sérieux dans les études scientifiques, semble être venue à point pour aider à ce grand travail de restauration des anciens édifices, dont l'Europe entière se préoccupe aujourd'hui. En effet, lorsque les architectes n'avaient à leur disposition que les moyens ordinaires du dessin, même les plus exacts, comme la chambre claire, par exemple, il leur était bien difficile de ne pas faire quelques oublis, de ne pas négliger certaines traces à peine apparentes. De plus, le travail de restauration achevé, on pouvait toujours leur contester l'exactitude des procès-verbaux graphiques, ce qu'on appelle des états actuels. Mais la photographie présente cet avantage, de dresser des procès-verbaux irrécusables et des documents que l'on peut sans cesse consulter, même lorsque les restaurations masquent des traces laissées par la ruine. La photographie a conduit naturellement les architectes à être plus scrupuleux encore dans leur respect pour les moindres débris d'une disposition ancienne, à se rendre mieux compte de la structure, et leur fournit un moyen permanent de justifier de leurs opérations. Dans les restaurations, on ne saurait donc trop user de la photographie, car bien souvent on découvre sur une épreuve ce que l'on n'avait pas aperçu sur le monument lui-même. » M. Viollet-le-Duc. "Restauration". *Dictionnaire Raisonné de l'Architecture Française du XI au XVI Siècle*, Tome Huitième, A. Morel, éditeur, Paris, MDCCCLXVI, 1866:33; See also Maffioli 1996:58

Like Boito, John Ruskin was also very interested in the use of photography for documenting cultural heritage conservation and architecture. The British scholar thought that the accuracy of the daguerreotype was superior to any form of drawing. Ruskin took this stance as early as 1845 while conducting his Venetian studies.¹⁰⁰ The British scholar described photography as an instrument providing the opportunity to view every fragment of stone exactly as it is, avoiding any margin of error with regard to the proportions of the building.¹⁰¹

The architect owned a collection of daguerreotypes, comprising 240 images, 192 of which represent the architecture of Italian cities.¹⁰² Ruskin believes that photographs are the most valid tools of information; according to him, photography is the greatest invention of the century, which was invented just in time to provide documentary evidence that may have saved heavy intervention on some monuments. Ruskin's ideas highlight the values of scientific documentation and conservation of cultural heritage through objective knowledge.

Accordingly, as a result of the use of photography, even architecture has a limited duration throughout time and thus the art historian's sole task is to register the existence of a monument, without guesswork or modification of any kind.¹⁰³ With that in mind, the scholar revised his position throughout the years, highlighting again the importance of hand drawing for architects.¹⁰⁴

Certainly the juxtaposition of drawing versus photography characterised the disagreements during the initial phase of the introduction of photography as a didactical tool for architects. Especially in the early years of the new technique, artists were afraid that their services of drawing would be no longer needed.

Referring back to Boito, a reference to his master Selvatico must be made. Within the debate of photography versus drawing or more generally of photography as a teaching tool for architects, Selvatico placed himself on the fence but with a positive attitude. "I

¹⁰⁰ Maffioli 1996:57

¹⁰¹ "Daguerrotypes taken by this vivid sunlight are glorious things. It is very nearly the same thing as carrying off the palace itself: every chip of stone and stain is there, and of course there is no mistake about proportions... It is a noble invention – say what they will of it – and anyone who has worked and blundered and stammered as I have done for four days, and then sees the thing he has been trying to do so long in vain done perfectly and faultlessly in half a minute won't abuse it afterwards." Cited from a letter written by Ruskin to his father from Venice on 7 October 1845. Harvey, Michael, "Ruskin and Photography", *Oxford Art Journal*, Vol. 7, No. 2, Photography (1984), pp. 25-33, Oxford University Press

¹⁰² Maffioli 1996:70 Ruskin's photographic collection is comprising 240 images, 130 of which are today kept in the Ruskin Galleries, Bembridge School, Isle of Wight. Documents state that Ruskin acquired ca. 20 of these images from Venetian photographers, while others were either commissioned or taken by the architect himself in 1849.

¹⁰³ Maffioli 1996:58

¹⁰⁴ *ibid.* Maffioli 1996:58. In addition see also Harvey 1984:25

notice” states Selvatico, “how among the ones who deal with the arts [artists], feel threatened; they believe that their work will not be needed so much and they will be loved less by the public. This worry stems from one of the miracles [photography] that make our present time worthy of pride and amazing.”¹⁰⁰

In his discourse *Sui vantaggi che la fotografia può portare all'arte* (About the advantages that photography can bring to the arts), Selvatico enumerates the innovative aspects that photography brings to the study of art and architecture. The new technique will represent the facts, without adding sentiments or ideas or exaggerate the vividness of colours.

The difference between Selvatico's praise of photography and the observations of other sceptical architects of his generation is the absolute confidence that the new technique will not affect artistic representations, but will be of great support to drawing and to the artist.¹⁰¹ Thanks to photography the artist will be able to produce their paintings and drawings with the assurance that their study of details will not be affected by their imagination. They will abandon exaggerations, the false interpretations of antiquity, the excessively anatomical nudes and theatrical extravagances; artists will only try to awake enthusiasm and not to fabricate nature. As for architects, they will be able to comprehend the true proportions of buildings, the uniqueness of details.

Last but not least, the public will be able to identify the excellent painter or drawer, namely the one that can represent veracity, without being influenced by taste or fashions.¹⁰² All the arts, according to Selvatico, will benefit from photography. The only category that will probably be eradicated is the one of mediocre draughtsmen and painters: “society will be eventually spared” as only the talented artist will benefit from the truth.¹⁰³

The extent to which Selvatico was enthusiastic about photography becomes clearer a decade later, when in 1870 he proposed a project concerning the photographic record

¹⁰⁰ “Scorgo adesso in coloro i quali trattano le arti, indistinto un timore; cioè, che ogni di meno saranno richieste ed amate dal pubblico le produzioni loro: e questo timore nasce da uno di quei miracoli che fanno l'orgoglio e la meraviglia dell'età presente.” Selvatico, Pietro. “Sui vantaggi che la fotografia può portare all'arte.” In *Scritti d'Arte*, *Scritti d'Arte*. Barbera, Bianchi e Comp. Tipografi Editori, Firenze, 1859, pp.337-341

¹⁰¹ Selvatico 1859:338

¹⁰² Selvatico 1859:339: “Così pittori e scultori, assoggettando al riscontro del vero i loro concepimenti, abbandoneranno per sempre, perché vedranno rinnegate dai fatti e dal pubblico, le enfatiche esagerazioni, le false interpretazioni dell'antico, i nudi pedantesamente anatomici, le gonfiezze del teatrale; e tenderanno, col depurato pensiero, di suscitare l'entusiasmo, non di fabbricar natura.”

¹⁰³ Selvatico 1859:341: “Così in una parola, tutte le arti meglio s'accosteranno a sciogliere il grande enigma del vero (...) Così essa verrà risparmiando alla società una miriade di mediocri che l'assediavano; e rialzerà nel concetto di questa, l'arte propriamente tale, l'arte cioè che si giova della verità per manifestare un'idea grande, e s'innalza a quella poesia di concetti ch'è seggio del vero artista, non del servile imitatore della natura.”

of the main Italian monuments, the *Proposta per la riproduzione fotografica dei principali monumenti d'Italia* (The proposal for the photographic reproduction of the most important monuments in Italy).¹⁰⁰

In the essay dedicated to Selvatico's initiative, Serena describes the architect's project as a *musée imaginaire* of the photography of works of art.¹⁰¹ Selvatico's proposal recommends that the Municipality of Padua should be the main promoter of this initiative, eventually publishing a volume of the photographic collection as a guidebook. Regardless of Selvatico's fundamental appreciation for photography, which he manifests earlier than other scholars in Italy, the architect's *Proposta* stands out for the innovative character of its museographical programme within the Italian contemporary scenario of art-historical photography.¹⁰²

As a matter of fact, compared to other European countries, where photography had already found a place in institutions, galleries and museum exhibitions since the late 1830s, Italy begins to consider photography as an inevitable mean of documentation only at the end of the 1860s. The interest was mainly awakened by the spread of artistic photographic reproductions required by artists, keen amateurs and tourists. Some opponents of photography (artists and engravers for instance) brought up the high costs of photographic production as well as the inadequacy of photography to truthfully represent chromatic differences and chiaroscuro effects.

This was especially the case for the representation of paintings, views and coloured frescoes. As for sculpture and architecture this issue was not applicable, thus making photography, opponents aside, a rather welcome new technique for the few scholars in favour of using photography as a didactical tool – especially in the early years before the 1860s.

The first instrumental and methodological employment of photography with regard to the documentation of monuments can therefore be attributed to Pietro Selvatico with his proposal of 1870. In his role as director of the *Commissione Conservatrice di Padova* (Conservation Commission of Padua) Selvatico also underlined the importance of

¹⁰⁰ Serena, Tiziana. "Pietro Selvatico e la musealizzazione della fotografia." *Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa. Classe di Lettere e Filosofia*, Serie IV, Vol. 2, No. 1 (1997), pp. 75-96. The document to which the scholar refers to (two pages) is today kept in the Civic Library of Padua, Carte di Pietro Selvatico, B.8. Manoscritti Selvatico. The dating of the document is deduced from the cross-referencing of annex documents and in relation to the inventory of monuments coordinated by the Ministry of Education that were discussed by the end of the 1860's and actively started in 1870.

¹⁰¹ Ibid. 1997:75

¹⁰² Ibid. 1997:76

monument cataloguing and more specifically, putting a photograph alongside the art historical description of a monument.³⁰ In addition, he strongly argued that photography would be able to accelerate the time spent on document restoration for urgent restoration.

Selvatico believed that one inadequate aspect of the existing inventories (Decree of 1866) was indeed the absence of photographic documentation of the monument. Hence in his proposal, Selvatico sets out an operational plan for the Commission of Conservation to acquire knowledge about local cultural heritage through the institution of a “special commission.” This special commission would comprise five members (artists and art experts) who were to draft a list of the main monuments of the city of Padua and its province, including marble sculptures, paintings or statues, which stand out for their great value and should therefore be photographed.

As an additional, yet highly important duty, the members of the commission would have to supervise the work of the photographer in directing him with regard to the framing and composition of the picture. The photographer has to be guided in the translation of this new representative language, emphasising the features of the monument and gradually creating a standardised code of photographic representation of the monument.³¹ Selvatico’s intention is to use photography as a technical reading tool of the monument.

The overarching purpose of Selvatico’s proposal was to extend the photographic plan to other museums at the national level, with municipalities collaborating with one another, exchanging photographs of the monuments in order to create a permanent photographic collection that each municipality would exhibit to the public.³²

Each picture should include a description of the monument (according to a standardised structure), thus presenting a monument history of Italy. It is interesting to note, how this project would have benefitted both the public – enabling them to see an accurate image of a monument with a detailed description – as well as the art historian, who would have a visual and informative overview of Italian monuments.

³⁰ Ibid. 1997:81 “I cataloghi e le definizioni che pur ne vanno preparando apposite Commissioni, non bastano perché la parola non è sufficiente a constatare il merito e lo stato di conservazione di un monumento e perché questo paziente lavoro non è per tutto condotto con quella energica diligenza che guarentigia di esattezza. Per raggiungere utilmente lo scopo vuolsi unita alla definizione l’immagine dell’opera.” Manoscritti Selvatico, *Proposta per la riproduzione...*

³¹ Ibid. 1997:84-85

³² According to Selvatico, each municipality should gather a collection of approximately 100 photographs; he planned the adhesion of at least a hundred municipalities to his program. In this way, the photographic reproductions of monuments would have reached 10.000 units. Ibid. 1997: 87, fn 40

Both for the public and for the scholar, the didactical aspects of the project would have been a priority.

Last but not least, Selvatico's proposal, possibly the most innovative of his career, establishes a new path, which leads directly to the way we understand cultural heritage conservation today. The *Proposta* goes beyond the promotion of photography or the necessity to draft an inventory of the national monuments. It establishes a link between education, conservation, a comprehensive understanding of the monument and museum exhibition in Italy, thus operating at different levels and for a varied public, from the scholar to the amateur.

Selvatico's proposal never became a reality, although it is important to note that the architect's scheme anticipated specific measures and decrees of monument conservation that were issued by the Ministry of Public Education a few years later.²⁸ Despite the favourable attitude and use of photography manifested by selected scholars, including Boito, the resistance against the new representation technique was strong and lasted for few decades after its invention.

Opposition towards photography was not only due to traditional academic or art historical stances as mentioned above (artists etc), but also to a general 'visual habit' of looking at the monument through drawing and painting that was still very established among the scholarly circles. With that in mind, Italian photographers and photographic studios looked up to the European professionals of the field, appreciating the veracity of representation of art and monuments.²⁹

Photography in Italy did not reach the museographic dimension considered so favourably by Selvatico. Here, in the 1870s photography was mainly used by scholars who understood the great potential of this technique, which enabled a huge amount of visual data to be gathered in one image. Architectural documentation and use for teaching would remain the only channels of the development of photography for many years.

²⁸ The first measure sponsoring the use of photography for the national cataloguing of monuments (although with many conceptual and art historical gaps) was a decree of 1875; a second decree was issued in 1889. Both regulations concerned a 6-months periodical documentation and conservation status of monuments on the national territory. Serena 1997:95

²⁹ To this regard, remarkable are the opinions of Francesco dell'Ongaro's *Sull'influenza della fotografia nell'arte. All'illustre incisore L. Calamata* in "La Camera Oscura" of 1863, praising photography as a democratic mean of representation, while Antinori appreciated the Old Masters catalogues of Adolph Braun, highlighting the precision of representation. Serena 1997:90

Considering once again Boito's photographic collection in the *Cartella N. 44* it is in this respect that we once more see that the scholar demonstrates an open-minded attitude and broader comprehension of photography and its possibilities, especially compared to most Italian scholars of the time who were against this technological innovation.

Although Boito's photographs cover a wide chronological span (as previously mentioned from the 1850s to the 1900s), the diverse nature of his photographic collection makes it very clear that Boito understood the many interpretational options and purposes of photography and the many ways of reading the monument through it.

The diversity between the portrayal of a single monument detail, of the isolated monument or of the city landscape surrounded by nature and urbanization testifies to Boito's forward-looking use of photography that goes well beyond the plain documentary – yet not less important – employment of photography. The images of his photographic collection convey observation and emotion combined with the study of monuments within their urban landscapes.

In terms of 'reading the monument' Boito's photographic collection shows the architect's full knowledge of the monument in its many historical and stylistic facets. The images of his compendium reflect the architect's theory of restoration and monument conservation. Boito's photographs frame the monument and its structure closely, in order to understand the technical construction and artisanal techniques of the past, yet when necessary, never failing to consider its placement within a modern urban environment.

Especially in this latter aspect, it is photographs of international cities and studios we are looking at. This outlook on cityscapes and monuments featuring within many topographical and architectural elements mainly exists in the broader scenario of transalpine European photography rather than in Ottocento Italy.

An in-depth investigation would go beyond the scope of this paper. Just to mention one example, there is a famous photograph by the *Bisson Frères* in 1858 (Figure 63) showing a view to the East taken from the cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris. This image is very similar in its intent to the city landscape portraying the towering height Gdansk Frauenthor (Figure 60) or of St. Mary's Cathedral (Figure 62) previously

mentioned. In his survey of photography and architecture 1839-1939 Richard Pare names it “the most encompassing of these environmental views”.²⁶



Figure 63. Bisson Frères. View to the east taken from the Cathedral of Notre Dame, Paris, before 1858 (from *Photography and architecture* by Richard Pare, 1982)

The picture was taken from scaffolding erected to build the spire over the crossing of Notre Dame. The image is a record of Viollet-le-Duc’s restoration of the cathedral showing that the finial had been recently installed and that the cresting at the ridge of the roof was still in process of installation.²⁷ The renewal of the roof lead is in progress and scaffolding still in place – yet all this factual information notes the author, is not the subject of the photograph. The photographer aims to display the city that spreads before us through the elevated point of view as well as the pre-eminent position of the cathedral in the life of the city.²⁸ The river and the finial in the foreground serve as devices to unite the vastness of the image. Likewise, although with slightly less sophistication, the city landscape photographs in Boito’s collection, aim to place the monument in question within its surroundings and its broader city landscape.

Compared to the Italian photographs of the second half of the nineteenth century, which mainly focus on the monument itself or on wide-angle city views, transalpine photography features a slightly different reading of the monument, where the

²⁶ Pare, Richard. *Photography and architecture 1839-1939*. Centre Canadien d’Architecture/Canadian Centre for Architecture, Callway Editions 1982, Montréal

²⁷ *ibid.* 1982:18

²⁸ *ibid.* 1982:19

monument is often not the only focus of the image.³⁰ The photographs of city landscapes and monuments owned by Boito show the ancient buildings bounded by a dense carpet of different urban constructions and ancient churches. They represent a European scenario of the monument's situation in nineteenth-century cities of which Boito was well aware.

Therefore, it can be concluded that next to the romantic and sentimental character of these images, the photographs in Boito's collection testify to the architect's understanding of the monument in his time, characterised by a constantly changing juxtaposition of ancient monuments, architectural stratifications and modern urban development plans. Boito had a realistic perception of the monument that fully echoes his ideas on monument conservation as well as his large restoration projects.

³⁰ For an overview of images in relation to art and architecture in the nineteenth century Italy please see the plates section in *Il Bel Vedere*, Monica Maffioli, 1996

Conclusion

The most challenging task of this dissertation has been to identify and connect the numerous cross currents that are related to the figure of Boito and his ideas and practices of monument restoration. This research project aimed to provide a continuation on the line of investigation of Boito's character as initiated in the late 1990s by Guido Zucconi, Tiziana Serena, Roberto Cassanelli, Marco Maderna and many other exponents of recent scholarly literature on Boito mentioned throughout the dissertation.

This approach entailed the study of Camillo Boito's work in which his accomplishments and nature as architect and authority on the discipline of restoration are co-dependent elements. Likewise, this dissertation further investigated the inter-reliant links of diverse topics within the nineteenth century debate of monument restoration: cultural heritage conservation, national sentiments of cultural renewal and tradition and last but not least, architecture and urban environment. When discussing Boito's work, this thesis aimed to consider without exclusion, all of these elements co-dependently as they inevitably belong to the historical and cultural context in which Boito was operating.

One main question was to assess Boito's position within the Italian post-unification panorama of cultural heritage conservation and restoration. The architect is considered one of the fathers of modern restoration, his role sanctioned by the Charter of Restoration of 1883. This document, decreed at the national level, is revolutionary: it regulates the material aspects of restoration, the scientific approach and the administrative measures that validated the restoration intervention as a "governmental and political" matter for the first time.¹

At the same time, recent scholarly literature noted that Boito's approach to restoration and his ideas on cultural heritage conservation were possibly inspired by notions that were already present within contemporary cultural circles and within the *cantieri* (restoration and construction sites, author's translation) while also being promoted by the several artistic congresses of the time.² It is in this regard that this dissertation

¹ This latter aspect becomes especially clear in Article 6, stating that all the photographs documenting the restoration intervention have to be sent to the Ministry of Education, i.e. a nationally relevant institution.

² Gritti, Jessica. *Cesare Cantù e l'età che fu sua*, Atti del Congresso di Brivio, Milano, Varenna 2005, Monduzzi Editore Cisalpino, Bologna 2006:607

increases our knowledge about Boito, questioning his title of “father of modern restoration”.

The suspicion that Boito might not be the absolute forerunner in matters of a methodical approach to restoration becomes only circumstantial when considering the works and theories by other architects. In this respect, Paravicini proves the international nature of the cultural debate in Italy, with his strong connections to the Ruskinian world of cultural heritage conservation. Alfredo D’Andrade emerges as the perfectly complementary character to Boito; he contributed a great deal to the field of monument restoration and to the legislation of cultural heritage conservation in Italy. His work adds to Boito’s accomplishments offering a wider picture of the nineteenth-century debate on restoration. Errico Alvino is the Southern Italian response to a cultural debate that initially seemed to have merely covered the northern regions and cities of Italy: these were geographically closer to the cultural and artistic hubs of central Europe, yet Alvino’s work demonstrates that the stream of monument restoration and urban development was actually a matter that concerned Italy as a whole nation. This pool of selected architects, occasionally crossed paths with Boito and inspired one another in their ideas and practices.

The further goal of this research project has been therefore to discuss the innovative ideas on monument conservation and its adaptation to modernising urban environments by these architects, delineating a clear circulation of ideas on restoration at the national level. The importance and achievements of these architects, which fully contribute to the Italian nineteenth-century conservation debate, does not detract in any way from Boito’s ideas and his stature as one of the pioneering figures of the Italian restoration world with his aim to employ a scientific methodology of monument restoration at the national level.

In addition, this research unfolds the fact that the true originality of Boito’s work lies in the results of his monument restoration, which was often criticised. In each case study presented in this dissertation, it becomes evident how the architect (in most cases) effectively balances the ancient and the original nature of the monument while strongly considering the surrounding modern environment.

The final result might have not fully reflected the statements of the Charter of Restoration, but found greater margins of inspiration within the Charter’s guidelines –

which inevitably had to be adapted to the necessities and requirements dictated by the condition of the monument and by its surrounding environment. In his restoration projects – as for instance the Porta Ticinese in Milan – Boito succeeded in maintaining the monument as a ‘living’ component within the enclosing setting and within the daily life of the contemporary urban community, avoiding its deterioration or eventual demolition.

At the international level, the most tangible difference between Boito and his peers is that he considered the restoration of the monument within a social and cultural and urban context, which was very different compared to the environments of other countries. Italy’s urban or small-village environment was mostly densely populated and made up of smaller, adjoining structures and houses, which throughout the centuries often grew around or were attached to the monument. For the most part, the monument was barely recognisable or rather neglected in its artistic importance or quality. In France and Britain, or even Germany, the monuments – both religious and civil – generally featured larger scale dimensions and there was the tendency, also in populated areas and city centres, to maintain a sort of isolation from the rest of the urban structures.

Boito’s conception and understanding of the monument is to be ‘used’ and be part of the cultural life of the emerging modern urban community. It is this attitude that made his practice and theories unique as compared to other international architect-restorers discussed throughout this paper. Thanks to this adaptable approach, Boito both set the example for other contemporary Italian peers while distinguishing himself from other international contemporary colleagues.

The contradiction between ancient and new in Boito’s work was introduced in scholarly literature at the beginning of the 1990s. In her anthology of 1988 Crippa gathered the most relevant essays by the architect on monument restoration, academic matters and architectural style, indicating that regardless of the subject, Boito lived in a time where the tradition and modernity would always be juxtaposed, thus being fully reflected in the architect’s work.³

This dissertation deepens the knowledge we have about Boito and his projects constantly dealing with this juxtaposition. This project aimed to offer a specific and

³ Crippa, Maria Antonietta. *Camillo Boito. Il nuovo e l'antico in architettura*. Jaca Book, Milano, 1988.

practical point of view on the architect's challenge by the means of case studies that confirmed the architect's awareness in restoring monuments with a contemporary setting. Starting from the restoration of the above-mentioned Milanese medieval gate and going on to his most celebrated and criticised project of the recomposition of the Donatello's altar in the Church of Saint Anthony in Padua, we could almost state that Boito adapted the monument to the use and purpose required in his time.

This approach may have not been faultless from the didactical point of view; however Boito's monument restoration projects often rescued monuments from demolition and from becoming ruins. In addition, his projects are the testimony of Italy's inevitable persistent relationship with cultural heritage and its historical environment.

This bond is still today a defining characteristic of Italy's urban and countryside landscape.⁴ Cultural heritage is spread across the whole country; monuments are an integral part of the urban setting and historical buildings have been necessarily adapted to modern purposes. This is Boito's lesson: finding a compromise for monuments, within often modernising environments, so as to comply with history, with the traditional architectures of the cities and with the inevitable requirements of urban modernisation.⁵

With regard to possible future research concerning Boito's contribution to the Italian conservation movement in the nineteenth century, there are two main aspects that could be further investigated: the first concerns the architect's relationship with his mentor and master Pietro Selvatico.

Scholarly literature has investigated extensively the relationship between Boito and Selvatico on both the personal and professional level. More specifically, scholars like Zucconi traced their parallel paths up to Selvatico's death, mainly with regard to Boito's architectural projects.

⁴ In regards to the quality of Italy's topographical and characterising feature in terms of heritage and urban or countryside landscapes see Settis, Salvatore. *Paesaggio, Costituzione e cemento. La battaglia per l'ambiente contro il degrado civile*. Giulio Einaudi Editore, Trento, 2010.

⁵ See Calabi, Donatella. "L'urbanistica di fine ottocento in un ventennio di attività della giunta municipale." *Camillo Boito: un'architettura per l'Italia unita*, edited by Guido Zucconi, Marsilio, 2000:37

Also when comparing Boito's writings with Selvatico's essay, it becomes quite evident how Boito was strongly inspired by his mentor with regard to the ideas of national architecture and the study of architecture in general.

With that in mind, not much investigation has been done with regards to links between Boito's and Selvatico's ideas on restoration and monument conservation. As a matter of fact, from 1845–50, Selvatico designed a new Gothic façade for the Church of St. Peter in Trento, thus proving the architect's involvement in matters of restoration at the practical level. With that in mind, it might be interesting to establish to what extent Selvatico might have influenced his pupil as far as monument restoration is concerned by means of material that could be uncovered in Boito's personal archive in the Brera Academy.

Zucconi states that Boito's biography allows a privileged view of the post-unification world of later nineteenth-century culture particularly that relating to the Fine Arts (including monument restoration, artistic production and architecture) because of the broad nature of his career.⁹ Savorra defines the architect as a giant of architectural historiography, referring to the architect's other professions as historian, critic, writer, lecturer and restorer.¹⁰

It is on the basis of these records that this dissertation pinpoints the multifarious interests of the architect, which allowed him, especially in his mature career, to accomplish projects, which encompassed the major themes of the cultural debate of the time. Boito's nature as *homo universalis* of culture of nineteenth-century Italy becomes even clearer when visiting Boito's private library collection in the Historical Archive of the Academy of Brera in Milan, also called the *Fondo Boito*. With its 1300 volumes, the *Fondo* fully reflects Boito's professional and academic career as well as his education.

Alongside the manuals of architecture (which you would expect) are tourist guides of Vienna, Krakow and Munich (all in German) – which the architect probably used when travelling and looking at the national styles of other countries – as well as numerous

⁹ Selvatico, Pietro Estense. "Prelezione al corso di storia architettonica per gli ingegneri laureati che assolvono gli studi architettonici nella I.R. Accademia di Belle Arti in Venezia, 15 gennaio 1856" in *Scritti d'Arte*. Barbera, Bianchi e Comp. Firenze, 1859

¹⁰ Jokilehto 1999:165

¹¹ As soon as access may be allowed after the re-organisation of the archive. Completion date of this process remains unknown.

¹² Zucconi, Guido. *L'invenzione del passato, Camillo Boito e l'architettura neomedievale 1855-1890*. Marsilio, Venezia, 1997:13

¹³ Savorra, Massimiliano. Boito e la casa per Musicisti. *Un protagonista dell'Ottocento italiano*, edited by Zucconi, Guido and Tiziana Serena, Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti, Venezia, 2002:173

technical volumes on hydraulics, hygiene and pedagogy. The library also includes volumes in English, such as the Sessional Papers of the Royal Institute of British Architects, denoting Boito's interest in architecture and cultural heritage conservation abroad. Volumes by other colleagues such as Pietro Selvatico, Cesare Cantù and Tito Vespasiano Paravicini as well as a large number of *Atti* files about restoration matters (as for example the *Palazzo di San Giorgio* in Genoa) and artistic congresses also feature in the personal library of the architect.

Each volume is intrinsically connected to his many duties, publications and accomplishments. It is highly likely that among the multitude of subjects and themes of this archive scholars may be able to reveal further causes for reflection on the architect's contribution to the cultural and architectural post-unification debate.

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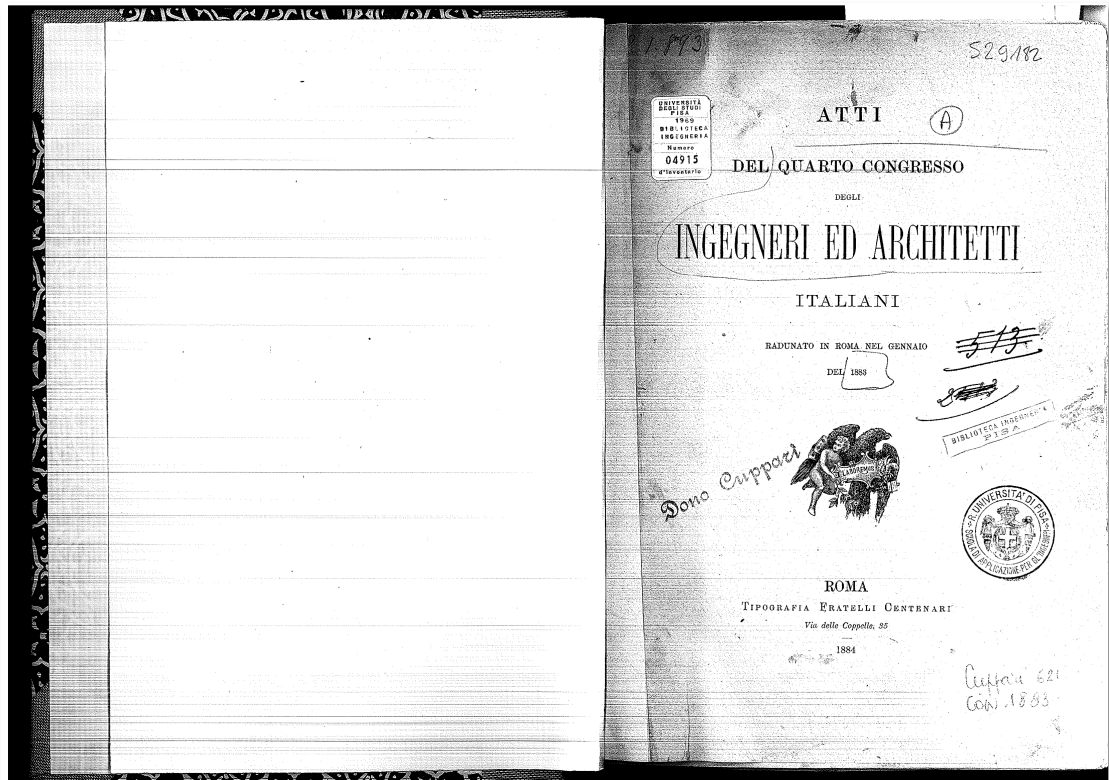
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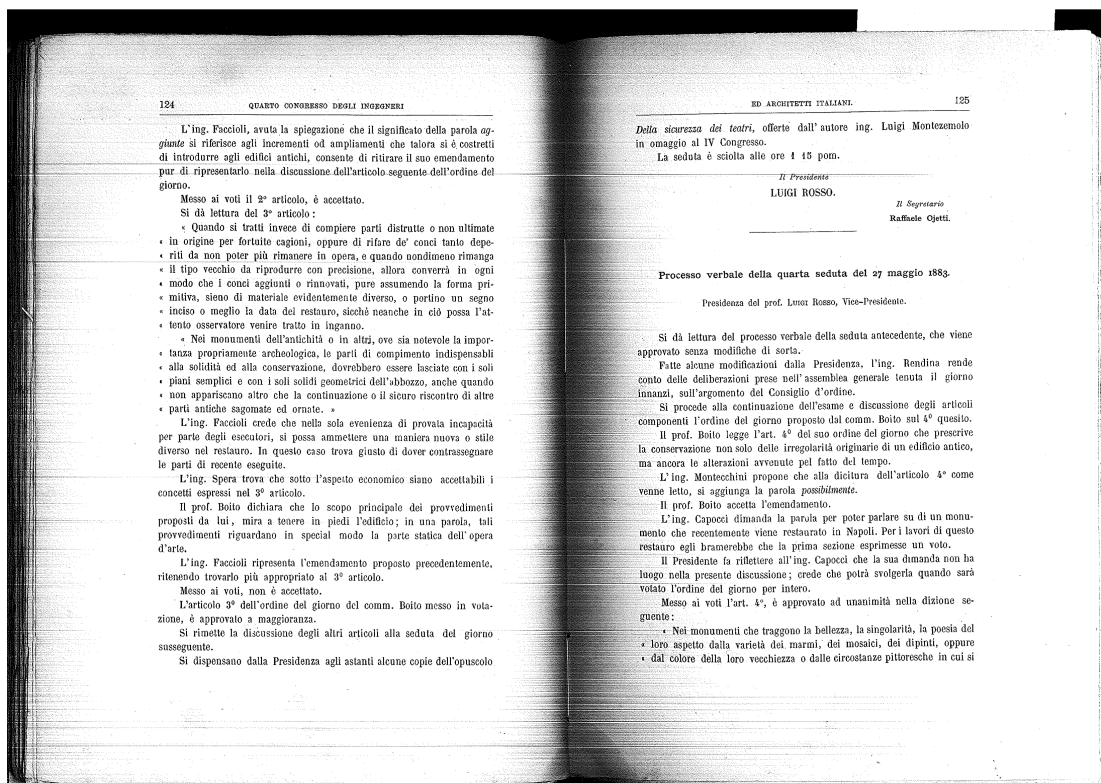
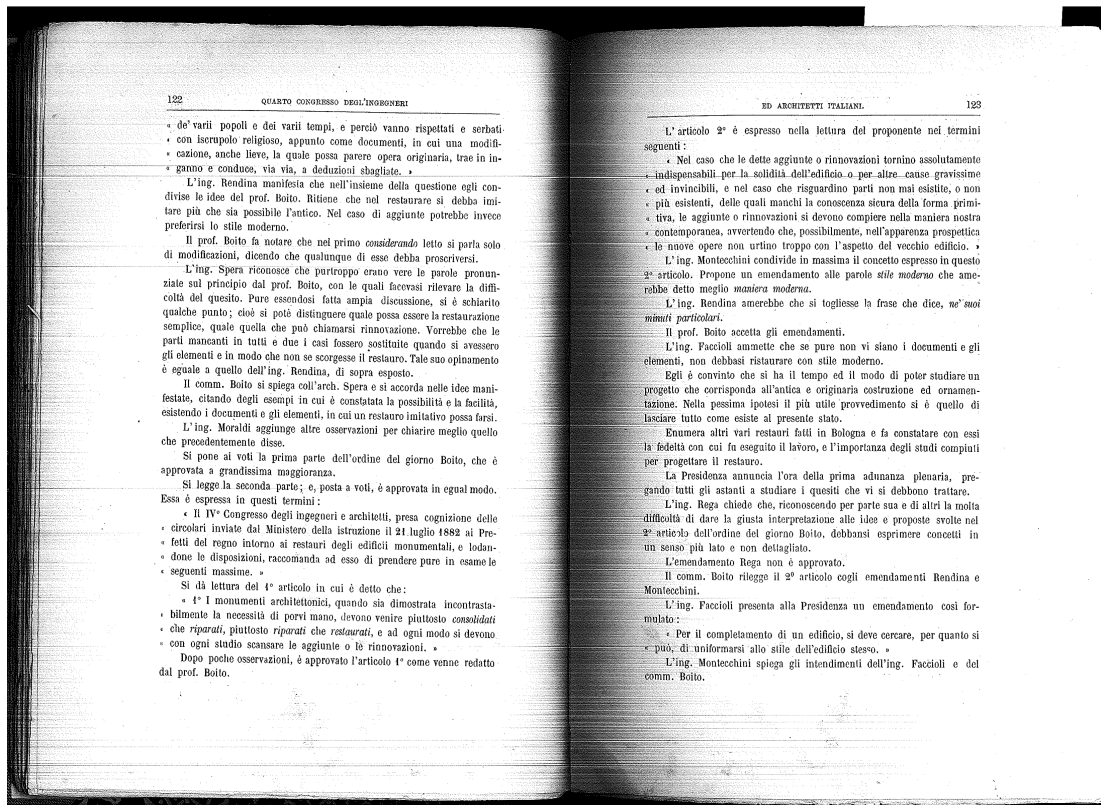
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Zucconi, Guido, and Tiziana Serena, editors. *Camillo Boito. Un protagonista dell'Ottocento italiano*. Marsilio, Venezia, 2002.

Appendices

Appendix I: Atti del quarto congresso degli ingegneri ed architetti Italiani radunato in Roma nel gennaio del 1883. Tipografia Fratelli Centenari, Roma, 1884 (pp. 122-125). Si ringrazia l'Università di Pisa, Biblioteca di Ingegneria / Proceedings of the fourth congress of Italian engineers and architects held in Rome in January 1884 (pp.122-125). Typography Centenari Brothers, Rome 1884. Courtesy of the University of Pisa, Library of Engineering





- trovano, o persino dallo stato rovinoso nel quale giacciono, le opere di
- consolidamento, ridotte allo strettissimo indispensabile, non dovranno
- scemare possibilmente in nulla cedesse ragioni intrinseche ed estrinseche
- di allettamento artistico. »

L'arch. Boito dà lettura del 5° articolo che riguarda le aggiunte e modificazioni che in differenti epoche fossero state introdotte nell'edificio primitivo.

Esso articolo 5° è approvato ad unanimità nei termini seguenti :

- Saranno considerate per monumenti, e trattate come tali, quelle
- aggiunte o modificazioni che in differenti epoche fossero state introdotte
- nell'edificio primitivo, salvo il caso in cui, avendo un'importanza ar-
- chitettonica e storica manifestamente minore dell'edificio stesso, e nel medesimo tempo svanendo o mascherando alcune parti notevoli di esso, sia
- da consigliare la rimozione o la distruzione di tali modificazioni od
- aggiunte.

- In tutti i casi nei quali sia possibile e ne valga la spesa, le opere
- di cui si parla verranno serbate, o nel loro insieme o in alcune parti
- essenziali, possibilmente accanto al monumento da cui furono rimosse. »

È letto l'art. 6° che ha per argomento la compilazione e l'esecuzione di un progetto di restauro, i documenti scritti ed illustrativi delle varie parti dell'edificio, delle modifiche progettate, e delle fasi che può avere un lavoro *in corso di restauro*.

L'arch. Giannini vuole che comprese nelle varie illustrazioni di un monumento in via di restauro o di riparazione vi debbano essere anche quelle eseguite a colore.

L'arch. Castellazzi bramerrebbe che di tutti i documenti riguardanti il monumento, si serbasse copia nell'edificio stesso.

L'ing. Bendina sarebbe di parere che una copia dei monumenti sia data ancora alla città che ha sotto la sua dipendenza il monumento.

L'ing. Capocci propone, quale emendamento all'art. 6° come fu letto, che si specificassero i soli casi in cui si potessero dare questi documenti, ossia quelli in cui i documenti fossero realmente utili, e quando fossero ben custoditi.

L'architetto prof. Boito accetta le proposte degli architetti Giannini e Castellazzi, ed in relazione di esse proposte rilegge l'articolo 6°, così concepito :

- Dovranno eseguirsi, innanzi di por mano ad opere anche piccole
- di riparazione o di restauro, le fotografie del monumento, poi di mano
- in mano le fotografie dei principali stadi del lavoro, e finalmente le

- fotografie del lavoro compiuto. Questa serie di fotografie sarà trasmessa
- al Ministero della Istruzione, insieme con i disegni delle piante, degli
- alzati e dei dettagli, e occorrendo con gli acquarelli colorati, ove figu-
- rino con evidente chiarezza tutte le opere conservate, consolidate, ri-
- fatte, rinnovate, modificate, rimosse, o distrutte. Un resoconto preciso
- e metodico delle ragioni e del procedimento delle opere e delle varia-
- zioni d'ogni specie accompagnerà i disegni e le fotografie. Una copia
- di tutti i documenti ora indicati dovrà rimanere depositata presso le
- fabbricerie delle chiese restaurate o presso l'ufficio incaricato della
- custodia del monumento restaurato. »

Tale articolo è approvato ad unanimità.

Gli architetti Giovenale e Faccioli propongono un articolo aggiuntivo ai già votati, il quale prescrive che in ogni monumento venga posta una lapide che abbia le notizie del restauro e della storia di esso edificio.

L'assemblea accetta questo articolo, che, come settimo, viene aggiunto all'ordine del giorno nella forma seguente :

- Una lapide da infiggere sul monumento restaurato, ricorderà la
- data e le opere principali del restauro. »

L'ing. Capocci ritorna ad esporre il suo parere che l'assemblea possa fare un voto di lode al restauro che va compendosi all'Arco di Aragona in Napoli, giacché, a suo parere, esso viene condotto sulle norme e sui criteri approvati dalla prima sezione.

Il Presidente prega l'ing. Capocci a non voler insistere su cosa che non può riguardare l'adunanza e la natura delle discussioni di un Congresso, il quale deve il più possibile tenersi all'esame dei temi che sono di un interesse generale per l'arte.

L'ing. Capocci dichiara di trovar giuste le osservazioni della Presidenza e rinuncia alla sua proposta.

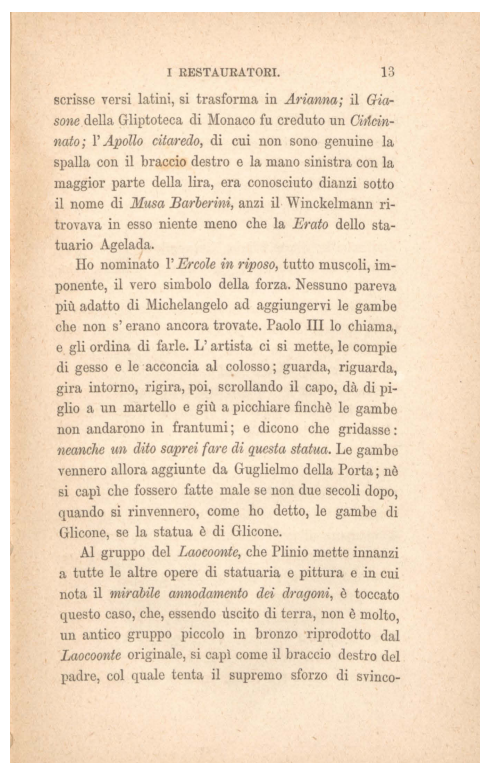
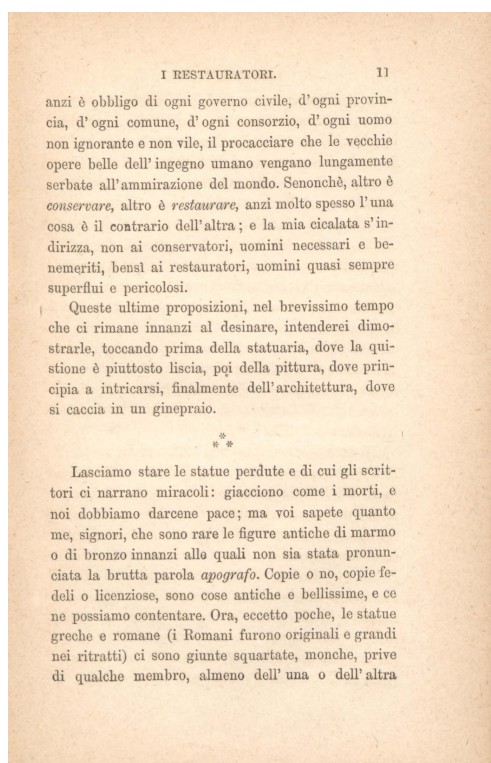
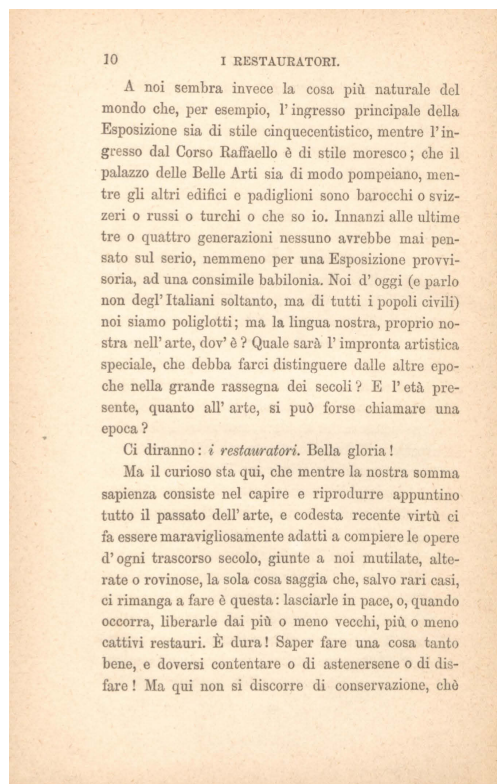
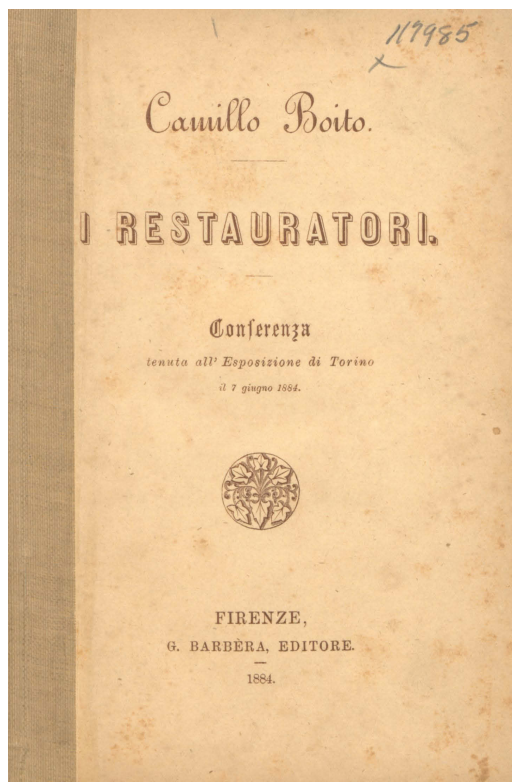
Il comm. Boito assume la Presidenza, invitando gli adunati a procedere all'esame del 5° quesito che chiede :

- Quali norme siano atte a rendere i pubblici concorsi per pro-
- getti di opere di architettura e di ingegneria rispondenti al vantaggio reale
- di cui li promuove, all'imparzialità del giudizio, ed al progresso dell'arte
- e della scienza. »

L'ing. Giovenale tiene a dichiarare che nella discussione che si andava a svolgere sul quesito egli prendeva la parola quale membro del Collegio di Roma, ed a difesa del regolamento che sull'argomento si compì dallo stesso Collegio.

L'ing. Pope riconosce l'importanza del tema, e si mostra dispiacente

Appendix II: Camillo Boito, *I restauratori, Conferenza tenuta all'Esposizione di Torino il 7 giugno 1884*, (pp.10-18) G. Barbera Editore, Firenze, 1884/Camillo Boito, *The restorers, Conference held in Turin on June 7th 1884*, (pp.10-18). G. Barbera Editore, Florence



larsi da uno dei serpi, e il braccio destro del figliuolo minore, alzato in atto di disperazione, fossero licenziosamente rifatti, dacchè tanto il padre quanto il fanciullo nel gruppo in bronzo piegano il braccio, mettendosi la mano sul capo. E così il povero signor Cornacchini, restauratore, è rimasto scornacchiato.

Dianzi ho citato Plinio. Non voglio lasciar fuggire la buona occasione di porgervi un suggerimento igienico, tolto dalla sua *Storia naturale* e non alieno dalla statuaria, di cui discorriamo. Se dunque vi capita di avere il dolor di testa, pigliate l'erba nata sul capo di una statua e, con un filo rosso, legatela alla vesta: subito guarirete (libro XXIV, capo 19).

Ma, in somma, di questi benedetti restauri, i quali danno in qualche parte dell'opera antica un concetto o lontano dall'originale, o, per lo meno, non indubitabile, v'è egli proprio bisogno? Non sono ammirabili così rotti e monchi il *Torso dell'Ercole* detto di Belvedere, il *Torso del Bacco* detto Farnese: il primo uno stupore di vigoria grandiosa eppur naturale, il secondo uno stupore di morbidezza elegante? Non è ammirabile e seducentissima quella *Psiche*, la quale fu trovata alla fine dello scorso secolo fra le macerie dell'Anfiteatro di Capua, e ora splende nel Museo di Napoli? E le manca il braccio destro, e le manca il braccio sinistro ed un pezzo di spalla e un fianco e tutto dall'ombelico in giù e il cucuzzolo del capo. Sul dorso vi sono le tracce dell'innesto delle ali; e piega

la persona in atto di grazia ineffabile, e guarda in giù forse ad Amore fanciullo, che le dovrebbe stare d'accanto, forse alla lucerna fatale o alla farfalla, che dovrebbe tenere in mano. In questi vaghi dubbi la fantasia s'ispira e si diletta e s'innamora. È un incanto. Se Michelangelo stesso, se il Canova l'avessero compiuta, non s'alzerebbe più di contro a noi indipendente il genio dell'ignoto artefice greco; noi non potremmo volare più attraverso ai secoli fino al beato paese della eterna bellezza.

C'è una parte del volto, forse la principale nei busti monocromi, la quale i cataloghi stranieri fatti bene registrano spessissimo come restaurata, ma della quale, per fortuna, non è difficile scoprire il tassello, anche quando i cataloghi mal fatti, quali sono in generale i nostri, non indicano punto i restauri. È il naso, contro al quale, oltre le cadute, gli atterramenti, le rovine d'ogni fatta, se la pigliano volentieri anche i monelli d'oggi; e per convincersene basta passeggiare sul Pincio, contemplando l'effigie degli innumerevoli uomini illustri. Gli occhi, specchio dell'anima, e la bocca, senza il colore delle pupille e delle labbra, perdono assai della loro espressione, massime che le pupille nel migliore periodo dell'arte antica non furono segnate affatto, o sparirono, perchè dipinte o formate di smalto o incrostate di pietre preziose. Il naso invece, così nel marmo come nel bronzo, così di prospetto come di profilo, imprime alla fisionomia il carattere suo spiccato: basta una differenza

quasi impercettibile nella linea della sua attaccatura col fronte, nella sua grossezza, nella sua forma dritta o aquilina o rincagnata o camusa o sinuosa e nell'ampiezza delle narici, per alterare l'aspetto e l'espressione delle fattezze.

Leonardo da Vinci lo mostra nelle caricature bizzarre; ed i Romani e i Greci cavavano dal naso un indizio dell'anima, come poi fecero i fisionomisti. Nella Bibbia stessa, vedete, il Levitico proibisce di appressarsi all'Altare a colui che ha il naso schiacciato o smisurato (capo XXI, versetto 18), e il *Cantico dei Cantici* (capo VII, versetto 4) non in tutte le traduzioni, ma nelle più fedeli, esclama: *Il tuo collo pare una torre d'avorio; gli occhi tuoi sembrano le piscine che sono in Hesbon, presso alla porta di Bat-rabbim; il tuo naso somiglia alla torre del Libano che guarda verso Damasco.*

Per gli Ebrei il naso era la sede della collera, e noi stessi diciamo *Saltar la mosca al naso*, come diciamo *Avere buon naso*, o semplicemente *Aver naso*, per essere di buon giudizio, prudenti, avveduti, e *Pigliare* o *Menare pel naso* e *Ficcare il naso* e *Rimanere con tanto di naso* o *con un palmo di naso*.... alla maniera che resterete voi, signori, scusate, dopo finita questa mia conferenza. Non intendo di scherzare: il grave, il solenne Tommaseo, che non celiava, ne' suoi *Pensieri morali* assegna due capitoli al naso, cantato già dai poeti, e comincia così: *Grande è il potere del naso nelle simpatie de' mortali.* Dopo avere affermato

che *la civiltà può di molto sui nasi*, sentenzia: *Occhi cerulei, naso lungo: donna non buona. — Naso ritto: anima per lo meno leggera. — Bazza e naso lungo: bontà. — Naso che s'inchina a baciare la bocca: ingegno poco*, e continua, ma per noi credo che possa bastare.

A me premeva di mostrarvi la somma importanza del naso nella fisionomia e nella statuaria per potervi muovere questa interrogazione: nei busti o nelle statue, dove esso manca, si deve rimettere o no? Lasciando la testa senza il naso, certo, si tollera una bruttura schifosa: noi possiamo fantasticare le braccia, le gambe di una figura, anche le spalle od un pezzo di nuca, ma per indovinare un naso, che non c'è, si richiede uno sforzo superiore forse alla nostra immaginazione. Perchè dunque non lasciarci soccorrere da un valente artista, che, dopo avere bene studiato il carattere della faccia rotta, compia col marmo, giacchè è in grado di farlo, quello che noi non sappiamo raggiungere con il nostro ingegno idealmente?

Dirò il mio sentimento. A me, confesso, ripugna anche in questa occasione, anche trattandosi di un restauratore insigne, di lasciarmi ingannare. Il restauratore, alla stretta dei conti, mi dà la fisionomia che gli piace; ed io voglio proprio l'antica, la genuina, quella che è uscita dallo scarpello dell'artista greco o romano, senza aggiunte e senza abbellimenti. L'interprete, sia pure grandissimo, mi riempie di fieri sospetti. In un solo caso il rappezzo può sembrare tollerabile,

anzi qualche volta desiderabile: nel caso che della statua o del ritratto ci fossero altri esemplari sicuri e completi, o per lo meno medaglie chiare o cammei evidenti.

Teoria generale per la scultura: RESTAURI NIEN-
TE; E BUTTAR VIA SUBITO, SENZA REMISSIONE,
TUTTI QUELLI CHE SONO STATI FATTI SINORA, RE-
CENTI O VECCHI.

*
* *

Innanzi di passare alla pittura, intendiamoci su due punti. Il primo è questo. Colui il quale, traendo da un'arte del passato tutti gli elementi della propria opera, la eseguisce nuova di sana pianta, non ha niente di comune col restauratore. Nel Castello in cui siamo, nel Villaggio qui accanto ogni concetto ed ogni particolare, così dell'architettura come della ornamentazione, sono cavati (e il Catalogo s'affatica a provarlo) da modelli effettivi del XV secolo; ma tutto è, come si sa, ricomposto, sicchè il lavoro apparisce una vera opera d'arte, dove non sappiamo se lodare più la scrupolosa cautela dell'archeologo e la fedele finezza del copista, o più il genio rifacitore dell'architetto e lo spirito dell'artefice, indovinatori di singolari aspetti prospettici e romantici. La vita, che c'è qui dentro, è venuta dall'animo creativo; il bello, che ci commuove, non è il parto grave dello studio, è il figlio volante della immaginazione.

Non era un restauratore il Duprè quando da gio-

Appendix III: Camillo Boito, *Relazione sul progetto di Restauro per la Basilica dei Ss. Maria e Donato in Murano*, Tipografia di Domenico Salvo e Comp., Milano 1861. Si ringrazia la Biblioteca Marciana Venezia/ Camillo Boito, *Restoration report for the Basilica of the Saints Maria and Donato in Murano*, Typography of Domenico di Salvo and Company, Milan 1861. Courtesy of the Biblioteca Marciana in Venice



LETTERA AL SIGNOR MARCHESE RAFFAELE PARETO.

Gentilissimo Signor Marchese

..... Ed eccole il disegno della pianta, due fotografie degli alzati e la descrizione del mio progetto per il restauro della vecchia cattedrale di Murano. Murano, Ella sa, è un'isoletta poco distante da Venezia, famosa per le sue fabbriche di vetro, da cui uscivano i più begli specchi del mondo, e dove tuttavia si fanno nascere le perle, la venturina, la malachite ed altre leggiadrie cosifatte. Gli abitanti sono poveri operai di quelle fabbriche, e poveri pescatori; gente buona ed attiva. Qua e là in mezzo alle lor case meschinelle, lungo l'unico canale che serpeggiando divide in due l'isoletta, s'alzano alcune vaste chiese, ricche di preziosi dipinti, e gli antichi palazzi, dove i veneti patrizi andavano a riposarsi dalle fatiche del governo e dai chiassi della città.

Questa, che io Le mando, è una piccola parte del mio lavoro; ma se il crollante edificio, bellissimo e singolare monumento dell'architettura fiorita in Italia nel cadere del decimo secolo, può importare a Lei, studioso amoroso delle cose antiche, questi disegni Le mostreranno come la basilica doveva essere nella prima costruzione, innanzi agli stolti restauri che la deturparono, segnatamente al secolo delle parrucche e degli arcadi. Ma, volendo poi dare alla luce nel Giornale ch'Ella dirige questa mia robuccia, sarebbe forse convenuto di far precedere allo studio speciale alquanto considerazioni generali sullo stile dell'edificio, sulla relazione ch'esso ha con gli edifici anteriori, contemporanei, o posteriori, e su certe singolarità dell'architettura veneziana fiorita nel mille. Così avevo in mente di fare; poi mi è sembrato che l'argomento non meritasse un esordio tanto solenne, ond'io Le mando il progetto con la sola descrizione che lo accompagnava quando lo presentai, tre anni addietro, all'Ufficio delle Pubbliche Costruzioni in Venezia. In verità, il ricercare quanto del modo bizantino, quanto dell'arabo, quanto del comacino è in codesta chiesa di Murano, m'avrebbe, volere o non volere, condotto nelle intricate e lunghissime vie della storia architettonica di quel periodo che altri dice lombardo, altri normanno, altri romanzo, altri gotico del primo modo, e via via. Certo è che, a guardare gli storici, quest'epoca è piena di contraddizioni, di esagerazioni, di errori; nè qui era il tempo di cacciarsi in tale ginepraio.

Or Ella mi conceda, signor marchese, di narrarle qualche pettegolezzo. Che vuol Ella? gli uomini, dal più al meno, sono nati alle ciancie. Tre anni addietro,

PROGETTO DI RESTAURO

mentre stavo a Firenze, ricevetti da Venezia un decreto, col quale mi s'incaricava di comporre il progetto di restauro per uno dei più belli e importanti edifici d'Italia, la basilica di Murano. Accettai molto volentieri il non chiesto incarico, e mi condussi a Venezia per fare gli studi sull'antico monumento e per disegnare il progetto: progetto che fu tosto approvato intieramente, e largamente pagato. Ebbi poscia l'incombenza di presentare in un dato termine gli sviluppi tecnici e statici del lavoro; ma certe faccende famigliari m'obbligarono appunto allora a portarmi nella Polonia russa, dove rimasi qualche tempo. Ritornato a Venezia, alcune cause politiche fecero sì che dovetti abbandonare il paese, dove, finchè le condizioni non mutino, non posso rimetter piede. Intanto alcuni mi fecero una colpa dell'aver portato meco il progetto della basilica, e di non averne compiuti gli sviluppi nel tempo prefisso.

Non ebbi, nè ho bisogno di sprecar la voce in scuse; ma in ogni modo voglio dirgliene qualche parola, non foss'altro perchè quest'occasione mi fornisce mezzo di fare, com'ora usa, una protesta. S'io non credetti adunque opportuno di consegnare agli Uffici veneti il progetto, si fu soltanto per il timore che l'opera mia, data in mano a qualcuno fra gl'impiegati delle Pubbliche Costruzioni, ne uscisse rabberciata e sciupata, tanto più che l'Ufficio delle Pubbliche Costruzioni in Vienna avrebbe dovuto dare la sua alta e definitiva approvazione. Di parecchi architetti ch'esercitano l'arte loro nella capitale austriaca io ho grandissimo rispetto e stima; chè, al certo, Van-der-Nüll, Förster, Sichardsburg ed alcuni altri, sono ingegni ricchi e severi, uomini che potrebbero insegnarci ad amare l'arte con amore profondo e a studiarla con pazienza infaticabile. Ma non si troverà fuor di ragione che non provi la stessa stima e l'egual rispetto anche per gl'impiegati di quell'Ufficio viennese, i quali non hanno sovente l'ombra di gusto artistico, ma in compenso hanno la mania di mutare tanto per mutare, guastando e svisando il primitivo concetto. Lo seppe — per accennare ad un esempio fra mille — lo seppe il povero Santi, uomo di alto intelletto e fecondissimo artista; il quale, dei diversi progetti ch'egli presentò per la facciata del palazzo patriarcale in Venezia, vide scelto il men buono, e questo pure, innanzi che venisse posto in esecuzione, rattoppato così miseramente da non si poter quasi più riconoscere. Non di meno, il danno fu del Santi; e tuttavia quella brutta opera non sua, gli è, benchè morto, imputata a gravissima colpa. Or chi potrà con ragione accusarmi s'io temo per il mio progetto una sorte consimile? Nè questo timore parrà strano agli artisti, i quali sanno quanta gelosia di affetto si ponga nelle proprie opere, benchè meschine. E che non fosse infondato io lo sapeva dalla mia stessa esperienza; giacchè qualcuno del governo lasciò vedere i miei disegni al professore Schmidt, perchè ne desse anch'egli un giudizio. Il giudizio fu cortese, fu troppo cortese per il mio lavoro; ma lo Schmidt credette pur conveniente di fare due osservazioncelle, le quali mi vennero accennate dal Governo perchè io *volendo* nè tenessi conto, e ch'io invece dichiarai per iscritto alla Deputazione Provinciale in Venezia di *rifutare intieramente, sì per la parte storica, come per quella dell'arte*, intendendo compiere il lavoro in tutto e per tutto giusta il mio primo concetto. La s'immagini, signor Marchese, che io aveva collocato l'altar maggiore fuori dell'abside, come fu comune uso nelle

PER LA CHIESA DI S. MARIA E DONATO IN MURANO

5

chiese italiane del medio evo, e costante in quelle di forma basilicale; ebbene, lo Schmidt asseriva che l'abside in ogni chiesa cristiana è e fu sempre destinata ad accogliere l'altar maggiore. Ora, se un architetto valentissimo di certo nell'arte sua di Germania è professore d'un'Accademia, usciva in errori sì madornali, in quali errori non cascheranno gl'impiegati d'un Ufficio viennese? Nè io sarò più li a rifiutare coteste belle correzioni; ma le dovrò anzi subire in pace ignorandole.

La speranza di potere quandochessia dirigere da me stesso il lavoro, per condurlo secondo il pensiero mio e senza gli arbitri noiosi di nessuno, ha fatto ch'io per qualche tempo tardassi a restituirne i disegni. Ma poi, visto che non li potevo più oltre con giustizia negare, li inviai, dichiarando nondimeno che rifiutavo intierissimamente la responsabilità di un'opera la quale non posso io stesso dirigere e sorvegliare. Questa protesta bramo che Le sia nota, signor Marchese, perchè la Sua stima è a me preziosissima; e voglio ch'Ella mi possa giudicare sulle cose mie, non su quelle che gli altri mi sciuperanno o correggeranno.

Or Ella mi perdoni di averla tediata con queste inutili filastrocche. Mi voglia un po' di bene, e mi creda

Milano, 21 febbrajo 1861.

Suo aff. amico
CAMILLO BOITO.

Descrizione del Progetto

per il restauro della chiesa di S. Maria e Donato in Murano.

Alcuni cronisti, non molto antichi, vogliono costrutta questa basilica da Ottone I, e consacrata a S. Maria Assunta da Buono, patriarca di Grado, nel 957. Se non che la savia critica deve rigettare per insussistenti tali asserzioni, accontentandosi di conoscere anteriore al 999 la consacrazione della chiesa, il che si rileva da un documento conservato nell'archivio di essa. Nel 1125 fu poi intitolata anche al nome di S. Donato.

Della prima costruzione rimangono avanzi assai considerevoli, tanto da poterne trarre per il restauro, non in tutto, ma in molte parti, sicuri indizi. L'ordinanza generale della chiesa è antica; le colonne e gli archi ad alto peduccio, che sostengono i muri della nave centrale e quelli del braccio absidiale della croce, sono senza fallo antichi; parimenti la parte posteriore dell'edificio, la quale è ornata all'esterno con eleganza di stile e rara accuratezza di esecuzione. La muratura e la decorazione di quest'abside è in terra cotta apparente e tagliata a martello; v'hanno molte colonne co' capitelli e le basi in pietra ed in marmo, e nel fregio del piano inferiore si vede un ordine di formelle triangolari in marmo greco, ornate di fogliami, di animali e di croci a bassissimo rilievo. Molti pezzi di ornamenti più antichi stanno incastrati nella muraglia. I mattoni adoperati, non solo in quest'abside, ma in tutta la chiesa, sono assai più grandi de' moderni, giungendo dalla dimensione di centimetri 30 su 24, fino a quella di 47 su 31. Lo stile è tra il Bizantino ed il Lombardo, con qual-

che lontanissima reminiscenza dell'Arabo. Tale carattere speciale d'architettura, analogo sì, ma non simile ad altri edifici contemporanei, cercai serbare liberamente nella facciata e nelle parti delle quali non rimane verun indizio antico.

È difficile giudicare se i muri delle navi e della croce risalgono alla primitiva costruzione. Il vederli murati un po' differentemente da quelli dell'abside, e il trovarvi molta irregolarità nei fori, potrebbe far pensare che fossero stati, se non ricostrutti, almeno grandemente restaurati nel terzo o nel quarto secolo dopo il mille. Infatti si trovano due finestre ne' muri trasversali del braccio destro della croce, tre in quelli del sinistro; nel muro che chiude il braccio destro si scorgono due ordini di tre finestre l'uno, invece in quello che chiude il sinistro un ordine solo di cinque fori. Se non che queste irregolarità non sono criterio sufficiente per tenere posteriore alla fondazione la costruzione de' muri, giacchè non ripugnano, anzi servono al carattere dello stile primitivo, nè mancano esempi di simili licenze in edifici contemporanei. Dall'altro canto il non vedere negli archi la forma acuta, farebbe inclinare a giudicarli antichi. Ecco perchè io credetti, difettando i dati più sicuri, di dover conservare nel progetto l'ordinanza accennata, della quale si vedono gl'indizi. E dico che gl'indizi soltanto è dato trovarne, perchè nel secolo barocco — secolo in cui nè antichità, nè bellezza valevano a preservare i monumenti dalla stolta profanazione — furono murati tutti i fori della chiesa, e aperti invece dei grandi lunettoni semicircolari, i quali, oltre al mostrare bruttissimo aspetto, divennero la principale causa dello sfasciamento e della ruina dell'edificio. Dodici finestre accoppiate a due a due nei muri della nave centrale vennero chiuse; parimenti si chiusero le finestre de' muri laterali dell'abside e quelle dei due bracci trasversi, dianzi ricordate. Niuno de' fori che nel progetto ho creduto di dover riaprire si volle conservato; talchè l'edificio, per questa e per molte altre profanazioni, che tosto dirò, fu intieramente svisato. — Buono per noi che l'abside non curarono di sciupare! — Aprirono adunque, come dicevo, tre grandissimi lunettoni nel muro destro della nave, all'altezza dal suolo interno di metri 10,86; ne aprirono uno in ciascun de' muri laterali dell'abside, due nelle cappelle che le stanno dalle parti, uno nel muro che chiude il braccio destro della croce, due nelle ali del prospetto. Nè i barocchi si accontentarono di ciò: — nell'interno della chiesa nascosero il bellissimo tetto con una volta a centine, la quale comincia dove i lunettoni, ed è ellittica con lunette, e sulla crociera come sul braccio absidiale è girata a vela; in oltre sotto gli archi bizantini ad alto peduccio ne costrussero altri di legname in forma semicircolare, e, scarpellata la cornicetta che correva orizzontalmente sulla ghiera degli archi, vi sostituirono una trabeazione di legno con goffi mensoloni barocchi. Alzarono di tre gradini il suolo dell'abside, seppellendo così le basi delle colonne e il pavimento ricco di marmi; spezzarono tutte le basi delle dieci colonne della navata, per collocarvi de' piedestalli in legno; chiusero le tre finestre absidiali. Strana e fortunata cosa è che non abbiano guastato l'importante mosaico nel catino dell'abside, dove in fondo d'oro si vede un'antica Madonna ed alcuni fregi di maniera affatto bizantina.

Bellissimo è il tetto della chiesa, in legname di larice, mirabilmente costruito. Risale senza dubbio non alla prima costruzione, ma alla fine del XIV o alla prima

metà del XV secolo: il che si riconosce dal modo di comporre le incavallature e di lavorare il legname, nonchè dalla grandissima somiglianza di esso tetto con altri costrutti in quel torno a Venezia. I legnami grossi sono tirati a squadra con grandissima precisione; vi sono due mezze velle ornate con piccoli cassettoni, e cassettoni si vedono tra i correnti. Nella crociera della chiesa i cavalletti diagonali sono senza catena, e i puntoni a modo di fili armati. Le catene degli altri cavalletti rinforzate a' capi da lunghi e ornati mensoloni: ed il tetto decorato da spirali, da dentelli, da ornamenti colorati nei cassettoni. Tutti i legnami grossi sono in eccellente stato di conservazione, salvo il puntone di uno de' cavalletti diagonali, il quale è fradicio e ha d'uopo di essere mutato; così pure conviene mutare un mensolone del cavalletto vicino, e parte dei legnami sottili. Tutto il coperto è tanto accuratamente commesso, che sarebbe irragionevole cosa lo scomporlo nel costruire la navata. Si vedrà più lungi come intendo provvedere a codesto.

Il muro della facciata, grosso un metro, fu certamente rifatto contemporaneamente al tetto, come si rileva dalla solida muratura e da alcune linee della esterna decorazione. Sonvi nel corpo centrale quattro lunghe lesene, che in doppia sporgenza aggettano un venti centimetri, e all'alto terminano con archetti sospesi, seguenti l'inclinazione del tetto. Nell'asse della facciata, all'altezza del coperto, v'è una piccolissima bifora, la quale fu poi murata; e finalmente, due pilastri smussati, assai sporgenti, rispondono esternamente ai due muri della navata centrale — pilastri che pare avessero ufficio di sostenere una tettoia. Tutto ciò è costruito in mattoni, e con nessuno gusto artistico e nessuna precisione di lavoro. Mi sembrò nell'immaginare la facciata di non dover curare nè punto nè poco queste linee che sono brutte, che si vedono chiarissimamente del secolo XIV, e che contrastano per ogni verso col carattere primitivo della chiesa.

Vediamo adesso il ruinoso stato dell'edificio. Tutti i muri delle navate sono più o meno inclinati a destra, verso mezzogiorno: quello sinistro della nave centrale strapiomba di 65 centimetri su 14 metri di altezza; quello dell'ala dalla stessa parte è fuori del diritto suo di 30 centimetri sull'altezza di metri 7. Questi muri delle navi così spostati e reggentisi per il solo legame del tetto, mandarono peli e larghissime fenditure verticalmente, per traverso, da ogni parte; nè sono restaurabili, sì, perchè murati ad *emplectum*, con mezzo mattone da una parte e dall'altra, poi riempiti di sassi, di mattoni spezzati, di calce che più non tiene: sì perchè non si troverebbe forse un metro quadrato di muro senza qualche non piccola fenditura. A battere con un martello sui muri delle ali e sui due della nave maggiore si sente crollare al basso nell'interno il riempimento d'opera incerta; ond'è che i muri più non sostengono che colle sottili pareti. — Le dieci colonne della nave e le quattro dell'abside, belle e tutte eguali di marmo greco, tolte certamente da più antico edificio, sono in ottimo stato; salvo due che sono rotte in senso trasverso. Le basi di esse colonne accennai trovarsi tutte spezzate: e però si hanno tutte a cangiare. I capitelli di stile romano imbarbarito e conservanti ancora la doratura delle foglie, non sono punto guasti, eccetto due che mostrano qualche scorniciatura. I due pilastri che terminano la navata maggiore sono in pessimo stato e strapiombano stranamente; le colonne di essa son tutte fuori del diritto loro; i dodici

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PROGETTO DI RESTAURO

archi che le stan sopra si vedono sconnessi in guisa irreparabile, così i due semicirculari che chiudono le navate laterali; e finalmente i muri su questi due archi sono pieni di larghe fenditure. Si vede da ciò che tutti i muri delle tre navate (eccetto il solidissimo della facciata) vanno demoliti e ricostrutti; parimente i due pilastroni. Le colonne converrà posare di nuovo a piombo sulle fondamenta, rifarvi le basi, e ricostruirvi sopra gli archi nella identica forma degli antichi. — Le fondazioni, per quanto si può giudicare senza gli scavi, dalla semplice livellazione, sono in buono stato, nè pare abbiano d'uopo di riparazione o di rinforzo. — Nella demolizione de' due muri della navata maggiore conviene trovare modo a sostenere il coperto, per riposarlo poi sulle muraglie ricostrutte, facendolo scorrere di 63 centimetri; il perchè penso di costruire due solidissimi castelli dall'una e dall'altra parte, i quali, larghi metri 2,30, lunghi quanto le navi, divisi a molti ponti, contraffortati da puntoni, servano a demolire, a ricostruire i muri e gli archi, non che a posare le colonne e a sostenere il tetto. Assai più semplici riusciranno le armature per la demolizione e ricostruzione de' due muri laterali della chiesa; non ostante anche queste dovranno essere di tutta la lunghezza delle navi, e tali da poter sostenere la rovinosa muraglia, mentre a pezzi verrà distrutta. Si demolirà a strati orizzontali, poi a letto sempre orizzontale si tornerà ad innalzare.

I due muri che chiudono le due braccia trasverse, e tutta la parte che resta verso l'abside possono conservarsi. Qui la costruzione murale è migliore, nè lo stato odierno è disperatamente ruinoso. Bisogna peraltro rivestire all'esterno il muro del fianco destro, costruirvi i due contraforti e le lesene; bisogna murare i due lunettoni nei muri che chiudono le cappelline absidiali, aprirvi le due finestre, come si vedono nel disegno; bisogna restaurare i due pilastroni della croce, legare con tiranti di ferro i muri trasversali e gli altri dell'abside, riparare gli archi, chiudere tutti i fori esistenti, aprire gli antichi, come i disegni mostrano; bisogna abbassare il lastrico dell'abside e del coro al livello del restante pavimento della chiesa.

Se il tetto principale è, come dissi, bellissimo e perfettamente conservato, non così lo sono i minori; chè anzi quelli delle navi laterali, delle cappelle e dell'abside sono di così cattivo legname e di così rozza costruzione da doversi al tutto rimutare.

Un'iscrizione, che si vede tuttavia molto ben conservata sul pavimento della chiesa, disposta circolarmente e in lettere di marmo bianco in musaico, dice:

INOEDNINRIICX . AN . DNI . MIL . CXL . PMENS . SETB . INDIC . V.

In nome del Signor nostro Gesù Cristo. Anno del Signore mille cento quaranta, primo giorno del mese di settembre, indizione quinta. — Di quell'antico lastrico tessulare rimangono considerevoli avanzi a pietruzze quadrate di marmo bianco, nero, rosso e verde, rappresentanti pavoni, aquile, galli e alcuni rozzi ornamenti. Altri pezzi ugualmente antichi sono di formelle geometriche triangolari, rettangole o d'altra forma, in marmi variamente colorati e disposti a disegni geometrici. Nei secoli susseguenti fu in molti luoghi restaurato questo pavimento, e vi furon poste alquanto

lapidi sepolcrali. La grandissima rassomiglianza che esiste sì nei materiali e nell'esecuzione, come nelle forme geometriche del disegno, tra il lastrico di Murano e quello della chiesa di S. Marco in Venezia, mostra chiaramente che queste due opere tessulari sono contemporanee; ond'è che il pavimento della basilica Marciana, da alcuni storici invecchiato di uno o due secoli, si viene a scoprire costruito nel decimosecondo. Tutto il lastrico è in cattivo stato, con molti avvallamenti e guasti; ma il restaurarlo secondo la maniera antica porterebbe ora una spesa maggiore di quanto abbisogna per riparare i danni di tutto l'edificio; e dall'altra parte questo lavoro può compiersi in molti anni a piccoli tratti. Il moderno pavimento del braccio posteriore della croce, composto di buoni marmi, può servire ad aggiustar, dove più occorra, quel della chiesa. Forse sotto al rialzo fatto dai barocchi a questa parte absidiale si troverà qualche frammento di suolo antico. In ogni modo non credo di dovere per ora occuparmi del lastrico.

È notevole la perfetta rassomiglianza di alcuni altri particolari che stanno nella basilica muranese con altri che si vedono nella chiesa di S. Marco. Qualche capitello delle colonne interne, l'abaco, la cornicetta interna ed una esterna dell'abside hanno esatissimo riscontro in capitelli e cornici della dorata basilica veneziana. Si sa che la chiesa di Murano fu incominciata circa negli anni in cui l'Orseolo riedificava la Marciana; ond'è chiarita la rispondenza di quei particolari.

Gli altari son tutti della età barocca, brutti ma ricchi di pregevoli marmi. L'altar maggiore ha due statue di marmo e il tempietto: due grandi stanno nelle braccia trasverse: due minori nelle cappelle presso l'abside: altri nelle navi laterali. Di questi altari si può trarre profitto pei nuovi, o adoperandone il materiale o vendendoli. —

PIANTA.

La chiesa è piccola, di semplice e regolare ordinanza; ond'è che il restauro non riuscirà soverchiamente difficile e dispendioso. Le tre navi, dal muro della facciata sino al principio delle braccia trasverse, son lunghe metri 19,37; la larghezza di queste braccia è di metri 7,53; la distanza dalle medesime al cominciamento dell'emiccio absidiale, di 7,61; il raggio dell'emiccio, di 4,52; la larghezza della navata maggiore, da asse ad asse delle colonne, di 10,40; la larghezza delle navi laterali, dall'asse delle colonne al muro, di 5,20, metà precisamente della nave centrale. Ho già toccato delle costruzioni murali da rifarsi e di quelle da conservare; quest'ultime sono indicate nella pianta con una tinta più scura.

Il muro laterale della navata destra, alto 7 metri e mezzo e destinato a portare un leggiero tetto, si ricostruirà in solida e piena muratura di mattoni, grosso una pietra e mezza (0^m,39), ma rinforzato da larghe lesene ad arco, sporgenti in due riprese una pietra. Il muro laterale della navata sinistra avrà lo spessore di due mattoni (0^m,52), e nell'interno del battistero andrà rinforzato con pilastri, i quali serviranno anche a sostenere i cavalletti del coperto di esso battistero, e a sollevare interamente il muro dal peso verticale e dalla spinta orizzontale del tetto. I muri della navata maggiore, sostenuti dalle dodici arcate, dovranno edificarsi in

Progetto di restauro per la chiesa di S. Maria, ecc.

piena muratura, e saranno grossi tre pietre (0^m, 78) fino alla cornicetta posta sopra gli archi; da questa fino al tetto si ridurranno allo spessore di due pietre e mezzo (0^m, 65). Questa grossezza dei muri è necessaria per sostenere il coperto; tanto più che molte sono le finestre aperte in essi, e che queste servono ad alleggerirli d'assai, e a far sì che possano essere solidamente retti dalle colonne e dagli archi. La differenza delle grossezze dovrà naturalmente porsi al di fuori, per modo che valga a meglio serrare la costruzione.

L'abside, il fianco destro e la facciata si possono vedere a considerevole distanza; vero è che una casupola posta dietro la chiesa toglie di guardare direttamente l'abside, ma questa misera abitazione può essere con pochi danari comperata e demolita. Fra il fianco sinistro ed alcune case che gli stan presso v'è un passaggio coperto, largo da metri 4,55 a metri 6,15. In questo passaggio troveranno conveniente luogo le nuove sagrestie, il battistero e la cappella di S. Filomena. Presentemente i locali a servizio della chiesa e la cappella sono addossati al fianco destro, e fanno sconcia vista, sì perchè di moderna e brutta costruzione, sì perchè interrompono le linee dell'edificio. Le odierne sagrestie si demoliranno adunque, e la cappella converrà trasportare dall'altra parte. Questa, cui è annesso un piccolo beneficio, fu fatta costruire trent'anni fa da un privato, e decorare nell'interno in istile Vignolesco ed in marmo bianco. Si vede nel disegno della pianta la sua presente collocazione ed il posto dove andrà poi trasportata.

A sinistra della chiesa, verso la facciata, si porrà il battistero, coperto da un tetto visibile e dipinto, con cavalletti poggianti su pilastri. La vasca esiste nelle odierne sagrestie, ed è antica. Si entrerà in questo battistero dall'esterno, e anche dall'interno della basilica per mezzo di un passaggio, il quale per tre archi darà adito ad esso, e per una porta alla cappella di S. Filomena, che riceverà lume dall'alto.

Un passaggio congiungerà direttamente la cappella con la grande sagrestia, divisa in due scompartimenti e comunicante colla chiesa per mezzo di una larga porta. Su questa sagrestia esiste anche adesso un oratorio, cui si sale per una scala che riesce in basso all'esterno ed all'interno. Di faccia all'uscio interno di essa scala si aprirà un altro uscio, e una scaletta condurrà alla galleria esterna dell'abside.

Presso l'altare della sagrestia vi sarà una stanza ad uso de' preti, o a deposito di diversi arredi; sì questa come uno degli scompartimenti della sagrestia saranno rischiarati da due bifore riceventi lume da un cortile, all'ingiro del quale sono parecchie ampie stanze, che ora servono a magazzini per la chiesa, e potranno servire anche poi.

Le porte nei muri laterali delle navi saranno conservate nell'istesso luogo dov'ora stanno, e dov'erano certamente fin dalla prima costruzione.

Le esigenze della chiesa m'obbligarono a progettare cinque nuovi altari, mentre io non avrei voluti che soltanto quelli dell'abside e delle cappelle laterali. Questi tre altari verranno coperti da un baldacchino marmoreo, a guisa de' bizantini; il maggiore sarà rialzato da terra cinque gradini, e di dietro avrà il *martyrium*, dove si deporranno i corpi di S. Donato e di S. Lorenzo. — Da un lato e dall'altro vi saranno de' stalli per i preti; di dietro, precisamente nell'emicielo absidiale, chiusi da un cancello, la cunteria e l'organo.

Presentemente il piccolo organo, che è appiccicato sopra la porta principale, aggettando nell'interno e non potendo in verun modo legarsi organicamente alle linee della chiesa, fa bruttissimo vedere; nè in quel luogo è possibile combinarlo in maniera non disconveniente e non brutta. Così, il carattere dello stile e la piccolezza dell'edificio non comportano la collocazione dell'organo in una delle due braccia trasverse, e in nessun altro luogo, tranne l'abside. Infatti l'emiciclo rimane senza ufficio veruno, giacchè l'altare ha da essere posto assai più innanzi, come sta nel disegno, e, dall'altro canto, questa è chiesa di piccola e non ricca parrocchia, dove non occorre cattedra vescovile, nè bisognano molti stalli per i pochissimi sacerdoti che vi sono addetti. L'organo si potrà rialzare di qualche gradino sopra un intavolato; e rimarrà spazio sufficientissimo per gli strumenti e i cantori, che nelle solennità di questa basilica non sogliono essere molto numerosi. È poi a notare che la piccolezza dell'edificio e la curva dell'abside faranno sì che il suono dell'organo, degli strumenti e del canto sia nettamente udito in ogni angolo della chiesa.

L'ambone in marmo greco, addossato presentemente al pilastro sinistro della navata, palesa così nella forma come nella rozza esecuzione lo stile del secolo decimoprimo. Questo pulpito verrà posto nel primo arco della navata sinistra, secondo era costume nelle chiese comacine o lombarde, nonchè in quelle romane dell'èvo medio. Cinque colonne sosterranno il pezzo antico, ed una scala girante intorno al pilastro servirà ad ascendervi.

Due confessionali in legno, di semplici e adatte forme, si porranno in capo alle navi minori, verso l'ingresso principale. E sul limitare di questo, come sul limitare degl'ingressi secondarj, tre scalini serviranno a discendere sul pavimento della chiesa, il quale è mezzo metro più basso del suolo esterno.

FACCIATA.

Per la composizione di questa facciata poco mi valsero gli studi prima fatti sugli edifici lombardi dell'alta Italia, sui bizantini di Ravenna e di Venezia, su quelli anteriori al mille che esistono in alcuni luoghi degli Stati papali e in Toscana. Ho toccato alla singolarità dello stile della basilica muranese, stile cui dovetti piegarmi nello immaginarne il prospetto.

Il contorno della facciata era stabilito dalle dimensioni interne della chiesa e dalla inclinazione de' tetti. Due pilastroni a maniera di contrafforti si dovevano naturalmente collocare a indizio de' muri della nave centrale e a rafforzarne gli archi; altri due pilastroni conveniva serrassero le due ali.

Al fine di conservare quanto più mi fosse possibile gli avanzi antichi, serbai della porta principale la forma rettangolare e gli stipiti, nonchè il basso rilievo che rappresenta S. Donato, titolare della chiesa, con sotto un fedele pregante. Segue il giro dell'arco un fregio a denti di sega, con formelle triangolari di terra cotta, ornate in varie guise e dipinte a smalto azzurro; il quale fregio, movendo orizzontalmente, va poi nelle ali a voltarsi sulle due bifore. Quest'ornamento, cavato dall'abside, ha ufficio di legare tutta la facciata, e di darle insieme unità e movi-

mento. Una cornicetta di pietra con fogliami, posta alla medesima altezza dell'interna e uguale a questa, lega la parte centrale del prospetto; mentre le ali terminano con un fregio in terra cotta, seguente l'inclinazione del tetto e ornato a cerchi con ismalto azzurro. La terra adoperata per questo fregio e per quello ricorrente sulla porta e le bifore, dovrà essere di pallido colore in confronto alla terra usata per le altre parti della decorazione e pei muri. — Nel centro della facciata v'è un'ampia trifora con sei colonne di pietra; dalle bande stanno incastrati nei muri due riquadri in pietra, di cui i pezzi centrali sono antichi, ed ora si trovano, uno murato nel fianco destro della chiesa, l'altro sul tetto al centro della croce. — I grossi contrafforti della parte centrale sostengono de' tabernacoli in pietra, con cupolini emisferici; ed essa parte centrale è coronata di tredici archetti, e termina con una cornice a mattoni disposti geometricamente. Al basso de' contrafforti sono de' sedili in marmo rosso di Verona. Tutta la facciata si costruirà in terra cotta, salvo le colonne ed alcune altre parti, che saranno di pietra. La parete esterna converrà tutta formare con un rivestimento di mezzo mattone, legato al solido muro con mattoni posti a chiave nel senso della lunghezza. Questo rivestimento dovrà murarsi in modo che aderisca fermissimamente alla vecchia muraglia, ed eseguirsi con la maggiore possibile cura nella orizzontalità e regolarità degli strati; poi, pulita e levigata la superficie e saturati d'olio i mattoni, dovranno questi rimanere scoperti, senza intonachi di sorte alcuna.

Tutte le figure che vedonsi nel disegno, nonchè gli ornamenti della porta, dovranno essere dipinti a fresco sul fondo di foglia d'oro. Il mosaico è sgraziatamente escluso pel troppo costo. Nell'arco della porta, ai lati del basso rilievo, il quale rappresenta, come dissi, il titolare S. Donato con un fedele pregante al disotto, framezzo agl'intrecciamenti de' fogliami bizantini si trovano, a destra una testa di leone, a sinistra un gallo: stemmi di Venezia e Murano. All'alto della trifora, proprio nel centro del prospetto, è dipinta una mezza figura di Madonna con le mani giunte; perchè alla Vergine Assunta fu fin dall'origine intitolata la chiesa. L'Annunciazione è, secondo l'uso antico, ricordata nelle statue dei due tabernacoli che stanno sui contrafforti: la statua a destra raffigura Maria Vergine, quella a sinistra l'Angelo. Dentro ai tredici archetti coronanti la facciata vedesi, nel mezzo in alto, la figura del Redentore; ai lati quelle dei dodici Apostoli.

FIANCO.

Se la facciata è, per difetto di ogni antico indizio, ideata tutta di nuovo, questo fianco all'incontro è rifatto religiosamente sulle sicure tracce della costruzione primitiva. Di tutte le finestre murate e tagliate con nuovi fori è tuttavia non difficile scoprire le forme antiche; parimenti restano conservate le cornici in mattoni, che veggonsi nel braccio sporgente della croce, due colonnine del secondo ordine di finestre, gli archi del timpano e le sporgenze di questo alle estremità: sporgenze che volli ripetute anco nella facciata. Alla parte inferiore di questo braccio sporgente, al fianco della cappella laterale dell'abside e a parte del fianco della navata sono presentemente addossati per l'altezza di 7 metri un edificio a due

piani per uso di sagrestia, e la cappella privata di S. Filomena. Queste appicciate costruzioni si demoliranno, sostituendo loro in quel modo che fu più sopra accennato. Tutto il braccio della croce va restaurato: chiuso il grande lunettone semicircolare moderno, scoperti i vecchi fori, rimesse le colonnine e le cornici, rivestita con nuova superficie di mattoni la muraglia. Così pure si dovrà rivestire tutto il fianco della cappella laterale dell'abside, ed aggiungervi le lesene arcuate e la lesena angolare; quanto poi al muro della navata, s'è già detto che dovrà essere demolito e ricostruito di nuovo.

Sopra la porta di questo fianco è dipinta in fondo d'oro una Madonna nell'atto di salire al cielo; S. Donato e S. Lorenzo pregano inginocchiati.

INTERNO.

Tutte le forme organiche, le colonne, gli archi, le finestre, i tetti sono riprodotti sui resti e sugli indizi antichi. — È antico il mosaico a fondo d'oro, che vedesi nel catino dell'abside e all'ingiro del suo arco. La Madonna in manto azzurro, e i fregi a pezzettini di vetro bianchi, neri, rossi ed azzurri, sono conservati perfettamente; qualche fenditura vedesi nell'aureo fondo, ma di lieve importanza.

Le pareti della chiesa saranno in tutta la loro superficie dipinte a fresco, col fondo giallo o di foglia d'oro. Gli ornamenti bizantini si eseguiranno al posto e al modo indicato dai disegni. Fra gli archi si rappresenteranno teste di cherubini: angeli sopra i pilastri: santi tra le bifore. Nell'ampio fregio, tra la cornicetta superiore agli archi e le finestre, si raffigurerà tutt'all'ingiro della chiesa in molti scompartimenti la vita di Maria Vergine, e ne' muri delle navate minori la vita di S. Donato. Nel vasto rettangolo che rimane sotto le cinque finestre del braccio sinistro, s'avrà spazio a una grande composizione, mostrandone l'Incoronazione e l'Assunzione di Maria Santissima; più su, porransi i quattro Evangelisti e i loro simboli. La porta che guida al battistero sarà annunciata da un fresco, rappresentante il battesimo di Gesù Cristo. Fra le finestre dell'abside dovranno porsi altre pitture: insomma tutte le pareti della chiesa s'abbelliranno di storie, condotte in istile rammentante, sebbene con più dotta e più elegante maniera, il bizantino. Queste composizioni murali sarà dato condurre un po' per volta; nè io nel preventivo fo cenno d'altro che dei dipinti ornamentali, lasciando di considerare la importantissima pittura figurativa: e ciò perchè la spesa di questa dipende intieramente dalla più o meno rinomanza dei pittori e dalle loro esigenze. Nel progetto mi accontentai di indicare solo qualche figura, non curandomi di riempire i vasti campi con le istorie colorate; e il feci per serbare più netta la linea architettonica, e lasciare piena libertà nelle composizioni a' pittori: libertà che dovrà peraltro docilmente servire all'unità dell'opera, al carattere dello stile, alle forme organiche dell'edificio.

Il tetto si ornerà con intrecciamenti geometrici, colorati a varie e vivaci tinte.

Gli altari, tutti rinnovati, come s'è detto, e composti nel modo bizantino, con tabernacoli sostenuti da colonne, si costruiranno in diversi marmi, e dipingeranno a varie tinte, dorandone i capitelli e alcuni altri ornamenti.

Tutte le finestre saranno chiuse da vetri bianchi rotondi, perchè le grandi pitture murali vogliano luce schietta, non alterata dai vetri a colori.

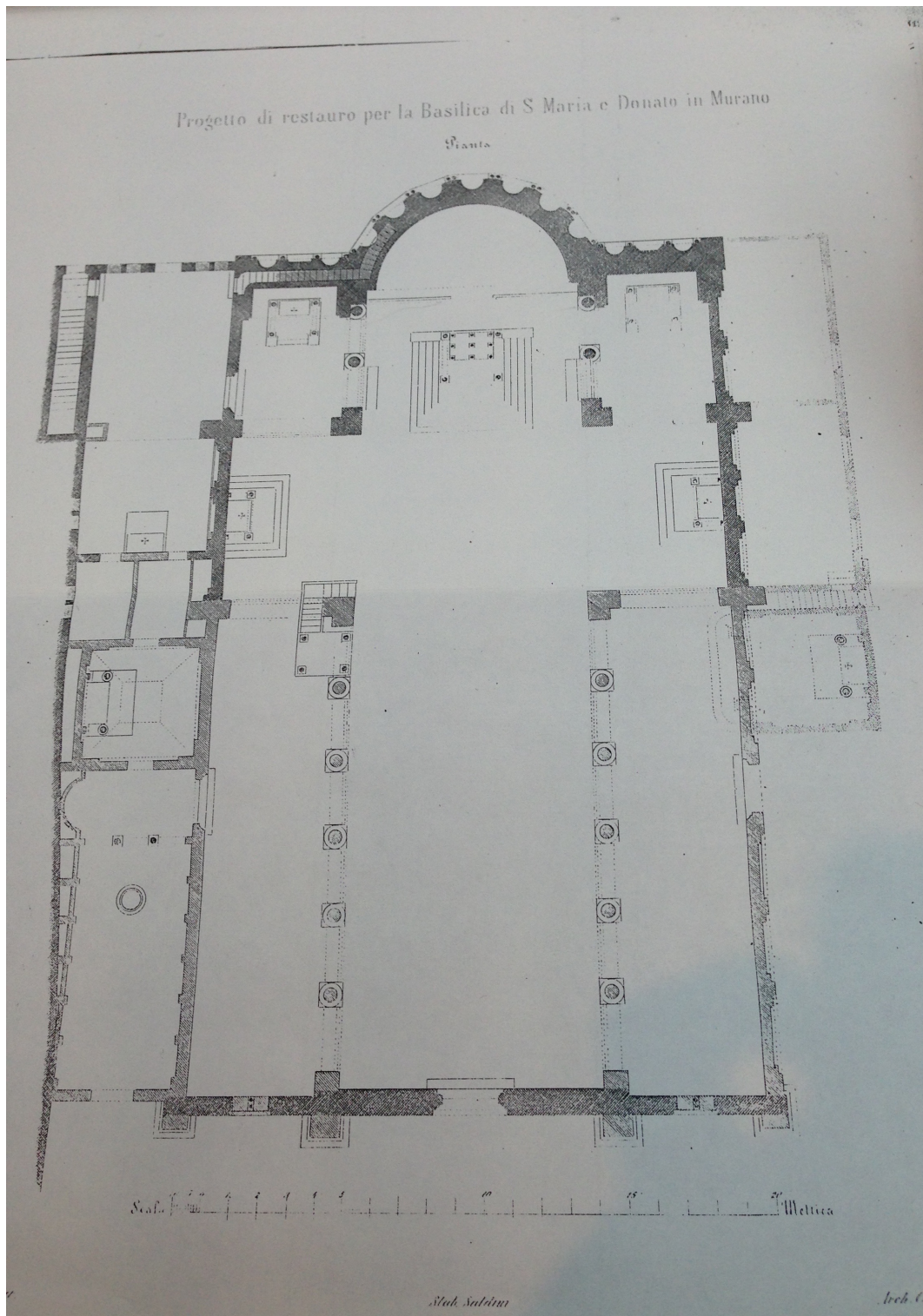
ABSIDE.

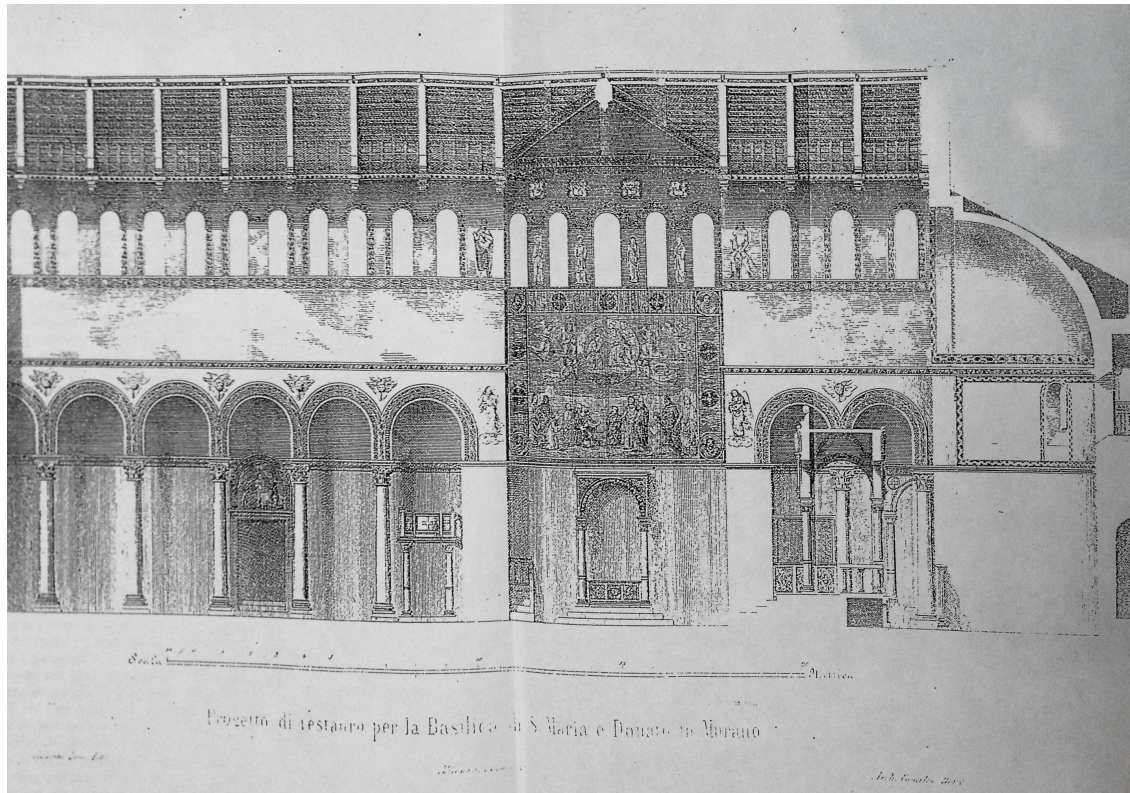
Non parvemi necessario un disegno che mostrasse il restauro di quest'abside; perchè ogni riparazione si restringe, come accennai più indietro, a rimutare alcuni mattoni dove sono troppo logori i vecchi, tagliandoli a martello dopo messi al posto; a collocare, dove mancano, le formelle triangolari di marmo greco nel fregio inferiore; a rimettere alquanto colonne in pietra, e colonnine della balaustrata; a chiudere il lunettone che dà ora luce alla cappella destra, e aprire sotto la loggia due finestre a questa ed all'altra cappella; a forare le tre finestre dell'abside. Inoltre converrà aprire nell'ala dove sta la scaletta che conduce alla loggia il foro adesso chiuso, per dare luce ad essa scala; converrà mutare del tutto il coperto piramidale dell'abside, essendo mal costruito e fradicio; finalmente converrà togliere l'intonaco al muro che sta sopra l'arco absidiale e riparare qua e là i danni. Tutti questi restauri dovranno essere fatti un po' alla volta, e da pochi valenti lavoratori. A ogni modo le riparazioni si dovranno restringere alle cose più necessarie, acciocchè la bellissima decorazione non perda il carattere suo proprio, e non sia scemata l'importanza archeologica.

Vuolsi sfuggire come profanazione stoltissima il pulire, il lavare, il rimodernare i monumenti dell'antichità; e pur troppo in questa profanazione stoltissima si cade spesso fra noi. Bisogna mettervi le mani solo quel tanto ch'è utile alla materiale conservazione di essi; ma rispettare conviene religiosamente ogni antica forma e irregolarità: rispettare ogni tinta, ogni macchia, di che il tempo — gran pittore e grande armonizzatore — colori l'edificio. Se in questa bellissima abside di Murano avesse col restauro a scemare l'artistica appariscenza e l'importanza archeologica, io consiglierei di lasciarla come al presente s'ammira.

(Estratto dal Giorn. dell'Ing.-Arch. ed Agron., anno IX.)

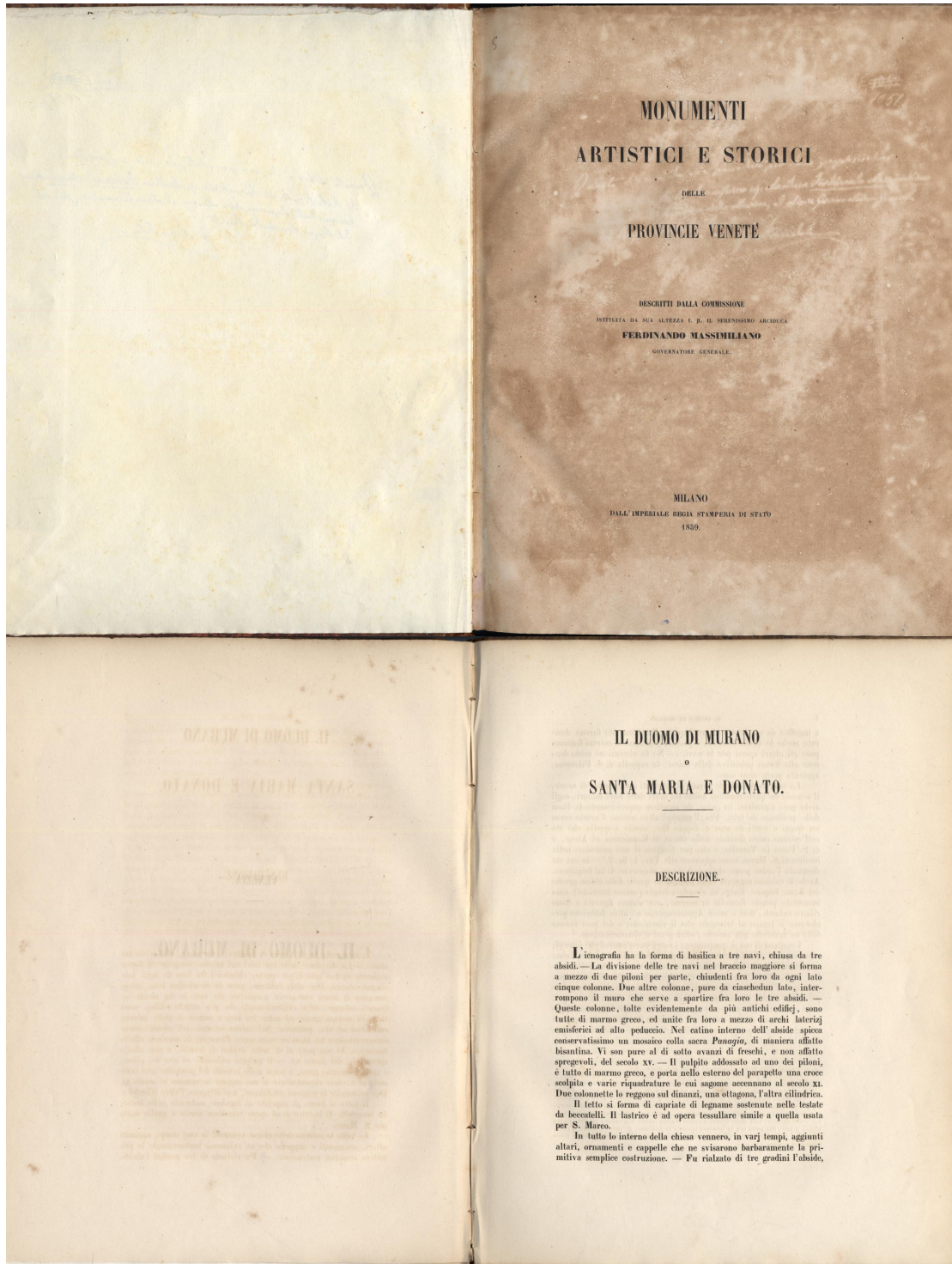








Appendix IV: Pietro Selvatico, Cesare Foucard. *Monumenti artistici e storici delle provincie venete. Descritti dalla Commissione istituita da Sua Altezza I. R. regio serenissimo arciduca Ferdinando Massimiliano, Governatore generale. Imperiale Regia Stamperia di Stato 1859. Si ringrazia il Museo Correr, Venezia.* / Pietro Selvatico, Cesare Foucard. *Artistic and historical monuments of the provinces in Veneto. Described by the commission established by His Royalty Archduke Ferdinand Maximilian, General Governor. Imperiale Regia Stamperia di Stato 1859. Courtesy of Museo Correr, Venice*



4 IL DUOMO DI MURANO.

e ingolfato da un brutto altare barocco. Barocamente furono decorate anche le absidi laterali, e pesanti montagne di marmo formano pure gli altari sparsi per le navate. — Né fu alterazione meno dannosa alla forma primitiva della chiesa, la cappella di S. Filomena, aggiunta pochi anni sono.

Lo esterno dell'abside consta di sette lati a due ordini di arcate, il secondo de' quali continua anche sui muri delle navate minori, cogli archi però degradanti in guisa, da segnare superiormente la linea delle pendenze de' tetti. Fra l'uno e l'altro ordine d'arcate corre un fregio a denti di sega a doppia fila, simile a quello che sta nell'esterno muro absidale della chiesa di Kapnikarea ad Atene, e di S. Foca in Tirolo, e che pur fregava il sito medesimo nella basilica di S. Marco, come apparisce alla Tav. I, fig. 2.^a (1) in cui sta disegnato l'unico pezzo che quivi ancora conservasi di tal fregiatura. Anche le colonne reggenti archi somigliano quelle delle chiese greche del Basso Impero. Entro al ricordato fregio (ordine inferiore) sono incrostate piccole farnesse in marmo, ove stanno figurati a basso rilievo animali, fiori e croci. Appartenevano ad altre fabbriche perchè non si legano al triangolo che li racchiude; e del pari furono tolti da fabbriche più antiche, altri pezzi d'ornamentazione.

I mattoni di cui si compongono i muri (tanto esterni che interni, come i piloni, sono per la maggior parte della stessa misura, forma e qualità di quelli adoperati nelle muraglie e nei piloni della basilica di S. Marco, cioè lunghi centimetri 30 su 24. Se ne vedono però qua e colà di molto maggiore dimensione, alcuni raggiungendo persino la misura di centimetri 47 su 31. — Nell'abside esterna poi, come nelle due ale ad arcate degradanti che la fiancheggiano, appaiono mattoni di due colori; gli uni molto rossastri, vennero posti a racchiudere la parte estradossale degli archi e a formare le fasce di divisione; gli altri giallistri servono al resto della murazione (2).

(1) Veggasi anche la tavola relativa alla basilica di S. Marco.
(2) E si veda la descrizione particolareggiata che dà il signor Ruskin nel suo bel libro *Stones of Venice* (V. tom. II pag. 48-49 Tav. V.) de' vari colori presentati da quest'abside esterne, tanto nei mattoni come nei muri, incrostate, come le farnesse (triglyphs), fregi, acroteridi, di marmo di diversi colori, alla cui sagoma sembra di fatto di quella pietra, glassa o d'oro, rivestiti in cui il conchietto alla prima del colore variabile che si trovava doveva compiere. — Tale sistema fu allora usato, in tutto o in parte, in una delle più antiche chiese, e si trova una tavola colorata d'oro degli archi dell'abside esterne, nella quale, secondo i colori giusti, secondo la provenienza dei mattoni, che non secondo il fatto, fece venire tale un abbellimento trascurato di pavoni, di verde, di rosso, di giallo, d'azzurro e di bianco, che quel che veniva usato, se si fosse modellato, se non inghiottito, quanto dimostrava l'armonia.

IL DUOMO DI MURANO.

5

STORIA.

L'epoca della erezione di questa chiesa viene fissata da alcuni cronisti colle seguenti notizie.

1.^a Che l'imperatore Ottone I, sorpreso da burrasca mentre guidava una flotta nell'Adriatico nell'anno 950, si propose di far edificare tre chiese se riusciva salvo da naufragio.

2.^a Che, essutisi i suoi voti, fece inalzare tre chiese: la prima *In palude Adriatici hic Murani, ad honorem Assumptionis B. V.*;

la seconda *In porta Parentino*;

la terza *In sepulchro Arsenie*.

3.^a Che per la consecrazione di quella di Murano (e di quella di Parenzo) l'imperatore Ottone invitò il pontefice Giovanni XII ad intervenire personalmente, ma questi non potendo recarsi sul luogo, ne diede incarico al patriarca di Grado *Buono* con sua lettera data in *Laterano il giorno XII delle calende di aprile, primo anno del suo pontificato*. — La consecrazione dicasi sia avvenuta il giorno 15 agosto dell'anno 957.

La critica storica non può accettare come autentiche queste notizie.

L'imperatore Ottone I non condusse forze militari per l'Adriatico né in quest'anno 950, né nei seguenti. Le cronache contemporanee ed i documenti editi dal Pertz (*Monumenta historica Ger-*

munie) ci danno molteplici prove del contrario. Abbandonando però l'epoca fissata al viaggio marittimo, e supposta vera l'intenzione dell'imperatore, con altre circostanze ed altri tempi, si esamini la bolla pontificia. Quattro fatti storici accennati in quel documento dovrebbero concordare tra loro: il titolo d'imperatore dato ad Ottone, il nome del pontefice, il nome del patriarca di Grado e l'anno del pontificato di papa Giovanni XII. Questi fu difatti papa dall'anno 956 al 964, e il primo anno del pontificato corrisponde al 957; e Buono era patriarca di Grado sin dal 954; questa coincidenza di date non regge però coll'anno nel quale Ottone fu incoronato imperatore, perchè ciò seguiva soltanto nel 962.

La bolla *mutanda* che contiene le stesse parole e la medesima data, ed ordina la consecrazione della chiesa di Parenzo al patriarca d'Aquileja Rodolfo, fu già tenuta falsa dall'Ughelli (*Italia sacra*, vol. V, pag. 395), dal Corner (*Ecclesia Torcellana*, p. II, pag. 49 e seg.), e dal De Rubis (*Eccles. Aquil. tom. V, col. 46*). Per emendare tali errori cronologici, alcuni scrittori supposero che l'imperatore fosse passato per l'Adriatico nell'anno 961, onde recarsi a Roma per ricevere l'incoronazione, e che il pontefice, il quale diede l'incarico di consacrarlo, sia stato Giovanni XIII nel primo anno del suo pontificato, cioè nel 966; ma questi scrittori dimenticavano che per quella di Murano, il nome di Buono patriarca di Grado, non poteva esservi inserito perchè morto sin dall'anno 963.

Sarebbe più facile concordare le date ed i fatti storici col supporre un errore di lettura nell'anno del pontificato di Giovanni XII; ed ammetto che fosse *settimo* invece che *primo*, combinierebbe anche con quelli la frase della bolla « *accensus ad presentiam nostram Otto romanorum imperator* ». La mancanza della bolla originale non permette tale esame paleografico. — Manca pure la minuta nell'Archivio Vaticano ¹¹.

L'inverosimile di tali notizie fu causa che nel secolo XVI, e precisamente nell'anno 1580 ¹², fosse composta un'iscrizione collocata poi nel pilastro sinistro della cappella maggiore, con queste parole:

(1) *Ultimo manuscritto*, perchè lo stato dell'antica archivio generale di Venezia, non ha permesso finora di constatare l'esistenza. Più è da notare che la data di lungo è sempre indicata nelle lettere Pontificie prima del 964, e solo per: *Ad presentiam* o *in palatio Lateranensi*, non in *Laterano* (v. *Adriaticum Pontificum*, Brescia, 1851).

(2) Documento esistente nel *Registro Specie*. — Archivia della chiesa — pagamento all'artista che scolpì l'iscrizione.

« D. O. M. In honorem Assumptionis B. M. Virginis Helia » Patriarca Gradensis Ecclesiam hanc conservavit, ex commissione » SS. DD. N. Joannis Divina Providentia XII, et ad preces Cesaris » ree Maiestatis Ottonis III, anno reparate salutis 993, die 15 augusti. »

Ma Elia I, fondatore della metropolitana di Grado, fu patriarca nel VI secolo, ed un Elia II, ometto dagli storici, ma della cui esistenza dà fede una sottoscrizione ad un decreto ducale, fu patriarca dall'anno 854 all'856. Giovanni XII papa era morto sin dall'anno 964, e supposto anche che si possa sostituirvi Giovanni XVI l'antipapa, per concordare la data 998, epoca della consecrazione per ordine di Ottone III imperatore, resterebbe provata l'erroneità del patriarcato di Grado in Elia nell'anno indicato dalla iscrizione.

I documenti della chiesa e una dissertazione inedita del prete Matteo Fanello (parroco della chiesa di S. Salvatore di Murano scritta nel 1818) non danno altre prove certe da sostituire a quelle dei cronisti visiti dopo il secolo XV, relativamente alla erezione di questa cattedrale. Un documento dell'anno 999 (conservato nell'Archivio di quella chiesa e già edito dal Corner) ci assicura ch'essa esisteva qualche anno prima, perchè il pievano (Michele Manterio) nell'atto di giurare fedeltà al suo ufficio ecclesiastico, dinanzi al vescovo di Torcello, promette d'imitare in ciò i suoi predecessori.

Questa chiesa che portava il titolo di basilica di Murano dedicata a S. Maria Assunta, ebbe in aggiunta quello di S. Donato dopo l'anno 1125, quando Domenico Michiel doge di Venezia, tornando dalla crociata, fece deporre in detta chiesa le ossa di quel santo, levate dall'isola di Cefalonia.

La iscrizione composta a circolo nel mezzo del pavimento a mosaico « IN NOMINE DOMINI NOSTRI JESU CRISTI » ANNO DOMINI MCXL PRIMO MENSIS SEPTEMBRIS INDICITIONE V » ci ricorda la fine di quell'opera tessellare; e forse questo fu l'ultimo lavoro di abbellimento fatto alla chiesa.

Senza fermare l'attenzione sull'epoca storica di quelle opere di mosaico, di scultura in pietra ed in legno, e su quelle di pittura che sono infisse nei muri di questa chiesa o furono trasportate in altro luogo, per le minime di rovina, giova ricordare che dinanzi alla porta maggiore esisteva il battistero, forse simile a quello della cattedrale di Torcello. Se non abbiamo un disegno della sua forma, sappiamo nondimeno dal Corner (*Eccles. Torcel.*, p. II, pag. 56) che quell'antico sacello sorgeva nella sua parte interna sopra un ordine di colonne, ed in mezzo vi stava l'urna battesimale che ora conservasi

nella sagrestia con questa iscrizione, la quale mostra come quella pietra avesse servito prima ad uso sepolcrale nell'epoca del paganesimo.

L. ACILIVS PESCA
DECVRIO SIBI ET P. ACILIO M. V. F.
PATRI SEXTILIAE SAENI MATRI
P. ACILIO P. F. FRATRI

INFR. PED. CXX.
RETR. PED. CXX.

Quel battistero fu demolito nell'anno 1719, improvvisamente il Corner, si quidem ornatus et permanenti suae matriculatae testimonio Ecclesia orbatu fuit.

Sino al 1699 esisteva pure nella chiesa di S. Maria e S. Donato, una pala d'altare argentea; ed altra a simiglianza di quella di S. Marco ne possedeva la chiesa di Parenzo saccheggiata. Considerando forse lo stato di deterioramento e la difficoltà di ristaurarla nella prima forma, fu trovato più utile di venderne il metallo che diede la somma di lire 2000 come risulta dagli atti di quell'Archivio.

Sopra un fidele di marmo infisso nello esterno dell'abside leggesi questa iscrizione scolpita a caratteri precedenti il X secolo.

T. SCE MARIE DE GENETRICIS ET BEATI ESTEFANI MARTIRI EGO
INDIGNUS ET PECCATOR DOMINICVS T....

Non è inverosimile che tale iscrizione appartenesse alla vicina isola di Mazono, *Mauricium*, o al lido dei tre porti che ingiacciati dall'aque nel secolo X, costrinsero gli abitanti a riuoverare a Murano ed a Burano. È possibile che questo ed altri simili marmi siano adoperati nella costruzione della basilica di Murano, perchè in nessun tempo, e meno nel X secolo i marmi degli edifici abbandonati si lasciarono perire, ma si impiegarono a nuove costruzioni. L'iscrizione su riportata allude forse a Domenico vescovo di Torcello vissuto verso la metà del IX secolo, secondo la cronaca del Canale.

Dopo il secolo XV furono aggiunti nella chiesa i seguenti altari ai presbiteri, nella cappella maggiore e nelle due laterali: 1.° a s. Rocco, 2.° a varie reliquie, 3.° a s. Lorenzo, 4.° all'Assunta, 5.° a s. Filomena ed il 6.° a s. Vincenzo.

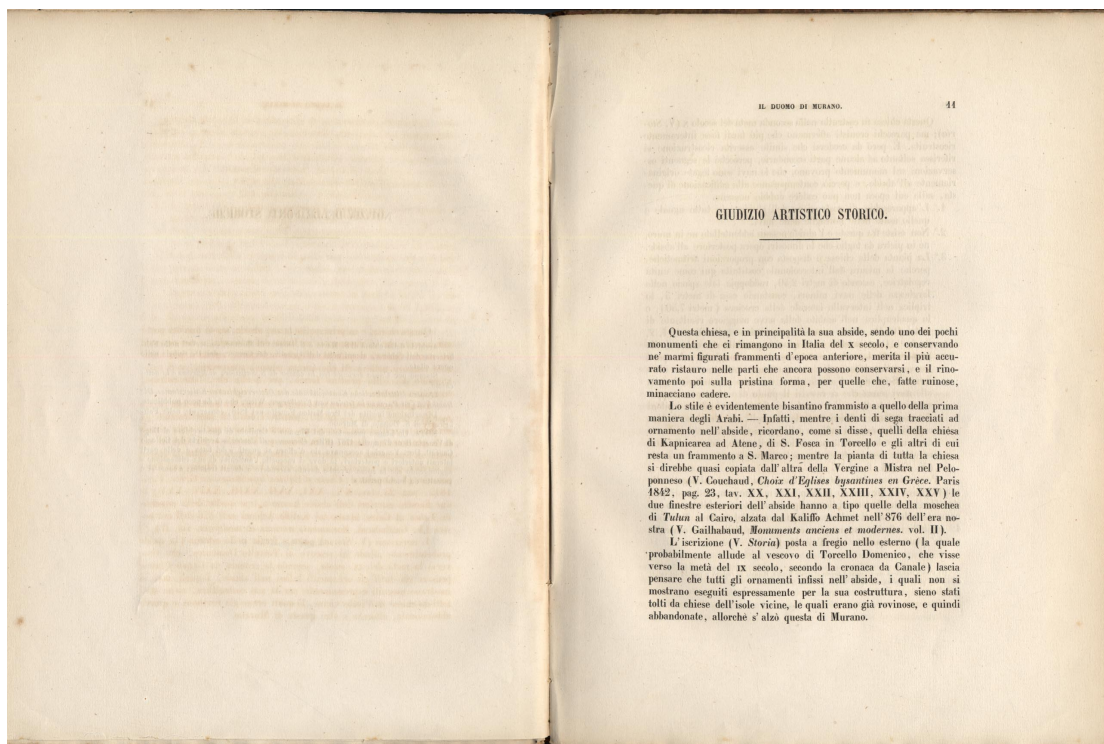
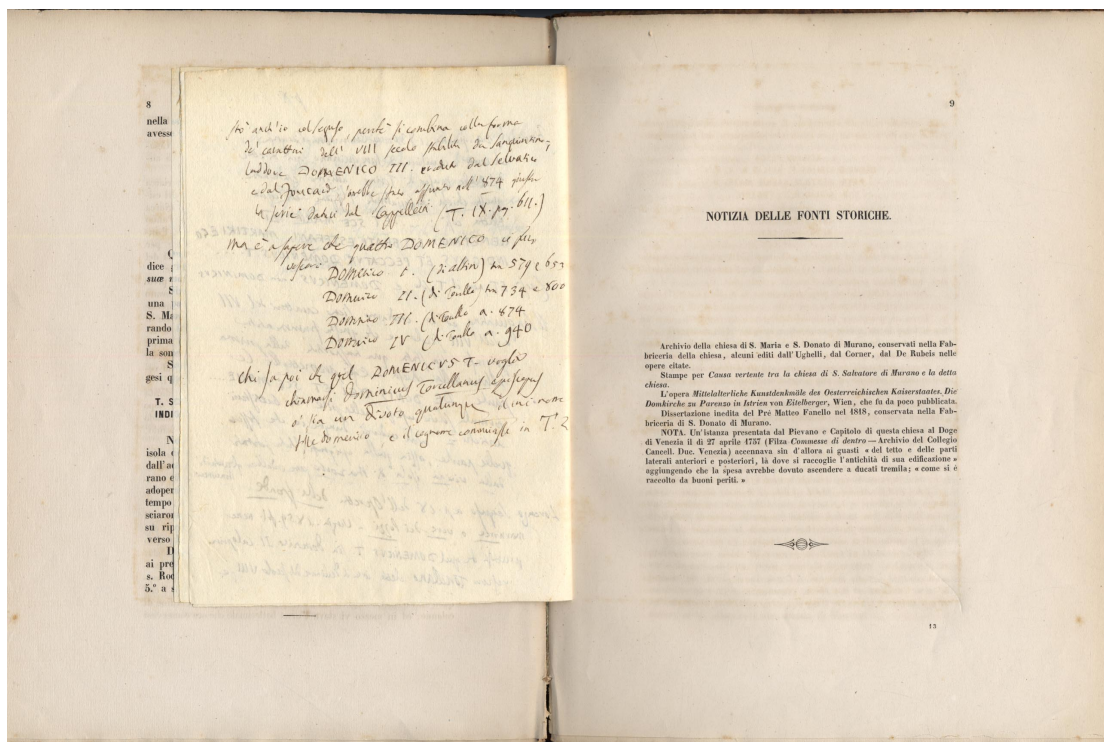
Nota ap. S. *Memoriale* *antico* e *l'unico* delle
primarie *vecchie* - *Isola* 1879.

La epigrafe L. ACILIVS C. *epigrafe* *antico* *indifferente* :
nel *lato* *colonna* e *epigrafe* *antico* *negli* *altari* :
La *colonna* *proprio* *l'epigrafe* *antico* *antico* :
Se un *lato* *ad una* *vece* *pioggia* :

L. ACILIVS. P. F. SCA
DECVRIO SIBI ET
P. ACILIO. M. V. F. PATRI
SEXTILIAE. SAENI. F. MATRI
P. ACILIO P. F. FRATRI
INFR. PED. CXX. RETR. PED. CXX

Nell'altro lato dell'altare *pietra* *l'epigrafe* *in*
l'epigrafe *antico* *ma* *mutata* *nell'altro*
e *nell'altro* : *colonna*

DECVRIO. SIBI ET
P. ACILIO. M. V. F. PATRI
SEXTILIAE. SAENI. F. MATRI
P. ACILIO P. F. FRATRI



Questa chiesa fu costruita nella seconda metà del secolo x (V. Storia); una parecchi cronisti affermano che più tardi fosse interamente ricostruita. È però da credersi che simile asserita ricostruzione si riferisca soltanto ad alcune parti secondarie, perocché le seguenti osservazioni sul monumento provano, che le navi sono legate originariamente all'abside, e perciò contemporanee alla edificazione di questa, sulla cui epoca non può cadere dubbio nessuno.

- 1.^a L'apparecchio di costruzione dell'abside è in tutto uguale a quello usato nelle muraglie delle navi.
- 2.^a Non esiste fra queste e l'abside nessun addentellato né in muro, né in pietra da taglio che le dimostri opera posteriore all'abside.
- 3.^a La pianta della chiesa è disposta con proporzioni aritmetiche, perché la misura dell'intercolonnio costituita qui come unità regolatrice, essendo di metri 2,50, raddoppia tale spazio nella larghezza delle navi minori, costando essa di metri 5, lo triplica nell'intervallo laterale della crociera (metri 7,50), e lo quadruplica nell'ambito della nave maggiore risultante di metri 10. Da ciò ne viene la progressione aritmetica di 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. Ora, sarebbe stato quasi impossibile rinvenire simile proporzione legando, come ora stanno congiunte, le parti nuove della chiesa colle anteriormente costruite, sotto altra forma. Se dunque l'abside che si vorrebbe più antica, è unita alle navi senza che si ravvisi il punto di unione; se l'apparecchio costruttivo n'è uguale; se finalmente i muri e i piloni fiancheggianti l'abside centrale, e quelli che chiudono le due cappelle laterali, si infilano coll'organismo delle navi in modo da formare la precitata proporzione aritmetica, ne esce che navi ed abside sieno state erette contemporaneamente, nel x secolo (V. Tav. I, fig. 1.^a).

Parechi però dei capitelli di quest'abside son così legati alla sua struttura da far credere si scolpissero nel tempo medesimo di questa; donde sono da tenersi sicuro tipo del carattere architettonico ornamentale che usavasi in Venezia dopo la metà del secolo x. Tali sono 12 capitelli infissi a sostenere le arcate esterne dell'abside centrale, un de' quali è riportato alla Tav. II, fig. 5.^a

(1) Questa leggenda inserzione è dovuta al signor Raskin, il quale la replicò a pag. 26 del vol. II della città veneziana sua opera *Sketches of Venice*.

STATO DI CONSERVAZIONE.

La muratura dell'abside è abbastanza solida, e non presenta lesioni gravi. Solo mostransi in pessima condizione gli ornamenti marmorei e laterizi che ne fregiano lo esterno. — Molte delle colonnette sono e smosse e logore; parecchi capitelli stanno per cadere, i fregi scolpiti appaiono staccati dal muro. — Vuoti di fresa data annunciano poi che alcuni d'essi o cadde o furono involati, forse per farne traffico co' forestieri.

Le tre navi che si congiungono all'abside sono affatto ruinate e minacciano di cadere. Ecco i guasti ch'esse presentano, e che rendono indispensabile la loro demolizione.

- a) Tutte le muraglie manifestano, dall'alto al basso, larghissime fenditure.
- b) I punti di legame agli angoli sono sfasciati.
- c) Il muro di divisione a sinistra di chi entra, strapiomba di 60 centimetri verso mezzodi; ed egualmente strapiomba, dalla stessa parte il muro d'ambito pure a sinistra.
- d) De' piloni uno solo conserva intatta la sua muratura.
- e) Le colonne delle navi strapiombano pure verso mezzodi.

In conseguenza la fabbrica è scomposta nella sua essenza generale, e tende a rovesciarsi verso mezzogiorno. — Essa crumble indubbiamente, se non fosse rettenuta dal muro d'ambito a destra di chi entra, ch'è ancora basevolmente conservato, e dalle capriate del tetto, le quali essendo per la maggior parte ancor solide e ben unite, servono a rettere congiunti i muri e ad impedirne lo sfasciamento.

Le cause di sì considerevole guasto sono da attribuirsi od alla fondazione poco solida sotto i muri delle tre navi, o, più probabilmente, agli enormi lunettoni che nel secolo xvii furono aperti a mezzogiorno, nella parte superiore del muro della nave mediana. — Quei lunettoni, spezzando la coerenza delle muraglie, crebbero colle aperture trasognanti ad arco semicircolare, le spinte sui pini dei muri d'ambito, e ne ajutarono il danno, già preparato dalla spinta delle incavallature del tetto. Gli sforzi però di queste esercitati contro le muraglie, non sarebbero mai bastati a produrre spostamenti radicali, senza quei malagurati lunettoni.

PROPOSTE PER LA CONSERVAZIONE E CUSTODIA.

Nello stato in cui sono le muraglie fiancheggianti le navi e i piloni interni, sarebbe impossibile pensare a nessuna riparazione delle medesime. — Quando pure si giungesse, con grandissimo dispendio e tempo ad incatenare le une o gli altri con grosse catene imbutellate da grappe e chiavardie, ancora non si potrebbero togliere gli strapiombi e lo indebolimento superiore del muro. Questi due fatti permanenti basterebbero per cagionare, da qui a non molto, gli stessi danni attuali. Poi, anche ammesso che una simile operazione si potesse eseguire con qualche probabilità di rassodamento durevole, essa finirebbe a costar poco meno della intera rifabbrica, senza ottenere che un mezzo scopo, perocché la causa del guasto rimanendo sempre, ne verrebbe che all'accidentale spezzamento od ossidazione di una catena di ferro, si dovessero rinovare le riparazioni.

Convien dunque, a parer nostro demolir tutta la parte guasta fino al muro absidale, e poi ricostruire le tre navi esattamente con nuova muratura, nello stato primitivo in cui esser doveano al momento della loro costruzione. — Ciò non è difficile ad ottenersi perchè su tutta la loro osatura appaiono manifesti i segni della primitiva costruzione. Onde ottenere con sicurezza simile intento, convien procedere nel modo seguente:

- 1.^a Bisogna fare un rilievo altissimo, si dentro che fuori dello stato attuale delle tre navi nella osatura pur primordiale, tracciando diligentemente le bifore e i trifori che si vedono

NB. Le colonne di questa cappella come quelle dei quattro altari che furono aggiunti nelle età della decadenza, possono computarsi a diffealo della spesa, poichè esse colonne sono impellicciate di bei marmi; come lo son pure le mensole.

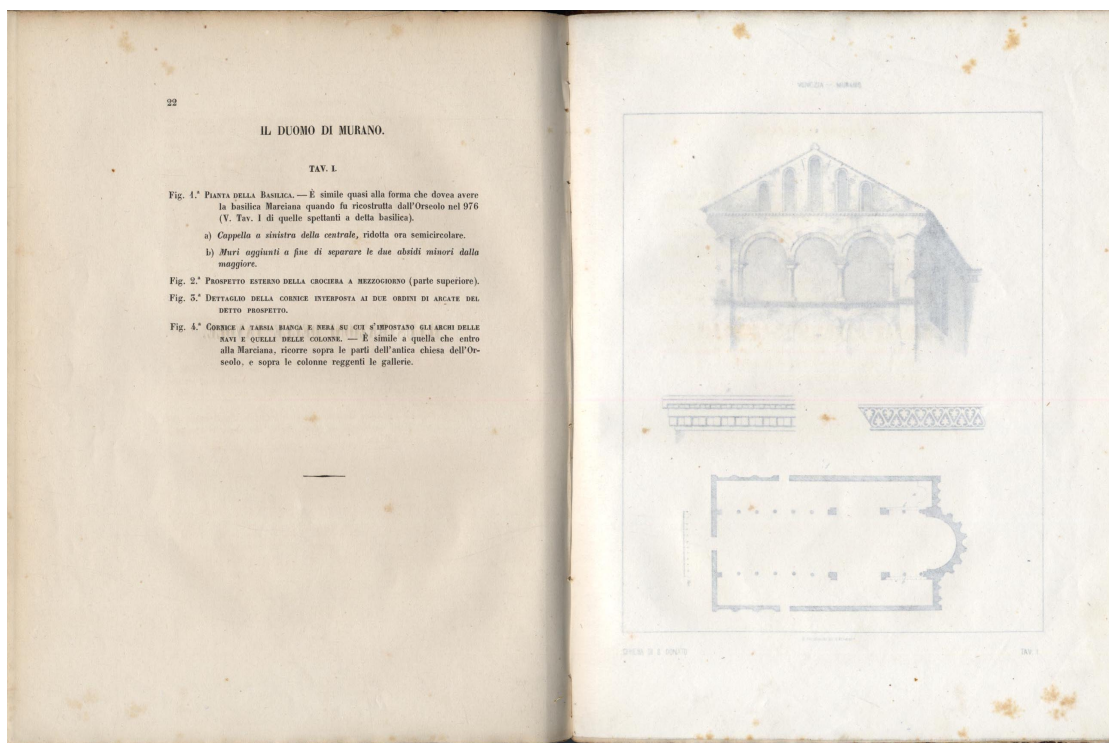
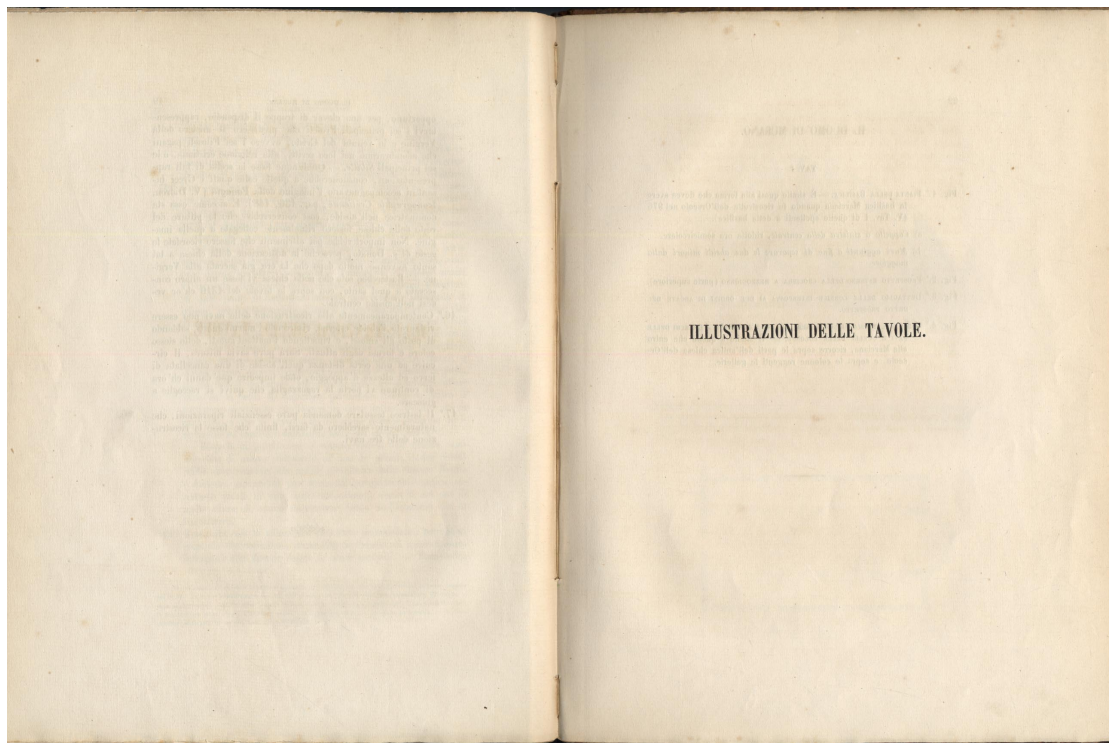
(2) A fine di risparmiare denaro in particolare nei punti, e poter salvare quasi bellissime, e per quanto appaiono saldaissime costruite, potrebbero tentare la ricostruzione delle muraglie senza batterie del tutto, cioè ricostruendole parte a parte, finché si giunga alla metà delle due cospiranti. Ma l'ansia di ottenere un simile risultato di riabilitamento, si fa inesorabile e conduce ben dilunghe le fondazioni, ove per ogni estero si deve conquistare che siano avvertite le loro parti, e che si possa realizzare la loro ricostruzione. Per questo, si propone la ricostruzione generale e parziale del tutto, e si vuol realizzare la ricostruzione proposta le mura laterali che reggono quei tetti (mura ora spottate dalla perpendicolare di circa 6,70) possono le riferire tutte, possono scendere, perché egli è certo che lo straripamento delle muraglie tra i cavalletti del rammentato tetto, a seguito di movimenti. L'occasione dei mari non deve che dovrebbe finire. In conseguenza di ciò sarebbe da evitare l'attuale progetto, inaccettabile di finire il progetto per il ritorno della chiesa, a più tardi, nell'ordine seguente: assestare.

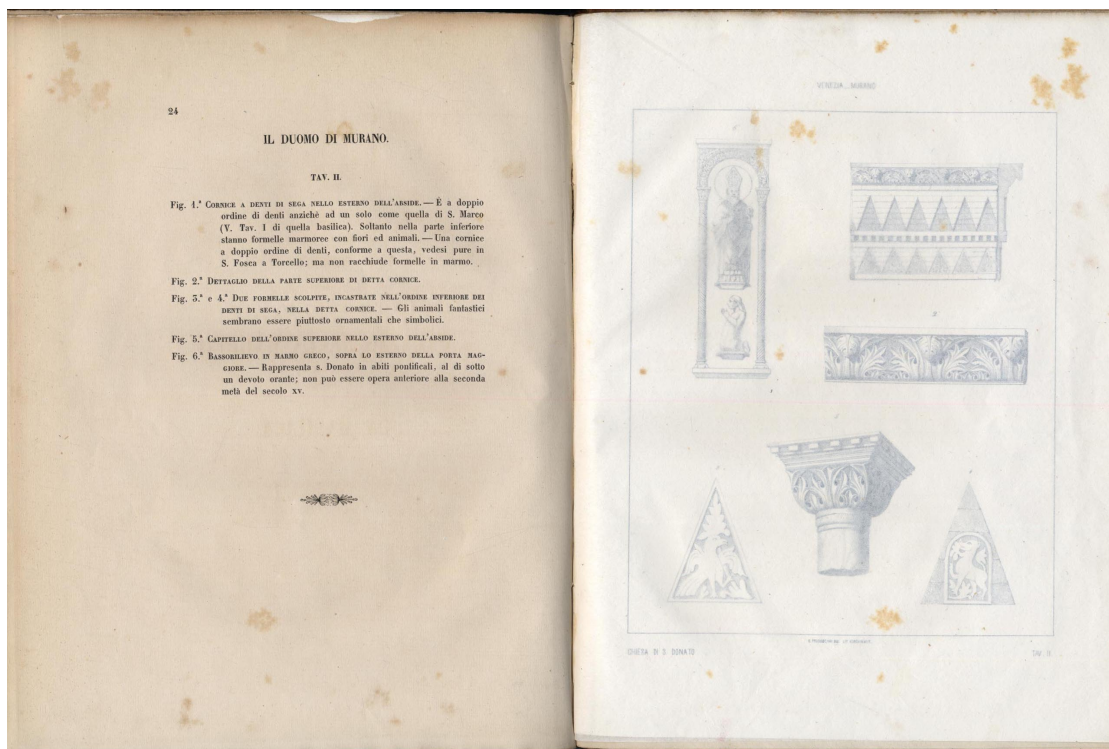
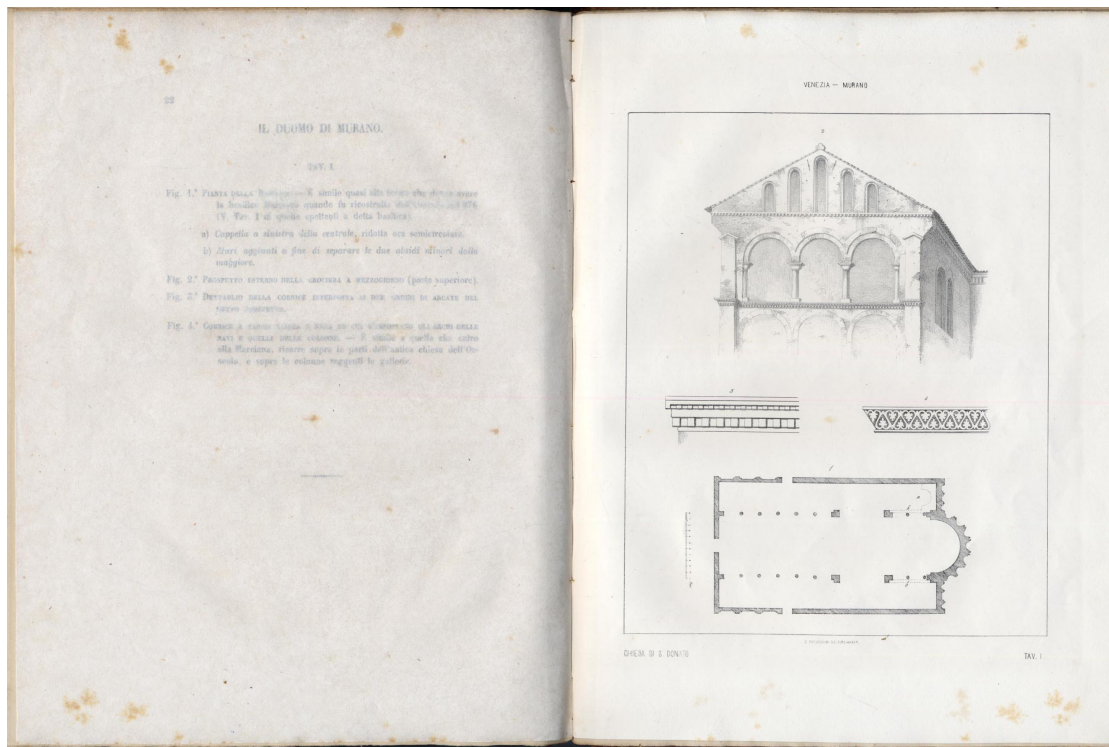
129 Il tetto si riccia colle capriate attuali, e queste si lascino visibili senza aggiungere volte finte. La chiesa fu sempre a tetto di legname visibile, perchè nei muri non si rinvennero nè imposte, nè intacchi di volte. — Di più, sendovi nel tetto attuale bellissimi beccatelli modinati, forse del secolo xv, questi giova conservare, e perchè sono bella e ragionevole decorazione, e perchè simile maniera di tetto è ora rarissima in Venezia.

43.* Compiuta l'opera si dipingano le travi a tinta azzurra aggiungendovi, con geometrica ordinanza, stelle d'oro, come nelle

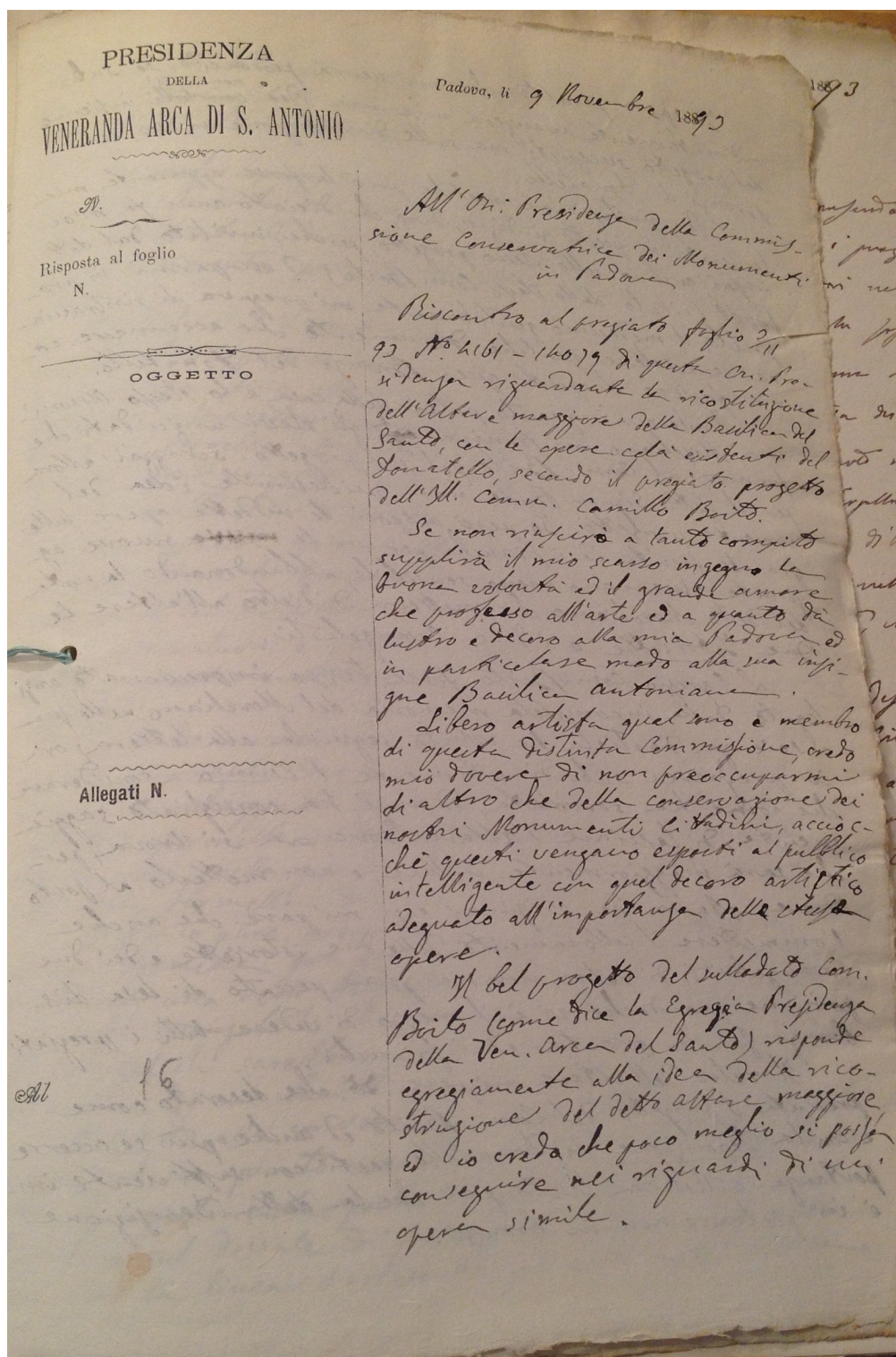
15.^o Restituita così la chiesa nel suo stato primordiale, potrebbesi renderla decorosissima, ornandola di freschi sui pezzi di muro interposti alle finestre sopra la nave centrale. — Tornerebbe

(1) Se fosse trovata severamente dispendiosa l'aggiunta del nartice, potrebbe collocar l'organo nel centro del muro semicircolare interno dell'abside; ma per far ciò senza ingombrare di troppo il vano di essa abside, converrebbe portare innanzi l'altare maggiore, di guisa che il suo prospetto stesse in linea co' due piloni i quali limitano l'abside nella pseudocrociera. — La vasca battenteina, in tal caso, starebbe addossata ad un dei muri di quest'ultima.





Appendix V: Letter by the sculptor Luigi Ceccon to the Commission of the Veneranda Arca, November 9th 1893



Io spero peraltro che mi verrà perdonato, se subordinatamente avrò avanzato una mia ^{non sulla} ~~idea~~ ^{idea} con tutti i ^{infern} ~~del~~ progetto susseguente, ma sulla distribuzione in esso dei Bronzi di Donatello.

Per giustificare qualche poco la forse apparente temerità in questo giudizio, dirò, che d'cio 50 anni fa occupai anch'io dello stesso progetto, perché, invitato dal dott. Bode (citato dallo stesso Com. Boito) ad occuparmi in proposito, il medesimo gentilmente mi pregava di rintracciare se esistesse qualche documento che accennasse come fossero disposti quei Bronzi del Donatello.

M'interessai quanto potei della cosa, e lo stesso Onor. mo Morelliano mi forniva ~~gli~~ ^{gli} stessi unici dati che forniva al Com. Boito pel suo progetto. Schizzai allora per il detto Signor Bode una quindicesima idea del presente progetto. Io però dispo di vedute opere tutte fra la fronte ed i fianchi per cui le ~~nuove~~ ^{nuove} nuove aggiunte riuscivano meno sensibili, abbandonando la nota del V. Morelliano che metteva di dietro all'altare le due Storiette e i due Evangelisti.

L'Egregio Com. Boito forse troppo impressionato, angeliato dalla incompleta memoria del Morelliano, nella sua coscienza d'artista ha voluto seguirlo alla lettera, ora io preferisco subordinatamente l'Esimio a considerare che come ha osservato, l'angi ha consigliato saggiamente, di lasciare l'altare dove ora si trova, per che sarà maggiormente in luce, e non metterlo al posto dove stava in origine, così mi pare che anche l'ommettere il collocamento delle due storiette e dei due Evangelisti, di retro, non sia gran peccato di lesa disposizione quando che vi è il mezzo di vedere tutti i pregiati Bronzi fra la fronte ed i fianchi.

Il retro dell'altare mi pare ~~che~~ ^{che} decorato come presenta il progetto del Com. Boito, e anche più se occorre e con la separazione di Donatello resti con sufficiente importanza artistica tanto più che la detta separazione è in pietra e non in bronzo.

allora le nuove aggiunte (come disse) sarebbero men-
 visibili, e ridotti alla sola incastatura (come accen-
 nell'Aut. VIII il Comm. Boito nella sua splendida rela-
 zione.
 Per meglio spiegare il mio assunto mi permetto pre-
 sentare gli uniti due schizzi copiati dal progetto Boito,
 solo modificata la distribuzione delle suddette opere,
 e ingrandimento parziale secondo la mia subordinata
 idea.
 L'artistico e il poetico pensiero del Comm. Boito, che
 quei bambini passino dal pianto al canto al flebile suono
 e rumoroso fino alla danza nulla verrebbe tolto alla pie-
 tissima interpretazione perché la distribuzione dei singoli
 bambini verrebbe attuata secondo il suo sentiero vale a
 dire in gradazione di sentimento ponendo ultimi ai
 pianti quelli che danzano.
 Quel grande basamento che forma lesena alla men-
 sa nell'altare lo troverei troppo nudo contrariamente
 alle opere del Donatello, il quale ornava forse di soverchio
 modanatura e perfino i ripari, ma questi ornamenti
 erano sapientemente eseguiti che non distruggevano mai
 l'effetto.
 Portando invece, come vedete, nel mio schizzo, tutti
 questi i miracoli, due a fianco del Ciborio e due nelle
 mensole fiancheggiati dai detti bambini e inquadrati
 nelle loro formelle si dovrebbe ingrandire un poco la
 mensa così quella grande lesena si ridurrebbe nella fronte
 alla sola formella di uno dei bambini.
 Il piano pure, presenta tre di quelle balaustre unite
 a una formella fra esse con un bambino, io invece
 ometterei una delle balaustre e in quello spazio metterei
 uno degli Evangelisti che doveva andare di retro, così
 gli Evangelisti sarebbero vicini due a due divisi dalle
 formelle di un bambino nella depen-
 denza.
 Riguardo alla convenienza della collocazione dei mi-
 racoli pel suo punto visuale più alto o più basso, lo si
 ottiene egualmente, portando quello della mela e del
 bambino sul dossale di fianco al Ciborio, e gli altri
 due con la linea d'orizzonte più alta nella Mensa.

Il ~~primo~~ piccolo ingrandimento del dorsale e della mena gioverà il primo per avere più spazio per sei candelabri di rito, il secondo per bisogno delle grandi funzioni.

Spero che i miei Egregi Colleghi, se troveranno giuste le mie osservazioni mi aiuteranno a pregare il Comm. Boito a convenire della opportunità della detta distribuzione per rendere più unite le dette opere con la sola aggiunta della parte architettonica.

Prego gli Onorandi miei Colleghi a considerare che ciò che esponi è il semplice mio pensiero senza ombra di preconcetto e senza avere la pretesa di voler correggere un'artista valentissimo che molto io stimo, e una prova della mia alta considerazione per un artista che tanto si eleva, io credo di darle nell'avere coraggiosamente esposto il mio pensiero sicuro che esso verrà interpretato dal medesimo coll'abituale sua elevatezza di cuore e di mente, senz'ombra di sospetto che io tanto unite abbia avuto la pretesa di voler comparire suo eguale con la mia opera.

f.^o Prof. Luigi Ceccon
Membro della Comm. Conservatrice dei
Monumenti in Padova

Per Copia conforme
Il Presidente
[Signature]

End.