

A metodologia do projecto de restauro em Itália:
aproximação metodológica ao contexto nacional

Maria Beatriz de Vilhena

Dissertação para obtenção do grau de Mestre em Arquitectura com orientação de
Professor Doutor José Maria Lobo de Carvalho

volume I/III Dissertação

volume II/III Anexos

volume III/III Extended Abstract

Extended Abstract

A master thesis implies a long process, aimed to express your questions along the years of learning. From the motivation of attending the University of Ferrara for one year and developing a project within the Restoration of Monuments course, *Laboratorio di restauro dei monumenti*, the method applied by the teacher Riccardo Dalla Negra, raised the question of the extrapolation of this process to another context.

Motivated by the supposed inexistence of a restoration method applied to the academic panorama, in a national context, the investigation aims to discover a spontaneous attitude, towards the historic heritage, through contemporary interventions in historic context. The investigation used the logic structure of the Italian method to design an analytic system aimed to understand the interventions through the study of the historic *object*, the *method* applied, and the *architecture* result, through its intervention, the architect.

The logic structure of the thesis is thereby divided in three moments. The first moment is the description of the method proclaimed by Dalla Negra, and applied in the *Laboratorio di restauro dei monumenti*, through its theory, methodological principles and the parallelism with the project designed during the course. The second moment is the design of a logic system, structured in analogy to the Italian method *object – method – architecture*, and built according to the principles of the restoration theory and the heritage charters. The third moment is testing the designed system, and applying its analysis to the national context, through a sample of selected works.

The first chapter refers to the Italian school of restoration through Ferrara's case. With a wide theoretical base, and through the influence of its interventions, the method pursued in the University of Ferrara, through Dalla Negra's work and theory, implies the long study of restoration theory, and therefore, the thesis contextualizes the case within the Italian and international paradigmatic essays.

Ferrara and the Italian school of restoration

The method presents itself not as a method for restoration, but a method to understand restoration.¹ Thought history is important, so is architecture, meaning the main importance of the academic process of restoration is giving the tools necessary for its main intervention, the architect. The process has a chronological logic for understanding the historic object, which is its historic research and hypothetical chronological evolution. The object in case is Palazzo Tassoni, located in Ferrara and belonging to the architecture campus, which provided a work *in situ*, and the evaluation of its adaptation to academic purposes.

Parallel to the historical research, the understanding of the typological order of the building, its constructive system and the architectural form, translates into the architectural survey, and the consequent architectural drawings. Aiming

to provide more detail to the survey, the cross-reference process with rectified photography, should provide the necessary detail to extrapolate the architecture knowledge of the object.

The evaluation of the state of conservation is done in two moments: the first one is the *stato di fatto* and the second one is the building pathology analysis. The *stato di fatto* is a trademark of this method, believed obsolete in other restoration doctrines, which means the profound knowledge of every detail, crack, anomaly or pathology through its extensive design over the architectural prospects, representing all the complexity that the rectified photography could not bring. The building pathology analysis is determined according to the *stato di fatto*, and through the constructive comprehension of the elements, cross-referencing building materials, its deterioration issues, and the solutions, according to the UNI-Normal 11182 regulation.² The restoration project starts here, with the *stato di progetto*, responding directly to the problems encountered, revealing an approach to the intervention from the detail to the architecture.

The architectural project responds directly to the typological logic of the building, and its ability to transform from heritage *ruin* to functioning building. The analysis of the compatibility of functions, *vocazioni d'uso*, is done according to the value of each space, its limitations, and its historic value. Depending on that analysis, the project is designed from the functional structure to the formal thinking, allowing, however, contemporary approaches where is pertinent, and maintaining an interventional philosophy in continuity with the restoration recommendations.

Process of methodological analysis

An approximation to a scientific analysis presupposes the enumeration of its qualifying parameters. The set of these parameters will guide a critical and objective reading of a contemporary intervention method in historic buildings of heritage interest, investigated in a certain context. The concepts assigned to this theme will be debated according to their influence on the defined parameters. The definition of these parameters seeks to approach the themes debated, in a general and universal picture of what is considered to be the fundamental concepts when dealing with the problem of architectural intervention in historical context.

Object analysis

In analogy to the methodological system described, it is proposed an approach to a scientific analysis process, through a triad of concepts, depicting the *object*, the *method* and the *architecture* of an intervention in historic context. The relation between the object and the intervention, under the creation of the intervenient is the core of the operational investigation. Through the quantitative evaluation of the object, according to its defining parameters, the *subject* is obtained, the study of the methodology defines the *restoration*, and the intervention according to given methodology in given object defines the *architecture*, operated through the architect.

The matter of the intervention, the *historical object*, is defined through a matrix of concepts, rated from 1 to 5, subject to each parameter. The *authenticity*

of the object defines the “sum of substantial, historically ascertained characteristics: from the original up to the current state, as an outcome of the various transformations that have occurred over time”³ and is rated from 1 (preserves the full authenticity) to 5 (totally altered, no traces of the building’s authenticity). The *legal classification*, on a national context, can vary from national monument (1), monument of public interest (2) or municipal interest (3) to non-classified (5), and the *context* is also a concern on the value of the object, whether its authenticity is preserved (1) or totally destroyed (5). According to the building’s *use and adaptability*, and referring to the concept of *adaptive reuse*, it is classified according to whether it maintains its original functions (1) or whether they are completely reversed, resulting in a typological change (5). The state of conservation and the cultural value are the last criteria, whether the building is considered to be in acceptable conditions (1) or in serious damage (5) and the value it represents in a wide context (1), a singular context (2-4) or whether it has no significant historical, esthetical or social value (5).

The *methodology* of the intervention aims to deeply understand the architect's strategic attitude when confronted with the monument, and the underlying need for the intervention. In order to prioritize a rigorous, comparative and reproducible system, the choice of analysis parameters sought to be as efficient and direct as possible, analysing constructive, technical and programmatic options. This methodological analysis, elaborated on a basis analogous to the method studied, develops the investigation of methods through its *historical, functional, aesthetic* and *philosophical* instances.

Methodology analysis

The *historical* aspect, corresponding to historical, historiographic and architectural research, represents the instance of observation and approach to the object, the relevance given to the study of the property through its hypothetical analysis, and ranking from 1 to 5, depicts accordingly whether the project was totally funded by the historic research, restoring the building strictly within that information (1) to whether it was completely oblivious to this historical context (5). The *typological* question is assumed, in this matrix, in its functional character, and is the reaction to the compatible uses analysed in the matrix of the object, and whether the new uses, proposed by the contemporary intervention, are the same as the original (1), analogous (2), according to the building’s adaptability to the new functions (3), or whether they imply a typological and functional transformation of the object to respond to these functions (4/5). The *aesthetic* instance is assumed by its constructive character, in the methodological relation it has with the object, and not as result, responding directly to the *philosophical attitude* that guides the intervention. The intervention can be materialized in the non-reconstruction of the historic object, and the assumed contemporaneity of hypothetical architectural additions (1), to the total subversion of the building’s historical materiality, resulting in a false statement of the object’s authenticity (5). The intervention’s *philosophy* guides all previous criteria and is, however, conditioned by them. It is this measure that we seek to investigate, and whether the ideology behind the intervention seeks a non-interventionist position,

obtained by preventive maintenance, and thus preserving the true authenticity of the object (1) to whether the ideology is focused mainly on the architecture result, overlapping the historic testimony, and subverting the authenticity of the building (5).

Architectural
analysis

Contrary to what has been sought in the previous analysis, an architectural analysis is not something easily quantifiable. The idea of trying, in a way, to summarize an intervention of architectural restoration into concepts, can not close the subject in itself. This approach, more abstract and more specific to each case, can not equal the supposed objectivity of the previous ones, and does not propose the arrogance to quantify the architectural character by qualitative criteria. This analysis tries to unravel the subjective character of the restoration, when in the field of architecture. Architecture as a process, not as a result; a process that, however, is often only uncovered at the end.

*Autobiography or the
problem of language*

The subject of an architectural *language* is something that is discussed when talking about an intervention called *interventive* in an historical object. The will to belong to its habitat is not one-dimensional, its situation involves concrete and immaterial terms, lies between its physical, political, social, economic and architectural surroundings. All this is the habitat of heritage to intervene. Language, on the other hand, expresses the will of a time and a society that belongs to the moment of intervention, by the hand of the architect. Like a work of art, belonging to a certain artistic movement, with such political will and social context, it is the artist's intellectual attitude that conceives it, so architecture can not be freed from its creator.

We can put the question of language in a concrete and objective plan, intrinsic to the object, or abstract and subjective, proper to the architect. In what concerns the object, we speak of a *philosophical attitude*, and that belongs to the field of methodology. Here, speaking of the influence that each author imprints on the work, it concerns what is intrinsic to himself, what causes elements of abstraction. It is the revealing element of the *autobiographical* process of the architect, and the context of a singular work in his personal investigation, the missing context in the objective analyses and definitions of restoration conventions, beyond the historical and aesthetic context, the *philosophical context* through its main actor, the architect. Mental construction uncovers the artistic personal atlas of its author.

Individualism / Collectivism

The itinerant concept of monument enters the discussion that is proposed here, does the object fit into an individualist aspect or, belonging to a city or context, a collectivism aspect. The role of the architect is then divided into two moments, the moment of observation and the moment of transformation. The identification of the belonging of this object, whether it is the product of a collective memory, or has an intrinsic and immovable value, say of an individual memory; and the transformation of this object according to the same context, allied to or delimited by a collective environment. Objects with an individual

memory, whose patrimonial value derives from one or more specific features, for artistic or personal reasons specific to the object and not the place where it is inserted, may undergo translational actions. This translational factor ends up creating a second moment of memory, which can become collective, justifying its new context, or remain individual and susceptible to new translations. When the object's memory value is only collective, its significance is linked to the material and spiritual surroundings of the place where it belongs. This *individualism/collectivism dichotomy* gains relevance when we deal with an object to be intervened, whether it is part of the context that surrounds it, and which symbolizes part of its expression, and what discourse it evokes.

The interest in the *typological* quality of Architecture was often the alibi for the vanguards. “The *type* is not so much the image of a thing to be copied or imitated exactly as the idea of an element that must itself serve as a rule for the model. (...) Everything is exact and given in the *model*; everything is more or less vague on the *type*.”⁴ The *type* represents the very idea or architecture, its abstract structure which is closer to the essence. The justification of form acts beside the functional value of architecture, it is not a question of style, it is a question of a common value that echoes through the building's character and is recognizable for its formal and underlying complexity. The adaptability of functions implied in an architectural intervention, does not imply a typology change of essence. The object's authenticity works through its mental structure, its *perceivable type*.

Type and tipology

The last criteria to guide the architectural analysis is *saturation*. Following the problem of the language, the individualism or collectivism of the architectural meaning, and the *type* as a logic and formal structure of architecture, saturation emerges as an abstract measure between the contention and the architectural invasion by the authorial perspective of the architect. It measures the distance between the praise of the monument and the *pragmatic anonymity*.

Saturation

Saturation, a more abstract and complex concept, brings together all the previous criteria, and like the interventive *philosophy*, saturation is also dependent and at the same time, defining the intellectual process that builds architecture. Contrary to methodological analysis, the scope of this concept is to discuss the final morphology of the object after the intervention, and what type of operation is that which transformed it. The object continues to maintain the original fictitious image, or represents a new instance subverted by contemporary addition, which transforms it through an *adaptation* or *juxtaposition* operation. The intervention can now be juxtaposed or adapted, as a concept of *complexity or contradiction*. The question of ruin, in analogy with the object of the intervention, can not be posed without a profound contradiction⁵, a contradiction in which one can divide two positions, a *contemplative* position, or an *operative* position (adapted, subversive or opposed).

National context and methodological approach

The methodological approach to the Portuguese context, structured by the described methodological analysis, selects from a broad panorama three case studies that, for reasons of pertinence, represent and influence tendencies in the contemporary context.

Reconversion of the Santa Maria do Bouro Monastery – Eduardo Souto de Moura

Eduardo Souto de Moura in the reconversion of the Santa Maria do Bouro Monastery (1989-97) acts on a historical, destroyed monastic structure, present in his childhood memory, and, even though his first impulse was the simplicity of leaving it as a *contemplative ruin*, he transforms it, subverting the history into a *dissimulated anonymity*. The new *operative* ruin, undissociated from its personal atlas and recurring investigation in the matters of constructive *truth* and personal memory, emerges from the complexity of *autobiography* and *anonymity*, assuming the ruin of the monastery in its individuality and contemplative value, in contrast with the collective memory of the place.

Reconversion of Santa Maria de Flor da Rosa Monastery – J. L. Carrilho da Graça

Carrilho da Graça in the reconversion of the Santa Maria de Flor da Rosa Monastery (1991-95), dealing with a classified national monument, admired as one of the most important national gothic monuments, assumes the individual symbolism of the monument, and dialogues with the landscape as a forgotten context, which belongs to the monuments' nature. Assuming the imperative need to occupy the monument, and in the fear that it represents the privatization of its heritage, the architect assumes the structure of the monument almost as an extension of the context, returning the most significant part to the community with a museum, and the remaining part of the monument assumes almost no defining functions, allowing its use like an empty space and semi-public areas like lobby's, circulation and restaurant. This contemplative philosophy allows it to exist almost like an *objet trouvé*. The architectural intervention assumes its contemporary character, with white abstract figures that dialogue with the plain fields that surround it, developing his *autobiographical* research detached from history.

Extension of the Passos Manuel Lyceum – Victor Mestre, Sofia Aleixo

Victor Mestre and Sofia Aleixo in the extension of the Passos Manuel Lyceum (2007-10) deal with a building that has always served its purpose and is occupied continuously since its edification. The strategy assumed was to consolidate the historic building and dissociate the new additions from the image of the Lyceum, taking advantage of structural opportunities in the historical construction to perform contemporary extensions. In a permanent dialogue between vernacular and modern architecture, the autobiographical question here does not arise by means of a personal process, but by a deliberately anonymous action. The apparently anonymous facet of the architecture of Victor Mestre and Sofia Aleixo finds its relation in the critical position of dialogue with the context, in a hierarchical process that begins unequivocally with the historical investigation, justification of the whole process, and in search of a structural and formal unity. *Operative* by programmatic imposition, but ideologically *contemplative* and immediately perceptible to the less sensitive gaze, the artistic unity remains apparently authentic and unchanging, allowing the reversibility of the architectural intervention.

The methodological approach of the case studies demonstrates a desire to understand, although sometimes abstract or superficial, the historical object as an intervention context. All of them are based on history, what differs, however, is their interpretation of history, under the critical and ideological position of those who interpret it. If for Victor Mestre history is the *client*, who dictates the intervention, and for Carrilho da Graça is an artistic fact that must remain apparently distant, Souto de Moura appropriates history as material available to the intellectual conception, the abstract materiality in transformation. And if, for Victor Mestre, archaeological investigation may mean that some moments in history are more solemn than others, Carrilho da Graça and Souto de Moura assume history as context and therefore characterized as an *historical event*.

Victor Mestre assumes history in its authenticity, the archaeological will to understand it in all its dimension, and to act respecting its symbolism and historical truth, Carrilho da Graça assumes the historical object at the contemporary moment, as a static work, and Souto de Moura adopts the principles of Brandi in their *phenomenological* value, when the *critical* attitude thus proposes them, and does like the *ancients*, transforms, subverts and adds another layer to history, without mummifying it and without departing from it, but without the arrogance of overlapping it. Souto de Moura represents a *critical classicism*, and responds to it, transforms and dialogues with history as a continuous process.

Victor Mestre works between the Italian inheritance of the restoration method and the inheritance of Fernando Távora for its vernacular value and its architectural position in relation to History, Carrilho da Graça adopts the context instead of the historic object as heritage, through an architecture of the place, and Souto de Moura appears in an *assumed contradiction* that works independently in the *saturation* between the two ideological inheritances.

There is no school of restoration in Portugal, in the sense of an academic structure, but there is a school of architecture that, *spontaneously* through its interventions, created a mental methodology of contemporary intervention rooted in the dialogue with the context.

¹ Cf. DALLA NEGRA Riccardo, NUZZO Mariano, *L'Architetto Restaura, Guida al Laboratorio di Restauro Architettonico*, 2008, p. 7.

² Beni culturali, UNI 11182, *Materiali lapidei naturali ed artificiali, Descrizione della forma di alterazione: Termini e definizioni*, 2006.

³ "Annex – Definitions" in *The Charter of Krakow*, 2000.

⁴ QUATREMÈRE DE QUINCY, Antoine-Chrysostome, *Dictionnaire historique de l'Architecture*, Paris, 1832, cit. in ROSSI, Aldo, *A Arquitectura da Cidade*, 2001, p. 53.

⁵ Cf. BRANDI, Cesare, *Teoria do Restauro*, Amadora, Orion, 2006, pp. 49-50.