

RESTAURO, MONUMENTI E CITTÀ

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The Quaderni di Restauro from the Department of the History of Architecture and Restoration in Naples Federico II University were created in 1990 by professor Stella Casiello, the current director of Scuola di Specializzazione in Beni Architettonici e del Paesaggio of the aforementioned University.

Restauro, Monumenti e Città is the fourth publication in the series, all of which were published by *Electa Napoli*, and is the first which focuses exclusively on the doctorate program in architectural conservation developed within Federico II. It has articles written by Andrea Pane, Raffaele Amore and Gianluca Vitagliano. Renato De Fusco and the authors' tutors Stella Casiello, Aldo Aveta and Renata Picone, respectively, present the essays.

The first text, written by Andrea Pane, fills an important historiographical gap. This is due to the fact that even with the existing ample bibliography, until now we couldn't find any in-depth research into the work carried out by the commission named by Alto Commissario Michele Castelli for the study of a management plan for Naples, a commission which Gustavo Giovannoni started to administer in 1926.

Pane dedicated her doctorate program (2002) to reviews based on the work of Gustavo Giovannoni and for the last few years has been researching the theory and practice of this professional relating, above all, to the question of "old centers", publishing various texts on this issue. Having knowledge of the works of Gustavo Giovannoni, Pane is able, on analyzing the Commission's proposals recorded in a report published in 1927, to construct relationships between proposals for this city and proposed theories put forward by this professional identifying, in the case of Naples, the defense of a principle discussed and later synthesized in *Vecchie città ed edilizia nuova* (1931), which states that the old centre should not be seen in isolation and that its destiny is directly linked to provisions of urban expansion and respective transport solutions. He identifies, on the other hand, actions distant from the guidelines set out in documents from 1913 relating to ways of operating in the old centers, in proposals such as those concerning S. Francesco di Paola Church, the Corsea neighborhood and the area between Gesù and Dante squares.

Pane, however, doesn't see the management plan as simply a part of the professional path of Giovannoni, but seeks to show it regarding its place in the urban history of Naples. He thus investigates how the administration of Michele Castelli and others who came after him used the plan, noting that in general, they worked in a more destructive way than was originally intended, and above all without a vision of territorial scale that characterized it, operating in way relating to urbanism "by parts". Furthermore, he places the plan in relation to those that preceded it, such as that of Francesco De Simone, of 1914, and in relation to those that followed it, such as the plans of 1939 and 1972, identifying what remains constant between them.

Pane does not fail to include in his study the operational difficulties that affected the work of the Commission, which was suspended at the end of 1929. The suspension occurred

due to complex motives which included, amongst other things, the preference of the Alto Commissario in using resources to carry out concrete and punctual works to the cost of the long studies demanded by the management plan.

As Renato De Fusco points out at the beginning of this volume, the essay of Pane is a “complete study” and thus becomes the source for all study relating to the urban history of Naples.

The second article, by Raffaele Amore, critically follows the work of Gino Chierici when he was superintendent of Siena, Naples and Milan between 1920 and 1945. An ample work which in the Campania region alone involved almost seventy restorations.

Following the most important projects, such as the San Galgano Abbey in Chiusdino, or that of the restoration of the west façade of the Palazzo Reale, the Pusterla di Sant’Ambrogio in Milan and the church of Santa Maria Maggiore in Lomello, the study made by Amore highlights the contribution this professional makes to debates concerning restoration at that time. He outlines a way of working that achieves, through experience, a gradual distancing of a “scientific” approach and an approximation to a “critical” dimension of restoration. He thus shows a Chierici contrary to a “restoration theory” and aware of the responsibilities of the restorer when making choices.

This process of change is clearly illustrated by Amore, especially through the projects carried out by the superintendency of medieval and modern art of Milan, where Chierici started work in 1935. The work carried out on the west façade of the Palazzo Reale is recognized as one which stuck most closely to the principles of scientific restoration, an approach he sought to improve on in the restoration work of Sant’Ambrogio and Santa Maria Maggiore.

Chierici is thus placed as a protagonist in the process of disciplinal restoration which would characterize the end of the 1930s in Italy, as contextualized by Amore in the article. In this panorama of restoration, the participation of the superintendent in the III Convegno Nazionale di Storia dell’architettura (1940), is highlighted. It was here that for the first time Chierici dedicated an entire essay to the problems involved in restoring monuments, in which he, whilst confirming the value of a philological approach to the study and restoration of monuments, goes further, by recognizing that a work of restoration can not help but be a critical act of choice. The essay by Amore ends with an article written by Chierici in 1957 when he was eighty years old, which recognizes, albeit in a more severe and somber tone, reflections he had already made in the period between the two World Wars.

In the third article, by Gianluca Vitagliano, the restorations carried out on Ospedale Maggiore, also known as Ca’ Granda, in Milan, are analysed. This covers a period from the 1940s until the first half of the 1980s, showing clearly the reflexes of the disciplinal debate of this period concerning choices relating to projects.

Ca’ Granda served as a base for various restoration experiments carried out by important figures in the architectural world of Milan including, amongst others, Ambrogio Annoni (1940 to 1954), Piero Portaluppi (1949 to 1967), and Liliana Grassi (1949 to 1985).

During these five decades there had been many changes made to the building which was constructed from a project of Filarete, as in the central body built in the seventeenth century from a project attributed to Francesco Maria Richini, as well as the work carried out in the nineteenth century from a project of Pietro Castelli. Parts of the complex were of differing architectural value and damaged in various ways during the war.

By critically examining these restoration experiments and by relating them to the theoretical and methodological references to each of the professionals involved, by

highlighting them with comparisons made between the thoughts of other architects and contemporaries, the author offers the reader, based on the particular case of Ca' Granda, an interesting insight into disciplinary history of restoration and the debates carried out in the Italian architectural world, especially in Milan.

It is possible to glimpse, for example, the relationship of Annoni with “scientific restoration” and the revision of this approach, which he elaborated when faced with new post-war demands. Starting with Liliana Grassi and work started on the quadrilateral of Filarete in the 1950s, the cultural debate centers on the overlapping questions relative to restoration and the relationship between modern architecture and history. It is Grassi who also leads the author to assign a space to the disciplinary debates of the 1980s.

The article clearly shows, in the case of Ca' Granda, how the actions of professionals from different historical contexts, in parts of the complex which were valued in different ways, allow greatly differing operative solutions and conceptual approaches, making this building an important palimpsest of twentieth century restoration.

The three essays in question allow the reader to learn about the rich intellectual output of Federico II University and to provide some insight into the themes of conservation by means of detailed and careful analyses based mainly on unpublished documents, calling in personages of great interest such as Giovannoni, Chierici, Annoni and Grassi.