

Introduction

The Venice Charter takes its inspiration from an article by Pietro Gazzola and Roberto Pane "Proposte per una carta internazionale del restauro" / Proposals for an international restoration charter, 1964, now available in *Il monumento per l'uomo - Atti del II Congresso internazionale del restauro*, Padova, 1971; which can be accessed at <http://www.international.icomos.org/venicecharter2004/indexfr.htm>, with a summary in English.

Pietro Gazzola was the Superintendent who restored *à l'identique* Ponte Pietra and Ponte Scaligero in Verona in the 1950s, as well as being the author of the translation of the Temple of Abu Simbel in Egypt. Roberto Pane was a professor of History of Architecture and Restoration, commentator, painter, as well as being involved in architectonic and urban restoration, a grand interlocutor with Europe and the Americas. Both were also present at the International Restoration Conference held in Venice between 25 and 31 May 1964.

The article by Gazzola and Pane was meant to consist – they wrote with simulated modesty – of a mere *updating* of the *Carta del Restauro italiana* (Italian Restoration Charter) of 1931 (articulated in 11 points, in turn fruit of the Athens Restoration Charter of 1930), and was intended to influence the other participants at the Conference, where it led to unanimous conclusions in plenary session. In effect, the definitive wording of the 1964 Venice Charter differed little from the "Proposals" of Gazzola and Pane (maintaining the division into 11 points of the 1931 Charter), thus demonstrating that they had provided the main input to the final draft. But this draft signalled, by completely contradicting the 1931 Italian Charter inspired by the great Giovannoni, a radical change in the usual practice of restoration, in the direction of conservation rather than renovation.

What brought about this change of course?

From the *Proposals* of Gazzola and Pane it can be deduced that they had been enlightened by the just published *Teoria del restauro* by Cesare Brandi, Rome, 1963, and especially by the chapter "Principles for the restoration of monuments", a theory mainly inspired by J. Dewey, in *Art as experience*, New York, 1934.

But the five year period from 1963-1968 was also that of the young "cultural revolution", from the Chinese in the East to the American in the West (from Mao Tse-Dong, to Adorno to Marcuse, whose *Eros and civilization*, Boston, The Beacon Press, 1955, was translated into Italian by Einaudi in 1963): from this revolution the European demonstrations were to explode violently in 1968 with the occupation of the Universities of Trento (in the North of Italy) and Paris, but wandered along from 1963 among the students of Architecture in Italy (the Faculty of Valle Giulia in Rome was occupied in May 1963), accompanied by an overrating of architectonic modernism suggested by Bruno Zevi (anxious to return to Rome from Venice where he taught. This led to his: "La lotta degli studenti-architetti continua" (The student-architects' struggle continues), in *L'architettura, cronache e storia*, July 1963), and to a symmetrical and contrary demonising of classicism. The students sarcastically made use of the rhyme of classicism with fascism, alluding to the generation of Ballio Morpurgo, Foschini, Muzio, Piacentini and Spaccarelli: those who had held the monopoly on the profession in Rome and in Italy in the preceding decades. In this demonising they involved Saverio Muratori (the builder of the *Palazzo della Democrazia Cristiana* (Christian Democrat Headquarters) in Rome), who left the Faculty of Architecture in Roma amidst their jibes (as did L. Benevolo and L. Vagnetti), leaving the way clear for the revolutionary and modernist new entries: Libera, Piccinato, Quaroni and Zevi.

This ferment probably inspired Cesare Brandi (made professor in the academic year 1963/64, and great admirer of the young) to the prophetic tone that distinguished his *Lessons* of 1963, and also authorized Gazzola and Pane to use the Theory of Brandi as a lever with which in turn to revolutionise the mentality of architectonic restoration established by the 1931 Italian Charter (and therefore also automatically 'fascist', like Giovannoni and his contemporaries), and so also the mentality of the restorers of the world present in Venice in 1964.

The first axiom of the Brandi Theory (as he called his most peremptory enunciations) was the following: << *only the material of a work of art is to be restored* >>, from which he went on to state that << *restoration must aim to re-establish the potential unity of the work of art, where that is possible without falsifying art or history, or cancelling every trace of the passage of the work of art through time* >>.

Brandi also asserted that << *For the restoration of monuments the same principles are valid as for the restoration of a work of art, and thus for paintings, both removable and not, furniture and buildings, objets d'art and history and so on... For a monument...the possibility to reconstruct the environment will only be possible with the anastylosis of the monument – where it can be dismantled stone by stone – but in the same place not elsewhere ...* >> as well as << *the absolute illegitimacy of dismantling and re-assembly on a different site ...* >> except in the case of << *dismantling and re-assembly uniquely linked to the safeguarding of the monument in that its survival cannot be achieved in any another way...* >>.

The Brandi *Principles* concluded with the following, peremptory, assertions: << *The environment should be reconstructed on the basis of spatial data, not formal data, of the missing monument. In this way a campanile should be reconstructed in Saint Mark's in Venice, but not the fallen campanile; a bridge should have been re-constructed at Santa Trinita, but not the Ammannati Bridge. The principles and requirements expressed above embrace the whole problem of the restoration of monuments... For all the rest, the problems are the same as those regarding a work of art; from the distinction of aspect and structure, to the conservation of the patina and the historic phases the monument has passed through.*>>.

Gazzola, as stated, had just refurbished the Bridges of Verona and was getting ready to transform the temple of Abu Simbel in Egypt: the axioms of Brandi chimed in unison with the slogans of the young revolutionaries which had evidently generated in him a 'sense of guilt' directly proportional to the 'sins' committed, and his 'conversion to conservation' assumed a value of almost mystical testimony, such as to drag along with him all the, still hesitant, Conference participants in a rite of collective purification. And therefore they accepted the *Proposals* of Gazzola and Pane meant to promote 'conservation rather than restoration', even if they went and go, as will be seen in the text that follows, against the methodological and practical certainties of architectonic restoration of those many European and Eastern countries where the refurbishment of monuments without any sense of guilt is still practised.

Furthermore, right from the start the Venice Charter confused (perhaps with the aim of concentrating in the I.C.R. – Istituto Centrale del Restauro (Central Restoration Institute) – the exercise of the protection of 'all' art objects, from ceramic vases to environments and urban monuments, a reminder of the state authoritarianism of minister Bottai, founder, with Brandi, of the I.C.R. in 1939) the *monuments morts* with the *monuments vivents*, as the French call them. And this confused the archaeological traces of our past with the buildings in which and with which man has developed his existence in historic centres, giving them form and being formed by them. In a country in which towns like Reims or Mont Saint Michel are reconstructed systematically house-by-house, when necessary, being mainly built with wooden structures that deteriorate, in order above all not to lose the architectonic lines of the medieval city, considered emblematic of a glorious past and so worth conserving. Italian building culture in contrast shows only rare traces of its wooden heritage, and even desired to re-evolve the events of the Fourteenth, Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries, when the cities that had been wooden became walled, thanks to the wealth of the merchant classes. And thus privileging walled buildings, and those developing a building culture that aimed at the emulation of ancient monuments, also mixing them with residential building, which tends to be ephemeral or at least subject to progressive mutation where it survives.

Furthermore, the 1964 Charter appears to be profoundly flawed (as detailed in the comments below) by having been formulated in a cultural environment – that of Italy – in which restoration of works of art has been and remains the only national fine industry, promoted by the commercial traffic in antiquities and works of art created by the Grand Tour and still extremely active. An industry that, starting from the 1800s, included especially those operators who were too 'artistic' to survive the asphyxiating environment of the industrial factory, where they would otherwise have ended up due to socio-economic and cultural conditions (cf. P. Marconi, *Il recupero della bellezza*, Milan, Skira, 2005).

At this point, the problem of authenticity, that appears to be the principal fetish of Brandi and the Italians, shows its origin in the mentality of the world of the commerce in art and antiques, where authenticity is rewarded with a higher sale price than for a copy and – vice versa - copying/forgery becomes a real crime, comparable to the forging of money.

Authenticity, therefore, is << *the ideological product of a mercantile society*>>, as stated by U. Eco in his *Trattato di semiotica generale* (Treatise on general semiotics), Milan, 1975, but as such has polluted the world of art historians–*connoisseurs* and those experts entrusted with protection in Italy, preoccupied with the conservation of authenticity to the point of being indifferent to the simple concept that the conservation of authenticity achieves nothing but exposes architectonic elements to a progressive ruin. The latest generation of materials can be used for repairs that will last for a few decades, but not for centuries. And deluding the same experts about the fact that the systematic maintenance mentioned in Art. 4 could be a calming panacea.

The 1964 Charter is therefore a document produced in a cultural and economic climate in which the duplication by necessity of monuments and urban centres was inevitably poor and summary, and for this reason demonised by *connoisseurs* used to the maximum finesse of the restoration of art objects.

There remains the problem whether such duplications were and are truly criminal, where it can be stated that their intention is humanly understandable and approvable, even necessary, with the aim of preventing the collapse of the works that testify to the culture of their times and places where they are perceptible in the most tangible and universal ways, that is, also by non-specialists, or by unprepared immigrants to our world– as well as by written texts or other more elitist manifestations of culture and art.

Today, in a world seeing an inevitable globalisation of culture and the migrations of entire peoples, works of architecture and historic centres are considered as permanent icons, tangible, utilized and utilizable, of and by the local cultures: their didactic, communicative and demonstrative functions therefore are of the greatest importance, and their restoration, meant in the most complete and correct sense of the term - or their most effective duplication, in case of necessity, carried out in the best possible way – has become, for the countries that consider themselves civilised, an obligation of civilization.

THE VENICE CHARTER, 1964

2nd International Congress of Architects and Technicians of Historic Monuments

Imbued with a message from the past, the historic monuments of generations of people remain to the present day as living witnesses of their age-old traditions. People are becoming more and more conscious of the unity of human values and regard ancient monuments as a common heritage. The common responsibility to safeguard them for future generations is recognized. It is our duty to hand them on in the full richness of their authenticity.

It is essential that the principles guiding the preservation and restoration of ancient buildings should be agreed and be laid down on an international basis, with each country being responsible for applying the plan within the framework of its own culture and traditions.

By defining these basic principles for the first time, the Athens Charter of 1931 contributed towards the development of an extensive international movement which has assumed concrete form in national documents, in the work of ICOM and UNESCO and in the establishment by the latter of the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and the Restoration of Cultural Property. Increasing awareness and critical study have been brought to bear on problems which have continually become more complex and varied; now the time has come to examine the Charter afresh in order to make a thorough study of the principles involved and to enlarge its scope in a new document.

Accordingly, the 2nd International Congress of Architects and Technicians of Historic Monuments, which met in Venice from May 25th to 31st 1964, approved the following text:

Comments on preamble

The complete authenticity of monuments is a theme that has obsessed Roman conservators and Italian experts on protection of monuments and works of art from the early decades of the Nineteenth Century (at the time of the Restoration of the Papacy), when the Grand Tour started again and portable works of art, but also parts of works of ancient architecture (capitals, friezes, metopes, columns, fountains, etc.), constituted precious goods, easy to export, the authenticity of which guarantees a high added value, and so naturally fuelled the growth in the forgery industry, something impossible in the case of living architecture (cities, towns, buildings, houses and churches still in use) and for archaeological sites.

It was necessary therefore to repress – as much on the moral level, by comparing it to a mortal sin, as on the penal level, making it a crime – the fine industry of forging of works of art without distinction between them with the crafty expedient of assimilating architecture along with portable works of art, for reasons of protection and restoration.

The Venice Conference met a few months after the publication of the main work by C. Brandi: the lessons of *Theory of restoration*, Rome, Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1963, which imposed, thanks to the notoriety acquired by the Author until 1939 as Director of the Istituto Centrale del Restauro (I.C.R.) and to his axiomatic style, a radical change in the direction of conservation rather than restoration, decreeing that << *the same principles apply to the restoration of monuments as have been posed for the restoration of works of art* >> (page 105), after having decreed that << *reconstruction, refurbishment and copying cannot even be dealt with in the theme of restoration, which they naturally exceed* >> (page 59). Thus in a text in which the safeguarding of authenticity was the basic theme, in a polemical climate dominated by the recent disputes over the reconstruction of the Santa Trinita Bridge in Florence, in which Cesare Brandi opposed Bruno Zevi, in Ragghianti and Salmi (which in contrast he eulogised) defining that refurbishment << *an offence against History and an outrage of Aesthetics* >>.

C. Brandi also demonised refurbishment as far as to teach the filling of “gaps” in paintings with stretches of watercolour << *without analogous integration, so that no doubt can be cast on the authenticity of any part of the work* >> (page 101), over-rating the durability of architecture due to the lack of sufficient technical competence. In fact walled works are subject to earthquake, fire, weather, pollution, injury caused by users and modifications of use much more than portable works of art protected in Museums. He therefore extended to architecture the operations retained obligatory in the field of restoration of works of art only in virtue of the fact that the restoration of the latter becomes necessary in much longer time periods than architectonic restoration (which is however required every twenty or thirty years, as in Rome at the time of the Jubilee) and thus did not preoccupy the bureaucrats responsible – for a few years – for their protection, once completed and put in a museum.

After having so much underlined the value of authenticity, however, two lines below it is affirmed contradictorily that << *every country is free to apply the principles that prevail for the conservation and restoration of monuments taking into account their own culture and traditions* >>. It probably came up at the time, but was eclipsed by the diktat of Brandi, that the awareness of the fact that many non-walled cultures and traditions cannot take into account the principle of the conservation of authenticity: in France and throughout Europe, for example, they have always replaced *à l'identique* - when necessary - wooden constructions both religious and profane in the gothic tradition, and in Japan there is still the

centuries old tradition of the periodic ritual refurbishment of religious buildings (such as the Shinto Temples of Jingu that are reconstructed every twenty years)

It is probable that the underlining of commitment to the value of authenticity in conservation was justified, in 1964, by the fact that at that historic moment they were seeing the reconstruction of entire stretches of city and entire monumental complexes, thanks to building operations - often, unfortunately, approximate and crude in being poorly funded and hurried - that had not considered how their prevalent commitment to the conservation of authenticity of ruins, rather had aimed at the conservation of the architectonic significance of buildings and complexes of ruined or destroyed buildings, even re-making them as new.

But this restitution was mainly 'restoration by necessity', as described by Salvatore Boscarino (*Il restauro di necessita'*, Milan, 1992), especially alluding to the reconstruction after earthquakes in Italy - in Messina (1908), Belice (1968), Friuli (1976) and Irpinia (1980) - in which the inhabitants and the widespread culture acted to reconstruct urban environments and monuments charged with memory and fascination - even if *imitated* with some clumsiness - in the absence of economic means the right schools, as much for architects as for skilled craftsmen.

It is sufficient to consider the post-bombing reconstruction *à l'identique* in Italy of the Montecassino Abbey and the Bridges of Verona, Bassano and Florence, that of the Stoà of Attalo in Athens (considered by Brandi to be a 'historic and aesthetic fake'), and the many other European initiatives for the reconstruction of monuments and urban sites destroyed by natural events (starting with the Campanile of Saint Mark's in Venice), or by the Second World War, as well as other wars or successive actions, and we see for example the Frauenkirche in Dresden, the Katarina Kircha in Stockholm, the Portico of San Giorgio in Velabro in Rome, the Borgo and Cathedral of Venzone, the Cathedral of Noto and the Bridge in Mostar.

Imitations - emulations abhorred for their frequent crudity and apparent newness, more than for the method, by the Italian lobby of art historians, protectors of authenticity encouraged by the much-feared Brandi and with him incurable fans of patina, who came and come from the ranks of the art experts (*connoisseurs*) at the service of the antiques market. To the point of overturning even the same common acceptance of the terms of conservation and restoration, if it is true, and it is true, that << conservation = maintenance in a state of efficiency, in usable conditions ...safeguarding, protection; and restoration = referred to a work of art, or also to objects considered artistic or precious, technical operations intended to reintegrate compromised or deteriorated details or ensure their conservation >>, from *Italian Dictionary* by G. Devoto and G. C. Oli, Milan, 1987.

DEFINITIONS

Article 1.

The concept of a historic monument embraces not only the single architectural work but also the urban or rural setting in which is found the evidence of a particular civilization, a significant development or a historic event. This applies not only to great works of art but also to more modest works of the past, which have acquired cultural significance with the passing of time.

Comments on article 1

This undoubtedly also includes habitations in urban centres as part of the same centres (or their building fabric) which are however subject - if in use - to frequent modifications to their type and to their external cladding, also due to the evolution in residential customs, successive incorporation into other types and to the growth of families. It is therefore very difficult to include them in the same category as portable works of art, or as ancient Monuments, in that they are *monuments vivents*.

Article 2.

The conservation and restoration of monuments must have recourse to all the sciences and techniques that can contribute to the study and safeguarding of the architectural heritage.

Article 3.

The intention in conserving and restoring monuments is to safeguard them no less as works of art than as historical evidence.

Comments on articles 2 and 3

Returning to the Italian Dictionary cited in the comments on the preamble, it can be seen that the term 'safeguard' is reserved for works of 'conservation and not works of restoration'. But it is difficult for an architectonic restoration, necessarily implying works of 'reintegration' -in order to safeguard the statics of monuments- can safeguard the whole pathetic aspect of the ruin, including its patina, from the moment that it is anyway necessary -to ensure the best

cohesion between the new and the ancient parts, and thus the statics– to intervene with moderate operations to eliminate the completely ruined parts, so as to guarantee the best insertion of the renovated parts into the organic context of the monument. It is also difficult for the newly restored monument to look ancient, given the momentary absence of patina provoked the work of cleaning and restoration. But given a few years' patience: the patina will be reproduced naturally, and the monuments, the houses and the districts will seem as ancient as they were before the restoration. As occurs elsewhere in the field of aesthetic surgery, where the degraded parts must be eliminated to encourage the best attachment of the newly substituted tissue. Furthermore, it is evident that works of architectonic restoration, if referred to inhabited environments - from Houses to Palaces to Churches – must often imply, in the course of restoration, works of adaptation to the functions of habitation or liturgy that have evolved over time, with the consequence that the category of pure *conservation* is difficult to take into consideration. The history that it testifies is thus a living history: It is not the importable history of ruins of bygone eras. Also here there is therefore confusion between *monuments morts and monuments vivants*.

CONSERVATION

Article 4.

It is essential to the conservation of monuments that they be maintained on a permanent basis.

Comments on article 4

Very true: systematic maintenance is fundamental, but let's not delude ourselves that the indefinite conservation of building structures is sufficient, exposed as they are to much greater degradation than portable works of art. The degradation and aging of building materials are inevitable, due to natural or anthropic causes, and in any case systematic maintenance is difficult to effectuate, because of its costs and the necessary skilled craftsmen. Maintenance, therefore, guarantees the control of the state of health of the monument and its parts, but cannot guarantee the long term survival of monuments, on which surgical operations will have to be carried out sooner or later. In order not to delude ourselves – or the public, misplacing trust in the chemical industries that flourished in Italy in the 1960s– on the claimed infinite duration of the effects of invisible chemical consolidation, as began in Italy from 1939 to 1964, often the work of Sanpaolesi (in Florence, Naples and Pavia, in 1939, 1940, 1961/62, 1964) and on the basis of the peremptory slogan of G. Dehio: << *Konservieren, nicht restaurieren!*>> (1900), as well as on the basis of the anachronistic re-evaluation of decadentism by J. Ruskin and the equally decadent suggestions of Camillo Boito dating back to 1893.

Article 5.

Making use of them for some socially useful purpose always facilitates the conservation of monuments. Such use is therefore desirable but it must not change the layout or decoration of the building. It is within these limits only that modifications demanded by a change of function should be envisaged and may be permitted.

Comments on article 5

Also see the comments on point 3. The article in question states the truth, but risks rendering buildings unusable, if we go too far in the direction of conservation. The planning that this implies would be impossible, furthermore, if it was not based on the means of evolution and the historic construction methods (anamnesis, anatomy and physiology of building), which today, however, are only practised in very few Faculties of Architecture, regarding the Italian tradition, and mainly at the Faculties of Roma Tre and Bari. Teaching that must include the history of the progressive transformation of building typologies and those of the methods and means of building techniques, where the teaching of conservation involves careful observation of the monument, and resort to invisible means to conserve its current aspect. It goes without saying that the transformations of building typologies include amongst other things the raising by one or more storeys of the original building, with the relative increase in the thickness of the body of the building in depth to house new communal stairways and new apartments, or its beautification thanks to applied architectonic orders, or the modification of the "style" of the arches (from rounded to pointed, or vice versa), or the modification of the internal distribution because of new habitation needs, etc.. These are requirements that cannot be compared to simple superimposed structures mentioned in Art. 11), and therefore may require notable alterations, the historical awareness of which can only guide the planner toward behaviour compatible with the current aspect, often involving distributive and visual alterations the maximum danger cited at the beginning of this Article: the definitive abandonment of the building to its destiny, given its unusability.

Article 6.

The conservation of a monument implies preserving a setting that is not out of scale. Wherever the traditional setting exists, it must be kept. No new construction, demolition or modification that would alter the relations of mass and colour must be allowed.

Comments on article 6

The sacrosanct prescription, that of the conservation of traditional environments, is difficult to follow, however, such that architects with only a 'modernist' preparation are not capable of or interested in doing so today, as will also be seen below, due to the prevalence of an avant-gardes education in the majority of Italian Schools of Architecture, instigated by the same Charter, which desired insertions to be distinguished from the context bearing the mark of their époque (see the preceding comments on article 5 and those on the successive article 9).

This, therefore, is the least observed Article of the 1964 Charter, despite being eminently aimed at conservation and it is often even betrayed by the Italian protection authorities (different, for example, from the French, Spanish, German or English), who share in their opportunism the modernist models of recent decades.

Consider the recent questions posed by the modernist covering structure constructed over the Ara Pacis Augustae in Rome by R. Meier in recent years: is this in accordance with this article? Consider that this glittering container not only impedes the appreciation of the frontage of the Church of St. Rocco and St. Girolamo degli Schiavoni and the Dogana di Ripetta that until 1909 faced the Tevere, but cancels forever the foundations of the Porto di Ripetta, the beautiful work of A. Specchi which concluded the road that lead from Piazza di Spagna towards the Tevere. Would it not have been better to refurbish the Porto di Ripetta, of which the foundations, designs, views and photographs remain, as already published for many years by many commentators without being heeded? Consider that to this day Strada Giulia a Roma - the model for all planned straight city streets from the Sixteenth Century to this day, on which Antonio da Sangallo and Borromini built and Raffaello planned – lies as it was reduced in 1939 after demolishing several blocks that faced onto it. What suggested to the Italian protection authorities to leave it in that pitiful state, if not the most maximalist conservationist previously mentioned, mixed with modernist avant-gardism of those who would like to leave a trace of their work, the sign of our times? What still leads us to conserve Via dell'Impero in Roma for its value of historical witness, instead of returning to the ground level of its principle ancient monuments (its traditional environment), approximately seven metres below the current main road?

Article 7.

A monument is inseparable from the history to which it bears witness and from the setting in which it occurs. The moving of all or part of a monument cannot be allowed except where the safeguarding of that monument demands it or where it is justified by national or international interest of paramount importance.

Comments on article 7

This obviously refers to the 'relocation' by demolition and reconstruction of Roman monuments to different sites in the 1920s and 1930s, due to the work on the Lungotevere and Piazza Venezia, undoubtedly dictated by compelling town planning needs of a local character but a Capital such as Rome should merit these to be considered of national interest, as this Article allows.

Article 8.

Items of sculpture, painting or decoration that form an integral part of a monument may only be removed from it if this is the sole means of ensuring their preservation.

RESTORATION

Article 9.

The process of restoration is a highly specialized operation. Its aim is to preserve and reveal the aesthetic and historic value of the monument and is based on respect for original material and authentic documents. It must stop at the point where conjecture begins, and in this case moreover any extra work that is indispensable must be distinct from the architectural composition and must bear a contemporary stamp. The restoration in any case must be preceded and followed by an archaeological and historical study of the monument.

Comments on article 9

This article, demanding restoration to stop where conjecture begins, echoes the justified fear that restoration will be carried out by incompetents, but mainly echoes the fears of the Italian protection authorities, in a country in which the 1939 protection law is still in force (which attributes to the State the protection of monuments, as required by the fascist minister Bottai, who wrote the law) to be victim of falsification for the purposes of fraud, a typical fear of the 'conservators' of the early decades of the Nineteenth century such as Abbot Carlo Fea (who was superintendent for the restoration of the Arco di Tito in the early 1820s and realised that its statues had been copied and replaced after the sale of the originals), in an Italy dedicated to the antiques trade connected to the Grand Tour, as previously stated in the comments on the preamble).

The 'distinguishing feature of architectonic design and 'bearing a contemporary stamp' that follow in this Article meant, for Abbot Fea, the limiting of the elaboration of the capitals and columns to their 'rough outline' and to the use of another material, but the entry of 'avant-garde' modernity of the 1920s signified for architects the recourse to 'alternative' design with diversified materials and techniques from those of the context and thus rigorously non traditional, as also suggested by Boito at the end of the Nineteenth Century: << *far io debbo così che ognun discerna*

I essere l'aggiunta un'opera moderna (I must work in such a way / that my additions are seen as the work of today) >>. Followed pedantically by C. Brandi, who imposed for example the so called *negativo* to the restorers of the *Istituto Centrale del Restauro*, as previously stated in the comments on the preamble), in order to fill the gaps in the paintings with stretches of polychrome inspired by French divisionism, and thus with the aim of not 'falsifying'.

Article 10.

Where traditional techniques prove inadequate, the consolidation of a monument can be achieved by the use of any modern technique for conservation and construction, the efficacy of which has been shown by scientific data and proved by experience.

Comments on article 10

It goes without saying that this Article, suggested by the contemporary and vaunted mythicization of technology, has induced since then restorers and the protection authorities to overrating the latest generation of technologies and materials in the task of reinforcing the unsafe parts of the monuments –even leaving them in an apparent state of ruin– often deluding themselves as to the durability and efficiency of the expedients adopted. The overrating of reinforced concrete is typical of this, over praised in the 1930s as a means of consolidation, or interpolated structures (e.g. the rocks of the columns in reinforced concrete between the rocks of the marble columns of the Parthenon, now the object of a campaign of substitution with real marble little more than fifty years after their realization, given their rapid degradation), or the adventurous injection of reinforced concrete (it is difficult to control the spread of the liquid cement injected into the wall mass), or recourse to ties that put off to the unknown future real and proper restoration, or recourse to chemical compounds "of the latest generation" (returning to the comments on article 4), relieving the bureaucrats involved in protection of responsibility for the effective conservation over time of the monuments entrusted to them, responsibility that lasts only a few years, in a state regime, thanks to the *turn over* of the same functionaries.

Article 11.

The valid contributions of all periods to the building of a monument must be respected, since unity of style is not the aim of a restoration. When a building includes the superimposed work of different periods, the revealing of the underlying state can only be justified in exceptional circumstances and when what is removed is of little interest and the material which is brought to light is of great historical, archaeological or aesthetic value, and its state of preservation good enough to justify the action. Evaluation of the importance of the elements involved and the decision as to what may be destroyed cannot rest solely on the individual in charge of the work.

Comments on article 11

Here we return to face the fear that those given responsibility for a project are not up to the work entrusted to them, as in Art. 9), and that the important decisions must be taken by others, at the ministry or a similar level, other than the "solely the individual in charge of the work", supposed to be culturally weak and incapable. But this is a typically Italian problem, institutional in character, that the instrument of the *Concorso* (competition) should guarantee – if well applied – every time entrusting the project to a competent professional or group of professionals, rather than leaving the judgement on the eventual elimination of superimposed structures to state protection authorities that cannot but be bureaucratized or politicized.

That stylistic unity, in pluristratified works, is not the scope of restoration, is obvious, even if the need remains within the restoration of every superimposed structure: the partial degradation of a superimposed structure cannot but impose the search for stylistic unity of the same superimposed structure, and eventually its aesthetic and linguistic compatibility with the context, to avoid the progressive accumulation, that otherwise would have not very significant ruins. And thus it would lead to the end of the monument in the medium term.

However, this poses the problem of the successive raising – often poor and clumsy – of the residential buildings in town centres, as already stated in point 5): whether to plan their elimination, or favour their integration in the resulting form, in the restoration of these *monuments vivents*?

It is worth repeating that safeguarding of the overlying structures is above all an Italian preoccupation, dictated by a historic insipience very widespread among operators, caused by the teaching institutions – from the Primary Schools to the Universities – where the History of ancient and traditional architecture is nearly completely banned (returning to the comments on article 5), in the name of the avant-garde modernity previously mentioned, different from, for example, the *Ecole de Chaillot*, (the French school of *Architectes en Chef*): a post-grad School that teach the language and techniques of the most common forms of architecture in France. This school is an obligatory step for those who want to follow a career as a restorer, not to mention the magnificent *Ecoles des Tailleurs de pierre*, also French, or the Spanish *Escuelas de cantería*. The *Ecole de Chaillot*, however, does not give access to a badly paid bureaucratic career working for the State, but to a free-lance career that gives admission to an institute of architects thanks to which the best get the best work.

Article 12.

Replacements of missing parts must integrate harmoniously with the whole, but at the same time must be distinguishable from the original so that restoration does not falsify the artistic or historic evidence.

Comments on article 12

Yet again the guilt complex of falsification emerges (see the comments on the preamble and the comments on article 9), as does the need for the distinction between the added and original parts of the elements destined to substitute the missing parts ...so that the restoration does not falsify the monument. Even so, at the beginning of the same Article it states that substitutions must be integrated harmoniously with the whole: the language of the substitution should therefore be the same language as the context, as occurs in the world of literary philology. But evidently, in being or considering themselves to be modern, the architects (and the engineers) present at the Venice Conference, had already forgotten that architecture, being destined for communication, cannot << *not rely on elements of previous codes ...on the contrary the object of architecture...becomes a work of art: an ambiguous form that can be interpreted in the light of different codes* >> (U. Eco, *La struttura assente*, 1968). Thus in their hands architecture becomes design, a term which now alludes to a global language of architecture and its exit from the world of traditional architecture in order to constitute a glittering object as fascinating as it is unusual. Or rather in the guise of a modern visual work of art, unrestrained by the problem of similarity to the original, and thus of iconographic communication (according to the tradition of the biographies by Vasaria), as well as the presentation of concluded forms. This preoccupation with design is completely inappropriate in historic contexts in which the conservation of the environmental conditions of monuments invoked in Art. 6) are imposed.

In other words: the language of modern architecture-design should not be employed in the planning of restoration, just as in philological operations recourse should not be made, for interpretations, to languages different to that of the text or to Esperanto. As for *Esperanto*, back in 1924 Adolf Loos said: << *the architect is a bricklayer who has studied Latin, but modern architects seem to be more like speakers of Esperanto* >> and thus modern architects diversify radically from the equally noble category of architect-restorers, who do not at all disdain the attributes of the bricklayer, but rather glory in it, and are to the refurbishment of the significance of architectonic texts what philologists are to the refurbishment of the significance poetic and literary texts (also see comments on the following article 13). Thus they must also have a good level of humanistic and antiquarian culture as a distinctive element of their preparation, where the modernist architects, as is too often noted and evident, ignore if not disdain antiquarian culture (returning to the original protection of the Ara Pacis in Rome), often factiously resorting – as occurred in the 1960s – to the rhyming of classicism with fascism.

The guilt complex of falsification, on the other hand, was born – as previously stated – in the early decades of the Nineteenth Century, in a world in which “*quantity is transformed into quality*” (Hegel), and therefore artistic value is guaranteed by its venal value, and vice versa. It is not by chance that in these same decades the antiques market in transportable and exportable works of art extended around the world, as testified by the Museums of Berlin, London, Munich, New York, Paris, St Petersburg etc., with their treasures of African, Etruscan, Egyptian, Greek, Middle Eastern, Eastern, Roman and Late-Roman art and architecture.

This cultural imperialism of the collectors was a symptom of the *colonialism* of the times.

Article 13.

Additions cannot be allowed except in so far as they do not detract from the interesting parts of the building, its traditional setting, the balance of its composition and its relation with its surroundings.

Comments on article 13

This Article is in contradiction with the preceding Article 12), where it is prohibited to falsify a monument: here it is admitted in fact (even cunningly using a double negative) that additions can be tolerated, where they do not disturb the equilibrium of the composition and the relationship with the surrounding environment etc., and thus, a condition of conforming to the language of the text (see the comments on article 12).

HISTORIC SITES

Article 14.

The sites of monuments must be the object of special care in order to safeguard their integrity and ensure that they are cleared and presented in a seemly manner. The work of conservation and restoration carried out in such places should be inspired by the principles set forth in the foregoing articles.

Comments on article 14

From the context and from the fact that this article immediately precedes that relative to excavation *work*, it can be deduced that “monument sites” mainly alludes to ancient sites, such as the Roman Forum or the Acropolis in Athens. It would like to further limit, therefore, possible reconstruction of ancient monuments, as for nearly two centuries in Rome in the “exemplary” case of the Arco di Tito (see the comments on the preamble and on article 9), with the risk of allowing their progressive ruin without any remedy. On this point, the attitude of the modern Greeks in the

extraordinary case of the Acropolis in Athens is very different: the Parthenon is again finding a good number of its columns, in fact, thanks to the care and extraordinary survey of Manolis Korrés, interposing new rocks with new grooves, realised with the same marble as the ancient ones, among the surviving ancient rocks and reconstituting the marble architraves in the place of facings in reinforced concrete – by now degraded - realised fifty/eighty years ago. Also the temple to Athena Nike is on its third re-composition, replacing the now degraded reinforced concrete with a roof reinforced with large stainless steel beams. In addition, Dionisiou Aeropagitou Street, which was until 2003 a squalid bypass for heavy traffic, was transformed, for the Olympics, into a beautiful pedestrian walkway, very differently from Via dei Fori Imperiali, in Rome, still dedicated to motorized traffic in a situation in which the visitor is forced to observe the ruins from above, rather than from the point of view of those who originally constructed the monuments, in the name of the maximalistic assertion that every historic stratification must be safeguarded (returning to the comments on article 11). The Athenian restorers have acted and continue to act under the eyes of international Authorities, which have evidently reflected on the maximalism of the *nicht restaurieren* in vogue in Italy since the Nineteenth Century, accepting the path chosen by the Greek protection Authorities. The time has come to take note of this and to move on to another Restoration Charter, less contradictory and better adapted to the current state of the discipline.

EXCAVATIONS

Article 15.

Excavations should be carried out in accordance with scientific standards and the recommendation defining international principles to be applied in the case of archaeological excavation adopted by UNESCO in 1956.

Ruins must be maintained and measures necessary for the permanent conservation and protection of architectural features and of objects discovered must be taken. Furthermore, every means must be taken to facilitate the understanding of the monument and to reveal it without ever distorting its meaning.

All reconstruction work should however be ruled out "a priori". Only anastylosis, that is to say, the reassembling of existing but dismembered parts can be permitted. The material used for integration should always be recognizable and its use should be the least that will ensure the conservation of a monument and the reinstatement of its form.

Comments on article 15

It is useless to say that *anastylosis* seems to be tolerated here *ob torto collo* only in consideration of the restoration works on the ruins of Greek architecture undertaken since the Nineteenth Century (a problem all architects have been aware of since the time of the 1931 Athens Charter – with the term mutated not by chance from the Greek language – not to mention the reconstruction of the Stoà of Attalo in Athens in the 1950s) but while still imposing minimum intervention and its recognizability, in the guise of the restoration of the Arco di Tito. But, if *anastylosis à l'identique* is to be considered favourably in the case of Greek architecture in marble, why not consider as favourably the reconstruction *à l'identique* of non-ancient Greek structures, such as Roman ones, which instead of marble used *opus coementicum* and mixed structures of brick, wood and stone?

PUBLICATION

Article 16.

In all works of preservation, restoration or excavation, there should always be precise documentation in the form of analytical and critical reports, illustrated with drawings and photographs. Every stage of the work of clearing, consolidation, rearrangement and integration, as well as technical and formal features identified during the course of the work, should be included. This record should be placed in the archives of a public institution and made available to research workers. It is recommended that the report should be published.