

RESTORATION, TRANSFORMATION, RECYCLING. THE DRIFTING OF THE DISCIPLINE BEYOND THE CONSOLIDATED CRITERIA

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Abstract: there is a last tendency in architectonic restoration to avoid the use of the term *restoration* in favour of other such as *reusing*, *reassessment*, *appropriation* or *mutation*. According to the author, this terminological shift makes evident a rejection of taken-for-granted criteria in the field of historical buildings restoration supporting less planning restraint when working on the monuments, which entails a threat to the transmission of heritage's historic and cultural values. Recent works in different countries are studied as a basis for these arguments.

Key words: Historical Heritage. Restoration. Transformation. Recycling. Architecture.

NEW TERMS FOR NEW CONCEPTS?

In January 2013 the Spanish magazine *Arquitectura Viva* changed its format in an issue dedicated to what traditionally would have been called monumental restoration, but which significantly was entitled “Transformations. The second life of buildings”. In the foreword, the magazine's director, the famous critic and architect Luis Fernández-Galiano¹, did not speak about values but capital, neither did he use the term “restored buildings” but “transformed architectures”, as if the meanings of these words (values, restorations) implied something obsolete, old-fashioned, useless. It is very significant Fernández Galiano's use of terms clearly linked to the world of economics, such as “capital”, together with adjectives like “thermodynamic”, “informative” and “symbolic”, in preference to the material, historical and social values of architecture. He is not the only one to use these

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1 FERNÁNDEZ GALIANO, L., “Transformaciones”, in *Arquitectura Viva*, n.º 148, 2013, p. 3.

words yet. In fact, the repetition of words such as “reusing”, “re-qualification”, “recycling”² (this is the favorite one because it is quoted *ad nauseam* in many articles and texts published in Spain in the last years³), words that, preceded by the prefix *re-*, suppose an intensification, a reinforcement, an emphasis that should make us think that something in the world of monumental heritage restoration is taking place, taking into account that the interventions to which these words are applied are far away from what we consider restoration. Other terms currently used come from the fields of contemporary art (*appropriation*), interior desing (*alteration*)⁴ and even from Science (*mutation*).

Is this terminological variety a sign of a change in the discipline? It is difficult to know it yet. However, the proper task of the art historian is to investigate these questions, to critically and historically determine what they convey. This may not happen in countries such as Italy, where it exists a centenarian and apparently solid tradition of architectonic restoration, whereas in the rest of Europe, and in Spain in particular, there is a complex and striking situation since that avoids the use of the term “restoration”. In fact, in our professional field, it is taken for granted that considerations about restoration are almost exclusively restricted to Italy, to such an extent that we use the expression *restoration alla italiana*, since discussions in the rest of Europe focus on technical rather than theoretical matters⁵, and there is a great number of authors who underline the absence in our country of a real discussion about the criteria and theory of restoration⁶.

But, what have we understood by restoration so far? Apart from a few disagreements of some incidental authors (logical in every walk of life), a certain kind of consensus about the nature of restoration has been adopted decades ago: “a process that must keep an exceptional character, its aim being to preserve and reveal the aesthetic and historic value of the monument, and based on respect for the original material and authentic documents. It must stop at the point where

2 Italics in this text correspond to the author.

3 Among them, the monographic issue *RECLAIM. Remediate Reuse Recycle*, from the magazine *a + t*, number 1 39-40, 2012.

4 SCOTT, F., *On altering architecture*, London and New York, Routledge, 2008.

5 TORSILLO, B. P. (Paolo (ed.): *Che cos'è il restauro? A. Bellini, G. Carbonara, S. Casiello, R. Cecchi, M. Dezzi Bardeschi, P. Fancelli, P. Marconi, G. Spagnesi Cimbolli, B.P. Torsello*. Venice: Marsilio Editori, 2005, page. 9.

6 About this matter the following may be consulted: RIVERA, J., “Restauraciones arquitectónicas y Democracia en España”, in *BAU (Revista de Arquitectura, Urbanismo, Arte y Diseño)*, Revista del Colegio Oficial de Arquitectos de Castilla y León Este y Colegio Oficial de Arquitectos de Castilla-la Mancha, Año II, n.º 4 (1990), Valladolid, pp. 24-41; GRASSOT, L., “El azaroso paso del Rubicón de la restauración monumental en España”, in *Informes de la Construcción*, vol. 44, No. 427, sept-october 1993, pp. 5-15; JIMÉNEZ MARTÍN, A., “Rememorando 25 años de intervenciones en el patrimonio histórico”, in *25 aniversario de las Jornadas Internacionales de Intervención en el Patrimonio Histórico-Artístico, Actas de las XIII Jornadas de intervención en el Patrimonio Histórico-Artístico. En el umbral de la memoria* (Logroño, 3 to 6 november, 2005), Logroño, Colegio Oficial de Arquitectos de La Rioja, 2007, pp. 23-77.

conjecture begins”⁷, and about some of its features: restoration must extend the life of the work of art in its physical integrity, with all the available technological means; restoration must safeguard the permanence of the prints of time that characterize the monument as a whole and in its different parts, notwithstanding any aesthetic or historical opinion; at last, restoration must ensure the possibility of using the monument when these forms and functions may be adopted in a logical way, without contradicting the previous aspects⁸. In the same way, there is an agreed methodology of the discipline which serves as a guarantee of a proper restoration: the previous study (the analysis of the monument, its circumstances and the problems to be solved in all possible aspects: historic, material, architectural, symbolic), the posing of the objectives to achieve, the architectural project, the execution of the work and the divulgation of the action.

However, as we have said, the use of the word restoration is being currently avoided in a conscious way on behalf of other such terms as transformation, recycling, reusing, re-qualification, appropriation or mutation⁹, a word that it is also applied to contemporary architecture to explain the deep changes motivated in the discipline by the real-estate bubble, the detachment from the iconic buildings and the return to aspects such as sustainability, humility, containment, architecture as a social and cultural fact¹⁰.

As a specific example of this attitude, the famous Dutch architect Rem Koolhaas avoids the word *restoration*, preferring *preservation*. In a provocative conference held in 2004 at the Columbia University¹¹, Koolhaas reflected on the situation of cultural heritage, giving some provocative ideas which years later he materialized in Cronocaos, an exhibition arranged in the framework of the 2010 Venice Biennial¹². Looking back in time, Koolhaas stated that we were at a ridiculous point in which preservation had overpassed us, in which excessive conservatism, presided by what he called the lobby of authenticity, antiquity and beauty, had become an epidemic that is destroying our cities, because it provokes gentrification (the shifting of the lower income inhabitants in favor of tourists and upper class inhabitants), adding that, when a building is preserved it is turned into something artificial.

7 This is the definition for restoration in the Restoration Charter, 1972, cfr. Torsello, *op. cit.* p. 142.

8 TORSELLO, B. P., *Che cos'è ...*, *op. cit.*, p.142.

9 LINAZASORO, J. I., “Mutaciones del patrimonio”, in *Arquitectura Viva*, n.º 148, 2013, p.7.

10 “Arquitectura mutante. Regreso a la esencia de una profesión tocada por la crisis”, in *Babelia*, cultural magazine by *El País*, n.º 1091, 10.20.2012.

11 KOOLHAS, R., “Preservation is overtaking us”, in *Future Anterior. Journal of Historic Preservation*, 2004, vol. I, n.º 2, pp. 1-3; OTERO-PAILOS, J., “Suplemento al manifiesto de preservación de OMA”, in *Quaderns*, n.º 263, 2011, pp. 41-52.

12 STOPPANI, T., “Altered States of Preservation. Preservation by OMA/AMO”, *Future Anterior. Journal of Historic Preservation*, 2011, vol. VIII, n.º 1, pp. 97-109.

The *Cronocaos* exhibition was especially virulent against institutions and movements such as UNESCO, criticized by Koolhaas for their excessive protectionism, proposing, in fact, to reduce the indiscriminate list of buildings to protect; even more, in a provocative way, Koolhaas suggested the necessity of writing a list of junk buildings to be demolished (Convention Concerning the Demolition of World Cultural Junk)¹³ as a complement to the famous Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural Heritage signed in Paris in 1972.

It is obvious that Koolhaas' attitude responds to a polemical and limited opinion on restoration, but it is producing a great response due to his position as a leader of contemporary architecture. The word preservation, which in fact comes from ecology, has already been used in many media which warn (partly right) how often restoration disguises the commercialization of history and collective memory, and the transformation of historic architecture into a commercial lure¹⁴.

In a similar way, and posed not following Koolhaas' ideas but as a symptom of the professionals' opinion, the Spanish architect Andrés Cánovas, from the Amann, Cánovas y Mauri studio, states that "the terms rehabilitation and conservation are introduced as staples that fix the actions to an existing reality: to return the building to its original form—as if this was desirable or possible—or, if so, to give it the stabilizing chloroform"¹⁵, and he rejects the word *conservation* in favor of *intervention*, which he considers more exciting, or *recycling*, the latter being "of deep poetic intensity" according to Cánovas. In fact, from this point of view, Cánovas emphasizes the advantages of the obsolete industrial architecture for its possibilities for further interventions. In this way, the heritage is considered a container for latent and useful energies, an object to be appropriated and creatively transformed, to recycle into something new. It seems evident, therefore, that the prevailing logic today is not the conservation of the past but its appropriation.

On her behalf, Anatxu Zabalbescoa, art historian and architecture critic, underlines precisely that one of the up-going tendencies in *reusing* historic buildings is that of recovery, an attitude, according to Zabalbescoa, close to a *povera* aesthetics, in which the buildings "have come to talk from their structure, from their truth, and that implies to set the past free and not to conceal it"¹⁶. A new aesthetics for sobriety and austerity as a response to the times of crisis and as rejection of the last years' show off¹⁷, to which a great number of current examples would apply.

13 STOPPANI, T., "Altered States ...", in *op. cit.*

14 AVILÉS, P., "Preservación, ideología y cultura", *Quaderns*, n. 263, 2011, pp. 13-16.

15 CÁNOVAS, A., "Después de la industria", in *Arquitectura Viva*, n. 148, 2013, p. 21.

16 ZABALBESCOA, A., "La estética povera impone su criterio moral", in *El País*, January, 3, 2013.

17 ZABALBESCOA, A., "Arquitectura en tiempos de crisis" (2 febrero 2011). Consulted on August, 29, 2013, on the digital edition <http://blogs.elpais.com/del-tirador-a-la-ciudad/>.

In the same line, Paul Godberger, the The New York Times critic, prefers the term reparation to rehabilitation or restoration, “in a attempt to make a fresh start in relation to that architecture, infectious with the frantic beat of consumerism, which has invaded with impunity our societies”¹⁸. Considering intervention in historical heritage in this way, repairing would give a chance to architecture to recover its lost social and cultural roles.

SOME CASES TO STUDY

Among the Spanish examples to be mentioned, Matadero de Madrid¹⁹ is outstanding, a monumental complex of great architectonic and urban interest of almost 150,000m², designed by the architect Luis Bellido between 1908 and 1925, in working order until 1996, listed in the 1997 Madrid’s urban planning. From 2000, this significant evidence of Madrid industrial architecture has underwent a relevant rehabilitation process, within a town political strategy, for which an especial plan was designed in 2005²⁰, which included the introduction of new usages so as to turn it into a city for creation, a new cultural pole in the south of Madrid in line to the “cultural factories” that have proliferated in the last decades²¹.

The intervention criteria included in that planning were based on reversion, flexibility and maximum respect to the original structures, determining “the preservation of the structure of the buildings”, and also “reversion, in order to easily turn the buildings into their original condition”. In the same way, it was considered that “all past prints that reinforce the experimental character of the new institutions it hosts” should be expressly respected²².

From that moment on, the Matadero has become an active experimental laboratory for both cultural creation and management and for monumental restoration²³. A space where different institutions coexist (Madrid City Hall, the Spanish

18 “Editorial”, in *On Diseño*, n. 330, 2013, monograph on architecture and rehabilitation, p. 43.

19 About the history and present transformations of this building see: BELLIDO, L., *El nuevo matadero y mercado de ganados. Memoria explicativa del edificio*, Madrid, Imprenta Municipal, 1910; Colegio Oficial de Arquitectos, ed. *El Matadero Municipal de Madrid - La recuperación de la memoria*, Madrid, Ayuntamiento de Madrid, 2010; ; HERNÁNDEZ MARTÍNEZ, A., “El museo como reclamo turístico de la ciudad. Caixa Fórum Madrid y el Matadero de Madrid”, in *Integración y resistencia en la era global. Evento teórico X Bienal de la Habana*, La Habana, Bienal de La Habana y SEACEX, Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores y de Cooperación, 2009, pp. 133-146.

20 Document included on <http://www.mataderomadrid.org/una-nueva-arquitectura-para-los-nuevos-tiempos.html>. [Consulted on March, 12th, 2013].

21 LUCAS, A, “Un ‘matadero’ para el arte de vanguardia”, in *El Mundo*, Madrid, march, 14th, 2006, p. 53.

22 Document included in: <http://www.mataderomadrid.org/una-nueva-arquitectura-para-los-nuevos-tiempos.html>. [Consulted on March 12th, 2013].

23 About the whole interventions see: “Centro de Creación Matadero, Madrid”, in *AV Monografías*, n.º 159-160, España 2013, pp. 28-53.

Theatre, the Design Centre, the Ruipérez Foundation, among others), sponsors, at the same time, of the conservation of the different parts of the complex by means of different intervention criteria, which makes the Matadero a fascinating example to study, and reveals some of the current tendencies and contradictions in historical heritage conservation.

One of the most relevant interventions to be mentioned is the Cineteca, opened in 2011, a pioneering institution devoted to documentary films.²⁴ The project is owned by ch+qs study (architects José María Churtichaga and Cayetana de la Quadra Salcedo), which has transformed four of the buildings into two cinemas, a recording set, an archive room, a patio for summer cinema and a canteen²⁵. The outcome has been qualified by the international criticism as “a futurist space”²⁶, like a set in *Metropolis*²⁷, an inspiring architecture²⁸, considered one of the best ten inner spaces in our country²⁹. Rightly defined as the recycling of a historical building³⁰, the keys to this intervention have been the experimentation with unusual materials such as industrial hoses for the inner part of the archive and cinemas and the treatment of light, with a system of hidden led bulbs that create magical and stunning spaces, which evoke the cinemas of the 1930s and 1940s, according to the critic Llätzer Moix³¹.

The Casa del Lector is, from a visual point of view, likewise spectacular, but controversial as regards the intervention criteria. An institution managed by the Ruipérez Foundation devoted to promote and encourage reading, inaugurated in 2012. Set up in buildings 13, 14, 17b and 17c, in an more-than-8000m² area, the project has been carried out by Ensemble Studio (architect Antón García Abril), winner of the 2006 restricted competition. Outstanding in the intervention are the giant pre-stressed concrete beams of forty tons weight, inserted across the holes of the buildings 13 and 14, that introduce a new perpendicular sense to the original basilica-like plan³². Two objections may be raised to this project: whether the introduction of these beams does respect the original typology of the building and

24 <http://www.mataderomadrid.org/cineteca.html>, [consulted on August, 26th, 2013].

25 “Cineteca y archivo de creadores, Madrid”, in *Arquitectura Viva*, n. 140, 2011, pp. 82-85.

26 WILDMAN, S., “From neglect to cultural nucleus”, in *International Herald Tribune*, weekend 2-3 february, 2013, p. 16.

27 LÓPEZ, A., “Madrid’s Killer Cinema”, *The New York Times*, April 4th 2012, http://www.chqs.net/archivos/publicaciones/documento_80_0703_nyt_120404_all.pdf, consulted on August 26th, 2013.

28 *En Voyage*, China, october 2012, pp. 80-81.

29 PARAFIANOWICZ, L., “Top 10: Spaces in Spain”, Published in *Frame*, June 26th, 2012, http://www.chqs.net/archivos/publicaciones/documento_85_0703_120626_frame_top+10+spaces+in+spain.pdf. [Consulted on August 26th, 2013].

30 TROVATO, G., “Madrid Matadero Cinemateque”, in *Compasses (Arabian Emirates)*, n. 17, 2013, pp. 82-89.

31 MOIX, L., “Cistells i mànegues de cinema. Crítica d’Arquitectura”, in *La Vanguardia*, June 14th 2013, p. 32.

32 “Casa del Lector, Madrid”, in *Arquitectura Viva*, n. 148, 2013, p. 22.

its space values, and if this is an easily reversible action such as the Special Urban Planning demanded.

In June 2011 the Nave 16 was inaugurated, a versatile exhibition space of about 6.000 m² managed by the local government, whose rehabilitation has been carried out by the architects Alejandro Virseda, José Ignacio Carnicero and Ignacio Villa Almazán, short-listed in the 2012 FAD Architecture Awards³³. In this case, the intervention, described by the same authors as the reassessment of the memory of the place by the recycling of the pre-existing architecture, affected two buildings and it consisted in the introduction of a flexible black-painted iron structure, as a giant furniture or box adapted to the dimensions of the central nave, which allows, by means of mobile boards, different positions that graduate the light according to the needs of this multifunctional area, used as a concert, exhibition or meeting hall, or as a set of independent exhibition areas likewise. The original structure of the iron columns was painted in dark grey and the plasters on the wall were removed in order to show the face brickwork, since its rough texture was considered more attractive in contrast to both the metallic ending of the original structure and the new additions.

Another intervention was the adaptation of part of the building 17 as the seat of the Design Center, managed by the Madrid Design Foundation, opened in 2007. In this case the architect José Antonio García Roldán did not touch the building, the walls and pillars partly broken and the plasters missing, and at the same time he introduced recycled materials such as bright polycarbonate in the closing structures, industrial trays of reused bumpers on the floor and galvanized iron to divide and adapt the exhibition area.

However the most interesting and the most publicized intervention of the entire complex was that realized between 2004 and 2006 under the direction of the architects Arturo Franco and Fabrice van Teeslar, in the Nave 17 where *Intermediae* was set up, an office of the City Hall conceived as a platform for the interchange of experiences between public and artists. This institution develops different plans of action including the help to artistic creation (the leader program *Abierto por Obras* encourages the creation by artists of specific works for the old fridge in the building 14), performances, exhibitions, and other social and educational activities.

Regarding the restoration criteria, the action by Franco and Van Teeslar has attracted the attention in both Spanish and international scenes³⁴, due to its radical

33 *On Diseño*, n. 327, junio 2012, consulted in the online edition: <http://www.ondiseño.com/proyecto.php?id=1965>. [Consulted on March, 12th, 2013].

34 FRANCO, A., "L'esperienza dei limiti [Exploring the limits]", in *Domus*, n. 8, 2007, pp. 12-19; lb., "Intermedia Matadero. Paseo de la Chopera, 14. Nave 17C. Antiguo Matadero Legazpi, Madrid: reinterpretación constructiva de un espacio degradado", *Pasajes de la Construcción*, 2007, n. 34, p. 23.

nature, to its austere and minimal willingness to non-intervention in the pre-existing architecture; in fact, criticism has defined it as “a new way to approach rehabilitation”, “a radical attitude that scrupulously respects the historic heritage limiting action to the minimum”, “an expressive view on the old and the new”³⁵. In the architects’ own words: “We assumed the project as an opportunity to explore the potentials of rehabilitation. We tried to contribute a new stance in historical heritage, a radical stance, an experience in the limits of non-acting”³⁶.

An attitude in which intervention has been reduced in a conscious way to the minimum; which corresponds to a taste for shapelessness, for rawness, for a kind of deliberately-poor aesthetics, unpleasant to certain canons, against the cult of the new that has been imposed in the social taste for years. Walls, floors and roofs remain the way they were, the architects have not made modifications but the insertion of a glass-and-steel box for the offices and some steel blocks for the toilets. The rest of the space appears such as it was after twenty years of neglect. Not only this, the expressiveness of the place has been improved by the use of materials such as iron and polished concrete for the scarce new elements (doors, windows, partitions, reception desk, etc.) that connect to the industrial sensibility. The minimum conservation principles have been overpassed, since in a provocative contemporary gesture, the artificial ruinous aspect has been underlined by the breaking up of wall plasters and pillars up to middle height and the opening of irregular doorways on the walls, where iron boxes that resemble sculptures are placed as doors. The effect is that of a lugubrious space which causes a strong impact on the spectator and connects with a fashionable *povera aesthetics*, quite common in avant-guard cultural institutions, as it is reflected in similar spaces: the Palais de Tokio in Paris, opened in 2001³⁷, and the MUDE, Museo do Desing e da Moda in Lisbon, inaugurated in 2009³⁸. The most recent instance in this way would be the Tanks, a venue for performances and action art set up in old petrol tanks, inaugurated in the Tate Modern in July 2012³⁹.

These interventions represent a kind of *minimal restoration*, in which the building remains frozen in its damaged state, making evident a minimal willing-

35 FERNÁNDEZ BERMEJO, R., “Desnudar la historia. Arturo Franco y Fabrice Van Teslaar. Centro cultural Matedero Madrid”, in *Diseño Interior*, Madrid, n. 183, 2007, october, pp. 170-177, especially p. 136.

36 “Centro Cultural Matedero Madrid: Arturo Franco y Fabrice van Teeslar”, in *Diseño Interior*, n. 183, 2007, pp. 170-177.

37 LACATON& VASAL, “Centro de arte en un pabellón de 1937, París”, in *AV Monografías*, n. 98, 2002, pp. 104-108; AYERS, A., “Fun Palais; Architects: Lacaton & Vassal”, in *Architectural review*, vol. 231, n. 1384, 2012 June, p. 44-51. More information about this architectural project in: HERNÁNDEZ MARTÍNEZ, A., “De museos, antimuseos y otros espacios expositivos en el siglo XXI”, in *Artigrama*, n.º 28, 2013, Departamento de Historia del Arte, Universidad de Zaragoza, pp. 29-54.

38 COHN, D., “Museum of Design & Fashion, Lisbon (Ricardo Carvalho + Joana Vilhena Arquitectos)”, in *Architectural record*, vol. 197, n. 9, 2009 Sept., p. 66-71.

39 GARCÍA, Á., “Arte en los tanques de petróleo”, in *El País*, July, 17th 2012.

ness for action, with a conscious use of imperfect endings on surfaces and a premeditated refusal to hide the passing of time in the work. Furthermore, in many cases there is a shameless exposure of the installations, the damages, in an attitude that, from my point of view, is due to a clash between contemporary artistic and social practices and the world of restoration⁴⁰. In fact, in the obsession with eroded and imperfect surfaces in many projects of contemporary restoration, one can observe the subtle and unconscious presence of pictorial Informalism, without forgetting the great importance in contemporary art of movements such as art povera, which drew attention towards humble and recycled materials. At the same time, the increased use of new sculpture materials such as Corten steel, present in so many works by contemporary artists ranging from the American Richard Serra to the Spaniard Eduardo Chillida, has succeeded in getting people used to an aesthetics different from that of traditional art, a factor that influences, together with the previous one, on the acceptance and success of unfinished-like restorations, where cracked and flaked walls, concrete floors, iron beams, etc. thrive.

It is not the first time that this relationship among aesthetics, art and restoration has been made clear. In fact, in 1954, Marguerite Yourcenar wrote a delicious text *Le temps, ce grand sculpteur*⁴¹ in which she noted the influence of changes in the taste for the appreciation of ancient art and the significance this circumstance had in the restoration of works of art.

CONTEMPORARY ART APPROPRIATES HERITAGE AND.... RESTORES IT!

On the other hand, the search for alternative and unusual spaces that offer more appropriate venues for contemporary works of art, has led to the localization and restoration of strange places such as prisons⁴², submarine bases⁴³ or bun-

40 On this, see: SALVO, S., "Il restauro dell'architettura contemporanea como tema emergente" en CARBONARA, G., *Restauro Architettonico, Primo Aggiornamento*, Torino, UTET, 2007, pp. 265-336; HERNÁNDEZ MARTÍNEZ, A., "Lo cutre es cool. Estética, arte contemporáneo y restauración monumental en el siglo XXI", in ARCE, E. et al. (editores), *Simposio Reflexiones sobre el gusto*, Zaragoza, Institución Fernando el Católico, 2012, pp. 477-504; y HERNÁNDEZ MARTÍNEZ, A., "L'estetica del deterioramento e dell'imperfezione: una tendenza in crescita nel restauro architettonico", in *Palladio: rivista di storia dell'architettura e restauro*, n.º 51, 2013, pp. 89-106.

41 YOURCENAR, M., "Le temps, ce grand sculpteur", in *La Revue des voyages*, n.º 15, 1954, pp. 6-9.

42 Manifesta 8_2010 Murcia, also known as the European Biennial for Contemporary Art, is a travelling activity throughout different places in the continent and which on this occasion was held in Spain, using as one of its seats San Anton's prison in Cartagena. REVUELTA, L., "Manifesta <okupa>", in *ABC cultural*, Madrid, July 31st 2010, p. 31.

43 LIFE, Lieu International des Formes Emergentes en Nantes (Francia). MARTÍ, O., "Una base de submarinos para las formas emergentes. El LIFE de Saint Nazaire insufla vida cultural a un lugar que simbolizó la destrucción de la ciudad" ("A submarine base for the emerging forms. Saint-Nazaire's LIFE provides cultural life to a place that symbolized the destruction of the city"), in *Babelia, El País* cultural magazine, Madrid, December 29th, 2007, pp. 30-31; "Transformación del búnker Alvéole 14", in *Arquitectura COAM*, Madrid, n. 356, 2nd Term 2009, pp. 35-39.

kers of the Second World War. The fascination these hermetic and daring buildings hold, a difficult and controversial heritage from history, mingles with the search for novelty; without forgetting that these projects aim to come to terms with history in a different way, depriving the Nazi constructions in Germany, Austria and France of their ideology by the introduction of cultural usages.

Among others, two outstanding instances may be studied: Vienna's Contemporary Art Tower (2001), CAT, and the Boros Collection, set up in a bunker in Berlin (2008)⁴⁴. In both cases we are in front of monumental works made in Hitler's command between 1942 and 1945, which visually impose themselves on public areas and are linked to dramatic events for German and Austrian people.

The *Contemporary Art Tower* (CAT) was one of the six flak towers built by the architect Friedrich Tramm in Vienna. Its position (strategically placed in the downtown), materials (an imposing mass of concrete, which undoubtedly constitutes a singular forerunner of architectonic brutalism), dimensions (50 meters high, 9 inner levels, up to 3.5 meters-wide walls) and history, made it a unique building. Its functions were not only military (to protect the air space of the Austrian capital from the allied bombings), but it was also used as air-raid shelter for civilians, even as hospital and radio station. Its authors envisaged it as a memorial for the German dead soldiers after the war, covering the rough concrete walls with marble tiles. The soviet army tried to demolish it unsuccessfully, because of its solidness and the resistance of the concrete fabric, and due to the closeness of many houses. Today, the six towers are listed as monuments and are property of both the Austrian state and city of Vienna.

The initiative in giving new life to the building was taken by Peter Noever, director of the Museum of Decorative Arts (MAK), an active and prestigious Austrian artistic institution, who in 1994 asked the state to use one of the neglected towers as a repository of its contemporary art collection. CAT was born a few years later, in 2001, and foresaw the enactment of an architectonic and artistic project by Jenny Holzer and James Turrell which partially modified the structure, especially in the outer and rear parts where two new glass pavilions would be built, a project that was not carried out due to different reasons⁴⁵.

The bunker's adaptation as MAK's branch was easy because of the minimum transformations in the building, since it is being used the way it was in 1944, that is, in its original state. The strategy was to occupy the building without any transformations, inviting contemporary artists to make specific works for it, as it has been in many countries since the 1970s (in this way the PS1 in New York is a specially

⁴⁴ More information on these two buildings in: HERNÁNDEZ MARTÍNEZ, A., "Can Contemporary Art change the future of conflicting heritage? The case of Nazism architecture", in GARCÍA CUETOS, M.^a P., y VARAGNOLI, C., *Heritage in conflict. Memory, history, architecture*, Arriccia, Aracne Editrice, 2015, pp. 173-200.

⁴⁵ http://www.mak.at:80/en/the_mak/sites/expositur/mak-tower_2.

significant forerunner)⁴⁶. Famous current artists such as Atelier Van Lieshout, Ilya Kabakov or Anish Kapoor have already placed their works there, establishing an amazing dialogue between contemporary art and the oppressive and aesthetically amazing spaces of the flak tower. This is, no doubt, a pioneer world initiative to show contemporary art in a singular context, which, at the same time, tries to confront the relationship between local population and an element linked to a decisive historical event that brings back a painful and unavoidable memory.

In a similar way, the introduction of a cultural usage into an unsuspected place, but with many noticeable differences in the criteria, the Boros' collection has to be mentioned⁴⁷, set up in the bunker built in 1942 in Reinhardstrasse, in Berlin city centre, in Mitte, one of the coolest quarters of the German capital. The project has been carried out by the Berlin studio Realarchitektur (Jean Casper, Petra Peterson and Andrew Strickland) and its aim was the turning of the Nazi bunker into both a private museum and a 450 square meter luxury house (a Miesian modern loft with a thoughtful design furniture) in the attic added to the original construction. This is no longer a public, as in the Austrian CAT, but a private initiative by the publicist Christian Boros, owner of an important collection of contemporary art, which includes the most famous artists such as Damian Hirst, Olafur Eliasson, Santiago Sierra, etc.

Boros bought the bunker in 2003, adding to its unusual and radical life a new stage as private museum, a singular testimony of the own German history. Its history begins with its construction under the Nazi regime; after the Second World War it was used as a prison by the soviet army; under the DDR was a warehouse for exotic tropical fruits, and its final usage after the reunification was that of a techno music discotheque and sadomasochist club.

The original building is a massive square-planned anti air-raid building, built in 1943 by the architect Karlz Bonatz, substantially smaller than CAT in Vienna, eighteen meters high (five floors), but with three-meter-thick concrete walls. In this case the criteria for intervention was the elimination of the main parts of the building, since the 120 original rooms with low ceilings, which sheltered 3,000 Berlin people, did not fit properly the collection's exhibition standards. For this reason, the architects demolished the walls and ceilings in order to create a labyrinthine structure of eighty spaces of different dimensions (some of them with a double or triple highness) and a 3,000 square meter exhibition space. It has to be noticed that, in this building, the nature of the collection, the peculiarities

46 On this institution see: <http://momaps1.org/>, and SMITH, R., "More spacious and gracious, yet still funky at heart", *The New York Times*, 31 october 1997, consulted on the digital edition august 28th, 2013. <http://www.nytimes.com/1997/10/31/arts/art-review-more-spacious-and-gracious-yet-still-funky-at-heart.html>.

47 SACHS, N., "Boros collection and residence (Realarchitektur)", in *Industria delle costruzioni*, vol. 45, n. 417, 2011 Jan.-Feb., p. 16-21.

of the works of art and the opinion of the artists themselves about its exhibition have influenced the decisions taken in the restoration. Some rooms have been specifically created to show particular works such as the installation *Berlin Colour Sphere* (2006), by Olafur Eliasson, or a monumental, 6-meter-high installation by Ai Wei Wei; in some other cases unusual perspectives of the work of art has been intentionally sought. In this sense, one may talk about *appropriationism* (term used to refer to a postmodern artistic trend of the 80s) by contemporary art of the monumental heritage.

It is needful to say that the building was scheduled and its facades and stairwells listed as historical monuments, but not the rest of the interior. Before the intervention, the bunker was covered with paint and graffiti, some of them have been partially brushed and the resulting rough surface is used as an abstract background for the works of art. Other rooms have been painted in white, according to the traditional “white box” museology, widespread in contemporary art.

After the refurbishment, the bunker has become another touristic attraction in the city of Berlin⁴⁸ and the critics of the famous American newspaper *The New York Times* welcomed it warmly: “a space that will have no rivals in its idiosyncrasy”, “one of the capital’s most extreme examples of its assets”⁴⁹ “a milestone in the city”⁵⁰; being similar to what happened in the German press: “a place with a turbulent history, now lavishly remodelled as a showplace for art”⁵¹, whereas the collector is described as “an usual customer with a sophisticated artistic taste”⁵².

However, these initiatives may arouse some suspicion. No doubt, these projects have many advantages from the point of view of international cultural tourism, but the key question is (further beyond the respect of these interventions to the buildings’ historic values, which is also relevant) whether contemporary art can be a means to tame the unwanted legacy of the Second World War, as the Polish art historian and journalist Katarzyna Jadozinska wonders regarding CAT⁵³, or whether the Boros Museum is only the ego’s affirmation of an ignorant customer indifferent to the historic value of the building as the German architect Norbert

48 GÓMEZ, J., “El búnker de un millonario. Una antigua fortaleza nazi sirve de vivienda-museo al rico Christian Boros”, in *El País*, August 20th, 2013, consulted on August 20th, 2013 on the digital edition.

49 TZORTZIS, A., “In a Berlin war bunker, Christian Boros creates a showcase for art”, in *The New York Times*, June 12th 2007, consulted on March 8th, 2013, http://www.nytimes.com/2007/06/12/arts/12iht-bunker.1.6105187.html?_r=0.

50 EDDY, M., “Contemporary Art Finds a Shelter in Berlin”, in *The New York Times*, Septem 2012, cons27th, 2012, consulted on march 8th, 2013, http://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/28/arts/28iht-bunker28.html?_r=0.

51 NUSSER, S., “The New Past: The Boros Collection in Berlin”, consulted on March 8th, 2013, <http://www.goethe.de/kue/bku/msi/en4151025.htm>.

52 KAPPINGLER, C., “Boros Art Collection, Berlin-Mitte-Art in a bunker with a certain frisson”, in *Architektuer Aktuell*, n. 342, 2008, pp. 120-129.

53 JADOZINSKA, K., “Bunkers with art”, in *Herito, Heritage, culture & the present*, january 05, 2011, digital edition consulted on January 26th, 2013, <http://www.herito.pl/en/articles/bunkers-with-art—2.html>.

Sachs says: “it might only be a remarkable work that shows the architects’ projecting ability. The decision falls to the visitor. In any case, the project brings up questions about the society’s attitude”⁵⁴. The truth is that in contrast to the building’s success in the professional world, as awards show⁵⁵, the visit may arouse some unease due to the transformation of a memory-filled building into a fashion place, in which the footprints of history have been treated as something material, disregarding its documentary value⁵⁶.

REFLECTIONS ON TERMINOLOGY

The terminology used today to describe and comment on heritage interventions unveils the shift in a social paradigm, the emergence of diverse attitudes towards heritage of which we are not fully aware. The use of terms such as appropriation, reassessment, regeneration, recycling, underlies the idea of heritage as asset, as resource and as a consumer product rather than a cultural good to be preserved. The deliberate refusal to using the word restoration, on which a series of negative comments are expressed, reveals that something is going on, and that something may be linked to our relation with history.

Probably, as the French anthropologist Marc Augé holds: “the problem is that nowadays the world is ruled by an ideology of the present, of today, that stunts both the effort of thinking the present as history, an ideology determined to turn into something obsolete both the teachings of the past and the wish to imagine the future. One or two decades ago, the present has become something hegemonic”⁵⁷. An attitude that would lead to the present’s demand to appropriate the past and to handle it at its own convenience. In this way, the opinion of Ignasi de Solà Morales, one of the responsible architects for the rebuilding of the German Pavilion for the 1929 Barcelona International Exposition and director of the Liceu’s rebuilding works, defending the right of contemporary architects to seize the past, is very significant: “the past culture has to be in the service of the present”⁵⁸.

⁵⁴ SACHS, N., “Boros collection...”, in *op. cit.* p. 16.

⁵⁵ Selected for the German pavilion in the 2006 Biennial of Venice, the famous magazine Wallpaper includes it into the 101 most exciting buildings in the world in 2007, in 2008 it is awarded with the Architecture Award for Concrete, and it is nominated to the Mies van der Rohe Award in 2009.

⁵⁶ “There is a seemingly great demand for extraordinary places today, for their authenticity, for their aura, and architects have been able to meet this demand. However, the visitor leaves with some discomfort this historical building whose dark past is now exclusively used for art and the ego of the collector, and in which, without establishing any distance, have been treated all traces as materials and as symbols, not documents.” KAPPINGLER, C., “Boros Art ...”, in *op. cit.* p. 128.

⁵⁷ AUGÉ, M., 2008, *Où est passé l’avenir*; Italian translation *Che fine ha fatto il futuro? Dai nonluoghi al nontempo*, Milano, 2009, quoted by G. Carbonnara, in *Architettura d’oggi e restauro. Un confronto antico-nuovo*, 2011, premissa.

⁵⁸ Interview with Ignasi de Solà-Morales published in the magazine *Abc Cultural*, October 2nd 1999, p. 49.

The sociologist Zygmunt Bauman characterizes the present times as a liquid, volatile, changing world in which “traditional habits, deep-rooted customs, the solid cognitive frames or the praise for stable values become obstacles (...) The modern liquid culture is not longer a learning culture, is, above all, a culture of indifference, of discontinuity and oblivion (...) We live a “liquid modernity”, understood as an individualized and unregulated consumer society”⁵⁹.

Perhaps, as a consequence of this situation, today’s society does not endure rigorous judgement nor limitations. This circumstance, apply to heritage protection, translates itself into an unlimited freedom to appropriate the past, thence the rejection of restoration criteria, a set of rules made by and inherited from a long thinking and reflecting tradition that characterizes the European artistic culture. The above mentioned reason may explain the conscious refusal to use the word restoration, since this will mean to assume the existence of some limits when intervening in historic architecture, to put a stop to creativity, to the possibilities of reusing, derived from the recognition of cultural values that must be preserved. Therefore, to reject the term restoration would remorselessly allow to sacrifice historic architecture on behalf of some purposes that have nothing to do with cultural heritage conservation. In this way, it is urgent and necessary to define and think about the monumental restoration of the 21st century, taking up again what is valid in the European restoration culture, a legacy that identifies us in front of other continents and cultures. We cannot forget that our decision to protect and preserve cultural goods is due to the values inherent to them, what commits us to act according to a historic sensibility and respect to them, not guided by aesthetic, economic or ideological criteria.

Unfortunately, the use of a language distant from the usual concepts of our discipline together with the criteria applied in some interventions, lead us to corroborate the less importance that the values of both historical heritage and restoration itself have. This process reveals the media-like character of current architecture and the displacement of the meaning of the term restoration, which is sometimes reduced to the recovery of the building’s image (for instance in the reconstruction of missing monuments), where, obviously, there is nothing left to restoration. In this context, restoration does not consists in the recovery of historic architecture’s values, but in the production of an fictional image that nonetheless it is very attractive to society; the proposal for the reconstruction of the Royal Palace in Berlin is very significant⁶⁰.

59 SARABIA, B., “Bauman. Sobre la educación en un mundo líquido”, in *El Cultural, El Mundo’s* magazine, 2-22-2013, pp. 10-11, esp. p. 11.

60 On this subject see: KUEHN, W., “Model und event”, in *Candide. Journal for Architectural Knowledge*, 2009, n.º1, pp. 97-116; OSWALT, P., “À propos du projet lauréat pour le Humboldt-Forum”. *Criticat*, 2010, n.º5, pp. 64-67; HERNÁNDEZ MARTÍNEZ, A., “Historia de la reconstrucción. Reconstrucción de la historia”, in ARCINIEGA GARCÍA, L. (ed.), *La obra interminable: uso y recepción del arte*, Valencia, Department of History

These opinions lay bare that we live in a society so different to that of the 20th century, yet the challenge before us is to simply accept the heritage's condition as a consumer product or to react and underline the importance of heritage's cultural values, and, at the same time, to adopt an attitude in our professional world which scientifically criticize, with solid reasons and broadcasted in the media, those interventions which cannot be labelled, under no circumstances, restorations, and which have decisive consequences in heritage.

As the American historian Leland Roth states:

“Architecture is like the shell of the nautilus of the human race: it is the environment we build for ourselves and which we change and adapt to our new expanded field as we acquire experience and knowledge. If we want to preserve our identity we must be careful not to remove the shell of our past, since it is like the physical chronicle of our aspirations and achievements”⁶¹.

of Art, Facultad de Geografía e Historia, Universidad de Valencia, 2013, pp. 293-324; HERNÁNDEZ MARTÍNEZ, A., “A la búsqueda (imposible) del tiempo perdido. Reflexiones en torno a la ‘reconstrucción idéntica’, definida por Paul Philippot”, in *Conversaciones...*, n.º 1, junio 2015, monográfico *Conversaciones... con Paul Philippot*, Coordinación Nacional de Conservación del Patrimonio Cultural, Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, México, pp. 97-116.

61 ROTH, LELAND, M., *Entender la arquitectura Sus elementos, historia y significado*, Barcelona, Gustavo Gili, 1993, p. 1.

ETHICS IN PRESERVATION IN THE 21ST CENTURY

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Abstract: The text shows the need to analyze the reasons that lead society to preserve their cultural heritage, found in the basis of the theoretical principles that underlie the practice. The idea is to work with coherent criteria and a sound methodology to carry out scrupulous interventions, in contraposition to reductive as well as arbitrary actions, subjected to shortsighted and sectorial interests. These parameters should guide the ethical and deontological principles of the different professions involved, so that the cultural heritage can continue to be accurate documents and, as such, can transmit knowledge in an appropriate manner and serve as effective support for knowledge and the collective memory**.

Key Words: Cultural Heritage. Preservation. Intervention Criteria. Theory of Restoration. Professional Ethics.

The ethical and deontological issues related to the preservation of cultural heritage are, nowadays, a highly emergent theme¹. In times of accelerated trans-

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** English text: Shirley Gabay. This text revisits statements presented in other texts, especially: KÜHL, B., "História e Ética na Conservação e na Restauração de Monumentos Históricos", in *Revista CPC*, n. 1, 2005, pp. 16-40, as well as "Ética e responsabilidade social na preservação do patrimônio cultural", ABRACOR Congress in 2009 and disclosed in the institution's site: <http://www.abracor.com.br/novosite/downloads/textobeatrizmk.pdf> (21.08.2013). The text was then republished, with the same title, in the magazine *Ideias em destaque*, n. 36, 2011, pp. 86-100.

1 A brief explanation is necessary about the use of certain words in this text. In Brazil, the terms related to preservation are used in a slightly imprecise manner; however, in the fields of knowledge involved the word preservation has a broader sense and includes a great variety of actions such as inventories, registries, laws, heritage education and also the interventions on the historic monuments. With regard to the interventions, the denominations maintenance, conservation and restoration can be used as proposed in the Venice Charter, with increasing degrees of transformation on the monument; or as proposed by Cesare Brandi, who summarizes all of them in the word restoration, the sense adopted in this text. We are aware of postures counteracting restoration, emphasizing conservation as an action with a diverse essence. There are also those who still look at restoration as an act that leads the monument to