

This book presents the contributions to the workshop that took place at the University of Genoa, Faculty of Architecture, on October 2007, as a new start for the thematic sub-network on Conservation, within EAAE and ENHSA. The workshop was the occasion to bring together educators in conservation, from various European Schools of Architecture, in order to:

- investigate similarities and differences, about contents and pedagogy of teaching, within the field of conservation/restoration of the architectural heritage;
- examine the ways in which the teaching of conservation/restoration is present in the curricula of different schools;
- critically compare educational objectives and strategies implemented by the schools in relation to conservation/restoration matters;
- exchange ideas and thoughts on new teaching methods and discuss the role of the teaching of conservation/restoration for an architect.

The workshop was attended by almost 100 participants representing: Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Rumania, Spain, Turkey.

ISBN 2-930301-35-X

Teaching Conservation/Restoration of the Architectural Heritage

editors: Stefano F. MUSSO, Luisa DE MARCO

EAAE transactions on architectural education n. 38



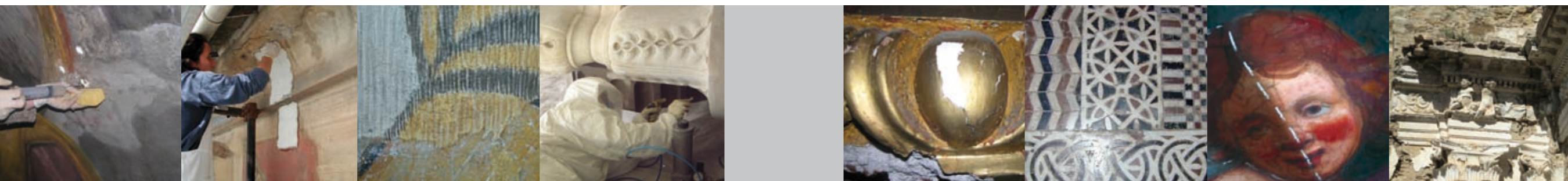
Acropolis Museum - Athens

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Goals, Contents and Methods

editors

Stefano F. MUSSO, Luisa DE MARCO



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Opening Session

Introduction

Stefano F. Musso *Coordinator of the sub-network on Conservation*
DSA - Department of Sciences for Architecture, University of Genoa (Italy) 15

Method, procedures, protocols

Paolo Torsello
DSA - Department of Sciences for Architecture, University of Genoa (Italy) 27

Presentation of the R. Lemaire Centre for Conservation

Luc Verpoest, Herman Neuckermans, K. De Jonge, Koenrad van Balen
"Raymond Lemaire Centre for Conservation",
Katholieke Universiteit of Leuven (Belgium) 33

First Session

What and why?

Keynote speech

Teaching/Thinking/Learning/Doing

Conservation and Creativity in Architectural Education

Prof. Loughlin Kealy
School of Architecture, University College of Dublin (Ireland) 41

L' Architecte pour la Restauration: une Expérience Didactique à Naples

Aldo Aveta
University "Federico II", Naples (Italy) 49

L' Architecte pour la Restauration: une Expérience Didactique à Naples

Bianca Gioia Marino
University "Federico II", Naples (Italy) 57

Why Teaching Conservation at all in a Mercantile Society?

Adrian Crăciunescu
University of Architecture and Urbanism "Ion Mincu", Bucharest (Romania) 67

Technology of Architecture towards Conservation

Giovanna Franco
DIPARC - Department of Architectural Design and Construction,
University of Genoa (Italy) 73

<p>Learning pre-modern Architectural and Construction Arts at the Faculty of Architecture, University of Rome Three Francesco Giovanetti*, Michele Zampilli** <i>*Municipality of Rome,</i> <i>**Department of Design and Study of Architecture,</i> <i>University of Rome Three (Italy)</i></p>	85
<p>The Restoration Teaching in the Laboratories of the second year at the Faculty of Civil Architecture of the Polytechnic of Milan Gabriella Guarisco <i>Department of Design of Architecture, Polytechnic of Milan,</i> <i>Campus Bovisa (Italy)</i></p>	101
<p>Summary of Educational Programme in Transformation and Conservation at Department 5; Architecture, Space, Habitation and Building Culture and of Research at the Institute of Building Culture. Gregers Algreen-Ussing <i>School of Architecture, The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts (Denmark)</i></p>	107
<p>The Art of Blending Jo Coenen <i>School of Architecture, Delft University of Technology (The Netherlands)</i></p>	113
<p>Project-centered, Construction-centered Design in the Training of Architecture Students Eugenio Vassallo, Emanuela Sorbo, Sara Di Resta <i>Department of History of Architecture, IUAV, Venice (Italy)</i></p>	125
<p>Les Savoirs de la Sauvegarde Alberto Grimoldi <i>Department of Architecture and Planning, Polytechnic of Milan</i> <i>Regional Pôle of Mantua (Italy)</i></p>	135
<p>Cultural Heritage Process Charted: Defining Competences to Decide Educational Programs Stefano Della Torre <i>Department of Building Environment Sciences and Technology (BEST),</i> <i>Polytechnic of Milan, Campus Leonardo (Italy)</i></p>	149
<p>Teaching Conservation/Restoration in the Architectural Field: a Challenge for Heritage Protection Public Institutions Luisa De Marco <i>Regional Directorate of Liguria for Cultural Heritage and Landscape - MiBAC (Italy)</i></p>	155

Second Session

How?

Keynote speech

How do we teach?

André De Naeyer

*School of Architecture, University College of Design Sciences "Henry van de Velde",
Antwerp (Belgium)* 163

Teaching in Diagnosis and Consolidation Courses

A. Anzani, L. Binda, L. Cantini, G. Cardani, P. Condoleo, S. Saisi

*Department of Structural Engineering, Polytechnic of Milan,
Campus Bovisa (Italy)* 173

An Architectural Heritage Graduate Studies Program: a Portuguese Experience

Jorge de Novaes Bastos

Faculty of Architecture, Technical University of Lisbon (Portugal) 185

Conservation and Restoration in the University of Naples Federico II: Education in Profession and Research

Stella Casiello, Andrea Pane, Valentina Russo

*Department of History of Architecture and Restoration
University of Naples Federico II (Italy)* 195

The Teaching of Architectural Restoration on the Degree Course in Constructional Engineering-Architecture at the University of L'Aquila

Donatella Fiorani

Faculty of Architecture, University of L' Aquila (Italy) 207

Teaching History and Theory of Conservation/Restoration

Lucina Napoleone

DSA - Department of Sciences for Architecture, University of Genoa (Italy) 215

Teaching the Restoration of Monuments at Palermo: the State of the Art

Renata Prescia

Department of History and Design of Architecture, University of Palermo (Italy) 221

Teaching restoration methodology:

Role of Scientific Contributions in the Conservation of Architectural Heritage

Franco Tomaselli, Gaspare Massimo Ventimiglia

Department of History and Design of Architecture, University of Palermo (Italy) 229

Teaching Restoration in the first School of Architecture in Turin

Luciano Re, Barbara Vinardi, Monica Fantone

Faculty of Architecture I, Polytechnic of Turin (Italy) 237

Restoration Didactics in the Master of Science in “Environment and Land” II School of Architecture, Polytechnic of Turin, Mondovì	
Maria Grazia Vinardi	
<i>Faculty of Architecture I, Polytechnic of Turin, Pole of Mondovì (Italy)</i>	247

Thinking while Doing, Doing while Thinking	
Rita Vecchiattini	
<i>DSA - Department of Sciences for Architecture, University of Genoa (Italy)</i>	257

Third Session

Who?

Keynote speech

Challenges in Moving from Architectural Conservation Education to Heritage Conservation Education	
Herb Stovel	
<i>Heritage Conservation Program, School of Canadian Studies, Carleton University, Ottawa (Canada)</i>	267

The Didactic Activities Carried out by the Diagnostic Laboratories, Faculty of Civil Architecture – Politecnico di Milano	
Francesco Augelli, Susanna Bortolotto, Cristina Tedeschi	
<i>Department of Design of Architecture, Polytechnic of Milan, Campus Bovisa (Italy)</i>	275

Archaeology of Architecture, Restoration, Teaching: “Why” and “How”	
Prof. Anna Boato	
<i>DSA - Department of Sciences for Architecture, University of Genoa (Italy)</i>	285

Conservation Studio Studies at the Tel Aviv University School of Architecture Documentation, Conservation and Planning in an Historic Environment	
Amnon Baror	
<i>Yolanda and David Katz Faculty of the Arts, The David Azrieli School of Architecture, Tel Aviv University (Israel)</i>	295

Teaching of “Restoration” at School of Civil Architecture of Politecnico di Milano Doctrine Contents, Teaching Methods and Perspectives	
Maurizio Boriani, Mariacristina Giambruno	
<i>Department of Design of Architecture, Polytechnic of Milan, Campus Bovisa (Italy)</i>	303

Conservation of Architectural Heritage: the Maintenance Culture in the Education Process Gabriella Caterina, Maria Rita Pinto, Serena Viola, Paola De Joanna <i>Department of Configuration and Realization of Architecture, University of Naples "Federico II" (Italy)</i>	309
Thoughts on the Teaching of Restoration: the Preservation Project today Maurizio De Vita <i>Department for the Restoration and Preservation of Architectural Heritage, University of Florence (Italy)</i>	315
Contents and Way of Teaching of a Course in Restoration at the Faculty of Architecture of the University IUAV of Venice Francesco Doglioni <i>Department of History of Architecture, IUAV, Venice (Italy)</i>	323
Teaching Planned Conservation to Enhance an Idea of Tutorship Different from Restoration Anna Decri <i>DSA - Department of Sciences for Architecture, University of Genoa (Italy)</i>	329
From the Analyses to the Project: Experiences of the Restoration Laboratory Bachelor three years course in Architectural Restoration Daniela Pittaluga <i>DSA - Department of Sciences for Architecture, University of Genoa (Italy)</i>	333

Fourth Session

When and to what extent?

Keynote speech

When and to What Extent do we Teach Conservation/Restoration? Carolina Di Biase <i>Department of Architecture and Planning, Polytechnic of Milan Campus Leonardo, Pole of Mantua (Italy)</i>	345
---	-----

Contributions of the Technical Sciences Area in Teaching Conservation/Restoration of the Architectural Heritage Rodica Crisan, Mircea Crisan <i>Technical Sciences Department, "Ion Mincu" University of Architecture and Urbanism, Bucharest (Romania)</i>	361
--	-----

Restauration et Rehabilitation du Patrimoine Architectural Hugues Wilquin <i>School of Architecture, Faculté Polytechnique de Mons (Belgium)</i>	369
---	-----

From Architectural Conservation/Restoration to Heritage Conservation: Université de Montréal's Perspective on Heritage Education	
Claudine Déom <i>School of Architecture, Université de Montréal (Canada)</i>	381
In Search of Integration of Teaching Design and Teaching Conservation	
Sevgi Lokce, Oktay Turan <i>Faculty of Architecture, Erciyes University, Kayseri (Turkey)</i>	389
Teaching Restoration at the School of Architecture of Valencia	
Camilla Mileto, Fernando Vegas, Juan Fco. Noguera <i>School of Architecture, Polytechnic University of Valencia (Spain)</i>	395
The Interdisciplinary Programme for Post Graduate Specialisation Courses for Protection of Monuments, Conservation and Restoration of Historic Buildings and Sites	
Helen Maistrou <i>Department of Architecture, National Technical University of Athens (Greece)</i>	403
Le Role de l'Enseignement de l'Histoire des Techniques Artistiques en Connexion avec l'Architecture	
Paolo Bensi <i>Second University of Naples (Italy)</i>	409
Discovering Natural Materials again	
Mana Rosa Montiani <i>Artistic Lyceum "Paul Klee - Nicolo Barabino", Genoa (Italy)</i>	413
The Master Programme "Intervention Methodologies in Architectural Heritage"	
Manuel Correia Fernandes <i>Faculdade de Arquitectura da Universidade do Porto (Portugal)</i>	421
Teaching of Architectural Restoration in an Engineering Faculty	
Gian Paolo Treccani <i>Faculty of Engineering, University of Brescia (Italy)</i>	425
Posters	429
List of participants	461

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**Teaching the Restoration
of Monuments at Palermo:
The State of the Art**

The Architecture Faculty of the University of Palermo, founded in 1945, is the oldest in Sicily; a Faculty of Architecture based in Siracusa was added in the 1990s and is dependant on the University of Catania; while in 2005 teaching began at the University *Kore* based in Enna, which offers a three-year degree course in the Science of Architecture as part of its department of Fine Arts Conservation.

The faculty of architecture of the University of Palermo provides a five-year architecture course (cl 4/5) as well as another, initiated in 2000, at the extended department of Agrigento; furthermore the department at Palermo offers a three-year course dedicated to Architectural Restoration, Renewal and Reutilization (cl 4) as well as a specialization in Architectural Conservation and Restoration (cl 10)¹.

Who Teaches Conservation and Restoration?

When architecture departments were initially established in Italy, the first professors were inevitably the Soprintendents of Monuments, whose everyday working experience provided in itself the basis for their professional capacity. At Palermo the first professor of restoration was Mario Guiotto (1945-49), followed by Armando Dillon (1949-55) and Giuseppe Giaccone (1955-66). In their place came professors from other disciplinary fields, at Palermo, architect Roberto Calandra, previously responsible for Urban Planning, and Salvatore Boscarino, from 1989 to 1998². A new generation of professors was the product of wide-ranging professional experience and they were the subsequent winners of competitions in sector Icar/19.

What and Why?

As part of the course “Laboratory for the restoration of monuments”, restoration is treated in its dual aspects of both a theoretical and a practical activity, with particular emphasis on the cultural implications of restoring historic monuments. Above all, the act of restoration has to be, at the same time, an act of historical-critical judgment combined with technical know-how where the experience of the first confirms the analytical conclusions of the second, as well as providing the moral authority required to define to what extent the restoration should proceed. Restoration has, as its primary goal, the *conservation*, whenever possible, of the original building materials, which are conserved because they are considered to be «the testimony, the documentary evidence and the reflection of a unique civilization, a particular culture and creative capacity, a resource which cannot be replaced and which belongs to the entire community».

It must be taken into account however, and in this it should be noted that architectural restoration varies from the restoration of paintings and sculpture, that in these monuments, as they have just been defined, human beings carry on their everyday activities: living, studying, working. For this reason, another goal of architectural restoration regards the *function* of the building, preserving whenever possible the same use or, alternatively, determining a new one which is compatible and consistent with the structure’s physical character.

As a result, it is essential to fully “understand” the monument and consequently to articulate a restoration project accordingly: comprehension and the resulting project are fundamentally dependant on one another and constitute the two essential poles of architectural restoration.

The classroom lectures, then, must above all guarantee the transmission of the diagnostic means of identifying the causes of deterioration without underestimating the importance of the humanistic and philosophical implications in such a way as to instill and reinforce in the students the incentives that will encourage them to “conserve” buildings rather than “transform” them, a tendency that until now has been part of the DNA of architectural graduates.

How is restoration taught?

At Palermo, the course *Laboratory for the restoration of monuments*, taught in the fourth year, is a six-month course (October to January) accommodating a maximum of fifty students. Comprised of 150 hours, 100 are taught by the professor (Icar/19) and 50 are dedicated to other disciplines taught by other professors interacting according to the logic of either in-depth analysis or complimentary studies. In general topics are selected from courses dedicated to the “Deterioration and diagnosis of historic structures” and “Structural Problems” in order to increase that complex background of expertise that results from the study of restoration. As for my course, which is principally aimed at creating concrete working experience (project development, restoration, worksite direction), in the last three years, I have chosen a curriculum of “Technical Systems for historic architecture” in order to explore issues of the compatibility of technical systems with the restoration of historic structures.

During a typical Laboratory, throughout a sequence of classroom lectures, everyone works together (including professors) on the restoration projects of historic buildings assigned to students who have been divided into working groups. The assigned buildings are more or less representative (ranging from the Cathedral to small individual structures) and more or less historic (including however “modern” examples), linked to problems of the city in such a way that the role of the University is not merely academic but one which, in so far as possible, confronts topical arguments related to the most current technical-artistic issues of contemporary life. The University is consequently involved in a wide range of cultural issues as advocate of a practical approach to community problem solving.

The single priority that is observed for assigning projects is that the buildings to be assigned are in a poor state of conservation and that they are readily accessible, because the process of architectural drawing and the tactile experience of measurement are considered fundamental experiences for the students.

The realization of the project is developed according to a methodology of restoration established throughout Italy. All of the notes accumulated while working on the elevations (both geometric and architectural) must be recorded, including the historical ones, and interpreted together with the documentation relative to the technical construction in such a way as not only to emphasize the project’s overall visual impact but also, and above all, the character of its material qualities, the very qualities which in their turn guarantee the most thorough conservation of the “pre-existent”. The next step is the creation of the “materials chart” and then the closely related “deterioration chart” which, together with the “program of restoration/conservation procedures”, make up the core of the teaching process. «The “state of defects” includes a survey of the alteration of the stone materials used in the construction as well as a study of the building’s structural stability. We have to treat this deterioration in such a

way as to reduce the instability between the structure and the external environment; to neglect this issue amounts to ignoring the ethical responsibility which must, both professionally and culturally, characterize the restorer»³. The pre-eminent objective of conserving pre-existing materials is rigorously pursued with all its didactic-methodological implications, underscored by a curriculum dedicated to the in-depth study of the techniques of consolidation.

The achievement of this objective is reinforced by the proposals of restoration and re-functionalization which, as a direct result of studying through historical-critical research, the formal character of the assigned structure, explores alternative relationships between conservation and innovative techniques aimed at restoring an architecture which is structurally stable, functional and of aesthetically high quality, conforming to the never outdated triad of Vitruvius.

When and to what extent is conservation/restoration taught?

The architecture faculty of the University Palermo has always given much importance to the project phase, a particular characteristic of the school⁴. Restoration is present in the third year course *Theory and History of Restoration* (50 hours, 4 credits) and in the fourth year course *Laboratory for the Restoration of Monuments* (150 hours, 10 credits).

In recent years, following a regulation first established in the academic year 2002-03⁵, based on the D.M.509/99, more attention has been paid to inter-disciplinary coordination, giving rise to an annually appointed Coordinator of Project Planning with the aim of assuring interdisciplinary interaction in such a way as to counteract the inevitable extremes of specialization. Thus, common issues of teaching and research, are developed in the individual courses along the lines of the specific disciplines, group seminars are organized together with didactic exhibitions and individual essays are published in volumes dedicated to more generalized overall themes⁶.

Admittedly this approach provides valuable experiences, but we are also convinced that the competence of the restoration specialist, confirmed by an Architectural Degree, remains somewhat limited for a student graduating today, and above all at a time when the possibilities of employment are above all provided by work on pre-existing structures. Undoubtedly additional attention to themes of architectural deterioration and diagnostic techniques would constitute a valid improvement of the program, in the same way that it would be important to devote such subjects as Architectural Drawing and Technology more to the study of pre-existing structures rather than focusing them so exclusively on new constructions.

The planning phase of the project still tends, even if perhaps somewhat less today than in the past, to prevail over that of its restoration, perhaps an act of self defense on the part of planning professionals or a defense of the exclusiveness of their authority. This calls for reinforcing the discipline of restoration, certainly without pretending an exaggerated autonomy, but nevertheless underscoring the fact it is, at the moment, still the only course that provides the required legal competence to practice Restoration (R.D. n.2537 of 22.10.25 art.52; confirmed by the Consiglio di Stato n.5239/06). Not defending this article signifies «agreeing to the implicit undermining of the basic training and exercise of the professional architect-restorer and above all to the dismemberment of architecture», a process already underway with regard to the activity of restorer⁷.

It seems to me essential to initiate a renewed exchange between the disciplines of Restoration and Project Planning which in the last fifty years have largely developed independently, a process which has neither helped one or the other; and above all, this process has not contributed to the care of our monuments⁸. This exchange could take place either in the Coordinating Laboratories, in the fifth year, or when the students prepare their undergraduate dissertations, or their doctoral dissertations; this last solution is the one I personally consider ideal because by then the student has had the opportunity to autonomously develop his own ideas regarding restoration and project planning, free of all outside influence.

At the same time I believe that specialist training in Conservation (degree in class 10) is an important improvement in recent years, but it should not constitute an excuse for diminishing the preparation in Architecture, which given its “generalized” and predominantly “humanistic” character seems to me to guarantee the cultural dimension that restoration cannot afford to lose in preference to a deceptive technical proficiency. Restoration, by its very nature demands a process of synthesis in which the varied components –history, science and technology- are brought together and it is along these lines that I proceed with my undergraduate dissertations, two of which I am presenting as my contribution to this conference.

The first of these⁹, which is dedicated to an important example of baroque architecture –the church of Saint Ann- was developed according to a traditional approach utilizing architectural drawing, historic research, architectural comprehension, and the identification of materials and deterioration, comprising together an in-depth study which further benefited from the aid of my colleague Teotista Panzeca, professor of the Science of Construction, who was consulted regarding the presence of structural faults, the principal cause of the building’s compromised state of conservation. The final result was a project which aims at re-establishing the monument’s architectural importance by freeing the cupolas on the roof of one of the lateral naves, disfigured by unjustifiable recent construction.

The second project¹⁰, which concerns an 18th-century villa –Villa Barone della Scala- seriously compromised, in part, by subsequent transformations of its interior, but even more so, by the transformation of its immediate surroundings. This project benefited from the assistance of my colleague F.Schilleci, of Urban Planning, in order to re-examine the villa’s urban context; together with that of G. Cuccia, of Project Planning, with whom the issue of recreating an appropriate context was confronted as well as the reconstruction of the villa’s collapsed wing; and finally that of M. Beccali, of Technical Systems, who provided the building, which was assigned a new public use, with the necessary technical systems.

Note

This article describes the teaching of Restoration in the five-year course (cl 4/s) of the Department of Architecture of the University of Palermo. For the three-year course in Architectural Restoration, Renewal and Reutilization (cl 4) and the specialist degree in Conservation and Architectural Restoration (cl 10) see the article in this volume by Professors Tomaselli and Ventimiglia.

References

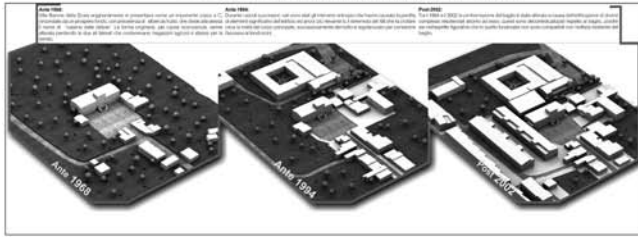
- 1 The situation described is that regulated by D. Lgs. 509/99 but which is about to be changed by the recent reform of L.270/04. See S. Musso, *Facoltà, si cambia!*, in “Il Giornale dell’architettura”.

- n.51, May 2007, p. 11. For the University of Palermo the most important variation of the new regulation, which is to become effective next year, is the reduction of the number of required courses from a total of 43 to that of 30 as well as the substitution of the three-year course of Restoration, Renewal and Reutilization with that of the Science of Architecture (also cl 4).
- 2 S. Boscarino, *Rapporto sull'insegnamento del restauro dei monumenti*, (1982) in Id., *Sul restauro dei monumenti*, Milan 1985, pp.172-177; see also R. Prescia, *Restauri a Palermo* (1943-2006) soon to be published.
 - 3 S. Boscarino, *Conoscenza delle struttura architettoniche: metodi e tecniche d'approccio* (1988), in Id., *Sul restauro architettonico. Saggi e note*, curated by A. Cangelosi and R. Prescia, edited by F. Angeli, Milan, 1999, p.42. Prof. Boscarino was responsible for the introduction at the University of Palermo of discussions on the state of architectural defects and my course is based on his teachings. See R. Prescia and T. Campisi (curated by), *Metodi operative per il progetto di restauro – Esercitazioni didattiche*, with S. Battaglia, E. Palermo, S. Portanova, Palermo, 2005.
 - 4 F. Alfano, *L'insegnamento della progettazione architettonica nella Facoltà di Architettura di Palermo dal 1984 al 1994*, in Id., *Trasmissibilità e insegnamento del progetto di architettura. L'esperienza della scuola di Palermo*, Naples, 2000, pp.11-24.
 - 5 See University of Palermo, Faculty of Architecture, *Quadro didattico 2001-2. Offerta formativa 2002-3*, Palermo 2003 and the later editions of 2005 and 2006.
 - 6 The chosen theme was that of the Valle dell'Oreto (the Palermo River) in the interest of which a Convention was signed by the Fondazione Fiumara d'arte di A. Presti and the Fondazione "Salvare Palermo" for a project of conservation and development of this seriously deteriorated area. See R. Prescia, *A più voci sul fiume Oreto*, in "Per", giornale della fondazione Salvare Palermo, n.12, May/August 2005, pp.6-7; A. Sarro, (curated by), *Temi operative per la valle dell' Oreto*, Palermo, 2008.
 - 7 Professors Document Icar/19 of 31.05.06 in response to art. 29 of D.Lgs. n.156 of 24.03.06 which permits "restorers" to work on decorated surfaces without the supervision of architect-restorers.
 - 8 An ongoing debate initiated by Minister Mussi regarding macro-sectors.
 - 9 E. Galizia, V. La Rosa, *La Chiesa di S. Anna la Misericordia a Palermo tra storia e progetto*, Undergraduate Dissertation in Architecture, Prof. Arch. R. Prescia, University of Palermo, A.A. 2006-7.
 - 10 A. Giannone, A. Incognito, *La Valle dell'Oreto tra ri-conoscimento e valorizzazione. Il caso della villa Barone della Scala*, Undergraduate Dissertation in Architecture, Prof. Arch. R. Prescia University of Palermo, A.A. 2005-6.

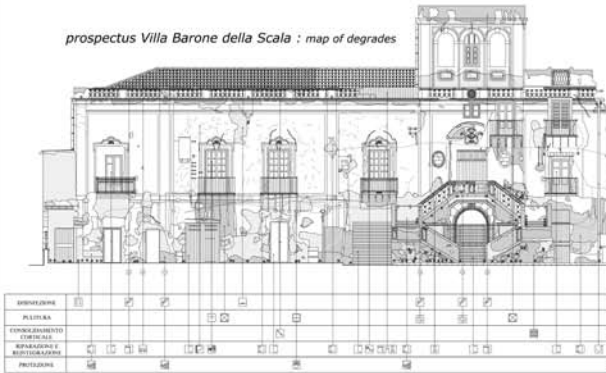
URBAN ANALYSIS
CONSERVATION
PROJECT



Villa Barone della Scala : Urban development of the Baglio



prospectus Villa Barone della Scala : map of degraded



PROBLEMA	STRATEGIA	CAUSE	MECCANISMO
LUMINOSITÀ

RUMORE

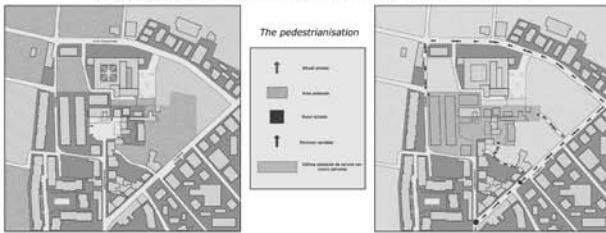
QUALITÀ AMBIENTALE

COSTRUTTO

MATERIA

LIVELLO DI INTERVENTO IN BASE ALLE ESISTENZE			

project of baglio and the villa Barone della Scala : Plants and sections



The project of the baglio arises from the need to create a meeting point in an urban area that today is likely to be an open space for those who live in adjacent buildings. If you return an identity to baglio, one of the key points in the evaluation of the project was to redefine the traffic, providing the closure of access and the opening of alternative routes. In this way, the piazza assumes more the identity of a "parking" lot becomes a place recognizable, meeting point and space for events throughout the giornata design of the baglio is based on three themes: the pedestrianisation-a place of aggregation and meeting with other families but system of roads. Including in part the concept of urban design as an addition to times, significant to a predetermined situation, there is a conviction that the project of restoring of this space took of the possibility of working on the design of the soil. A number of pumps of stone and formhubs connect in a system the morphological structure of the baglio strongly and characterize the image, so that by soil gapping the baglio assume a role of mediation between urban context and the site.

