PriMera Scientific Engineering Volume 3 Issue 5 November 2023

ISSN: 2834-2550



The Transformation from "gestalt" to "real" ---- Research on the Protection Strategy and Æsthetic Development of Italian Architectural Cultural Heritage

Type: Review Article

Received: September 19, 2023 **Published:** October 27, 2023

Citation:

Yuan Minglan., et al. "The Transformation from "gestalt" to "real" ---- Research on the Protection Strategy and Aesthetic Development of Italian Architectural Cultural Heritage". PriMera Scientific Engineering 3.5 (2023): 63-73.

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Yuan Minglan^{1*} and Chen Hongyan²

 1 Lecturer, Zhongkai University of Agriculture and Engineering, China

²Associate Professor, Doctor, Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts, China

*Corresponding Author: Yuan Minglan, Lecturer, Zhongkai University of Agriculture and Engineering, China.

Abstract

Italy has a rich world cultural heritage, and its protection strategy has also been developed. It has experienced value changes that emphasize "restore the original shape of the building", "historical authenticity", and "integrity protection". The aesthetics presented here are also Changes have taken place, highlighting the "beauty of historical truth and the beauty of differences of contemporary imprints."

Keywords: architectural cultural heritage; protection strategy; aesthetic development; gestalt and authenticity

Introduction

From 2015 to 2016, the author was a visiting scholar at the University of Florence, Italy, and his research direction was conservation and restoration of architectural cultural heritage. During the period, the architectural cultural heritage projects in Italy and other European countries were investigated and studied to obtain valuable first-hand information. The protection and restoration strategies of architectural cultural heritage in Italy have experienced different stages of development, and each stage presents different aesthetic tastes. Some of them are worth our reference and reference.

One The protection and restoration of architectural cultural heritage

On June 23, 1978, Italy acceded to the Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, and as of July 2018, a total of 54 Italian World Heritage sites (including 5 natural heritage and 49 cultural heritage) have been reviewed and approved by UNESCO for inclusion in the World Heritage List. It includes 6 transnational projects (4 cultural heritage items and 2 natural heritage items), ranking first in the world in terms of quantity. Italy has served four times as a member of the World Heritage Committee and twice as the president of the World Heritage Committee. In 1950,

UNESCO commissioned the International Institute of Museums to hold a conference in Florence to discuss the establishment of an international organization on the protection and restoration of cultural relics and buildings to play a guiding and supervising role. In 1964, the second Congress of architects and technicians of historic buildings was held in Venice, forming the famous "Venice Charter"; The Seventh World Cultural Heritage Conference was held in Florence, Italy, from 5 to 9 December 1983. The 21st World Conference on Cultural Heritage was held in Naples, Italy, from 1 to 6 December 1997.

Preservation and restoration strategies and aesthetic presentation during the Renaissance

During the Middle Ages, people's minds were imprisoned and closed by Catholicism, theocracy was supreme, and they lived in the dark ages. After the Italian Renaissance in the 15th century, the emerging bourgeoisie was keen on the revival of Greek and Roman classical culture, and the classical brilliant architectural culture of ancient Rome aroused great interest. At that time, the Roman government already had the "Department of Ancient Objects", and set up special positions and personnel in the "protection of ancient buildings", responsible for the protection and restoration of important architectural groups in ancient Rome. It began to excavate buried statues, ceramics and other works of art, renovate dilapidated historical walls, repair incomplete official palaces, and carry out the restoration and protection of historical relics on a certain scale. In 1515, Raphael, one of the three great Renaissance men, was appointed protector of Roman antiquities, and he had a deep and broad knowledge of classical architecture, sculpture and painting. In 1519 Raphael raised the question of the preservation of Roman ruins and manuscripts of ancient urban maps. It is worth mentioning that Raphael also pressured the Holy See to prohibit people from using Roman monuments (especially the Colosseum) as quarries and destroying monuments by greedy stone mining, which protected the Colosseum and other monuments at a critical juncture.

The Renaissance was the revival of Greek and Roman classical culture from the social perspective, but in fact, it was the anti-feudalism movement launched by the emerging European bourgeoisie in the field of consciousness with the help of the revival of classical culture, which got rid of the rule of theocracy, pursued the return of humanistic spirit in philosophy and emphasized people-oriented. Astronomy also developed, again discussing the relationship between the earth, the sun, and the universe; In the aspect of painting art, the works tend to express humanistic thoughts and reflect the scenes of secular life; In architecture, it pays attention to order and proportion, shaping the harmonious order of the ideal classical society; In literature, it advocates "happiness in" and the pursuit of material enjoyment.



Figure 1: Cathedral of Our Lady of the Hundred Fiores.

At that time, social views, philosophical thoughts, progress in astronomy, artistic pursuit and other comprehensive factors had an impact on the concept and aesthetic presentation of the protection and restoration of historical buildings, and the way to protect and restore historical buildings in this period was called "Renaissance protection and restoration". Its aesthetic principles follow the purpose of conservation and restoration, namely "to restore the original appearance of the building as much as possible in order to be used, reproduce the classical aesthetics of ancient Roman architecture, inherit the column system from classical architecture, and create the beauty of coordination and order according to classical proportions". Obviously, this aesthetic presentation is a worship of classical architectural style and culture, and it pursues an aesthetic representation of the past. At that time, newly built buildings were also innovated according to functional requirements after comprehensive learning of the aesthetic presentation of classical architecture such as structure and proportion. This aspect can be reflected in the large dome of the famous Renaissance building "Cathedral of the Virgin of Flowers", which is modeled after the large dome of the Pantheon in Rome and reflects a magnificent momentum. It is worth mentioning that the protection and restoration center has been set up during the construction of the Virgin Flower Cathedral, and it is still protecting and restoring the church to ensure the function and ensure the complete form. (Figure 1, Figure 2)



Figure 2: Restoration room.

This Renaissance style of heritage building conservation has always had a lot of impact on the world. China's architectural heritage protection methods are also driven by it, and some places are still using restoration gestalt or reconstruction combined with commercial purposes. For example, the commercial pedestrian streets in some cities were originally old buildings with historical value, but in order to promote commercial development, they were completely knocked down and rebuilt, making the old buildings take on a new look. Take the famous World cultural heritage of the Great Wall as an example, some sections have been completely damaged or collapsed, but in order to bring tourism benefits and economic purposes, local agencies have rebuilt the collapsed sections of the Great Wall in a way that is as old as the old, carried out large-scale restoration or restoration, and even adopted new or fake sections of the Great Wall. This is a kind of destructive protection, but also contrary to the authenticity of the original state of cultural relics. Fortunately, the state issued the "Great Wall Protection Master Plan" to improve the overall level of protection of the World cultural heritage of the Great Wall, combined with advanced technology and international concepts of protection and restoration, a new protection of the Great Wall, and explain the historical value of the Great Wall and the current spirit. (Figure 3)



Figure 3: The Great Wall of China.

Conservation and restoration strategies and aesthetic presentation in the nineteenth century

In the course of Italy's development, it became a French vassal state from 1797, Rome was regarded as the "second capital" of the empire by Napoleon in 1809, and France withdrew from Italy in 1814. During this period, France invested huge funds in the construction of Rome's city, archaeological excavations and heritage restoration. The French took to demolish useless buildings and open up grand plazas; For the architectural remains, we insist on the excavation of the whole landscape, and restore them to the appearance and state of construction when conditions permit. During this period, Italy was inevitably influenced by the French concept of "reintegration". However, with the help of domestic strength, the Italian government has continuously promoted and updated its concept of architectural heritage protection and restoration, and has gradually become the international mainstream.

In 1861, the Kingdom of Italy was established; In 1870, Italy achieved full territorial unity. After the unification of Italy, the government made every effort to promote the protection and restoration of historical buildings, and formed regulations to promulgate. In 1870, in order to better promote the process of restoration and protection of historical buildings, the Italian government composed of experts from the Ministry of Education drew up regulations on the protection of ancient buildings. Around 1872, the regulations on the protection of ancient buildings were revised and improved by the government, and Italy's first protection law on historic buildings was officially born. In this law, different levels of protection are clearly divided into "national level (first level)" and "local level (second level)". Different levels of historical buildings have different sources of protection funds, state-level cultural relics buildings are funded by the government for restoration and protection, and local cultural relics buildings are funded by the municipal government for restoration and protection. It is worth mentioning that the first law on the protection of cultural heritage buildings strictly stipulates that the integrity and stability of cultural heritage buildings should be protected, and no arbitrary damage should be carried out. Since then, the protection and restoration plan of Italian cultural relics has been brought under the strict management of the government.

In the late 19th century, the practice of architectural heritage protection was widely developed in Italy (even Europe), and restoration was the common practice of architectural heritage protection during this period. At that time, the Rome municipal government carried out a wide range of site excavation and cultural relic restoration work, and in 1887, the government formulated a series of site excavation and protection plans, that is, the ancient Roman Forum as the center of the monument protection area, to carry out stepby-step archaeological excavation and restoration protection. With the development of excavation and research work in depth, the unearthed ancient architectural sites, sculptures, ceramic works of art are more and more abundant; In order to avoid the authenticity and integrity of ancient architectural sites and building exterior surfaces in the protected area being destroyed by ignorance, the government issued a building code for the protection of ancient buildings in the late 19th century, which clearly requires the protection of their authenticity and integrity, and is still a model of practice. The specific strategy is that the Italian government adopts the principle of overall protection. First, the macro planning and protection of the "ancient Roman historical center", protecting the original structure of the historical center, and building a new city outside the old city; The second is the overall protection of "big sites", emphasizing the protection of famous buildings and the overall environment, the authenticity value of the park, preserving the millennium vicissitudes of the ruins and aesthetic presentation, and not carrying out large-scale restoration and reconstruction. For the parts that need to be maintained, new structures and new materials are used to reflect contemporary imprints. The third is to implement a sustainable and relatively perfect heritage education system, set up professional cultural heritage protection personnel training education institutions, train professional talents, popularize public awareness, and carry out environmental and life-style education interaction. At present, the protection, research and dissemination of the architectural heritage project is still deepening, and has continued to this day, and it has become an important historical value brand of the Roman city. In the on-site investigation and research in 2016, people can still see the authentic residual parts of the building, the overall environment and the landscape, reflecting the traces of history; For example, some surviving Roman Columns were fixed, but made of contemporary steel; Some of the more complete old buildings are used to display the documentary research, archaeological research, discovery and accumulation of results in the area, highlighting the holistic concept of authenticity protection and restoration, and presenting the status quo aesthetics of authenticity. (FIG. 4, FIG. 5) However, in the second half of the 19th century in Europe, there was still a "style restoration" that focused on the historical style and form of buildings, and emphasized the formal beautification and gestalt, which was later criticized.



Figure 4: Historic center of ancient Rome.



During this period, the aesthetics also shifted, and began to pay attention to the beauty of historical value, the beauty of artistic value and the importance of the protected object, excavate the history and change process of the protected object as much as possible, the theme of painting and sculpture art works, archaeological work, and pay attention to the integrity and authenticity of historical relics and buildings.

Conservation and restoration strategies and aesthetic presentation in the 20th century

Due to Italy's rich architectural culture and continuous conservation and restoration practices, its international influence and status have gradually gained recognition and promotion. With its strength, Italy has organized several important international conferences (conservation and restoration of heritage buildings), issued a series of national standards, and deepened the consensus on conservation and restoration, reaching new heights. In 1931, the first International Conference of Architects and Technicians of Historical Monuments was held in Athens, Greece, with the theme of "Discussing the restoration of historical and historical buildings", and the conference adopted the famous Athens Charter resolution. In 1932, the International Museum Administration (IMC) held an international conference on the same theme in Rome, forming the "Italian Charter for the Restoration of Cultural Relics Buildings" (referred to as the "Rome Charter"), which clarified the technical requirements and standards for the restoration of cultural relics buildings, and became the international technical specifications guiding the restoration of cultural relics buildings at that time. In 1932, the Italian government issued the Standards for the Restoration of Historic Buildings, which were based on the principles of the Athens Charter. This national code, edited by Gustavo Giovannoni, defines, in addition to the conventional standards for conservation and restoration, the proper use of modern materials (e.g., steel, cement, concrete, etc.) in conservation and restoration. Around 1936, the "Law on the Protection of Historical and Artistic Objects" and the "Law on the Protection of Natural Landscapes and Places of Interest" were promulgated, which detailed the categories of protection. (Figure 6)



Figure 6: Old and new enclosures of the Colosseum.

During the Second World War, historic buildings in many countries were destroyed, and conservation and restoration efforts all over the world came to a standstill. After the war, restoration and conservation became urgent. In 1945, the United Nations was founded; In 1950, UNESCO commissioned the International Institute of Museums to hold a conference in Florence to discuss the establishment of an international organization on the conservation and restoration of cultural relics and buildings, to play a guiding and supervisory role; In 1956, the United Nations Science, Technology and Cultural Organization established the International Center for the Study of the Conservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM), headquartered in Rome. This has also established Italy's central international position and important role in this field. In 1964, the second Congress of Architects and Technicians of Historic Buildings was held in Venice, resulting in the famous resolution "International Charter for the Protection and Restoration of Historic Buildings and Historic Sites", which has been recorded in the history of the Venice Charter. The Charter clearly puts forward a core concept that will have a profound impact on future generations: "It is our responsibility to pass on our cultural heritage in a true and complete way." This establishes in legal form the importance of "authenticity" for World Heritage. In addition, the Charter also emphasizes the principle of "minimal intervention, the principle of old and new identifiability, the principle of compatibility, the principle of reversibility", which plays a practical guiding role in the conservation and restoration practice of later generations.

It can be said that the Venice Charter still has a guiding role and significance for the current international conservation and restoration research. It is not only a summary of modern conservation and restoration thoughts, but also a new opening of contemporary Italian conservation and restoration thoughts. After the 1960s, Italian academic theories in this field have been developed and deepened, and many new strategies, new concepts and new methods have emerged, which have a profound influence on the protection and restoration of cultural relics and buildings in the world.

The historical and aesthetic value of cultural heritage is determined by the historical information it carries and the aesthetic sense of "authenticity". [Reference Zhang Xin: The Value and Significance of the "Authenticity" Principle in the protection of Cultural Heritage, Journal of Hubei Academy of Fine Arts, End of 2008, 4.

It is clear that after the Venetian Charter, the aesthetics presented by the conservation and restoration of historic buildings are the pursuit of "the true beauty of architecture, art, painting and environment", respect for historical reality, minimal intervention, discernability of old and new, compatibility and reversibility, avoidance of simple gestalts with forged elements, and avoidance of destructive conservation and restoration practices. Since then, the value of "authentic beauty" in the protection and restoration of cultural relics has been internationally recognized and has become the basic principle of aesthetic presentation. After the Charter, it also triggered several very important trends: First, in order to avoid the collapse and disappearance of historical buildings, it is necessary to adopt new methods, new materials, new structures for maintenance, repair and reinforcement, in order to present the real, historical, cultural and artistic value of historical buildings. Secondly, from the perspective of context and continuous text, the preservation and restoration of historical buildings are carried out in pursuit of presenting understandable historical context and aesthetic sense. Thirdly, the protection and restoration of the building and its social environment and cultural background present the overall characteristics and aesthetic value.

Among the cultural heritage of Italy, the protection and restoration work of some urban areas with important historical value has been continuously promoted since the beginning of archaeological excavations, and the research work has been gradually deepened with the conservation and restoration concepts of different times, but maintaining the principle of authenticity is always the first task of protection. World cultural and natural heritage "Pompeii" can be said to be a natural history museum, in 1748, the Spanish continued to excavate the site and loot a lot of treasures; In 1861, after the unification of the Kingdom of Italy, the new regulations on the protection of cultural relics were formulated, and the professional personnel of archaeology and historical research were formed to carry out comprehensive protection and excavation of the site, and were on the right track. Its conservation and restoration, research, display, education and other work continue to deepen and carry out. Especially in the protection and restoration of ancient cities after the unification of Italy, the first thing is to adhere to the principle of authenticity, keep the excavated urban pattern, site, architecture, figures, artifacts, paintings and other original conditions, and become an open museum with historical educational significance and research value. All in all, the conservation strategy of Pompeii has evolved from the 18th century to the present, reflecting the renewal of Italian conservation and restoration concepts. It is not only an aesthetic presentation of authenticity, but also an overall aesthetic presentation with documentary value and critical value. (Figure 7, Figure 8)



Figure 7: The authenticity of Pompeii.



Figure 8: Authentic presentation of Pompeii, museum.

Two Aesthetic integration of cultural resources and thematic activities

Around the 17th century, Italy became an important tourist destination for the upper classes of Europe, due to its numerous historical buildings (churches, castles), landscapes, paintings and archaeological finds; It was the first successful marriage of culture and economy. With the development of The Times, the integration and cooperation of culture and economy are more obvious, and the contemporary aesthetics presented by them are increasingly diversified and thematic.

In terms of economic benefits, Italy's domestic cultural heritage is a unique tourism resource and an important resource to promote its economic development. Italy's World Cultural Heritage conservation aims, among other things, to be used and activated. The correct rules and regulations are the most suitable and dynamic guarantee that the architectural cultural heritage will not destroy the original building and environment. This requires not only huge investment from the government, but also the overall planning from the international perspective of the city brand.

Take Venice, Italy as an example, the architectural pattern and architectural appearance of the entire island cannot be changed or destroyed, but the internal space use function of the building can realize the replacement of functions, and become an exhibition hall, cultural place or appropriate commercial space, thus activating the city and architecture. Every year, Venice plans many events with international influence, attracting people from all over the world to visit. On the one hand, it is the functional replacement of the historical buildings in Venice, and on the other hand, it brings continuous attention to the dissemination and consumption. Among them, the centuries-old Venice Architecture Biennale and Art Biennale attract tens of millions of visitors every year and successfully activate the Venetian island region. A similar area is the historic center of Florence, which is also a tourist city based on cultural resources and supplemented by other comprehensive themed activities, attracting tens of millions of people to visit each year. (Figure 9, Figure 10)



Figure 9: A unique historical resource for Venice.



Figure 10: Venice Biennale venue.

It is undeniable that, driven by the international theme activities, the historical buildings in the cultural heritage realize the replacement of functions and integrate various new artistic activities, commercial activities or other activities, forming the coexistence of architectural cultural heritage and diverse aesthetic presentation. In other words, the architectural cultural heritage cannot be changed or destroyed, while the thematic activities planned are changeable and have a diversified aesthetic presentation.

Third, the cultural and creative products of architectural cultural heritage are popular

In recent years, the cultural and creative industry has become an important driving force for the rapid economic development at home and abroad, and cultural and creative products have become the new protagonist of the cultural industry. The protection of architectural cultural heritage and the dissemination of aesthetic value need more diversified ways, and cultural and creative products are a carrier of the combination of culture and life. Italy is very good at making use of the historical value and unique resources of its architectural heritage, and has developed many series of cultural and creative products around the IP (Intellectual Property) symbol of architectural heritage, so as to realize the contemporary dissemination of historical architectural aesthetics, which also brings high profits, and the profits obtained will continue to be used for the protection and dissemination of historical buildings. The cultural and creative products developed with the Italian architectural cultural heritage as the core have become the living spokesperson of historical buildings. Based on the history and story of each architectural culture, it carries out the design with characteristic direction and practical value, and becomes the architectural peripheral products that people can take home, use and wear. Secondly, they have the communication value of high recognition, fashion and easy circulation, showing the life aesthetic characteristics of historical buildings, and arousing more people's attention to architectural cultural heritage. (Figure 11)



It is worth mentioning that China's Forbidden City has successfully developed many series of cultural and creative products around history, culture and stories, integrated social resources and network platforms, and brought huge impact. These cultural and creative products spread the culture of the Palace Museum and caused the Palace Museum craze, presenting the life aesthetics on the other side of the Palace Museum.

Fourth, the reference value to our country

The protection experience and aesthetic presentation of architectural cultural heritage in Italy have certain reference value for the protection and aesthetic presentation of historical buildings in China, including the following aspects.

First, the formation of regulations and systems to protect China's architectural cultural heritage at the legal level, and to popularize in a timely manner. After many legislations and updates, Italy has gradually formed a contemporary conservation and restoration system. At present, China's architectural cultural heritage protection laws and regulations are not perfect, mostly in the form of rules, methods, notices, etc., rather than rising to the level of laws and regulations. In addition, it needs to be constantly updated and more widespread.

Second, we need to strengthen international cooperation and seek common ground while shelving differences. On the one hand, foreign talents are invited in to provide intellectual and technical external forces for the protection of our cultural heritage, and on the other hand, domestic talents are encouraged to "send out" and learn from their experience in advanced countries. Although Italy's architectural cultural heritage protection system is advanced, it is also based on its environment and materials to promote the accumulation of achievements. Similar projects, Italy's experience is worth learning; However, most of China's ancient buildings are mainly wooden buildings, and its protection and restoration concepts need to have their own experience, and sum up the rules and aesthetic presentation suitable for wooden buildings.

Third, actively planning cultural activities with international influence, explaining and disseminating the architectural cultural heritage value of our country. Italy's historic urban areas (Venice, Florence, Rome), with the help of international artistic activities to achieve functional replacement and activation of the area, the dissemination of historical values and local cultural and artistic values. Italy has formed a creative economy of "culture + tourism", attracting visitors and enthusiasts from all over the world. China's architectural cultural heritage also needs contemporary cultural activities to intervene, through international theme activities, explain the contemporary value of historical cultural heritage, generate international influence.

Fourth, open up multi-channel public education, enhance the basic knowledge of cultural heritage protection and restoration, and form social consensus, public morality and public aesthetics. Cultural heritage is the witness carrier of the history and cultural development of a country and a nation, and is the common wealth of the country and even the world. The Italian government has entrusted the Ministry of Education to draft regulations on the protection and restoration of cultural heritage and promote them at the educational level. The government has made "Regulations for the Protection of Italian Cultural Heritage" a compulsory subject for officials, requiring public officials to master relevant regulations and regulations; Through public education, people are highly aware of the rarity, non-renewability and uniqueness of historical and cultural relics, and insist on protecting their authenticity and integrity. In addition to the government's own strength, it is also good at mobilizing and leveraging social strength and capital to achieve the protection and restoration of cultural heritage. Establish ways to encourage public participation. Efforts to protect architectural heritage cannot be separated from effective public participation and supervision. The Italian government disseminates its conservation policies and achievements through public education, workshops, forums, exhibitions, volunteers and other means of architectural heritage conservation.

Fifth, increase the participation of aesthetic and cultural researchers to improve the aesthetic research and real presentation of architectural cultural heritage protection. Architectural cultural heritage must truly reflect the historical changes and traces of The Times, which requires the participation of aesthetic experts, archeologists, craftsmen, architects and planners. In the process of restoration in China, aesthetic researchers are absent or not paid attention to, which makes the aesthetic characteristics of architectural cultural heritage restoration turn to simple "antique imitation and repair".

For the present form of our country, the public's understanding of the importance of the protection of architectural cultural heritage is far from enough, and there are obvious interests driving; In addition, there are not many ways and channels for public participation, which also causes certain barriers to participation. It is possible to try to include the regulations and knowledge of cultural heritage protection into the compulsory education stage, and at the same time, popularize it to the public by means of information technology carriers, increase the interaction between professionals and the public, and gradually form a consensus on protection and restoration and aesthetic appreciation.

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