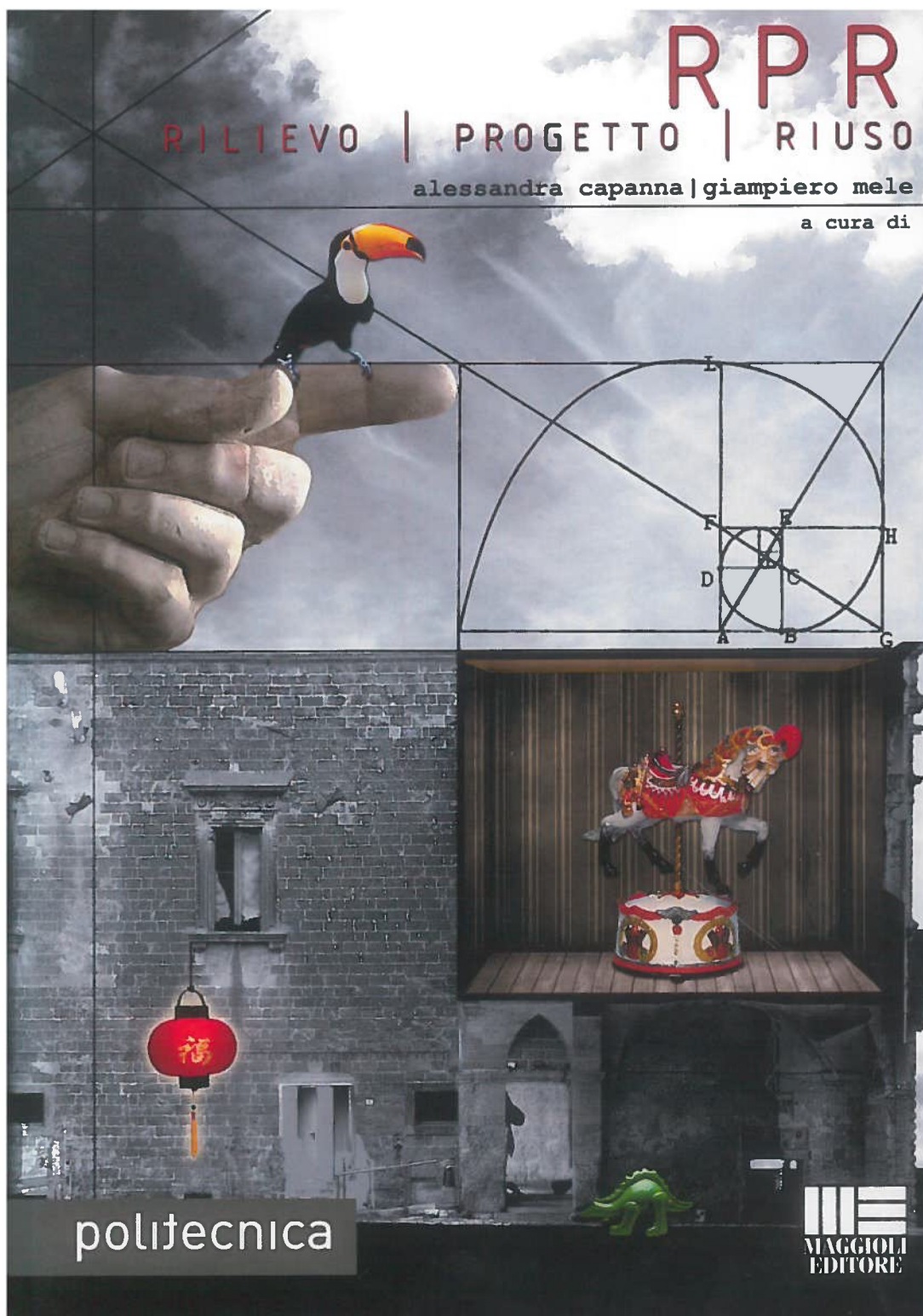


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RPR. Rilievo, Progetto, Riuso.
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Presentazione

João Pedro Xavier

Preface

RPR - Rilievo | Progetto | Riuso, is the result of the contributions presented at the conference on this matter at Castri di Lecce, April 8th -9th 2016.

The book, whose editors are Alessandra Capanna and Giampiero Mele, respectively from the University of Rome "La Sapienza" and from the University eCampus, publishes as well papers by invited authors working on the same research topics.

The conference had its origin in the studies, analysis, and site inspections, which aimed to translate into projects the different possibilities of re-use of the Palazzo Vernazza, in the little town of Castri, looking for answers in accordance with the vocation of the territory, taking advantage of a careful and thorough survey, developed to the point of allowing to identify, through metric analysis, the geometry that was the basis of the architectural composition in the original project.

The description of combined procedures of Rilievo, Progetto, Riuso (Survey Project and Reuse) is the subject of the book's "Foreword", in which the editors outline "A Method for Seeking the Measure of the Project". In this paper, it is assumed that the knowledge of the building's original design geometry and metric (and related subsequent projects resulting from subsequent transformations) can be a guarantee for new formal solutions, resulting from possible extensions of the building itself, so that the project of reuse could be in continuity with the pre-existent structure, without hiding its modernity as well as its identity.

Ensuing the "Foreword", which explains the survey methodology and the project methodology followed for the Palazzo Vernazza, the book is divided into three chapters: "The Survey for the Project of Reuse", "The Design for Reuse" and "The Restoration Project for Reuse" - which bring together the dissertations of the various authors - whether they are theoretical, critical or on design matter.

The cataloging of these papers in different sections, without compromising the need to consider the RPR (Rilievo-Progetto-Riuso) as the legs of a tripod supporting any architectural intervention (which is always fundamental and undeniable when accomplished on a pre-existent case-study), focuses on each particular role in the process.

So we can see that the first chapter highlights the role of the architectural survey, as it concerns the full knowledge of the historical object, whether it is a building, a built complex, a city or territory, which is essential to ensuring a well-versed project of reuse. In the second and in the third chapter, the projects are taken into account as a whole, although in the differentiation of these two chapters, gradations of the reuse projects can be recognized according to historical, aesthetic, cultural, environmental values of the historical context.

In the titles of the three chapters, the repetition of the term “reuse”, linked to the notion of “project”, suggests that a transformative action, providing the scenario for reuse, is only relevant if society as a whole requires it. This does not prevent the actors of the intervention from contributing to the identification of this transformative necessity, as it occurs with this work developed around Palazzo Vernazza. In other words, reuse will always be a sign of vitality, otherwise it will not guarantee the necessary sustainability of the intervention.

As Viollet-le-Duc wrote - quoted in Marina Docci’s paper – “the best way to save a building is to find to it a function”, as this function is a true necessity, which in any case must meet the specific conditions of historical building, for whose understanding the prime role of the architectural survey is basic.

All the papers that make up this book also identify a convergence on the need to formalize, without complexes, the contemporaneity (in terms of modernity of the design approach) of the project of reuse, legitimized by the correct definition of the intervention program, by discarding an attitude of pure conservation, generally inhibiting the natural process of evolution in the life of a building, which is a particular effect of the dynamics of the city, since the buildings generally endure far beyond the specific need for which they were conceived at a given moment.

Acknowledging the difficulty of going beyond the definition of leading ideas for the project of reuse, and because every case is a case, there is nothing better than presenting some exemplary interventions, trying to identify some design strategies, such as in more conceptual papers, i.e. the Rosalba Belibani’s “The project of reuse between, methodology and specificity”, Alessandra Capanna’s “Contemporary project and reuse in Rome” and Marina Docci’s “The new for the old: designing the present respecting the past”.

A significant set of papers consists of the description of particular works by the authors themselves.

The first chapter highlights the architectural survey in its overall sense, underlining the decisive role of digital technologies in the process, such as the

studies of the Small Cloister of Certosa di Pavia, developed by Ezio Arlati & al.; the arithmetic and geometric analysis in the theater and amphitheater of Lecce, carried out by Giampiero Mele (in line with the survey methodology followed for Palazzo Vernazza), and the study of the transformations of the façades of the buildings in Aversa, in the context of the debate between authenticity and reuse, developed by Ornella Zerlenga & al.

In other papers, the description of the architectural survey work is complemented by the subsequent description of the projects of reuse, in perfect alignment with the title of the chapter, "Il Rilievo per il Progetto di Riuso" (The Survey for the Project of Reuse). Part of this group of papers are those illustrating the project for the fruition of the archaeological area of Rudiae by Enrico Ampolo; the research for new functions for the Ospedale dei Riuniti of Città di Castello by Mariasole Bernicchi; the restoration of the convent of S. Angelo Ocre, by Stefano Brusaporci & al.; the proposal for a new reuse for the Rocca di Manciano by Paola Puma and Giuseppe Nicastrò; visions for the project of recovery of the former Foundries of Multedo, in the Genoese Western area, by Giulia Pellegrini, and finally, the prototyping of architectural elements by Alberto Segno.

In the second chapter, there are some papers on the theoretical discussion on the reuse project, such as those - previously reported - by Rosalba Belibani and Alessandra Capanna, to which should be added the paper on the importance of the contemporary re-use of collective open spaces by Roberto Bove, the research for a methodology for the recovery of modern and contemporary architecture, by Pierfranco Galliani, and an overview about the need to find the right museology to design the reuse with art, by Anna Riciputo.

In this second chapter, are also presented some projects in the form of drawn theoretical proposals that outline the concrete position of contemporary architects in respect to the project of reuse, such as the case of a new hotel, designed in the railway station area in Lecce, by Enrico Ampolo; that for the church of Favara at Veglie, by Fabiana Cicirillo, and the projects for a square, a street and a building in Sicily, in the little town of Cammarata, by Antonino Margagliotta. For example, in this last paper, there is a clear tendency to theoretically frame the project as an exercise of interpretation and story-telling of the new proposed form for the historical context.

Thus, as in the methodological proposal for the reuse project presented in the "Foreword", it is preferred that the affirmation of the present in the prefiguration of the future - therefore of the project - should be of "gentle" and "quiet" figurative system, in perfect continuity with the past.

Finally, the third chapter presents some projects in which the architectural value of the historical building makes restoration and conservation imperative, as in the case of the restoration project for the ancient church of Santa Maria di Cerrate, by D. Esposito & al. In this chapter, Antonella Saisi introduces the discussion on the need for a correct diagnosis of historical structures where architectural intervention is required, and Enrica Marcella Stefanelli presents the restoration project carried out on the murals of the bishop's rooms in the Oria Bishop's Palace in Brindisi.

However, Marina Docci's paper, previously reported, in the subtlety of the title "The New for the Ancient: Designing the Present in Respecting the Past", exposes a critical conscience concerning the character of a reuse intervention. The author emphasizes that the in-depth knowledge of a building that is unanimously renowned as indispensable to be accomplished, before making the intervention, is sometimes an alibi of disrespectful projects with regard to the historical matter, that is to say, that sometime the new setting above the ancient is intended instead of designing the new for the ancient.

In conclusion, this beautiful book will surely be a gift for all those who deal with the theme of Survey-Project-Reuse as a transversal issue also at the social level, but above all I think it is a decisive contribution to the discussion of the future of a place, Castri di Lecce, starting from a building, Palazzo Vernazza, seeking a favorable response to the wishes of a community.

Because the authors told me, that it all started with the study of the building in parallel with the search for new functions to dedicate to it, based on the analysis of the needs of the territory, to answer to the owner of the Palace's question: "what can I do about this property?"

However, this question is now also a question of the whole community, represented by the Mayor of Castri di Lecce, and so hopefully this adventure that has already got significant achievements in the academic field begun by Giampiero Mele and Alessandra Capanna, will be translated into reality with the legitimacy of a proper reuse for Palazzo Vernazza, through a qualified architectural project.

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