

The volume collects the results of the research carried out as part of the International Agreement, signed in 2015 and still in progress, between the Diliman University of the Philippines, College of Architecture and the University of Naples Federico II, Department of Architecture. The studies and the different initiatives (workshops, seminars project) realized, in the Philippines and in Naples, have been focused on the topic of the post-emergency reconstruction, resulting from disasters caused by nature. In the volume the processes, that have been determined after a disaster, are examined in emergency and post-emergency phases, by facing negative aspects that invariably recur in the reconstruction events and that affect significantly the project role. A fundamental point of the contributions is the assumption that the project is a process, that is able to hold together different multidisciplinary techniques and tools, with the objective to give answers to the difficult pressures dynamics, intrinsic to the economic, social and policies conditions. The constant comparisons between Italy and Philippines, between different reality and design attitudes, allow having large and multiple sights, ranging from specific architecture issues to more large conservation policies. It is a meaningful frame of issues connected to the topic of the reconstruction, but also to the themes of the interpretation of heritage and identity of places, proposing possible perspectives and conservation strategies, between temporality and materiality.

Heritage, temporality and materiality

Perspectives Exchange between Italy and Philippines

editor **Pasquale Miano**



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ISBN 978-88-8497-619-2

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Collana / Book Series
Abitare il Futuro / *Inhabiting the Future* / 12
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This publication has been produced within the International Agreement between University of Philippines Diliman and University of Naples Federico II signed in 2015



From physical de-composition to identity reconstruction. Architectural design for ruins as re-composition

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Bruna Di Palma

Introduction

Due to sudden events such as natural disasters and war damages or more slow changes due to the passage of time, in any case, the physical substance of architecture is the protagonist of intermittent metamorphoses that modify its overall image. Often, however, as result of these more or less substantial destructions, both the constitutive structure and the settlement principle underlying the architecture construction itself, manage to escape unharmed or in any case to remain recognizable. In this way, modified architectures are created, de-composed bodies in relation to the external urban relationships that held them firmly anchored to a consolidated contextual image. And also new ruins born, new architectures de-composed in their internal relationships that regulated their survival in relation to their original conception both in terms of shape and use.

Then, on one side what survives to such special circumstances and strengthened through the upheavals created by such events, is an idea of architectural identity as a modifiable data, which helps to set up a framework of open reflections on the evolution of architecture. On the other side, the theme of metamorphosis and processuality intimately characterizes the evolution of architecture that sees modified, with the passage of time, its shape, its use, its meaning.

In this framework of physical and conceptual changes it is placed the work of architectural and urban design as a re-writing of a new phase of life for architecture in its form of ruin, where ruin means a processual form of architecture. Through the configuration of a design devices system, such as critical operations of re-composition, the ruin can be read through the layers of its palimpsest, and the continuation of its life, as inhabited urban architecture, can be rewritten.

A special case is that one composed by sacred architecture, urban landmarks that characterize the public space of the city and symbolic buildings from the point of view of the historic layering and constructive experimentation. Churches destroyed by earthquakes, typhoons or damaged by war bombings, always represents specific cases of new conditions for architecture. But architectural and urban design for these buildings become also an opportunity to generalize about the theme of re-composition design for de-composed architectures.

Physical de-composition and identity reconstruction

Over the last few years it has increasingly convinced that the vision of archaeological

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Aerial view of a destroyed greek temple,
July 1977 (photo by W. and E. Myers taken
from the baloon).

ruins and ancient urban fabric as reassuring places within which retrace the universal principles of harmonious city and architecture construction is, on balance, a false certainty.

We are in fact in the face of unstable, incomplete, unexpected and contradictory frameworks which show a huge variety of signs compositions, traces that are actually moving, processes (Derrida 2002).

De-composed by events that modify their features, architectural and urban bodies see changing their original integrity, their physical integrity, but instead contribute to witness how their identity is preserved right through the sequence of these metamorphoses.

Stating from Martin Heidegger and Jacques Derrida way of thinking about, Aldo Masullo says: «All that is not inert, is process, change: its identity is the passages' system through which the change takes place, the same course of change. In short, here the identity is a function of the difference» (Masullo 2006, p. 34). Interviewed by Bernard Vecchi about identity, Zygmunt Bauman also systematizes his thoughts through the following steps: identity as a problem, identity-puzzle, the construction of identity, leaving out the dynamic character and in progress, but also the fragile and perpetually provisional feature, of identity (Bauman 2003, p. 14). But then coming to say: «After all, the core identity - the answer to the question: who am I? And above all the credibility in the time of any response we can give to this question - can be created only in reference to the link connecting the individual to other people and to the presumption of reliability and stability over time of such bond. We need relationship, and we need relationships you can count on, a report which we can refer to, to define ourselves» (Bauman 2003, p. 111).

Andreina Ricci takes these considerations as essential to subvert «misinterpretations, abuses, misunderstandings in the way of understanding and managing the urban archaeological heritage. [...] The prospective of an identity as a process, an active identity, tangible and hardworking, requires to accept and recognize the real otherness conditions, even when compared to reality very close to us. [...] Indeed such a perspective involves that something must be done because some of those places or pre-existing architectures arrive to take root in terms of identity; if it does not happen, archaeological ruins and monuments, even within the same territory, the same border, urban or national, can only continue to be unknown, another» (Ricci 2006, pp. 112-113).

Therefore, in an attempt to revive the ruins, in their double situation of urban decomposition and architectural dis-integration, all those design devices that are able to weave back relations between the ruin and its original context or reassemble it an the active form of architecture are fundamental.

Architectural metamorphosis

«The shape, in the metamorphosis game, perpetually goes from its necessity to its freedom» (Focillon 2002, p. 101), with these words Henri Focillon closes his text

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Mimmo Jodice, *Alba Fucens*, 2008.



titled Shapes' life, with which he proposes a kind of forms morphogenesis and, in particular, with the term metamorphosis (from greek metamórphosis, which derives from metamorphôun transform, comprising metá, which means processing, and morph, form), wants to reveal the open and in progress feature of this theme.

«In a sense from the day when a statue is finished, his life begins. And it is passed the first stage, which, for the work of the sculptor, has led her from the block to the human form; now a second phase, over the centuries, through an alternation of adoration, admiration, love and defiance or indifference, by successive degrees of erosion and wear, bring it back gradually to the state of unformed mineral that he had withdrawn from the sculptor. [...] Some of these modifications are sublime. To the beauty wanted by a human brain, an age, a particular form of society, we add an accidental beauty, combined with history facts, due to the effects of natural causes and time. Statues so well broken that from the ruin comes out a new work, perfect in its own segmentation» (Yourcenar 1985).

In this sense, it is given an active role to the time which induces a metamorphosis on architecture, leading it, in its de-composed configuration, to the state of ruin through a structural modification process as much as inside the cyclical transformation of physics matter, as Gilles Deleuze says: «What is most intimate, most essential, to the body of events as growing, shrinking, be cut?» (Deleuze 1969).

So, the metamorphosis transforms the physical matter through successive cycles of stratification: «all forms of stratification, whether geological or archaeological, are the result of 1) erosion/destruction, 2) movement/transportation, 3) deposit/accumulation. But while the geological stratification is due exclusively to natural forces, the archaeological one looks like a consequent of natural and human forces, otherwise separated or combined with each other, so that erosion, movement and sediment are intertwined with works of destruction, transport and accumulation or construction. The stratification phenomenon is therefore in any case two-faced, always assuming the downfall of the previous balance and the formation of a new one» (Carandini 2010, pp. 25-26).

In this sense, José Ignacio Linazasoro writes «the ruin introduces an architectural model as a process» (Linazasoro 2010, p. 17), so that the contemporary architectural project stands as the latest step in the metamorphic process, today's instant of its occurrence: «composing architectures means to manage a complex system of variables, to move within metamorphic fields related to each other, to control a spectrum of different mutations simultaneously. [...] The metamorphic character of design operation is also enhanced by the changing nature of the elements of the architectural object» (Purini 2011, p.39).

Particularly compared with the emerged ruins, the metamorphosis process acts mainly through «action of erosion/destruction - that - never means an added layer, but a lack of layer or layers [...] we can call it interface or surface itself. The surface that does not require a layer represents both the action of erosion/destruction and the surface life itself» (Carandini 2010, pp. 25-26).

The erosive action, therefore, causes of condition of lack (from the Latin *mancus*, needless, incomplete) that, as Marc Augé says, it is «not so much a lost sense, but a sense to find again» (Augé 2012, p. 138).

From the point of view of material action, the lack as unintentional mutilation acts on the architectural body as subverting solid balances, opening up to unprecedented dynamism, «the Victory of Samothrace - André Malreaux says - is not a human invention. We may imagine it untouched and suppose it wonderful, but it would change its nature [...]. The lack of the head gives it a movement which has no relation with other ancient statues, all is combined to confirm its timelessness» (Malreaux 1957).

Semantically viewed, as Focillon wrote: «The art substance is [...] the same life. More generally, the artist is in front of existence as Leonardo Da Vinci in front of the wall ruins, ravaged by time and winters, riddled with bullets, stained by the waters of the earth and sky, pierced by gaps. We do not see other than the traces of ordinary circumstances. The artist sees figures of distinguished men or mixed, battles, landscapes, collapsing cities - forms» (Focillon 2002, p. 80).

The metamorphosis that occurs across the state of lack, manifested on one hand the loss of some parts characterizing the original configuration of the building, on the other the enrichment given by the creation of new empty spaces that subvert both architecture internal rhythms and urban relations to the closest context, altering predetermined proportions but also creating new potential links.

The theme of the lack can be revealed with the partial or total loss of one or more elements that compose the ancient architectures, more often roof and interior floors, in erosions more or less localized on the single architectural element, for example the vertical walls, or, more overall, compared to the artifact considered as a whole, there can be an almost total loss of the original volumetric features. But the ruin with «the loss of integritas, refers to a sense of anthropic, intricate and vital complexity, uncovered from the superstructures, maintains emphasized assertive characteristics of the powerful bearing wall nucleus, bared also of the pervading lexicon of stylistic features» (Manieri Elia 2007 p. 103).

The process of erosion, in its most markedly aggressive form, may cause a destructive and permanent action on archeology. In this case, the ruin's volumetric entirety can be said completely lost; more than by its presence the architecture is revealed through his absence. An absence that can manifest itself in the continuation of specific urban morphologies or in the definition of open spaces between buildings, expressing on the contrary, the value of presence, through the persistence of its track. In this sense, Peter Eisenman, taking up a thesis of Jacques Derrida, writes that it is «possible another form of memory, a memory that is no longer about fragments or representations or abstractions, but through something that he calls track. The track is the presence of an absence,

not a presence in his metaphysical fullness and neither an absence in dialectic opposition to the presence, but rather something that goes beyond the dialectic. It's more like an absence not absent» (Eisenman 2004).

Architectural design for ruins as re-composition

The architectural physical matter is involved, therefore, in successive life cycles and different configurations, from time to time original, becoming in this sense protagonist, over that of the phases of dis-integration, also of the multiple forms of its possible re-integration to life: «the form is aesthetically valid in so far as that can be seen and understood according to multiple perspectives, showing a wealth of aspects and resonances without ever ceasing to be itself» (Eco 2013). Within the architectural body in ruins, a structural sense retains. It that allows the architectural and urban project to get a framework of its tracks from which leaving for their re-interpretation: the substructure (typological structure, overall geometry, bearing skeleton) of the ruin lead the writing, the re-configuration, its next phase of life.

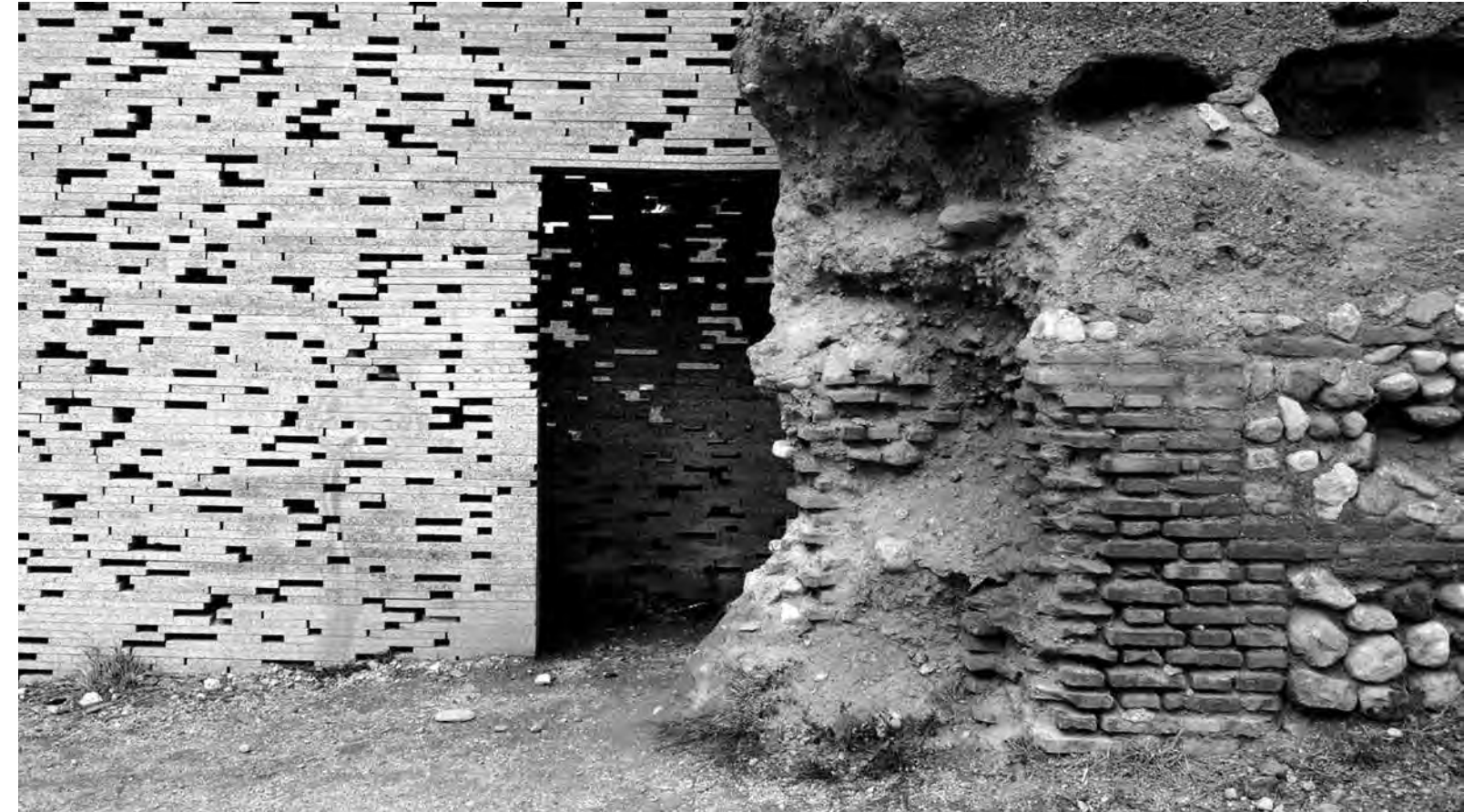
In this regard, Marc Augé says «What strikes us out of the ruins' show, even when the erudition claims to let them tell a story, or when the device of sound and lights turns them into a show, is their ability to provide the sense of time without summarize the history and without finish it in the illusion of knowledge or beauty, and also their ability to take the form of a work of art, a memory without a past [...]. - where - the consciousness of the lack has shifted» (Augé 2003).

For the purposes of design construction, therefore, «the relationships between objects are significant [...], between objects and monuments, including different monumental presences, between buildings, underground stratigraphy and the over ground stratigraphy. Only through multiple relations you can reconstruct environments, interrelationships between men and nature and re-imagine a complex order between the city and the countryside» (Ricci 1990).

The re-composition as re-insertion into the urban fabric

«The historical topography is operative, because the space is not fragmented in only one way, but according to certain criteria: certainly that one of the archaeological approach, that one of the relationship to establish between urban spaces that appear differentiated in terms of time, use and function, and even the criterion of the landscape as witness of the evolution of the place writing (according to the etymology of the word topography) and as writing of the history through the place» (Tsiomis 2002).

Then, from this consideration of Yannis Tsiomis, it appears crucial, before tackling the project for individual ruins, to frame in a total reconfiguration speech the heterogeneous spaces of the city. Only in a joint action, they can contribute to have good city life in urban spaces with a sense in the contemporaneous reality. The individual fragmented spaces can therefore be structured into a weaving

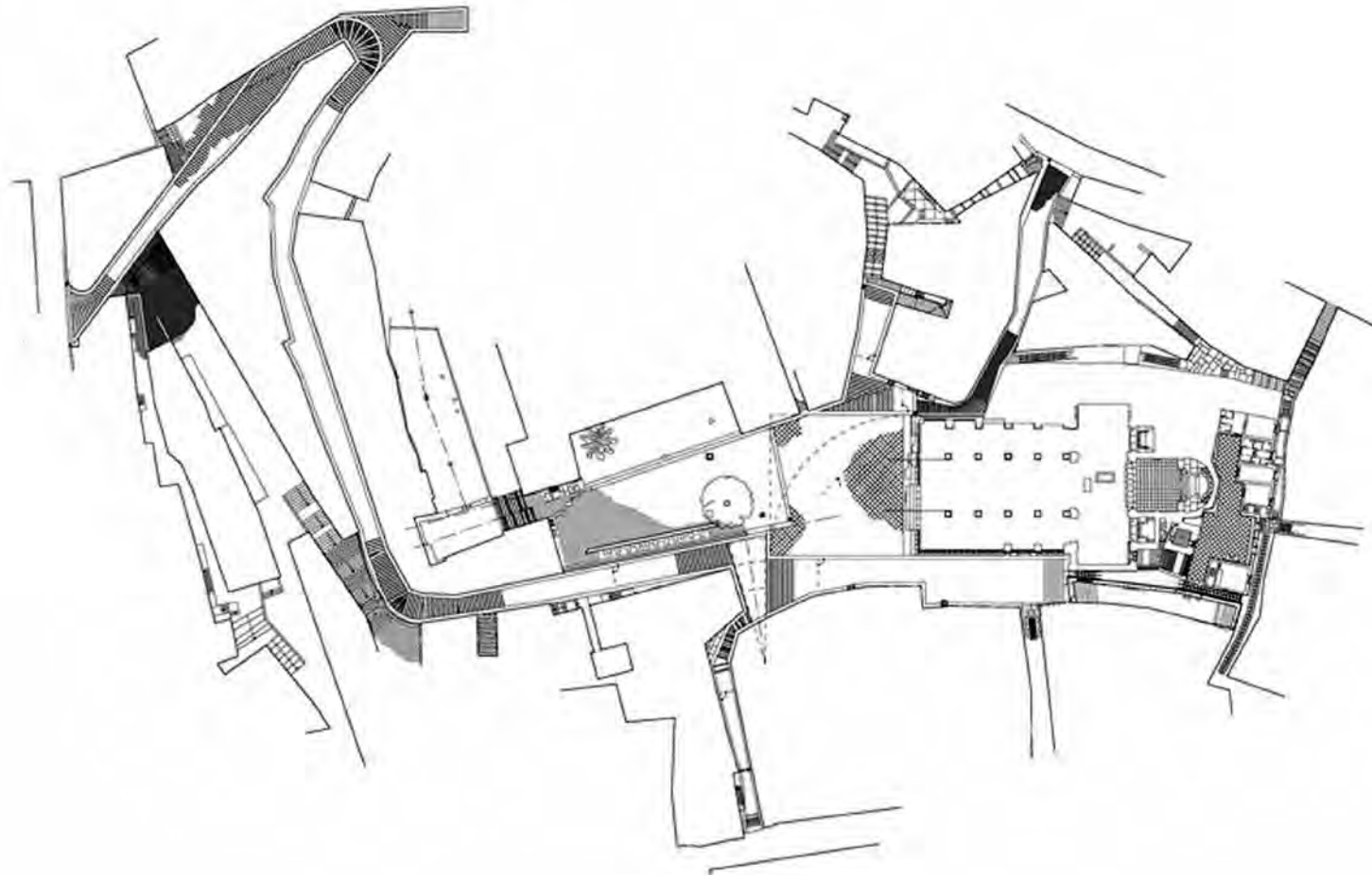


that «more than by its heterogeneous and really different parts, is defined by the manner through which these different parts become inseparable by virtue of particular folds. [...] So the weaving does not depend on the parties themselves, but on the layers which determines the cohesion: the new status of the object [...] is inseparable from the different layers that expand themselves, creating other opportunities to turn or folding» (Deleuze 2004, p. 62).

The work on the weaving of the historical topography allows to embed the element in the place and, in a contextual perspective, this leads the construction of a synchronic articulation of spaces sequences, connected by a topological time that folds on itself its phases.

Taking into account the two perspectives, equally essential one and the other,

Antonio Jimenez Torrecillas, Restoration of the Nazari walls, Granada (Spain), 2002-2006.



Álvaro Siza Vieira and Roberto Collovà,
Resetting project for the main church and
its adjacent spaces and buildings in Salemi,
Trapani (Italy), 1984-1997.

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Álvaro Siza Vieira and Roberto Collovà,
Reconstruction of the Mother Church in
Salemi, Trapani (Italy), 1984-1997.

one punctual, which concerns the individual ruins and the other, oriented to the illustration of the relationships between the individual fragments, «it means to design weavings, seams, sequences, tracks, paths, intended to explain what the ruins of the contemporary city are able to illustrate» (Ricci 2006, p. 147). With the description of these themes, the design strategy for the public paths around Alicia square, roads and open spaces, and the reconstruction of the Mother Church in a little center in south Italy, Salemi near Trapani, seems really clear. After the 1968 earthquake, Álvaro Siza Vieira and Roberto Collovà were called to re-define the open spaces of this little city.





Peter Zumthor, Kolumba Museum, Colonia (Germany), 1997-2007.

They designed a set of minimum acts in the historic fabric: a system of punctual actions for single strategic nodes builds an unified urban project, involving the entire extension of the historic center of this town of Arab origin.

At the end of the path, near Alicia square, there are the Mother Church ruins. The project works on an unique open space composed by that one of the square and that one of the church which flux one into another. The church's recovery takes place by subtraction, by eliminating some superfluous elements which insisted on the apse structures and through a re-paving of the hall. «So, we talk about empty space as a language motion and as a generative condition; not as a lack - or as an absence - [...] So, the possibility to arise in this void of a rhythmic syncopation, a space-time identity already qualified in the rhythmic alternation of complementary opposing phases: stasis/movement, for example, or even sleep/vigil or, ultimately, death/life» (Manieri Elia 2008, p. 6). In this way the original sacred precinct is re-configured, while the apse wall of the church is a new urban backdrop of the square.

The re-composition as volumetric re-construction in situ

Evoking the words of Pierre Alain Croset which describes the lesson of Rafael Moneo, insert a new architecture in a stratified palimpsest means working to build





new relationships inside the volumetric substance of the project, taking into account three aspects: «the consciousness of having to build inside a historical period, and therefore durable, strong of the responsibility to propose a new building which, beginning a new life, will have to undergo in turn of future transformations; the need to exercise a very acute and specific critical reading of the place of intervention, of its architecture, to interpret his permanence features and its possible modification; the difficult choice of an architectural language and a range of materials which prove themselves as appropriate, knowing that there is no possibility of a simple determinism between critical reading and design choice» (Croset 2007, p. 59). The design work for the Kolumba Museum in Germany is conceived following the previous issues. The original middle age Maria church St. Kolumba was damaged through the centuries and destroyed during the World War the second. Peter Zumthor was called to design a museum on the bombed ruins of the church. The Archdiocese Museum in Cologne resumes the original profile of the late Gothic church on whose walls are woven the new ones. It's character of urban landmark is confirmed also through its new aspect. With the aim of entering into a stratified urban place and becoming part of the built contextual environment, the new building as a fortified architecture that dominates the town, protects its dual inner content: the ground floor with the archaeological ruins and the upper floors with the museum treasures.

The re-composition as re-connection on the edge

Thinking about the reversal of the concept of exclusivity that the edge space attributes to the ruins area means to think about the issue of the limit, which



divides and potentially connects the ruin to the urban space. This means to build a transitional space, a threshold through a work that distances the ruins of the past by a vision that offers them only as an aesthetic precedent. This also means to consider each area occupied by the ruins as an intermediate contingent space that innovates, also making it more complex, the happening of the contemporary urban life. It also allows to pass from the exceptionality of the monument to the normalization of history through mutual penetrations between the space of the ruins and the urban space that tends to undermine the interface idea and instead create a kind of membrane area within which all the internal content is in contact with the external one, through measured transition sequences.

It is above all with ideas of Mario Manieri Elia for the design of the edge area of Largo Argentina in Rome, that we can recognize a conductor line of the project for this intermediate zone between the two times of the city. He designed this transitional space as an idea-shape, a terraced system, a «semantic structure, placing itself in relation with the different urban sections overlapped and crossed each other, cannot and should not grope for a mediation between the different signs systems and the different realities: either offer coverage to urban contradictions and conflicts - stating that - you do not have to seek help from a real flight of steps, nor to an arrangement in terraces; it is not to say the function of being or that of the tread. In fact, it is to make plausible all these functions together in a hybrid way. [...] All in hindsight [...] substantiated by the meaning of complex step, of connection between distinct reality systems, the separation of which remains: indeed, it is emphasized. It is to put it on speech as a value in itself» (Manieri Elia 1998, pp.117-121).

João Luís Carrilho da Graça, Recovery and conversion of São Paulo church ruins in a museum, Macao (China), 1995.

Therefore, the issue is not the cancellation of the theme of the edge design, but the reasoning on the edge, a strategy on intermediate sites as transitional architecture, as construction of a spatial sequence of thresholds, as in the recovery and conversion of São Paulo Ruins in a museum. The church of St. Paul in Macao, also known as Mater Dei, a 17th-century Portuguese church dedicated to Saint Paul the Apostle, was built in 16th-century by the Jesuits. The complex was one of the largest Catholic churches in Asia at the time but was destroyed by a fire during a typhoon in 1835. The ruins now consist of the southern stone façade sits on a small hill, with 68 stone steps leading up to it. From 1990 to 1995, the ruins were excavated under the auspices of the Instituto Cultural de Macau to study historic past. The crypt and the foundations were uncovered, revealing the architectural plan of the building.

The ruins were restored and converted into a museum by the Macanese government thanks to the design work of João Luís Carrilho da Graça. He worked along the perimeter of the church with a new roof structure both for ruins conservation and visitors accessibility. In this way he also re-traced the original morphology of the ancient building. The façade is now buttressed with concrete and steel in a way which preserves the aesthetic integrity of it. A steel stairway allows tourists to climb up to the top of the façade from its back giving them an original view both of the church and of the city all around it.

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