

# The Restoration of Historic Buildings Between 1835 and 1929: the Portuguese Taste

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## Abstract

The glorification of the historical monument - a European phenomenon that emerged during the first quarter of the 19th Century - occupied a place of great theoretical and iconographic importance in the Portuguese press. Through engravings, its image attained a power of synthesis, both in the creation of symbols and in the understanding of stylistic categories, becoming a major driving force behind the greater value that was given to the medieval architectural heritage and its consequent restoration.

Despite being given a relatively ineffective and somewhat belated administrative and legal framework, the prestige and popularity of medieval monuments were sufficient to ensure a significant number of restoration works after 1840. Literature on art, the press and manuscript sources of the period, sought to identify the principles to underlie the idea of restoration in Portugal between 1839 and 1925, as compared to models adopted throughout Europe. Although Portuguese artistic culture lagged far behind other European nations, the restoration of medieval religious architecture was common practice in Portugal at that time, both due to the idea that unity had always been one of the fundamental principles of architecture and because the cult of monuments stemmed from a mythical and symbolic production of national identity.

## Keywords

Monument, architecture, history, memory, restoration, conservation, Portugal, 19th Century

## 1. The glorification of the historical monument

The glorification of the historical monument, a European phenomenon that emerged during the first quarter of the 19th century, found fertile ground in Portugal's periodical press for its theoretical and iconographic enshrinement. Through engravings, and later photography, the image, a powerful medium of synthesis both in creating symbols and in contributing to an understanding of stylistic categories, reproduced and disseminated the iconography of monuments, thus becoming a central vector in enhancing the value of medieval architectural heritage and consequently its

restoration. The use of images to document the state of buildings from a previous era gave them, at times, the status of models to be followed in reproducing architectural elements that had disappeared in the meantime, in a virtual game played between image and reality, since engravings of monuments were more often than not idealised.

Even though interest in antiquities and the conservation and restoration of emblematic or artistically invaluable objects and constructions had always existed, given that certain moments in history dedicated special attention to the matter – the Roman empire, the Carolingian empire, the Papal Rome of the Middle Ages, the Italian Renaissance and, in Portugal, during the reigns of Dom Manuel (1495-1521) and Dom João V (1706-1750) – restoration theory and practice took on greater importance in the 19th century, as one of the central cultural vectors of the time. This marked a difference in relation to previous centuries. Only in the 19th century was restoration work carried out in a concerted and systematic fashion. Official bodies were founded, capable of carrying out works, as were multiple private societies dedicated to the conservation of monuments, their inventory and classification.

Despite the existence of an inadequate and rather belated legal and administrative framework, the prestige of Portuguese medieval monuments was so compelling that, by 1840, restoration was being regularly undertaken, having been boosted in particular by the restoration of the Batalha Monastery (*Mosteiro da Batalha*)<sup>1</sup>. At the time, about seventy other medieval buildings had already been restored or had restoration projects drawn up for them. In art studies, press articles and manuscript sources, we sought to identify the guiding principles underlying the restoration work undertaken, motivated by some of the main theories espoused in Europe at the time. Restoration projects inspired by the theory and works of Viollet-le-Duc and by the famous definition of *restauration* did not find much echo in Portugal, although the French architect's prestige influenced some of the criteria that were applied and which were better understood from the last decade of the century onwards.

The lack of artistic training and the permanently deficient situation of architectural education at that time are not enough to justify the lack of restoration projects based on Viollet-le-Duc's modern theory. When there were architects who were capable of undertaking projects, these were usually rejected, or when projects were accepted, they were later subjected to profound alterations and much criticism. In Portugal, less radical restoration was preferred, more scrupulously and archaeologically based upon the monument's remaining vestiges, with the aim of recovering the building's "original features", but not its exact pristine form. This was true of work carried out on the Batalha Monastery, the church of São Miguel do Castelo<sup>2</sup>, the Old Cathedral (*Sé-Velha*) of Coimbra<sup>3</sup>, the Cathedral (*Sé*)

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<sup>1</sup> Construction of the Batalha Monastery (*Mosteiro da Batalha*) was ordered by Dom João I (1385-1433) in fulfilment of a promise made to the Virgin Mary, in return for victory at the Battle of Aljubarrota (1385), against the king of Castile. It is its status as a commemorative building and its high-quality Gothic construction plan (classified by UNESCO as World Heritage in 1983) that make of the monastery of Batalha a highly celebrated monument in Portugal.

<sup>2</sup> According to tradition, Dom Afonso Henriques, the first king of Portugal (1143-1185), was baptised in the church of São Miguel do Castelo in Guimarães. It is for this reason that this small Romanesque church was so highly esteemed in the 19th century.

<sup>3</sup> The Romanesque Old Cathedral of Coimbra dates from the 12th century.

of Guarda<sup>4</sup>, etc. Certainly, not all restoration works followed these principles, but these were the ones that were most admired and were widely adopted as models for other works. Another line of thinking typified by various restored monuments advocated more radical, more appealing forms of restoration, came closer to eclecticism, and was rooted in the idea that the representation of architectural features from the past should be combined with the monument's contemporary syntax. This was the case at Jerónimos<sup>5</sup>, Madre de Deus<sup>6</sup>, Santa Cruz of Coimbra<sup>7</sup>, etc.

The debate that took place at the turn of the century between theories that defended radical forms of restoration and those that defended mere conservation, whose motto was first widely divulged through the restoration of the Jerónimos Monastery and the reception in Portugal of Camillo Boito's theory, relatively well-known at the time, seems to have been a great relief to many, for whom radical restoration had never held much appeal.

The cult of the historical monument in Portugal, taken almost to a point of sacralisation, made historically valuable medieval buildings practically untouchable. This is the crux of the restoration issue: its ambiguity, and its equivocal and utopian nature. It is the reason why authors and critics vacillated between the intention of conserving monuments that history had altered over time, while respecting the works of all periods, and the need to preserve the monument's historical value, here understood from Riegl's perspective. He maintained that all elements that covered buildings in their original state should be removed: the lime that hid stones and abbreviations, altars, tiles and other additions that obliterated the monument's historical value and the capacity that it had to represent a certain period.

## 2. Restoration or Conservation?

During the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, restoration of medieval architecture was regularly carried out in Portugal, where criteria from the previous century were adopted, with the use of traditional stone masonry techniques learnt on construction sites. Knowledge of architecture and construction was improved through prescriptive models for restoration works that were imported from abroad and could be found in widely disseminated manuals.

Rather than seeking unity in style, restoration work at the time was almost always rooted in the idea of unity as the grounding principle for architecture in general and in the cult of the monument issuing from the symbolic and mythical production of the national identity that they represented.

Restoration that unambiguously sought unity in style and the total removal of the so-called accretions apparently became much more widespread from the second decade of the 20th century onward, and indelibly marked restoration work undertaken after 1930. However, this matter falls outside the scope of this paper, and here we will only present an outline of its main characteristics.

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<sup>4</sup> The Gothic Cathedral of the City of Guarda dates from the 15th century.

<sup>5</sup> Dom Manuel I (1495-1521) ordered the construction of the Jerónimos Monastery (*Mosteiro dos Jerónimos*) (Lisbon).

<sup>6</sup> The Convent of Madre de Deus (*Convento da Madre de Deus*) in Lisbon was founded in 1509 by Dona Leonor, wife of Dom João II.

<sup>7</sup> The construction of the Monastery of Santa Cruz (*Mosteiro de Santa Cruz*) of Coimbra began in 1131.

The restoration of the Batalha Monastery, begun in 1840 and continued throughout the century, represents a landmark in the history of architectural restoration in Portugal.

The great quality of its construction, its emblematic value, the fact that it was the first Portuguese monument to be made the subject of a beautifully illustrated foreign publication,<sup>8</sup> the prestigious sponsorship provided at the beginning of the works by Dom Fernando de Saxe-Coburg Gotha, husband to Dona Maria II (1834-1853) and the landmark conception of restoration that was applied to the monumental site by Luis Mousinho de Albuquerque, were to act as driving forces for the development of the restoration phenomenon in 19th-century Portugal.<sup>9</sup>

From 1840 onwards, constant news of restoration works being carried out or of the stated intention to do so appears across the country.

A complex phenomenon to define, the Portuguese works of restoration appear to be associated with the historicist, Romantic 19th century, which glorified the historical monument and sought to classify and conserve it, and to the architects and theorists who gained renown through both their work and their theories: Viollet-le-Duc, J. Ruskin and Camillo Boito. But, despite the greater importance of their works and respective ramifications in 19th-century Europe, restoration was such an excessively widespread activity throughout the century, at times being carried out with the use of much earlier methods than those proposed by these authors, that we cannot analyse the phenomenon in its entirety based only on their theories. In Portugal, Viollet-le-Duc's influence only became explicitly apparent in restoration projects dating from after 1890 (those on the Cathedral of Guarda by Rosendo Carvalheira,<sup>10</sup> the Castle of Leiria by Ernesto Korrodi,<sup>11</sup> and the Cathedral of Lisbon by

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<sup>8</sup> Murphy (1795). Murphy, an architect of Irish extraction, came to Portugal in 1789 with the intention of producing detailed drawings of the monumental site of Batalha. Encouraged and sponsored by William Conygham, a member of the Society of Antiquaries of London, who had visited Portugal in 1783 and returned to England with drawings of Portuguese monuments, Murphy's visit should be seen in the light of the English cultural and artistic environment of that time. Since the first half of the 18th century, the English had been interested in the origins of Gothic architecture, seeking justifications and inspirations for their revivalist trend (or a taste that had never entirely disappeared) in order to build "in the Gothic style". It is in this context that the huge success of Murphy's work should be understood, being published in a luxurious edition in London in 1795 and spreading the prestige of the Batalha Monastery and its highly esteemed architecture throughout Europe. A significant majority of the foreigners travelling in Portugal during the 19th century, and who visited Batalha either for official reasons or as tourists, mention Murphy's work, a clear sign of its widespread dissemination and its important role in publicising Portuguese monuments.

<sup>9</sup> Having written *Memoria inédita acerca do Edifício Monumental da Batalha* (Unpublished Memoir on the Monumental Building of Batalha), Luis da Silva Mousinho de Albuquerque (1792-1846), who was responsible for the conservation and restoration works on this Monastery between 1840 and 1843, left us with possibly the only Portuguese text of the mid-19th century written by a restoration project's actual author.

<sup>10</sup> Rosendo Carvalheira (c. 1864-1919) was the architect of several buildings in the city of Lisbon. In 1897, he concluded *Memória sobre a Sé Cathedral da Guarda e sua possível restauração* (Memoir on the Cathedral of Guarda and its possible restoration), whose methodology was inspired by the work of Viollet-le-Duc. He supervised the restoration works between 1899 and 1919, opting at times for the French architect's theory, and at others for solutions that were better suited to the conservation of features added after the Gothic period.

<sup>11</sup> The Gothic Castle of Leiria was the subject of a partially accomplished restoration project in 1898, planned by the Swiss architect and teacher of design, Ernesto Korrodi, who worked in Portugal.

Augusto Fuschini,<sup>12</sup> with one or two exceptions in the case of projects that were not put into practice (Jerónimos Monastery, Lisbon, by J. Possidónio Narciso da Silva).<sup>13</sup> There was also the diffuse influence of J. Ruskin and W. Morris, or the more direct influence of Camillo Boito, who during this decade launched a major debate on conservation and restoration, as can be appreciated from the work undertaken on the old Cathedral of Coimbra by A. A. Gonçalves.<sup>14</sup>

During much of the century, the restoration works that were undertaken ignored these theories, instead adhering to criteria and themes inherited from the 18th century. They were influenced by such questions as the historic enhancement of monuments, the prestige and vital attraction of what is or seems to be old, training in restoration, specialists coming periodically from abroad and the dissemination of manuals that were meant to be used in restoration works.<sup>15</sup>

Although there was an absence of concerted programmes and well-defined methods, a lack not only of training and theory, but also of actual architects trained in this field of specialisation, a political and gubernatorial setting in constant mutation (belatedly given a proper administrative structure, with irregular and often inadequate budgets), several restoration works were nonetheless carried out, and buildings threatened with ruin were maintained through smaller or greater interventions. Under the influence of the periodical press, which broadly speaking provided the phenomenon with its greatest

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<sup>12</sup> Augusto Fuschini (1846-1911), an engineer and Member of Parliament who presided over the Council of National Monuments, was responsible for the restoration of the Cathedral of Lisbon, having worked on the projects and works between 1899 and 1911. The Romanesque Cathedral of Lisbon (*Sé*) suffered great damage during the earthquake of 1755. In the late 18th and early 19th century, the repair work that was undertaken afforded the cathedral an air of neoclassical inspiration. Augusto Fuschini applied both Romanesque and Gothic forms, which resulted in a highly fanciful restoration. During the first half of the 20th century, the works continued, but now the work by Fuschini was removed and a more restrained programme was followed.

<sup>13</sup> Joaquim Possidónio Narciso da Silva (1806-1896), the architect of the Royal Household, founded the *Real Associação dos Arquitectos Civis e Arqueólogos Portugueses* (Royal Association of Portuguese Civil Architects and Archaeologists) (1863), over which he presided. There, he undertook important activities in the protection and restoration of monuments.

<sup>14</sup> António Augusto Gonçalves (1848-1932), a teacher of design, a sculptor and archaeologist, was influenced by the Arts and Crafts movement. Between 1893 and 1918, the restoration of the Old Cathedral of Coimbra was partially the responsibility of António Augusto Gonçalves, governed by the principle of veracity and denoting the influence of the methods and theory of Camillo Boito, already well-known in Portugal in 1895.

<sup>15</sup> One of the best-known examples is the Roret Manuals collection, by the Frenchman Nicolas Roret, who in 1824 founded a publishing house in Paris, which became famous for its popular encyclopaedia of technology. On the subject of the restoration of monuments, this collection published Schmit (1845).

J.-P. Schmit was an inspector of religious monuments and a member of the *Comité Historique des Arts et Monuments*. The author expounds on the principles adopted by that Committee. His aim is to give advice, gained over 26 years from his studies and theoretical and practical experience in the restoration of monuments.

There is a copy of this manual in the "old catalogue" of the Municipal Library of Porto, stamped by the *Real Bibliotheca Publica do Porto*. In the *Catálogo da Bibliotheca publica de Guimarães*, dated 1888, p. 236, a copy of this manual is referred to in an edition from 1856.

We can conclude that this work was consulted in Portugal by restoration authors. Its availability in public libraries, widespread dissemination, and the contents that coincide with the type of restoration that was diligently practised in Portugal allow us to come to this conclusion.

The celebrated journal directed by César Daly, "Revue de L'Architecture et des Travaux Publicques", in whose pages the restoration works carried out in France were extensively reported and discussed, was subscribed to by the Municipal Library of Porto in 1860.

boost in Portugal, restoration works took advantage of the enthusiasm (and funds) of individuals or local societies dedicated to the safeguarding of monuments. The authors of a number of projects took some advice, received praise and had disagreements with the Royal Association of Portuguese Civil Architects and Archaeologists; and certain restoration works were completed at a surprisingly fast rate, given that this was a time of crisis and instability, but also one of progress and development, processes which would frequently be at odds with the conservation of buildings from the past.

In undertaking incipient restoration works, in many cases with low budgets and without well-defined projects when compared with the vast, complex interventions performed on French, German, Italian or Spanish monuments, 19th-century Portuguese restorers were not unaware of the need to safeguard medieval buildings; on the contrary, they sought to establish there the presence of a past marked by bravery and grandeur, restoring buildings which best represented the legacy of the nation. By being closely linked to this latter consideration, the historical value of monuments was one of the main criteria, or rather, a *leitmotiv*, in choosing the buildings that were considered worthy of restoration and in determining the type of works that were to be carried out; another criterion was an admiration for architecture as one of the highest forms of art, due to its artistic and constructive qualities, and its emblematic ability to portray the era of its construction.

In recent years, a significant number of studies and research works have appeared, seeking to unravel the ties between the 19th century (and Viollet-le-Duc) and the practice of restoration as something immanent in its culture. Viollet-le-Duc, in his renowned *Dictionnaire Raisoné de l'Architecture Française*, insisted, when dealing with restoration, that: "the word and the thing are modern"<sup>16</sup>. He denies the Greeks, the Romans and the Middle Ages the idea of restoration, stating that only in his time, since the historical discipline had been created, had it adopted such a distinct attitude in its relationship with the past (Viollet-le-Duc 1868). According to this author, the origins of restoration are linked to 18th-century intellectual developments brought about through palaeontology, philology, ethnology and archaeology, which opened new horizons for the analysis of the cultural world and for the understanding of medieval architecture, from which one should ultimately learn to build. Restoration and project merge together as concepts when the architect has the capacity to understand all the links with the past. Restoration is thus a great disciplinary discovery that combines the science of historical analysis and architecture.

The concepts of Viollet-le-Duc were part of a modern theory of architecture, which regarded the past as an object of scientific analysis, research and learning. This attitude implied a significant break with the dominant thinking of the preceding era, because the selection he made of Gothic architecture was dependent on his understanding of the constructions built in that style as organic and functional structures, in what amounted to a deliberately anti-classical position. According to the definitions of Riegl, the historical value of monuments mattered less than medieval architecture or the lessons that one could draw from this. It is for this reason that his restoration works were so "radical" and that his famous definition of *restauration* allowed for the restoration of a building to its complete state, which may in fact have never existed.

These concepts do not in any way correspond to the vast majority of the works undertaken in 19th-century Portugal and other European countries. This definition of restoration that has been

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<sup>16</sup> VIOLLET-LE-DUC, Eugène (1868). S./v. Restauration, "Dictionnaire Raisoné de l'Architecture Française du XI au XVIème siècle". Vol. 8, Paris, 1868.

presented, in which it is defined as a new discipline, belongs to Viollet-le-Duc and cannot be expanded to include the culture of restoration in its entirety.

In the Portuguese periodical press, the term restore/restoration was understood from the 1830s onwards as meaning to “renovate, reform, recover the former state of”. This definition was similarly upheld in the *Dicionário da Língua Portuguesa* (Dictionary of the Portuguese Language) by António de Moraes e Silva, after its 3rd edition in 1823 (Silva 1823). The word restoration continued, however, to be used in its narrower sense of renovation, i.e. when the works done to a building conserved its present state, or also when it was altered by modern works. This latter interpretation, which was very commonly found in the chronicles of the 17th and 18th centuries, tended to be used less and less during the 19th century. The idea of “recovering the former state” prevailed and took hold. By the end of the century, there had been a certain change, since the term took on the clear meaning of an architectural intervention performed upon a partially ruined building, with the aim of restoring its destroyed elements. But, by this time, the differences between restoration and conservation were already at the centre of a fairly broad debate.

Taste and respect for the conservation and renovation of all artistic objects from the past are phenomena that have always existed, even if practised only sporadically, since that which is old is durable and ensures the continuity of civilisations. The Roman Empire thus understood this question by, at times, perpetuating constructions situated at the limits of its most remote outposts, because Rome was eternal, this being the founding idea and reason of the Empire. During the Middle Ages, there were many examples of restoration works undertaken on Roman buildings, as well as measures taken to prevent their destruction, especially in Papal Rome. In 15th-century Italy, a large number of Papal Edicts were issued to prevent the destruction of the architecture of Pagan and Christian antiquity. In Rome, these documents ordered the restoration of buildings such as the Pantheon, the Aqua Virgo aqueduct and the Aurelian walls, at the same time as other constructions from that period were being destroyed. The desire to modernise and embellish the city included the constructions of antiquity to which great artistic value, and a corresponding prestige, had been attributed, but it also led to the destruction of others. This consideration will always be a part of the conservation of monuments in Western Europe (Choay 1992: 26-50).

In Portugal, well-known examples of an interest in classical art and its conservation during the Humanist 16th century were provided by André de Resende<sup>17</sup>, as he admired Évora for its historical past, or Damião de Góis<sup>18</sup>, when describing the monuments of Lisbon.

Dom Manuel ordered the restoration of the royal tombs of Santa Cruz of Coimbra and its church, thus bestowing greater dignity on the founders of the monarchy. Symbolically, the works display the art of the king’s time and the multiple emblems of his reign. Also well-known were the royal statutes forbidding construction between the Jerónimos Monastery and the Tagus River (Rosa 1989:126) and the conservation measures taken to preserve buildings in the kingdom, which were the responsibility of the Court’s architects. Any other attitude would not make sense. All political systems need to preserve the symbols of their legitimacy.

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<sup>17</sup> André de Resende (1500-1573), humanist and antiquary, wrote, among other things, *História da Antiguidade da Cidade de Évora*, 1553.

<sup>18</sup> Damião de Góis (1502-1574) described Lisbon’s monuments in *Elogio da Cidade de Lisboa*, published in Latin in 1554.

The attitude of Dom João V, who founded the *Academia Real de História Portuguesa* (Royal Academy of Portuguese History) in 1720, and passed a law to protect and study “ancient monuments” (Phoenician, Greek, Roman and Arab), was part of the European phenomenon that Françoise Choay has called “the Age of Antiquaries” (Choay 1992: 51-75). This was a time of interest in gathering knowledge on national antiquities, “in which the glory of the Portuguese Nation can have great interest”, since the loss of these vestiges would be “a loss so sensitive and damaging to the reputation and glory of ancient Lusitania” (Paço 1958 (8): 29-52).

Awareness of the damage that would be caused to the glory of the nation by the loss of those vestiges indicates an awareness of the value of heritage, but, as we have said, the prestige attached to antiquities and their safeguarding has existed throughout the ages, because of their aura of mystery, artistic value and raw materials.

### 3. Legislative measures

We will now focus on the restoration works of the early 19th century, excluding those that took place at the Batalha Monastery.

The first legislative measure regulating restoration of “public monuments” was introduced in 1840, inspired or supported by Mousinho de Albuquerque, who was then beginning his work on the Batalha Monastery. This measure was introduced because of the works which had been carried out on the Jerónimos Monastery since 1834, where the monastic quarters were on the verge of being adapted to accommodate a philanthropic institution that provided shelter for minors.

The norms established were as follows:

1– repairs or reforms are forbidden that alter the order and plan according to which the public monuments were built, since their worthiness for being classified as works of art, or historical heritage and monuments of national glory depends on the conservation of their original form and design;

2– the devastation that some buildings have suffered due to a total disregard for good taste and the precepts that should be adhered to in all repairs should be stopped, the results of this being evident in the restoration of the Jerónimos Monastery, one of the most celebrated and lavish Portuguese monuments;

3– the Administrative Committee must take the greatest possible care, especially with regard to the Monastery’s exterior, in order not to destroy or transform the original construction, doing its utmost to prevent the appearance of modern amendments “next to the beautiful old [structures]”, since this would be “a testimony to ignorance and a lack of esteem for our glorious antiquities”;

4– if there is the possibility that repair work may alter the proportions of the building’s construction, the project must be submitted to the government for its approval (Collecção 1840: 7).

The principles that were thus legislated for were certainly applied to a small number of constructions, being dependent on the supervisors of the works themselves, the state of the buildings and other circumstances, but the simple fact of their being decreed reveals the concept of restoration that at the time prevailed at the Ministry of the Kingdom (*Ministério do Reino*), then responsible for public works. The restoration of the Batalha Monastery and the position, conferred on Mousinho de Albuquerque in 1838, of Inspector of Public Works for that Ministry, were decisive in defining these



criteria.

The Ministry of Public Works, Trade and Industry (*Ministério das Obras Públicas, Comércio e Indústria*) was created in 1852, including a technical department that was responsible for repairs to national monuments, until then under the direction of the Ministry of the Kingdom. But the great reform of 1864, which reorganised the ministry and creating a body of engineers, some of whom studied in France, truly marked the introduction of an organised and structured restoration policy. That same year, the statutes were approved by the Royal Association of Portuguese Civil Architects and Archaeologists, a society which from its outset was dedicated to safeguarding the national heritage. These two facts, as well as the multiplication of articles in the illustrated periodical press and specialist presses after the end of the 1850s, were decisive in guaranteeing that in the following years, works dedicated to restoring the former appearance of buildings also increased dramatically. Furthermore, all these factors also favoured a greater availability of information than had existed in the previous decade.

#### 4. Viollet-le-Duc's way or Portuguese taste?

Between 1835 and 1866, important reforms were undertaken on the monastic quarters of the Jerónimos Monastery. The restoration of the cloister was resumed in 1882, lasting until 1886, and the church was restored between 1868 and 1878.

In 1848, J. P. Narciso da Silva, who had developed an interest in the Jerónimos monument at an early stage, wished to publish a book on the Monastery, similar to the one that James Murphy had dedicated to Batalha, but he was unable to raise the necessary resources.

At the Paris Exhibition in 1867, he presented a wooden model of a project to restore the monastery, which focused in particular on the western façade and its respective towers. The project was not implemented, but years later it was still highly praised, in view of the “damage” that was then being done to the church.

The concept of authenticity, one of the principles of restoration most frequently debated in the 19th century, contributed to the ambiguity of this phenomenon, which fluctuated between the need to respect the historical monument, an explicit aspiration of Possidónio's, and the desire to alter it whilst nevertheless adhering to the criterion of authenticity and the maintenance of the original project.

The towers of Possidónio's project for Jerónimos were part of the area of intervention, or rather, of the *mimesis*, since the arrangement was inspired by elements that already existed in the building.

In his *Mémoire Descriptive du Project d'une restauration (...)*, Possidónio da Silva stated that he intended to restore not only all that was demolished and altered, but also to compose the part that was never built. The particular circumstances of the building, its historical value, the merit of its architecture, its original character, its inclusion in the category of “Manueline”<sup>19</sup> architecture, a unique style developed during the reign of Dom Manuel, formed an ensemble of qualities that so interested the architect that he not only wanted to repair the building but also to complete it (Silva, J. 1867: 3).

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<sup>19</sup> The Manueline style is a Portuguese contribution to Late Gothic Art.

The architect also projected the highest part of the incomplete west portal and its choir, for which he established proportional measurements along the length of the naves. All these elements took the church as their module, both in terms of dimensions and ornamentation, creating a uniform whole. Possidónio indicated measurements for the different construction elements, establishing proportional relations between them, and applied the same relationship to new elements. In this way, he contended, an arrangement that was agreeable to the eye would be obtained, in harmony with the dimensions that the architect Boitaca had originally conferred on his striking, magnificent building (Silva, J. 1867: 5-6). Possidónio Narciso da Silva was acquainted with the work of Viollet-le-Duc, whom he greatly admired. In 1869, at the invitation of the Royal Association of Portuguese Civil Architects and Archaeologists, the French architect became a corresponding member of the society. The Jerónimos restoration project was inspired by works similar to those of Viollet-le-Duc, whose theoretical studies started to be published in 1854, even though he had been writing since the beginning of the decade about the restoration works, which he then supervised, in journals which Possidónio knew well and to which the Royal Association's Bulletin referred constantly, such as the "Revue générale de l'architecture"<sup>20</sup>.

At the Jerónimos Monastery, Possidónio sought to accomplish something similar to the constructive and decorative logic that Viollet-le-Duc had found in Gothic architecture. In this sense, his project was the Portuguese example that most closely followed the restoration style applied by the French architect to such works as the Notre-Dame in Paris and the Cathedral of Clermont-Ferrand. The Portuguese projects developed at the turn of the century, such as those by Korrodi for the Castle of Leiria and by Fuschini for the Cathedral of Lisbon, also adhered to the Viollet-le-Duc's theory, but not all of the latter's restorations were in any way guided by the same criteria. Fuschini's and Korrodi's projects were closer to the definitions of the *Dictionnaire Raisonné (...)* and the reconstructions of Carcassone and Pierrefonds.

Possidónio's project was not undertaken. Until the 1930s, no modern restoration project such as Viollet-le-Duc understood it in its twin dimensions was ever totally accepted in Portugal. The integrated, erudite projects, intended to complete great architectural structures that had not existed until then (towers, high vaults, portals, etc.) and which followed the theories of Viollet-le-Duc (in other words, which complied with what remained in the building that was then to be imitated, Possidónio's project being an example of this), or those proposing the reconstruction of a building that may never have existed, were not generally approved. Even when these projects were initially accepted, they were later altered. Korrodi's project for the Castle of Leiria (1898) suffered many alterations when it was put into practice, and Fuschini's project for the Cathedral of Lisbon (1899-1911) was greatly altered after partial reconstruction was already underway.

Let us take a more detailed look at the issue in hand. At the turn of the century, the projects developed by Possidónio, Korrodi and Fuschini had not endured, nor had they established a following in Portugal, and the projects for the covering of the Imperfect Chapels (*Capelas Imperfeitas*)<sup>21</sup> of the Batalha Monastery (Murphy and Haupt) or the idea for the completion of the

<sup>20</sup> Consulting the lists of acquisitions of the Association's library published in its Bulletin, it can be seen that constant references are made to this publication.

<sup>21</sup> The Imperfect Chapels (*Capelas Imperfeitas*) (1436-1533) correspond to an order initially made by Dom Duarte (1433-1438), to build a Pantheon located to the east of the church's entrance. This work, restarted several times, was never concluded, and its covering was left unfinished.

church of the Carmo Convent (*Convento do Carmo*)<sup>22</sup> (1867, 1904) never met with enough support to be carried out. However, projects that were clearly revivalist and fanciful were applied to the Jerónimos Monastery (west wing) and to the Madre de Deus Convent. In other words, approval was given to projects relating to constructions that already existed, but which were to be adapted for new purposes. Such approval clearly removed the buildings' testimonial and historical value. They were no longer considered monuments, but constructions, so that inventive, and even festive, transformations were not considered distasteful, because the monument's historical value or its value in terms of antiquity was not being questioned.

The idea of profoundly altering an historical monument was never looked upon favourably and, for this reason, the most highly praised restoration works were those that adhered to the principle of authenticity and the search for the building's original state, copying, renovating and inventing, but not too much in any of these cases: Batalha (Mousinho de Albuquerque), the Old Cathedral of Coimbra (A. A. Gonçalves). This principle dated back to the 18th century, even in Portugal, but in the 19th century it was further stressed in the vast amount of thought dedicated to the historical value of monuments. The excessive esteem in which they were held made them practically untouchable.

It is true that artistic education did not adequately prepare architects, but it is also true that when there were architects capable of undertaking complete restoration works, almost no one accepted, wanted or understood them. It was not, then, a question of a lack of training in architecture, but rather a profound lack of artistic culture, together with an untimely, intense and exacerbated cult of the monument.

## 5. Purity, veracity and authenticity

One work that presented different characteristics was the restoration of the Church of São Miguel do Castelo in Guimarães, begun in 1874 under the supervision of Francisco Martins Sarmiento. Considered exemplary, this restoration funded by the Ministry of Public Works and by local subscription received high praise from the press and the Royal Association of Portuguese Civil Architects and Archaeologists, which awarded Francisco Martins Sarmiento a medal.

The church's prestige was enormous, both in the city and the country, not only because of its construction plan, but also due to its proximity to the Castle and especially because tradition stated that it was here that Dom Afonso Henriques was baptised. Its simplicity and reduced scale transformed this church into a showcase for illustrating both the virtues and the times of the founder of the Portuguese monarchy. Its value as a historical monument was extremely great. Its restoration, maintaining the church's "purity of style", pleased everyone.

Martins Sarmiento was an archaeologist, trained in positivism and an enthusiastic discoverer of objects of the past which were laden with historical *veracity*. The fact that he placed a few stone blocks next to the stairs and the inscription that accompanied them provided clear evidence of the spirit of this archaeologist, who sought to lay bare the remaining elements and simultaneously enhance them,

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<sup>22</sup> Construction of the Convent was ordered in 1393 by Dom Nuno Álvares Pereira (1360-1431), Constable of the Kingdom, as an *ex voto* for the victory achieved at the Battle of Aljubarrota (1385). The church was partially destroyed by the earthquake of 1755, which caused the Gothic covering to cave in.

as well as made apparent the diligence with which he supervised the church's restoration. The criterion adopted was the reconstruction with care and authenticity of the monument's original state, or in other words, of those elements where this was possible. In this sense, the works supervised by F. Martins Sarmiento were very similar to those undertaken by A. A. Gonçalves at Coimbra's Old Cathedral.

In 1897, writing about the completion of the restoration works at Jerónimos Monastery, Ramalho Ortigão (1836-1915), who worked as an inspector for the Commission for National Monuments, where he was responsible for analysing projects, set forth the Commission's stance on the practice of restoration:

He began by considering that only the practical purpose and utility of a building justified its restoration and established three fundamental criteria:

1– *in the same way that literary omissions are not filled in, so should architectural omissions not be filled in.*

This idea, revived by Camillo Boito, was already to be found in the debate taking place in France on the question of restoration. In 1851, Didron made a similar comparison in relation to the restoration of Reims Cathedral;

2– *a monument is a living organism which develops, is modified and transformed. To undo the work of one period in order to redo that of a previous period is to offend the continuity of tradition, "it is to harm the building (...) more or less scientifically, in an element that is essential to the integrity of its historical expression"*<sup>23</sup>. (ORTIGÃO 1943 [1897]: 244).

During the first half of the 19th century, Victor Hugo, Didron, Prosper Mérimée, Montalembert and Guillermy strongly defended the non-suppression of elements added after the original construction. Respect for the integrity of buildings was to be one of the central aspects of the thought of J. Ruskin and W. Morris;

3– *the restored monument should have a plaque with its history and successive architectural alterations.*

One of the vectors of Camillo Boito's theory related to the visibility of the interventions that were carried out.

## Conclusion

The restoration work undertaken in Portugal between 1835 and 1929 was highly diverse in terms of the models, criteria and principles adopted, as well as in the way that it followed the theories that were understood to a greater or lesser degree. It could not have been any other way. The time between these two dates is vast and the protagonists of the phenomenon were very different in their training and personality.

As we have already noted, in its more modern dimension, the type of restoration theorised by Viollet-le-Duc did not find much acceptance in Portugal, and we have already explained why. We believe that the text written by Ramalho Ortigão, quoted above, serves as an example of the adherence to new criteria as defined by Camillo Boito, but also illustrates the type of restoration that was more easily accepted. Alongside a mentality that rapidly adhered to recent theories, we observed an older school of thought. The general acceptance of some aspects of Boito's criteria stemmed from the fact that these same aspects corresponded to the type of restoration work that had the greatest number of advocates in 19th-century Portugal.

The constant concern with scraping off plaster and lime was a result, as we have said, of the historical value attached to monuments and the profound reflection that was dedicated to the subject in Portugal. However, restoration works undertaken after the Middle Ages were not often condemned to be regarded with total disdain. There were good and bad "vandalisms" and the various elements added to the original work (accretions) were often preserved because of their artistic quality. Undoubtedly, this notion of quality corresponded to a subjective and contemporary judgment, but we do not find in Portugal an exacerbated sense of medievalism in the restoration of monuments.

From a mixture of Mousinho de Albuquerque's classical search for exact conformity and harmony in the Batalha Monastery, the archaeological diligence pursued by Martins Sarmiento in restoring the church of São Miguel do Castelo, the search for veracity and the recreation of the original effect by A. A. Gonçalves in the restoration of Coimbra's Old Cathedral, and the idea of the primacy of architecture rooted in its capacity to signify the period of construction, as followed by Rosendo Carvalheira in the restoration project for the Cathedral of Guarda, a model of restoration was gradually developed, notwithstanding the differences, that was highly appreciated in Portugal at the time.

Unity of style – a concept that we assume enjoyed increasingly wider acceptance, particularly after 1930, is not quite the central issue as far as restoration in Portugal is concerned. Rather, it is a question of the idea of unity as a general rule in architecture, or, more precisely, the desire to make the planimetry, volumetry and constructive elements (i.e., the science of calculating planes and volumes) more distinct, thus allowing for a clearer perception of monuments.

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