SOME INSTANCES OF ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN IN THE PROTECTION OF CELTO-ROMAN RUINS

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1. Preamble

The program of interventions that follows the decision to enhance any ancient remains must necessarily be constituted by the contribution of tools provided not only by maintenance and restoration, which are fundamental and decisive, but also by contemporary architectural design.

The clear differences observed in the numerous examples of the conservation and enhancement of archaeology confirm the existence of a multidisciplinary [1] and multisectoral approach and interpretation, which combines individual and different contributions, directing them towards a specific goal: the enjoyment of the asset by the general public. It is possible that the vulnerable conditions of the material to be preserved may lead to the adoption of restoration techniques and protective actions that are often binding from a design perspective, sometimes limiting the creativity of those involved. However, in certain circumstances, these constraints can stimulate new solutions, which may be very bold yet still respectful of the object to be enhanced [2]. In this direction, the topic of 'protective coverings for ruins', among other things, has prompted further reflection on the tools that the most adept museographic practices can stage. Indeed, these protections, whether partial or total, require communication strategies that must simultaneously consider both indoor and outdoor musealization techniques. As is well understood, each nation has developed its own cultural formation and, thus, a specific way of viewing its past, primarily traced in the archaeology of its own territory, precisely because archaeology essentially represents 'the childhood of every country'. However, since the effects of globalization have had noticeable impacts even in the archaeological field, the most diverse cultural and interventionist orientations have also undergone clear contaminations. This has led to the creation, especially in Europe, of modern-generation archaeological museums, where, contrary to the increasingly widespread search for identity and the necessary rediscovery of one's origins, even the most expressive museographic practices of certain cultures have been mixed [3].

Protective interventions for archaeological sites, through the use of *in situ* covering structures, have taken on more specific forms depending on the nation in question. Each nation, in its general characteristics, has represented a 'constitutive element' of the discourse on interventions for antiquities. When attempting to synthesize the variety of approaches among different actions, even those conducted at archaeological sites within the same cultural context, clear differences can be identified. These differences are particularly evident in the approaches to the conservation and

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musealization of the past, implemented through the use of tools provided by contemporary design (with all its possible languages), in addition to the more usual tools of restoration and maintenance.

"The built vernacular heritage is important; it is the fundamental expression of the culture of a community, of its relationship with its territory and, at the same time, the expression of the world's cultural diversity [4]".

The ongoing quest for communities to identify with their cultural expressions, which are fundamentally and closely linked to the territory, can also involve the recovery of ancient construction techniques. These techniques are interpreted as tools for the preservation of the natural environment and, at the same time, as living testimonies of the many and diverse characteristics of different places. The analysis of natural elements, with which traditional construction often engaged, can provide a solid foundation for the design of interventions in archaeology. Against the backdrop of an ongoing debate between advocates of hi-tech architecture (as seen in the cases of Loupian and the Vesunna Museum) and proponents of the opposite no-tech approach, these interventions can foster greater awareness of respect for the site, whether urban or, especially, non-urban. This awareness translates into protective architectures that focus more on seeking 'social value' rather than merely pursuing an aesthetic result [5]. The use of vernacular architecture, which is widely applied especially in England (with the most representative examples being the characteristic huts of Bignor, the musealization of Chedworth, and numerous other cases) [6], reflects a particular inclination towards everything related to the origins of a people and the natural context that served as the backdrop for the lifestyles of an ancient past. Although established since the nineteenth century, the vernacular aspect of these examples of protecting ruins provides an opportunity for contemporary architectural research. It responds perfectly to the timeless demand for congruity between form and function, without ever neglecting the essential aspect of efficiency, also confirmed in a study by the Getty Institute, which praises the excellent results of such vernacular protection systems. At Bignor and Chedworth, which have served as early models of what was sought after, as well as at Littlecote and other smaller examples (North Leigh, Kings Weston, etc.), one of the most evident characteristics of the interventions on most of the remains of Roman villas is their absolute rusticity and traditionality.

These two aforementioned experiences have led to the conviction that the most appropriate covering for the ruins consists of *traditional vernacular structures with masonry or masonry-and-timber walls supporting a timber roof covered with stone slates, thatch, or other materials* [7]*,* so that the remains of villas are treated as if they were agricultural memories rather than archaeological monuments. Bignor Roman Villa was discovered in 1811 when George Tupper found a large stone belonging to the pool of what would later be called the 'Ganymede Room' on his property near the picturesque Bignor Hill. The site caught the attention of John Hawkins (1761-1841), a cultured and cosmopolitan local landowner, who summoned Samuel Lysons [8]. With the collaboration of the Royal Academy's painter-archaeologist Richard Smirke (1778-1815), Lysons uncovered the villa's most important mosaics. Baths and hypocausts also emerged, suggesting the presence of something more than a simple rustic villa, despite the dating and interpretation challenges that always accompany a site excavated with pre-scientific methods [9].

The Bignor site is distinguished by having preserved its exceptional mosaics *in sit*u, employing a method of display which may be considered somewhat rudimentary today, but was highly innovative at the time.

This approach became a model for the conservation of ruins. The intervention, as is well known, involved the construction of small cottages with thatched roofs, designed both to cover the main mosaics and to organize a small museum (Figure 1). Subsequently, a wooden gallery was also erected to cover another mosaic uncovered during the excavations, the long geometric floor of the 'North Corridor' (Figure 2). Finally, in the 20th century, two more buildings similar to the previous ones were added to cover other mosaics discovered in more recent excavations. Meanwhile, the rustic part of the villa was reburied.

Figure 1. Bignor (West Sussex): the typical thatched roofs of the Roman Villa (by A.R.D. Accardi).

Figure 2. Bignor (West Sussex): the exceptional mosaics preserved in situ *(by A.R.D. Accardi).*

The Bignor villa should be noted as an example of contemporary architecture applied to ruins as it was undertaken without succumbing to the reconstructive tendencies that would later characterize typical archaeological preservation in Northern Europe (especially Germany) [10]. The language used reflects the architecture of the time: promotional materials for the site museum specifically mention *barrel-vaulted roofs*.

The layout of the settlement remains quite clear; however, the 'capannucce' (huts), *tradendo un'impostazione evocativa, confermano un carattere ingiustificato e fuorviante* [11], as they evoke not the original volumes of the villa but rather the volumes and language of the local vernacular architecture of the Georgian era. This gave rise to the idea of a Romano-British 'country-house culture', which later emerged as the foundation of a long-lasting vernacular architectural language. This vernacular language was identified with types such as the thatched *cottage*, the timber-framed barn, and the small gable-roofed house made of wood or stone - what archaeologists recognise as 'Celtic background'. Over time, these same structures have been the subject of conservation efforts, as they themselves have become historical artifacts. The restoration has involved both the wooden structures and the thatched roofs, using traditional 're-thatching' methods as is typically necessary for this type of roofing.

Paradoxically, the Bignor site appeals more to contemporary tastes than to those of the era in which it was established. It represents the archetypal image of a historically layered site that was not scientifically reconstructed but unconsciously revived. This is one of the reasons why this old intervention, even after two centuries since its realization, is still considered so appropriate by most commentators.

2. The application of vernacular language in Sanxay

In an overview of archaeological sites characterized by a predominantly vernacular nature, one of the oldest, if not the most ancient, examples in France must not be overlooked: the protective intervention of the Gallo-Roman baths of Sanxay (Figure 3 and Figure 4). Located near the commune of Sanxay (Vienne, Poitou-Charentes), the remains of an ancient *vicus*, a Gallo-Roman rural village built around the 1st century AD, were discovered and excavated by Reverend Camille de La Croix towards the end of the 19th century [12]. The excavations that uncovered the cruciform temple, the hilltop theater, and the Roman baths also revealed the central role of the *vicus*, originally divided into two main sectors: residential and artisanal [13].

The intervention on the Gallo-Roman baths of Sanxay, similar in many ways to that of Séviac (which we will discuss later), can undoubtedly be included among the historical experiences of archaeological protection that primarily advocated for a meticulous reconstruction of ancient architectures. Indeed, if the archaeological site is observed from above, beyond the traces of the large temple and the theater layout, it is possible to perceive the original mass of the ancient *balnea* entirely. This is because the protection intervention of the baths (initiated around 1889 as a state initiative) introduced a system of inclined roof coverings, supported by sturdy trusses and wooden pillars, which restores the appearance of a seemingly intact building. However, if the complex is observed 'from the ground', the perceived image is quite different. In fact, the roofing system, although evocative of a past reality and despite the materials used contributing to a typically rural *aura* - thus entirely appropriate for the object of protection - reveals within it a 'disordered' archaeological mass of ruins at different altitudes, which, from a communicative perspective, poorly harmonizes with the imposing protective structure, making the distinction of the original interiors somewhat challenging.

Figure 3. Sanxay (Vienne, Poitou-Charentes): the protective covering of the Gallo-Roman baths of Sanxay (by A.R.D. Accardi).

Figure 4. Sanxay (Vienne, Poitou-Charentes): the protective covering and its massive support framework structured in accordance with the structural rhythm of Roman architecture (by A.R.D. Accardi).

Walking among the ruins via an elevated walkway gives the impression that the massive support framework overshadows the remains of the baths, even though it is structured in accordance with the structural rhythm of Roman architecture (Figure 4). Therefore, the spatial effect inside is not very convincing, and the interpretative signage is almost entirely absent to date. Nevertheless, we are dealing with a careful, albeit old, evocation of specific Roman archetypes, concerning not only the roofs with clay tegulae but also the treatment of the parapets of the elevated walkways, which mimic, without faithfully reproducing, the typical language of Roman architec-

ture, as seen in the wooden gable boards and the vertical perimeter protection, also wooden, present in the two large partially covered thermal wings.

Here at Sanxay, the architectural language used for the covering presents many points of fusion between two styles. Although a greater emphasis has been placed on Roman archetypes, the vernacular aspect reappears in several places, albeit in the background, in an overall operation that seems to express the effects of past Romanization on the local traditional architecture.

3. From 'Victorian shelter buildings' to a new language of mediation: the case of Chedworth

The villa of Chedworth, located seven miles from Cirencester, not far from the Fosse Way, the main Roman road in the region [14], was discovered entirely by chance within the estate of the Earl of Eldon by some Victorian nobles hunting rabbits. It was excavated by James Farrer (1812-1879) and a very young Fred Norman (1849-1940), who began to uncover a large building whose construction was started in the first half of the 2nd century AD. Initially composed of separate structures, it later developed, with the construction of connecting sections, into the layout of a large U-shaped complex, intersected by a gallery and equipped in the 4th century with a double set of baths. At the end of this century, following a destructive fire, much of the wooden elements of the various buildings were replaced with masonry, a change that reflects the high social class of the owner, whose residence and *tablinium* were likely situated within the western gallery. It was the site's owner, Lord Eldon, who decided not to sell the artifacts unearthed from the excavation to any museum, but to preserve them in a room connected to the site, and to build protective structures for the mosaic pavements revealed during the excavation campaign. This illustrates how, in this case, as in many similar ones, preservation did not depend on public intervention, but solely on the will of private individuals. At the time, under the direction of James Farrer himself, the most interesting sections of the villa were covered with four large gabled structures, in the typical style of the region. Although not entirely successful in maintaining coherence with ancient architectural identity, the small 'museum' at Chedworth, with its lattice textures, sharp gables, and chimneys in perfect 'Victorian country style', is effectively the first 'site museum' attached to a Roman villa and specifically built for this purpose. In the same country style, the very delicate wall crests were also protected by dual-pitched roofs covered with stone tiles. As David Lowenthal aptly notes, the arrangement at Chedworth is an excellent example of how ancient artifacts are both past and present, and how this intimate and inescapable unity is part of a «continual flux, altering, ageing, renewing and always interacting with the present» [15] (Figure 5).

Any attempt, whether more or less necessary, to intervene on the ruins with the addition of new coverings and the creation of a better museographic project should ensure that the 'new', or the present, does not enter this flux and irreparably disrupt it, perhaps even under the pretense of going back two thousand years. In the mid-1990s, the National Trust initiated a conservation and development plan for Chedworth villa, which has operationally developed the theoretical premises regarding the processual nature of conservation, interpretation of significance, associative values, and the need for community management. One of the concerns of the new plan, beyond the physical preservation of the Roman villa, was the communication of a 'maximum of meanings', which has certainly not yet been achieved and will need to be specified with new ideas and a 'Management Plan' derived from the 'Conservation Plan' [16].

Figure 5. Chedworth (Gloucestershire): the ruins of the roman villa covered by gabled structures in the typical style of the region. Among the wall crests protected by dual-pitched roofs covered with stone tiles, stands the small 'museum' of Chedworth, with its lattice textures, sharp gables, and chimneys in perfect Victorian country style. In the background, the recent building protecting the mosaics of the West gallery (by A.R.D. Accardi).

Until then, the quest for a complete museographic communication of the ruins, which is absolutely necessary, and aims at a better understanding of the site by the public, could not extend to the idea of creating new coverings that were very different from the originals, even if designed with a better ability to reconfigure the original shapes of the ancient buildings in ruins. This was because the significance of the 'Victorian shelter buildings' was firmly established. However, the idea of proceeding with excavations and constructing new coverings now seems quite appealing, especially since the existing mosaics are not displayed under the best conditions, despite being perfectly preserved, and the buried ones are at risk. At that time, the absolute priority was to safeguard the 19th-century appearance of the site, which led to an even more complex problem, because two different historical periods would have interacted with each other.

Recently, however, these same coverings have undergone transformation thanks to the innovative and sustainable project by Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios (March 2012). The project involved a conservational-exhibition structure designed to protect the most significant archaeological remains, particularly the mosaics, which runs along the western side of the villa. The project has opened up new discussions about the site's interpretation and the new opportunities it could provide for learning and enjoyment. Indeed, the building is designed to welcome visitors and serve as an interpretation center for the public (Figure 6). The new building literally 'rests' (non-invasively) directly on the remains of the Roman ruins, utilizing a structure made of optimally sized wooden frames that do not require attachment to the Roman masonry of the villa, which means it is a self-supporting structure that can be easily dismantled or adapted as future interpretation and conservation practices evolve. A suspended exploration path, among elevated floors, little balconies, and walkways, allows the public to retrace the 'reconfigured' spaces and view the rich mosaic floorings from above. The new silhouette of the protective structure, despite its contemporary features, blends into the surrounding context, offering an asymmetric pitched

roof system that highlights the difference in elevation of the mosaic floors and distinguishes the reference environments: on one side, the long ambulatory to the West, on the other, the succession of rooms of the thermal establishment, including the *triclinium* (Figure 7). The enclosure of the structure consists of a dense lattice of slats, placed both in the roofing and in the walls, allowing for a 'filtering' protective shielding that allows air to pass through for proper interior ventilation. Along the side corridor, some sliding shutters on special rails have been installed on the windows, so that the surrounding context is periodically revealed, thereby maintaining the connection with the site and avoiding the sense of abstraction that total closure would produce (Figure 8).

Figure 6. Chedworth (Gloucestershire): two views of the recent building protecting the mosaics of the West gallery, also designed to welcome visitors and serve as an interpretation center for the public (by A.R.D. Accardi).

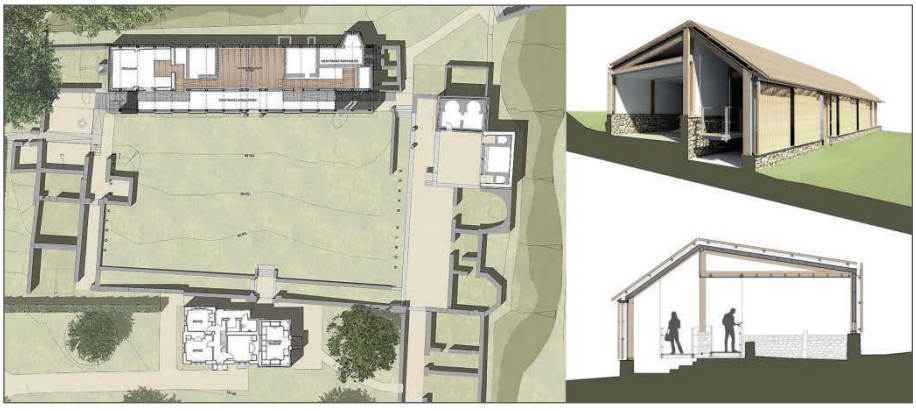

Figure 7. Chedworth (Gloucestershire): plan, perspective cross-section and section of the building project, designed by Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios (graphic reworking by A.R.D. Accardi).

Figure 8. Chedworth (Gloucestershire): two views of the interior of the new shelter, with a suspended walkway to explore the mosaics placed at different heights (by A.R.D. Accardi).

4. The radical transformation of vernacular language: the case of Séviac

At the archaeological site of Séviac, a Gallo-Roman villa near Montréal du Gers (Department of Gers), it is precisely the aforementioned vernacular architecture that links this luxurious residence to its rural context. Here, 'vernacular' [17], synonymous with *indigenous* and *domestic* architecture, emphasizes an indifference to influences from other cultures, thereby giving greater consideration to the original cultural heritage as a means of understanding a community, the true *Genius loci*. Indeed, with the creation of a vernacular-style covering, the current protective intervention on the ruins seems to reclaim more of an ancient Gallic expression, rather than focusing on the more evident Roman influence. This large archaeological complex from the 2nd century AD, marked by a long occupation that lasted until the 7th century, is primarily notable today for the remains of its private baths and the associated villa - structured around two garden-courtyards surrounded by a peristyle of marble columns - as well as for the unique stratification of polychrome mosaics belonging to the residential part of the Late Empire, among which the famous *mosaïque aux arbres* stands out.

The first traces of the peristyle house in Séviac (*pars urbana*), particularly the mosaics which have survived in excellent condition [18], were discovered around 1867. However, it was only a century later that a more extensive and lasting excavation campaign began, led by a passionate group of volunteer archaeologists, headed by Paulette Aragona-Launet. These campaigns, initiated in 1967, progressively revealed not only the entire layout of the villa but also a large number of mosaic floors [19], an immense thermal complex, a necropolis, and a Paleochristian sector. Particularly significant in the history of the site and its exploration was the year 1974, when the famous pair of skeletons known as the *Amants de Séviac* were uncovered. They are now displayed among the ruins in a case embedded in the ground. Additionally, the already mentioned *Mosaïque aux arbres* and the Merovingian-era *Trésor*, composed of seventeen gold coins, were also found.

At Séviac, the remains of the buildings and the polychrome mosaics have been preserved *in situ*, within a rustic and traditional setting that gives the archaeological complex a more specifically rural character, which is not entirely satisfying. Since 1979, some protective structures have been installed over the areas at risk of degradation (particularly those with mosaic flooring and hypocausts). These structures

took the form of roughly hewn wooden pavilions with pitched roofs covered with clay tiles, reflecting the traditional partial coverings used in Anglo-Saxon conservation, but without aiming precisely at recreating the original volumes [20] (Figure 9).

Figure 9. Séviac (Montréal du Gers, Dep. du Gers): several views of the Gallo-Roman villa, with its previous arrangement of rustic and traditional roofing, which gave the archaeological complex a more specifically rural character (by A.R.D. Accardi).

A significant evolution of this vernacular covering system became evident with the placement of a new structure protecting the 4th-century thermal sector. This structure mimicked the central volume of the *frigidarium* and the two side wings (originally intended for the hot rooms). For the new pavilion, still present *in situ* today, more modern technological tools were used, which, overall, did not result in any stylistic clash with the previous coverings. The modernity of the structural framework, made of glued laminated timber columns and beams, was softened by the arrangement of a typical pitched roof with *tegulae* and *imbrices*, giving the building a more traditional appearance. The choice to use wooden plank panels to close off the gables and the external perimeter was interesting, as their highly uneven texture evoked the characteristic rows of Roman brickwork. This closure, despite its evident materiality, did not create an effect of total encapsulation, as the almost completely open base of the structure allowed ample space for direct interaction between the protected ruins and the open-air environment. The Gallo-Roman site of Séviac also could not forgo adopting that much-experimented archaeological musealization practice in rural settings, which translates into the ordinary reorganization of the surrounding greenery (i.e., attention to the landscape dimension), the *anastylosis* of some architectural elements, and the more usual leveling of the walls.

While visitors to the site are still accompanied by diligent guides, likely meant to compensate for the limited educational materials confined to a few small informational panels which, through reconstructive images and brief captions, present the different sections of the villa and their original functions, a complete understanding of the site's history requires an extended visit to the archaeological museum located in Montreal-du-Gers, about two kilometers from the ruins. The museum presents the most important discoveries made at the site, including the famous *mosaïque aux arbres*, numerous sculpted objects and various artifacts related to daily life. However, this 'remote relationship' between the site and the museum does not ideally ensure continuity of information for the public [21]. Nevertheless, at Séviac, there was a complete transformation of its image. In 2013, work began on a new protective covering, which involved the total dismantling of the older protective structures, those in vernacular style, except for the most recent one mentioned above, which was built over the 4th-century thermal sector (*frigidarium* and the two side wings) (Figure 10).

Figure 10. Séviac (Montréal du Gers, Dep. du Gers): on the left, the previous covering of the Gallo-Roman villa; on the right, the new protective structure designed by João Luís Carrilho Da Graça (by A.R.D. Accardi).

In June 2011, an international architecture competition promoted by the Pôle Archeologique S.I.V.U. Elusa-Séviac - aimed at developing a new intervention for covering and musealizing the Gallo-Roman villa of Séviac and focused primarily on protecting the mosaic floors most susceptible to degradation - was won by the architect João Luís Carrilho Da Graça. In presenting his project idea, he wrote that he had conceived

un projet qui met en place un dispositif de protection et ne fait pas référence à une typologie connue. C'est un dispositif technique avec sa propre logique, dispositif d'aspect homogène qui crée un événement qui n'est pas en concurrence avec les vestiges mais redonne à lire l'emprise de la villa et son importance. Évènement: profiter de l'occasion pour que l'architecture contemporaine ait droit de cité dans le Gers. Architecture qui va jouer par contraste de façon très forte. Situation privilégiée qui permet au contraste de fonctionner. Peut devenir un outil de communication: c'est une vrai valeur ajoutée [22].

It is essentially a hyper-technological structure, the geometry of which stems solely from the need for protection. The abstract image of the new structure deliberately contrasts with the remains of the pre-existing buildings, so that, according to the designer, this play of contrasts contributes to enhancing the prominence of the Roman ruins, in contrast to more traditional reconfigurative roofing interventions, which, with their imposing mass, could overshadow or even conceal, the real object of the development. Placed at about 2.5 metres from the level of the ruins, the roof is characterised by a large flat volume, a *gros coussin gonflé d'air*, which seems to float like a cloud and dissolve near the archaeological skyline. A dense warp of metal trusses forms this large covering plate, whose box-like volume, about two metres thick, allows light to filter through and, with its horizontality, accentuates the unevenness of the ruins' elevation. The new roof, continuous and translucent, in order not to appear too invasive, has literally been wrapped in a special semi-transparent layer, which purports to give a more ethereal image of the whole, softening the strong impact that the structural latticework might have exerted (Figure 11).

Another building, made of glass facades, located at the entrance to the *villa* and along the ancient Roman road, fulfils the function of welcoming the public and introducing them to the Gallo-Roman *villa* of Séviac and its history.

Figure 11. Séviac (Montréal du Gers, Dep. du Gers): views of the new protective structure designed by João Luís Carrilho Da Graça (by A.R.D. Accardi).

5. Conclusion

Throughout this discussion, we have repeatedly touched upon issues related to the musealization of 'Romanity', where efforts have long been made to prioritize emotional engagement between the audience and the represented history, rather than a *sic et simpliciter* contemplation of the past. This engagement is primarily achieved through experimentation with open-air musealization. However, what truly embodies the innovation in this trend is the architectural research, which, guided by the most innovative museographic concepts, plays a pivotal role. It reconciles the needs of conservation, presentation, respect for the subsoil, and, last but not least, the current orientation towards *beautification* [23]. As noted by archaeologist Kevin Walsh [24], if taken to extremes, beautification may overlook aspects of the past that do not contribute to the creation of widespread pleasantness and harmony. It may thus prioritize the more scenic aspects of the landscape, positioning itself almost exclusively *in the eyes of the perceiver* [25].

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Biographical Notes

Aldo R. D. Accardi is Associate Professor on Museography, Interior and Exhibition Design, PhD in 'Recovery and Use of Ancient Contexts' at the University of Palermo, he has been teaching in the degree programmes 'Architecture' and 'Cultural Heritage' of the University of Rome and Palermo, as well as in university Master's degree programmes. He has carried out scientific research activities and has participated in various national and international scientific research projects, mainly focused on 'Exhibition and Interior Design', with several in-depth studies such as 'The contemporary design language in the musealization of historical interiors'. He also serves as a reviewer for national and international journals, belongs to scientific committees of journals and master's programmes, and is the author of more than 70 publications, including monographs, journal articles, contributions to edited volumes and conference proceedings. He has considerable experience in the field of 'indoor and outdoor musealization projects' and the 'enhancement of cultural heritage', for which he has obtained, various consulting assignments for the redesign of archaeological museums, including the project for the re-setting up of the Archaeological Museum of Agrigento - Valley of the Temples Park.

Summary

The program for enhancing ancient remains involves contributions from maintenance, restoration, and contemporary architectural design. The varied approaches in conserving and enhancing archaeology highlight a multidisciplinary and multisectoral method aimed at public enjoyment of the heritage. Preservation often requires restrictive restoration techniques, which can limit creativity but also inspire innovative solutions that respect the heritage. Different nations, shaped by their unique cultural formations, have developed specific ways of interpreting their past, primarily through local archaeology, seen as 'the childhood of every country'. Globalization has impacted archaeological practices, leading to a blending of cultural and interventionist approaches, especially evident in modern European archaeological museums. These institutions reflect a mix of expressive museographic practices despite the ongoing search for cultural identity and origins. In this contribution, several exemplary case studies regarding the coverage interventions of Celtic-Roman/Celto-Roman ruins have been examined. The aim is to illustrate some possible approaches to protective coverings in the archaeological field, while being aware that it would be necessary to extend the reasoning to a greater number of case studies and that respecting the editorial space granted, forces us, rightly, to a more appropriate synthesis.

Riassunto

Il programma di valorizzazione dei resti antichi prevede contributi provenienti dalla manutenzione, dal restauro e dalla progettazione architettonica contemporanea. I diversi approcci alla conservazione e alla valorizzazione dell'archeologia evidenziano un metodo multidisciplinare e multisettoriale finalizzato alla fruizione pubblica del patrimonio. La conservazione richiede spesso tecniche di restauro restrittive, che possono limitare la creatività ma anche ispirare soluzioni innovative rispettose del patrimonio. Diverse nazioni, plasmate dalle loro peculiari formazioni culturali, hanno sviluppato modi specifici di interpretare il proprio passato, principalmente attraverso l'archeologia locale, considerata "l'infanzia di ogni paese". La globalizzazione ha avuto un impatto sulle pratiche archeologiche, portando a una fusione di approcci culturali e interventisti, particolarmente evidente nei moderni musei archeologici europei. Queste istituzioni riflettono un mix di pratiche museografiche espressive, nonostante la continua ricerca di identità e origini culturali. In questo contributo sono stati esaminati diversi casi di studio esemplari riguardanti gli interventi di copertura di rovine celtico-romane/celto-romane. L'obiettivo è quello di illustrare alcuni possibili approcci alle coperture protettive in campo archeologico, nella consapevolezza che sarebbe necessario estendere il ragionamento a un maggior numero di casi di studio e che il rispetto dello spazio editoriale concesso ci obbliga, giustamente, a una sintesi più appropriata.