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07

Textual Architectures: Visual Invention Through Narrative Reception
Elena Merino Gómez
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The emulation of architectures from other architectures is the general source of inspiration for architectural creation. Mimesis exercises based on narrated architectures are much more complex, to the extent that words leave spots of indeterminacy that are difficult to fill in for the recipient. The ways of bridging the textual gaps to recreate buildings which are coded only in words allow us to discuss reception theories, typically literary, from the perspective of their connections with architecture. This research analyzes the role of the "model reader" of architecture and his possibilities as an emulator agent of architectures that have come to us through written texts.
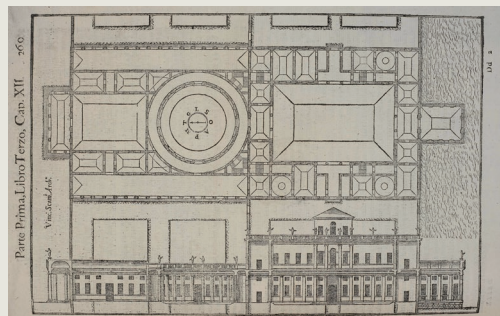
The variable space that mediates between the $\mu\tilde{\upsilon}\theta o\varsigma$ *(mythos)* and the $\H{o}\psi\iota\varsigma$ *(opsis)*, the Aristotelian "plot" and "spectacle"[1], has always been a place of opportunity for the plastic arts. The *mythos*, which is also a narration, not neccessarily invented, and the *opsis*, which alludes unequivocally to the visual, make it possible to establish in the field of architecture a path similar to that proposed by Wolfgang Iser in the field of literary theory. Iser recovers in *The act of reading*[2] the concept of *Unbestimmtheitsstellen* "spots of indeterminacy" from Ingarden[3] to highlight the fact that it is not possible to realize a complete adequacy between what is described within the texts and the phenomena, realities or objects described.

The multiple situations that reception poses to the recipient who reads the description of an architecture are analogous to those experienced by the recipient of the literary text. The description of an architecture itself can be treated as a literary fragment, fictional or not, not always intended to be represented visually. However, unlike what happens with other intangible realities, the possibility of materializing written architectures has inspired countless graphic and architectural works from Antiquity to the present day.

The reader of a non-fiction text, which describes a reality that has existed or exists, will see his understanding mediated by his own experience, distorting reality with his own interpretation, to create a new one. There are as many possible worlds[4] as potential readers. Similarly, someone who reads the description of a real, existing or disappeared architecture, even comparing his architectural competence to that of the "model reader" proposed by Eco[5], will draw or build a reality very distant from that of the architecture that is woven only with words. A "model reader" of architecture, who has

all the intellectual tools related to the discipline, will not produce a reality identical to that of any other "model reader" of architecture with similar tools. The need to complete the "spots of indeterminacy" inherent in any textual narration destroys the possibilities of unequivocally reconstructing the real referent. However, this inevitable "asymmetry between the text and the reader"[6], no matter how qualified the reader may be, has been a source of creation until now. The reiterated architectures[7], which try to replicate the same referent, give rise, however, to creations that are always unequal.

Classical sources have bequeathed to us illustrious examples of architectural descriptions, whose "overdetermination"[8] led us to think, as far back as the Renaissance, that they were converted into ideal models for reviving disappeared architectures. From the profusion of details, even mensiological, with which Pliny the Elder[9] described the Mausoleum of Halicarnassus or from the narration, as a "promenade architecturale", of the Villa Laurentina by Pliny the Younger[10], dozens of interpretations have emerged throughout the history of architecture. As interesting as the tantalising recreation of the original referent, is the very history of the interpretation of the texts, which runs parallel to the theories of reception in any other field of the arts.

In the same way that scenarios, utensils or clothing in the pictorial tradition, until the irruption of historicist trends, generally reflected the uses of the time in which they were painted, regardless of whether they portrayed events that occurred in other periods, so, the architectures that emulated classical texts, built or drawn, contained traits indebted to their time. However, while the appearance of perishable elements was irretrievable for painters, the relative immanence of architecture made it possible on some occasions to totally or partially rescue their image. Although fragmentarily, the archaeological remains of Antiquity offer minor alibis for arbitrary recreation. The recipients of the text must employ for any allegedly philological reconstruction, as well as their own knowledge of the world[11], the data provided by material heritage.

The maritime villa, near Ostia, that Pliny the Younger narrates to his beloved Gallo, was a source of inspiration since Raphael adopted it as a model for the Villa Madama project in 1519[12]. The fabulous suggestion arisen by the idyllic description of the enclave, along with the morphological dissection of the spaces, make the textual villa[13] not only a literary *topos*, but a classic exercise that tests the transmutation capacity of an architecture from word to object. Everything that the verb is not capable of specifying gives the recipient the opportunity to be completed. Like the set designer who materializes the visual boundaries of the dramatic text environment[14], the architect must fill in the spaces of indeterminacy.

When Scamozzi presented the first graphic reconstruction of the Laurentine in 1615 (fig. 1), a path for graphic hypotheses began and continued without interruption until the present. The erudition of the Vincentian architect, which undoubtedly brings him closer to the model reader of Eco, does not cover, however, all the aspects enunciated by the Plinian epistle. The "overdetermination", as it happens with the literary work, does not always contribute to the concretization of what is described, but it produces more indeterminacy[15], since it multiplies the *lacunae*[16] of each new element that it introduces.

In the missive, in addition to the detailed description of the architecture, the landscape, a changing scenario *par excellence*, is the protagonist. The difficulty of verbally capturing a changeable environment is not an obstacle for the Pliny, who narrates the close link between the villa and its surroundings, providing some objective data regarding orientation, its relationship with the coast, the presence of nearby buildings and the winds that beat against it. Despite the data, the reconstructions of the 17th century, given the difficulty involved in capturing the landscape, only address architecture in a decontextualized reverie. Scamozzi's plan and elevations, with no other reference to outer space than the symbolic representation of a rectilinear sea and the sketch of geometric parterres, do not offer

much more definition of the relationship with the place than that drawn by Félibien des Avaux in 1699. The French erudite delineated the articulation of the villa with its gardens (fig. 2). The landscape introduces an almost unavoidable element of indeterminacy.

Both Scamozzi and Félibien[17], accompanying their respective graphic interpretations of the Laurentina, verbally paraphrase the epistle to Gallo. Scamozzi, succinctly, simply recovering the tectonic lexicon and, Félibien, in a more extensive way, emphasizing, in addition to architecture, a scenery that later, like Scamozzi, he does not represent either. The authors add more words to the words, in an exercise that, far from simplifying or clarifying, adds the new uncertainties that all over-explanation entails. Félibien allows himself to amend Scamozzi[18] as well as Pliny[19]:

> "Scholars will easily recognize all the other licenses that Scamozzi has taken, not only as regards the atrium, in which he has made a patio surrounded by rooms that are not explained in any way in Pliny's letter: but also in what regards most of the other parts of the Laurentine, which Scamozzi tried to accommodate in his plan rather to the uses of his time than to the truth and accuracy of the description that Pliny left".

> "We will try, to the extent that we can, to describe the Laurentine part by part and with more order than Pliny did".

In the same way that overdetermination, paradoxically, can be a source of more indeterminacy, Scamozzi's encyclopaedic competence in architecture was decisive so that, as Félibien accuses, the uses in vogue at his time betrayed him, possibly unconsciously, in the formalization graphic of his proposal. Previous knowledge of the world can collide with the ability that is presupposed to a model reader like Scamozzi, mediating the interpretation of a text and accommodating it to his pre-existing mental schemes. On the other hand, a reader less prepared in the architectural field, although artistically competent, as Félibien was, approaches the textual description in a much more literal, less automated way, insofar as he is less influenced by personal experience.

The main theoretical works on the Aesthetics of Reception, in the sphere of literature, generally relegate the "concretization"[20] of the textual to the level of mental consciousness. The possibilities of "concretization" of a narration are based on the reader's experience[21] as mental images, virtually irretrievable. However, even "concretized", the images in the receiver's mind are not complete. The images are configured in a "formal scheme of many indeterminate points"[22], which, to the extent that they do not transcend the mental, will remain undetermined.

Regardless of the different levels of concreteness that each recipient models in his consciousness, his images will remain secluded in his intellect, unless the text demands or offers possibilities of conversion into real objects, such as theatrical performances or cinematographic scripts. The *intentio auctoris*[23], in the case of the epistles of Pliny the Younger, was eminently descriptive and communicative. The Villa Laurentina, since existing, literarily corresponded to a "space represented" with words[24]. Its subsequent disappearance turns it into an object of fantasy, irrefutable with reality and, therefore, transferable to a fictional plane. In any case, the author's intention, in the first instance, was to communicate to his friend the benefits of a villa and its real location. After the selection, correction and publication of the letters carried out by Pliny himself, the *intentio auctoris* is modified, at the same time that the potential recipient and the possible interpretations multiply. The existence of the object represented at the time of the story rules out that among the author's implicit intentions was the intention that a potential recipient make graphic hypotheses about their country residences.

The plausible definitive disappearance of the Laurentine increases the uncertainties and the possible readings up to the present, unlike what happens when the archaeological finds interrupt centuries of graphic conjectures. Thus, the discovery of the

Vesuvian villas and cities puts an end to the tradition of imaginative reconstructive hypotheses of domestic architecture (fig. 3) that Fra Giocondo da Verona began in 1511. Since the first illustrated edition of Vitruvius[25], the interpretation of the atriums of Roman houses according to the Vitruvian description is one of the recurrent themes in the illustration of Renaissance treatises[26]. Fra Giocondo, Giovan Battista da Sangallo or Cesare Cesariano (fig. 4), deal with graphic proposals that betray the still unknown Roman remains, all the more so the more they try to define. Perspective views, much more than plans, are the ones that suffer the most from the need to concretize indeterminate aspects in the text.

The central perspectives force their authors to "transform the linear and successive expression of language into a scenic expression"[27]. Despite the profusion of details with which Pliny narrates his villas, his expression is particularly linear, as he describes itineraries. For this reason, the draftsman will be forced to concretize spatial details that possibly were not even in the mind of the writer, nor in that of those recipients whose interaction with the text should not transcend the traditional role of the reader. However, when it comes to undertaking the graphic definition, the receiver must select the aspects that are going to be specified, those that are going to be made visible and, along with the former, those that are going to be discarded. It will thus limit "the many indeterminate points" to a finite number of determinations. The reader who extracts the images from his mental dimension to draw them is forced to confine them to the "narrow limits" of a plan, a perspective or a model. Lessing, as is well known, insists on this, in relation to painting, throughout his Laocoön[28]:

> "[...] it suffices to consider that the sphere of poetry is more extensive, that the field open to our imagination is infinite, that its images are immaterial and can subsist side by side in greater number and variety, without one hiding the other or degrading it, as would happen with the objects themselves or their natural signs in the narrow limits of space or time".

In any case, the graphic representation from a text does not only consist of a limiting act, but has the same co-creative aspect as any other act of reading. The drawing, the model or the built emulation require inventing aspects that remain undefined by words, at the same time that they freeze the infinite possible versions that the lack of definition grants. The images that provoke the reading are fossilized with their expression, since the minds are less impressed with the discourse "than with what is subject to the faithful eyes"[29]. Once a visual model is fixed, it will be difficult for the one who proposes successive interpretations to avoid the previous images. This is traceable, for example, in the arbitrary arched atrium of Fra Giocondo (fig. 3), which undoubtedly influenced the later proposals of Cesariano (fig. 4) and Sangallo.

Similar reasons, although not identical, led Burckhardt to avoid, as far as possible, the illustration of his guide to Italian art, *Il Cicerone*. In an unpublished handwritten note for the introduction[30] he explains why he is reluctant to accompany his descriptions with engravings:

> "When dealing with architecture I have used, only in a few cases, engravings and illustrations. [...] What has been seen with one's own eyes appears in an illustration, being in geometric projection, so unusual and strange that it frustrates any attempt to deal with the impression that something never seen could cause on a viewer who sees these [graphic] sources, no matter how good they are".

Despite the reticence of Lessing or Burckhardt concerning images, which they always consider reductive, the truth is that in the 18th and 19th centuries the visual production from classical texts did nothing but increase, although modifying certain keys. Some archaeological finds, from the Enlightenment to the dawn of the 20th century, liberate places like Troy or Babylon from myth, transferring them to a non-fictional sphere. Even, in some extreme cases, the myth is a source of inspiration to create visual elements beyond the reader's mental image. It is well known how Arthur Evans interpreted the remains of Knossos, taking inspiration from the Crete of Minos to accommodate them to classical sources and build part of a reality that probably did not exist but in the territory of fable[31].

Reception Aesthetics theorists have attached great importance to the role played by the reader as an implicit updater of the potential meanings of a text through the reading process[32]. The multiple possible interpretations of a written work, as well as its affective impact on the recipient, have been the subject of research and theorizing throughout the entire 20th century. However, the influence of the images created, realities found or objects constructed from the texts have, on occasion, travelled back to the world of the word to which they originally belonged. Once converted into visual artifacts, with the power that this implies, the new realities, identified, imitated or co-created from reading, return to the literary world through transformation processes not as assiduously studied as that of traditional reception. The inverse reception, from visual recreation to text, has consequences of a very diverse nature: from the review and updating of the obscure terminology of Vitruvius in its confrontation with reality to the invention of imaginaries on which, in turn, new literary works are based.

The *divinazioni*, hypothetical restitutions based on descriptions of ancient architecture or based on scanty material remains[33], gradually leave the field of divination to join the scientific restitution of architecture. The demands of the dominant positivism will not be satisfied with a hypothetical completion of the spots of indeterminacy, but will demand empirical evidence that authorize the graphic decisions adopted. Progress in the archaeological discipline corrects, provides new meanings and provides unprecedented arguments to justify a scientific reading of the sources.

Saint-Non will accompany, at the end of the 18th century, his description of the temple of Isis found in Pompeii with an image by Louis-Jean Desprez (fig. 6) of which he affirms that it is not "an ideal reproduction, since it is It has been built from the actual ground floor and with the same forms which the artist [Desprez] has done nothing more than restore and reestablish as it should have been"[34]. Therefore, he offers what he considers to be the only possible restitution in a univocal interpretation, which he also supports in an approximately philological way in the following pages. In the illustration offered, it has not been necessary to fill in the blank spots of indeterminacy with the reader's imagination, since the author considers that there is only one possible interpretation: "therefore, the resulting remains have established the exact representation of this image"[35]. Thus, without intending to, he becomes a model reader capable of solving a scene that, in his opinion, has enough data to provide a single solution.

Throughout the 19th century, the training syllabuses of French architects, in the context of the Bourbon Restoration[36] or those of those Italians educated at the *Reale Scuola di Ponti e Strade* and at the *Reale Istituto di Belle Arti* in Naples[37] will be exercised through the representation of architecture (fig. 5). The accurate graphics, the presence of dimensions in the restitutions, the legends, the annotations, the graphic scales or the construction details provide the nineteenth-century exercises with enough data to be considered something more than mere speculation.

Despite the scientific path pursued by architectural restorations, their evocative capacity prevents them from remaining static in a kind of definitive conclusion of the path covered from texts to materialization. It is common, for example, to observe the restitution images populated by anonymous characters resurrected for the occasion (figs. 5 and 6). In the drawing in which, according to Saint-Non, Desprez would have reestablished the architectural model exactly, he also "takes the liberty of resurrecting the priests of Isis, [...]. It is one of those pleasant illusions by which the magic of the arts, combined with knowledge and research, presents before our very eyes that kind of things of which they would otherwise be deprived"[38].

The images derived from "pleasant illusions", propitiated by the joint reading of texts and material findings, once again trace the path back from science to the narrative. Bulwer-Lytton uses the "cult of Isis" and her "existing temple" to bring to life the priest Arbaces in his Last Days of Pompeii[39]. The priest of the false oracles officiated in that temple of Isis, halfway between the archaeological, the textual and the imagined.

The archaeological fever of the 19th century contributes to renewing interest in classical sources, necessary to rigorously read the sites and reinterpret the sources themselves. The enormous amount of data obtained, since the Enlightenment and throughout all positivist currents, is invested in creating substantiated imaginaries that, thanks to their apparent rigor, arouse a cultivated interest in the subjects they dealt with. The author of *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* did not find in the fifteenth century "vernacular, proper and native words"[40] to describe the "great and marvellous works"[41] from the past. He had to draw on Vitruvian and Albertian terms to describe the temple of the "Supreme Sun"[42] and retrieve the narratives of Pliny the Elder and Flavio Biondo[43] to reconstruct in words his own version of the Halicarnassus Mausoleum. The text is accompanied by a famous illustration (fig. 7) whose fidelity was shattered by the archaeological finds of the remains of the mausoleum in the 19th century[44].

The new data on the complete morphology of the houses found in the Vesuvian lands allow updated readings of texts contemporary to the tragedy. In 1818, *L'École des Beaux Arts de Paris* proposed as an object of "emulation" the already mentioned Villa Laurentina[45]. *Beaux-Arts* training, in addition to dihedral projections, presents three-dimensional models (fig. 8) that force the interpreter of the text to define aspects that remained indeterminate in the plans and elevations of the 17th century (figs. 1 and 2). The architecture reader, as a creative subject, was, however, legitimated, to use the imagination, unlike the limits to which other professions were constrained: "The archaeologist has the strict duty to stop his affirmations in the point where he lacks knowledge; the architect has license to fill in the uncertainties with the imagination, the ignored reality with reasoned but creative fantasy"[46].

As the 19th century advances, the difficulties of unequivocal readings that the 18th century findings seemed to foresee are gradually assumed. A scientific claudication can be observed in the new interpretations that unites them with the romantic aesthetic that Schinkel and Stier imprint on their versions of the Laurentine. If with the discoveries of Pompeii and Herculaneum the updating of the Vitruvian iconography based on scientific data experienced a brief glow[47], the uncertainty about Pliny's villa continued to stimulate its visual exegesis until the present. The resignation about an eventual unequivocal identification of the villa gives the reader the license to devise proposals that will probably never have to face reality. The practical assumption of the destruction of the object, or even the doubts about its past existence, turn it into a space for a new fable that will free the interpreter from the slavery of objectivity.

In 1982, Maurice Culot, head of archives at the *Institut Français d'Architecture* in Paris, called a friendly competition on the already then classic theme of Plinian villas. The most relevant figure summoned was Léon Krier, who understood classicism as "a recognition of history without enslavement to it"[48]. A model reader to the point of knowing fragments of the epistle to Gallo by heart, Krier, however, takes advantage of the absence of material references to carry out an exercise of intentional decontextualization in which the *intentio lectoris*[49] ends up prevailing over the classical written work itself. The freedom that Krier assumes allows him to make an ethereal interpretation that places the villa in a metaphysical space of platonic quality[50] (figs. 9 and 10).

The liberating readings that can be seen from Romanticism to Krier's abstract geography already heralded a one-way trip to the limits of interpretation. Against all odds, in the 21st century, the exercise will still prove inexhaustible. Saverio Pisaniello proposes to Adolfo Natalini to revisit the issue of the textual interpretation of Pliny's villa. The question, which, at first, strikes the co-founder of Superstudio as "bizarre and anti-modern"[51], will, however, explore paths not yet travelled. Disrupting the literary genre, which moved between the epistolary, the descriptive or who knows if the merely phantasmatic[52], the researcher will transfer the *topos* to the territory of poetry. Pisaniello, a well-trained model reader, will set himself up as a new $\pi o \iota \eta \tau \acute{\eta} \varsigma$ (*poietés*)[53], in his more lyrical and less mimetic aspects. Through this translocation, the new reader will transform from recipient into author. He will bridge the gap between the two agents through an unprecedented creation that will require new decoding efforts from future readers and will force them to continue a trail of uninterrupted interpretations since the last two thousand years.

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de logements qui ne sont expri-
mes en aucune maniere dans
la lettre de Pline: mais à l'égard
de la plûpart des autres parties
du Laurentin que Scamozzi sur
son plan a plûtot tâché d'acco-
moder à l'usage de son temps,

qu'à la verité & à l'exactitude de la description que Pline en a laissée". FÉLIBIEN DES AVAUX, J. F., op. cit., p. 79. (The conventions of 17th century French are respected in the transcriptions).

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33. VALENTE, P., *Della Instituzione degli Architetti e del Miglioramento dell ´Architettura*, Gabinetto Bibliografico e Tipografico Strada S. Biagio de' Librai num. 41., Napoli, 1823, pp. 65-66.

34. [...] cette reproduction n'est pas idéale, puisqu'elle est élevée sur le même Plan, & dans les mêmes formes d'une Architecture que l'Artiste [Desprez] n'a fait que restaurer, & rétablir telle qu´elle a dû être". (Trad. por los autores). SAINT-NON, J.-C. R., op. cit, p. 117.

35. "Des débris existans [sic] ont d'ailleurs établi l'exacte Représentation de cette Scène". Ibid., p. 117. (Translated in English by the authors of this paper).

36. BATALLA-LAGLEYRE, G., "Reinventing the Architectural Drawing in Pompei: Objectivity and Romanticism around 1830", in Getty Research Institute Journal, n.º 13, 2021, p.88.

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38. [...] il a pris la liberté de ressusciter les Prêtres d'Isis [...]. C'est une de ces illusions agréables, pour lesquelles la Magie des Arts, jointe aux connoissances & aux recherches, rappelle à nos yeux mêmes ce dont ils seraient privés sans ce secours. (Trad. por los autores). SAINT-NON, J.-C. R., op. cit, p. 117.

39. BULWER-LYTTON, E., *The Last Days of Pompeii*, William Nicholson, London, 1834, p. 6.

40. "[...] vernacoli, proprii et patrii". COLONNA, F., *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, b iii v. Aldus Manutius, Venezia, 1499, p. biii v.

41. "[...] magne et miravigliose opere". Idem.

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46. "L'archéologue a le devoir strict d'arrêter ses affirmations dès que la connaissance lui manque; l'architecte a licence de suppléer aux incertitudes par l'imagination, à la réalite ignorée par la fantaisie raisonnée, mais créatrice". (Trad. por los autores). SEURE, G., *Monuments antiques relevés et restaurés par les architectes pensionnaires de l'Académie de France à Rome, Vol. 1*, Ch. Massin & Cⁱᵉ Éditeurs, Paris, 1911?, p. 2.

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48. DU PREY, P. de la R., "The Villas of Pliny: Reflections on the Exhibition by its Guest Curator", in *The Fifth Column*, 1984, vol. 4, n.º 2, p. 23.

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53. ποιητής (poietés): maker, creator, author, inventor

Images

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03. *Vitruvian atrio testudinato*. Fra Giocondo da Verona. Vitruvio Polión, M., *De Architectura Libri Decem, M. Vitruvius per Jocundum solito castigatior factus cum figuris et tabula...*, G. da Tridentino, Venezia, 1511, pp. 62-63.

04. *Atrio testudinato*. Cesare Cesariano. Vitruvio Polione, M., Di Lucio Vitruuio Pollione *De architectura libri dece: traducti de latino in vulgare, affigurati, cõmentati,...* Impressa nel amœna & delecteuole Citate di Como: P. Magistro Gotardus da Põte, 1524, p. 97.

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08. *View of Pliny's country villa*. Haudebourt, L.P., *Le Laurentin. Maison de champagne de Pline le Jeune restituée d'apré la description de Pline*, Chez Carillan-Goeury Éditeur-Libraire, Paris, 1838, pp. 240-24.

09. *Léon Krier, Imaginary reconstruction perspective of Pliny's Laurentine Villa,* 1982, reprographic copy with pencil on paper, 41.5 × 49 cm, DR1985:0296. Canadian Centre for Architecture © Léon Krier.

10. *Léon Krier, Imaginary reconstruction perspective of Pliny's Laurentine Villa,* 1982, reprographic copy with pencil on paper, 30 x 40 cm, DR1985:0298. Canadian Centre for Architecture © Léon Krier.

08
Reconstructing the Processes of Reproducing Monuments: the Impact on the Large Formats of the Nineteenth Century
Montserrat Lasunción Ascanio

The creation of replicas using moulds was not new in the nineteenth century. However, for various reasons, particularly the creation of public museums, the use of casts as museum objects took off around the world. This was due to the use of new materials and improved techniques. This article addresses some issues in the processes of creating moulds of monuments based on new information found in archival documents on these objects. In the mould-making process, the requestor, the owners of the originals and the management of the operation are directly related to the state of conservation of monuments and the role of replicas in the preservation of current monumental heritage.
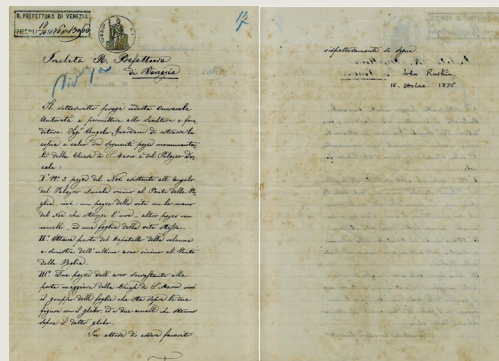
PETITIONS IN VENICE A few years before the reappearance of *The Stones of Venice* in its travel edition (1879), John Ruskin requested, through petitions to the prefecture of Venice and the Italian Ministry of Public Instruction, the purchase of some replicas of fragments of the Doge's Palace and of Saint Mark's Basilica of this city[1].

These two petitions were made in 1876 and 1877 **(figs. 01, 02)**. In them, Angelo Giordani, the sculptor who the "*illustre signore John Ruskin professore di Londra*" (the illustrious Mr. John Ruskin teacher from London) had entrusted with the work, stated that he planned to carry out the task following the legislation of the time and with the system "*all'argilla*" (clay), as had been used on other occasions.

The process in question was that of copying with clay moulds that were applied against the original model to obtain an imprint of it, which was subsequently used to create the plaster cast. This new piece would constitute a portable replica of the architectural fragments that would return to England with the writer. All of the replicas were the result of the extensive bureaucratic and technical process that these petitions involved, as they were painstakingly regulated by the Italian authorities in the recently formed kingdom.

Specifically, in the document from 1876, Ruskin asked Giordani to make moulds of some fragments of the sculpture of Noah, situated in the corner of the Doge's Palace close to the *Ponte*