

Archaeological restoration: an analysis of theoretical hybridization. The influence of Camillo Boito and Gustavo Giovannoni on the work of Augusto Molina Montes

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Abstract

This article examines a little-known passage of the various and indisputable contributions of the work of Camillo Boito and Gustavo Giovannoni to the development of a theory of restoration for built heritage: the links between the Western ideological context that are present in its conceptualizations and the way in which their proposals were used to articulate new theoretical enclaves outside the European sphere. In particular, we closely examine the way in which some of their conceptual and methodological foundations were translated and adapted for the elaboration of a hybrid theory of restoration of archaeological monuments in the 1970s in Mexico, as seen in the work of Augusto Molina Montes.

Keywords: *Camillo Boito, Gustavo Giovannoni, hybrid theory, Augusto Molina, conservation theory, Mexico, archaeological conservation.*

Introduction

The inauguration of the first *Esposizione Generale Italiana* in 1884, marked a significant moment for the region of Turin in the creation of the *imaginary*¹ of the rising Italian nation. Preceded by three national exhibitions (Florence, Milan and Palermo), as well as another dedicated to the fine arts in all-pertinent venue of Rome, the Turin display followed the 19th-century tradition of the World Fairs or *Expositions Universelles*, by articulating –from various technological, commercial and instructive entertainment exhibits– a nationalist ideology, which was intimately interwoven with notions of industrial, commercial and cultural progress (Greenhalgh, 1988, 1989; Tenorio-Trillo, 1996). Representing the latter, the innovative role of an exhibition of architectural models by Alfredo D’Andrade, which sought to illustrate the development of fine arts in Italy from the twelfth to the 17th century, is worth noting (see Jokilehto, 1986: 341, Benedict, 1983).

¹ This concept derives from the personal and collective works of Hobsbawm (Hobsbawm and Ranger, 1983; Hobsbawm, 1987), an author that refers to the nation as a metaphor that transfers the significance of a given community to the figure of that political construct of the nation-state, a process that is articulated throughout invented traditions (Hobsbawm and Ranger, 1983: 12). Hence, a nation is conceived of an imaginary that creates a shared bonding amongst tens, or indeed hundreds, of members who formerly belonged to other type of communities.

There is an imbricated, and to some extent, paradoxical relationship, between this display of reproductions and the development of the Italian theory of restoration of the second half of the 19th century, a movement that was incidentally characterized, among other aspects, by a fierce battle against reconstruction (Jokilehto, 1986: 329-350; Turner, 2007: 182). Indeed, the two-folded details of this link reveal a few significant connections between areas that today we could think of as only distantly related. On one hand, D'Andrade's original intention was that the aforementioned exhibition highlighted Piedmontese historic buildings that were at risk, a work driven by motivations of built heritage preservation derived from his official work of graphic and photographic documentation of the office responsible for conservation of monuments in Piedmont and Liguria (Jokilehto, 1986: 341). On the other hand, the didactic element of this exhibit was praised by one, who was the teacher of D'Andrade himself: Camillo Boito, the father of philological restoration (1836-1946) (Jokilehto, 1986: 341 Rocchi, 1974; Torsello, 1982). And it was, surely, in that *Esposizione di Torino*, where Boito gave a conference entitled *I restauratori*, which was latter published in 1884. This latter text with *Vecchie città ed edilizia nuova* (1913) by his follower and pillar of scientific restoration, Gustavo Giovannoni (1873-1947), are the subject of translation and analysis for this issue of *Conversaciones...*

To be sure, a large body of literature focuses on the work of Boito and Giovannoni, as well as on their various and indisputable contributions to the development of a theoretical framework for the restoration of monuments between the last third of the 19th century and the first third of the 20th century, both in Italy and in the rest of the Western hemisphere (e.g., Jokilehto 1986: 341-371; Rocchi, 1974; Torsello, 1982; Turner, 2007). Hence, this article alternately seeks to explore a vein of relationships hitherto understudied: What is the ideological context that supports the theoretical concepts of these authors? How were their postulates interpreted and, in turn, employed to articulate new theoretical enclaves outside the European sphere? Particularly, I wish to explore the manner in which some of Boito's and Giovannoni's conceptual and methodological foundations were translated and adapted for a rather unique theory of restoration of archaeological monuments in the 1970's in Mexico by Augusto Molina Montes (1924-2008) (Figure 1).



Figure 1. Portrait of Augusto Molina Montes. *Image: Daniel Juárez Cossío, 2009.*

Before we start, a brief disclaimer note: although some would characterize Molina's endeavor within the limits of what is routinely called "tropicalization", I have abandoned such point of view because of their insistence upon the monomania of a framework going from the center to the periphery. Rather, here I explore a frontier of interpretation of equitable trends, which both Homi Bhabha (1984) and García Canclini (1990) call "hybridization." With this in mind, this article seeks to generate an observation of the history of restoration that recognizes a communion between the global and the local, a view that draws attention to the contributions at glocality. This exercise initiates with the exploration of the work of Boito and Giovannoni that goes from the contextual to the conceptual field and back.

Boito and Giovannoni: contexts and concepts

This text does not aim to present an exhaustive review of the biography, historiography and contributions of Boito and Giovannoni. Suffice is to examine some key notions that are at the core of the conceptual and the methodological foundations of their theoretical discourses. To begin with, I would like to point out that Boito's and Giovannoni's theories referred to a common object: the "monument"; a cultural heritage entity that derives from architecture and that is characterized by its definition in correlation with the concepts of memory, past and, hence, time (Carman, 2003). Such time-related referents are also implicated into Boito's classification of types of monuments (1893): his seminal speech of the *Risoluzione del III Congresso degli ingegneri ed architetti* classified them as ancient, Medieval and modern, the latter dating from the Renaissance to the present day. This typology can hardly be considered entirely original; yet it worth mentioning that its origin can be traced back to Boito's homeland: the Italian peninsula.

As Plumb (2001: 9-10) has stated, by the 14th century, a series of economic, political and cultural changes had operated first in Italy, and then in other parts of Europe, making people conscious of the transition of time. As a result, Renaissance humanists began to think of their era as a distinctively *modern* age. This derived from an ontological operation of time, since Humanists constructed a succession of sharply distinctive ages, separated by ruptures: the ancient, the middle, and, modern periods (Lowenthal, 1985: 23). Such a division of time into periods was established according to an inter-dependent dating system. The modern period was thus conceived as a consequent separation from the obscurantism of the Middle Ages, whose end was marked by the fall of Constantinople in 1453, whereas the ancient was conventionally associated –following Petrarch– to pre-Christian times (Calinescu, 1987: 11). During the 18th century, European historians popularized this tripartite division of ancient, medieval and modern history (Daniel, 1962: 15), yet it was the *meta-narrative of progress* from the second half of the 19th century that truly consolidated it. This process came along with the integration of theoretical models of evolutionism, including the one that formulated the evolution states of cultural development: savagery, barbarism and civilization (Errington, 1998: 14-15). In fact, due to the work of Lewis Morgan, *Ancient Society* (1887), this tripartite system became the cornerstone of Victorian theories of both anthropology and archeology.

For the purpose of this article, I will focus strategically on the notion of antiquity, a term that was included in key titles of 19th-century History and Archaeology (see Medina-González, 2011: 73). To be true, from the 15th century onwards, antiquity was conventionally associated with the Classic period, and hence, with the Greek and Roman cultures: yet by the Victorian era, this concept had already been expanded by incorporating other ancient cultures, such as the Egyptian, Assyrian, Chinese, among others (see Medina-González, 2011: 73). This extended version of the notion of antiquity derived largely from the outburst of archaeological discoveries that took place, from the 1800's, in various parts of the world, including in the

Middle and Far East, as well as in the Americas (for a review, see Daniel, 1975: 69-135). Accordingly, *Ancient Society* (Morgan, 1877) –which sought to provide a logical framework for anthropological evolution from a Eurocentric point of view– actually proposed that Greek and Latin cultures were the pinnacle of human civilization.

Yet, the 19th-century *meta-narrative of progress* was not only as an academic project, for this period precisely stands out due to its great economic, social and political transformations, which were then interpreted as an indisputable confirmation of human, social, and cultural evolution (Medina-González, 2011: 75; Errington, 1998: 12). Following Lowenthal (1985: xxi, 100-105), these ideas also generated a great awareness of both the passage of time and of the distance from the past. This derived not only in a great sense of antiquarian retrospection, but also in reverence of the past, actions of recovery and, calls for the restoration of past remains. Likewise, the 1800s Restoration movement must be understood within the scenarios that implied the formation of nationalist narratives that sought create a new sense of community, identification and, collectivity, by imagining territories, inventing traditions and, creating glorious pasts (Hobsbawm and Ranger, 1983). This background provides a new insight on D'Andrade and Boito's efforts for cataloging and studying Italian monuments, for the issue of several acts for legislative protection, and for discussions regarding monument's restoration, since these were part of the process of unification of the Italian kingdom (Jokilehto, 1986: 335). In fact, from this perspective, we can now clearly unveil the implicit (nationalistic and patrimonialistic) intention of Boito's sentence, "we, of the fortunate 19th century, have great arms that can hold all these things": i.e. the monuments² (Boito, 2017: 12).

This ideological framework also serves to analyze some issues regarding the rationale of Boito's theoretical principles for restoration.

Firstly, we should mention the creation of an intermediate theoretical path. As *I restauratori* shows (2014 [1884]) Boito was at the center of a debate between clashing positions: on the one hand, what we can call "the Ruskin way" implied "doing nothing" or "rejecting restoration"; on the other hand, Viollet-le-Duc's theory which was full of "dangers" since it sought to "return to a complete state, which may have not existed at any given time"³ (Viollet-le-Duc, 2017: 52), a position that converted restoration into a "superfluous exercise". Based on this, Boito (2017 [1884]) formulated the possibility of a necessary and legitimate restoration, which is characterized his three "archaeological criteria": i.e. do not innovate, complete, embellish, add aggregates, remove parts; maintain the defects of symmetry, which were considered historical defects and; above all, reject any reconstruction that implied falsification.

In second place, taking into account Boito's conceptualization of the ancient monument is key to understand his archaeological criteria, since this entity was considered not only as document that expanded history, but also as complex historical evidence, formed by the original structure and its successive additions (Boito, 1893a; Jokilehto, 1986: 336). Hence, my contention is that by conceiving the ancient monument as an archaeological artefact, Boito justified that its restoration meant to respect the monument's materiality that enables approaching the past, to perpetuate its potential as a document, as well as to preserve it as a witness in an intact form.

² Original quotation: "...noi del beato secolo XIX abbiamo sì gran braccia che s'accoglie ogni cosa."

³ Original quotation: "le rétablir dans un état complet qui peut n'avoir jamais existé à un moment donné".

The former ideas also sustained –in my opinion– Boito’s criteria for intervention, which were indeed parameters for respectful limits of action, since not only prevented erroneous or misleading assumptions, but also precluded falsification, defined as a deception to the archeological interpretation and to appreciation. On these grounds, Boito (1893a) actually proposed that restoration should preserve the *dignity* of the monument. *I restauratori* presented some specific norms according to three heritage categories: paintings, sculptures and monuments. It was within the scope of the latter, where Boito (2017 [1884]) confessed a great difficulty fulfilling the following premise: “to do the impossible to preserve the artistic and picturesque aspect of the monument”⁴ by obliging any aggregates to be appreciated as works of today. These premises reached further refinement in his 1893 works, which synthesized the deontology of his theory in eight axioms and articulated his *typological* approach. This approach considered categories of monuments for the purpose of establishing specific forms of intervention, namely: *archaeological restoration* (destined to ancient monuments), *picturesque restoration* (dedicated to Medieval constructions) and *architectural restoration* (focused on modern monuments), a model that reflected the tripartite periodization of history described above (Jokilehto, 1986: 337). To be true, the principles for *archaeological restoration* were the most conservative of all, since Boito (1893b in Jokilehto, 1986: 337) essentially proposed to preserve what remains of the original monument and, when necessary, to reinforce the support, which must be made in such a way as to be distinguishable. Indeed, these propositions reveal –in my opinion– that Boito prioritized on the respect for the documentary quality of the archaeological monument.

Yet, the most important legacy of Boito was his three principles that ensure the respect for the monument, the rejection to reconstruction and the distinction of the intervention treatment. In fact, these can be found in the writings of Giovannoni, as it is attested by the contents of the *Athens Charter for the restoration of historical monuments (Athens Charter)* (1931), a document that advocates: “When, as the result of decay or destruction, restoration appears to be indispensable, it recommends that the historic and artistic work of the past should be respected, without excluding the style of any given period”; “a general tendency to abandon restorations *in toto*”; and when it comes to ruins, the imposition of a “scrupulous conservation is necessary, and steps should be taken to reinstate any original fragments that may be recovered (anastylosis), whenever this is possible; the new materials used for this purpose should in all cases be recognizable” (*Athens Charter*, 1931: art 2, 3, 4). This same document also shows some of Giovannoni’s concerns about the existing tension between modern development and the preservation of historic centers, by recommending that “in the construction of buildings, the character and external aspect of the cities in which they are to be erected should be respected, especially when among ancient monuments where the surroundings should be given special consideration” (*Athens Charter*, 1931: art 5). This concern was, of course, developed in further greater both in *Vecchie città ed edilizia nuova* (Giovannoni, 1913), as well as in the urban manifesto, the *Charte d’Athènes*, of 1933.

Due to the complexity of the topic, and to the space limits of this text, we will not include an analysis of these documents that surely discuss the complex forces that take part on urban layout planning. However, it should be noted that they are, in essence, another manifestation of the implicit positions in the coexistence of the ancient and the modern. Indeed, since the consolidation of the already mentioned tripartite periodization of history, different forms of relationships between antiquity and modernity have been established. It is complex to approach the subject in detail, but in this general framework suffice it to say that in terms of direction they are at the center of the conceptualization of time. Indeed, visions of historical

⁴ Original quotation: “Bisogna fare l’impossibile, bisogna fare miracoli per conservare al monumento il suo vecchio aspetto artistico e pittoresco.”

progress and of decadence have a deep ancestry (Medina-Gonzalez, 2011: 77). However, in the 17th century, the famous *Querelle entre antiques et modernes* reflected in an intellectual manner, the comparison between periods that had existed since the Renaissance: on the one hand, a few philosophers concluded that scientific knowledge was progressive, while artistic expression was degenerative (Calinescu, 1987: 152; Lowenthal, 1985: 92). Some of these positions were articulated into models, associated with cycles: the famous *Chain of Being* and the *Chain of Art*: nevertheless, and well into the 18th century, the dominant intellectual models emphasized the process of degeneration (Medina-Gonzalez, 2011: 74). This changed in the second part of the 18th century, when the traditions of thought derived from the scientific revolution, as well as economic models and technological advances, ratified a belief in progress, as formulated in the *meta*-narrative, which we have already discussed (Errington, 1998). Eventually, the tensions between visions of degeneration and evolution would articulate a cyclical model of progression and decline (Medina-González, 2011: 78). In accordance with this point of view, the notion of “ruin,” derived from Romanticism, found a place which not only reinforced the idea of cultural deterioration, but the value of beauty of such a fall, and a moral lesson that generated anxiety regarding the fate of today’s society (Carpenter, 1950: 6-16). Hence, the need for conservation seems to be derived not only to preserve the ancient in its history and beauty, but also the concept of moral education, which is explicit in Giovannoni’s text (2017 [1913]).

We should highlight a methodological note that differentiates this author from his predecessor: while Boito’s normative approach, as we have already mentioned, was typological and hence axiomatic—that is, by developing principles—the definition of “Restoration” by Giovannoni in the *Italian Encyclopedia* (1936) opted instead for a processual approach, which he considered to be composed of the categories of restoration of consolidation, restoration by recomposition, restoration by liberation, and restoration by complementation or renewal (Jokilehto, 1986: 353).

Several authors have pointed out the influence of Boito and Giovannoni on theoreticians of the second part of the 20th century in Italy and Europe, particularly in the *restauro critico*, led by Cesare Brandi (Jokilehto, 1986: 417-419). It is worth mentioning that this inheritance was strictly conceptual, since Brandi’s theory, although it clearly separated the treatment of ruins, did not comprise the typological or procedural versions of his predecessors. Notably, this influence would be reflected in the work of a Mexican scholar, Augusto Molina Montes, whose biography and theoretical perspective will be discussed below.

Molina: scenarios and contributions

In 1974, almost one hundred years after the publication of *I restauratori* (Boito, 2017 [1884]) and more than 50 after *Vecchie città ed edicicia nuova* (Giovannoni, 2017 [1913]), the National Museum of Anthropology of Mexico held the *Primera reunión técnica consultiva sobre conservación de monumentos y zonas arqueológicas*⁵, an event designed to analyze the state of affairs of archeological restoration in Mexico. In the midst of critics regarding the excesses of reconstruction in pre-Hispanic sites, such as Teotihuacan (1962-1964), Cholula (1967-1970), Uxmal (1970-1974) and Teotenango (1971-1975)⁶, relevant conclusions were drawn by an interdisciplinary group composed by archaeologist Noemi Castillo, architect Salvador Díaz-Berrio, scientist Luis Torres Montes, architect Ariel Valencia Ramírez, restorer Jaime Cama and architect Augusto Molina Montes, who was also the coordinator of the meeting, in his capacity as advisor to the department of pre-Hispanic monuments of the *Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia* (INAH). The resultant document was paradigmatic for restoration

⁵ First technical consultative meeting on conservation of monuments and archaeological sites.

⁶ The development and implications of these projects have already been reviewed in several publications (Molina, 1974, 1975; Schávelzon, 1990; Alonso y García, 2002; Medina-González, 2004).

theory in Mexico (Castillo *et al.*, 1974a, 1974b): in addition of endorsing the general principles of both the *International charter on the conservation and restoration of monuments and sites* (*Venice Charter*) (1964) and the *Final report of the meeting on the preservation and utilization of monuments and sites of artistic and historical value* (*Norms of Quito*) (OAS, 1967), it postulated an absolute prohibition to reconstruct pre-Hispanic monuments and a strong support for limiting interventions on these structures to consolidation.

Apart from discussing both the innovative nature of the *Primera reunión técnica consultiva*, Schávelzon (1990) has already stated the resistance to its adoption in professional practice. In addition, Juárez Cossío (2009) has pointed out to the political controversy that surrounded both its conception and in its applicability. Others have indicated, erroneously from my point of view, the lack of a clear theoretical framework in its development (Alonso and García, 2002). The truth is that both aspects can only be fully informed by analyzing in depth the thoughts of Molina and, especially, by studying the foundations of his masterpiece: *Restauración arquitectónica de edificios arqueológicos*⁷ (1975). (Figure 2).

The biographical details of Molina have already been summarized with great integrity in the obituary note elaborated by Juárez Cossío (2009): it is worth emphasizing his origin in the political and cultural aristocracy of Yucatan, his initial education in a cosmopolitan environment, his training in architecture at the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, in New York, his professional studies in archeology at the *Escuela Nacional de Antropología e Historia* (ENAH), as well as his interest in the history of architecture, archeology and restoration (Molina, 1961, 1964, 1992). Another important aspect of Molina's work was his leadership in the heritage department of INAH, a task that was his participation into a critical current of official archeology, which was at the time institutionally consolidated by the dominant figure of Alfonso Caso (Juárez Cossío, 2009: 164; Schávelzon, 1990).

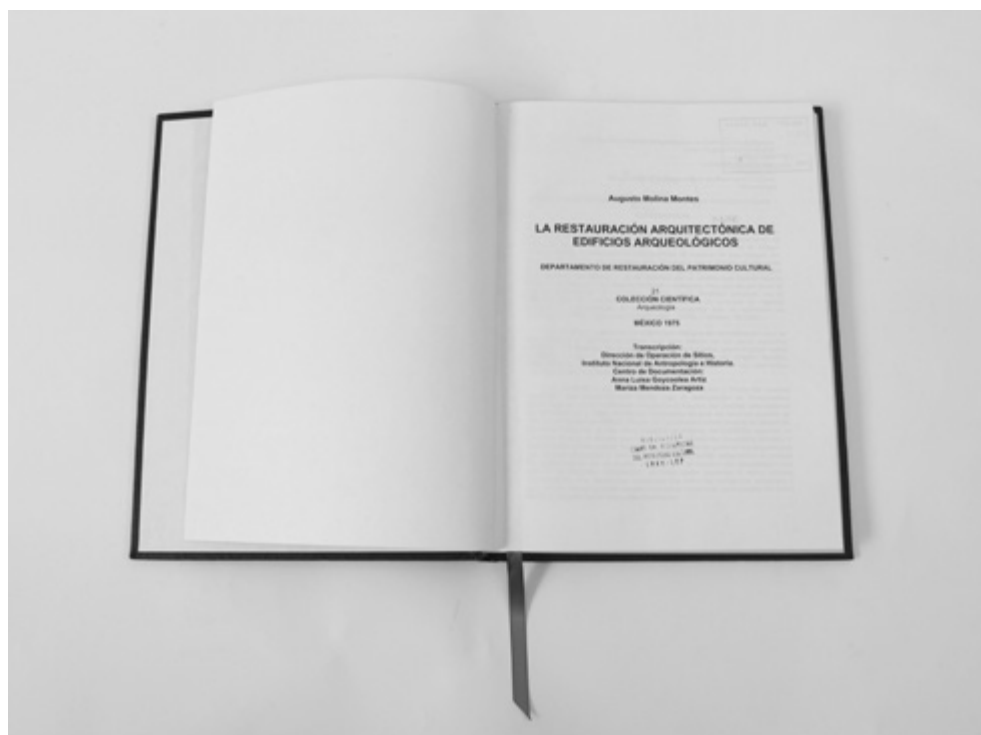


Figure 2. Front cover of the publication *La restauración arquitectónica de edificios arqueológicos* by Augusto Molina Montes (1975).

⁷ *Architectural restoration of archaeological buildings.*

Molina never intervened directly in the restoration of pre-Hispanic buildings; yet he was undoubtedly a leading figure in the development of the theoretical discourse of conservation-restoration in Mexico that took place in the 1970s. As Juárez Cossío (2009: 165) has already mentioned, Molina's thoughts were clearly influenced by key authors of the philological, scientific and critical restoration: Boito, Giovannoni, Roberto Pane, Renato Bonelli, Carlo Perogalli and especially Cesare Brandi. In this regard, the *Teoria del restauro* (Brandi, 1963) has been identified as the gravitational detonator for Molina, in terms of his proposals for defining restoration, subscribing to axioms, and his approach to decision-making. The marks of Boito and Giovannoni have been recognized, but with less intensity (Juárez Cossío, 2009: 166).

As Juárez Cossío (2009: 166) aptly points out, Molina did recognize Boito as the founder of the theoretical bases of restoration: from the works of the latter, the Mexican architect retrieved the distinction between conservation and restoration, conceiving the former as a way of preserving the historical reality and the authenticity of the work of art. On the basis of this thought, actually Molina proposed that "monuments must be consolidated before they are restored, thus avoiding hypothetical and idealized reconstructions"⁸ (Juárez Cossío, 2009: 165-166). Furthermore, the *Questioni di architettura nella storia e nella vita*, published in 1929, provided "principles, annotated by Augusto, [which] could constitute an effective guide for many researchers, who cling to reconstruction over any other consideration"⁹ (Juárez Cossío, 2009: 166). I would now like to complement other fundamental influences from Boito and Giovannoni in Molina's thought, which have not yet been analyzed in literature and which demonstrate the creation of an original hybrid theory.

Firstly, we should emphasize that the title of his work indicates a relevant interdisciplinary blend: he proposed a specific field of action for restoration, whose objective was the architectural fabric of the archaeological building. From the point of view of the Mexican archaeological tradition and its most important legislation, the *Ley federal de monumentos y zonas arqueológicas, artísticas e históricas*¹⁰ published in the *Diario oficial de la federación*¹¹ in 1972, the definition of archaeological monument has been conventionally confined to the pre-Hispanic times, a period that, in turn, has been the main focus for professional practice in the field of archeology (Medina-González y Becerril, 2012). However, given that the notion of building is closer to architecture, it is possible to suggest that the title and content of Molina's work connected the exercise of architecture in the pre-Hispanic heritage, and thus enabled the possible "translation" of the theory of restoration.

There are important consequences of this "translation" given that, when Molina (1975: 29) speaks of antiquity, of the old, or of archeology, he elaborates his theory in two senses. On the one hand, following Pedro Armillas, he proposes that archeology should not only cover the cultures of antiquity, but also the research of much more recent periods, that is, historic cultures (Molina, 1975: 30). On the other hand, his book is—both on its historical path and in its approach—mainly an exercise that equates antiquity, archeology and pre-Hispanic elements. In this sense, Molina maintains a typological approach; just as Boito had proposed his *restauro archeologico*.

Secondly, it is interesting to note that although Molina does not use the word "monument" in the title of his publication, this term is actually used profusely throughout his work. More importantly, it is the concept he conveys by noting that this entity stands out because of its value as a historic

⁸ Original quotation: "los monumentos deben ser consolidados antes que restaurados, evitando así reconstrucciones hipotéticas e idealizadas."

⁹ Original quotation: "principios, glosados por Augusto, [que] podrían constituir una guía eficaz para muchos investigadores aferrados a la reconstrucción por encima de cualquier otra consideración."

¹⁰ Federal law of archaeological, artistic and historic monuments and sites.

¹¹ Federal official gazette where all legislation is published, and comes into force.

document (Crema, 1959: 36 in Molina, 1975: 31). And just as in the case of Boito (1884; 1892) and Brandi (1963), this documentary condition of the archaeological monument consequently means that its intervention must be based on “absolutely truthful data, thus avoiding the transformation of hypotheses into constructions” as Giovannoni had already recommended since 1929 (Molina, 1975: 31).

In addition, and thirdly, the greatest influence of Giovannoni through the work of Carlo Perogalli (1955) would be that Molina’s *archaeological restoration* would not develop its deontology solely from axioms derived from Brandi. It would rather be based on a processual method which proposes different approaches, whose names and definitions are summarized in the following table:

Processual conservation (Molina, 1975: 48)	
Type	Definition: Objective
Restoration of consolidation	It aims at conserving the stability of the building <u>or</u> at providing it for structures that have, in a higher <u>or</u> lesser degree, lost such stability.
Restoration of liberation	It has the purpose of liberating the monument from those additions or aggregates that deform it or somehow devalue it, or which hamper the appreciation of the monument. In archaeology, it may be considered that in some cases, excavation is part of the restoration of liberation.
Restoration of reintegration	It is undertaken in order to restitute elements that have been lost to the structure. The clearest example of reintegration is anastylosis.
Restoration of reconstruction	This implies the reproduction of a destroyed monument, made in the same place, with the same shape and with new materials.
Restoration of innovation	It is undertaken in order to adapt the monument to a new use.
Restoration of restorations	It refers to treatments which become necessary when an older restoration treatment has altered the monument’s historic or aesthetic significance.

Much of Molina's work (1975: Chapters IV to VI) was devoted to establishing the parameters and criteria of the restoration of consolidation, liberation, reintegration and reconstruction by using both theoretical arguments and the practical applications of case studies. Given the extent of this contribution, we are not able, at this time, to delve into its details. We will only mention that, in concurrence with Boito and Giovannoni, the restoration of consolidation was considered a priority in restoration, as well as the purest of the restoration methods (Molina, 1975: 49). This led Molina to criticize those interventions on pre-Hispanic monuments that, by abusing the term, had exceeded their limits (Molina, 1975: 54). Additionally, when speaking of reconstruction restoration, Molina (1975: 70) emphasized the ban of archaeological reconstruction, supporting his arguments not only on the principles of other scholars of European restoration, but also on the critique of various intervention treatments on Mexican pre-Hispanic monuments; this view was echoed in the resolutions of the *Primera reunión técnica consultiva* (Castillo *et al.*, 1974a; 1974b), as well as in the conclusions of the *Primer Seminario regional latinoamericano de conservación y restauración*, whose participants expressed their condemnation of the proliferation of works "that falsify and cancel the values of monuments, understood as documents of history and art"¹² (Serlacor, 1973: 5n, in Molina, 1975: 73).

Conclusions

A large body of literature has already acknowledged the influence of Molina's texts on the intervention of Mexican pre-Hispanic monuments, and particularly in the *Yaxchilan Archaeological Project* (García Moll, 1984; 2002; Juárez Cossío, 2008; 2009). Additional reviews of his initiatives in monumental archaeological conservation undertaken by his disciples or followers between the 1990's and 2010's will certainly provide more details to assess their application and an impact on professional practices.

However, it is worth pointing out that Molina's most significant influence can be found in the field of training. His work was not only a key factor in the foundation of the Master's degree in conservation and restoration of immovable cultural heritage at the *Escuela Nacional de Conservación, Restauración y Museografía* (ENCRyM-INAH), but he was also the most powerful theoretical force at the forefront of the seminar-workshop on archaeological conservation, where his book became the backbone of training.

I was fortunate to witness the intelligent and informed criticism and proposals of Molina, when I participated as assistant of the Committee of Conservation of *Special archaeology projects* in 1993. It was then, when as a recent undergraduate from the degree in restoration of movable heritage, I could expand my interdisciplinary vision to the field of architectural restoration. The book of Molina (1975) was of my first reading materials on this field. The text introduced me to Boito, Giovannoni, Pane and from thereon, to the scholars preceding Brandi and Philippot, who formed the essential theoretical foundation of my university education.

From my personal experience, I can add that Molina was not only always willing to teach, but he also maintained a lifelong thirst for learning, a condition that definitely motivated him to maintain a constant dialogue with peers and students. One of the main features of his formal and informal teaching was the insistence upon knowing everything possible about a monument, a position that definitively clarifies the dimension of sensibilities by pointing out that "the ruins possess an evocative and expressive power that emanates from their own condition; well consolidated remains of buildings, which are adapted in an adequate

¹² Original quotation: "que falsifican y anulan los valores de los monumentos, entendidos como documento de historia y arte."

framework, must tell more about a historical site than a cold reconstruction, artificially deprived of its historical essence [...] the concept of the expressive value of a ruin is not a significant “romantic” concept of a morbid and superficial love of the ruined elements alone, but is rather part of the sense of history, of the passing of time, which the remains of an old building communicate to the viewer”¹³ (Molina 1975: 48). It is perhaps this academic vocation and the sense of understanding of heritage that brings Molina closer to Boito’s feelings; the latter, in his digression of *I restauratori*, not only links the historical perception to the critical instinct, but to that which takes place where the possibility of boredom of an academic event dissolves before a passionate confession: “[in order] to restore well, it is necessary to love and understand the monument, the painting, the building ... the ancient art”¹⁴ (Boito, 2017 [1884]: 10).

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¹³ Original quotation: “las ruinas poseen un poder evocativo y expresivo que proviene de su propia condición y que restos de edificios bien consolidados y adaptados en un marco adecuado, deben decir más de un sitio histórico que una fría reconstrucción, desposeída artificialmente de su esencia histórica [...] el concepto del valor expresivo de la ruina no es un concepto “romántico” significativo de un amor mórbido y superficial de lo ruinoso por sí mismo, sino que es parte del sentido de historia, del paso del tiempo, que los restos de un antiguo edificio comunican al espectador.”

¹⁴ Original quotation: “Per bene restaurare bisogna amare ed intendere il monumento, sia statua, quadro o edificio, sul quale si opera, e quindi l’arte vecchia in generale.”

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