

L'IDEA ROMANTICA DI RUSKIN E QUEL "MEZZO POLLICE" DI SUPERFICIE PERDUTA

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Abstract

John Ruskin's phrase has remained famous: "What copying can there be of surfaces that have been worn half an inch down? The whole finish of the work was in the half inch that is gone; if you attempt to restore that finish, you do it conceptually". This 'aphorism', contained in "The seven Lamps of Architecture", is indicative of the author's romantic ideas, linked to a sort of satisfaction with the degradation of architecture and its surfaces, which is opposed to an arbitrary restoration of the same. And, again, Proust's 'mental reference' is similar to the smile of the Virgin who "through the erosion of the stones" acquires greater charm - Proust's comment on Ruskin's Bible of Amiens -, or how (it is still the same text) "the sun caressing the deteriorated statue of the Virgin". What validity can these thoughts have today? What distance (or closeness) can there be between these ideas and the current one by Amedeo Bellini who, as is known, stated in 1990: "The surface registers the change: therefore it must be preserved"? Taking inspiration from these initial reflections, the report intends to retrace the salient phases of the change or of the possible permanence of the concepts that have followed one another over time on the need to preserve historical surfaces.

Keywords: *John Ruskin, Proust's reference, historical surfaces, degradation, conservation*