

Rebalancing the Ruin

Critical-Creative Approaches to Restoration-Conservation

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From a purely architectural perspective, a ruin could be defined as a built structure that has lost its material integrity and thus suffered an imbalance between the three essential virtues that initially conferred upon it the status of architecture. According to the ancient definition handed down to the present through the treatise of Vitruvius, architecture is characterised by the virtues *firmitas*, *utilitas* and *venustas*, meaning durability, convenience, and beauty:

There are three departments of architecture [...]. All these must be built with due reference to durability, convenience and beauty. Durability will be assured when foundations are carried out to the solid ground and materials wisely and liberally selected; convenience, when the arrangement of the apartment is faultless and presents no hindrance to use, and when each class of building is assigned to its suitable and appropriate exposure; and beauty, when the appearance of the work is pleasing and in good taste, and when its members are in due proportion according to correct principles of symmetry.¹

The balance of the architectural whole is ensured by these qualities, but once this equilibrium is disrupted, it becomes incomplete and falls into ruin. Can a ruin recover the three virtues and become architecture again through a critical restoration process?

The treatment of ruins has been an issue ever since humans started building with durable materials. Until the invention of the concept of monument preservation in the 19th century, ruins were reused and recycled continually, being adapted to the needs of each era, according to their material value. With the discovery of ancient Roman sites like Pompeii and Herculaneum in the 18th century, dealing with archaeological ruins became a major issue. From this, an archaeological approach to the conservation of ruins (*restauro archeologico*) emerged, and two consolidation works on the Colosseum in Rome in the early 19th century are noteworthy for the maturity of their critical approach.

1 Vitruvius: The Ten Books on Architecture. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 1914, p. 17.



Fig. 1: Colosseum Rome – Raffaele Stern's reused brick buttress with the preservation of the appearance of crumbling arches, photo 2021.

The Colosseum had been damaged by earthquakes in the early 18th century, causing parts of the outer ring to collapse. The situation of this great Roman monument worsened with further earth tremors in the first decade of the 19th century, leading to the detachment of the travertine finish due to the rotation of the pillars and the consequent lowering of the key blocks of the arches. In 1806–1807 a design proposal by architect Raffaele Stern called for the construction of a large brick buttress to contain the collapsed arches. A counter-proposal by contractor Domenico Schiavone suggested the demolition of the collapsing part of the crumbling arches along an oblique line forming a 'buttress', causing thereby a loss of original historic fabric. Stern's proposal to build the brick buttress from waste bricks was the winning solution, as it could be accomplished with half of the budget needed for demolition and aimed for the conservation of the fabric in its integrity.²

Raffaele Stern froze the travertine blocks in their state of imminent collapse by walling in the arches, avoiding their disassembly and reassembly, which

2 Jukka Jokilehto: A History of Architectural Conservation. Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann 1999, pp. 77–79.



Fig. 2: Colosseum Rome – Giuseppe Valadier’s arch buttress repeating the original forms of the monument, photo 2021.

would have implied a rather elaborate and costly operation.³ The intervention conserved the original state of the cracks and the lowering of the keystone blocks, still visible today, as if preserving the effect of the earthquake. The intervention merely stopped the collapse without attempting to complete the monument, thereby proving to be a very modern form of respect for the ancient monument (see Fig. 1).⁴

In 1820 Giuseppe Valadier was commissioned to consolidate the western outer ring facing the Forum. His design proposed a buttress imitating the ancient structure of the arches, reconstructed in plastered brick to complement the original ones in travertine (see Fig. 2). Furthermore, Valadier claimed that his method could eventually be applied to rebuild the entire monument.⁵ This second restoration of the Colosseum, completed in 1826, anticipated what would

3 Claudio Varagnoli: *Consolidamento nel Settecento e nel Primo Ottocento*. In: Paolo Rocchi (ed.): *Storia del Consolidamento*. Pomezia: Mancosu 2008, pp. 100–118, here pp. 106–107, 116–118.

4 Giovanni Carbonara: *Avvicinamento al Restauro: Teoria, Storia, Monumenti*. Napoli: Liguori 1997, pp. 87–88.

5 Jokilehto 1999 (see note 2), pp. 85–87.

become one of the two conflicting positions of the 19th century when dealing with ruins: either complete restoration or pure conservation.

A turning point that triggered the reconsideration and rethinking of existing restoration principles came with the huge amounts of ruins that many European countries faced after the Second World War. A critical approach to restoration, between the two extremes of conservation and innovation, sought to establish continuity with the existing elements by merging old and new elements into a new entity.⁶ In his 1963 *Theory of Restoration*, the Italian art critic and historian Cesare Brandi issued principles for a critical restoration of damaged works of art. He argued that a work of art is a whole and not a sum of parts and therefore each surviving fragment potentially reflects the whole of which it was once a part: 'If a work of art, which is not a sum of parts, is physically fragmented, it will continue to exist as a potential whole in each of its fragments. This potential will be achieved in direct proportion to what has survived of the original artistic features on each fragment of the material that has disintegrated.'⁷ Brandi's critical restoration approach aimed to re-establish 'the potential oneness of the work of art, as long as this is possible without committing artistic or historical forgery, and without erasing every trace of the passage through time of the work of art.'⁸

While having to deal head-on with the ruins of war, the early post-war period saw the development of a similar critical-creative approach in practice, emphasising the idea of intervening by superimposing the present on the past in an attempt to blend the old and the new into a true unity. Interventions such as Hans Döllgast's creative reconstruction (*schöpferischer Wiederaufbau*) of the Alte Pinakothek in Munich (1946–1957) – about which more below – and Liliana Grassi's creative recovery (*recupero creativo*) of the Ca' Granda in Milan (1946–1958) have established new departure points in reconsidering interventions on heavily damaged buildings so as to respect the ruins' dignity while aiming to integrate them into a new architectural whole that is faithful to its time.⁹ Both interventions rejected the idea of restoring the original appearance of the building, reacting to the ruin directly in a critical-creative way. Thus, a clear differentiation was made between the surviving fabric of the original structure and the new additions, made in such a way as to reintegrate the missing gap into a new entity.

Fifty years after the completion of Döllgast's intervention in Munich, Berlin has seen the completion of restoration work on two war-damaged museums, the Neues Museum by David Chipperfield Architects and Julian Harrap (2009) and the Natural History Museum by Diener & Diener (2010). Both represent unusual examples of restoration for the German context and demonstrate a paradigm shift towards a critical approach to conservation-restoration today.

6 Giovanni Carbonara: *Architettura d'Oggi e Restauro: Un Confronto Antico-Nuovo*. Torino: Utet Scienze Tecniche 2011, p. 100.

7 Cesare Brandi: *Theory of Restoration*. Firenze: Nardini 2005, p. 57.

8 Brandi 2005 (see note 7), p. 50.

9 Liliana Grassi: *La Ca' Granda: Storia e Restauro: Inaugurazione Ufficiale della Nuova Sede dell'Università degli Studi di Milano – anno acc. 1957–1958*. Milano: Antonio Cordani 1958, pp. 69–90.

On the basis of three case studies, this chapter aims to investigate the relationship between the ‘hot’ restoration approach carried out immediately after the war and the ‘cold’ restorations carried out at a considerable distance from the traumatic event. Hans Döllgast’s pioneering intervention can be seen as a precursor of the Berlin projects half a century later, proving that his approach was not fashionable for its time, but rather avant-garde. All three museums have regained their function after restoration and have become museums again, so the biggest challenge in all cases was to reintegrate a missing gap, a rational and poetic negotiation between solidity and appearance to rebalance *firmitas* and *venustas*. Looking beyond Vitruvius’s idea of beauty, closely linked to the principles of symmetry, *venustas* encompasses the idea of harmony of the whole. In this way, the new architecture that results after the critical-creative intervention does not demonstrate a perfect formal unity but rather a subtle dialogue between the old and the new, where both positions are represented but none prevails over the other.

Alte Pinakothek in Munich, Hans Döllgast (1946–1957)

In front of our windows in Arcisstraße, the mountain of debris grows ever higher and the opposite façade ever more naked. Robbers throw down the Raphael and twenty-four others, finally the Dürer and everything on the Pinakothek that was on lead sheet. They took the copper, the zinc railings and a kilometre of iron fence. This went on until 47/48.¹⁰

The Alte Pinakothek in Munich was built by Leo von Klenze between 1826 and 1836.¹¹ Right at the beginning of the Second World War, the museum was closed and the collections moved out of storage. In 1944/45 the building was bombed and severely damaged.¹² At the end of the war, all that was left were burnt-out walls and a 45-metre hole in the centre of the building. The area in front of the south façade served as a debris storage area. The building remained in a ruinous state until 1952, as it had not yet been decided whether it should be restored, or demolished and rebuilt; both positions were represented among the architects in Munich.

Hans Döllgast had been working voluntarily on a restoration project for the Alte Pinakothek since 1946, so his proposal prevailed, as it proved its feasibility

- 10 ‘Vor unsern Fenstern an der Arcisstraße wird der Schuttberg immer höher und die Fassade gegenüber immer nackiger. Räuber schmeißen den Raffael und vierundzwanzig andere herunter, zuletzt den Dürer und alles, was an der Pinakothek auf Bleiblech stand. Nehmen das Kupfer mit, die zinkenen Baluster und einen Kilometer Eisenzaun. Das ging so weiter bis 47/48.’ Hans Döllgast: *Journal Retour*. Salzburg: Pustet 2003, p. 16. All translations from German to English were made by Florina Pop.
- 11 Friedrich Kurrent: *Das historische Denkmal als Denkmal seiner Geschichte: Zum Wiederaufbau der Alten Pinakothek in München 1946–1957*. In: *Archithese* 1 (1981), pp. 3–9, here p. 4.
- 12 Michael S. Falser: *Trauerarbeit an Ruinen – Kategorien des Wiederaufbaus nach 1945*. In: Michael Braum, Ursula Baus (eds): *Rekonstruktion in Deutschland: Positionen zu einem Thema*. Basel: Birkhäuser 2009, p. 76.



Fig. 3: Alte Pinakothek Munich – Hans Döllgast’s intervention on the south façade consisting of a structure of steel columns supporting the roof and the subsequent closure of the gap with re-used bricks, photo 2021.

and cost-effectiveness by means of concrete plans, while the advocates of demolition and reconstruction could not even take a decision about the location of the new building. Döllgast developed several design proposals and received an initial official planning contract for securing the ruin. This led to stabilising the south façade and to temporarily propping up the roof with steel supports, leaving the gap open. As a consequence of this first operation and the need to close the void, Döllgast designed a bold proposal for a glass curtain wall in 1953. This solution, contrasting to the existing building fabric, would also have had a strong impact on the interior, but due to the high cost and technical and climatic constraints, this proposal was not seriously considered.¹³ A year later, it was decided to close the gap with a brick wall, as this was the most cost-effective solution (see Fig. 3). On the north façade, Döllgast closed the gap with re-used bricks from other war-damaged buildings and completed the original fabric in a reduced form without decoration. By 1955, the work on the exterior façade was completed and the interior work began; two years later the museum was inaugurated (see Fig. 4).¹⁴

At the end of the 1960s, work on the façades had to be redone for fire protection reasons and because of damage. In the process, there were fierce arguments favouring the goal of a complete ‘deconstruction’ of Döllgast’s intervention in order to ‘finally get rid of the fatal and still reminiscent patchwork of dark times’

13 Erich Altenhöfer: Hans Döllgast und die Alte Pinakothek. In: Michael Gaenßler (ed.): Hans Döllgast 1981 – 1974. München: Callwey 1987, pp. 45–91, here pp. 62–63.



Fig. 4: Alte Pinakothek Munich – Hans Döllgast’s reintegrated north façade with bare re-used bricks and lack of decorative elements, photo 2021.

and instead pursue a faithful reconstruction of the Leo von Klenze building.¹⁵ In all his interventions in bomb-damaged buildings in Munich, Döllgast rejected restoration in the sense of reconstruction, choosing instead to work in a contemporary language with simplified forms that enter into dialogue with the existing elements, making a virtue out of necessity and referring to his method as creative reconstruction (*schöpferischer Wiederaufbau*).¹⁶

In his approach based on economy of means and respect for the original fabric, Döllgast’s intervention is reminiscent of Raffaele Stern’s archaeological approach to the eastern buttress of the Colosseum: ‘Döllgast did not see the reconstruction of the Alte Pinakothek as a question of monument conservation efforts, but rather as a task oriented towards the circumstances and requirements, which had to be solved as simply and cost-efficiently as possible with technical-craftsman means.’¹⁷ In the time and context in which he operated, Döllgast’s approach was innovative in a manner similar to Stern’s in Rome,

14 Franz Peter, Franz Wimmer: Von den Spuren: Interpretierender Wiederaufbau im Werk von Hans Döllgast. Salzburg – München: Anton Pustet 1998, pp. 34–38.

15 ‘[um] endlich das Flickwerk loszuwerden, welches fatal und immer noch an dunkle Zeiten erinnere.’ Kurrent 1981 (see note 11), pp. 4–5.

16 Kurrent 1981 (see note 11), p. 7.

17 ‘Döllgast sah den Wiederaufbau der Alten Pinakothek nicht als Frage oder Problem denkmalpflegerischer Bemühung, sondern als eine an den Gegebenheiten und Erfordernissen orientierte Aufgabe, die mit technisch-handwerklichen Mitteln möglichst einfach und kostengünstig gelöst werden musste.’ Altenhöfer 1987 (see note 13), p. 80.

proving that critical detachment and respect for the historic fabric are timeless and valid throughout the epochs. Döllgast's intervention also filled the void with material debris, leaving visible traces of the traumatic event that caused the damage. He avoided reconstructing the initial forms of decoration, making a clear distinction between the old and the new and achieving in this way a new unity which leaves all traces visible. This made it possible to rebalance *firmitas* and *venustas*, and thus the intervention works as a storytelling tool: 'Döllgast deliberately left such traces visible during the reconstruction after the Second World War so that the buildings tell their own story.'¹⁸

Despite the freshness of the approach, that post-war period was not yet ready to accept it, so Hans Döllgast's intervention was heavily criticised and threatened with demolition in favour of reconstructing the original appearance of Leo von Klenze's building. It took decades to be accepted and appreciated for its critical qualities, paving the way for other similar approaches to find acceptance in the same context decades later.

Neues Museum Berlin, David Chipperfield Architects (1998–2009)

We did not want to raise a monument to the destruction, nor did we want to build a historical reconstruction. Our vision was to preserve this unique ruin, which has survived not only the destruction of war but also the process of erosion over the last sixty years, and to make it meaningfully visible [...] in order to let a new building emerge from the remains of the old, a new building that neither glorifies nor conceals its history but includes it within itself. A new building that is composed of fragments or parts of the old, but which, like the old, strives for a coherent whole.¹⁹

The Neues Museum in Berlin was built between 1841 and 1859 by Friedrich August Stüler next to Karl Friedrich Schinkel's Altes Museum (1823–1830) on the island site of the former Lustgarten, which King Friedrich Wilhelm IV of Prussia wanted to transform into a free space for art and science. The Museum Island was bombed several times during the Second World War, causing severe damage to the buildings. In November 1943 the main staircase of the Neues Museum was hit by incendiary bombs, and in February 1945 the north-west and south-east wings and the passage to the Altes Museum were partially destroyed by

18 'Spuren dieser Art ließ Döllgast beim Wiederaufbau nach dem zweiten Weltkrieg bewusst sichtbar, damit die Bauten ihre eigene Geschichte erzählen.' Peter/Wimmer 1998 (see note 14), p. 9.

19 'Weder wollten wir der Zerstörung ein Denkmal setzen, noch eine historische Nachbildung bauen. Unsere Vision war es, diese einzigartige Ruine, die nicht nur die Kriegszerstörungen, sondern auch den Erosionsprozess der letzten sechzig Jahre überlebt hat, zu bewahren und sinnvoll sichtbar zu machen [...] aus den Überresten des alten Gebäudes ein neues entstehen zu lassen, ein neues Gebäude, das seine Geschichte weder rühmt noch verbirgt, sondern in sich einschließt. Ein neues Gebäude, das aus Bruchstücken oder Teilen des alten zusammengesetzt wurde, das jedoch wie schon das alte, ein geschlossenes Ganzes zu erreichen sucht.' David Chipperfield: Einleitung. In: Rik Nys, Martin Reichert (eds): Neues Museum Berlin: David Chipperfield Architects in Zusammenarbeit mit Julian Harrap. Köln: König 2009, pp. 10–11, here p. 11.



Fig. 5: Neues Museum Berlin – half-reconstructed south-west façade with the recent entrance to the James Simon Gallery in the foreground, David Chipperfield Architects, photo 2021.

bombs.²⁰ It was the only one of the five museums on the island that was not reopened after 1945, remaining in a ruinous state of direct weathering for more than sixty years. The decision to rebuild the museum had been in preparation since the 1960s and was finally taken during GDR times, exactly fifty years after the beginning of the Second World War, on 1 September 1989.²¹ In 1993, an international architecture competition was announced for the completion of the Neues Museum and the recreation of the connections to the neighbouring museum buildings, the Pergamon and the Altes Museum. The second competition phase was won by David Chipperfield Architects in collaboration with Julian Harrap (see Fig. 5). Restoration works began in 1998 and the museum was reopened on 16 October 2009.²²

The intervention caused long-lasting debates on the validity of the approach to restoration that would maintain the traces of war destruction: ‘In 1997, we inherited the enormous physical context, of what remained of the Neues Museum. There was something both sad and beautiful about it. It had stood there for some sixty years with only few attempts at stabilisation, not the result of a recent action, but one that occurred during World War II. This was one of

20 Gisela Holan, Günter Schade: Zwischen Zerstörung und Wiederaufbau: Das Neue Museum 1945–1989. In: Oliver Hamm, Peter Antonioli (eds): *Das Neue Museum Berlin: Konservieren, Restaurieren, Weiterbauen im Welterbe*. Leipzig: E. A. Seeman 2009, pp. 31–37, here p. 31.

21 Peter-Klaus Schuster: Ein Tempel der Erinnerung: Zum Neuen Museum von David Chipperfield. In: Rik Nys, Martin Reichert (eds): *Neues Museum Berlin: David Chipperfield Architects in Zusammenarbeit mit Julian Harrap*. Köln: König 2009, pp. 169–204, here p. 169.

22 Rik Nys, Martin Reichert (eds): *Neues Museum Berlin: David Chipperfield Architects in Zusammenarbeit mit Julian Harrap*. Köln: König 2009, pp. 257–263.



Fig. 6: Neues Museum Berlin – south-east façade with newly built corner risalto and rebuilt south colonnade, David Chipperfield Architects, photo 2021.

our responsibilities. [...] We felt from the beginning that an approach of historical reconstruction – in other words, a complete rebuilding according to the original plans – was not appropriate in this particular situation, where time had created a strange monument that was neither building nor ruin, and yet both.²³

Unlike in Munich, where the intervention on the Alte Pinakothek was made in the early post-war period, while the memory of the traumatic event was still very present, in Berlin there was half a century of distance to evaluate and discuss possible approaches towards recovering the ruin. In spite of long debates and different positions, in the end, a critical intervention that preserves the traces of time and history was appreciated. Obviously, something had changed in the collective mindset in the fifty years between the two interventions.

The architectural concept involved filling in the original volume with the aim of merging old and new into a new entity, leaving traces of war damage visible. As Döllgast had done previously, the architectural filling of the void was done with simplified forms of the original decoration that nevertheless maintain the rhythm and volume of the original building (see Fig. 6). The new intervention

23 '1997 haben wir mit dem Neuen Museum einen enormen baulichen Kontext übernommen, der zugleich traurig und schön war. Die Museumsruine existierte bereits seit über sechzig Jahren, in denen man aber nur versucht hatte, sie zu stabilisieren. Die Ruine war also nicht erst vor Kurzem, sondern bereits im Zweiten Weltkrieg entstanden, und darin lag auch unsere Verantwortung. [...] Von Anfang an fanden wir, dass in diesem besonderen Fall, in dem die Zeit ein seltsames Denkmal hatte entstehen lassen, das weder Gebäude noch Ruine und doch beides zugleich war, eine Restaurierung, die auf eine historische Reproduktion abzielen würde – also ein kompletter Nachbau im Sinne der ursprünglichen Pläne –, inakzeptabel war.' Andres Lepik: David Chipperfield im Gespräch mit Andres Lepik / David Chipperfield in conversation with Andres Lepik, Neues Museum, Berlin, November 29, 2008. In: Andres Lepik for the Freunde des Neuen Museums (ed.): Neues Museum: Friederike von Rauch. David Chipperfield. Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz 2009, pp. 6–18, here p. 5 and p. 12.



Fig. 7: Natural History Museum Berlin – restored east wing, Diener & Diener Architekten, photo 2021.

is clearly recognisable from the ruin, but together they manage to form a new architecture. The interrelationships between repair, conservation, restoration, and completion were coherently coordinated from the architectural fragment to the pictorial scale.²⁴

Natural History Museum Berlin, Diener & Diener Architects (1995–2010)

The unfinished as well as the destroyed confront us with the question of how our intervention cannot simply seal the old and place something new on top of it but operate with the existing history. Seen in this way, even traces of use or history are a source for something new in which the old can live on.²⁵

The Natural History Museum in Berlin was designed by August Tiede and completed in 1889. During the Second World War, in February 1945, it was damaged

24 David Chipperfield: Das Neue Museum: Architektonisches Konzept. In: Oliver Hamm, Peter Antonioli (eds): Das Neue Museum Berlin: Konservieren, Restaurieren, Weiterbauen im Welterbe. Leipzig: E. A. Seeman 2009, pp. 56–59.

25 'Das Unfertige wie das Zerstörte konfrontieren uns mit der Frage, wie unsere Intervention nicht einfach das Alte besiegeln und etwas Neues darüber setzen, sondern mit der vorhandenen Geschichte operieren kann. So gesehen sind schon Spuren des Gebrauchs oder der Geschichte eine Quelle für etwas Neues, in dem das Alte fortleben kann.' Roger Diener interviewed by Sabine von Fischer, Neue Zürcher Zeitung, 6 March 2020.



Fig. 8: Natural History Museum Berlin – reintegration of the missing gap by mimetic repetition of the original structure in visible cast concrete, Diener & Diener Architekten, photo 2021.

by bombing and the east wing was most severely affected. Just like the Neues Museum, this part of the building remained in a ruinous state for many decades without any action being taken. The recovery of ‘Berlin’s last war ruin’²⁶ was the subject of an architectural competition in 1995, which was won by the architecture practice Diener & Diener. The entirely redesigned museum, including the restored east wing, reopened in 2010.²⁷

The spaces in the restored wing house the museum’s wet collection, containing light-sensitive exhibits that require a controlled environment. The animal specimens stored in alcohol-filled jars are displayed as an open, walk-in archive for visitors and researchers alike. To ensure a controlled environment for the exhibits, the building envelope is sealed and the new façade elements are completely opaque. The windows, which are blind to the outside, fit into the rhythm of the original façade openings and are in dialogue with the preserved original façade segments, which were consistently bricked up (see Fig. 7).²⁸

26 Annette Galinski: Nach altem Vorbild. Kriegszerstörter Ostflügel des Museums für Naturkunde in Berlin wiederaufgebaut. In: *Bausubstanz* 4 (2010), pp. 52–56, here p. 52.

27 Axel Simon: Ursuppenküche. Diener & Diener bauen Sauriersaal im Berliner Naturkundemuseum. In: *Hochparterre: Zeitschrift für Architektur und Design* 23 (2010), 11, pp. 36–39.

28 Project description from the architects’ website, <http://www.dienerdiener.ch/de/project/renovation-and-expansion-of-the-east-wing-of-the-museum-of-natural-history> (accessed 17.02.2022).

The contemporary intervention stages the filling of the gap in the façade through a mimetic repetition of the old masonry. Casts were made from the fragments of the original façade, from which prefabricated gray concrete elements of various sizes were produced.²⁹ The different colouring of the façade through the various materials creates an effect of beneficial disturbance. The concept of distinguishing contemporary material from the existing original substance is reminiscent of Hans Döllgast's work, while the decision to repeat the original forms is reminiscent of Giuseppe Valadier's work on the western outer ring of the Colosseum.

This intriguing and bold proposal lies somewhere between a critical reintegration of the gap and a mimetic redesign that stages a new whole, blending old and new building fabric while preserving the memory of the building's destruction during the war (see Fig. 8). Diener & Diener's intervention in Berlin speaks a contemporary language in its materiality mirroring the technological possibilities of its time, yet in terms of appearance, it remakes the original form. This could be a proof of loyalty to the surviving fragments of the original building, or a safety measure to lower the risk of the intervention becoming unbalanced due to the chromatic and material difference from the original fabric.

Conclusion

Every ruin has a right to dignity. It carries the legacy of the past, a story of survival. With their presence, ruins give meaning to the present and set a framework for the future. Ruins are silent storytellers, and therefore deserve to be listened to carefully and assessed on a case-by-case basis before being subjected to intervention. Any ruin reveals qualities inherent to its condition as an architectural entity that has fallen into disrepair for whatever reason. Careful consideration of the imbalance in the characteristics of the ruin can create a new equilibrium by rebalancing the attributes of the ruin with the goal of creating a new whole: 'Emphasising that meanings are not fixed but open to adaptation and reinvention, a fragmented composition is a truer reflection of a contemporary society than a complete composition, indicating that a work of architecture, art or literature can remain unfinished, literally and in the imagination, focusing attention on the creativity of viewers, readers and users, and artists, writers and architects.'³⁰

The condition of the unfinished could be considered part of a critical-creative approach of our time, as it leaves room for appropriation in the present and future life of the ruin that has become architecture again. By allowing the preservation of traces as precious signs of the passage of time on the artifact, the unfinished appearance can coexist in dialogue with the contemporary intervention.

In all three case studies, the interventions maintain the traces caused by war damage and successive weathering and try to blend old and new together in similar ways. Hans Döllgast's method and rational approach to restoration-conservation

29 Sarah Borree, Anh-Linh Ngo: Museum für Naturkunde Berlin. In: Arch+ no. 204 (2011), pp. 46–51.

30 Jonathan Hill: *The Architecture of Ruins*. London: Routledge 2019, p. 294.

based on economy of means was pioneering, and yet was met with great controversy. Both Berlin case studies, on the other hand, were recognised by winning major awards and acceptance in society. What would have happened if Döllgast's intervention had been sacrificed and not preserved? It was clearly a precursor for similar later interventions in the German context and remains an example of an honest approach to a wounded architecture that first and foremost needs someone who believes that it can become a new whole again. The validity of the impulsive response to the harsh reality of the ruin is confirmed in this case by its inspirational qualities for present and future generations.

Abstract

Die Wiederherstellung der Ruine

Kritisch-kreative Ansätze der Restaurierung/Konservierung

Aus rein architektonischer Perspektive ist die Ruine ein Bauwerk, das durch Fragmentierung seine materielle Integrität verloren hat. So manifestiert sich im Bauwerk ein Ungleichgewicht seiner wesentlichen Merkmale, die den Status der Architektur definieren: *firmitas*, *utilitas* und *venustas*. Diese können durch einen kritischen Prozess der Neuintegration des verbleibenden Fragments in einer neuen Architektur wiederhergestellt werden. Die durch den Zweiten Weltkrieg verursachten Schäden zwangen viele europäische Länder, neue Strategien im Umgang mit der Bausubstanz zu erproben. Kritisch-kreative Ansätze des Wiederaufbaus in der frühen Nachkriegszeit wie beispielsweise Hans Döllgasts Alte Pinakothek in München (1946–1957) boten den Anlass, Eingriffe an schwer beschädigten Gebäuden in einer Weise zu überdenken, die die Würde der Ruine respektiert, ohne zu versuchen, die Spuren der Zeit zu tilgen oder historische Fälschungen zu schaffen. Ziel war es nun vielmehr, sie in ein neues harmonisches Ganzes zu integrieren, das ihrer Zeit gerecht wird. Auch gegenwärtig wird dieser Ansatz verfolgt. 50 Jahre nach der Zerstörung wurden zwei im Krieg zerbombte Berliner Museen restauriert: das Neue Museum und das Museum für Naturkunde. Dieser Beitrag illustriert, wie die Spuren der Zeit und der Zerstörung bewusst bewahrt wurden.