

The terracotta as material from covering in architecture: examples of restauration in Piemonte

by Iolanda Mele

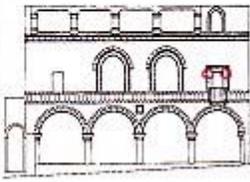
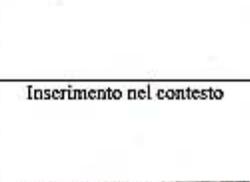
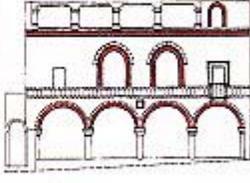
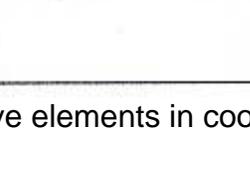
Tutor: Cesare Romeo

Co-tutor: Luisa Stafferi

The terracotta is an ancient material, used in Italy and in every historical epoch, but it is above all during the Middle Ages and especially in Northern Italy, that this material has found its maximum artistic expression. Despite the material tiles, and ceramic has generally been, and is still the protagonists of the constructive technique of our Country, despite the diffused employment of the terracotta architectural in Italy, few are thin to today the specific studies on this material.

The thesis reenters in the attempt to enrich the knowledges on this material, a little studied in past, perhaps because identified as synonym of poor art, intervening on different points,:

- 1) the terracotta is treated as material from covering of façade, his/her history, with particular respect to the Piedmont, the different methods of production and the different methodologies of manufacture, proceeding to a classification of elements in terracotta of the Province in Turin, for the formulation of detailed cards used for analyzing the decorations of the buildings examined in the thesis: the church of Santa Maria Assunta in Chivasso, the House of the Green Count in Rivoli, the church of Sant'Antonio in Ranverso near Buttigliera Alta (TO); the cards furnish in detailed way the characteristics proper of every tile individualized in the analyzed cases, also defining the dimensions and, where possible, the percentage of reinstatement of the tiles because of the restaurations suffered in past;

Scheda tipologica			E.2.1		
Soggetto: casa del Conte Verde - Rivoli. Tipologia delle formelle in cotto della facciata					
	<u>Tipologia</u>	Figura antropomorfa: putto sbocciante da corolla fiorita e leone accucciato sul tralcio orizzontale		Percentuale di reintegrazione: 0%	
	<u>Lavorazione</u>	Pezzi unici			N° formelle: 2
	<u>Finitura superficiale</u>	Invetriatura/colore			Dimensioni: 33x19
	<u>Tecniche produttive</u>	Foggiati entro stampi in unico pezzo e rifinito a mano prima della cottura			
	<u>Funzione</u>	Decorativa			
	<u>Tipologia</u>	Figura antropomorfa: tralcio di foglie avvolgente un fusto centrale e visi femminili		Percentuale di reintegrazione: 0%	
	<u>Lavorazione</u>	Seriale			N° formelle: 118
	<u>Finitura superficiale</u>	Colore: strato rossiccio legato con caseina o colla animale			Dimensioni: 40x33
	<u>Tecniche produttive</u>	Foggiati entro stampi in unico pezzo e rifinito a mano prima della cottura			
	<u>Funzione</u>	Decorativa			

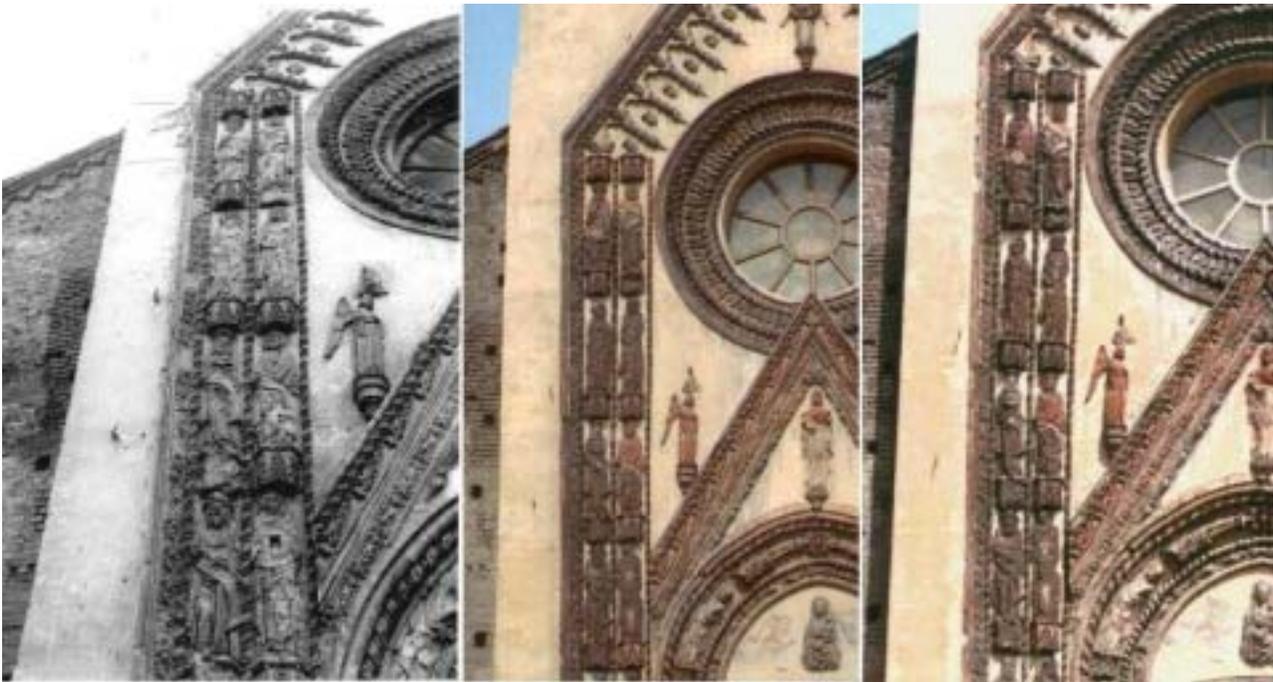
Pict.1 : example of card-indexing of the decorative elements in cooked of the House of the Green Count in Rivoli

2) it is faced therefore the problem of the restauration of this material, considering two principal moments in the history of the architectural terracotta:

- the period that goes from the end of the eight hundred to the Nine hundred first years, the epoch of the interventions of D'Andrade and his collaborators on many medieval Piedmontese buildings, in that climate of revival of the Middle Ages and rediscovery of a material that the advent of the Baroque one had relegated in second floor. The nineteenth-century interventions were characterized by an accurate study of the history of the building, and the tendency of the renovators of the past was that to bring it to the original forms, even if this for the most part involved the remaking of whole parts and the total reinstatement of degraded elements or lacking with perfect copies for color, form and physical characteristics;
- Other important period for a study of the history of the restauration of the cooked one is the period that has been going for the years' 70 of the Nine hundred up to our days, period characterized by the experimentation of new technologies of intervention on the cooked one with the use of chemical products. The church of Santa Maria Assunta is one of the first examples in Piedmont of the use of these techniques in the restauration, and accordingly one of the testimonies that you/he/she allows to appraise the effectiveness of such products today (in this case resins siliconiche) after thirty years from their employment.



Pict.2: the church of Sant'Antonio in Ranverso before and later the restoring intervention of Cesare Bertea of the 1924-20



Pict. 3: the church of Santa Maria Assunta in Chivasso.before the intervention of the Superintendence to the Environmental and Architectural Good of the Piedmont, after the intervencion and in 2001

The cases taken in examination introduce different problem list, but overall they almost pick up it totality of the types of degrade to which the material is subject, and the analysis of the

methodologies of intervention applied, and therefore applicable. It is not had certain the conceitedness to be able to define concepts or unique or absolute behaviors: it operates it of time in time examining the object of the restauration in all of its parts to establish what the most consistent method is in a particular situation.

The cases are analyzed associating to a punctual study of the characteristic tipologiches and production of the "terracotta architectural", and to the analysis of the interventions of restauration on buildings that also introduced different characteristics of degrade, the verification of the conservative state of the material after different years from the last suffered restauration.

The interventions described in the thesis represent some examples of the possibility to perform works of restauration applying these methodologies.

For further information, please write to jolemele@virgilio.it