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Between Renaissance and Neo-Renaissance: Tito Vespasiano Paravicini's Graphic Corpus

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The importance of a comparative study on Renaissance and its artistic, cultural and historical reception in the 19th century has been highlighted by several scholars, especially in recent times. Such a comparative approach is characterised by a sort of 'mirror game' in research that is useful not only for understanding the 19th-century perception and sensibility in transforming the Italian Renaissance into a framework for developing a national identity, but also for increasing knowledge of the material and immaterial culture of the Renaissance itself.

This essay analyses the contribution that the study of the almost unpublished corpus —of around 1,000 drawings — by the Milanese architect Tito Vespasiano Paravicini (1830–1899) has made to the knowledge of specific episodes of Renaissance architecture in Lombardy. Paravicini's work is discussed here not in relation to 19th-century restoration theories or architectural practice (both topics that have been explored at length) but above all in his commitment to testifying to a series of architectures and a decaying landscape in Milan following the Italian unification in 1861. To highlight the importance of Paravicini's graphic collection as a source for the history of architecture, we focus on a selected number of drawings that are crucial for reconstructing important yet misunderstood episodes of the Milanese artistic culture between the 15th and 16th centuries.

Neo-Renaissance: A Troublesome Concept

Between the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Renaissance architecture became a model to follow and imitate, in order to create new architectural languages, as well as a means of defining modern identities. In this historical context, studying and surveying buildings from the 15th and 16th centuries, which were often subjected to demolition or radical reworking, was a crucial component of an architect's training at this time. The result of this 19th-century graphic production was twofold: on the one hand, it recorded the appearance of Renaissance buildings that were about to disappear and, on the other, it was functional to the development of catalogues of models and decorative elements useful for the practice of both contemporary architects and restorers.

The importance of a comparative study between historical-artistic and literary developments in the 15th and 16th centuries and their rereading and reinterpretation in the 19th and early 20th centuries has been recently highlighted by many scholars (Buck and Vasoli 1989; Grieco, Rocke, and Gioffredi Superbi 2002; Portebois and Terpstra 2003; Koopmann and Baron 2013; Bolzoni and Payne (eds.) 2018). They have stressed the need to investigate this topic in the broader context of cultural history and with an innovative approach that privileges the study of the intersection between various disciplines, rather than insisting on a sectorial specificity. Within this approach, the creation and reinterpretation of the Renaissance myth is defined 'not so much as a revival but as a pan-European phenomenon of critique, commentary and re-shaping of a 19th-century present perceived as deeply problematic' (Bolzoni and Payne 2018: 9–10).

However, no synthesis of the neo-Renaissance cultural phenomenon exists to date, and a compendium of the subject is nearly unfeasible, given both the current state of the literature and the territorial specificities that the cultural phenomenon has acquired in the various regions of Europe, as well as across the ocean.[1] The definition of the Renaissance itself is still a 'necessary but troublesome concept' (Bann 2018: 46). Its periodization oscillates between 1300 and 1600, depending on the different historiographical schools (Cantimori 1971: 553–557; Franceschi 2002: 153–154). It is even more complex to tackle the topic of neo-Renaissances in the multifaceted context of 19th-century Western culture.

Although an interdisciplinary approach to the cultural phenomenon of neo-Renaissance has been recognised as necessary, the study of the history of architecture

still has a sort of primacy in the definition of 19th-century revivalism, while also providing the basis for a rereading of the phenomenon and its implications in other arts and humanities. However, a comparison between 15th-century Italian architecture and contemporary European architecture directly contributed to the formation and definition of the term *Renaissance* in the 19th century, due especially to the work of the Swiss scholar Jacob Burckhardt (Ghelardi 1991; Gardini 2010; Ghelardi 2018). In this semantic genesis there was a significant alternation between the terms *Renaissance* and *Risorgimento* (Burckhardt and Kugler 1858; Burckhardt 1992; Burckhardt 2006), and the 'recovery of the Renaissance' was crucially related to the construction of an identitarian process. In Italy, this approach was embodied in the Risorgimento spirit (Croce 1958; Ossola 1983; Dionisotti 1989; Pelgrom 2011: 83–85) while in the rest of Europe it had to deal with the problem of creating a national style and constructing an authoritative present through the rereading and acquisition of a precise memory of the past.

The Lombard Problem: Which Renaissance for Neo-Renaissance?

In 1839, when Italy was on its way to becoming a nation for the first time, an article in the journal *Il Politecnico* recalled the 'quintessentially modern and Italian style, in which Bramante's genius was able to combine the pure elements of antiquity for our use' ('Sulla Piazza del Duomo' 1839).[2] The article hinted at a 'national' tradition to which 15th-century Milanese architecture had made a decisive, yet vague, contribution. Within the varied context of post-unification Italy, similar to what had happened in the Quattrocento, a more precise and pertinent declination of the Renaissance artistic language on a regional scale was needed. In Lombardy, a regional neo-Renaissance style then being promoted was a hybridisation of the legacy of 'Lombard Bramantesque', a generic label that in the 19th century was applied to all local architectures dating to the 15th century.

The creation of the new language was problematic in many respects. First, it is complicated to assign precise labels to buildings which blended together with ease different languages, ranging from a late neoclassicism to a neo-15th-century Sforza style with a medieval flavour, up to more specific revivals of 'Bramante' motifs, all aesthetically unified by cladding, terracotta decorations and graffiti and sometimes even candelabra supports. Such a 'confusion' is not the result of an anachronistic attitude but a consequence of the same 19th-century uncertainty in defining what was or was not Renaissance and Bramantesque. This situation was also determined by contemporary studies on Milanese Renaissance and Bramante in particular. The scholarly discussion at the time was complicated by two issues. First, the identity of Bramante himself was confused, leading to the campanilistic and fanciful (to say the least) reconstruction and invention of several people called Bramante and Bramantino. Second, the label

'Bramantesque' was also extended to include the work produced in 15th-century Lombardy by the Solari family, Giovanni Antonio Amadeo, and their followers.

Besides the local pride that these historiographical constructions generated, the association of Milanese architecture with Bramante inextricably linked the region to the 'birth' of Renaissance architecture and, in particular, to Rome. Thus, Lombardy was presented as a more or less direct contributor to the unification of the 'national' architectural cultural heritage (Selvafolta 2005a: 65, 85; Selvafolta 2005b; D'Amia 2014; Giordano 2014; D'Amia 2021).[3] Furthermore, the generic 'Bramantesque' language lent itself to various interpretations, according to whether it was associated to Sforza Lombardy or to Papal Rome. In the case, this was confronted with local traditions while, in the latter, directly with the Antiquity. Therefore, Bramante's name was declined in the Sforza-Lombard direction on the one hand, and on the other it constituted the foundation for the construction of the Italian Renaissance.

Throughout the centuries, however, the fascination with a Sforza Renaissance in Lombardy was never completely abandoned, as is shown by its re-elaboration in some 17th- and 18th-century villas and castles in the region (Rossetti 2021b). Yet the origins of this local neo-Renaissance taste can be identified with an early case of conservation and reworking of Renaissance architecture, namely when the Ticinese architect Giocondo Albertolli (1742−1839) dismantled the 'Bramantesque' Chapel of Sant'Antonio that was in the church of San Francesco in Lugano, and reassembled it, encapsulated in a neo-classical shell, at Brugherio, in Lombard Brianza (1815−1832) (Valli 1989; Agliati 1994; Valli, Cannella 1994; Calderari 2021: 213−218).

However, the interest in a Lombard tradition was not just a question of local self-awareness but a more complex phenomenon of an interest in the legacy of the architectural vocabulary of Bramante, and therefore also of Lombardy, on a European scale, especially in the Anglo-Germanic area. Contradicting for the first time the traditional Vasarian Florentine-centric approach (Bolzoni and Payne 2018: 20), the appreciacion of Quattrocento red terracotta artefacts seems to have almost surpassed the Florentine bichrome works in *pietra serena*. A notable example is that of Heinrich Ludwig Gruner (1801−1882), who in 1867 published a monograph in London on Lombard terracotta architecture. A few years earlier, he had printed (also in London) a handbook of ornament, in which the early Renaissance was represented exclusively by Lombard models: Santa Maria Incoronata, in Lodi, and Santa Maria delle Grazie, San Maurizio al Monastero Maggiore, Sant'Ambrogio and Palazzo Taverna, all from Milan (Gruner 1850: 51−60, 75−76; Gruner 1867).

Far from the Romantic 'dark' Renaissance rediscovered earlier in the century, the newly rising ruling class mirrored itself in the vital mercantile nobility of the 15th century. Some Visconti and Sforza dukes were subjected to a sort of historical

revisionism and transformed from tyrants into positive characters. This was especially notable for Ludovico il Moro.[4] Within such framework, financiers and entrepreneurs (members of the 'new families' of Bagatti Valsecchi, Borghi, Conti, Crespi, Hoepli, Mylius, Ponti, Turati, etc.; see Rebora 1999; Pavoni 2003; Selvafolta 2010: 212), art historians and architects were the agents — more or less consciously — for the rediscovery and dissemination of the motifs of Lombard Renaissance architecture. For example, the Swiss publisher Ulrico Hoepli (1847–1935) commissioned a neo-Sforza house for himself right behind the castle of Milan, and his new abode's loggia was decorated by the Ticinese artist Ernesto Rusca with portraits of famous men and artists active at the court of Ludovico il Moro (Formenti 1896; Selvafolta 2005b; Selvafolta 2010: 212–214; De Palma 2015). The entire house appeared as a great Sforza tale. This illustrated the acquisition of a style corresponding to a history with which a certain society identifies itself. A veritable staging of history, of an image of the past, came to condition taste and collective imagery.

Such 'fictitious' Bramantesque and imaginary neo-Sforza architecture characterised the Milan-Ticino region of the 19th century. Yet no detailed survey exists of this neo-Sforza stylistic development, which transformed and unified the landscape from the metropolis to the shores of the region's lakes (Ceresio, Verbano, and Lario). Two surviving examples are the redbrick 'Filaretian' towers that dot the green Alpine foothills and parks on the lake shores, and the myriad chapels in a Bramantesque 'Pozzobonelli Chapel' style that characterise the cemeteries of this region, including the Sessa Chapel in Varese (discussed below).[5]

Preserve, Destroy, Reinvent

In the ideological prism of post-unification Italy's identity, whose facets were memory, its preservation, and the conception of a new national artistic language, it is possible to observe precise options and shifts of meanings by its main protagonists.

'Rejoining history and theory actually meant making history itself an instrument of theoretical reasoning, by then elected as a design guide' (Tafuri 1986: 173). This project for an 'operative history' was actually full of ambiguity in its didactic aim of inventing a tradition. Sources for a national art were selected between the Lombard Middle Ages and a long-term Renaissance, whose chronological spans were extensible at will and often literally coloured by medieval hues (De Dartein 1865; Boito 1916; Venturi 1902; Zucconi 1997; Guarisco, Bella, Leoni, and Mirandola 2015). While the adoption of the term *Risorgimento* for this architecture was a choice that synthesised national unity and the Renaissance (Selvafolta 2002: 138), in Milan this was declined as a 'Risorgimento of Lombard architecture' of brickwork, in close continuity with the specific Visconti-Sforza language.

However, it was Camillo Boito who extended the ideal chronological span of reference in a Vasarian sense, when he claimed that 'the architectural Renaissance should begin with the blossoming of Giotto … just as in poetry and letters it begins with Dante and Petrarch' (Boito 1893: 22). Thus, at different scales of design, forms deemed as proto-Renaissance, a category that encompasses 15th-century architecture from Venice to Milan and represents for Boito, as well as Pietro Selvatico, an expression of the *genius loci* (Zucconi 2016: 20), were mixed with neo-medieval structures and layouts. Beyond the undeniable *pastiche* they created, such results offered a hypothetical departure from the neoclassical system, by then unreproducible and no longer historically appropriate. Similar attempts walked the thin line of anachronism, their outcome the production of architectural images available at different levels of use and interpretation.

The invention of tradition and memory stands in precarious balance around the pivot of the monument's architectural survey and, inevitably, its preservation. From 1865 onwards, Boito began to theorise an architectural archaeology that was based on survey, comparison, observation, and *in situ* investigations combined with documentary research. This method of analysing artefacts (particularly medieval ones) based on surveys was shared with the extensive studies of Fernand De Dartein and Alfredo D'Andrade (Boito 1916: 95; Zucconi 1997: 111−131; Cunha Ferreira 2016). The intention was to distil, through a 'scientific' procedure, the characters of a 'modernly ancient' national tradition, as Boito's text *Architecture of the Middle Ages in Italy, with an Essay on the Future Style of Italian Architecture* (1880), attests right from its title. However, this future language appears quite vague from its initial statement: 'abundant in words and phrases, free from syntax, imaginative and exact, poetic and scientific, which is suitable for the expression of the most arduous and diverse concepts' (Boito 1916: 83).

In this framework, the panorama after the mid-century is somehow paradoxical. The emerging ruling class contributed to destroying and simultaneously preserving the region's Renaissance past as it promoted demolitions and subdivisions. However, at the same time, they gathered and collected the most precious fragments of these demolished structures in their buildings, finally integrating them into modern architectural works. While entire buildings were destroyed, their erratic pieces were assembled and used as decorative models for the new dwellings' exteriors and/or interiors, in a process that can be seen as paralleling what the Renaissance did with Roman antiquity.[6]

Unlike Florence, where in the 1890s the municipality required the architect Corinto Corinti to systematically survey and document everything scheduled for demolition in the old city centre (Boccia 1985), in Lombardy the task of recording the existing

buildings was left to the sensibility of individual architects and scholars.[7] One of the protagonists of this empirical rescue of memory was certainly Luca Beltrami (1854–1933), who has been studied the most (Paoli 2014 and Di Biase 2016; see also Amedeo Bellini's many studies of this topic; for Beltrami's published writings, see Bertelli 2014). In comparison, the — also very prolific — production of other colleagues of the previous generation, such as the architect Tito Vespasiano Paravicini (1830–1899), has been overshadowed.[8] The graphic material Paravicini produced is extremely valuable, as it allows us to expand our knowledge of both an important period of Lombard architecture between the 14th and 16th centuries and the 19th-century vision of the past.

Paravicini and the Archaeology of Renaissance

> And here I argue, once again expressing the wish that I uselessly threw to the wind already thrice, that no building may be modified, altered or restored without the exact reliefs of its current state having been presented to special commissions in charge of verifying them and deposited in public archives, where scholars may examine them if necessary. In this way, if it is not possible to recover what has disappeared, in the future it will be available for whatever is necessary for those who study the history of art to know the changes and all the modifications that a given monument has undergone, or at least an exact survey of the monument itself, in the event of its destruction. (Paravicini 1877: 585)

Within this briefly outlined framework, the rediscovery of Paravicini's unpublished corpus of drawings preserved in the Biblioteca Ambrosiana in Milan, which is dated between 1865 and 1890, appears crucial. It consists of 1,000 drawings, including sketches, building surveys, and architectural elevations, mainly of Renaissance buildings in Lombardy. The material is collected in 40 large-format albums, 11 small-format sketchbooks, and several boxes with loose sheets (Bellini 2013).

Paravicini has not received much critical attention so far. Amedeo Bellini's fundamental studies on him almost exclusively concern the issue of monument restoration in the 19th century (Bellini 1992; Bellini 1995; Bellini 2000, with a review in Mezzanotte 2001; Jokilehto 2002: 200; Bellini 2013). Daniela Lamberini's work, meanwhile, highlights Paravicini's key role on the Italian scene and in the international context, as well as the modernity of his thought (Lamberini 1998).

A professor of drawing in a Milanese technical institute, Paravicini occupied a position at the sidelines of the Milanese cultural establishment. He was a radical supporter of conservative restoration and a firm follower of Ruskin's theories. In 1881, Paravicini

became a member of William Morris's London-based Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB), and in 1882-1883 was on its board. He was concerned not just with monuments and outstanding works but above all with the original context of the buildings and the urban fabric that was being altered (Bellini 2000).

Given his ideas, Paravicini was often in contrast with the supporters of integrative restoration, of an ideal form of the monument and concentrated on the best-known buildings. Amongst them was Giuseppe Mongeri (1812–1888), the director of the Brera Academy and author of several studies on Milanese Renaissance architecture, who rediscovered Bramantino as an architect (Squizzato 2008). Paravicini and Mongeri were like two sides of the same coin: one studied monuments in the process of demolition, the other reconstructed the graphic activity of Renaissance architects, which would also provide models for the 20th-century avant-garde. Both were engaged on opposing fronts in the planned positivist cultural construction of the Lombard neo-Renaissance, which continued until Malaguzzi Valeri's (1867–1928) editorial enterprise on the court of Ludovico il Moro.[9] Tellingly, those books were supported by Ulrico Hoepli, who had already published Mongeri's and Paravicini's works.

Paravicini was subjected to a veritable *damnatio memoriae*, especially after 1882. In this year the *Times* published his letter to William Morris and other British intellectuals, a plead to support the preservation of the Italian monumental heritage, endangered by destructions and restorations which he did not hesitate to describe as vandalism (Morris 1987: II, 107–109, doc. no. 791). In Italy, this appeal was perceived as unpatriotic and offensive; it cost Paravicini his reputation and his participation in the Milanese cultural elite, following a trial of sorts (Bellini 2000: 58–61).

The issue of monument conservation was violently divisive. In the background were the arguments between historians and architects, conservators and restorers. Despite extensive dissertations and statements, between stylistic classifications and positivist mentality, practically anyone who crossed the line from theory and practice in those years was bound to contradict what he had previously argued.[10]

On the crucial issue of restoration, Paravicini's radicalism was absolute: 'A badly restored monument is a misrepresented monument, a falsified document ... If the preservation of monuments is the cornerstone of history, a well-intentioned restoration is its vivification', he wrote, to the extent of intending restoration as an action to destroy the authenticity of the work of art (Paravicini 1880: 73).[11] He thus presented conservation as the only feasible option 'without the smallest addition, without any renewal', 'respecting all the imprints of time' (Paravicini 1883: 74).[12]

Paravicini's strictness did not spare even the most distinguished members of the Academy, including Boito:

> The monuments that suffered the most alterations, which had the most capricious, most damaging results, were those entrusted to the care of the Royal Commissions for the Conservation of Monuments, the Professors of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts of the University and the Polytechnic, for which reason any observation, any protest could not be followed up, since these people, by virtue of their very social position, were considered the only ones competent and infallible in the matter ... The Cavalier Architect Camillo Boito, professor of Architecture at the Academy of Fine Arts, commissioned by the Municipality of Milan to liberate the old Porta Ticinese from the hovels that partially hid it, took the opportunity to knock down the old medieval towers that were part of it, flanking it externally, and rebuilding them a few meters farther back, pretending to be ruined. He also added a battlement to the gate itself, which does not even have the reason of an ancient trace, which did not prevent him from being appointed Municipal Councillor of Milan, Member of the Royal Commission for the Conservation of Monuments of the Province of Milan and Member of the Superior Council of Art in Rome.

He goes on to decry the proposal of another member of the Academy, in a passage that enlightens his ties to the international conservation circles:

> The sides of the ancient Basilica of Sant'Ambrogio in Milan had been destroyed since the end of the fourteenth century in order to open chapels, and a century later Bramante of Urbino attached a magnificent portico to those on the northern side. Cavalier Bisi, Professor of Perspective at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts and current president of the Academy, wanted to destroy Bramante's work in order to create a flank in the original style of the Basilica, and this could only be prevented by involving the architect Aymar Verdier of Paris in my protest. (Paravicini 1881b in Bellini 2000: 199–200)

The mention in this quote of the French architect and restorer Aymar Verdier (1819–1880), a pupil of Henri Labrouste, highlights his peculiar position, as does his relationship with William Morris and the SPAB. While the Milanese *intelligentsia* left him in the background, the international scene considered Paravicini a creditable reference for Lombard buildings.

In regards to an assessment of contemporary architecture, Paravicini praised those buildings that combined a neo-Sforza syntax with modern comforts, in terms of

distribution and technical systems, such as the Ponti, formerly Taverna, house: 'The rest of the façade is the praiseworthy work of the architect Baj, and it is surprising that he succeeded so well in imitating Bramante's style in 1841, when Vignola was still reigning supreme' (Paravicini 1885: 365).[13] He also praised the Bagatti Valsecchi house that displays 15th- and 16th-century pieces: 'sculptures, friezes and capitals, all varied, modern works, but so well airing the antique as to trick even the most practical antiquarians' (Paravicini 1885: 355–361; Brioschi 1895; Moretti 1896). He combines this observation with a progressive perspective that urgently calls for the 'health and safety requirements demanded by modern construction' for current civil dwellings (Paravicini 1885: 368).

As a designer, Paravicini rarely used the architectural language derived from his studies of the Lombard Renaissance, choosing instead from different styles according to circumstances, like a dress worn for an occasion. He tried his hand at the most disparate historicist languages, from neo-Egyptian to neo-Greek, neo-Arabic and neo-Pompeian, without demonstrating any great skill or thought (projects in BAMi, III.St.E.XIV, album 2 and Mss. F 276 inf, R 262 inf; and in the construction of the Pelanda Tomb at the Cimitero Monumentale, 1872; and Casa Viganò in Besana Brianza, 1877–1878, see Bellini 2000: 99–128).[14] It may be that the embarrassment produced by a lexicon reduced to an occasional option was plastically reflected in his own projects, which are objectively uninteresting. Such circumstances show how an operation of 'ideological revival aimed at bridging the gap between civil commitment and cultural action' (Tafuri 1986: 172) in many cases ends up leaving on the ground architecture's *disiecta membra.*

Between the 1860s and 1880s, Paravicini combined his professional design work with an intense and detailed survey of late medieval and Renaissance buildings in Lombardy.[15] It should be pointed out that his graphic production stands out in the panorama of the currently known 19th-century drawings for the geographic area examined. These drawings reveal a great precision, particularly noticeable in the sketchbooks where Paravicini recorded the measurements of each architectural and decorative detail. The study of each building was therefore conducted with a scientific and scholarly spirit. Paravicini further enriched the scope of his work by integrating this kind of survey with archival research, conducted either in person or with the help of other scholars, such as Pietro Ghinzoni (1828–1895; Bellini 2000: 18). To this extent, Paravicini appeared to share the approach advocated by Boito, Beltrami, and Mongeri.

Paravicini's surveying activity was closely linked to a concern for scientific knowledge and, at the same time, to a didactic purpose. In 1874 he founded and directed a journal, the *Albo dell'architetto*, with the aim to publish surveys of monuments that

would serve as a 'study and model in terms of the archaeological and artistic heritage … for the current development of building art … but even more so for restoration … which requires a thorough and complete knowledge of the characteristics of this or that building; of each architect's own approach; of the special type of the period, of the country, etc.' (Paravicini 1874: 3; Bellini 1992: 897).

However, very few of Paravicini's drawings were published, just about a hundred among a thousand or more produced. Those published were mainly related to the architect's projects and to the most famous monuments of Lombardy — the Chiaravalle Abbey, the Certosa of Pavia, the church of Santa Maria presso San Satiro in Milan, etc. This graphic material was rarely used to testify to the form and structure of the Renaissance buildings that Paravicini surveyed (cf. some drawings of a building demolished in the late 19th century in Via Torino, published in Barbara 1986: 205−207, n. 1.2; Patetta 1987: 305−307).

In 1878, a selection of his drawings were engraved and published in the trilingual volume (in French, Italian, and German) on the Lombard Renaissance, which Paravicini published in Dresden under the meaningful title *Die Renaissance-Architektur der Lombardei/L'architecture de la Renaissance en Lombardie* (Paravicini 1878). Significantly, the Italian title became *L'architettura del Risorgimento in Lombardia*, a strong mark of the semantic ambivalence of the terms Renaissance and Risorgimento. If the engravings are better known, generally, Paravicini's surveys of buildings did not enter into the discussion of the Renaissance or even the debate on the formation of contemporary taste.

This graphic and documentary study, mostly focused on Lombardy, enabled Paravicini to draw up a catalogue of buildings and a linguistic repertoire to be transmitted to his contemporaries. But that is not all: by identifying the historical roots of this cultural heritage in the Visconti-Sforza period, he configured an alternative legacy to that of Vasari. The third volume of *Le arti del disegno in Italia: Storia e critica*, which the eminent Pietro Selvatico (1803−1880) entrusted to Paravicini, after writing the first two volumes himself, focused in a heavily unbalanced manner on Lombardy and Veneto (Selvatico 1877; 1879; Auf der Heyde, Visentin, and Castellani 2016; Zucconi 2016). In 1879 Paravicini opened his book with a real statement of intent, reiterating the equivalence between Rinascimento and Risorgimento:

the most splendid epoch of Italian art, such as that of the Risorgimento, to which I have assiduously turned my studies and research for over twenty years, and finding myself the holder of quite a few unpublished documents and reliefs of monuments

that time, and even more so the neglect and malice of men, have destroyed or com-
pletely disfigured, I did not want to neglect such a propitious occasion to make them
public. (Paravicini 1879: 1)

In this ambitious volume, Paravicini combines historical and archival data with an
analysis of the buildings with respect to the substance of their construction (structure
and material) and linguistics, as well as his own graphical contribution of surveys,
perspectives, and orthogonal projection tables. The publishing project, which Selvatico
had planned, was of the highest quality and a pioneering venture compared to the
publications that Francesco Malaguzzi Valeri would later prepare for Lombardy and
Pietro Paoletti for Venice (Ferretti 2016).

One crucial issue on Paravicini remains still completely unexplored. In addition to
major Lombard buildings — which he surveyed in order to record their appearance
before inappropriate restoration works distorted their original image — he dealt in
detail with buildings that are difficult to identify. He carefully studied the so-called
minor architecture, mostly civil buildings, recording both their decorative details
(capitals, entablatures, clipei, coats of arms, etc.) and showing how these buildings
were originally integrated into an urban fabric that was later disintegrated and made
unrecognisable. Almost no bibliography addresses any of these still unidentified
structures, and only archival research can fill this gap. Paravicini's drawings are a
valuable new source for architectural historians who look for an alignment between
buildings and documents, as new archival documents sometimes refer to buildings
that have disappeared or, conversely, because existing buildings are not recorded by an
adequate documentation.

Paravicini and the Renaissance Painted Façades in Milan

Compared to studies about other Italian Renaissance capitals, the topic of painted
façades in Sforza's Milan has received little attention. For example, on this subject
highly relevant contributions have been written on Rome or Verona. The Verona case
is perhaps one of the most fascinating and complex, due to the illustrated repertory
of painted façades published in 1864 by Pietro Nanin (1808–1889) (Cenni 1983) and
extensively studied by Gunter Schweikhart (1973) more than fifty years ago.

The heritage of memories concerning the presence of frescoed façades in Milan
is more than lacking: unfortunately, most monuments have disappeared, with the
exception of the 'larval' façade of palazzo Fontana Pallavicini that still faces corso
Venezia, whose documents are disassembled. Although Paravicini's drawing activity
of recording painted façades cannot be compared to Nanin's — in part because fewer

examples survived in Milan compared to Verona — his contribution is now not only indispensable for a preliminary mapping of painted façades in Renaissance Milan but also because it testifies to cases that have never been published (Rossetti 2019).

It is also useful to take into account some key problems regarding the presence of painted façades in Milan: (1) recent research shows the extensive presence of painted façades from as early as the 14th century (Novelli 2019); (2) the continuation of the phenomenon into the late 16th century is even less studied. The painting of façades was actually a long-lasting practice that was functional to solving an architectural issue. As the Venetian ambassador to France pointed out in 1549, the Milanese palaces had 'a very ugly form without any architectural point' (*Descrizione* 1862: 69). Many buildings, even noble ones, were the result of irregular arrangements, often only regularised by their painted façades. Milan was a city of brickwork, and its distance from marble quarries drove it towards more economical solutions, such as the creation of spectacular façades painted with alternating fake marble facings and scenes, the like of which Vitruvius and Pliny also observed in ancient Rome.

Most celebrated in this context — also through contemporary poems — were the interventions of Ludovico il Moro in 1493 and 1494. The Duke Sforza planned to reform all the main streets of Milan by aligning the buildings' eaves and providing painted facings on their fronts. In an indispensable relationship between painted architecture and ephemeral decoration, the reform project was completed for the sumptuous festivities of the marriage of Bianca Maria Sforza, the Duke's niece, to Maximilian of Habsburg in 1493.

Paravicini made accurate drawings of at least five painted façades in Milan: the above-mentioned palazzo Fontana Silvestri **(Figure 1)**; a façade in Via Cappuccio; the front of a building in Via San Giovanni sul Muro; the decorations on the façade of palazzo Landriani in Borgonuovo, and the frescoed scenes on one side of Piazza del Duomo. Paravicini's drawings of the two buildings in Via Cappuccio and Via San Giovanni sul Muro attest to two somewhat opposite types of painted façades. The former is an illusionistic system of fake statues alternating with openings, while the latter is a painted architectural framework and no figures (Rossetti 2019).

The watercolour plates in Paravicini's albums are accompanied by a series of extremely detailed sketches in squared-paper sketchbooks. These types of drawings have been of great help in identifying the two lost buildings, which were not recorded in city guides, and in reconstructing part of their original configuration. For each of them, it is even possible to hypothesize about their client, identifying the context of patronage within which these lost works could be placed.
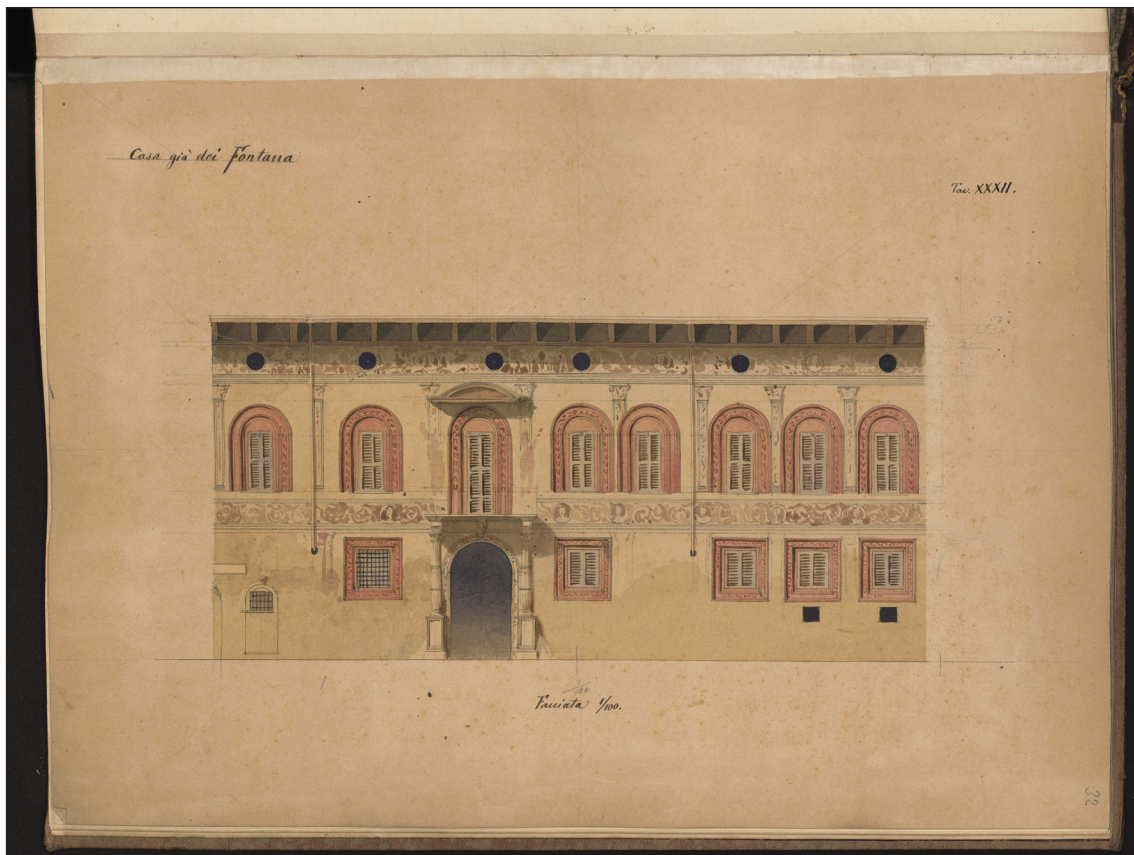
Figure 1: Tito Vespasiano Paravicini, *Fontana Silvestri Palace*, Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, III. St.E.XIV, album 32, plate XXXII. © Veneranda Biblioteca Ambrosiana.

Paravicini's drawings also contribute to our understanding of a frescoed façade that was much celebrated by sources but whose layout was completely unknown: the façade of the so-called Rebecchino block in Piazza del Duomo (BAMi, III.St.E.XIV, album 32, plate XVIII; S.P.II.217, sketchbook 8, cc. 31–32) (**Figures 2** and **3**).[16] As already mentioned, no mid-16th century painted façades have survived, which explains the lack of studies on the subject. Written sources, however, attest to many frescoed façades in Milan, for example those representing ancient emperors, portraits of Charles V, and modern generals painted by Cremonese Antonio Campi (1524–1587) or those by the less famous Brescian painter Giuseppe Galberio (Torre 1674: 59; Leydi 1999: 197–199; Sacchi 2016: 20n28). Milanese façades from the 16th century may also have fascinated Veronese patrons and artists, who sometimes imitated them, as displayed by the project for an ephemeral apparatus that scholars have attributed to the circle of Giovanni Francesco and Giovanni Caroto, which showed peculiar Latin mottos that also appeared on a Milanese façade by 1592 (Marcorin 2020: 157–158).
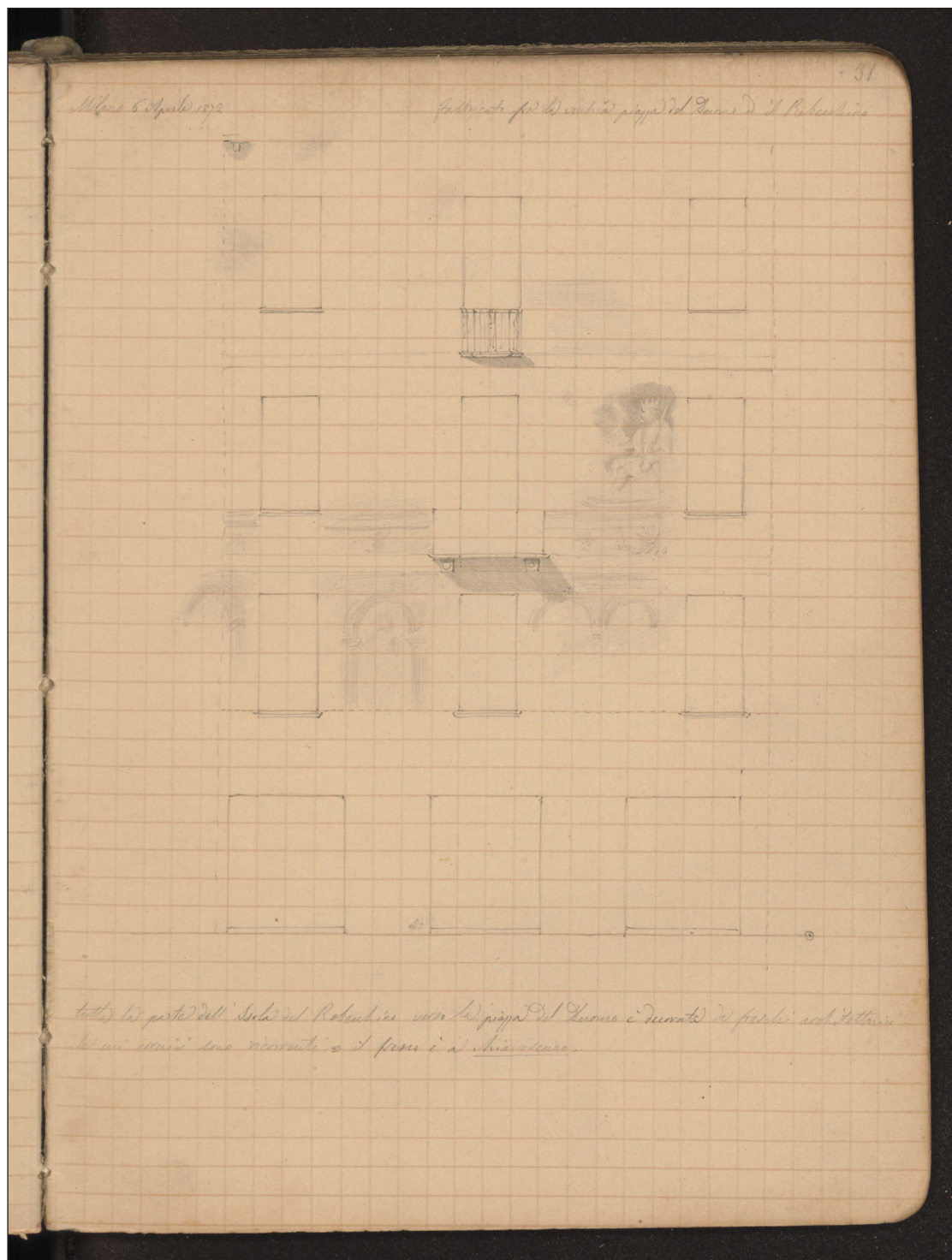
Figure 2: Tito Vespasiano Paravicini, *Façade in the Rebecchino block in Piazza Duomo*, Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, S.P.II 217, sketchbook 8, f. 31r, 6 April 1872. © Veneranda Biblioteca Ambrosiana.
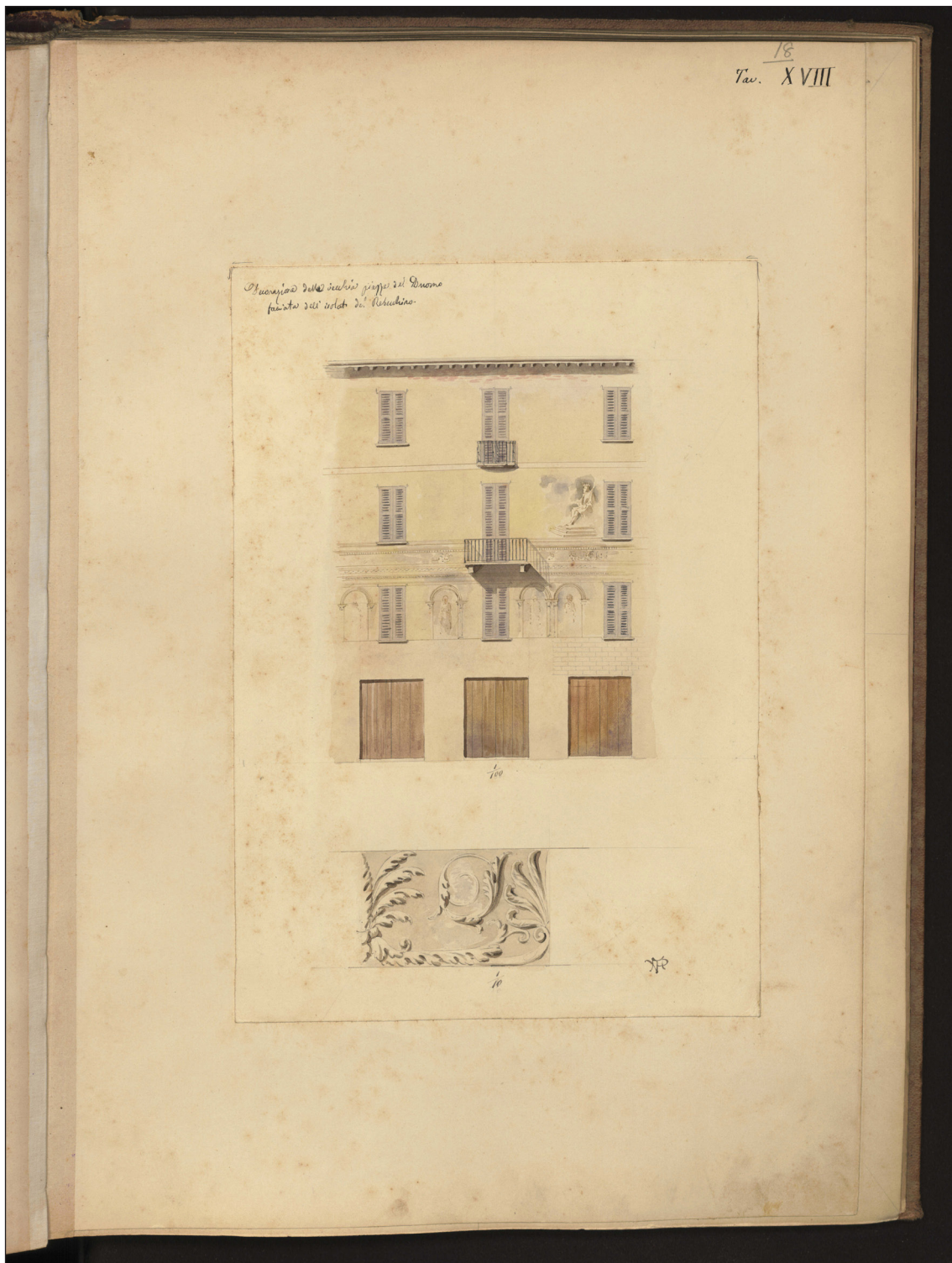
Figure 3: Tito Vespasiano Paravicini, *Façade in the Rebecchino block in Piazza Duomo*, Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, III.St.E.XIV, album 32, plate XVIII. © Veneranda Biblioteca Ambrosiana.

Paravicini's drawing of the front of the Rebecchino block in Piazza del Duomo brings together sources and images for the first time in this context. One of the earliest scholars to mention frescoes in the area was Carlo Torre, who in 1674 correctly associated them with the visit of Philip II in 1548 (Torre 1674: 361–362), emphasising the presence of battle scenes and architecture in monochrome ('chiaroscuro'). On the contrary, later sources up to Giovanni Battista Cavalcaselle erroneously or doubtfully attributed the paintings to Bramantino (Crowe and Cavalcaselle 1871: vol. 2, 32n2). Paravicini's drawings confirm and even explicitly highlight the presence of monochrome frescoes.

Moreover, the configuration of the four-storey building, with its central balconies, allows us to identify the depicted house as the one located in Piazza Duomo, at the entrance to Via Torino, placed exactly where was the portico of the former cathedral of Santa Tecla until its demolition in 1548. The area was fundamental in the project for the re-development of Piazza Duomo by Ferrante Gonzaga and his architect Domenico Giunti, carried out between 1548 and 1551 **(Figures 4** and **5)**. The location of these frescoes was also crucial, because it establishes a connection to the last ephemeral triumphal arch prepared for the entrance of the Infante Filippo (on the entrance of the Infante, see Leydi 1999: 137–184).

The intertwining of ephemeral architecture and *architectura picta* was therefore central at this point. For these paintings, whose appearance was unknown until now, payment orders to Domenico Giunti in 1551 have already been identified (Soldini 2007: 261–271, esp 270n123). Paravicini's drawing therefore provides a very significant insight into how Giunti organised the façades on the southern side of the square. A painted *opus isodomum* on the ground floor façade, which stressed the system of workshops, was overlaid by a first storey adorned with niches that likely contained allegorical figures. A large serial frieze was repeated, according to Paravicini's markings, over the entire elevation of that side of the square. Above this frieze, a number of scenes were painted in a free-form field. In the drawing one can recognise only a king sitting on his throne ready to be paid homage, which was probably the conclusion of a lost scene *all'antica*.

The names of the artists employed by Giunti for this task are still unknown. As often happens, given the short time available and the large area to be frescoed, more than one painter may have been involved. It is difficult to understand whether this decorative campaign can be linked to the youthful activity of Aurelio Luini — who in 1548 would have been only eighteen years old — on the basis of a poetic comment alluding to frescoes with themes matching those of the entrance to the Infante and placed in an area close to the Duomo (Lomazzo 1587: 105).[17]
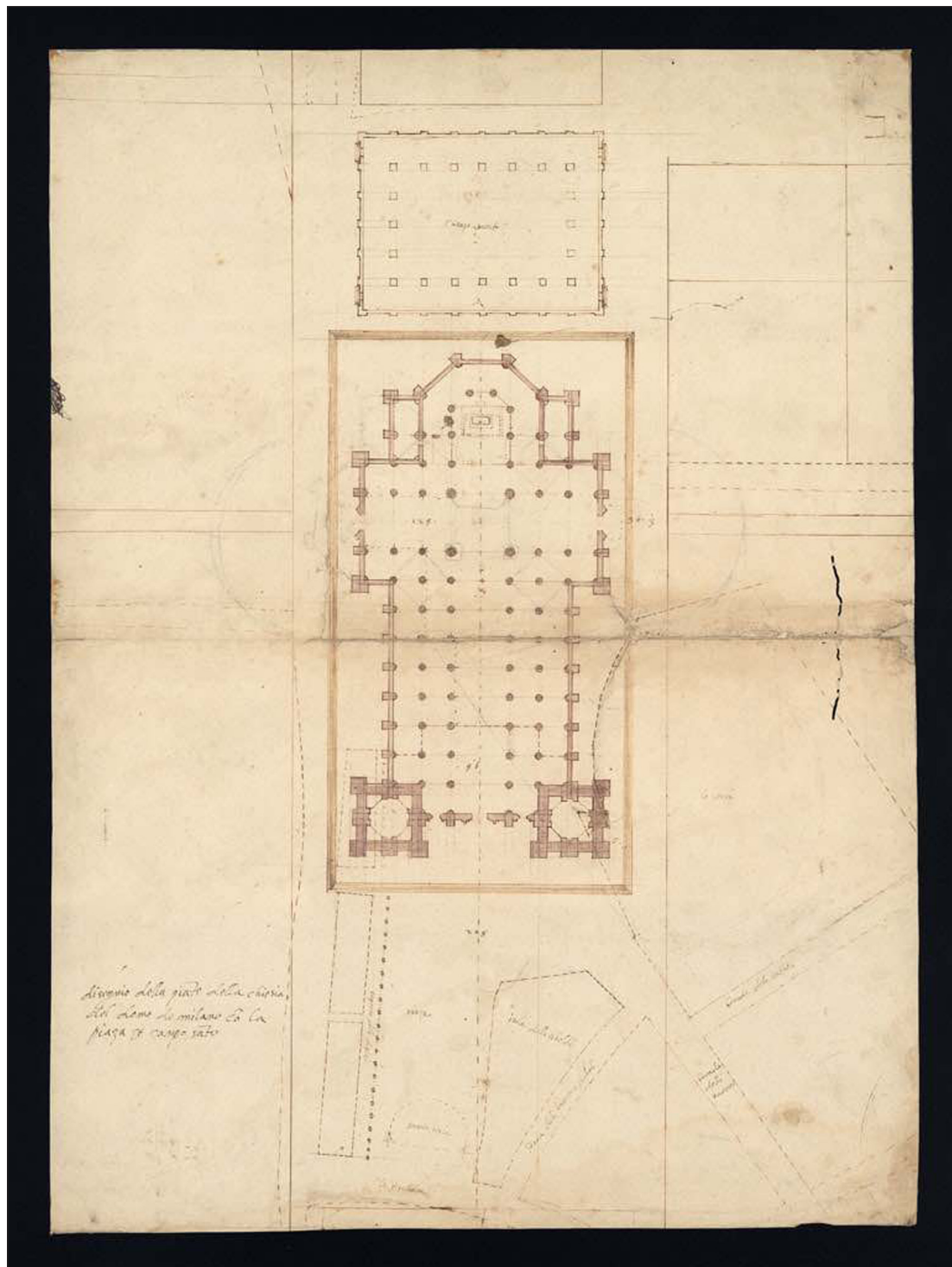
Figure 4: Vincenzo Seregni, *Piazza Duomo* (*Disegnio della pianta della chiesa del domo di Milano con la piaza et Campo santo*), Milan, Archivio Storico del Comune di Milano (Biblioteca Trivulziana), *Raccolta Bianconi*, II, f. 2r.

Figure 5: Alessandro Duroni, Piazza Duomo, 1859, Milan, Civico Archivio Fotografico — Raccolte Grafiche e Fotografiche del Castello Sforzesco di Milano, inv. FM B 52.

The case study highlighted here demonstrates the great potential of Paravicini's archive: it adds valuable visual information by giving shape to buildings that have only been textually documented so far. Studying the drawings also confirms the importance for Renaissance researchers today to carefully examine material produced in the 19th century as documentary evidence, a time in which a certain revival refocused the attention of scholars, architects, and artists on fifteenth 15th and 16th centuries art.

Paravicini's Reliefs and Plates: between the Study of the Monument and the Creation of a Model

Paravicini included several examples of private and somewhat minor Renaissance buildings. Also for these buildings the architect created a double system of recording information. He prepared both highly detailed surveys, provided with all the measurements of every architectural element of the entire edifice, as well as watercolour plates in which each architectural detail, columns and capitals in particular, is drawn with elegant accuracy. In addition, to highlight the wide *varietas* of these antique decorative elements — a heterogeneity that cannot be assimilated to the standardization required by contemporary mass production — the plates in some cases are organised similarly to those of the grammar books of ornament from the mid-19th century, which were important references for Paravicini's volume printed in Dresden in 1878.

A notable example is the plates dedicated to Casa Salimbeni in Via Torino in Milan (BAMi, III.St.E.XIV, album 25, plates XX–XXXII; S.P.II.217, sketchbook 5, cc. 1–11; Barbara 1986: 205–207, n. 1.2; Patetta 1987: 305–307) **(Figure 6)**. Here again, Paravicini provided graphic evidence of an aspect of a building with an extremely layered and significant history. He accurately recorded the existence of a loggia that dates to before the 15th century, attempting to read the construction phases of the building, which at some point became a rental house and was used for craft and commercial purposes (BAMi, R 260 inf). Although Paravicini did not understand the building's original function, he recorded what is now the only surviving image of the 14th-century columns of one of Milan's most important municipal buildings, the Credenza di Sant'Ambrogio, which had been incorporated into the 15th-century house (after Casa Salimbeni) (Rossetti 2022). The oldest elements are included, with appropriate notes, in what is a veritable repertory of columns and capitals from the early Lombard Renaissance.

Paravicini also unfolded in three plates all the variants of the Salimbeni house capitals in drawings that seem to have been prepared as a handbook of models for contemporary architects **(Figure 7)**. In his notes he also mentions that candelabras, capitals, and entablatures of a demolished well were placed as ancient remains in the house (Via Rossini 3, Milan) of the master builder Paolo Ortelli, who in 1868 was in charge of the demolition of the building (BAMi, R 252 inf). This was a very common practice in the Milanese building sites of those years; the remains of Renaissance residences were reused as ancient vestiges and inserted into neo-Renaissance contexts. From Paravicini's point of view, Casa Salimbeni thus became a 'minor' exemplary building suitable for understanding not only the image of certain houses of the Milanese middle class in the 15th century and how they incorporated earlier structures but also how much the variety of Renaissance decorative elements influenced 19th-century construction in Lombardy.

In this period, of course, it was not only such 'minor' buildings that became models or were partially reused in contemporary buildings. Great attention was also given to Bramante's authentic architecture, first and foremost the complex of Santa Maria presso San Satiro. The church, always at the forefront of scholars' and intellectuals' interest, was portrayed with its still incomplete façade by Giovanni Migliara (1785–1837) during the early years of the Restoration (Tosi 2009: 77–78). It also appeared in the planned, but never published, volume on Bramante by Prosper Barbot (1798–1878) and Etienne-Jules Thierry (1787–1832), as a milestone of the architect's work (Di Teodoro 2001: 96, fig. 29). Beginning in 1834, the nave of the church, with its faux perspective choir, along with the sacristy and the façade on Via Falcone were also the subject of competitions within the scenography and perspective courses at the Brera Academy (Ricci 1997b).

Figure 6: Tito Vespasiano Paravicini, *Salimbeni house in Via Torino*, Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, III.St.E.XIV, album 25, plate XXII. © Veneranda Biblioteca Ambrosiana.
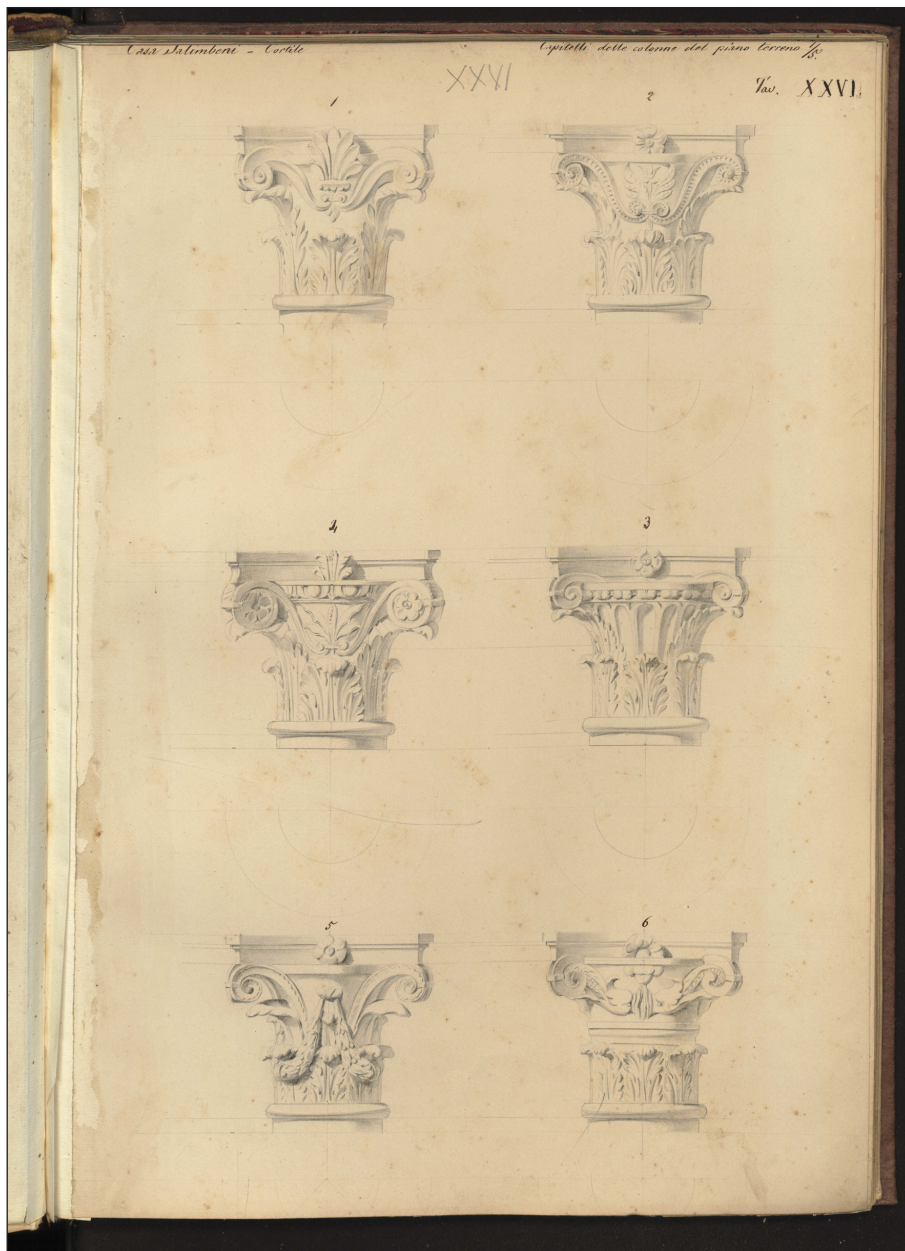
Figure 7: Tito Vespasiano Paravicini, *Capitals from Salimbeni house*, Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, III.St.E.XIV, album 25, plate XXVI. © Veneranda Biblioteca Ambrosiana.

More than to the church's choir, Paravicini devoted a total of twenty plates and as many pages of surveys and sketches, as well as an impressive number of notes, to the sacristy of San Satiro and its decorative and architectural details (BAMi, III.St.E.XIV, album 24, plates XXV–XLIV (sic XILIV); S.P.II.217, sketchbook 2, cc. 1–22) **(Figures 8 and 9)**. In 1870, following the invitation of the French architect Aymar Verdier,

Paravicini commissioned the erudite Pietro Ghinzoni to search documents about the church in the Milanese archives, but he probably also carried out his own research, as demonstrated by his transcriptions and notes (Bellini 2000: 18n29; BAMi, R 249 inf, fasc. 9).

Figure 8: Tito Vespasiano Paravicini, *Santa Maria presso San Satiro, Sacristy*, Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, III.St.E.XIV, album 24, plate XXVII. ©Veneranda Biblioteca Ambrosiana.

Figure 9: Tito Vespasiano Paravicini, *Santa Maria presso San Satiro, Sacristy, second register details*, Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, III.St.E.XIV, album 24, plate XLII. ©Veneranda Biblioteca Ambrosiana.

The architectural structure of the sacristy had already been used as a model in 1850. Following the death of his spouse Maria Isimbardi (1827−1849), Marquis Giovanni Borromeo d'Adda (1808−1859) commissioned the architect Giuseppe Balzaretto (1801−1874) to build a chapel for his villa at Arcore **(Figures 10** and **11)**. A faithful copy of

Bramante's sacristy (Porzio and Tedeschi 1991; Zanchetti 2014), the Borromeo d'Adda Chapel allows us to measure the aesthetic climate in which Bramante's Renaissance language had become, of the many possible choices, as Paravicini himself would write, the one used for 'the official style' of the ruling class in Lombardy, especially those who supported the construction of the new Italian state (Paravicini 1885: 332).[18]

Figure 10: Giuseppe Balzaretto, Borromeo d'Adda Chapel ('cappella Vela'), Arcore, Villa Borromeo d'Adda, Arcore. Photo by Marco Introini, 2022. © Marco Introini.

Figure 11: Giuseppe Balzaretto, Borromeo d'Adda Chapel ('cappella Vela'), Villa Borromeo d'Adda, Arcore. Photo by Marco Introini, 2022. © Marco Introini.

Another important reference that demonstrates the longstanding practice of precisely reproducing renowned Milanese Renaissance buildings is the famous central plan structure in the Lombard architectural landscape: the Cascina Pozzobonelli Chapel (with worksite documents from 1499 to 1507). This religious building was part of a suburban mansion and offered a sort of small-scale reproduction of Bramante's Tribuna of Santa Maria delle Grazie (Fortunato 2016), which became a model for local neo-Renaissance architecture. Both the chapel and the Cascina Pozzobonelli attracted the attention of contemporary scholars of Renaissance architecture, such as Gaetano Moretti (1898: 33–37; 1908: 97–98), Luca Beltrami, and Diego Sant'Ambrogio

(Fumagalli, Sant'Ambrogio, and Beltrami 1891: 33–35). Paravicini made drawings of the entire complex on 12 April 1880, then returned to the site on 18 and 22 May 1884 and on 7 July 1887 (BAMi, S.P.II.217, sketchbook 9, cc. 14–20). Once again, in extremely detailed surveys the architect recorded the proportions of each element of the building, in the process highlighting also the successive stratifications and the transformation of certain portions of rustic buildings and service areas. Paravicini's investigation provides a precise reading of the complex, verifiable thanks to a few original photographs and diametrically opposed to the reconstructive drawings made by the architect Pier Olinto Armanini (1870–1896), published by Camillo Boito and Gaetano Moretti in 1898 after Armanini's death (Boito, Ricciardi, and Moretti 1898) **(Figures 12** and **13)**.
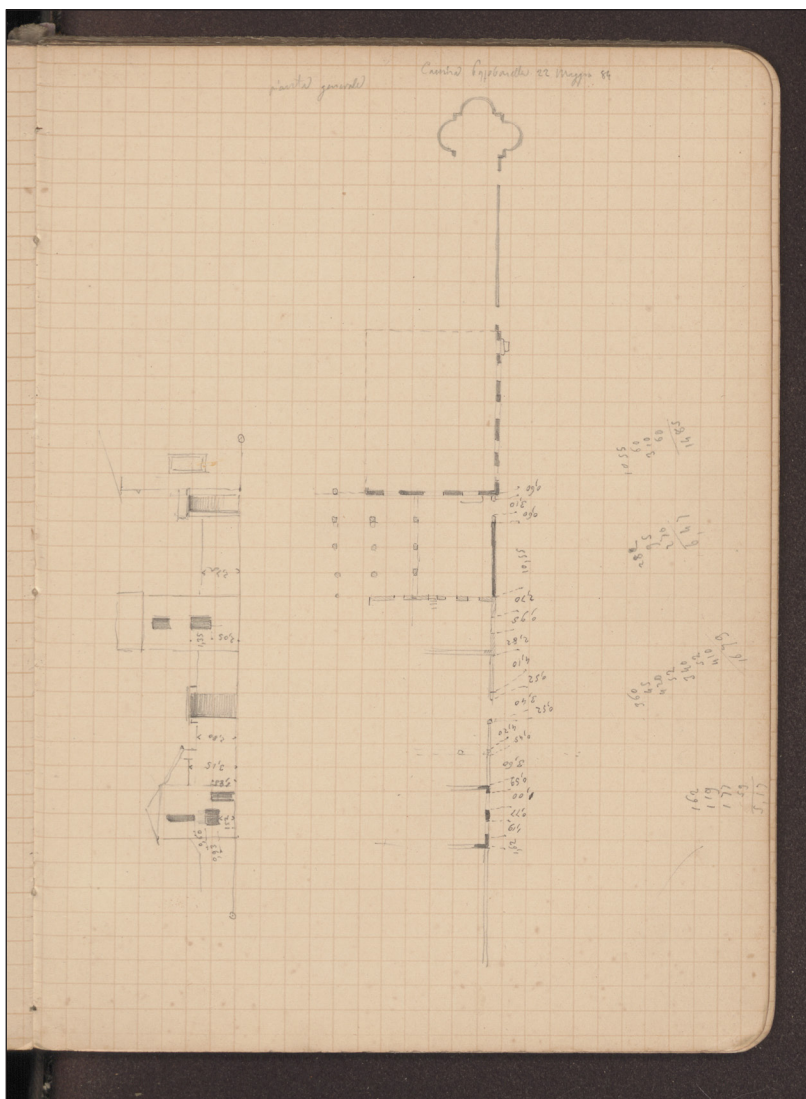

Figure 12: Tito Vespasiano Paravicini, *Cascina Pozzobonelli*, Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, III. St.E.XIV, sketchbook 9, f. 19r. © Veneranda Biblioteca Ambrosiana.

Figure 13: Tito Vespasiano Paravicini, *Pozzobonelli Chapel*, Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, III. St.E.XIV, sketchbook 9, f. 14r. © Veneranda Biblioteca Ambrosiana.

Significantly, in the early years of the 20th century, the Pozzobonelli Chapel was reproduced in the cemetery of Cartabbia (Varese) to house the family tombs of the entrepreneur Ernesto Sessa (1875–1947; Sessa 2011: 179) **(Figures 14** and **15)**. The

design is nearly the same, except for the specular reproduction of the complex and the reduction of the portico perpendicular to the entrance to three bays from the original ten and the four that survive in Milan. The erection of the Sessa Chapel took place well into the 20th century and the building housed the family tombs until relatively recent years. Its creation is relevant as it bears witness to the persistence of a taste, but also to its vulgarisation. While Marquis Borromeo d'Adda and his architect Balzaretto celebrated the deceased marchioness by constructing a refined container for elegant sculptures by Vincenzo and Lorenzo Vela, the Sessa Chapel in Varese is a cheap reproduction — as highlighted by the low quality of the *graffiti* on the vaults — promoted by an emerging family of the Lombard bourgeoisie.

Figure 14: Sessa Chapel, Cartabbia Cemetery, Varese. Photo by Marco Introini, 2022. © Marco Introini.

Figure 15: Ceiling of Sessa Chapel, Cartabbia Cemetery, Varese. Photo by Marco Introini, 2022. © Marco Introini.

Nonetheless, chapels and mansions made of red brick, thus rich in contrasting colours, became in the post-Unitarian years, right up to *Novecento* Milanese architecture, the typical language of a region that identified itself with the warm colours of those buildings defined improperly as Bramantesque and more appropriately conceived as neo-Sforza. So powerful was this ideal connection that the engineer Carlo Emilio Gadda, in his novels written in the 1930s and published in 1944 under the title *L'Adalgisa*, defined the brightness produced by these buildings as the 'light of a Bramantesque afternoon'.

Conclusion

Paravicini can be considered a seismograph of a turning era, with all its contradictions. Because of his immense graphic enterprise, he reminds us of the overwhelmed

protagonist of Thomas Cole's painting, *The Architect's Dream* of 1840 (Toledo Museum of Art, Toledo, USA), who is contemplating all the languages of the history of architecture, and perhaps wondering, like Heinrich Hübsch, 'In welchem Style sollen wir bauen?' (Hübsch 1828).

Paravicini's activity as an architect is not particularly relevant: his realised works are limited to neo-Byzantine, neo-Gothic, or neo-Renaissance tombs, and a neo-Tudor villa, and in his design 'eclecticism goes as far as stylistic incoherence' (Bellini 2023). His commitment to the issue of monument preservation was entirely theoretical. However, such circumstances allowed him to pursue in a radical sense a Boitian approach that not even Boito himself followed. If for many architects, including Boito, Beltrami, Mongeri, the survey was essentially a knowledge tool used to orientate an 'appropriate' rearrangement of a monument and transform a building into a hypothetical 'original image' of presumed authenticity, for Paravicini it provided indications for reconstructing the entire stratification of a building, including its scattered and apparently incoherent parts. This is why he considered not only major monuments but also minor buildings. This type of almost obsessive attention led Paravicini to understand, for example, the relationship between the design of the original floor (which was completely re-done during the restorations without taking into account the previous one) and the quadratures of the Zenalian ceiling in the chapels of the Certosa di Pavia, all issues that Beltrami did not comprehend. Paravicini's care triggered many disagreements with the authorities that were managing the Certosa restoration site, so much so that he was banned from the building (Bellini 2023).

Paravicini's role of 'public censor' undoubtedly marginalised him, but it also increased the importance of his graphic production, which was the only way he could achieve his goal of accurately bearing witness to a past that was either disintegrating or dissipating into fashionable styles through chaotic revivals. His work becomes a testimony rather than a new production. This testimony is more precious than ever for such a complex art-historical panorama as Lombardy's, which was first penalised by Vasari's teleological construction of Italian art history and then by 19th-century campanilism and speculation.

Within this framework, Paravicini emerges as a sort of lighthouse for safeguarding the image of a Renaissance that was glorified but in fact misunderstood and unprotected. It is in this spirit that the works by Carlo Fumagalli, Beltrami, and Sant'Ambrogio can also be set, in a belated attempt to preserve the image of individual monuments and above all a historical landscape still Sforzesque that was being destroyed in the post-unification years.

Paravicini's work is ultimately an eminently graphic one: the survey campaign is his historical project and for this reason it becomes a useful source for architectural historians in reconstructing the state and form of buildings, especially Renaissance ones. This graphic project was perhaps partially frustrated, especially in the production of the large watercolour albums, by the discovery of the value of photography in reproducing monuments. It is symptomatic that Paravicini also included photographs of Italian monuments in the albums of drawings. In addition, his notes include addresses of Italian photographers with attached lists of the architectural subjects they had photographed. For Paravicini, however, the analytical value of the survey as a document capable of conveying detailed information, such as measurements and notes on materials and stratifications, seems to win in substance and importance.

Well aware of the disappearance of a world that needed to be documented, Paravicini produced an overflowing collection of heterogeneous materials, as if in the face of history one could only survive by preventing oneself from proceeding. This approach reminds us of the Benjaminian angel of History who also seems to be reflected in the Bramantesque head that turns its back to us in the Prevedari print: equally turned to the past, a time period to be studied in order to re-invent the present.

Notes

1. On the relationship between Renaissance architecture and the national neo-Renaissances, see at least Pavoni (1997); Bałus, Krause, and Laudel (2001); Leniaud (2003); Karge (2007); Karge (2008); Karge (2015); Lemerle, Pauwels, and Thomine-Berrada (2010); Damjanović (2013); Harder (2013); Brucculeri and Frommel (2015); and Bolzoni and Payne (2018).

2. The article is traditionally attributed to Carlo Cattaneo but was probably written by Francesco Durelli (D'Amia 1999; 2021: 83; Grisoni 2023). The recovery of the 'Bramantesque' in Milan took place precisely within the framework of the teaching of Durelli as chair of perspective at the Brera Academy (Ricci 1997a: 66–83; 1997b). On Brera's courses and architectural practice, see Ricci (1992); D'Agati (2023).

3. Giuseppe Zanoja, a canon of Sant'Ambrogio and professor at the Brera Academy, in his 1805 academic prolusion, stated that 'in the buildings of Bramanti and those other architects that came after him, we were poised to place ourselves on the same level as our neighbours' ('nelle fabbriche de' Bramanti e di altri posteriori architetti minacciammo di metterci a livello co' nostri vicini') (Zanoja 1805: 30). In 1843, Giulio Ferrario reported that Giuseppe Bossi, the secretary of the Milanese Academy, had wished that 'not only should everything that pertains to the history of Bramante and the various Bramanti be collected, but that the many fine buildings that are worthy of bearing such a beautiful name, of which there are many in Lombardy and especially in Milan, should be drawn and completed' ('si raccolga tutto ciò che spetta alla storia di Bramante e de' vari Bramanti, ma che si disegnino e si pubblichino le molte belle fabbriche che portano degnamente un sì bel nome, delle quali n'ha molte in Lombardia, e specialmente in Milano') (Ferrario 1843: 44, in Ricci 1997a: 67).

4. On the complex historical assessment of Ludovico il Moro during Restoration and his ambiguous revival as a prince patron of great artists, especially in relation to Leonardo da Vinci (as shown by the painting that Giuseppe Diotti presented at the 1823 annual exhibition in Brera), see Pelgrom (2011).

5. In 1851, the Milanese conference organised by the Istituto Lombardo delle Scienze openly promoted the use of terracotta in the building trade. It should be noted that the recovery of terracotta for decoration and cladding was closely linked to a revival of brick production, a particularly flourishing industry in Lombardy (Selvafolta 1990: 34; Selvafolta 2005a: 68–69; Patetta 2018: 325). In this sense, historicism and industry weld their own arguments together.

6. An example of the ambiguity between speculation and conservation is the house in Via San Giovanni sul Muro in Milan, which was carefully studied by Paravicini (Paravicini 1878, plate 1; Paravicini 1887). He made sketches and watercolours shortly after February 1872 (BAMi, S.P.II.217, notebook 8, cc. 8, 9, 10, 12, 15, 16, 27; III.St.E.XIV, vol. 24, plates XX–XIV). Mistakenly known as Casa Grifi, the building was demolished without hesitation in October 1876; the owner, the banker Giovanni Noseda, donated the door to the Museo Patrio di Archeologia and later fitted out the main hall of his nearby house in Santa Maria alla Porta in neo-Bramante style (Rebora 1999: 91). For the door and house, see Rossetti (2013), updated in Rossetti (2019: 61). The author was able to identify the building's patrons — Giovanni Antonio Ferrari and his sons — by looking at the coats of arms that appear in Paravicini's reliefs.

7. No systematic photographic campaigns were organised in Milan, unlike other areas, particular Paris, where in 1865 Baron Haussman instituted the Service des Travaux Historiques, then called for the preparation of a *Histoire générale de Paris* (Impr. Impériale, Paris 1866) and entrusted Charles Marville with photographing the disappearing city (de Thézy 1980). However, in 1889, the establishment in of the *Circolo fotografico Lombardo* (Paoli 2000), animated by Carlo Fumagalli, was followed in 1891 by the volumes *Reminiscenze di Storia ed Arte nel Suburbio e nella città di Milano* (Fumagalli, Sant'Ambrogio, and Beltrami 1891–1892; Cassanelli 2014; Cassanelli 1996). Here, for the first time, Fumagalli's photographs illustrate extensively a Milan that would soon disappear. Significantly, in 1892 the National Photographic Cabinet was established in Rome, while in 1899 in Milan, Boito, Fumagalli, Corrado Ricci, and Gaetano Moretti founded the 'Ricetto fotografico' (see Serena 2011: 247, 258).

8. Around Beltrami, but often working independently or with even conflicting attitudes, other people gathered, such as the prolific Diego Sant'Ambrogio (1845–1920) who in his many articles (at least 400) testified about the existence of buildings that would soon be destroyed (Fumarco 2013). Other architects were Gaetano Moretti (1860–1938) and Gaetano Landriani who produced drawings for Beltrami (see Bella 2009; Canali 2018).

9. It is precisely with Malaguzzi Valeri's books that the figure of Ludovico il Moro is completely rehabilitated and interpreted as the most complete type of Renaissance prince (Moro 2023).

10. Bellini (1990–1992: 900) observes that 'Boito's contradictions resulted in a practice that was often completely indistinguishable in outcome from that of stylistic restorers, as it would be for all followers of philologism'. Boito intended to pre-

serve the diachronic sense of a monument, since it 'loses, I repeat, all or almost all of its importance when the scholar can reasonably doubt that the restoration has altered, more or less, the forms, or has added those that seem original, which is another way of altering the antique' ('perde, ripeto, tutta o quasi la sua importanza quando lo studioso può ragionevolmente dubitare che il restauro ne abbia alterate, più o meno, le forme, o n'abbia aggiunto di quelle le quali sembrano originali, che è poi un altro modo di alterare l'antico'). He therefore recommended that they should 'keep the monument standing, assuring it a long life with the reinforcements that science and practice suggest. Every other work becomes a forgery in a public monument' ('tenere il monumento in piedi, assicurandogli una lunga vita con i rincalzi, che la scienza e la pratica suggeriscono. Ogni altra opera diventa un falso in monumento pubblico') (Boito 1893: 7, 11). In the same paper, however, he cites some sections of the document he signed in 1884 at the 3rd Congress of Italian Engineers and Architects, in which he recommended that 'architectural monuments, when the need to repair them is incontrovertibly demonstrated, should rather be consolidated than repaired, rather repaired than restored, avoiding additions and renovations in them with every study. … Those additions or alterations that have been introduced at various times to the original building will be considered as monuments and treated as such, except in the case in which, having a manifestly lesser artistic and historical importance than the building itself and at the same time distorting or masking some notable parts of it, it is advisable to remove or destroy them' ('i monumenti architettonici, quando sia dimostrata incontrastabilmente la necessità di porvi mano, devono piuttosto venire consolidati che riparati, piuttosto riparati che restaurati, evitando in essi con ogni studio le aggiunte e le rinnovazioni. … Saranno considerate per monumenti e trattate come tali quelle aggiunte o modificazioni, che in diversi tempi sono state introdotte nell'edificio primitivo salvo il caso in cui, avendo un'importanza artistica e storica manifestamente minore dell'edificio stesso e nel medesimo tempo svisando o mascherando alcune parti notevoli di esso, sia da consigliarne la remozione o la distruzione') (Boito 1893: 28–30). It is evident that the last passage can be used to legitimise the neo-medievalisation of a series of ecclesiastical buildings, such as San Pietro in Gessate, Santa Maria del Carmine, San Marco, San Babila, San Vincenzo in Prato, Sant'Eustorgio, and San Simpliciano, whose elevations Ferdinando Reggiori published before and after restoration (Reggiori 1947: 242–260; Zucconi 1997: 234). Luca Beltrami's intervention at Castello Sforzesco was still paradoxically placed within this framework. Faced with the 1884 urban development plan that called the structure into question, Mongeri and Beltrami proceeded with documentary studies on the basis of which Beltrami planned a 'reduction to its original state' of the building, transforming it into a total work of art (Mongeri 1884; Beltrami 1885; Bellini 2014: 33–37). However, Mongeri stated a few years earlier that 'among the most serious and terrible dangers one runs into dealing with restoration is that, as a result of it, the modern operator substitutes, even unconsciously, the feeling of his own personality for that with which the object was originally marked. … One of the most opportune pieces of advice may be to conserve a ruin, however it may be, rather than to draw a line of pen over it … In such cases the ruin, suitably supported, is worth more than a second life, since metempsychosis is impossible' ('fra i pericoli più gravi e terribili cui si corre incontro col restauro, vi ha quello che, per effetto di esso, l'operatore moderno sostituisce, anche inconsciamente, il sentimento della personalità propria a quello onde l'oggetto, in origine fu improntato. … Vi può essere fra i consigli più opportuni anche quello di conservare, comunque sia, una rovina, che menare sopra di essa un tratto di penna … in casi siffatti la rovina, opportunamente sorretta, val meglio di una seconda vita, poiché metempsicosi torna impossibile') (Mongeri 1878: 110, 265). On Beltrami's project for the new 'invented' façade for Palazzo Marino towards Piazza della Scala, see Bellini (2014: 32–33).

[11] 'Un monumento male restaurato è un monumento svisato, è un documento falsato […]. Se la conservazione dei monumenti è il cardine della Storia, un ben inteso restauro ne è la vivificazione'; see also Paravicini 1881a.

[12] 'L'ideale di un restauro archeologico è di conservare tutte le parti del monumento senza la benché minima aggiunta, senza alcuna rinnovazione; è di rispettare l'antico come attraverso i secoli e con tutte le impronte del tempo, senza contraffazioni, senza adulterazioni … senza alcuna idea di ridonare l'antico splendore o di completare il monumento'. In a manuscript titled *Morituri te salutant* (Bellini 2000: 161–171), Paravicini concluded: 'I am firmly convinced that when a monument or any building of historical, artistic or archaeological importance is in an alarming state of decay, it must be stopped by assiduous, daily care … resisting any desire to touch the building and its ornaments, whatever they may be; if the building has become incompatible with its present use, another must be built rather than enlarge or alter the building) resisting any desire to touch the building and its ornaments, whatever they may be; if the building has become incompatible with the present use, another one should be built rather than enlarging or altering the old one; in short, ancient monuments should be considered as remnants of past art, created by past customs, in which modern art in any guise cannot intrude without destroying or damaging them. It is because of all these considerations that I have collected these archaeological notes on some monuments in Lombardy that because of their current state of decay, and the danger to which their characteristic parts are

exposed of being mutilated or replaced, I have placed this motto at the head: morituri te salutant' ('Io sono intimamente convinto che quando un monumento od un edificio qualunque d'importanza storica, artistica od archeologica, trovasi in istato di allarmante deperimento, si debba fermar questo mediante cure assidue, giornaliere ... resistendo a qualunque desiderio di toccar la fabbrica ed i suoi ornamenti qualunque essi siano; se l'edificio è diventato incompatibile all'uso presente, se ne fabbrichi un altro piuttosto che allargare od alterare l'antico; insomma si considerino i monumenti antichi come avanzi dell'arte passata, creati da usanze passate, nei quali l'arte moderna sotto qualunque veste non può intromettersi senza distruggerli o danneggiarli. È per tutte queste considerazioni che ho raccolto queste note archeologiche sopra alcuni monumenti della Lombardia che pel loro stato attuale di deperimento, ed il pericolo cui restano esposte le loro parti caratteristiche di essere mutilate o sostituite le ho posto in testa questo motto: morituri te salutant').

[13] 'Il rimanente della facciata è opera lodevolissima dell'architetto Baj, e fa meraviglia ch'esso sia riuscito così bene nell'imitazione dello stile *Bramantesco* nel 1841, allorché dominava ancora despota il Vignola'. In addition to being mentioned by Gruner as noted above, the building was the object of a programmatic essay by Mongeri (1881). The author praised the restoration of the 16th-century Aliprandi palace by the entrepreneur Andrea Ponti, the wealthiest man in Lombardy. On the original construction site of the palazzo of 1509 to 1511, as well as the original appearance of the façade prior to Baj's intervention, see Giovannelli and Repishti (2020: 185–189, 300 fig. 63; D'Amia 2021: 80–81).

[14] In addition to the projects, the manuscript BAMi R 264 inf is intended as a grammar book with a repertoire mainly from Ancient Greece to Egypt, but with cosmatesque and Giottesque decorations. The particular focus on Egypt is associated with Paravicini's six-month journey in 1871, documented in the travel journal BAMi R 267 inf. From various papers scattered in his archive, it can be deduced that his fascination with Egypt was such that he considered preparing a history of Egyptian art. His only real interest in the contemporary neo-Renaissance seems to be revealed by the presence of photographs of buildings in Vicenza (in the BAMi album, R 265) that were built or renovated in neo-Renaissance style during the 19th century.

[15] Paravicini was also interested in specific mediaeval buildings, especially for matters related to their ongoing restoration (in Milan: Sant'Ambrogio, San Vincenzo in Prato, Porta Ticinese, etc.), but he also revealed a considerable curiosity for the Rococo or Lombard Baroque, especially the balcony gates of Lombard palaces of that period.

[16] Paravicini's drawings show a portion of the painted façade of the northern front of the Rebecchino block (demolished in autumn 1875) overlooking Piazza Duomo. As usual, the architect produced both a survey, with a valuable annotation indicating that 'the whole part of the Rebecchino isle towards Piazza del Duomo is decorated with architectural frescoes whose frames are recurrent, the frescoes are in chiaroscuro' ('tutta la parte dell'isola del Rebecchino verso la piazza del Duomo è decorata da freschi architettonici le cui cornici sono ricorrenti, il fresco è a chiaroscuro' (BAMi, S.P.II.217, sketchbook 8, c. 31), and a coloured illustration. The latter, now plate 18 of volume 32, represents a cut-out drawing that originally came from the volume displayed at the national exhibition in Turin (Torino 1884: 119 number 265). The drawing was originally annotated: 'decoration of the ancient Piazza del Duomo the frescoes took up the whole side formed by the block of Rebecchino and the small front of this towards the Duomo' ('decorazione dell'antica piazza del Duomo i freschi prendeva tutto il lato formato dall'isolato del Rebecchino e la piccola fronte di questa verso il Duomo') (BAMi, R 260 inf). The architect also mentions the paintings in his *Le arti del disegno in Italia. L'evo moderno*, presenting them as a model for the use of frescoes on façades and fronts (Paravicini 1879: 148).

[17] 'Diverse altre opere prima egli dipinse; / ma lodata sia sempre infrà le prime / quella vicina al Duomo, ove li dei / e gl'Augusti con l'armi intorno finse, / con tai riflessi et d'intorni si bei / che non trova l'invidia ove gli lime'.

[18] It is noteworthy that years later, Paravicini was in contact with the family, as he taught drawing to Febo Borromeo d'Adda, a nephew of the patron of the Arcore Chapel (BAMi, R 250 inf, 21 July 1891).

Author's Note

Competing Interests

The authors have no competing interests to declare.

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