

LEARNING FROM LOUIS KAHN'S SALK INSTITUTE PRESERVATION PROGRAM? SPUNTI PER LA CONSERVAZIONE DELLE SUPERFICI LIGNEE DEL XX SECOLO

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ABSTRACT

The use of wood in 20th-century architecture represents an aspect of the dialog that the Modern Movement established with the past. Widespread material in the traditional construction site, in 1900s wood elements had ample opportunities of experimentation, frequently combined with other overtly modern materials such as reinforced concrete or metallurgical products.

With the aim of providing starting points and suggestions dedicated to the outcomes, to the critical issues and to the evolution of the approach concerning the conservation of contemporary wooden surfaces, the paper means to investigate the field in light of recent experiences carried out on authorial architectures. The problems of conservation of wooden surfaces, intrinsically connected to the buildings for which they were conceived and, at the same time, undermined by the environment aggressiveness in which they are inserted, allow to recognize traces of progressive changes in the approach both to the knowledge and the conservation of these elements.

The study considers a chronological segment that includes architectures built between the mid-thirties and the mid-sixties of the 20th-century: from the experiences carried out for the restoration of wooden elements of the Viipuri Library by Alvar Aalto (1930-35), to the intervention dedicated to the *block-bau* of the station of the Lago Nero by Carlo Mollino in Sauze d'Oulx (1946-47), to the conservation program of the teak window wall assemblies in the Salk Institute for Biological Studies by Louis I. Kahn (1959-1965).

What changes is the gaze to the original drawings, the role recognized to them during the restoration works: when the sources are not translated into the design, but their contents become part of the designer's hermeneutical path, time seems to acquire its order.

Key-words: *conservation, wooden surfaces, Carlo Mollino, Alvar Aalto, Louis Kahn*