

IL MOORISH KIOSK NEI GIARDINI BOTANICI HANBURY: L'ANIMA CELATA

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Abstract.

The proposed project concerns the conservative restoration of Moorish Kiosk, a garden furniture of exotic design later used as a tomb by Thomas Hanbury (1832-1907) and his wife Katherine (1843-1920), located inside the Hanbury botanical gardens, the largest acclimatization park for exotic plants in Italy.

The Moorish Kiosk, which is stylistically unitary despite the heterogeneity of his materials, is structurally constituted by a metal armor, not visible, in iron profiles which from the foundations end up inside the summit dome forming a frame; the vertical parts that cover the supporting structure are entirely made of brick modular elements, decorated with geometric and phytomorphic patterns. The state of conservation of the artefact appears somewhat compromised and shows degradation phenomena similar to those already found in 1990, when the last restoration was carried out.

The campaign of non-destructive diagnostic investigations conducted in situ allowed to determine some of the characteristics of the internal structure of the Kiosk, through a series of videoendoscopic, ultrasonic, pacometric and thermographic investigations; the results of the analysis have revealed extensive phenomena of carbonation and corrosion of the internal iron bearing structure, amplified by the rainwater infiltrations which penetrates through the discontinuities of the material, provoking new ones and continuously feeding the corrosion reaction.

The project, currently in the final phase, has long questioned the objectives to be achieved, having to balance the conservative needs of the building, extremely fragile but equally significant from the testimonial point of view, with the need to verify its overall resistance, even compared to possible earthquakes, to assess the state of safety and "usability" to the public who comes in large quantities to visit the Hanbury botanical gardens and to pay tribute to the tomb of their creator.

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