Restauring Patinas and Tartars in the Musee Napoleon's Workshop of Sculptures

The Musée Central des Arts, ancestry of the Louvre was founded in 1793 and he was part in the post of all on the demonstration for the presentation of the royal collections. Inside the Louvre the first workshop of sculptors, in the beginning exclusively dedicated to the restorations of the antiquities was established in 1708 when the collection was increasing with artiva from Villavalle and Italian's company. The signature of the treaty of Tolentino had also powerfully accelerated this movement. A sculptor Bernar Lange, will have a central place for the creation of the workshop until his death in 1389. Born in 1749, Bernarde Lange studied in the Académie Royale de Dessin and obtained a gold medal in 1777. Since his success, he decided to move to Italy where his master Frera Lucia, had also studied. After a brief time in Carrea, Lange arrived in Rome in 1778 and had to stay there until 1792, just four months after his arrival, he worked in the workshop of Carlo Albaniz and as a worker paid per day for sculptors of the French Academy before opening his own workshop and gallery. During this years he studied, with Albani who restored the Farnese collection the specific techniques and very lucrative branch of restoration. His forced back to France in 1795 match with the demand of the first restorations and the project of creating a school of restoration and painting in sculpture inside the Louvre. The sculpture department would have been designed by him. The creation of this school was the revaluation of the taste and interogation of the antiquaries and conouisseurs and the desire to import what was considered as specifically Italian and mantener knowledge and technique in France. Even before the 18th century, the general method of restoration had been established: plaster molding of the fragment, sketching in clay, and finally installing a marble or plaster complement. A tradition existed in France but it is not our subject here. During the first years of the institution, the techniques of restoration, especially installation of the tasselli and consolidation of marbles as well as all the tools came from Italy before real changes of technology allowed for an autonomy of practices. The arrival of the works sailed in Italy as a result of the French military campaign was a fantastic victory of time. Because of its threshold mission to be a universal museum requiring exceptional conservation of masterpieces, to repair the scars of vandalisme and time, it was unthinkable to show mutilated works and fragmented or alkeplated sculptures in the Louvre's halls to amass. The creation of a sculpture restoration workshop was necessary for a nation that wanted to be one only to use the arts. The Pol-Chimetroni Museum was undoubtedly the model for the administration of the Central Museum.

CLEANING AND POLISHING

About the state of the surface and polish of the sculpture, a debate is necessary for a nation that wanted to be one only to use the arts. In 1796, the architect Auguste Pajot was in charge of the salle des Antiques in the Louvre and one of the administrators of the museum since 1785 published in La Décadè philosophe a text on the necessity of changing the methods of cleaning sculptures, especially the ones from gardens.

Fire is a long time I have been revolting by the ways in which the statues exhibited in public gardens are cleaned. Before long it will alter and destroy the masterpieces that we must preserve for posterity. At certain times of the year, people climb on our most beautiful statues, rub them with sponges, with pieces of wood, even use water soap (a solution of acid nitric) to shorten their work [...]. If for two thousand years they had cleaned the Apollo, these sublime forms which make the adornment of the universe, would not exist any more. The solution of acid nitric was, at the end of the 18th century, used to clean metals and suppository metals. An as example, the sculpture Cadeaux, to restore; 2 times vases from Germany treated them with an acide de clean to the last bit before paintings a new edition. After 1830, the restorer Togneri had changed the method of cleaning the oxides. The call of Pajot has not been against the method, as an example, always in 1796, the marble worker Scalier cleaned all the sculptures antiques and moderns of the Grand Galerie of the Louvre with a solution of acid nitric; black soap and crushed peas. The use of black soap was constant and at the end of the century, conservators had stopped to apply solutions of chlorhydric acid, as did sculptures of Versailles during the second part of the 18th century. The year after Pajot's publication, in 1797, the sculptor and restorer Claude Dujoux was questioned by a special commission about his techniques of cleaning sculptures when he worked in Versailles and in the Tuileries. When we read their positions and answers, we understand that, according to him, there was no danger for the sculptures were dusts and lichens and the garden and then types of trees was able to be adapted to the types of marbles exposed outside. In his opinion, chemical was better than human hand. In Versailles, the painter Joseph-Duplessis had been appointed supervisor of the maintenance of the figures in the park in the fall of 1794, a position he held until 1803. Exploring the state of the exterior sculptures and wishing to clean them “as they were done in the past, with black soap and some peas.” Duplessis, in order to develop his method, had been in contact with Michel-Joseph Majault (death in 1790), inventor of a process for coloring marble that consisted of heating the stone to incorporate pigments, liquid wax and minerals. Second on his method, Duplessis was obligated by the minister to stop talking about his processes in July 1800. The same year, a commission send the conclusion that all chemical and manual cleaning were reproducible. To protect the sculptures from lichens, the best way was to enter them in the museums. For them destined to stay outside, the protection could be by using a brush, sawdust and some oxygenated hydrochlic acid saturated with potash, easily called Eau de Lev. The protection of the sculptures had might also done by application of a thin slice of liquid wax.

After the departure of Duplessis, an anonym sculpture, friend of Pajot, wrote: “The sandstone is still a plague for the statues, as well as the punice stone. One must especially avoid using it on nudes, unfortunately, this way of cleaning is used in Versailles.”

Before 1803, during the first campaigns of restoration of the ancient marbles in the Louvre, the last remnants of the color of the Etruscan Plate (fig.4) would disappeared, perhaps carried away by a mixture of sulfur and marble powder freely used by the polishes. Another example, the Diana of Versailles (fig.2), the restoration By Lange and Mariano Gossi had “erased some of the remains of color that detached its drapery from the nudes” and the artist Antoine Quatremère de Quincy. This information was given directly from Bernarde Lange, who was in charge of the restoration. Knowing the long-lasting ties between Lange and Quentin, this testimony seems very likely. Bernarde Lange was a neoclassical sculptor and he ever been in good relations with Antoine Quatremère Vinicius. The positions of the curator has not be to forget in the choice of each restoration. The question of the polish of the white marble was really important and, depending the type of stone, the techniques was sometimes complex. By the way, the surface to be polished or the cutting plane was firstunfinished being rubbered with powder chalks and clays. The homogenized and cleaned surface was then passed through lead and seyrate while receiving water. A last passage, in order to make the marble shiny, was done with bone got compound of alum and calcined sheep bones. Visconti transposed from Rome the taste, already established in France by the neoclassical sculptors, of the polishings of the ancient marbles. The gray granite of the Nakh-Tobbed, besides that was used in Rome, was also used in Pestale at the time he was commonly produced in Rome since the 16th of art and Visconti. Similarly, the red granite bastus from the Duch of Duches was ordered for sale in 1806 to be in entirely with the success, as the prophecy basins from the Round Room of the Pol-Chimetroni Museum.

PLASTER, PATINA, STUCCO, BEST AND GILDING:

The sculptor Pierre Cartellier, during his restoration of a presumed ancient torso of Trojan and not identified, worked over the sculptures of the fragment. He explains his works as follows: “I cleaned the whole thing and fined it from the patina that covered it, then the plaster was removed to make it look as much as the ancient marble as possible.” These plaster, workshop techniques, some made from commonen, tea, tobacco, black or white ink.

Shortly after the statue's arrival in 1808, and certainly before its installation in the galleries in 1811, Lange examined the statue Nilos Borghese (fig.5) and drew up a report on the statue. We learn that “several parts have been covered with a facettor tartar or sucrose which even separates and detaches in all places.” Before his exhibition, the statue has been cleaned by the restorers' workshops and that the plaster joints will have been reformed. The description of the Cesare Mattioli (fig.6) just arriving in Paris, reduced the sculpture to a plain sandstone. By the end of the century, it was due to sandblasting and the surface of the marble before creating a patina covering the entire sculpture. As we have seen, the sculptors placed outside were most of the time completed with marbles or, as in Versailles, with glazed lead. Although the term-stucco refers to many compositions, it is generally a lime-based plaster tinted in the wax or ochres, and its use was occasionally composed in the Louvre workshop to complement the sculptures. “Stucco” could also refer to patina or turiere applied to homogenize the appearance of morel. Real recipes were used. Thus “to make statues to a table of Patina and a sculpture identified as Minervs”, fish-goo - composed from deepfish skin, - shark - and bradfish were used while a thick acid patina was completed with lime, egg white, calcined bones pot and red pot in 1804 after the fall of the Empire Visconti, who managed to reconcile promptness and economy of funds, again considered posthumous the execution in marble of several restorations, and was content to have them done in stucco, especially those of the bas-reliefs, since they are monuments that are sheltered from the ravages of the art. These stuccos, patina and turiere, quickly applied in thickness or in whitewash on the marbles, had as function to homogenize the sculptures and to hide the marks of certain restorations. The aesthetics of the works shown in the Louvre were determined by the techniques of smoothing the stucco and polishing the marble.

More rarely, coldplating was also used as a sculpture plastic for its plastic qualities. For example, the nose of the Ic of Versailles. The arm, from the shoulders down, was changed using black-finished plaster as material. A cistern handle was placed in the left hand. Several tuscan or larger fragments were replaced and a patina applied in the workshops of the Louvre: Pierre-Maximilien Delafontaine (1774-1860) or his father was paid 30 francs after 1805 for raccorder du drap de l'auto pour le buste of Annette Pio (fig.7) now came back to Paris. Il Burse of Venice, one of the first ones sized by Thorpe's troopers in 1796, were transported to Paris. Their last place in Paris was in the composition of the chariot overthrowing the Act de Triomph de Carrocel, designed by the architects Perrier and Fontaine and decorated with sculptures whose themes were chosen by Denon. In 1815, they were, according to Fontaine, brutally removed from the Arc de Carrousel and brought back to Italy. They were arrived color of bronze, and left in gold seal an observatory. Thus, the general appearance of the four ancient Hercules would have been modified in Paris, but was it a vigorous cleaning or had they been entirely restored?

In his 1838 critic of the Solon, Théophile Gautier noticed that, following Canova's example, the sculptor Antoine Étas had given a warm tone to his marble of Cains and his race caused by God thanks to an iron oxide stone which gave it an aspect "preferrable to the gaudy and flickering lustre of new marbles which have the appearance, against the light, of immense pieces of sugar cut into facets."

Nucleosilicon was an international movement and the color of a rule in sculpture. The history of restorations is also a history of taste and the antique.