



### **Light and Cultural Goods**

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The architectural environments and the art objects are "visible" thanks to light. It is in fact the correct dosing of light quantity and quality, today at our disposal in artificial form since the invention of the electric light, that allows the completeness of the perceptive process and consequently the "correct knowledge" of the illuminated subject.

From time immemorial this new material configures and exemplifies the relationship between man and the three great arts of drawing: Painting, Sculpture and Architecture, and it represents a fundamental part of the history of the artistic culture. The artistic languages have experienced the endless interpretative possibilities of light, that becomes expression and symbol, central element of the aesthetical production.

So there is an historical point of view of light, together with the scientific and technical one, that is able to locate the specific cultural valences when we think about light that becomes matter as the stone, the bricks, the marble, etc.

The fruition of the cultural goods is the presupposition to face the complex "historical" relationship between light and form in the numerous and heterogeneous art productions. It is possible to consider object of this brief analysis both the external goods (like the buildings and the urbanistic contexts of historical-artistic value) and internal goods such as museums, picture galleries, places of exposure of art works)



The concept that light is a material of planning or creation in general, gives us the possibility to affirm that a wrong use can also modify the relationship between user and work, with light it is possible "to create" an art work, so it is possible to define a communicative and expressive meaning.

This "creation" refers to the architecture, but also to painting and sculpture: to conceive a new building or a sculpture, thinking about the night fruition that could be equal or different to the diurnal one, or about a pictorial work in order to go beyond the "traditional" value of light that is generally represented.

Another very important element is what we can define "planning of service." Service has to be considered, not as something that diminishes the creative and projectual activity, but as the complex relationship among the pre-existing historical-artistic cultural goods of the ages in which there was no electric light.

When we decide to enjoy, to use historical buildings and their urban context at night, we necessarily must avoid to change their natural side, the materials, the geometric construction, the constructive elements that identify their style. Also for what concerns the urbanistic context we should respect the "originality" of what has been built, without modifying the existing relational structure among the buildings.

Therefore it is important to respect the native meaning of the historical-artistic goods, this means to correctly lighten an architectural work, an exposure of painting or sculpture, and

to know the specific meanings and make them "legible" night and day.

Another important aspect refers to the equipments used to produce the light at service of these goods. Unfortunately too often their nocturnal impact is not considered or even eluded, forgetting that the respect of the historical-artistic goods refers also to a serious evaluation of the aesthetical pollution problem.



It is easy to find "forms" that clash with the architecture of the building where they are applied for what concerns dimension and morphology or colour, or objects that "encumber" halls of historical museums forgetting that the same museum, just because historical, is a work of art. To integrate the equipments in the most determinate way seems to be the most suitable solution to this problem; so it is important to find the necessary connections to realize an harmonic integration with the style of the building, a dimensional, morphological, chromatic harmony that allows a proportional, formal and chromatic respect of the pre-existences. Finally it is useful to synthesize some concepts to better focus the treated matter: The light that has to be "created", to valorise and make enjoyable the works of art, is a light of service for the expressive and intrinsic qualities of the works themselves. This application field of light refers to the dialectical-expressive relationship of light and cultural goods (term that refers to the three great disciplines of drawing: painting, sculpture, architecture).



Therefore it is fundamental the work in team, of the lighting designer, of the museum expert, of the person responsible of the museum or the exhibition, of the historian-art critic. They will individualize, even before the technical solution, the fundamental criterions and those of method from which the project will arise. So it is possible to say that they will individualize the "conceptual model" at the base of the technical choices that will follow. The realization of this "model" of intervention has the purpose to define the system of things that has to be visible, that is " what" has to be lightened, with reference to the meaning and also the system of vision, that is how to lighten with reference to the narrative construction. In short with the expression "conceptual model" we indicate the moment of the interpretative choices to correctly lighten the object-subject with a synthesis of the knowledge acquired during the analysis. It is natural that all this happens without forgetting the ties of quality and quantity of light imposed by the regulations in force for the protection and preservation of the works of art.

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