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# THE CIVIC MUSEUM OF BOLOGNA DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR

Anna Tulliach

*A detailed research conducted at the archive of the Archaeological Civic Museum in Bologna, as far as the years 1921-1951 were concerned, revealed important information about the anti-aircraft defence measures adopted by the Department for National Education, the local government and Pericle Ducati, director of the Museum from 1921 to 1944. The first anti-aircraft defence measures were adopted in 1935 with the creation of a list of the most important items of the Museum which needed protection in the event of war. The research conducted in the archive of the Museum revealed that, since 1940, the majority of the items were boxed up and transferred to various anti-aircraft defence sites located in the Bologna district and in the city centre: the shelter of the Civic Museum itself, the Pascoli schools, Villa Aria (close to the city of Marzabotto), Colonia di Casaglia, and the hermitage of Tizzano. Information about some cases of in situ defence measures has been recovered too. Furthermore, the events connected to the two major air raids that damaged the buildings located near the Civic Museum (the city council palace and the Archiginnasio Library) on July 24, 1943 and January 29, 1944, have been taken into examination. Finally, significant data have been collected in relation to the events that affected the Civic Museum after the liberation of Bologna (April 21, 1945), focusing in particular on the main themes of the recovery and the restorations of the objects, and the reopening of the Museum.*

This paper is the result of a detailed research conducted in the archive of the Archaeological Civic Museum of Bologna with regard to the years 1921-1951<sup>1</sup>.

The purpose of the research was to understand how the director Pericle Ducati<sup>2</sup> and the local government dealt with the problem regarding the anti-aircraft defence measures applied to the collections of the Civic Museum during the Second World War.

Thanks to the archive work conducted in the Museum it was possible to retrieve a large amount of data regarding, in particular, the anti-aircraft

defence measures adopted by the town council and the Department for National Education, the shelters selected by Pericle Ducati and the local government for the anti-aircraft defence, and finally the air raids that affected the Civic Museum. Moreover, it was interesting to find out what happened at the Museum after the war; in particular,



Fig. 1. A partial view of the room nr. X of the Civic Museum (Etruscan collection) in a photo dated back to 1947 (Archivio Fotografico Museo Civico Archeologico di Bologna)

<sup>1</sup> The work conducted in the archive of the Archaeological Civic Museum of Bologna with regard to the years 1921-1951 has been the subject of the author's master degree thesis *Il Museo Civico di Bologna sotto la direzione di Pericle Ducati (1921-1944)*, tutored by Prof. Maria Teresa Guaitoli (Dipartimento di Storia Culture Civiltà, Università di Bologna) and by Dr. Anna Dore, Dr. Paola Gioveti, Dr. Laura Minarini (Museo Civico Archeologico di Bologna).

<sup>2</sup> Pericle Ducati directed the Civic Museum of Bologna from 1921 to 1944, year of his death. He suffered an attempt to his life in February 1944 and died in October of the same year. From 1944 to 1947 Giovanni Maioli and Mario Zuffa directed the museum as acting directors (the first one from 1944 to 1945 and the second one from 1945 to 1947). In February 1947 Luciano Laurenzi was elected new director of the Civic Museum of Bologna. For more information regarding Pericle Ducati: Mansuelli 1946; Laurenzi 1961; Cairo 2012.



Fig. 2. A partial view of the room nr. XVI of the Civic Museum of Bologna (sculptures from XV to XVIII century) in a negative of a picture dated back to 1947 (Archivio Fotografico Museo Civico Archeologico di Bologna)

about the objects recovery, the museum reopening and the objects restoration.

Therefore, the outcome research represents an enrichment with regard to the knowledge of the history of museological practises during the Second World War.

#### *1934-1940: anti-aircraft defence measures*

The first decrees regarding the protection of the items with a strong historical and cultural relevance in the event of war were promulgated in as early as 1934, when the fear of the outbreak of a war increased. In fact, on May 5<sup>th</sup> 1934 the government promulgated the *Regio Regolamento per la protezione antiaerea del territorio nazionale e della popolazione civile, costituzione di un Comitato centrale interministeriale*. In particular, it ordered the institution of *Comitato Centrale Interministeriale per la Protezione Antiaerea*, strictly depending from the Department of War and from the civic committees.

This last decree was followed by the foundation of the U.N.P.A. – *Unione Nazionale Protezione Antiaerea* (Royal Decree, August 31<sup>st</sup> 1934). U.N.P.A.'s tasks were: encouraging the construction of the private shelters and organizing the anti-aircraft defence operations with regard to the population.

On December 31<sup>st</sup> 1934 the Minister for National Education, Francesco Ercole, sent out to all the Superintendencies a confidential Circular (nr. 107) regarding the anti-aircraft defence measures

to be adopted for the movable and immovable historical and cultural heritage. Precisely, for the movable properties he requested to make lists of the most significant items from the point of view of their historical and cultural relevance and to specify the location where to transfer them in the event of war. As far immovable properties were concerned, instead, he asked: to make lists of the most important monumental buildings; to signal them with distinguishing markings; to study their peculiar characteristics in order to identify the parts to protect; to write an anti-aircraft defence plan to be applied to them in the event of war. To that, it was often enclosed an accurate photographic documentation in order to be used in case of restoration or reconstruction of building a involved in a destruction<sup>3</sup>.

With regard to the defence measures to be adopted for the historical and cultural heritage in the event of war, it was also published the regulation *Istruzione sulla protezione antiaerea* (Department for War, 1938).

After the Circular sent by the Minister for National Education in December 1934, Pericle Ducati made a list of the most important items of the Civic Museum without defining the shelter, because the local government had not selected it yet (January 19<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> 1935)<sup>4</sup>.

In 1935 the Rector of the University of Bologna, Alessandro Ghigi, appointed Pericle Ducati to represent the University in the commission for the study of an anti-aircraft defence project for the historical and cultural heritage of the Bologna district<sup>5</sup>.

After the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939, the anti-aircraft defence measures dedicated to the historical and cultural heritage increased in number.

Between September and October 1939 Pericle Ducati and the Superintendent of Antiquities made lists of the most important museum's objects, which needed to be packed in boxes and transferred to a safe site in case of an air raid threat<sup>6</sup>. It is necessary to point out that the shelter was still not selected.

<sup>3</sup> For more information regarding the anti-aircraft defense measures: Direzione Generale delle Arti 1942; Bersani, Roncuzzi Roversi Monaco 1995; Ciancabilla 2010; Roncuzzi Roversi Monaco 2010.

<sup>4</sup> ASMCABo (*Archivio Storico del Museo Civico Archeologico di Bologna*), Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 64/Museo Civico, p. 24, 1935.

<sup>5</sup> Cairo 2012: 63 (Alessandro Ghigi's letter to Pericle Ducati, May 18<sup>th</sup> 1935).

<sup>6</sup> ASMCABo, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 62/Museo Civico, 6



Fig. 3. The head of the Athena Lemnia statue (Inv. G 1060 – Museo Civico Archeologico di Bologna) in a photo dated from 1921 (Archivio Storico Musei Civici d'Arte Antica, Bologna, Fondo Malaguzzi Valeri)

The lists made by Ducati and the Superintendent included a large amount of objects of the archaeological, medieval and modern museum's collections. Among the forty-two items considered as the most important of the museum's collection, were mentioned: head of the *Athena Lemnia* statue (fig. 3)<sup>7</sup>; *Civita Alba* terracotta (fig. 4)<sup>8</sup>; *Situla della*

settembre 1939; ASMCABO, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 62/Museo Civico, 11 ottobre 1939.

<sup>7</sup> Inv. G 1060 (*Museo Civico Archeologico di Bologna*). Ducati 1923: 62-63; Morigi Govi, Vitali 1982: 151; Hartswick 1983; Morigi Govi 2009: 136.

<sup>8</sup> Ducati 1923: 82-84. The *Civita Alba* terracotta were later returned to the city of Ancona and they are now on display in the Archaeological National Museum of the Marche region.



Fig. 4. A detail of the Civita Alba terracotta in a photo dated from 1921 (Archivio Storico Musei Civici d'Arte Antica, Bologna, Fondo Malaguzzi Valeri)

*Certosa* (fig. 17)<sup>9</sup>, *Situla Arnoaldi*<sup>10</sup>; Captain Francesco Francia's shield, better known as *targa bentivolesca* (fig. 5)<sup>11</sup>; Pietro di Castel Durante's plate (fig. 6)<sup>12</sup>; the model for Giambologna's fountain of Neptune<sup>13</sup>.

The Civic Museum of Bologna closed on June 7<sup>th</sup> 1940 after an instruction sent out from the Department for National Education, which ordered to all the museums and galleries to close to visitors in order to allow the anti-aircraft defence measures to be implemented.

On November 20<sup>th</sup> 1941 Giuseppe Bottai, Minister for National Education, sent out a Circular (nr. 188) to all the local Superintendencies regarding the reopening of museums and galleries, specifying that this was possible only for the collections located in monumental buildings and only for the institutions capable of presenting to the public the items still situated inside, without compromising the adopted defence measures. Pericle Ducati and the Superintendent of Antiquities of the Emilia region decided to reopen the museum on February 1<sup>st</sup> 1942<sup>14</sup>.

<sup>9</sup> Inv. 17169 (*Museo Civico Archeologico di Bologna*). Ducati 1923: 123-124; Morigi Govi, Vitali 1982: 290-291; Morigi Govi 2009: 92-93.

<sup>10</sup> Inv. 17960 (*Museo Civico Archeologico di Bologna*). Ducati 1923: 117; Morigi Govi, Vitali 1982: 271; Morigi Govi 2009: 86-87.

<sup>11</sup> Inv. 401 (*Museo Civico Medievale di Bologna*). Ducati 1923: 165; Boccia 1991: 92-94.

<sup>12</sup> Inv. 1125 (*Museo Civico Medievale di Bologna*). Ducati 1923: 190; Ravanelli Guidotti 1985: 114.

<sup>13</sup> Inv. 1503 (*Museo Civico Medievale di Bologna*). Ducati 1923: 202-203. The model is now on display in the room nr. 15 of the Medieval Civic Museum of Bologna.

<sup>14</sup> ASMCABO, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 64/Museo Civico, 24 novembre 1941; ASMCABO, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 64/Museo Civico, 1 dicembre 1941; ASMCABO, Ar-





Fig. 5. Captain Francesco Francia's shield, better known as Targa bentivolesca. Inv. 401 – Museo Civico Medievale di Bologna (Boccia 1991: nVI)

About the reopening, Guido Achille Mansuelli, at that time an assistant at the Civic Museum, wrote an article on the pages of *Resto del Carlino* (February 2<sup>nd</sup> 1942), describing the museum's collections and stating that some groups of objects had been transferred to the museum's storehouse and they had been consequently substituted with plaster casts, in order to allow visitors to enjoy the stunning museum's items.

The first casts were placed inside the museum's gallery rooms between 1940 and 1941. In September 1942 Ducati placed an order for some casts of statues of the medieval and modern collection with the Trebbi Agostino firm<sup>15</sup>. Moreover, in April 1943 the Superintendence of Antiquities requested that the Civic Museum of Bologna had plaster casts made of the most important Felsinean funeral *stelae*, whose removal was dangerous for

chivio Atti Diversi, f. 64/Museo Civico, 16 dicembre 1941; ASMCABo, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 64/Museo Civico, 15 gennaio 1942.

<sup>15</sup> ASMCABo, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 64/Museo Civico, 13 agosto 1942; ASMCABo, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 64/Museo Civico, 3 maggio 1943.

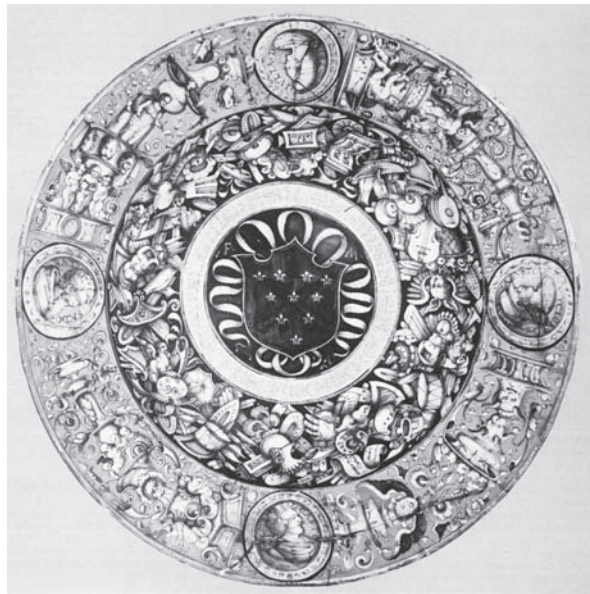


Fig. 6. Pietro di Castel Durante's plate. Inv. 1125 – Museo Civico Medievale di Bologna (Ravanelli Guidotti 1985: 113)

their fragmentariness and impossible for their size and weight<sup>16</sup>.

After an instruction directive of the Superintendence of Antiquities, the Civic Museum of Bologna closed to visitors again in October 24<sup>th</sup> 1942 because it was necessary to protect and remove the items that were still on display in the gallery rooms<sup>17</sup>.

Despite the serious political situation, in the eight months of opening the Civic Museum registered 10,366 visitors: 1,545 with paid tickets; 24 with temporary authorization or annual card (free entrance); 8,797 in the days with free admission<sup>18</sup>.

Moreover, it is necessary to point out that during the war the museum office spaces were occupied by the families of some museum functionaries, amounting to a total of forty-two people<sup>19</sup>.

#### *Anti-aircraft defence sites*

From the data collected in the archive of the Archaeological Civic Museum of Bologna it was

<sup>16</sup> ASMCABo, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 63/Museo Civico, 20 aprile 1943.

<sup>17</sup> ASMCABo, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 64/Museo Civico, 26 ottobre 1942.

<sup>18</sup> ASMCABo, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 64/Museo Civico, 1942.

<sup>19</sup> ASMCABo, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 65/Museo Civico, 1945.

possible to discover that during the First World War the former Civic Museum's director, Gherardo Ghirardini, packed the items in boxes and moved them into two secure sites: an underground room located below the main staircase of the museum; the room that housed the numismatic collection, which was located in the office spaces<sup>20</sup>. Pericle Ducati used the underground room below the main staircase, too.

As seen before, from 1935 to 1940 the Superintendence of Antiquities, the local government and the Civic Museum started to adopt some measures for the evacuation of the museum's objects to secure sites.

The items were mainly packed in boxes and transferred to various anti-aircraft defence sites located in the Bologna area: the Civic Museum's air raid shelter, situated in the basement; some places belonging to the town council, unfortunately not specified in the archive's documents<sup>21</sup>; *Colonia di Casaglia*; *Eremo di Tizzano*; Villa Aria, close to the city of Marzabotto.

The last three sites are situated in the province of Bologna. In particular, *Colonia di Casaglia* is the actual Longhena School, located in *via di Casaglia* on the hills of Bologna. *Eremo di Tizzano* is situated on the hills near *Casalecchio di Reno*, in the suburb of Ceretolo; in fact, in the archive's documents it is frequently mentioned as *Eremo di Ceretolo*. Villa Aria is a suburb of the city of Marzabotto and it is located near the National Archaeological Museum and the Archaeological area of the Etruscan city of Kainua-Marzabotto.

With regard to the museum's air raid shelter, in May 1943 it was decided to build some dividing low walls, in order to create different spaces where to store the items removed from the gallery rooms. The works were finished in October 1944<sup>22</sup>. At the end of the war, it was decided to close the passage between the outside and the shelter and to transform the last one in a storehouse, where to put the museum's objects that were not on display (December 1944). This space is still used by the

Archaeological Civic Museum of Bologna as a storehouse.

Furthermore, Pericle Ducati and the Superintendence of Antiquities decided to adopt *in situ* defence measures for the largest and heaviest *stelae* and tombstones and for the smallest items that had a minor historical and cultural relevance. These last objects remained inside the display cases where they were located.

In June 1940 some groups of items were packed in boxes and transferred to the museum's basements. This is proved by an invoice, dated June 19<sup>th</sup> 1940, by the Fratelli Mazzanti firm regarding some removal works and the construction of the boxes intended to contain the objects evacuated from the gallery rooms to the air raid shelter<sup>23</sup>. Unfortunately, the list of the items involved in this transfer is not specified in the archive's documents.

On December 18<sup>th</sup> 1942 some jewellery artefacts were transferred to the museum's air raid shelter. Among these, fibulas, rings and earrings from the Certosa and the *Arsenale Militare necropolises*<sup>24</sup>.

Between 1943 and 1944 the removals from the museum's display cases to the air raid shelter increased in number, especially after a request of the Superintendence of Antiquities, which asked to speed up the anti-aircraft defence measures because of the closeness of the war in the Bologna area. In the same letter sent to the Civic Museum's director, the Superintendence encouraged to transfer to the basement the less perishable objects if in contact with humidity and dust, exhorting not to consider the artistic and archaeological relevance of the items involved, in order to extend the defence measures to the highest number of objects<sup>25</sup>.

On May 1943 the Superintendence of Medieval and Modern Art made lists regarding the items to be transferred to the Civic Museum's air raid shelter and to some sites located outside the city. Unfortunately, these last places are not specified. The objects were packed in boxes and covered with sand bags<sup>26</sup>.

<sup>20</sup> ASMCABo, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 58/Museo Civico, p. 24, 1935; ASMCABo, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 58/Museo Civico, p. 27, 1935.

<sup>21</sup> The list of the items transferred to these secure sites is included in the archive's document ASMCABo, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 63/Museo Civico, maggio 1943.

<sup>22</sup> ASMCABo, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 64/Museo Civico, 3 maggio 1943; ASMCABo, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 64/Museo Civico, 24 agosto 1944; ASMCABo, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 64/Museo Civico, 6 ottobre 1944; ASMCABo, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 64/Museo Civico, 15 dicembre 1944.

<sup>23</sup> ASMCABo, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 63/Museo Civico, 19 giugno 1940.

<sup>24</sup> The complete list of the objects involved is included in the archive's document ASMCABo, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 63/Museo Civico, 18 dicembre 1942.

<sup>25</sup> ASMCABo, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 64/Museo Civico, 20 luglio 1943.

<sup>26</sup> The list of the items involved is included in the archive's document ASMCABo, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 64/Museo Civico, 7 maggio 1943.



After a request of the Superintendence of Antiquities, on January 19<sup>th</sup> 1944 the records and the catalogues regarding the museum objects were closed in a box and stored into the air raid shelter<sup>27</sup>.

In December 1944 seeping water was detected in the shelter, on some boxes that contained statues and inscriptions removed from the gallery rooms. Fortunately, damages to these items were not noticed. Anyway, the objects were removed from the boxes and transferred to another part of the shelter<sup>28</sup>.

On November 10<sup>th</sup> 1944 some objects belonging to the collections of other museums and institutions of Bologna were closed in boxes and transferred to the Civic Museum's shelter. This is certainly a demonstration of the relevance and authority of the Civic Museum inside the cultural landscape of Bologna<sup>29</sup>. The items were: Nicolò dell'Arca's *Compianto sul Cristo Morto* from *Chiesa di Santa Maria della Vita* (stored in seven boxes)<sup>30</sup>; alto-relievo from *Basilica di Santo Stefano* (three boxes); Romanesque capital from *Cattedrale di San Pietro* (one box); Nicolò dell'Arca's *Madonna con Bambino* from *Palazzo d'Accursio* (twenty-two boxes). To these objects was added the Certosa's lectern<sup>31</sup>, belonging to the medieval and modern Civic Museum's collection, deconstructed in five pieces.

On December 24<sup>th</sup> 1944 the Etruscan *stelae* were made into pieces, wrapped up and transferred to the underground rooms below the museum's porch<sup>32</sup>.



Fig. 7. A detail of the gold cope of Chiesa di San Domenico. Inv. 2040 - Museo Civico Medievale di Bologna (Boccia 1991: 456)

With regard to the *stelae* and tombstones not removed yet from the gallery rooms, it was decided to proceed in two ways: the smallest ones were taken into pieces, packed in boxes and transferred to the air raid shelter or to some sites located outside the city, unfortunately not specified in archival documents<sup>33</sup>; the largest and heaviest *stelae* and tombstones were left in the gallery rooms and protected with low walls or with sand bags and wooden planks, varnished with a fire-retardant paint. The largest and heaviest statues of the medieval and modern collection were left in the gallery rooms and protected with low walls or wooden planks and sand bags, too<sup>34</sup>.

The *in situ* defence measures regarded also the smallest items considered of less historical and artistic relevance. These objects were left in the display cases where they were located<sup>35</sup>.

<sup>27</sup> ASMCABO, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 64/Museo Civico, 19 gennaio 1944.

<sup>28</sup> ASMCABO, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 64/Museo Civico, 15 dicembre 1944.

<sup>29</sup> ASMCABO, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 64/Museo Civico, 27 novembre 1944.

<sup>30</sup> The group of sculptures had been previously protected *in situ* with sand bags and wooden planks (1940 ca.). The statues had been firstly enveloped with pieces of paper. (Bersani, Roncuzzi Roversi Monaco 1995: 100-101; Direzione Generale delle Arti 1942: 172-173)

<sup>31</sup> Inv. A46 (*Collezioni Comunali d'Arte di Bologna*). Ducati 1923: 212. The lectern is now on display in the room nr. 4 of *Collezioni Comunali d'Arte di Bologna*.

<sup>32</sup> ASMCABO, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 64/Museo Civico, 24 dicembre 1944.

<sup>33</sup> ASMCABO, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 64/Museo Civico, 14 giugno 1943; ASMCABO, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 64/Museo Civico, 23 dicembre 1944.

<sup>34</sup> ASMCABO, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 64/Museo Civico, 17 febbraio 1943; ASMCABO, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 64/Museo Civico, 14 giugno 1943; ASMCABO, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 64/Museo Civico, 26 luglio 1943; ASMCABO, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 64/Museo Civico, 30 agosto 1943.

<sup>35</sup> ASMCABO, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 64/Museo Civico, 29 settembre 1944.

As far as the air raid sites situated in the province of Bologna are concerned, Villa Aria in Marzabotto was the first one chosen for the evacuation of the Civic Museum's items. In fact, already in September 1939 the Prefecture issued instructions for the transfer to this place of the museum's most important objects<sup>36</sup>. The first removals dated back to June 1940 and the items involved were: gold cope of *Chiesa di San Domenico* (fig. 7)<sup>37</sup>; chorale nr. 6 (Ducati 1923: 229); charter nr. 20 (Ducati 1923: 230); illuminated chorales from nr. 52 to nr. 55 (Ducati 1923: 231-232); chorales from nr. 70 to nr. 75 (Ducati 1923: 233); illuminated codices from nr. 79 to nr. 98<sup>38</sup>.

On October 28<sup>th</sup> 1942 thirty-two boxes containing the most precious objects of the Civic Museum were transferred to Villa Aria. Among these items: *Situla della Certosa*; the head of the *Athena Lemnia* statue; *Civita Alba* terracotta; *Situla Arnoaldi*.

Between November 1942 and August 1943 twenty-one boxes were removed from the museum and transferred to Marzabotto. The boxes contained numerous items of the medieval and modern collection. The list of the objects involved included: Pietro di Castel Durante's plate; a violin ascribed to Andrea Amati<sup>39</sup>; *targa bentivolesca*; twenty-nine illuminated chorales; one hundred and eight medals<sup>40</sup>.

On May 1943 the Superintendence of Antiquities collected eleven boxes from the Civic Museum and transferred them to Villa Aria. The boxes contained chorales, ivories, medals, potteries and weapons. In addition to these items, also the Bonifacio VIII statue, closed in a cage, was transferred to Marzabotto<sup>41</sup>.

Moreover, on August 1943 eleven Felsinean *stelae* were removed from the gallery rooms and transferred to Marzabotto: one from Arnoaldi *necropolis*; four from Certosa *necropolis*; two from De Luca *necropolis*; the *stela* known as *Pietra Zannoni*<sup>42</sup>; the funeral *stela* known as *Pietra dei vitelli*<sup>43</sup>; the *stela* known as *Stele di Saletto*<sup>44</sup>.

To *Colonia di Casaglia* was transferred the entire Civic Museum numismatic collection, in addition to four cabinets belonged to Pope Benedetto XIV. The boxes were twenty-three of the University's numismatic collection and twenty-eight of the municipal one<sup>45</sup>. The removal operations took place between February and March 1943.

Also the Casa Carducci Museum books, the ones belonging to the Giovan Battista Martini Library and the precious manuscripts and incunabula belonging to the Archiginnasio Library's collection<sup>46</sup> were evacuated to *Colonia di Casaglia*.

The removals to *Eremo di Tizzano* started on August 1943. The first items transferred here were: numerous artefacts of the Egyptian collection; the objects from the *necropolises* Arnoaldi, Certosa, Benacci, De Luca; the artefacts belonging to *Ripostiglio di San Francesco*<sup>47</sup>.

<sup>36</sup> ASMCABO, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 62/Museo Civico, 6 settembre 1939.

<sup>37</sup> Inv. 2040 (*Museo Civico Medievale di Bologna*). Ducati 1923: 227; Boccia 1991: 456-457. The cope is now on display in the room nr. 7 of the Medieval Civic Museum of Bologna.

<sup>38</sup> Ducati 1923: 234-237. More information about the removal dated back to June 1940 could be found in the archive's documents: ASMCABO, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 63/Museo Civico, 12 giugno 1940; ASMCABO, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 63/Museo Civico, 14 giugno 1940; ASMCABO, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 63/Museo Civico, 17 giugno 1940; ASMCABO, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 63/Museo Civico, 19 giugno 1940.

<sup>39</sup> Inv. 1821 (*Museo Internazionale e Biblioteca della Musica di Bologna*). Van Der Meer 1993: 129. In June 1937 the violin was donated to the Civic Museum of Bologna by prof. Edmea Nicolina Bormida and it had previously belonged to her brother, prof. Filippo Bormida. Actually, Andrea Amati had not built the violin. The instrument is now on display in the *Museo Internazionale e Biblioteca della Musica di Bologna* (room nr. 8).

<sup>40</sup> The complete list of the items involved in the transfer dated back to October 1942 is included in the archive's document ASMCABO, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 63/Museo Civico, 28 ottobre 1942. Instead, the list of the objects transferred to Villa Aria between November 1942 and August 1943 is included in the archive's document ASMCABO, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 63/Museo Civico, 2 novembre 1942.

<sup>41</sup> Inv. 1668 (*Museo Civico Medievale di Bologna*). Ducati 1923: 222-223. The statue is now on display in the room nr. 7 of the Medieval Civic Museum of Bologna. The list of the items transferred to Marzabotto on May 1943 is included in the archive's document ASMCABO, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 63/Museo Civico, 25 agosto 1943.

<sup>42</sup> Inv. 21999 (*Museo Civico Archeologico di Bologna*). Morigi Govi 2009: 74-75.

<sup>43</sup> Inv. 27843 (*Museo Civico Archeologico di Bologna*). Ducati 1923: 111; Morigi Govi 2009: 74.

<sup>44</sup> Inv. 25677 (*Museo Civico Archeologico di Bologna*). Ducati 1923: 140; Morigi Govi 2009: 75. In the archive's document ASMCABO, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 63/Museo Civico, 25 agosto 1943 is included the list of the eleven funeral *stelae*, with their bibliographical references to the text *Le pietre funerarie felsinee* by Pericle Ducati.

<sup>45</sup> ASMCABO, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 64/Museo Civico, 1943.

<sup>46</sup> Ciancabilla 2010: 87-104.

<sup>47</sup> Ducati 1923: 159-161; Morigi Govi, Vitali 1982: 258-262; Morigi Govi 2009: 75-76. The complete lists of the items involved in this removal and in the one dated back to August 1943 are included in the archive's documents ASMCABO, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 64/Museo Civico, 30 agosto 1943 and ASMCABO, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 63/Museo Civico, 1943.

In May 1944 Casa Carducci Museum had an interest in *Eremo di Tizzano* as an anti-aircraft defence site for some objects belonging to its collection. Therefore, it asked to the Civic Museum to reduce the space occupied by its boxes. Giovanni Maioli, at that time acting director of the Civic Museum, answered negatively, because the museum's items were already too much cramped and, for their preservation, he didn't think it was proper to reduce further the space at their disposal<sup>48</sup>.

When the fear for bombing raids in the Apennine around Bologna became too high, the Civic Museum's director, the local government and the Superintendence of Antiquities decided to transfer the boxes located in *Colonia di Casaglia*, *Eremo di Tizzano* and Villa Aria to two secure sites in the Bologna city centre: the museum's air raid shelter and the school known as *Scuole Pascoli*<sup>49</sup>. The removal operations took place between July and September 1944. In particular, the museum's most important items were transferred to the air raid shelter. The head of the *Athena Lemnia* statue and *Situla della Certosa*, especially, were put inside their boxes and embedded in a wall of the shelter<sup>50</sup>.

The only objects not transferred to the shelter or to *Scuole Pascoli* were the *Civita Alba* terracotta, the gold cope of *Chiesa di San Domenico* and some illuminated chorales. In fact, in August 1944 they were all consigned to the Superintendence of Antiquities of the Veneto region and transferred to a shelter in Venice<sup>51</sup>. Unfortunately, the reason of this choice is not specified in the archive's documents.

*Colonia di Casaglia* suffered a devastating bombing raid on October 11<sup>th</sup> 1944, in which died the Archiginnasio Library's director, Lodovico Barbieri. *Eremo di Tizzano*, instead, was later occupied by a part of the German squad for the quartering of its soldiers.

### *The bombing raids that affected the Civic Museum*

Between 1943 and 1944 numerous air raids took place over the city of Bologna, target of the American troops because it was the main railway junction between the North and the Centre of Italy<sup>52</sup>.

On July 24<sup>th</sup> 1943 some American aircrafts dropped one hundred and fifty tons of bombs on the Bologna railway station, with the purpose to block the rail connections. Some of these bombs hit other areas of the city centre. Among these, the Maggiore Hospital and the town council Palace (fig. 8), located near the building that housed the Civic Museum. The number of casualties was really high: 160 dead and 270 injured<sup>53</sup>.

On January 29<sup>th</sup> 1944, between 11.30 am and 12.50 pm, numerous bombs were dropped on the city centre by eighty American airplanes. The target was still the railway station, but other buildings were hit, causing the most catastrophic air raid attack that hit the monuments of the city. Fortunately, the casualties were not high: 31 dead and 47 injured<sup>54</sup>. Among the monumental buildings hit by the American bombs, the Archiginnasio Library, strictly communicating with the Civic Museum's building. In particular, the Archiginnasio Library was hit by numerous bombs dropped directly on the east and south wings<sup>55</sup>. They caused the total destruction of *Cappella di Santa Maria dei Bulgari*, *Teatro Anatomico*, the former *Museo dell'VIII Centenario dell'Università*, *Biblioteca della Società Agraria*, *Biblioteca della Società Medica Chirurgica* (fig. 9).

After this last air raid and the one that affected *Colonia di Casaglia* (October 11<sup>th</sup> 1944), the precious manuscripts and books belonging to the Archiginnasio Library were transferred to a room called *Salone dei Demaniali*, located in the Civic Museum's building (fig. 11). This room had been vacated in November 1940 by the transfer of *Archivio di Stato*, whose premises were located inside this building, to the new office spaces (situated in *Piazza dei Celestini*). In particular, the premises known as *Salone dei Demaniali* were located close to the Civic Museum gallery rooms nos. X-XVIII. This space is now used by the Archiginnasio Library as reference room.

<sup>48</sup> ASMCABO, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 64/Museo Civico, 31 maggio 1944.

<sup>49</sup> In the archive's documents *Scuole Pascoli* is frequently mentioned as *Rifugio Pascoli*.

<sup>50</sup> ASMCABO, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 63/Museo Civico, 6 luglio 1944.

<sup>51</sup> ASMCABO, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 64/Museo Civico, 19 settembre 1944; ASMCABO, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 65/Museo Civico, 2 gennaio 1945; ASMCABO, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 65/Museo Civico, p. 103, 1945.

<sup>52</sup> Bersani, Roncuzzi Roversi Monaco 1995; Dalla Casa, Preti 1995; Mazzanti 2001; Ciancabilla 2010.

<sup>53</sup> Bersani, Roncuzzi Roversi Monaco 1995.

<sup>54</sup> Bersani, Roncuzzi Roversi Monaco 1995.

<sup>55</sup> Bergonzoni 1987; Bersani, Roncuzzi Roversi Monaco 1995; Belletini 2001; Ciancabilla 2010: 87-104, 167-195.





Fig. 8. The town council Palace after the bombing raid of July 24<sup>th</sup> 1943 (Bersani, Roncuzzi Roversi Monaco 1995: 197)



Fig. 9. The Archiginnasio Library after the air raid of January 29<sup>th</sup> 1944 (Bellettini 2001: 38)

Fortunately, these two bombing raids, which were so close to the Civic Museum, affected it only indirectly. In fact, damages to the museum's items were not registered. The only damages resulted to the glasses of the display cases, windows and roof lights, produced by the blasts and the fragments of the bombs dropped nearby. With regard to the air raid of January 29<sup>th</sup> 1944, the one that hit the Archiginnasio's building, the most damaged Civic Museum's gallery rooms were nos. III, IV, V, VI, VIII and X<sup>56</sup>.

<sup>56</sup> ASMCABo, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 64/Museo Civico, 27 agosto 1943; ASMCABo, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 64/Museo Civico, 31 gennaio 1944.

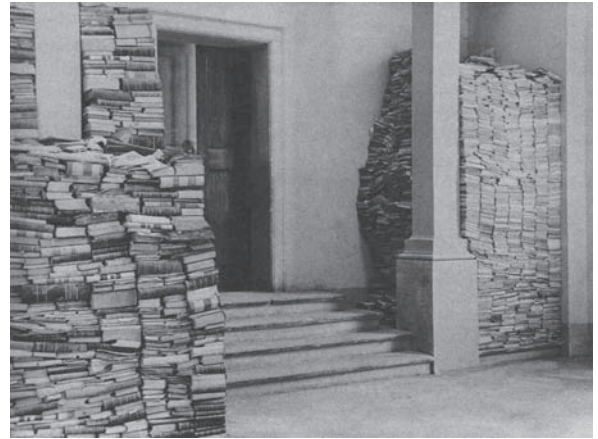


Fig. 10. Some of the books belonging to the Archiginnasio Library transferred to some premises of the building that housed the Civic Museum, after the bombing raids of January 29<sup>th</sup> 1944 and October 11<sup>th</sup> 1944 (Bersani, Roncuzzi Roversi Monaco 1995: 134)



Fig. 11. The precious manuscripts and books belonging to the Archiginnasio Library transferred to the room called Salone dei Demaniali after the bombing raids of January 29<sup>th</sup> 1944 and October 11<sup>th</sup> 1944 (Bersani, Roncuzzi Roversi Monaco 1995: 237)

#### *1944-1951: objects recovery and museum reopening*

After the death of Pericle Ducati (October 17<sup>th</sup> 1944), the Civic Museum's direction was temporary assigned to Giovanni Maioli, Ducati's right-hand man, secretary of the Archaeological Institute of the University of Bologna and director of the Risorgimento Museum, which was housed inside the Civic Museum's building. Maioli was supported in his work as Civic Museum's acting director by Guido Achille Mansuelli, assistant at the museum<sup>57</sup>.

<sup>57</sup> In the Civic Museum of Bologna Guido Achille Man-

At the end of the Second World War, Giovanni Maioli was suspended for political reasons from his assignments as director of the Risorgimento Museum and as acting director of the Civic Museum. In fact, he was a sympathizer of the Fascist regime. Consequently, the Minister for Education elected Mario Zuffa as Civic Museum's acting director. On February 1947 Luciano Laurenzi was elected holder of the Archaeological chair at the University of Bologna and director of the Civic Museum.

The Museum reopened to visitors on January 25<sup>th</sup> 1948. The visitors' turnout was immediately really high: 121,954 admissions have been recorded from the opening to December 7<sup>th</sup> 1949<sup>58</sup>.

As soon as the war ended, Mario Zuffa was concerned about the condition of the museum's items evacuated to the air raid shelter and of the objects loaned for exhibitions organized by other museums and institutions and not returned yet to the Civic Museum.

Already in June 1945 he carried out some inspections to the Giardini Margherita tomb, verifying its degradation caused by the German troops during their occupation of the area. One block of stone of the tomb was removed and flung to the ground, probably with the purpose to control what there was inside<sup>59</sup>. In the same letter, Mario Zuffa reported to the Superintendence of Antiquities that he had received the news that the German soldiers, running away from the city of Bologna, had totally destroyed the two-arches Roman bridge on the river Gaiana, close to Gallo Bolognese (Castel San Pietro, Bologna).

In June 1945 Mario Zuffa opened the wall of the museum's air raid shelter where some items had been embedded during the war. The objects were taken out the wall and transferred to a site

suelli attended to the reorganization of the bronze statuettes collection on display in the room nr. VIII and of the artefacts belonging to the Verucchio *necropolis* kept in part in the room nr. VIII and in part in the museum's storehouse. Moreover, he attended to the cataloguing of the marble statues and of the bibliographic material, to the rearrangement of the photographic archive and to the organization of the anti-aircraft defence measures applied to the museum's items (ASMCABo, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 64/Museo Civico, 19 gennaio 1944; ASMCABo, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 64/Museo Civico, 23 febbraio 1944; ASMCABo, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 64/Museo Civico, 19 settembre 1944).

<sup>58</sup> ASMCABo, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 68/Museo Civico, p. 196, 1949.

<sup>59</sup> ASMCABo, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 65/Museo Civico, p. 60, 1945.



Fig. 12. The bronze candelabrum from Giardini Margherita necropolis. Inv. 17198 – Museo Civico Archeologico di Bologna (Archivio Fotografico Museo Civico Archeologico di Bologna)

drier than the shelter, pending to be put on display in the museum's gallery rooms. Despite the high humidity level of the shelter, the items resulted to be in fairly good conditions. Only the bronze *candelabrum* from Giardini Margherita *necropolis* (fig. 12)<sup>60</sup> suffered some damages and, in particular, the break of a candlestick. Among the objects removed from the shelter, *Situla della Certosa* and the head of the *Athena Lemnia* statue<sup>61</sup>.

On May 30<sup>th</sup> 1945 Mario Zuffa took out from the air raid shelter a small group of weapons belonging to the modern collection. On these were noticed several damages caused by the high humidity level and by the direct contact with the floor on which they had been located. In particular, two harquebuses suffered high damages to their stocks<sup>62</sup>.

<sup>60</sup> Inv. 17198 (*Museo Civico Archeologico di Bologna*). Ducati 1923: 134. The item is now on display in the room nr. X of the Archaeological Civic Museum of Bologna.

<sup>61</sup> The complete list of the items involved in the removal from the air raid shelter is included in the archive's document ASMCABo, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 65/Museo Civico, p. 62, 1945.

<sup>62</sup> ASMCABo, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 65/Museo Civico, p. 58, 1945. The harquebuses involved were: inv. 185 (*Accademia delle Belle Arti di Bologna*); inv. 196 (*Accademia delle*



In July 1945 Zuffa asked to the Superintendence of Antiquities and to the local government the authorization to take out and transfer to the museum the boxes situated in *Scuole Pascoli*, because he was afraid of the possible damages caused by the high humidity level of the school's underground rooms. The transfer operations took place in September 1945<sup>63</sup>.

On April 15<sup>th</sup> 1946, after many requests, the model for Giambologna's fountain of Neptune, previously sent to the exhibition *Mostra del Cinquecento Toscano* (*Palazzo Strozzi*, Florence, April-October 1940)<sup>64</sup>, returned to the Civic Museum. On the same day, the gold cope of *Chiesa di San Domenico* and the illuminated charters and chorales, transferred to Venice in 1944, returned to the museum<sup>65</sup>.

In June 1945, Mario Zuffa started the operations regarding the rearrangement of the gallery rooms and the collections. First of all, he removed from the air raid shelter the boxes containing the numismatic collection and he transferred them to the office spaces, inside the rooms where they had been located before the war (June 1945). He also returned the Felsinean funeral *stelae* to the gallery rooms nr. X and XA (June 1945 – September 1946). Moreover, Zuffa proceeded with the operations regarding the review of the pottery collections and the removal of the anti-aircraft protections of the room nr. XVII (January 1946), where the windows had been closed with boxes full of sand in order to protect, from the bombing raids, the items not removed.

In 1950 the new Civic Museum's director, Luciano Laurenzi, removed some sculptures from the air raid shelter and transferred them to the room nr. XVII (March 1950). He also attended to the display of the Felsinean *necropolises'* artefacts (room nr. X) by adopting an organization by funerary equipment, instead of using a typological criterion.



Fig. 13. Captain Francesco Bernardo's shield (inv. 400 - Museo Civico Medievale di Bologna) in a photo dated from 1938 ca. (ASMCABO, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 67/Museo Civico, p. 45, 1948)

In January 1948 Luciano Laurenzi received the news that the items loaned for the exhibition *Mostra Triennale delle Terre Italiane d'Oltremare* (*Campi Flegrei*, Naples, May 9<sup>th</sup> –October 15<sup>th</sup> 1940)<sup>66</sup> had been not recovered after the end of the war. The building in Naples where they had been put was occupied by the American troops during the war<sup>67</sup>. In particular, the Superintendence of Naples stated that the objects had been destroyed or stolen by the Americans<sup>68</sup>.

The items involved were: Captain Francesco Bernardo's shield (fig. 13)<sup>69</sup>; some Turkish weapons belonging to the Luigi Ferdinando Marsili's collection<sup>70</sup>. Before the loan, the objects had been on display in the room nr. XIII.

*Belle Arti di Bologna*). They refer to *Accademia delle Belle Arti di Bologna* because they belonged to its *Oploteca*, donated to the Civic Museum in 1881 (the formal delivery took place in 1884) (Boccia 1991: 20-26).

<sup>63</sup> ASMCABO, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 65/Museo Civico, p. 80, 1945; ASMCABO, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 65/Museo Civico, p. 87, 1945; ASMCABO, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 65/Museo Civico, p. 117, 1945.

<sup>64</sup> *Mostra del Cinquecento Toscano in Palazzo Strozzi* 1940; Podestà 1940; ASMCABO, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 65/Museo Civico, p. 26, 1946; ASMCABO, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 65/Museo Civico, p. 76, 1945.

<sup>65</sup> ASMCABO, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 65/Museo Civico, p. 27, 1946.

<sup>66</sup> *Prima Mostra Triennale delle Terre Italiane d'Oltremare* 1940.

<sup>67</sup> Detailed information about the anti-aircraft defence measures adopted by the Superintendence of Naples with regard to the items on display in the exhibition *Mostra Triennale delle Terre Italiane d'Oltremare* could be collected in the text *Direzione Generale delle Arti* 1942: 277-279.

<sup>68</sup> ASMCABO, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 67/Museo Civico, p. 29, 1948; ASMCABO, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 67/Museo Civico, p. 45, 1948.

<sup>69</sup> Ducati 1923: 165-166; Boccia 1991: 21-23, 33.

<sup>70</sup> Ducati 1923: 166-167; Boccia 1991: 16-19.



Fig. 14. Lastra tombale di Giovanni Sala (inv. 1599 – Museo Civico Medievale di Bologna) in a photo taken before the break caused during the removal operations to the air raid shelter (Boccia 1991: 466)

Only in 1996 the shield returned to the Medieval Civic Museum of Bologna thanks to *Nucleo Carabinieri Tutela Patrimonio Culturale* and to the Minister for the Cultural Heritage, Antonio Paolucci.

In particular, in the Eighties, the shield was recognized by Gualberto Ricci Curbastro, collector and scholar of ancient weapons, in the catalogue of an ancient weapons dealer from Paris. Evelina Ricci Curbastro, daughter of the collector, tried to ask for information in order to buy the shield, but unfortunately an English dealer had previously bought the item and sold it to an unknown American collector. In 1995, Gualberto Ricci Curbastro found the shield in New York. This was about to be donated to the Metropolitan Museum by the art collector Ronald Lauder. Therefore, Ricci Curbastro noticed the Italian *Nucleo Carabinieri Tutela Patrimonio Culturale*, which returned the shield to Bologna. This is now on display in the room nr. 18 of the Medieval Civic Museum of Bologna (inv. 400).

Unfortunately, nothing is known about the Turkish weapons belonged to Luigi Ferdinando Marsili (Boccia 1991: 28). They have not been located in any private or public collection yet.

Finally, it is necessary to point out that, in the archive, it was found an interesting letter sent by Mario Zuffa to the local government and dated back to June 1945. This regards the break of a medieval tombstone during the transfers to the air raid shelter of the Renaissance tombstones on display in the rooms nrr. XVI and XVII. The item involved was *Lastra tombale di Giovanni Sala*, ascribed by Pericle Ducati to Alfonso Lombardi (fig. 14)<sup>71</sup>. The tombstone fell to the ground and broke

<sup>71</sup> Ducati 1923: 208; Boccia 1991: 464-466.



Fig. 15. The room nr. IV of the Civic Museum (Egyptian collection) in a photo dated from 1947 (Archivio Fotografico Museo Civico Archeologico di Bologna)



Fig. 16. The room nr. X of the Civic Museum (Etruscan collection) in a photo dated from 1947 (Archivio Fotografico Museo Civico Archeologico di Bologna)

in two parts. The object is now on display in room nr. 19 of the Medieval Civic Museum of Bologna (inv. 1599) and it is still broken.

#### *Objects restorations after the war*

With the rearrangement of the collections and the museum reopening, it was necessary to make some maintenance works on the objects.



Fig. 17. Situla della Certosa (inv. 17169 - Museo Civico Archeologico di Bologna) in a photo dated from 1921. In the picture it is possible to see the result of the restoration executed in January 1921 by Francesco Proni (Archivio Storico Musei Civici d'Arte Antica, Bologna, Fondo Malaguzzi Valeri)

The first artefact to be restored was the famous *Situla della Certosa* (fig. 17), which during the war was first transferred to Marzabotto and then embedded in a wall inside the museum's air raid shelter. Numerous damages were caused by the humidity and, because of this reason, the item was subjected to a cleaning treatment (December 1948)<sup>72</sup>.

Damages caused by the humidity were noticed also on the demotic papyri collection. This was restored in December 1948, too<sup>73</sup> (fig. 17).

<sup>72</sup> ASMCABo, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 67/Museo Civico, p. 181, 1948.

<sup>73</sup> ASMCABo, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 67/Museo Civico, p. 183, 1948.

*Situla della Certosa* had been previously restored in January 1921, after the First World War, because of the damages caused by the humidity of the museum's basement where it had been transferred for defence measures. The maintenance work was conducted by Francesco Proni, restorer at the Civic Museum. In particular, the restoration was executed by removing all the lamina fragments that composed the item. These were later secured to a new base made with plaster, instead of wood<sup>74</sup>.

In 1949 the prehistoric pottery collection was subjected to a restoration. This was assigned to a restorer of the Superintendence of Antiquities of the Emilia and Romagna region.

Luciano Laurenzi was not satisfied with the work of this restorer, who did not have the right competences to work on the prehistoric pottery, because he had always worked on the ancient classical pottery. Therefore, Laurenzi proposed to the Superintendence and the town council to assign the work to a restorer of the Superintendence of Antiquities of Siracusa, because this kind of works on the prehistoric pottery had reached excellent results in the Archaeological National Museum of the Sicilian city.

The restoration started in December 1949 and it was conducted in relation to the reorganization of the museum room nr. 1, where the prehistoric collection was on display. The collection was also enriched with some artefacts donated to the Civic Museum by the speleologist Luigi Fantini<sup>75</sup>.

Finally, in 1950, some medieval and Renaissance statues were restored after their removal from the museum air raid shelter. Laurenzi assigned the work to Vicini, eminent and respected restorer of that time<sup>76</sup>.

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<sup>74</sup> ASMCABo, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 49/Museo Civico, p. 97, 1921; ASMCABo, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 51/Museo Civico, p. 142, 1921.

<sup>75</sup> ASMCABo, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 68/Museo Civico, p. 170, 1949; ASMCABo, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 70/Museo Civico, p. 94, 1951.

<sup>76</sup> ASMCABo, Archivio Atti Diversi, f. 69/Museo Civico, p. 92, 1950.



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