

THE HISTORICAL REQUIREMENT ON THE IDENTITY OF A PIECE OF ART.

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ABSTRACT.

Every piece of art, as a human product, has a double requirement: on the one hand the aesthetic and, on the other hand, the historical.

We can easily agree that the aesthetic requirement relies on the force of the image to catch our attention, producing a pleasing sensation in our brains. However, something doesn't work in the same way when we are in front of a copy, or when we have some specific information about the piece, etc. The image is the same but, our experience watching it will probably change. This is a matter of historical requirements.

If we focus on **the identity of a piece of art**, we have to bear in mind all the characteristics or qualities that make this work only and different from the rest. Therefore, we have to make a special effort to research about the historical matters around the piece and to accept they could be one or another depending on the moment.

I'm afraid that studying the piece from a current point of view can frequently be misleading, because what it is for us now is something different from what it used to be for the creator, for the customer and for its contemporary society in general. Time has gone by and our tastes and experiences have changed, too.

Accordingly, in theory, we can make a distinction between several historical determining, although in practice, we often mistake them – or, at least I must accept I have.

In October of 2018, I had the privilege of restoring a *tricromia* process stained glass. The piece is in the Immaculata Chapel of Montserrat Monastery and was made in 1910. So far, in Catalonia, only Gaudi used this technique for his stained glasses in Mallorca Cathedral.

As I stood facing this important piece, it brought me about feelings of solemnity: the interest of the customer to have a rare modern technic piece, the glazier's challenge for design in three tinted images, the careful work with the fragile sheets of glass, the feel and pressure for the responsibility, etc.

The lack of documentation and the restoration process led me to consider the possibility I could be wrong about that. Perhaps, some of the "mistakes" found, could actually be an evidence of its essence and its identity, not as a model of a modern art piece but, as a mere exercise, in which everyone tried to put into practice their skills.

Humbly, I would like to introduce this experience, to share with you how my perception about it changed, unfolding another interpretation about the identity of this work.

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