

**The modern challenge of recreating art like that of the past.
Intervention proposal for the Temple of San Juan Bautista, Tochimilco,
Puebla, Mexico.**

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ABSTRACT

On September 19, 2017, an earthquake measuring 7.1 with an epicentre between the states of Puebla and Morelos shook the southeast of Mexico, causing serious damage to historic buildings.

The temple of San Juan Bautista is located 46 kilometres from the epicentre in the municipality of Tochimilco, Puebla. The main areas of severe damages are the destruction of the vault, the total loss of its façade, and the collapse of the bell tower and the wall crowns. The annexes that were built in recent years were also affected.

To ensure that the intervention proposal responded to the condition of the temple, some studies were carried out on the elements that remained standing, in order to confirm if they are structurally sound. Due to the heterogeneity of the constructive systems there was not possibility to perform an intervention based on anastylosis (puzzle of pieces).

Therefore, the rehabilitation proposal of the space based on postwar restoration theories has been developed, which establishes that all events leave a historical and important mark on the buildings and it is difficult to recover the historical substance of these.^[1]

In the proposal, the ruin is interpreted as a puzzle whose isolated pieces do not make sense. The integration of contemporary architecture is proposed to facilitate its coherent reading. That's why the walls and their constructive stages will be consolidated, in order to mitigate the risks which, the unstable elements could represent to the public. In the space, steel structure will be used to recreate the original geometry of the temple. There will be reed canvases similar to the vaults of South America inside the vaults, and the exterior will be covered with a gable roof that protects the crowns of the old temple. This solution will reassemble the original covers of the temples from the 17th century in Mexico.

This proposal seeks to discard imitations and false historical work that lack the here and now of the original work. We are committing ourselves to help the future generations understand heritage from all the traces that time has left, and reflect the preserved ruin as a tribute to the builders.

The limits of the project will be subordinated to what the primitive form poses. Far from silencing the voices of past architecture, we seek to let the original building speak by itself.

REFERENCES

- [1] De Gracia, Francisco, *Construir en lo construido. La Arquitectura como modificación*, 3rd Edition, Editorial Nerea, p. 195, 1992.