

POLYTECHNIC OF TORINO
FACULTY OF ARCHITECTURE 1
Degree in Architecture
Honors theses

Rivalta di Torino. Marks Persistence and Continuity

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The subject of the thesis is the historic centre of the town of Rivalta di Torino, west of the city of Turin.

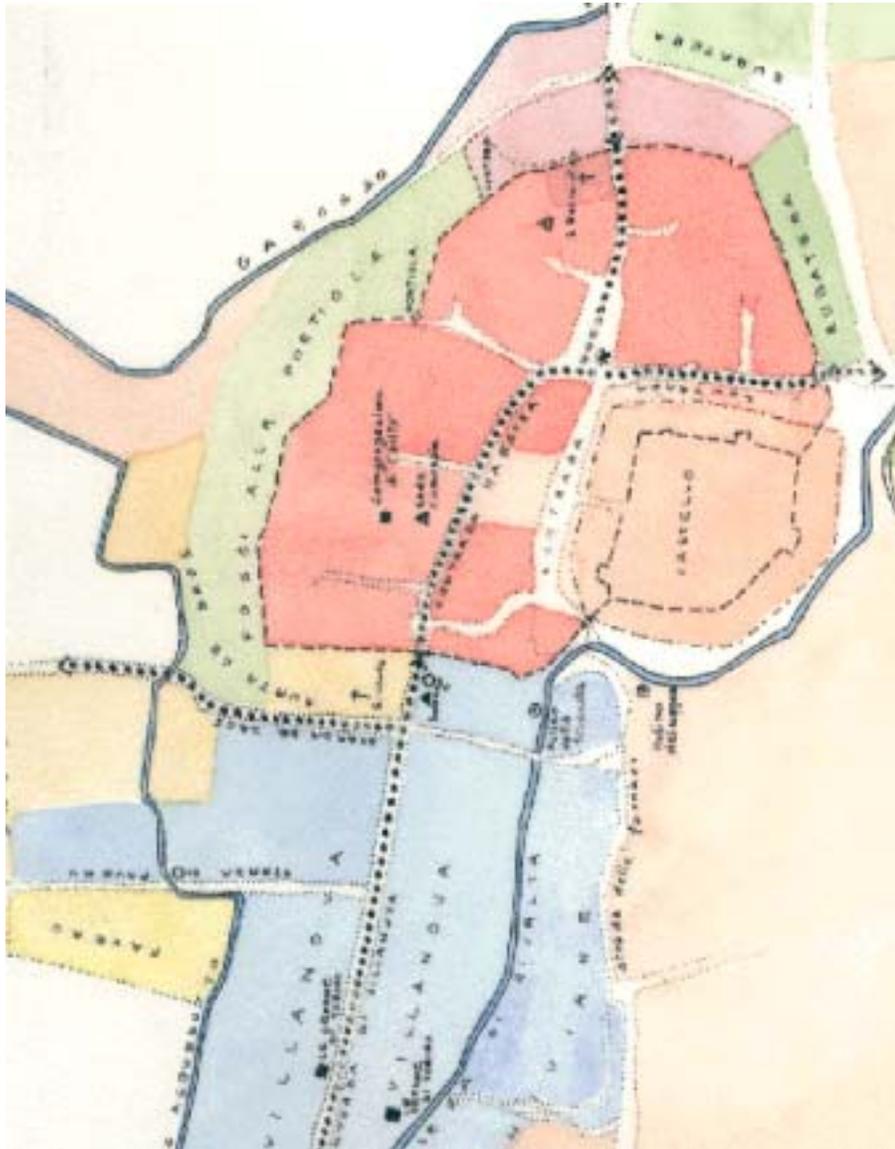
To carry out this job we have undertaken an archival research to reconstruct and outline the historical structure of the town, its aggregations and the changes related to the historical events. So we have identified which features lasted over the time and characterized the overall urban plan.

Ample scope has been given to the cadastres dating back to the XV, XVI, XVIII and XIX centuries which helped to set the urban and typological study of the periods they refer to. The linguistic and conceptual differences of the cadastres have required the creation of a comparison method based on the drawing up of comparative charts compiled after a numerical analysis of each feature.

Thanks to the sources available, the main stages of the urban fabric building process have been identified and analysed. These steps refer to tables summing up the features of the built-up area structure and the connections among the single elements, i.e. the architectural emergences, the cores, the inner road system, the connections with a wider territorial road network etc.

Rebuilding and talking about the origins of the place itself, the flow of events, the projects and interventions allowed an analysis and description of the oldest part of the town which – though it has neither outstanding elements nor a monumental structure – can still be recognized in the single re-assembly of the parts, the objects and the connection with the surrounding landscape.

The new strengths which opened onto the political and social background on the brink of the XX century transformed the pre-existing buildings and entailed interventions of new and through construction. These actions, however, were not able to replace or cancel the sturdiness of the medieval structure whose traces come up at times in the old buildings, lines, crossings, widening elements and in some parts of the built-up area.



Picture 1 Excerpt of the built-up area structure (1778)

Thanks to the study of the urban artefact history and the analysis of its stages, we have recognized and related all the marks, clues, scattered fragments, different uses, connections among the parts and features – we have rediscovered the original contents and meanings.

It is especially while reading and interpreting the maps that the sense of the place supporting structure is restored, i.e. in the road routes and their coordination of streets, lanes, small squares; in the connections with the built-up area – either residential or monumental – and in the relationship with the areas allocated to farming. All these items explained how the place had been managed – as it comes out from information about the activities which took place as a consequence of community problems and needs.



Picture 2 Excerpt of table "PERSISTENCES"

The concept of persistence does not only refer to the materials and techniques used, the single artefact or the building exclusively. It is about the themes, times and ways the soil was taken up – features which deeply marked the identity of the place and distinguished its overall image.

It is a historic and cultural identity which has to be represented and revived through the course of the existing fabric transformations. It involves analysis and knowledge, comparisons and targets identification. So, it is fundamental for a urban upgrading project which is able to balance preservation and transformation, common interest and private benefit.



Picture 3 Example of persistence (number 10 of the picture 2)

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