

The construction and the building techniques of the Royal Farmhouses in Racconigi: matter of their preservation

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The thesis focuses on the constructive elements and techniques employed in the Royal Farmhouses of Racconigi, especially the one so called "Streppe" and "Migliabrana Nuova", through a chronological excursus of their status and the processes that determined the actual consistency. Through the analysis, the reading and the historical and critical confrontation that emerges from the documents found in the archives and from a series of on-site surveys of the settings that are nowadays visible, I was able to raise some issues for a correct preservation and formulate proposals for the protection and valorisation of the two houses. Even if to include the constructive systems and techniques as qualifying elements for a correct valorisation of the historical heritage is an issue that has been widely accepted, still it represents an exception when employed in single cases. This thesis then wants to consider those elements as important as, for example, an ancient fresco, which is at once original and irreproducible.



The "Streppe" farmhouse: cadastre 1768

The "Streppe" farmhouse was built, at the end of the XIII century, by the benedictines monks of the Casanova Abbey on a land that became their property in 1266, being before part of the communal land of the town of Racconigi. The monks managed to maintain the property intact through the centuries and for almost five-hundred years, when the "Streppe", then, became, at the end of the XVIII century, part of the funds of the "Savoia-Carignano" family, remaining so until the napoleon occupation. In the Restoration period the house, again, was reclaimed by the Savoia-Carignano and in 1832 was finally added to the "Patrimonio Particolare" of King Carlo Alberto. At the same time the other house, the one so called "Migliabruna", became the key-point of an infrastructural reorganisation of the area north of the Parco Reale. This area was redesigned to fit a rational system of rectilinear roads which led to a new farmhouse, "Migliabruna Nuova", which was newly built south of the prehesistent one. The design of this last one carries the signature of Architect Ernest MELANO.

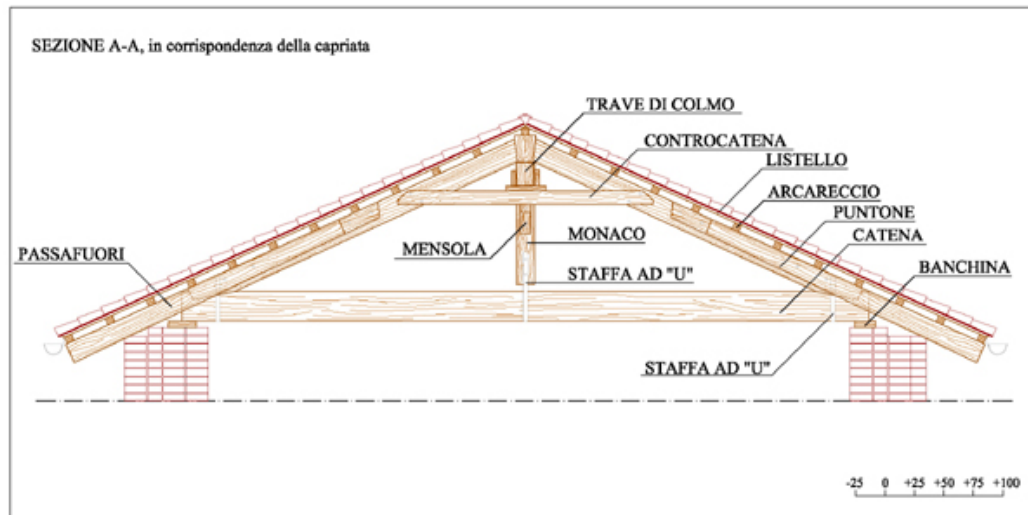


The "Migliabruna Nuova" farmhouse

The datas found in the archives and the one taken from actual on-site surveis made possible to retrace an hypothetic stratification of the construction phases for the overall complex. This phase was very helpful cause it made possible to determine a chronological and a contextual order in which the construction systems were employed. This passage is mandatory for a correct valorisation of the overall building.

For the "Migliabruna" farmhouse I referred to the project drawn by Ernest MELANO and dated May 6th, 1836, that can be perused in the State Archives in Torino. The Melano drawings were very helpful to retrace the development of the building from the architect's indications. It is indeed very important to acquire a wider knowledge of the constructive procedures in order to employ a correct valorisation of the complex and for future preservation.

The normative that rules the historical and cultural properties, so called "Beni Culturali", stresses on the point that a correct preservation starts with the widest knowledge of it. Through the study of the constructive systems I was then able to point out some issues related to previous incorrect intervention and to a general state of abandonment of the building, and also propose some repairs that require a general degree of respect and rigor. The full understanding of the constructive systems and as well the analysis of the state and consistency of the roofs, the walls and windows, led to discover and unveil a common architectural pattern that can be read in all the farmhouses and that stratified through the years.



The "Migliabrana Nuova" farmhouse – roofing: a wooden truss

This language strongly characterizes the image of the two buildings from the point of view of their historical, cultural and constructive value, which shall not be, in any case, altered but taken as key point for a correct and respectful valorisation.

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