POLITECNICO DI TORINO

Honors thesis

COURSE OF

Master of Science in Architecture Heritage Preservation and Enhancement

Abstract

Laurent Chappis in San Sicario Alto,

Study for a digital archive and historical reconstruction of

the project's assumptions and cultural contexts

Tutor	*by*
Rosa Tamborrino	Alessandro Gobbi

Correlators
Fulvio Rinaudo
Paolo Piumatti

September 2015

_____

The thesis is a study of the projects for San Sicario Alto, drawn up by the architect of Aix-les-Bains Laurent Chappis, through the availment of tools and interdisciplinary methods.

The study of Chappis' projects was based on two fundamental archival sources, namely the archives of the commission of San Sicario Alto and the private archives of architect Chappis in Chambery, which were studied during a visit on site. The first archive, owned by the cooperative NONSOLONEVE, was the main instrument for the development of the thesis; the archive's projects were digitalized and catalogued, in order to produce a graphic and a historical rebuild of the studied material.

After a report of the life and an analysis of some of the works carried out in Italy by Chappis, a interesting and controversial figure, the thesis focuses on the study of the projects of the archive NONSOLONEVE, in relation to those found in the French archives, which it has led to the setting up of a database containing all the information obtained from an analysis of the contents previously studied.
The database, created by the program Microsoft Access, has been set in order to allow a quick and intuitive reference of the content studied, which allows crossed and targeted research and it has proved to be a vital tool for an historical reconstruction of the Chappis' projects.

It was then observed that the Architect had planned to put San Sicario Alto at the center of a large ski area, which would include within it other places in the Val Susa, enclosed between Cesana and Mount Fraiteve.
This type of analysis has led to a comparison of the projects of the archives previously mentioned, this has lead to the formulation of an hypothesis in which were summarized, in a territorial plan in scale 1: 5000, the resort of Val Susa and the connections between the cableway stations planned by the Architect, related to the paths of the ski lifts and the existing ski tracks.

Subsequently, it was possible to note how Chappis had suggested different variants of the arrangement of the area within his projects, in which the same structures are placed in different positions, or in which the same functions are presented according to alternative forms. It was therefore made a planimetric hypothesis in which, through a study based on the relation between dates, forms and functions, was proposed a ideal arrangement of Chappis' projects about *Clos de la Chapelle*. Considering that few projects of Laurent Chappis were made beyond the stage of boards for the competition, it is not possible to establish what the actual idea of the Architect for San Sicario was. So it was proposed the hypothesis which could be realistically brought closer to a further development of the project (**img.1**).
As seen in this study and during the visual analysis of the tables drawn up by Chappis, it has been noticed a particular care by the Architect in the positioning of the buildings compared to the morphology of the mountain. Therefore, the thesis has moved precise analysis of a selection of structures designed by Chappis and their behavior into the slope of the area, using 3D modeling.

Using as a basis the Architect's topographical surveys, a render model of the mountain area was reconstructed (**img.2**).On this transposition were then superimposed the patterns of some architectures conceived by Laurent Chappis, thus demonstrating the minimal invasiveness of the whole on the ground (**img.3**).

The 3D modeling has led, eventually, to the observation of analogies between the design methods of Chappis and the proposals of the British group for architecture and philosophy *Archigram*, which belongs to the radical current of the same years. The use of a modular design in living cells and bold and futuristic forms is the main common element between Chappis and Archigram, used as a starting point for an analysis of cultural contexts.

_____

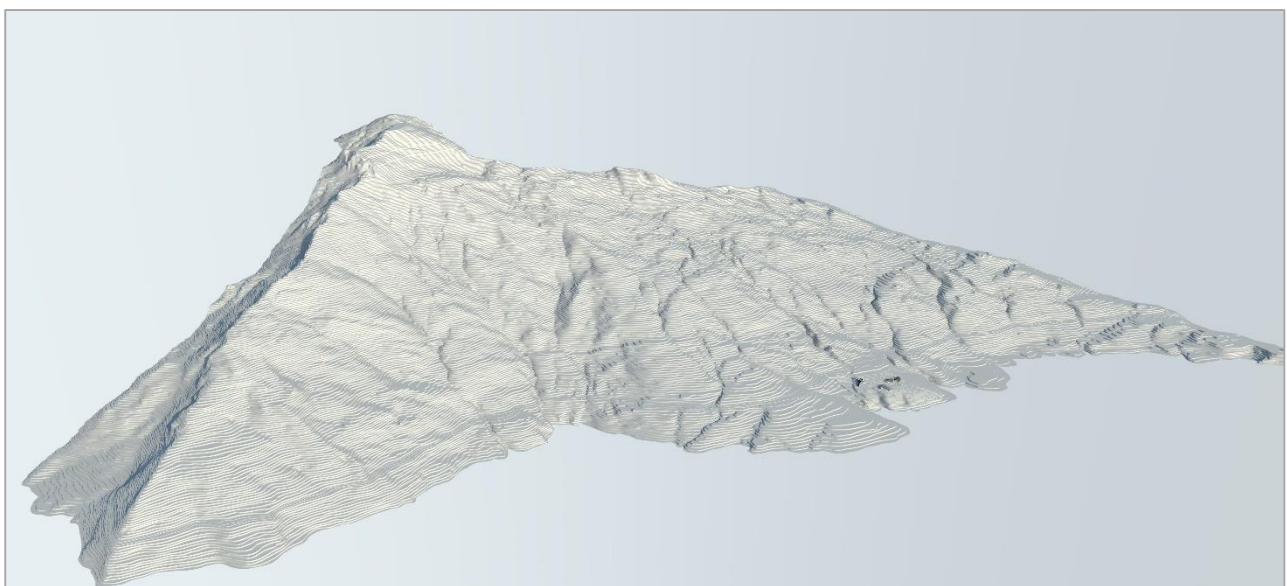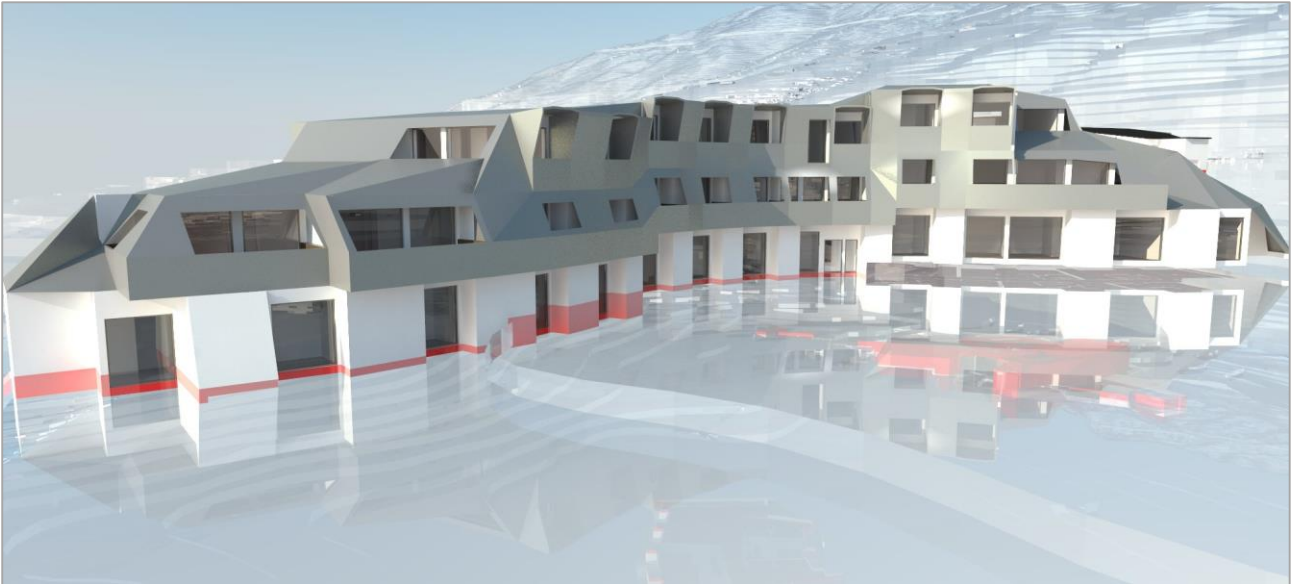

Figure 1

Figure 2

Figure 3