

Entrance gate to the park of “Gran Bosco” in Salbertrand: hypotesis of “re-use” of the fort of Sape’

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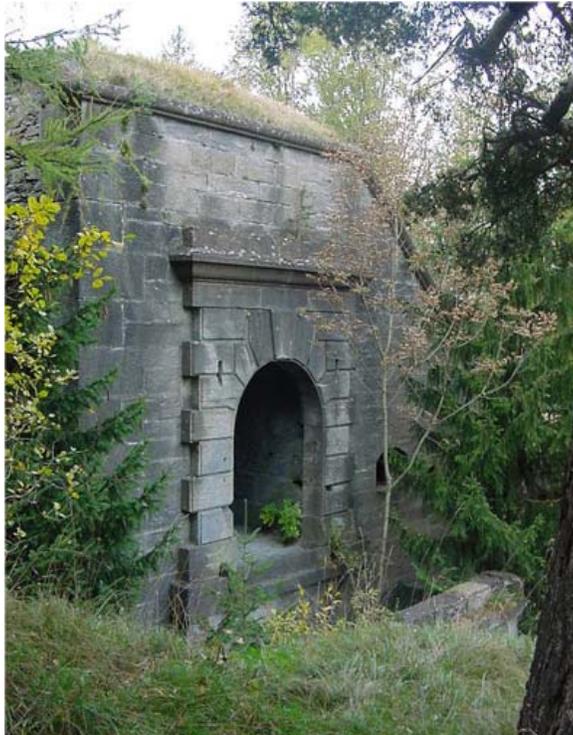
During the Academic Year 2001-2002, we attended our last workshop of architecture at university and after this experience, we chose the subject of our thesis.

The workshop proposed a theoretical reflection and an actual activity linked to the valorisation of contemporary architecture throughout the comparison of subjects such as history, technology, design and economic evaluation.

The idea of studying the battery set at Sapè was born by our deep passion for fortifications built up in the Valley of Susa. Our interests had grown up as we acknowledged how all these buildings had been abandoned and forgiven, leading to their progressive and continuous ruin.

The thesis develops more deeply the studies made during the workshop; its aim is to propose for the battery of Sapè the function of entrance gate to the park of “Gran Bosco” in Salbertrand, the function of “museum of its-own”, and that of halting-place along the path named “Sentiero dei Franchi”.

Studying a peculiar building, we would like to create a starting point for the “re-qualification” of the whole territory of the Valley: this could be done linking in various touristy and historical itineraries some other fortifications and that one at Sapè with the main forts.



We studied the matter from the point of view of different subjects: each one of them enlightened some key-points that conditioned our choices.

The historical chapter pointed out the importance of the Valley of Susa in military affairs as it belonged to a major defensive line (Fenestrelle-Assietta-Exilles): by this fact we justified a large intervention of “re-qualification”.

The architectural and geometrical relief, then, through a direct touch with the building, lead us to the more complete knowledge of it.

Petrography was the subject that most helped us to justify the conservation of Sapè: it allowed us to acknowledge the main characters of stones employed in its construction. By this data, we discovered the quarry of origin not far from the fort. After punctual analysis and checks made in laboratory, we defined the best interventions to do on stones.

The anthropological chapter, made by fragments of tales, allowed us to look at the territory as a puzzle of novels, defining a characteristic geography linked to imagination and local symbols.



After having established the interventions of conservation, the methods useful against humidity and finally having a good knowledge of the territory, the next step was to define the best activity to insert in a complex structure such as the battery of Sapè.

Among different functions, we considered that of “museum of its-own” and halting-place the best for a building that should be do **the entrance gate to the park of “Gran Bosco” in Salbertrand.**



We know that our design has got inevitably some strong points and others weaker, deriving from the fact that it is focused on a peculiar building even if it aims to involve the whole territory.

As strong points we can consider:

- the creation of an architectural and historical ambit, the only existing at the moment, that illustrate the settlement of fortifications on the Alps;
- the possibility of creating itineraries which spread over political borders;
- the valorisation of places avoided until now from tourist activities;
- cause it concern the re-use of existing buildings, the design has got a low impact on environment, at the same time it requests high concentration of human work;
- it allows to link different lands once joined in a hole territory.

As weak points we can consider:

- the lack in a deep knowledge of fortifications on the Alpes;
- loyal problems in defining the actual property of the buildings;
- problems linked to the accessibility to military paths, mostly caused by absence of upkeep.

Knowing that to be closed to reality our proposal would be complete only with others studies and an actual engagement, we can conclude our work wishing that an immediate intervention could stop the worst war these fortifications had never faced: the decay to a continuous ruin.

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