A museum: the Royal Complex of Turin, a matter of method and esteem
by Alessandra Merzagora
Tutor: Maria Grazia Vinardi
Co-tutor: Gennaro Napoli

The first step for a successful planning is a good knowledge of the territory in which one works. This is the direction towards which this academic thesis develops, a thesis which merges a thorough knowledge of the Turin city center and some hypothesis about new measures of intervention and development. Since several years, the panorama of Turin’s Cultural Heritages has demonstrated its will regarding the creation of a single Complex in the heart of the city. This creation envisages the union of some museums, which are spatially close. The Italian word Polo (which is translated here with the word Complex) has been adopted only recently with the purpose of defining this cultural unification. The museums that are included are: the Antiquities Museum (Museo delle Antichità), the Savoy’s New Gallery (Nuova Galleria Sabauda), which has been recently transferred in the new wing of the Royal Palace, the Royal Palace itself (Palazzo Reale), the Royal Armory (Armeria Reale), the Royal Library (Biblioteca Reale) and finally the Chiabese Palace (Palazzo Chiabese). This last one can be considered as the most relevant element of the Complex, since its first floor (which was once occupied by the National Museum of Cinema) has been designed for being the ticket office and the bookshop of the whole Complex. Following this path, the first goal of this dissertation is the one of making the cultural heritage comprehensible and communicable. Precisely, just a part of this heritage was considered and studied thanks to some useful tools, used firstly, to investigate the stratification of the structure and its transformation and secondly, to understand some objects, with which the beneficiaries are in contact with. The elaborate construction of this central area was verified and made comprehensible by examining in depth what is considered certain and what has been written by others before us.
At this point, it has been presented not only the development on a urban scale of a part of the city, which nowadays is considered central, but also a chronological analysis of it. This analysis started from documentary and bibliographic sources, which were used to create a critical collection for every single examined artifact. This led to the final result of the drafting of files concerning the historic buildings. This particular result can be considered as part of the second goal of this dissertation and it consists in the divulgation of the found and studied materials. This disclosure is addressed to an average audience, which appears to be interested in the history and the evolution of these buildings.
Then an informative database has been created, which contains the cataloguing of the whole museum area, divided into rooms for the Royal Palace and into exhibition spaces for the museums. The starting point was the first floor of the Royal Complex. It is interesting to notice that when the information becomes more substantial, it is possible to update gradually the cataloguing, adjoining the documentary research, which can be consulted by the audience, that in this way has the access to a broader range of publicity material. However, this database is accessible not only to the audience, but it could also be used in order to improve and simplify the management of the involved buildings.
Informative database. In particular, example of file regarding a type setting of the Royal Palace
Starting from an historic and critical idea of the examined architectures, the draft of this thesis led to the conclusion that the hypothesis of unification turns out to be interesting also from a critical point of view, since the buildings are not only linked by a spatial proximity. Currently, it is particularly important the transmission and the appreciation of this heritage, also in order to ensure a careful management, which is oriented on the one hand towards the conservation, and on the other hand towards the projected and accurate employment of the assets.

For further information, e-mail:
Alessandra Merzagora: alessandra.merzagora@gmail.com