



POLITECNICO
DI TORINO

Honors thesis

Master in Architecture Heritage Preservation and
Enhancement

Abstract

**The Cistercian abbey of Morimondo: church architecture.
Stratigraphic analysis and arches study**

Tutor/correlator

Silvia Beltramo

by

Martina Carle

February 2021

The subject of the thesis is the study of the architecture of the church of the abbey of S. Maria di Morimondo (MI), a Cistercian settlement of undisputed importance on the territory of northern Italy, where Lombard traditions and Gothic experimentation are deeply intertwined. The foundation of the monastery is attested to 1134 with direct filiation from the Morimond Mother Abbey, however, only two years later it was transferred to the current site. The aim of this survey is to investigate and clarify the phases of construction and transformation of the building by deepening the analysis of the built church, still little investigated. The stratigraphic analysis of the elevations and the study of the geometry of the arches are therefore key topic of this work, which analysis started during the internship activity carried out at the archaeological society F.T. Studio, thanks to which it was possible to acquire a greater knowledge of the architecture of the artifact and its characteristics, identified during the analysis of the survey. This thesis proposes, in the first place, a historical research on the foundation and development of the monastic complex, including the events related to the building of the church. In this work were also investigated the transformations of the medieval structure and particularly the restoration interventions through the study of the unpublished documents consulted in the archives of the *Soprintendenza Archeologia Belle arti e Paesaggio per la città metropolitana di Milano*. The information acquired through the bibliographic and archival research, which were fundamental to support the critical interpretation of the results obtained from the analysis of the built, have been collected and ordered within a historical-chronological framework. In this regard, the application of the methodology of analysis of the elevations has involved the study of the geometry of the arches of entrance to the chapels and of the central nave, with the aim of recognizing groups of homogeneous arches through the identification of analogies and differences between architectural elements whose repetitiveness within the building can be evidence of different construction phases. For the stratigraphic analysis, on the other hand, the external fronts of the church and the internal eastern front have been studied through the recognition of stratigraphic units, while the relative and absolute chronology readings of the apsidal area have been deepened, relating simultaneously the external and internal front. The interpretation, based on the documentary studies and on the analysis of the building, has made it possible to clarify the development of the ancient site, started in the second half of the twelfth century at the side bordering the monastery and advanced to the north, with an interruption and subsequent continuation of the construction site in correspondence with the springer of the southern transept and with the conclusion of the central apsidal front. Moreover, it has been possible to clarify the typology and the quality of the following interventions during Modern and Contemporary Age and to reconstruct the phases and transformations of the building that have now disappeared, with the hope that this survey and analysis can provide a contribution to research on the subject and provide the basis for further studies and insights of a monument with high historical and architectural potential.

For info:

martinacarle@hotmail.it

s257456@studenti.polito.it