



**Politecnico
di Torino**

Honors Thesis

Master in Architecture Heritage Preservation and Enhancement

Abstract

**THE GROWTH AND PROLIFERATION OF RELIGIOUS PLURALISM IN TURIN: THE ANALYSIS
AND PLACE-MAPPING OF AN UNDECLARED PHENOMENON OVER A CENTURY**

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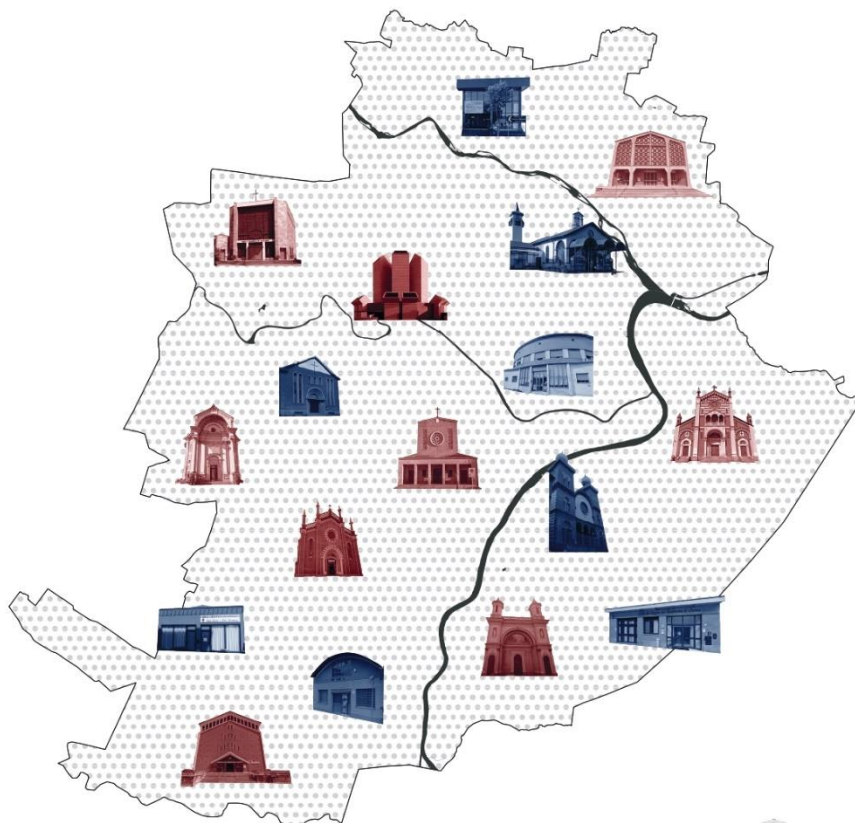
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From the latter nineteenth century on, Turin has been a destination for immigration that has led to a plurality of cultural traits and communities. The city has proved to be a breeding ground for religions and spiritual movements that took root there. At the present, Turin hosts Catholic churches and a variety of places reflecting the practice of other religions and spiritual forms. This thesis starts from the data collected by the Center for Studies on New Religions (CESNUR) and the Observatory of Religious Pluralism (OPR). In the first part of this thesis, 159 catholic churches and 161 places of worship of other religions and spiritual movements were identified and located on maps, divided into five religious macro-categories on the basis of the subdivision made by the OPR: Protestantism (86), forms of Judeo-Christian origin (30), forms of Eastern origin (23), forms of Western origin (4), and Islam (18). This thesis reports a historical overview of the legislation on religious buildings starting from the promulgation of the Albertine Statute (1848) up to the most recent regional laws, with special reference to legislation in Piedmont. In almost all cases, the various religious and spiritual movements settled in the urban fabric in contexts originally intended for other functions (garages, residences, ex-factories, courtyards of residences). In the second part of the thesis, the places of worship are related to the context of the city from 1861 until the present. Immigration began to be particularly disruptive after the World War II as a result of massive migratory waves from Italian regions that allowed the growth of religious and spiritual forms different from Catholicism. Along with the de-industrialization process beginning with the 1990s, Catholic religious places crystallized within the urban fabric that had been consolidated with post-war reconstruction while alternative places hosting other religious and spiritual forms proliferated markedly. The most recent migratory waves and their consequent increase in urbanization have also led to the formation of cultural groups marked by ideologies based on themes ignored by historical religions as well as the appearance of typical non-European religions such as Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism. The third part of the thesis consists in an in-depth analysis of ten non-Catholic places of worship. These places can be considered particularly important because of their location, evolutionary and architectural characteristics, religious macro-categories, community membership, on-going activities and available archival documentation. This part also attempts to compare two case studies that present major differences at an evolutionary, compositional, architectural and community level: the case studies of the Apostolic Church in via Caluso (Circoscrizione 5, Madonna di Campagna) and the Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses in via degli Artisti (Circoscrizione 7, Vanchiglia). This comparison attempts to help deepen the understanding of an apparently undeclared cultural phenomenon that is so complex it needs to be tackled using interdisciplinary tools and that plays too limited a role in the studies dedicated to the contemporary city and architecture in Italy and elsewhere. The multifunctionality of these places – the various social, educational and cultural roles they play – can provide us with interesting ideas for measuring, studying and fostering pluralism and inclusiveness in the contemporary city.

Marco Celenza

**CRESCITA E BOOM DEL PLURALISMO RELIGIOSO A TORINO:
ANALISI E MAPPATURA DEI LUOGHI DI UN FENOMENO SOMMERSO
ATTRAVERSO UN SECOLO**



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