



POLITECNICO
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Honors thesis

COURSE OF ARCHITECTURE CONSTRUCTION CITY

Abstract

**Knowledge, conservation and development of
abandoned villages. The forgotten city of Noto.**

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The abandoned villages are small forgotten cities, actually surviving on the margins of everyday life in the silence brought by the disinterest of people and institutions; however, the phenomenon of so-called "ghost towns" puts in front of a situation of loss of architectural and cultural heritage continues to increase. This is the starting point of this thesis, which aims to investigate a little known subject, on which the bibliography and research material in short supply, in order to arrive at some practical considerations about the future of these places. Starting from the study of the limited sources, it has been realized a mapping and cataloging of 195 abandoned villages on the Italian territory, which represented a good basis for reflection. The analysis of this series has been able to investigate the causes of the phenomenon and developments, until you get to propose some types of intervention possible.



Fig.1_ Map indicating the 195 abandoned villages encountered and cataloged on the Italian territory, by region.

The second part of the research deals with the question under the theme of the legislation: it has been addressed to the study of the legal references on the protection and enhancement of these places, starting from the indications of an international character until you get the specific field of regional relevance.

The core of the thesis is represented, however, the investigation of a case study, used as an example to propose transactions that could constitute an intervention method of similar enterprises. The choice fell on Ancient Noto, in Sicily, the city destroyed by the 1693 earthquake and forgotten for centuries on top of Mount Alveria, a few kilometers from the current city of Noto, famous throughout the world as inserted, along with other seven cities in the Val di Noto rebuilt after the earthquake, in the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2002. The special, which led to decide for the study of this abandoned village, it is the proximity of this unknown heritage with the city considered one of the "pearls of the Baroque", a tourist destination internationally and protected by larger institutions.



Fig.2_ Carving a panoramic view of Noto Antica reproduced from a lost original.

Noto Antica has distant origins of which are still visible traces in the territory, and it was during the different epochs an important center of the Val di Noto because of its position in commercial and administrative level. The 1693 earthquake destroyed turning it into a set of ruins and rubble. The new city was built in a different place and following the contemporary architectural style of the time. Since that time the ancient city has turned into a "ghost town", a victim of vandalism and decay that followed the devastation. Used for years as a grazing area in the Eighteenth Century was given in perpetual lease to individuals who left terrible traces of their passage. Even today it is abandoned, forgotten by the institutions, too busy to extol the beauties of the new city to understand that among those ruins lies a huge resource of the territory. Some areas are still waiting the expropriation by the municipality, while the approval of the archaeological restrictions, in 1979, represented the first step in the re-appropriation by the population of the place. The thesis was carried out following three stages of analysis: the knowledge, the conservation and the enhancement.

The first made it possible to build a solid foundation of investigation, which is still difficult delineation given the lack of historical and bibliographical sources. Starting from the knowledge of the territory and its history, and based on the investigation carried out at the site, it was possible to advance the considerations of the state of preservation and enhancement of the current. The proposed action is part of a reality in which there was no major excavations and almost non-existent are the reliefs. The awareness of the great archaeological heritage and landscape of Noto Antica has led to proposals for the creation of an Archaeological Park of Alveria: the aim is to implement interventions designed to preserve the ruins and the security of the area, in order to arrive at the creation of facilities and services that can allow the place to become a tourist and cultural destination in the relevant territory.

The current Noto that we all know has distant origins, in the "bare stone" resting silent in the place where the earthquake has broken, as if on top of that mountain the time had stopped in 1693, and waits for someone to start write a new story fragment.

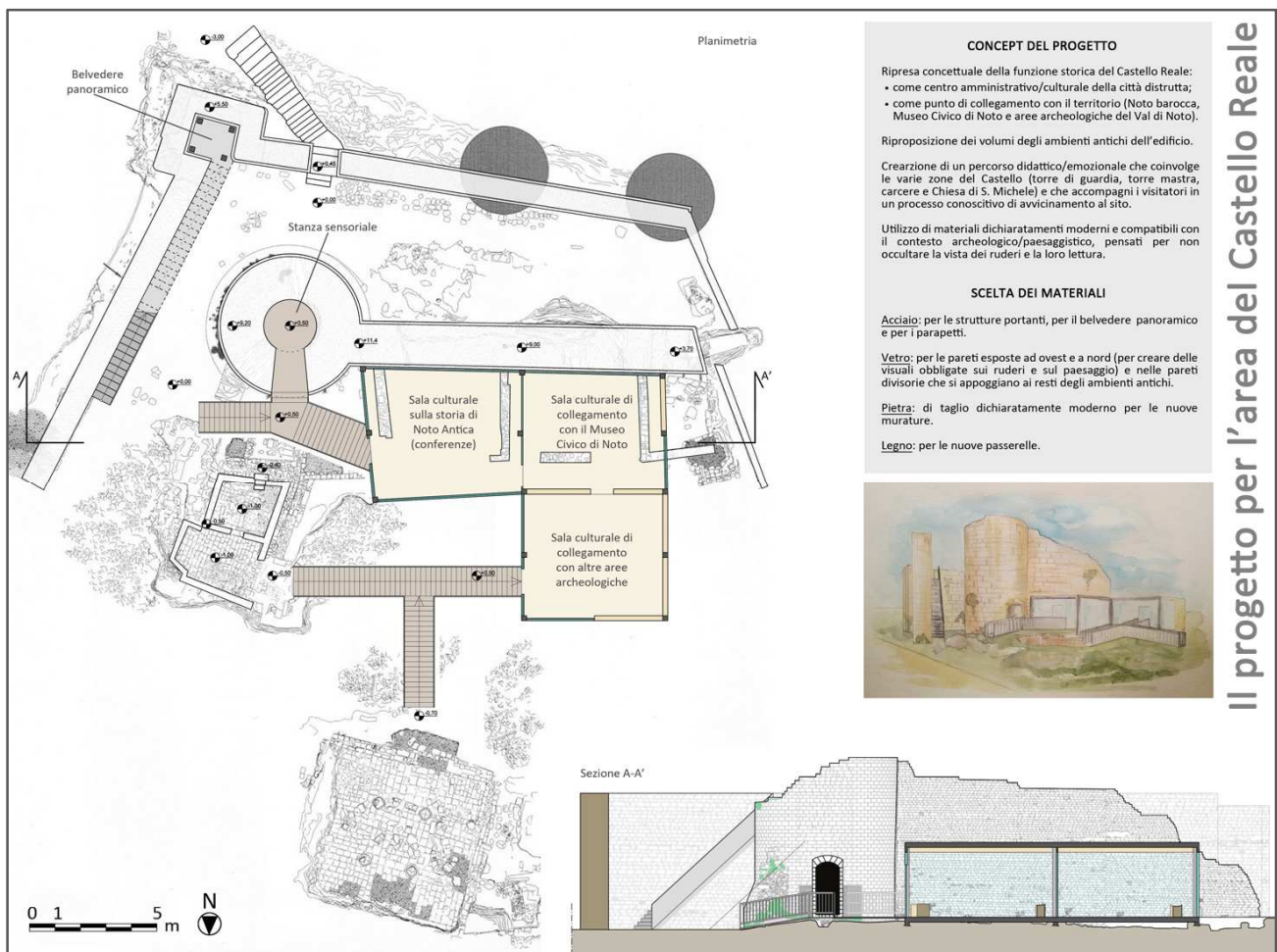


Fig.3_ Representation of the project of old-new dialogue for the area of the Royal Castle.

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