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Gozzani Palace in Casale

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The treaty of Utrecht in 1713 sanctions the handing over of powers between the Gonzagas and the Savoias. In the picture of Savoia's expansionism, Casale was a strategic point in the hand of the enemy, but the characters of centrality towards the area, which was historically bound to Casale, were extinguishing as many domains of Monferrato were integrated in Savoy Reign.

For almost all the Seventeenth century there is not an excessive building redevelopment in Casale but we must remember that the city played the role of stronghold after the annexation of Monferrato to Gonzaga's domains in 1564 and that the construction of the cittadella began towards the end of the century and ended in 1612.

The coming of the new monarchs and political stability in Casale brought about a big building rebirth. At the same time, a renewed agriculture politics radically modified the housing boom dynamics of the provinces. The transfer of the titles of nobility, with the rights of domain, and a fiscal politics that damaged the old nobility, involved a subdivision of the large estates which were owned till that time by few noble families from the high class and encouraged the birth of a new social class in the provinces. The searching of social affirmation of this rising class deeply concerned the fabric of the cities that had to fulfil a demand of residential districts and of representation.

The try of this new nobility gave impulse and vitality to that lucky season of architecture of Casale that lasted all the Eighteenth Century. The singularity of the constructive politics in Casale consists in appearing as the result of the sum of spontaneous social-economic necessities, more than a try of a town planning organisation.

The shapes of the buildings show traces of strong links with the Mantovano and only after half of the Eighteenth Century we can see that Casale will come close to the architectural styles that we can find in the Savoy capital.

At the beginning of the century, the structure of the city, which was still medieval, had a big development with many interventions where we can notice that an urban scale drawing is missing.

The redevelopment building of Casale has a characteristic; the architectural intervention which looks like a replacing of some bodies of fabric existing before, rather than build new mansions. Between the Castle and the Dome there is the nerve centre of the city where there are settled a lot of administrative and commercial activity. In Mameli Street there are the greatest reorganized noble buildings, which at that time were near the places of city power. Above all, there were a lot of free lands that permitted grandiose designs. The Nineteenth Century is the period where the Gozzanis touched the greatest magnificence and deeply marked the history of Casale. Giovan Battista Gozzani was the greatest figure of that period; in 1765-1776 he was Decurion and Mayor of Casale. He entrusted di Robilant with a project for the construction of his new mansion in 1778: di Robilant made a fast career for one self in the Civil Service and made a lot of projects; this increased his prestige at Court. Thanks to this fame he knew the Marquis Gozzani of S. Giorgio. If we exclude some town planning projects, S. Giorgio Palace is the last work of di Robilant.



In this work we can find all the styles of that period , where an apathetic Baroque was replaced a stimulating neoclassic experience : the disposition of volumes, the disposition of spaces and the decoration show the new language of the official architecture but the disposition of the great staircase moved away from the models people knew at that time.

The general establishment of Gozzani Palace of S.Giorgio is not different from those of the other noble mansions of Casale: a sleeve joins the dwelling houses to the service rooms and to the stables, the courtyard is divided from the rustic façade by a building, the representation zones and the flat for the guests and that for the landlord are rich in frescos, unlike the daily rooms; even on the ground floor there are flats for noble families. Even if Gamba di Perosa Palace is similar to the project of 1759, it's in Casale that the architect shows his self- confidence in the solutions: we can remember the accentuation of the centrality which is got underlining the big window that surmounts the main door entrance, the rhythm of the pilasters which organized the windows giving agility to the façade, the attention to the lighting with the vaulted entrance- hall which got light to mark the entrance.

The fragmentary of the archive of the familiy largely lost, didn't supply enough material to know why the works interrupted. We can surely say that the realisation is incomplete. So, we lose that unit sense, that harmony in the construction that we can find in the drawing of di Robilant risking to emphasize only the details and not the general plant of the work. The palace, all the historians agree, is the best realisation of this brilliant spokesman of the subalpine school, the winning post of an artist " born gueriniiano and come at the thresholds of the Neoclassicism" ,a great contribution to that that period of transition which was going to the end of the Nineteenth Century.

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