

Public and private bodies in the enhancement of architectural and environmental resources. The application of Conjoint Analysis to a "conservation" hypothesis for Venaria Reale Castle

by Verderone Giuseppe and Villata Daniele
Supervisors: Rocco Curto, Mario Dalla Costa

The thesis was based on the conviction that the conservation of the cultural heritage cannot leave aside the contribution of economic disciplines; for this purpose, the potential value of a marketing forecasting technique (Conjoint Analysis) was assessed in relation to hypotheses for the re-use of the emblematic Venaria Reale Castle.

The application of Conjoint Analysis for the first time to a historical monument required the development of innovative methodological instruments, both in the formulation of activities for re-use and to verify the compatibility of pre-existing structures with the new functional purposes.

The thesis was divided into two parts: the first part was more theoretical and general, and the second of an applicative nature.



The Castle of Venaria Reale. General view.

FIRST PART

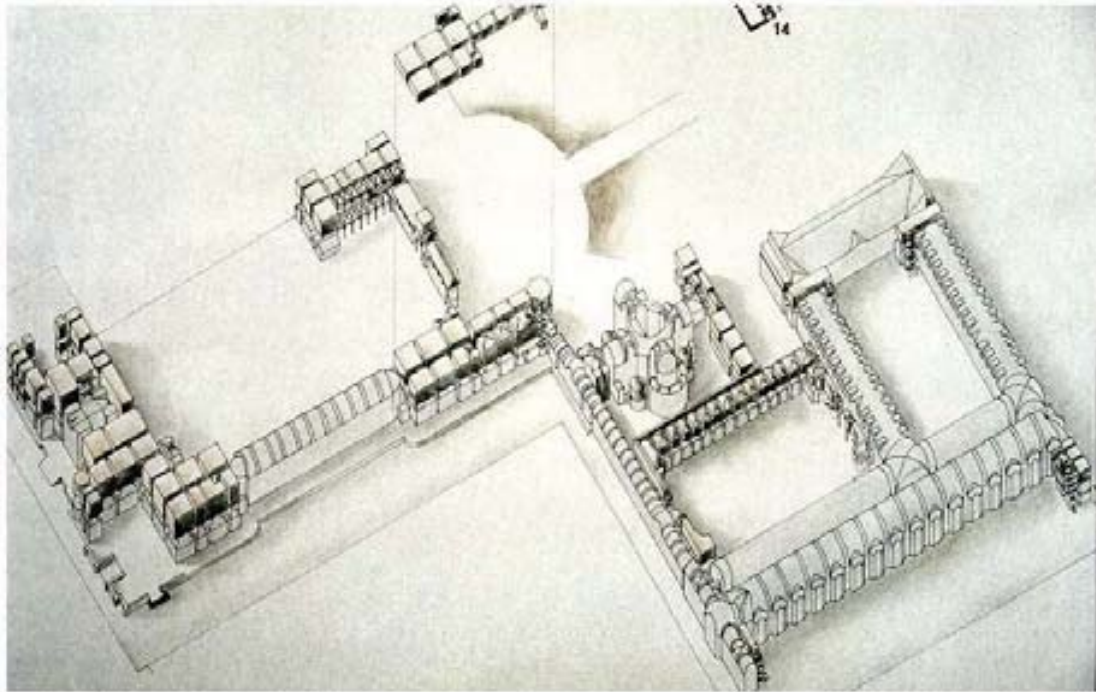
The concept of a cultural asset provided the starting point for an analysis of cultural policies and the relationship between public and private bodies involved in the conservation of historical monuments, for which the more reliable techniques of economic evaluation were outlined.

In view of the outstanding cultural importance of Venaria Castle, the thesis tackled the question of the re-use of historical monuments, focusing on the guidelines laid down by the Charters of Restoration, and on the problems regarding the compatibility between the historical, esthetic, structural and distributive characteristics of the monument in question and the hypotheses for new activities to be located there.

Subsequently, the concept of enhancement emerged. In this context an important role was played by the museum as an instrument for the re-vitalisation of monumental "containers". An analysis of cultural, national and local consumption in the various sectors (museum, theatre, music, cinema, sport, other leisure activities) allowed the proposed new uses of Venaria Castle to be optimised by producing a realistic photograph of the effective demand for cultural activities. The first part of the thesis ended with a general discussion of Conjoint Analysis. It was first developed in U.S.A. (1965) and is generally applied to expendable consumer goods. It is based on the definition of a series of alternative characteristics (functional uses, in this case) of the product in question which are combined together to produce several different profiles which are then submitted to a sample population of potential users who express their preferences. The processing of the data (output) gives the level of utility of each of the characteristics examined.

SECOND PART

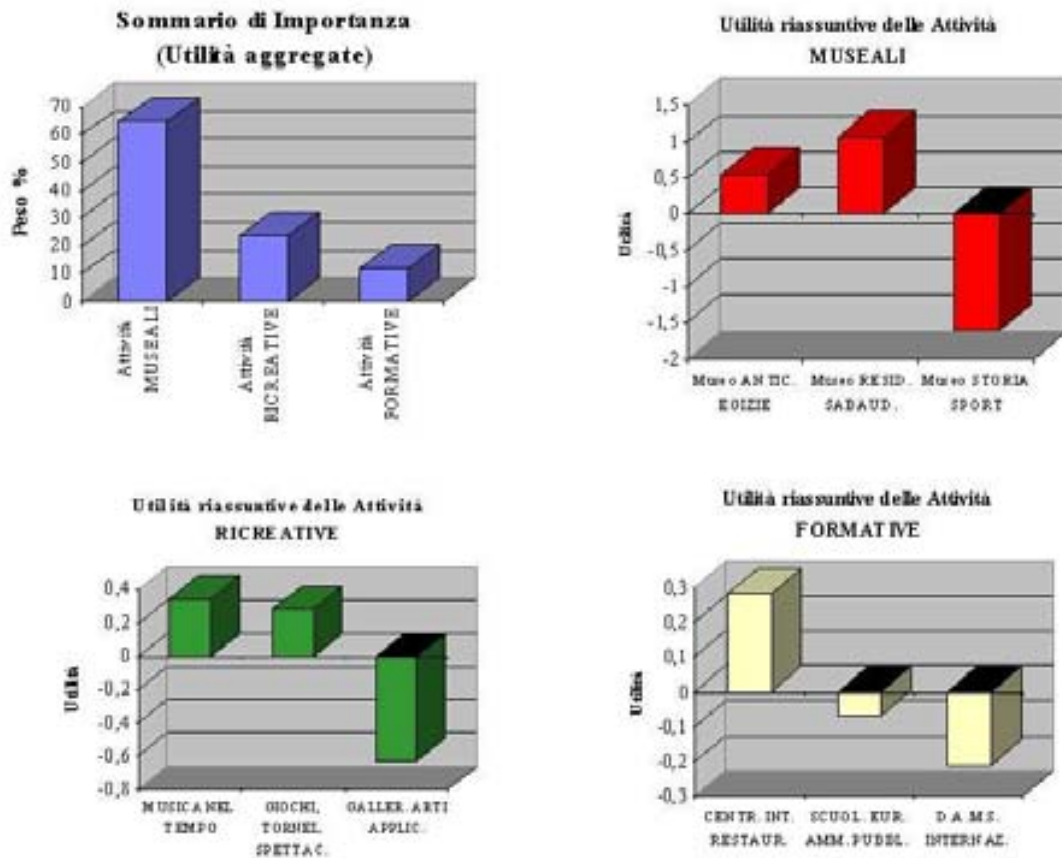
The applicative procedure consisted, on the one hand, of a reading of the building layers of the Royal Palace and the identification of the architectonic and distributive features of the building, and on the other the identification of functional activities for the re-use of the castle. The latter were divided into the following activities: museum, leisure and training.



Volumetric analysis of the complex

Three specific alternatives were proposed for each of the three activity groups (some of these were conceived by us, others arose from the public debate on the re-use of the Castle). The museum activities included: the Egyptian Museum, the Museum of Savoy Residences and the Museum of the History of Sport; as leisure activities: Games and Tournaments of the Past, Music in Time, and the Gallery of Applied Arts; as training activities: the International Centre for Restoration, the European School of Public Administration, D.A.M.S. International.

CONJOINT ANALYSIS enabled these alternative uses to be translated into 11 offer profiles (each profile is the semi-casual combination of one museum activity + one leisure activity + one training activity) which were listed in order of preference by a statistical sample of 400 individuals (interviewed at La Mandria Park).



Output of CONJOINT ANALYSIS survey

The output underlined that museum activities were preferred by 64.5% of those interviewed, whereas the ideal profile (highest degree of utility) was made up as follows: Museum of Savoy Residences, Music in Time and the Centre for Restoration. On the basis of these preferences and compatibility with the existing structures, the authors arrived at two *metaproject* proposals. The first envisaged the transfer of the Egyptian Museum, which would share the premises with Music in Time and the School of Public Administration; the second proposal consisted of the Museum of Savoy Residences together with Games and Tournaments of the Past, and the Centre for Restoration. In both cases premises were included for commercial services, catering, management and reception.

In conclusion, the thesis confirms the successful combination of forecasting techniques and restoration methodologies and foresees the positive and effective development of this combination in the re-use of cultural assets.

For further information, Giuseppe Verderone, e-mail: archiver@tin.it