

The urban parks of Jülich and Lucca. Demolition and preservation of the fortified systems "*alla moderna*"

by Claudia Fantino

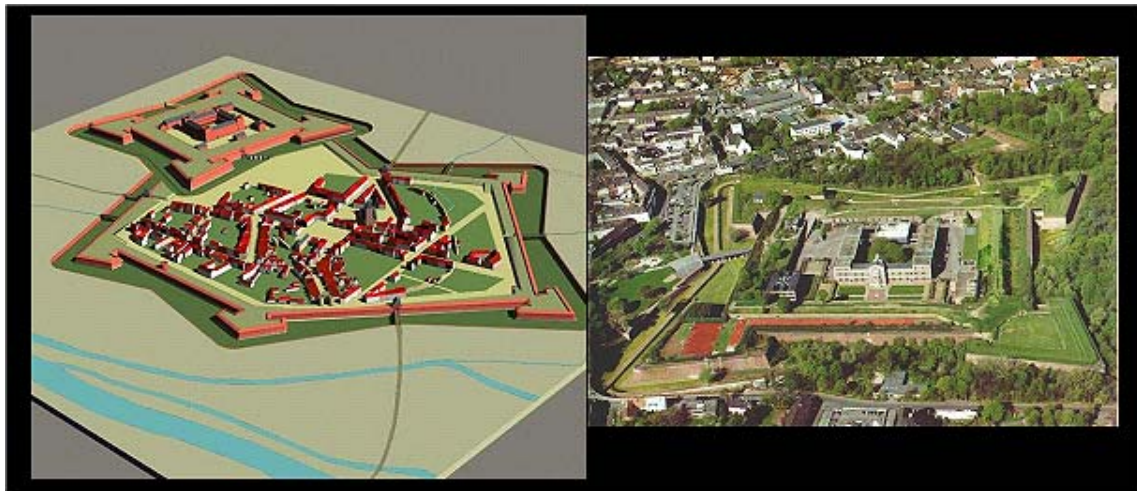
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This research paper compares the close links between two examples of European architecture considered to be typical of their differing cultural contexts.

The two constructions taken into consideration are examples of fortified systems built in the same historical period, according to projects by Italian architects, but on geographically different territories: one in the State of the Low Rhine, in Germany, and the other in the Regional State of Tuscany.

The research focuses on the different approach of the two European countries and in particular the towns of Jülich and Lucca, towards fortified systems. In fact, despite the fact that they were founded under similar conditions, during the XIXth century these fortified systems reached very different stable relationships with their territorial, social and cultural context.

It is important to underline that this comparison concerns the complete fortified system, since the walls in Jülich were demolished, and only the nucleus of the fortress remains preserved.



The fortified system of Jülich before and after the demolition of the ring of the wall

The fortress of Jülich was chosen because it represents one of the best preserved examples of Italian fortified architecture "*alla moderna*" (according to the Italian style of the XVIth century) ever built in Europe, a style that is almost unknown in Italy. Besides, Jülich shares with Lucca a vocation as urban park that developed only at the end of the XXth century in the German territory, while it was already present in the XIXth century in Italy.



The urban park of Jülich

In fact, the second object of the study, the City Walls of Lucca, are an exemplary Italian case of a fortified town that has not been demolished, and an emblematic example of an urban park at European level.



The fortified system und urban park of Lucca

The purpose of this study is to compare two realities of fortified systems that, in practice, have never been used for their defensive function and have been developed, although in different ways, as urban parks. These objectives have been dealt with by multiple analysis:

1. A comparison between the respective constructional systems and the different approaches used in dealing with the problems related to the process of 'defortification' and to the diachronic development of the walls and the fortified systems (underlining on the one hand the reasons that led to the transformation of Lucca from fortified place into urban park, and on the other the reasons that have not allowed a similar process to develop in Jülich, but have led to a parallel phenomenon in only a single part of the fortified system, such as the Napoleonic bridgehead).
2. The analysis of the differing past and contemporary, German and Italian approaches to the issue of the restoration of fortresses, within the context of the latest International Restoration Charters and the different methods of the restoration used during the last fifty years of the XXth century.
3. The comparison of the concluding arguments of the planners of the major restoration works in order to define and clarify the differences between the current situations of these fortified urban parks in Germany and Italy.

The close and unusual link between these two situations has been addressed for the first time in this dissertation and extended in the significant documentary appendix, by the biography of the Italian architect Alessandro Pasqualini, the Bolognese designer of the sixteenth-century fortified system of Jülich previously unknown in Italy. One of the aims of such dissertation, written in collaboration with German professors, architects and engineers, is to promote the reputation of this Italian architect, who worked mostly in The Netherlands and in Germany, in his own country.

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