

POLITECNICO DI TORINO
FIRST SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE
Master of Science in Architecture
Honors theses

Jews in the city of Turin: the ghetto

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This thesis collects all the documentation regarding the ghetto of Torino (1679-1848) from the point of view of its architecture and its urban inclusion, focusing both on the process of construction of the quarter, which is still present today, like a tangible and material expression of a tragic memory that still survives despite all the vicissitudes that risked its conservation, and on its architectonic history, from the abolition of the ghetto until today.



The facade of the Old Ghetto

From the perspective of a historian of architecture, archives documents and the existing documentation on the subject have been filtered and observed with a different magnifying lens, which has produced additional information to the ones available on the topic till now. Innovative contents in this thesis mainly deal with a deeper study on the former structure of the quarter, by means of a research carried on documents of the “*Archivio Storico della Città di Torino*” (ASCT), which has allowed the reconstruction of the historical stratification of the single buildings of the ghetto.



New front in the ghetto

An additional innovative content consists in the presentation of inedited iconographical documents, drawn up during the French occupation of the Savoyard Reign, during which the Hebrews live a First Emancipation such that the ghetto was dismissed and put up for sale.

A third brand new topic is represented by the research led on the architectonic story of the quarter, from the abolition of the forced ghetto (1848) until today. Starting from the Report of Estimate, which rescued the buildings from demolition in favour of an urban re-qualification, it continues with the analysis of the enclosures of the *Catasto Gatti* of the ASCT, which has brought to the finding of a new planimetry of the quarter, never cited in other studies on the subject.

The research includes the presentation of the projects for restructuration of the single building lots, presented to the Commune and kept in the town archives, with the addition of a study on war damages described in the “*fondo UPA*” of the “*Archivio Storico*” of Torino, and of rebuilding works after the 2nd World War, which complete the picture of the architectonical transformations of the buildings of the quarter.



One of the gates of the Ghetto Vecchio

The photographic study on what is still up of the two blocks of the ghetto of Torino, adds the last brick to the knowledge of a story which has not ended up with the opening of the gates and the freeing of the Hebrews, but keeps on going on through the conservation of the Hebrew marks in Torino, represented not only by the Mole Antonelliana and the synagogue, which are symbols of the freedom of religion recently acquired, but also through the symbols of constriction and forced residence in a well defined, limited and watched over place, where individual freedoms of expression and integration with the rest of the population were forbidden.

This thesis has been carried on archive documents, some of which are new and inedited and on documents on the subject of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, mainly of sociological and historical kind.

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