

ITALY

Residences of the Royal House of Savoy

Brief description

When Emmanuel-Philibert, Duke of Savoy, moved his capital to Turin in 1562, he began a vast series of building projects (continued by his successors) to demonstrate the power of the ruling house. This outstanding complex of buildings, designed and embellished by the leading architects and artists of the time, radiates out into the surrounding countryside from the Royal Palace in the 'Command Area' of Turin to include many country residences and hunting lodges.

1. Introduction

Year(s) of Inscription 1997

Agency responsible for site management

- Regional Directorate for Piedmont's Cultural Heritage and Landscape
Ministry of Cultural Heritage
Piazza San Giovanni 2
10122 Torino
Piedmont, Italy
E-mail: m.turetta@piemonte.beniculturali.it

2. Statement of Significance

Inscription Criteria C (i), (ii), (iv), (v)

Justification provided by the State Party

Le Palazzo Reale avec les édifices de la "zone de commandement" et le complexe des villas extra urbaines pour le "divertissement et la chasse" constituent un bien culturel de valeur universelle, témoignage matériel du rôle primaire attribué à l'urbanistique et à l'architecture de la maison des Savoie à l'appui de l'engagement politique et militaire qui la portera, au cours de trois siècles, du duché de Savoie au trône de l'Italie Unie.

La monarchie absolue affirme, avec le Palais turinois auquel se joignent les édifices destinés aux fonctions du gouvernement et avec les résidences extra urbaines, sa présence et son modèle de gestion du territoire.

La capitale s'organise et se développe sur les axes définis par la "zone de commandement", les villas

la cendrent, formant une "couronne de délices" qui dessine la campagne et protège des prétentions du patriciat subalpin.

L'avoir confié la tâche de la réalisation à des artistes qui ont marqué l'histoire de la culture européenne et le rôle revêtu par la dynastie des Savoie et par le Piémont dans le vieux continent, renforcent la valeur sur-nationale de cette partie du patrimoine historique et artistique de la région.

Les autres capitales européennes, bien que caractérisées singulièrement par des présences monumentales même plus considérables, n'ont pas été marquées par un phénomène aussi important à l'échelle nationale, développé avec une continuité tout à fait logique pendant une si longue période de temps.

39.i : Le paysage plus identifiable est celui mieux défini, conçu et fait intentionnellement par l'homme, celui donc qui comprend les paysages de jardins et de parc créés pour des raisons esthétiques souvent associés à constructions ou complexes religieux.

As provided in ICOMOS evaluation

Qualities: The Residences of the Royal House of Savoy are an extensive body of buildings which provide an important and detailed chapter in European architecture. They also offer examples of rich painted and carved interior decors in many of the residences, and have finally found their place in the roll of important gardens. The series of residences emphasizes the immense work of creation and homogenization, ornamentation and improvement, carried out in the course of a "Baroque episode" spanning the 17th and 18th centuries. The Dukes of Savoy had a sense of continuity and a long-term vision in terms of architecture. These two virtues give very striking visual and stylistic cohesion to the functional rigour of the palaces and villas. They also make these buildings one of the most complete and prestigious examples of the strategies and styles of the European Baroque. These palaces and villas are all of consistently high quality, and in some cases they may be considered to be outstanding. Over many decades they brought together a chain of the most outstanding architects, from Ascanio Vitozzi to Alfieri via Castellamonte, Guarini, and Juvarra, the quality and excellence of who is proclaimed by their projects and by their present condition.

They constitute a dynastic heritage that is both complex and unitary. It is a true symbiosis between culture and nature through its mastery of urban space and its planning of vast tracts of countryside.

Recommendation: That this property be inscribed on the World Heritage List on the basis of criteria (i), (ii), (iv), and (v):

The Residences of the Royal House of Savoy in and around Turin represent a comprehensive overview of European monumental architecture in the 17th and 18th centuries, using style, dimensions, and space to illustrate in an exceptional way the prevailing doctrine of absolute monarchy in material terms.

Committee Decision

Bureau (June 1997): The Bureau recommended the Committee to inscribe this site on the World Heritage List on the basis of cultural criteria (i), (ii), (iv) and (v). The Residences of the Royal House of Savoy in and around Turin represent a comprehensive overview of European monumental architecture in the 17th and 18th centuries, using style, dimensions, and space to illustrate in an exceptional way the prevailing doctrine of absolute monarchy in material terms.

Session (1997): The Committee decided to inscribe this property on the basis of criteria (i), (ii), (iv) and (v), considering that the Residences of the Royal House of Savoy in and around Turin represent a comprehensive overview of European monumental architecture in the 17th and 18th centuries, using style, dimensions, and space to illustrate in an exceptional way the prevailing doctrine of absolute monarchy in material terms.

- Statement of Significance adequately defines the outstanding universal value of the site
- No change required

Boundaries and Buffer Zone

- Status of boundaries of the site: inadequate
- In 1997 only the boundaries of the building were graphically designed. In the description of the assets listed clear reference was also made to the appurtenances, and, as a whole the asset "introduces the concept of the designed cultural landscape". Even following the restoration work currently in progress which also regards the areas surrounding the residences, the perimeters have been more specifically defined including within them the park and garden areas which still reflect the original value of historic gardens built at the same time as the Residences
- Buffer zone: no buffer zone has been defined; further work needed

- For each of the Residences the legal system for the protection of the neighbouring area has been verified and where such does not offer sufficient guarantees the same constraints have been (or are in the course of being) extended in accordance with the Legislative Decree of 2004. Moreover, many of the residences are in areas which are protected at a regional level or which border on park areas

Status of Authenticity/Integrity

- World Heritage site values have been maintained
- The residences of the Royal House of Savoy are undeniably authentic
- As things stand at present no work or alterations are planned which may compromise the integrity of the sites. All the measures needed to ensure that the integrity of the sites is safeguarded have been adopted at a national and regional level as well as with the single (public or private) bodies to whom the assets have been entrusted

3. Protection

Legislative and Administrative Arrangements

- Legislative Decree 22 January 2004, no 42. Cultural Heritage and Landscape Code, in accordance with art. 10 of L.6 July 2002, n° 137. The Residences have all been identified as part of the cultural heritage and therefore benefit from protective legislation, they are either owned by the state or by public bodies or are inalienable
- The protection arrangements are considered sufficiently effective

4. Management

Use of site/property

- Visitor attraction. Currently the Residences are museum premises or the premises of institutional activities

Management /Administrative Body

- Steering group; formally constituted. Function: Definition of the planned management model for the Venaria Reale complex and the Royal Residences of the House of Savoy in Piedmont; mandate: Assessment of the repair and restoration projects for the Residences; the predisposition of a communication plan; the planning of a network of services common to the system; supervision of the implementation of the project

- Management under protective legislation; under contractual agreement between the State Party and a third party
- Site manager with responsibilities added to an existing work
- Levels of public authority who are primarily involved with the management of the site: national; regional; local
- The current management system is sufficiently effective

5. *Management Plan*

- Management plan under preparation
- Responsibility for over-seeing the implementation of the management plan and monitoring its effectiveness: Piedmont Regional Authority; Regional Directorate of Piedmont's Cultural Heritage and Landscape, Ministry of Cultural Heritage

6. *Financial Resources*

Financial situation

- State Budget; Regional Funds
- Banking Foundations
- Sufficient

7. *Staffing Level*

Rate of access to adequate professional staff across the following disciplines:

- Very good: conservation, interpretation, education
- Good: management, promotion, visitor management
- In some sites (Palazzo Reale, Venaria Reale, Castello di Moncalieri etc.) voluntary associations have been working jointly with the State, Region or Municipality for many years

8. *Sources of Expertise and Training in Conservation and Management Techniques*

- At Turin Polytechnic, II Faculty of Architecture, there is a Degree Course in "The history and conservation of architectural and environmental heritage" leading to the specialist degree in "Architecture for the restoration and valorisation of architectural and environmental heritage". In addition, there is the II level Master from the Polytechnic of Turin, "Management of Cultural and Environmental Heritage". From an operative point of view a special office has

been set up within the Piedmont Regional Authority to deal with the monitoring and gathering of site documentation and the elaboration of scientific and technical data as well as the administration of the sites of Venaria Reale and, in the future, of the other Residences

- The conservation and restoration work undertaken is based on patient stratigraphic research, archive studies, scientific analysis, and the analysis of structures. The work is also designed in some cases to bring to light elements that had been hidden by previous refurbishments and to correct some previous building work
- Training available for stakeholders

9. *Visitor Management*

- Visitor statistics: 648.253 (Piedmont Cultural Observatory. Only the museum sites regularly open to the public have been named), 2003
- Visitor facilities: services available in each of the Residences open to the public: Area of command Palazzo Chiabrese: guided tours available – booking required; Palazzo Reale formerly Palazzo Vecchio, then Palazzo San Giovanni: bookshop exhibition areas conference rooms/ congress premises guided tours; Teatro Regio: guided tours; Archivi di Corte: photocopying, conference/congress areas, teaching workshop, guided tours, facilitated access; Armeria Reale, Biblioteca Reale: museum, season ticket, tourist card, entrance free of charge Residences inside and outside the city; Palazzo Madama: guided tours free on Sundays temporary exhibitions where compatible with restoration work; Palazzo Carignano: Facilitated access explanations for the non-sighted audio-guides; Castello della Mandria: guided tours of the park, guided tours of the Castle hamlet, Agliè Castle, Govone Castle, Moncalieri Castle. Racconigi Castle: refreshment area conference/congress facilities guided tours cafeteria exhibition area teaching workshop small train; Rivoli Castle: guided tours and upon booking library and video-library facilitated access theatre multifunctional area coffee shop restaurant shuttle service; Castello di Venaria Reale: bookshop guides souvenir shop exhibition areas guided tours; Castello di Racconigi: museum; Castello di Rivoli: bookshop and reading rooms consultation of telematic services museum
- Visitor needs: It would be necessary to estimate site by site as regards the progress of

restoration work and the areas which can be visited by the public

10. Scientific Studies

- Risk assessment; Studies related to the value of the site; Monitoring exercises; Condition surveys; Impact of World Heritage designation; Archaeological surveys; visitor management; transportation studies
- The “model” site is Venaria Reale, the most difficult in terms of size, of the funds used and of the technical, scientific and administrative staff specifically employed
- The designation of the asset as a World Heritage site appears constantly as a foreword in all the deliberations of the Piedmont Regional Authority and the official documents and reports determining and justifying the allocation of funds and approval of projects. The destination of a significant part of the complex of the Venaria Reale Palace as the Museum of the World Heritage of Humanity has also been defined

11. Education, Information and Awareness Building

- An adequate number of signs referring to World Heritage site
- World Heritage Convention Emblem used on publications
- Adequate awareness of World Heritage among: visitors, local communities, businesses, local authorities
- The possibility is being considered of opening a World Heritage Museum in the in the Reggia di Venaria; In 2005 the Racconigi Castle and the Palazzo Reale hosted the “Third Conference of the Italian sites on UNESCO’s World Heritage List”
- The designation of World Heritage is constantly used in all the training and project initiatives. One of the initiatives affecting staff training and awareness currently under way is the “Feasibility Study for the reutilization of the Royal Residences and Historic Dwellings in Piedmont ” commissioned by the Piedmont Regional Authority from EPAT
- Local participation: In accordance with Framework Programme Agreement implementation agreements were signed on 10 may 2002 also involving the local communities

12. Factors affecting the Property (State of Conservation)

Reactive monitoring reports

- N/A

Conservation interventions

- Risk factors are constantly monitored and kept in mind in the individual restoration projects. Restoration works carried out starting from the year of World Heritage listing, in Palazzo Reale, Palazzo Chiabrese, Armeria Reale, Archivio di Stato, Cavallerizza, Palazzo Madama, Valentino Castle, Villa della Regina, Rivoli Castle, Moncalieri Castle, Reggia di Venaria, Mandria Castle, Racconigi Castle, Pollenzo Castle. In some of them the restoration continues. Work is also planned for Palazzo Carignano, Palazzina di Caccia of Stupinigi, Govone Castle
- The restoration work planned or under way is restoring the original value of the Residences and in many cases is giving results initially un hoped-for as regards knowledge of the building phases of the various complexes, of their setting in the appurtenances of parks and gardens, of the procedures for decorating the interiors and of the reconstruction of the appearance of the properties with their relative furnishings.
- Present state of conservation: good

13. Monitoring

- Formal monitoring programme
- The monitoring activities required in accordance with the Framework Programme Agreement between the Ministry for Cultural Heritage and Activities and the Piedmont Regional Authority are active with particular reference to the progress of public investments and restoration work. The Ministry of Finance requires six-monthly reports on the time schedule of the works and a comparison of the resources utilised and the costs incurred. As regards the state of repair and the actions to safeguard such in accordance with state regulations, the situation is constantly monitored by the Commission

14. Conclusions and Recommended Actions

- Main benefits of WH status: conservation; social; economic; management
- Currently the circuit of Residences has been indicated as one of the main area of tourism development in economic terms at a regional level. Recognition of its universal value has proved fundamental in obtaining the above-mentioned grants
- Strengths/Weaknesses of management: the notoriety of the system is not yet proportionate to its excellence, given that some of the residences were in a state of total abandonment until a few years ago and the conversion process has not yet been completed. Complexity of the process of redefining compatible destinations of use. Complexity of planning and the long time required to complete restoration work. Cost of the system as regards maintenance and running of the properties, sustainable only with the input of additional resources. Complexity of political and administrative co-ordination of the responsible bodies

Future actions:

- Winter Olympics of 2006. 2006 will be a key year for the opening of the Villa della Regina and especially of Venaria to the public, the sites which suffered most from improper use in the past. In the short term Palazzo Madama and the Royal Armoury too should be reopened to the public, key attractions for the area of command to which the winter Olympics will give exceptional visibility. Organisation responsible: TOPOC, Organizing Committee for the XX Olympic Winter Games
- 150th Anniversary of the Unification of Italy in 2011. Between 2007 and 2010 all the restoration sites should be closed and the project of the "Royal District" perfected with integrated management of the Residences in the command area. At the same time, the putting into use of the Venaria Reale complex will constitute a fundamental point of reference for the city and the territory. Organisation responsible: the responsible Authorities still have not been defined. Timeframe: 2006-2010