

URBAN AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

AFAM - Cultural Centers in Europe: Institutional Structures, Governance Forms and Management Models for Sustainable Project Development

Funded By	Dipartimento DIST MINISTERO DELL'UNIVERSITA' E DELLA RICERCA [Piva/CF:97429780584]
Supervisor	BONINI BARALDI SARA - sara.boninibaraldi@polito.it
Contact	
Context of the research activity	<p>The research explores the emerging issue of managing urban scale metropolitan cultural venues with multiple spaces and programmes. The ongoing redevelopment of the XVIth-XIXth century Royal Military academy and Horse stables “Cavallerizza Reale” in Torino sees the collaboration between Bank Foundation, Municipality, University, Institutional investors, Art Schools as Conseratorio (music) and Accademia (visual arts). It provides the unique opportunity of following the project in its spatial, cultural and institutional making, observing the complex interplay between real estate, heritage, finance, culture and the difficult balance between top down policies and bottom up cultural production, between conflict and consensus. The Cavallerizza placemaking provides a relevant example, with significative comparables as the Museum Quartier in Wien, La Friche Belle de May in Marseille, le Palais de Tokyo and Le 104 in Paris, the Matadero in Madrid – just to name some of the most relevant experiences.</p>
	<p>In recent years, the phenomenon of cultural centers has spread throughout Europe, from East to West, as well as to other continents. This has responded everywhere to a combination of institutional, artistic, and social needs that have cyclically reemerged.</p> <p>Between the Seventies and the Nineties, the occupation of abandoned spaces by communities, predominantly artists, spread across Europe, giving rise to numerous independent creative and social initiatives. In Italy, as elsewhere, some of these realities have grown over time to become institutionalized, others have stubbornly defended ancient utopias, some have surrendered or become extinct, and others have been reborn in different forms.</p> <p>At the same time, various local administrations—mainly in large urban centers but not exclusively—initiated hybrid cultural projects both in terms of contents and governance. They were driven by the dual desire to restore abandoned historic buildings or industrial archaeology sites that were otherwise at risk of becoming significant urban voids, and to experiment with innovative forms of cultural aggregation and production. This often occurred through significant partnerships with local entrepreneurial and economic</p>

Objectives	<p>forces and, in Italy, with the involvement of banking foundations, leading to the creation of interesting yet complex management systems.</p> <p>Today, the landscape of cultural centers is a fragmented and heterogeneous mosaic, including realities that are very different from each other in terms of history, functions, and characteristics. This landscape is still little known both in its operational aspects and its disciplinary implications.</p> <p>The aim of this grant is to investigate the reality of cultural centers in the Italian and European context, deepening the understanding of the phenomenon from a project, governance, and management perspective. In addition to exploring the origins and contents of the initiatives, it seeks to study how the various institutional, governance, and management structures interact with the architectural opportunities and constraints that such projects present. Particular attention will be given to the economic sustainability of the initiatives: it is one thing to focus on the projects and thus on the initial investment, but quite another to assess the ability of the involved actors to attract and generate sufficient resources for their long-term survival. A reflection on the (managerial and cultural) skills for managing such complex systems will also be central.</p> <p>In this emerging global trend, the case of Cavallerizza represents an unique experience in Italy, possibly opening a new season of public/private partnership. Observing it in its making while taking part in the process are the possible ingredients of a “research in action” reflexive experience with direct access to original documents, stakeholders and actors, while tracking the site’s placemaking in real time. This will allow a deep understanding of the key factors in play and possibly the definition of sustainable and inclusive management models.</p>
Skills and competencies for the development of the activity	<p>Experience/education in cultural project management and in economics of culture and the arts; Experience /training in artistic production and practice; Personal commitment in the research issue.</p>