Designing a Bundle of Rights.
The Construction of Commons in the Case of Cavallerizza Reale in Turin

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Abstract
Within the debate around urban commons in Italy, it has been argued that the overlapping of public property and common use is needed in order to set a common. This article questions that perspective through the case of the masterplan for the Cavallerizza Reale complex in Turin (2016), by considering space as a key factor in the understanding of a bundle of rights.
The masterplan proposes the reorganisation of the right of use to establish a specific urban space as a common, through different tools acting in the fields of property regime, planning regulation and preservation regulation.

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A Critique of the Overlapping of Public Property and Common Use

The debate around commons in Europe has been active over the last few years, and the topic has been the focus of academic research in many fields. Special attention has been given to the psychological perspective (Bieniok, 2015 in Dellenbaugh *et al*.), to the practices through which different actors use commons (Di Feliciantonio, 2017; Vianello, 2015) and to the re-appropriation of space through bottom-up processes and the roles of the different actors involved. In this context, a strong link has been made between the creation of commons and the socio-political dimension (Franta, Hamedinger, 2018; Dellenbaugh, Kip, Bieniok, Müller, Schwegmann, 2015), giving significant attention to the practices of use.

Vitale (2013:14) questions this approach by reframing the role of two of the seminal works of commons literature. He argues that, by opposing Hardin's (1968) and Ostrom's (1990) studies on commons, we are losing other understandings of these two works, such as the importance of actual space (Ostrom argues that her study focuses on commons of controlled dimensions) and the importance of rules (Hardin describes coercion and the recognition of necessity as key points in his argument).

This alternative approach can be traced back through Italian legal history thanks to Grossi (1977), who explored alternative property regimes and especially forms of collective appropriation, according to the setting of rights in a space.

In light of these cultural contexts, and focusing our attention on the urban context, one particular aspect of the debate could be considered relevant: could we organise a set of rules though which urban space can be considered as a common?

In the Italian context, it seems that the ascription of urban space to public property could be the only way to guarantee the non-rivalry of this good, and thus its public use. This perspective was confirmed on the occasion of the abrogative referendum on water privatisation in Italy, which saw an overpowering victory of the public water faction, or on the *Regulation of Green Spaces* adopted by the City Council of Rome in 2014, which gives some responsibilities to private individuals (in this case citizens) for maintaining public property.

Such an understanding of the issue of commons probably originated from the difficulty of managing the common use of urban space, which leads us to another aspect of the issue we are facing: the relationship between property and the use of space.

The overlapping of public property and common use has been questioned by several scholars, who argue that this overlap cannot be considered as granted. Ward (2002), among others, explores the private use of common lands through the squatting practices of commons in England, and Kayden (2000) addresses the same field explored by Ward with a counter-perspective, looking at the public use of privately owned spaces in contemporary New York City. Along the same lines, Maddalena

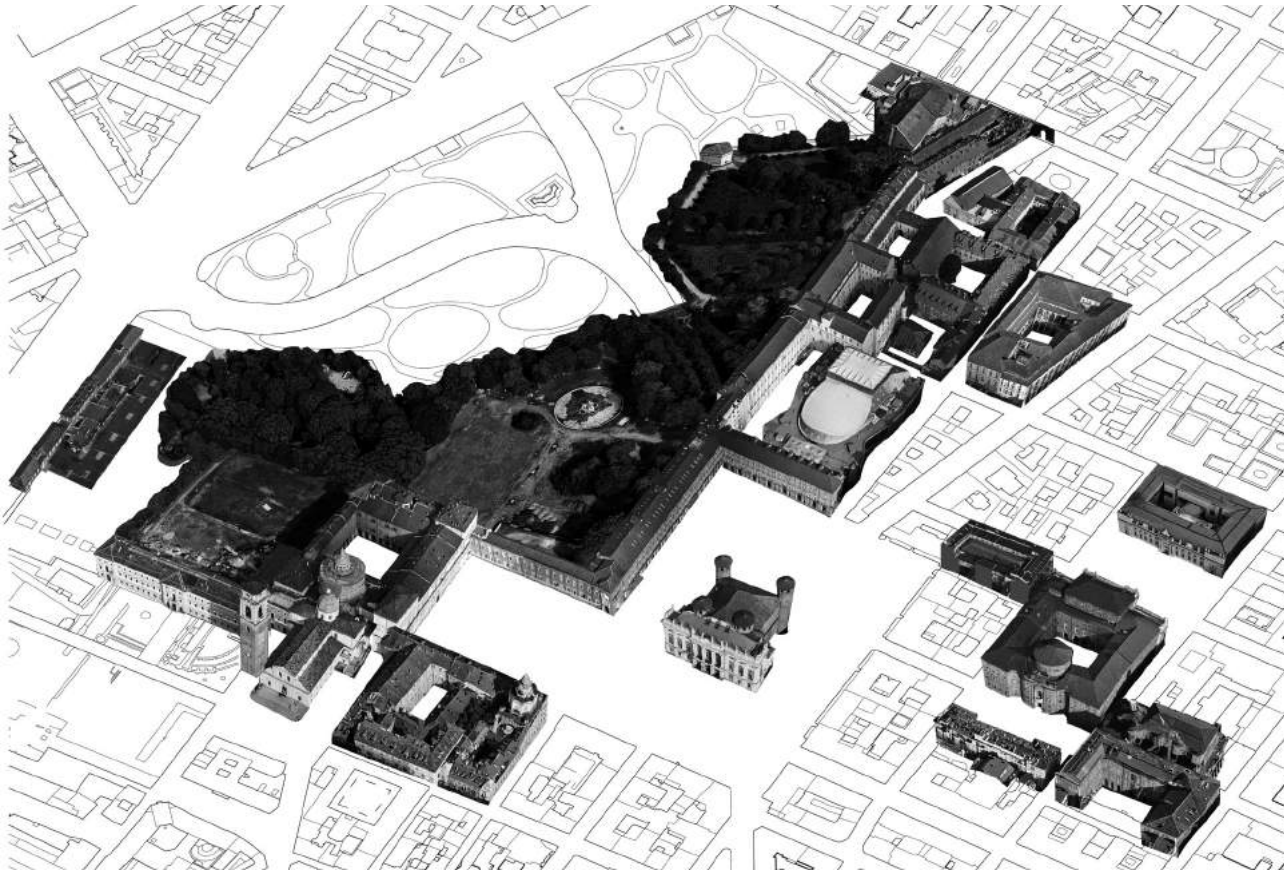


Fig. 1 – Cavallerizza as part of the cultural district of the historic city centre of Turin.

(2012), from the juridical perspective, analyses the Roman Law that questioned the relationship between property and use. He argues that public property is not a consequence of public use, and, therefore, the latter cannot be a valid criterion to identify the former.
In other words, there are several examples of buildings and urban spaces that can be defined as – to paraphrase Kayden – publicly owned private spaces, such as barracks, police stations, prisons and government offices, as well as privately owned spaces that can be considered, as a matter of fact, commons.
In this context, Cavallerizza Reale[1] in Turin presents a case study that may offer a tentative answer to the initial question by proposing a hypothesis: it is possible to manage the common use of a portion of urban space by setting spatial-based rights of use, rather than by overlapping common use and public property.

Design as a Tool to Ground Rights in Cavallerizza
Cavallerizza Reale is a group of buildings once devoted to the royal academy, horse stables and royal ridings, which is part of a bigger

1 - The masterplan for Cavallerizza – *Cavallerizza distretto culturale. Masterplan per la riqualificazione, valorizzazione e conservazione ad uso pubblico del complesso della Cavallerizza Reale in Torino* – was established in 2015 by the Municipality of Turin and developed by Homes s.r.l – a Politecnico di Torino spin-off.

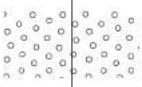
Right of use

Property

Planning regulation

Property of the Municipality of Turin

Eligible functions:
-Residences (not allowed on the ground floor, max 50% of the total area)
-public services and university services
-cultural activities, museums and exhibitions.
-Tertiary activities
-Commerce
-Parkings



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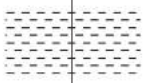
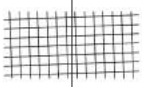


Closed to the public

Open to the public (according to the hosted function)



Open to the public (on occasion, according to the hosted function)

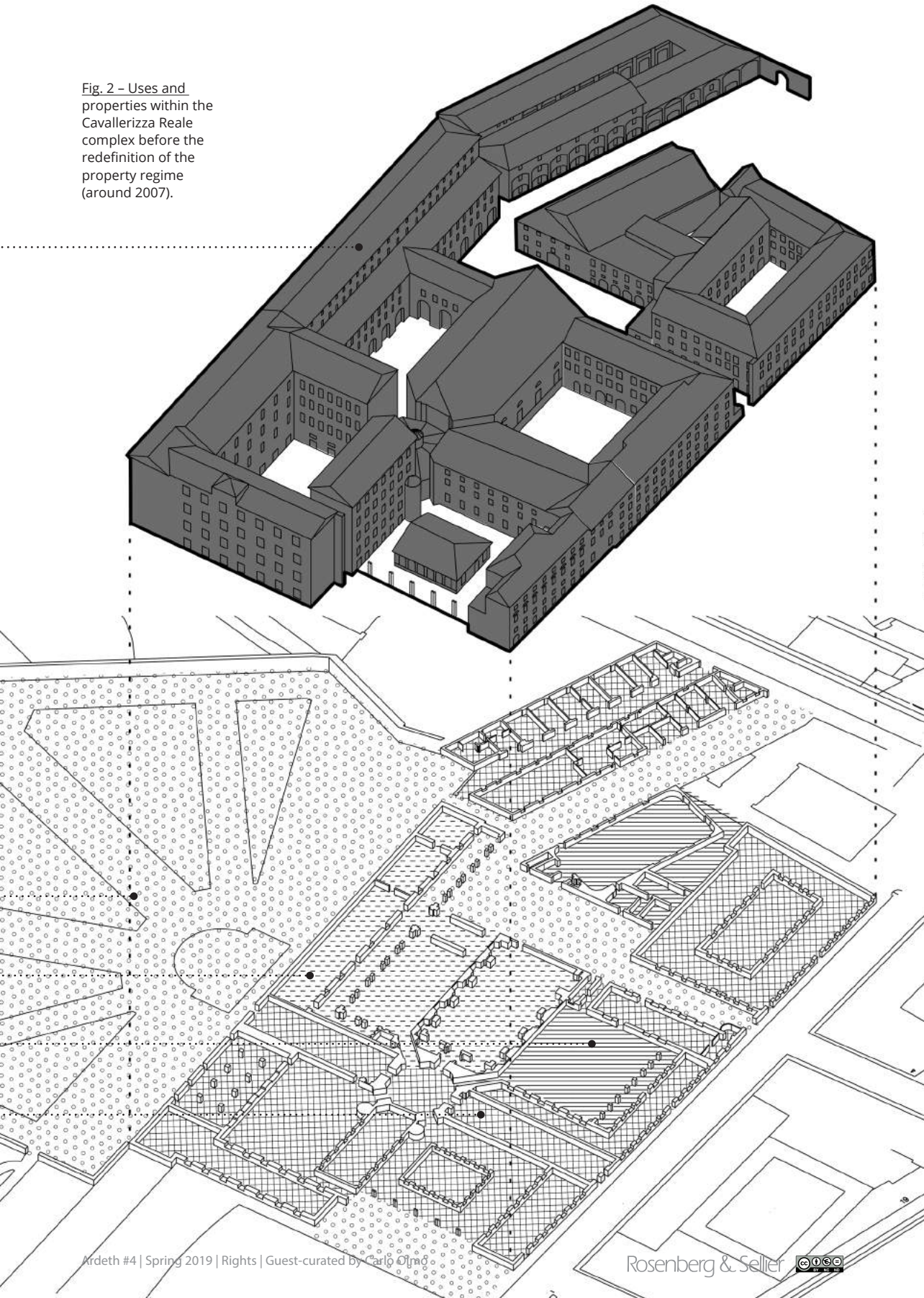


Fig. 2 – Uses and properties within the Cavallerizza Reale complex before the redefinition of the property regime (around 2007).

Rosenberg & Sellier

Right of use

Property

Planning regulation

Property of the Municipality of Turin (concession to the University of Turin) - Public

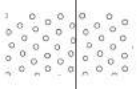
Property of CCT - Private

Property of Italian Deposit and Consignments Office - Private

Eligible functions are not changed. The masterplan provides indications for a whide range of options according to the structural and distribution pattern of the buildings

Property of the Municipality of Turin

Open to the public (possibly closed at night)



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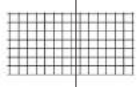

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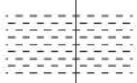

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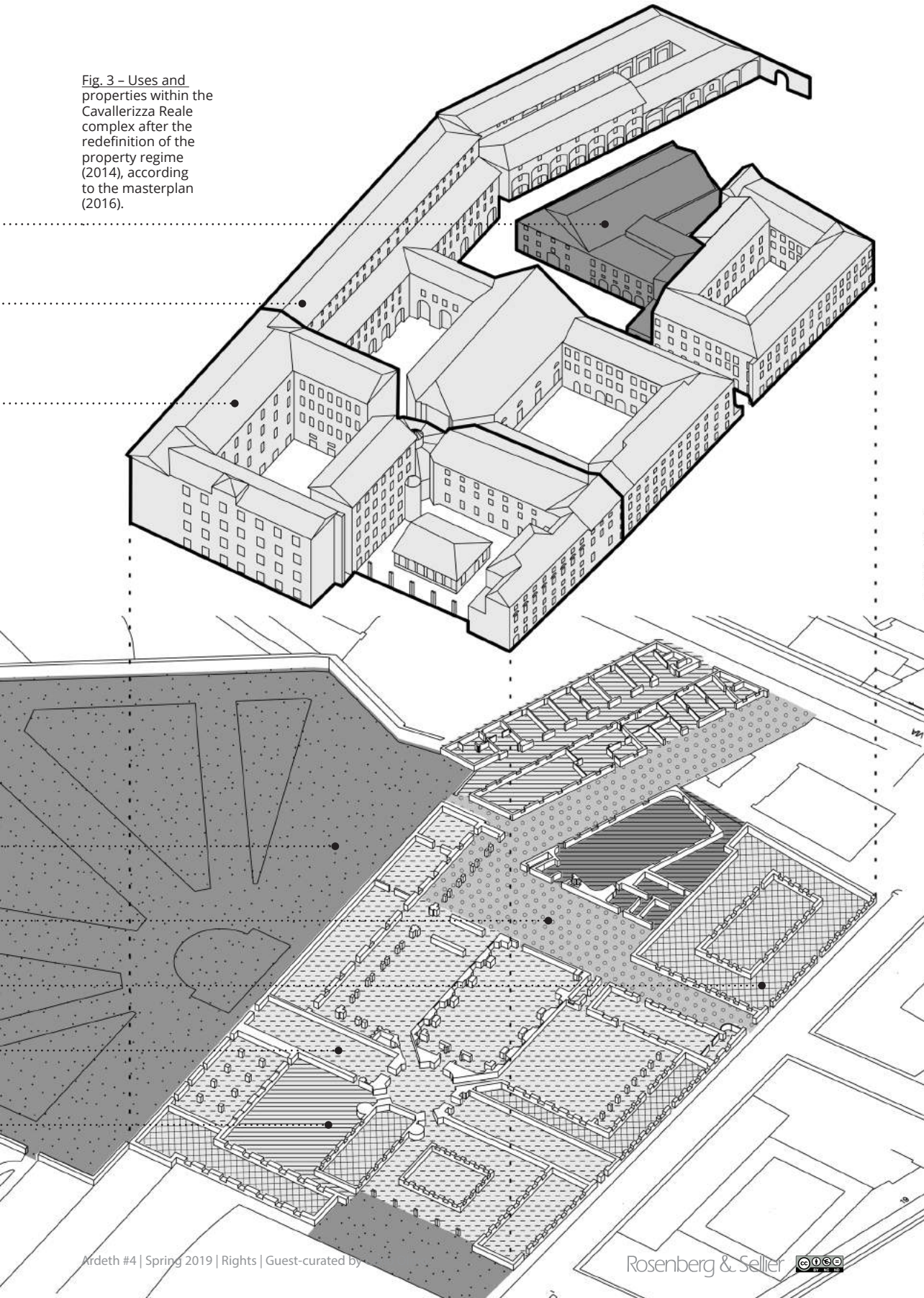


Fig. 3 – Uses and properties within the Cavallerizza Reale complex after the redefinition of the property regime (2014), according to the masterplan (2016).

Fig 4 – Typological analysis of the interior distribution.

system of royal palaces within the historic city centre of Turin. During the last twenty years, Cavallerizza has seen different uses[2], and, in 2014, part of the area was squatted by a group of artists and students who declared it to be a common. Their declared aim was to allow access and offer cultural activities to citizens.

Even before the occupation, during the 1990s, other approaches to the reuse of the semi-abandoned complex were attempted. Those approaches[3] looked at the area as a coherent project, in need of a single function, to be returned to civil society.

We can argue that, in the cases of both the occupation and the first attempt to reuse the Cavallerizza, the conflicts around the transformation of the area were grounded more in the setting of rights (of access and use) *tout-court* rather than the distribution of rights within the actual configuration of spaces ("How can I access this space? According to what rules I can use this building?").

The masterplan therefore aimed to question the coherence of the building complex to demonstrate that this was, in fact, a narrative that was built during the preservation process of the royal palace and headquarters. The consideration of the building as a whole originated from the representation published in the *Theatrum Sabaudiae*, a *recueil* of projects that foreshadowed the desired aspect of several cities in the Duchy of Savoy (partially corresponding to the current Piedmont region). Some of these projects were realised over a period of centuries, but the Cavallerizza was not part of them. Documents[4] show how the construction of this area is a rather outstanding example of the incremental processes through which modern European cities have been constructed.

From this perspective, the masterplan considers the multifaceted nature of the group of historic buildings and abandons the perspective of the need for a unique function, thus offering a different understanding of the tools for rights distribution. By looking at the Cavallerizza as a multi-layered system of buildings owned by different parties, the masterplan proposes a design-based approach: the reorganisation of the right of use to set a specific urban space as a common.

Designed Commons through the Design of Space

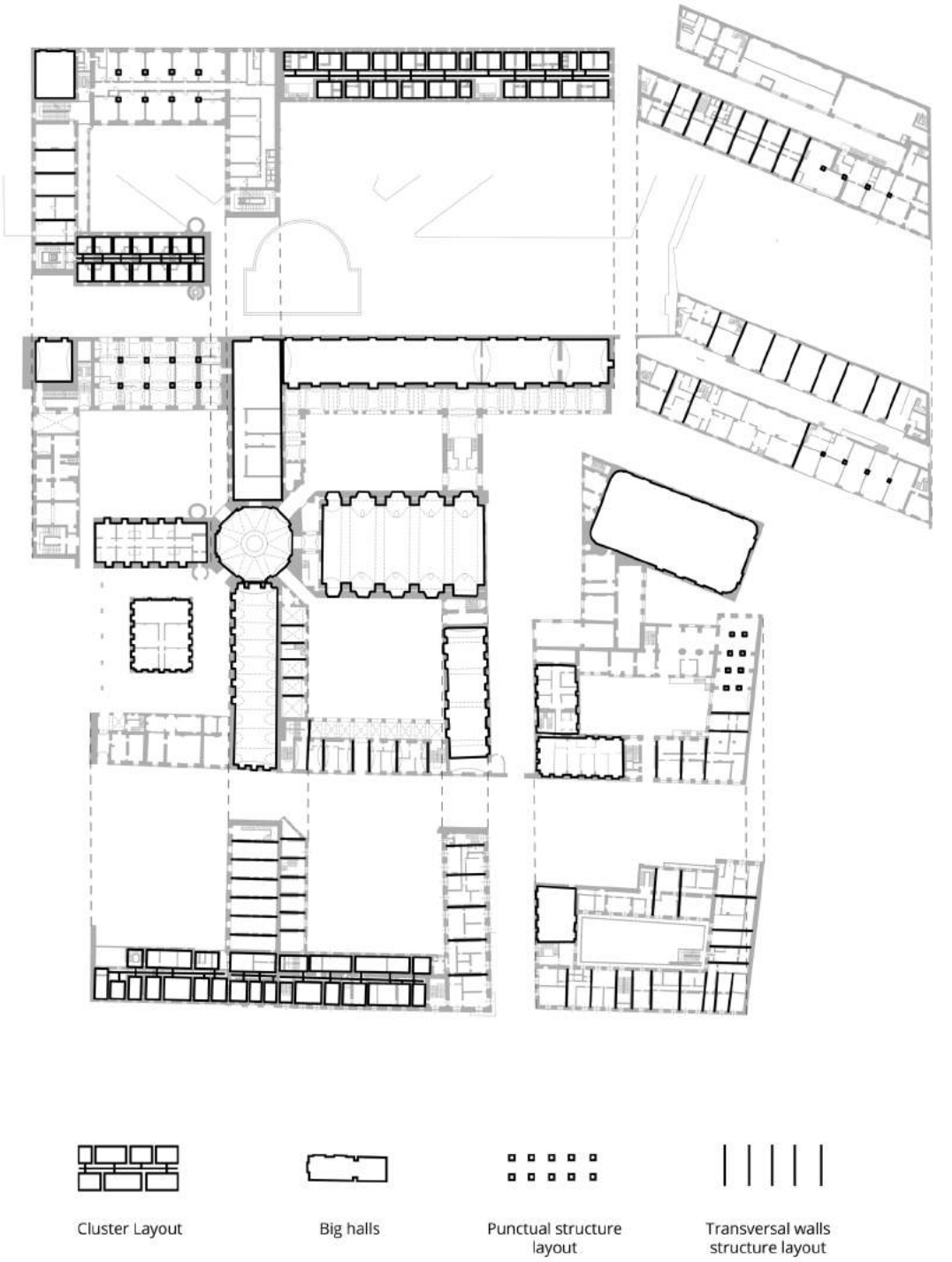
This approach, based on the distribution of rights, implies two perspectives. On the property regime side, the status quo presents a fragmented property split among private or semi-private parties. The masterplan uses this as a basis for not foreclosing the public use of the ground level, either inside or outside of the buildings. Future private investors are asked to put public functions at the ground level and to guarantee public access to the open areas, thus allowing public use of private property.

On the planning regulation side, rather than their exact final function, the masterplan suggests functional typologies of buildings. To identify these functional typologies, the starting point is once again the space it-

2 - From 2005 to 2013, Cavallerizza hosted a theatre hall in its buildings and, since 2008, has hosted the main lecture hall of the University of Turin.

3 - Agostino Magnaghi, *La Cavallerizza Reale. Studio di fattibilità*, Torino, 1999.

4 - [G. B. Ravelli?], *Pianta generale delle scuderie, rimesse e maneggio appartenenti a Sua Altezza Reale il signor Duca di Chiablese in Torino*, around 1780; Soprintendenza ai Beni architettonici e paesaggistici per le province di Torino, Asti, Cuneo, Biella e Vercelli. See also P. Foglietti e L. Tonta, Scuderie e Maneggi. Ground floor plan, September 28th, 1864; Archivio di Stato di Torino, Sez. Riunite, Real Casa fototeca.


Cluster Layout
Big halls
Punctual structure layout
Transversal walls structure layout

Structure

1: The main distribution pattern of the building is organised around a central corridor and stairwells positioned in the corners. Although they were significantly damaged during the Second World War, the structures still have elements of interest – in particular, the late nineteenth century structural system of the wing towards the royal gardens, the vaulted rooms and the staircase in the north corner, and the vault of the hall at the ground floor of the south-east wing. The top floor and the attic are the result of post-war elevations.

Potential

2 - The halls on the ground floor, which are characterised by vaulted rooms, present a potential for functions open to the public. In particular, the central rotunda is key to allowing access to all the courts of the Cavallerizza complex and will be preserved for this purpose. The rooms on the upper floors are suitable for the function of collective residence, because of both their distribution layout and the possibility of transforming the top floor and the attic floor.

Suggested Uses

3 - Because of the overlap of a cellular system and a set of large halls, the building offers a particular predisposition towards temporary residential functions or services (such as private and public offices, administrative offices, cultural and educational activities, and leisure). Spaces on the ground floor – specific halls and the fencing pavilion – are intended for collective functions.

Constraints and Possibilities

4.1
Conservation constraint on the vaulted rooms, as well as the staircase.

4.2
Possibility of reorganising the distribution of the top two floors, respecting the existing volume.

4.3
Constraint for conservation of the punctual structural system.

4.4
Possibility for creating dormers on all the roofs, except the pitch facing the royal gardens. Dormers will be aligned with the window pattern.

4.5
Restoration constraint for reinstating the ground floor hall and consequent demolition of the structures within its volume. Recovery of the lost surfaces will be allowed in other parts of the building.

4.6
Restoration constraint for the vaulted room on the ground floor of the south-west wing.

4.7
Possibility of creating a staircase next to the central rotunda.

4.8
Possibility of creating a connecting volume between the fencing pavilion and the ground floor of the south-west wing.

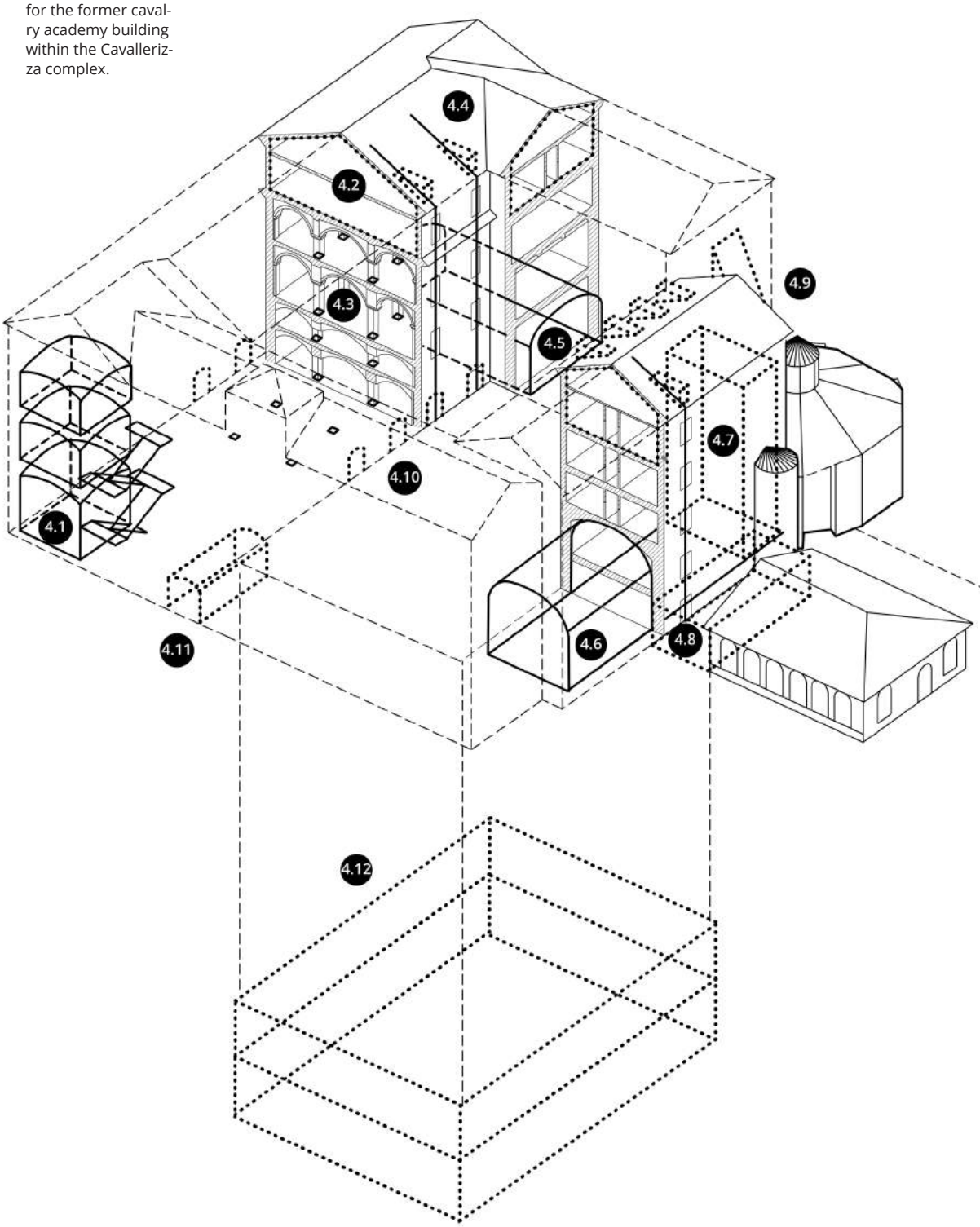
4.9
Conservation constraint on the rotunda. Possibility of creating smaller volumes within the virtual volume identified by the extrusion of the rotunda.

4.10
Possibility of modifying the ground floor openings to create connections towards the courtyard and the royal gardens. The openings will respect the alignments of the existing windows.

4.11
Possibility of opening a connection from the internal courtyard towards the Mollino square.

4.12
Possibility of excavation in tPossibility of excavation in the internal courtyard for the construction of underground parking lots. The excavation will have to respect the application of the procedure of Preventive Archaeology (reference articles 95–96 of D.L. 163/2006) and the related discipline in compliance with circular no. 1 of the Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities and Tourism, Directorate General for Archaeology, on January 21st, 2016.

Fig 5 - Example of proposed regulation for the former cavalry academy building within the Cavallerizza complex.



self. Suitable functions are allowed according to a deep typological study of the existing buildings, highlighting different structural and distribution patterns [Fig. 4].
In other words, the approach of the masterplan for Cavallerizza proposes precision of the spatial distribution, but less precision regarding the definition of functions.
To allow the reuse of the buildings and the actual installation of new functions, another tool has been experimented with: a clear and shared understanding of the transformation potential of the historic buildings and of the spatial interventions allowed. Looking at the Italian context, heritage preservation regulations are often focused on constraints. Moreover, preservation authorities are asked to approve transformations according to a given preliminary architectural project. Without being in opposition to this understanding, the masterplan suggests the gathering of the authorities' consensus on a set of precise spatial constraints and transformation opportunities. These could allow investors, prior to specific projects, to make general economic evaluations and permit authorities to guarantee preservation. Such an approach has been tried through a different representation of the preservation constraints, which integrated spatial representation and texts and was subject to an agreement with the regional preservation authorities.

Conclusions

The masterplan for Cavallerizza Reale is meant to be a tool to build a common for citizens, private investors and the public administration. This has been attempted through a tool aimed at the construction of commons in order to organise the bundle of rights that is grounded in the Cavallerizza complex.
Such an organisation of rights is considered possible, though not easy, through the design of a set of spatialised rules. These have not been designed to question the property regime, but rather have aimed to offer a clear and shared understanding of rights to the parties involved in the transformation of this area of the historic city centre of Turin. The transformation of Cavallerizza is still ongoing, and the process is far from even a partial conclusion, and therefore a verification of the hypothesis made above is still not within reach in this particular case. Further, an overall evaluation of the process will likely not be possible in the next few years, while the tools and understanding of the commons issue underpinned by the masterplan offer a further experiment and a means to set new hypotheses in an abductive process (Kuhn, 1962), rather than an evaluative one.

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