

THE MONUMENTAL COMPLEX OF S. DOMENICO MAGGIORE

PALAZZO CORIGLIANO

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The monastery of S. Domenico Maggiore, together with the church, forms a monumental complex which is the result of many changes started in 1227, when Pope Gregory IX sent to Naples a group of Dominicans. Between 1272 and 1274 Thomas Aquinas, one of the most influential authorities of Catholic theology, taught philosophy at S. Domenico in the Studium wanted by Charles I of Anjou. The Monastery reached its maximum development after the rebuilding promoted in 1669 by Tommaso Ruffo, the Grand Prior of Bagnara.

During the sixteenth century the building was articulated into three distinct parts: Saint Thomas' dorm, the novitiate and the dorm of the Masters, located around an inner garden. The monastery is now divided into different areas: one part is still occupied by Dominican monks; a second one, at the ground floor, is occupied by the Virtus Gym; a third, large part is occupied by the high school Alfonso Casanova; the largest part of the complex, which was the seat of the courtrooms of "Corte d'Assise" (criminal court) during the 1990s, has recently been restored.

The restoration was aimed to the recovery and preservation of the original spaces, with their architectural and decorative features, among which mention must be made of the sixteenth-century frescoes and stucco adorning Thomas Aquinas' dorm. The first stage of the restoration project starts in 2000 and was completed in 2002 (project Polis-Musea, supported by the Superintendence for Historical Patrimony of Naples with the Financial Grants for Historic Centre of Naples of the European Community); the second stage began in May 2006 and ended in July 2011 (financed through state resources provided by law 0.12.2000, no. 400, art. 1 "Restoration on Cultural Heritage and Activities and Campania Region). Thanks to the joint efforts of State and local government, the Convent was thus reopened to public in May 2012.

Corigliano Palace

Saluzzo di Corigliano Palace was built in the 16th century by the Italian architect Giovanni Francesco Donadio for Giovanni de Sangro duke of Vietri. After being damaged by an earthquake in 1688, the Palace was restored by the Gambacortas, a noble family from Pisa. In 1732 the Genoese duke Agostino Saluzzo purchased the building along with the Calabrian feud of Corigliano, after which the Palace took its name.

Between 1927 and 1934 the "Istituto Universitario Orientale", now "L'Orientale" University of Naples, rented the noble floor of the building; later on, in 1977, the Orientale purchased the Palace in its entirety. During the 1988-1992 wide-ranging restoration, several ancient structures were brought to light. Among these, worth special mention are the remains of the Roman lower decumanus and of a Greek wall. The latter, which have been left exposed, are encapsulated in the "Aula delle Mura Greche".

The "Orientale" University of Naples is the oldest school of Sinology and Oriental Studies in Europe and has a strong tradition of language, cultural and social studies, both ancient and modern, relating to Europe, Asia, Africa and the Americas. Since its very beginning, (in 1732) the "Orientale" has set itself up as a centre for learning and research which aims to focus on similarities and differences between various cultures. But once we start looking at differences, we also take a close look inside ourselves. It is an intellectual exercise which becomes a spiritual one at the same time. Studying people and cultures, their relationships and their differences, is, more than anything else, a way of questioning who or what we are.

We should allow ourselves to be assailed by doubt, accept challenges, expand our closely-knit circles to let others in. We should be open to otherness and diversity because we become richer as a result. This is something the "Orientale" does on a daily basis, and always has done. And it is one of the reasons why our University has such lasting appeal.

Today, in a world where people of different languages, cultures, religions and myriad schools of thought, art forms, moral attitudes and customs are coming into closer contact, our University will not be caught wanting because it has always been involved in intense International cultural relations and has always collaborated with universities in many different countries. The "Orientale", therefore, is able to guarantee its students an education in line with the demands of today's world.

The University today has a very original outlook, offering students intellectual experiences and academic input which fundamentally enable them to get to know people and cultures which are different from their own, and to interact and communicate with them. The education provided also translates into effective entry into a rapidly-evolving job market: a window on the world, therefore, where language and culture and knowledge overlap and interweave, and eventually blend in the dual disciplines of teaching and research.

The Chancellor
Elda Morlicchio

Department of Asian, African and Mediterranean Studies

The Palace hosts the Department of Asian, African and Mediterranean Studies (DAAM). Through a rich multidisciplinary perspective, it aims at a thorough and integrated approach to a wide range of different cultural and geographical areas. The DAAM, indeed, offers courses on different fields of Humanities and Social Sciences, ranging from prehistoric to contemporary times: both Ancient and Modern Languages, Philosophy, Archaeology, History of Art, History, International Relations, etc. During its long history, the DAAM has established worldwide relations with universities and research institutes sharing the same interests. This results in strong exchange programmes which allow students to enhance and improve their education abroad.

As for archaeology, it is largely present at the Orientale not only as the subject matter of courses on different cultural areas and methodological issues, but also as field research. Archaeological Missions, either based at the Orientale or in partnership with it, work in several Mediterranean, Asian and African countries, actively involving students.

Thanks to the expertise and research interests of the academic staff and the specialised libraries, which hold precious book collections, the DAAM provides the best conditions for a holistic approach to Oriental disciplines and for the development of transcultural competences based on a balance of knowledge, skills, awareness and sensitivity.

<http://www.unior.it/ateneo/1/1/l-orientale.html>

**The Complex of S. Domenico Maggiore and Palazzo Corigliano will host the
24th Conference of the European Association for South Asian Archaeology and Art
from 2nd to 6th July 2018**

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