

POLITECNICO DI TORINO
SECOND SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE
Master of Science in Architecture (Environment and Land)
Honors theses

LOOKING FOR THE URBAN FORM. A project for St. Mauront, Marsiglia

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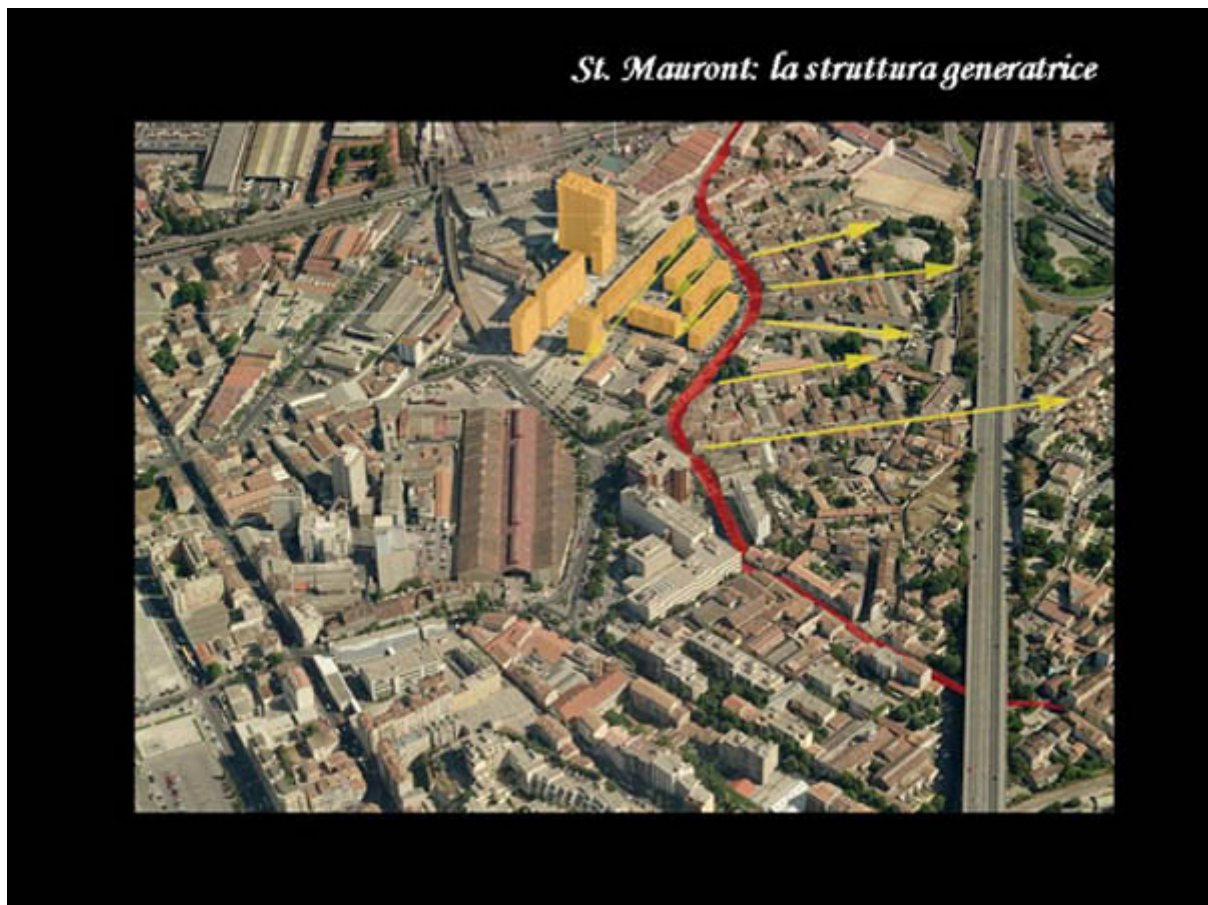
This work comes from the demand to sum up the chance that the Double Degree in Marsiglia offered us, so it must be read as the result of a course made of thinking and drawing the town and its landscape. The text is divided in two parts: the first one concerns the planning and the construction of the city form: starting with historical-critical contributions it's possible to find parameters of research and examination useful in the project realization introduced in the second part.

The central subject of this work is the urban form. This subject, in our opinion, has been neglected from the architectural criticism, maybe because of too many misunderstandings that overhang the concept and the same idea of the city form. So with this work we tried to talk about the topic of 'form' in order to identify some methods to define the urban form planning, especially when concerning the existing city. Planning, philosophical and sociological topics are combined with reflections about the contribution of art and cinema.

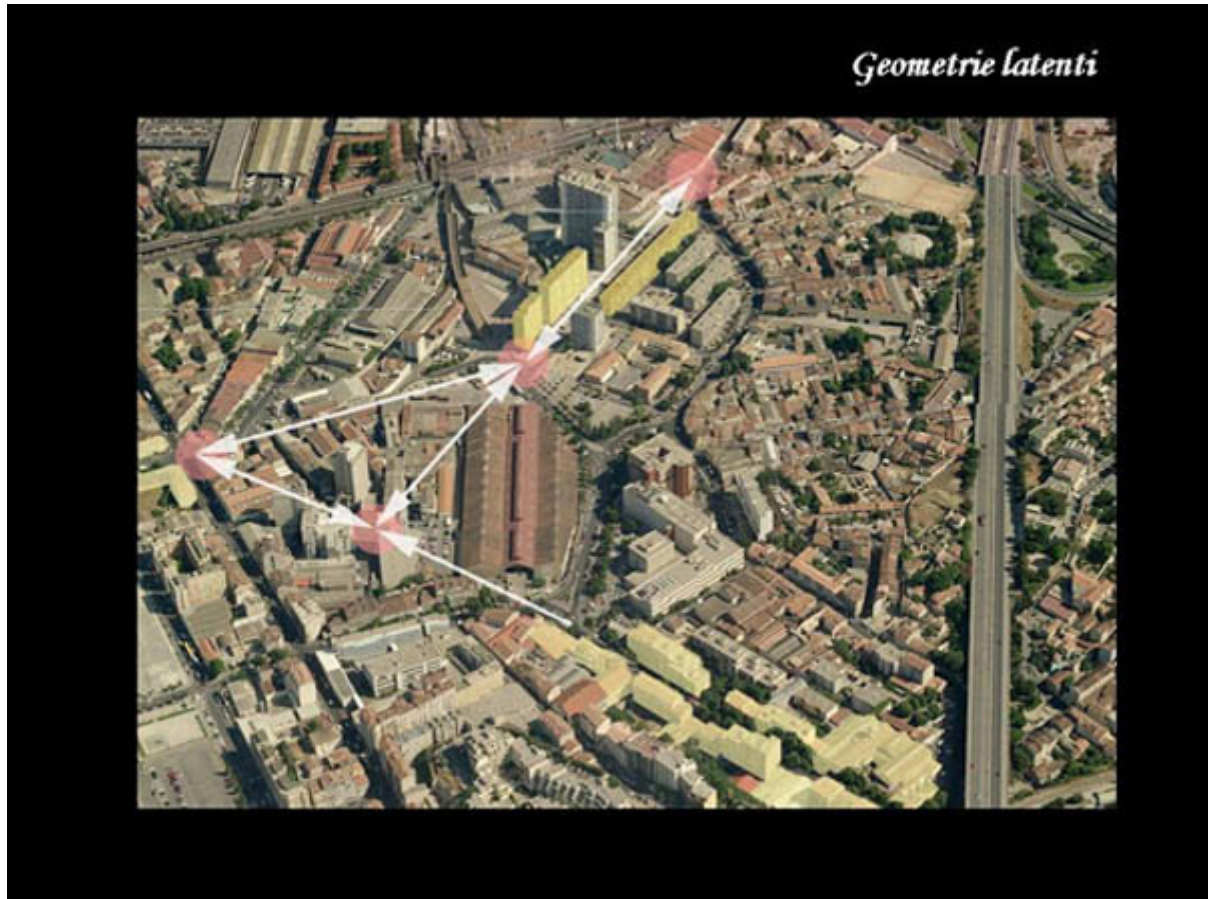
From these thoughts it became clear that planning, in urbanism, is an activity going through a crisis because of the loss of the concept of architecture when considering architecture as a structure in which different planning scales and different perspectives, technological, functional and aesthetics must merge. Dealing with the city, means first of all, understanding the role of the architectures that compose it. So, how is it possible to make compatible and fluid the relationship among a group of parts that must prove their specificity at the most? The experience matured from some great European cities, which we analyzed a lot, reveals that it's possible to move from an existing critical point in the urban reality to rescue degraded spaces and to reinstate them in the structure generating the agglomeration. All of this becomes possible if we pay attention to the plant architecture: town-planning scheme, proportion, orientations, roads, spaces and public buildings, spaces regulations, profiles concretize the whole union.

Laying theoretical bases of the project we looked for an area of Marsiglia where it would be possible to apply these parameters. St. Mauront district called our attention because of the numerous ambivalences that subsist in the site: in fact, though it is located in the closeness of the town center, it is characterized by physical, architectural and social degrade, just like the suburbs.

So we chose to plan the work first of all analyzing the district and the general form of the town that contains it, but we didn't want to make it just a simple historical-morphological analysis, so we based it on the Lynch model. In fact, only a careful examination of the site can bring out the problems that become the principle to move from, in order to let the new come out.

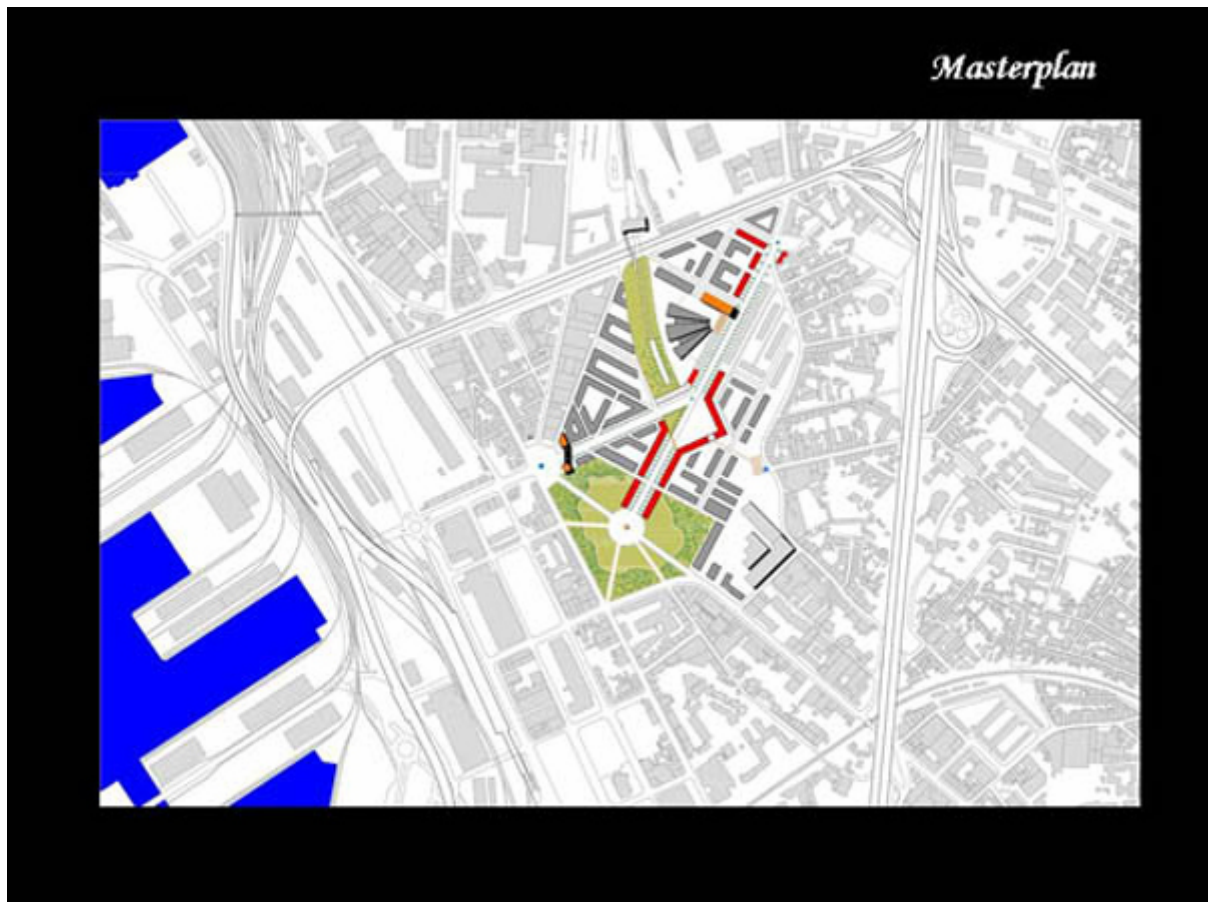


The work conducted on these portions of the town has become the principal instrument as a general logic was determined: the generating structure of the place (pict.1) and its hidden geometries (cité Bellevue and historical aces, pict.2) have become a mean to re-establish the relationship with the neighbourhood.



So we tried to produce a public space that could improve and justify the setting by exploiting the light, the colour and the perspective perception; in other words the form of the space was defined. The course structure becomes the main point of the project that moves from a reinvention of intrinsecal historical values of the town: Marsiglia, in fact, is built on great monumental aces like the *allées* and on strong focal points.

In our project these are bound to bring out the urban weft: above all the new square is thought on the basis of simple geometry but it is even able to break a regularity based on the cité Bellevue imprint (pict.3).



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