



**Politecnico
di Torino**

Honors Thesis

Master of Science in Architecture Construction City

Abstract

**Metamorphosis Between Limits:
Possible solution for urban revitalization of the Xi'an Railway Station area**

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Known as one of the most important cities in Chinese history, Xi'an is defined as the cradle of Chinese civilization, as it was the capital of thirteen dynasties. A city with more than 3,100 years of history, it also represents the easternmost end of the Silk Road and has been a model of urban planning for several historical eastern capitals. A city rich in history like Xi'an is the result of a stratified accumulation of traces left over time, a whole that carries multiple meanings of memories, perceptible in the fragments, in the traces and in the voids that require interpretations and new meanings.

Over time, the total absence of an urban project has allowed the common practice of the tabula rasa with every morphological and topographical sign, leaving in the city of Xi'an pieces with a dimension without space, where antiquity and historicity suffer from the absence of nostalgia and memory. This emerges in the urban piece that houses the old Xi'an station, where a part of the city has been razed to the ground in view of the future extension of the station that will house a new subway stop. The terminal today is a physical and visual barrier and a place of congestion. It stands as a wall between the imperial city and the Daming Palace National Heritage Park, both cultural centers of relevance. The project proposal is to redesign this urban fabric, imagining the fall into disuse of the station with its function, allowing a connection between the city in the walls and the remains of the imperial residential palace of Xi'an. The thesis work aims to give a reconfiguration to an urban piece completely deprived of its identity with a process of creating a new urban intertwining through the rewriting of limits, intended both as barriers and as connectors.

Hence the idea of metamorphosis as an urban transformation, and in particular the transformation of an element such as a barrier into an object that allows connection, therefore the barrier renounces its essence becoming a fixed but permeable element. The result of the thesis is a method of interpretation that aims at the revitalization of urban elements that have lost their identity, looking for a new configuration that holds together innovation and memory, as a sort of place outside of urban congestion, but still inside urbanity. that becomes a space of connection. The thesis is essentially divided into three parts. The first historically investigates the city of Xi'an and its main urban components to focus on the site under study. The second looks for the matrices that can guide the project in its birth. In the final chapters, the thesis sees the application of the resulting matrix in the urban piece under study where the walls, identifying components of the site will no longer be barriers but passable limits, giving new readability, and therefore new writability, to the assembly of the modern city.

This matrix allows us to continue writing and re-signifying the urban landscape with new forms within already configured and dense systems.

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