

**Designing the boundary: a proposal for the transformation of the former civil hospital in Gorizia**

by Samantha Berto

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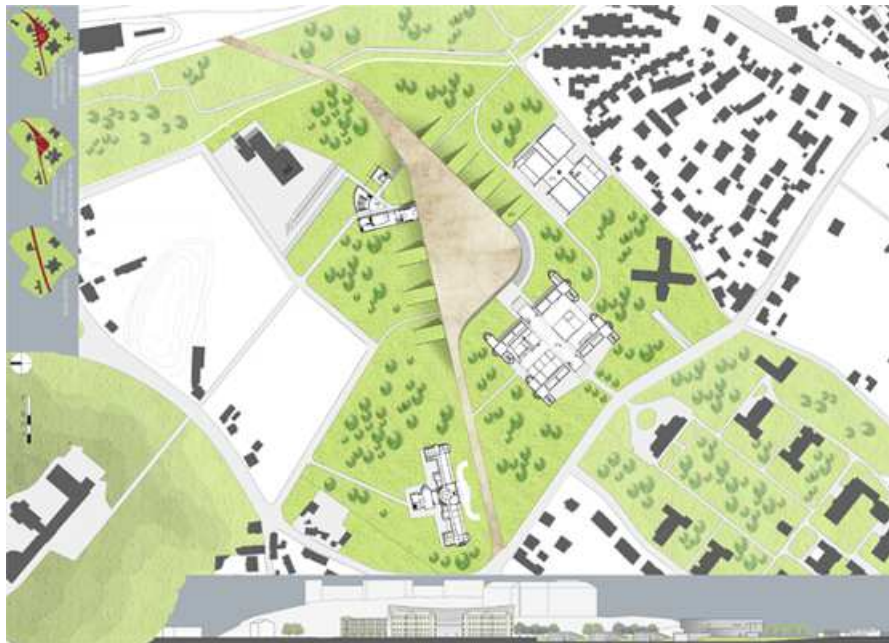
The competition "Spazio Giovani alla Frontiera" has been an opportunity for studying the complex context of Gorizia, which has been divided for nearly fifty years into two parts by the State boundary, and its "modern twin" Nova Gorica, with whom it shares (often without a common policy) the same territory. Since Slovenia has joined the UE in 2004, the border between the two countries has been removed, and the lands which used to be suburban have become today the centre of the conurbation made by Gorizia and Nova Gorica. They have not a real identity, and clear boundaries neither because the old border has never been a physical limit, but it has been and it still is a very strong cultural division, strengthened by years and years of racial hate, that has prevented any kind of common development. The interest for this issue has started at the beginning of the 90s and it has become popular thanks to the winning project of the European II by Antonio Angelillo, whose *proposal has liked the project of few residential buildings to a bigger problem, i.e. the issue of the areas at the border, of the need of a better relation between the two cities (...) starting from a common source: the landscape*. Our proposal has tried to follow this principle aiming to a project strongly related to the context of Gorizia. The thesis begins with a historical-urban analysis, finalized to the comprehension of the main features which have driven the urban development. In fact the city of today is the result of many layers coming from several plans which have never been completed: the "Austrian Nice" of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the garden city by Lasciac, the modern city by Fabiani, until the latest proposals of a Nova Gorica-model city and a functionalist organization for Gorizia. The conclusion of this analysis is the image of the "Nuova Gorizia", i.e. the future big conurbation made by the two existing cities, united in one common plan. This first phase has been the base of the competition project, whose main idea is the creation of an axis in direction east-west, which reminds, but at the same time overtakes the concept of "border". Despite of being a simple line, it stretches between the main buildings of the area designing a lowered plaza which let the visual continuity of the park.

Around this space, several semi-underground pavilions complete the over all system.



View of the project area

Furthermore, this concept has been more developed during the final phases of the thesis, which have followed the conclusive meeting with the other competitors and three municipalities.



Plan of the territory

There, besides the discussion on the urban issues, it has been underlined the historical, cultural and social relevance of the building of the ancient hospital of Gorizia, despite the problems due to its scale and its low architectural value. My idea for its restoration is based on the placement of a new pedestrian gallery instead of the existing central volume. It is a space which at the urban scale connects the new park to the existing one, and at the architectural scale distributes all the functions placed in the building.



Views of the covered gallery

In such a complex context, it has been chosen to maintain the existing building, reminding that this area is characterized by services for young people. With the hope that they, thanks to the knowledge of the past, will work for the collaboration, which is absolutely necessary for the reconnection of the territory.

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