

POLITECNICO DI TORINO
FIRST SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE
Master of Science in Architecture (Construction)
Honors theses

The residential architectures for the middle classes in the years of economic “boom”. A study on a Turin district: the Crocetta

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This thesis develops a study of the Crocetta district in Turin, once a rural area outside the historic walls of the city, which completed its construction in the second half of the twentieth century with the phenomenon of the reconstruction of war damages and the typical housing “boom” in Fifties and Sixties, through works of residential buildings owned by construction companies that acted as property developers aimed at the middle classes of the population.

The objective is to identify what role these residential architectures and characters played in the real-estate market to define the urban landscape of the district after the Second World War, as they have produced the forms of social stratification representing the status of the new lifestyles related to extraordinary economic development in those years, and how the construction of these architectures progressed.

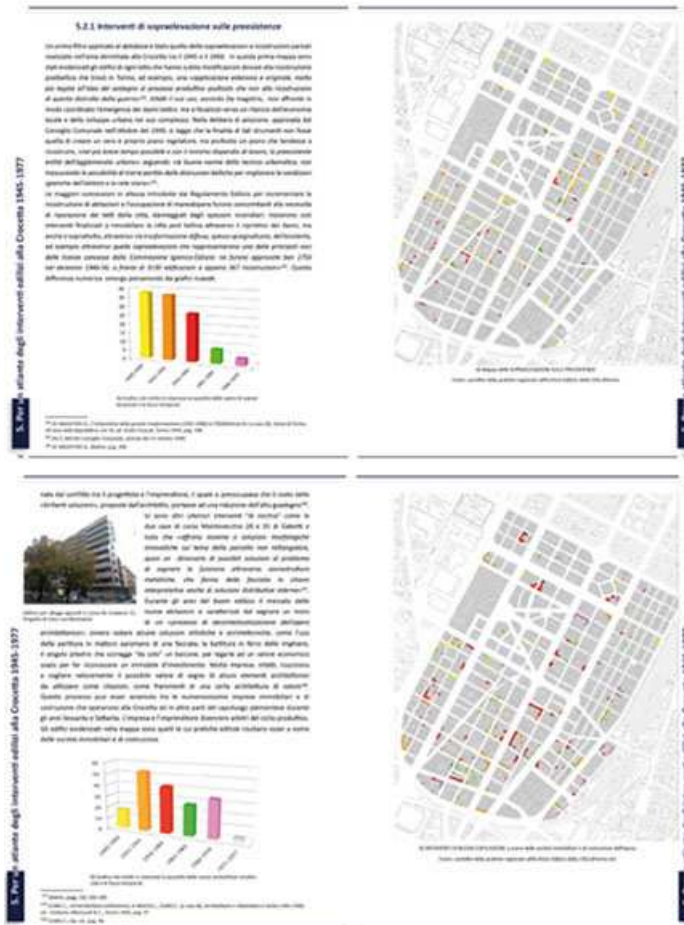
The survey method is organized into different observation’s scales that cross the size of the city, the district up to the reality of the individual architectural products selected during the research activity. This is useful so that we can have a complete view of the area, from its origins to the years of great transformation, using different types of sources.

The first part deals with the analysis of a chronological selection of maps of Turin (registers, expansion plans, public transport, city guides, planning regulations), using their descriptions to investigate how the streets and urban area change, in order to understand its physical and spatial aspects until the end of Second World War.

This aims to create a solid starting point to explore the conditions that arose later in the “boom” years: the effects on society, the debate on the question of the ideology of the house, investigated by a selected multidisciplinary historical production of the Seventies and Eighties who demonstrated and interpreted the theme according to the specialization of the authors, and, finally, the real-estate market in Turin with its participants.

The work continues with a more specific phase concerning the production of a database that contains the building operations carried out in Crocetta’s individual lots, during the analysed period, classified according to defined number codes fixed by the Archives Building of Turin.

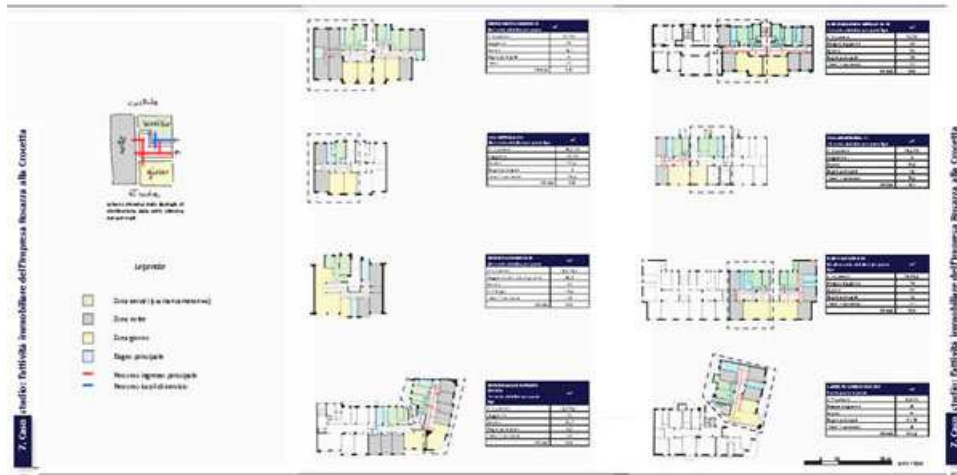
From the data obtained by the usage of digitalized cards, available from the website of the Archives, has produced an Atlas of building operations consisting of thematic specialized maps and related graphs that represent the set of real estate transactions occurred in the district (1945 -1977): from raising to new buildings, the presence of a number of garages to the location of a large number of fuel distribution systems.



Part of Atlas of buildings operations

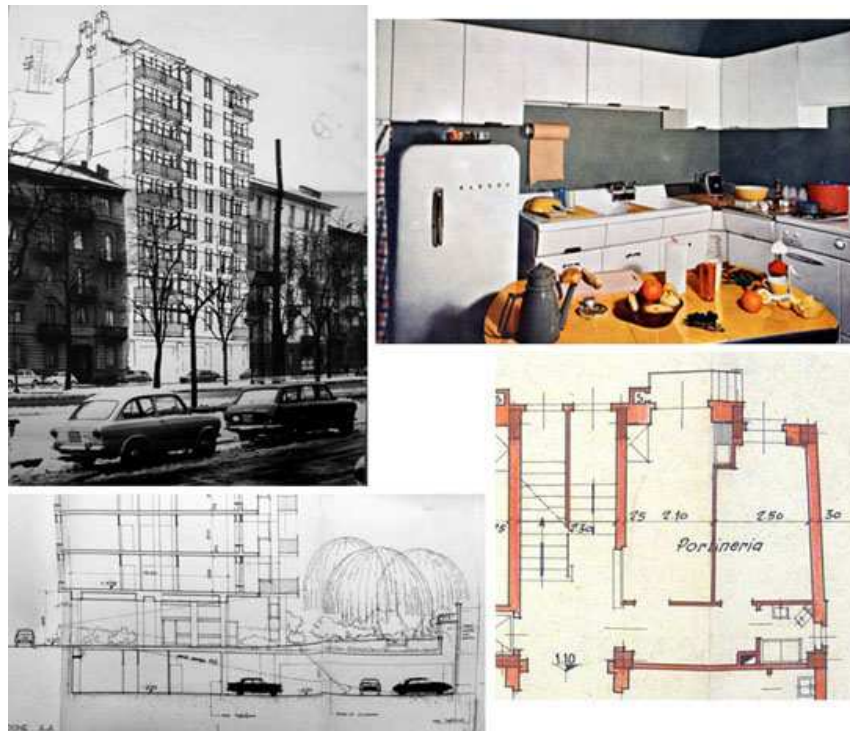
This is followed by a filing and analysis of construction requests of residential architectures under the name of Rosazza, one of the most common name in the database.

After an administrative, design and descriptive history of these works follows a comparison that identifies the common characteristics and specific solutions that are characterized by models of typological, distributive, formal and decorative solutions that helped to define a sense of belonging to certain social groups of the population.



Comparison of distributive solutions

The residential architecture for the middle classes played a key role in the “boom” years as it became the leading sector of the real-estate market characterized by the intention to propose typologies partially renovated to meet the needs of potential residents.



Some of middle classes' symbols of economic "boom"

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