

POLITECNICO DI TORINO
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Honors theses

The Paraboloid of Casale Monferrato: a design proposal of re-use

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The conversion and re-use of abandoned industrial buildings is a significant solution both as a response to the need of new spaces in contemporary cities and as a method for the conservation of the roots of today's society, which, since the Industrial Revolution, shaped the land, landscape and the culture in which we live according to his needs.

The lime manufacturing tradition in Casale characterized the landscape for many centuries. The introduction of mechanized techniques imprinted deep and diverse scars on the territory, observable today in the hilly landscape and in the city as indelible signs of labor, history, culture and industrial development of the local society.

The proposed renovation of the Paraboloid in Casale Monferrato is dictated by several reasons: first of all, the need to preserve an iconic building of cement production in the area by placing it as a point of reference within the routes of the territorial industrial culture;
in the second place not to lose an important witness of the evolution of the reinforced concrete structures in the early decades of the twentieth century (because of its shape and its technical characteristics);
thirdly to give continuity to a part of the urban tissue characterized by a vacuum.

The project considers many recent re-use interventions of former industrial complexes which have had a particularly positive feedback turning them in cultural centers. In particular, were taken as reference models the ANCHOR POINTS of ERIH (European Route of Industrial Heritage), ex-production sites considered representative for the industrial history. They should provide information on the industrial history through museum installations, routes in the area, debates, etc .. In line with the principles that characterize an *anchor point* and based on the comparison with the local interests and the global design of the Casale's heritage protection, the Paraboloid has been chosen as an interpretation and as a cultural center of the area and as the starting point of the cement-production routes.

In the new project, to ensure the respect of the existing building, has been chosen a solution that would create additional volumes to accommodate the museum and cultural center functions by placing them in a new independent x-lam structure, leaving thus the users the ability to read the original building's character and recognize the new wood volumes with which the concrete structure communicates and relates.

The inclusion of the site in the ERIH project could be a possibility of development, especially at a local level: Casale Monferrato could become a point of reference for the cement production's history and for cultural exchanges based on it.

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