

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

ABANDONMENT APOLOGY
empty architecture, factory museum

by Andrea Ronzino

Tutor: Pierre-Alain Croset

Co-tutor: Valeria Minucciani

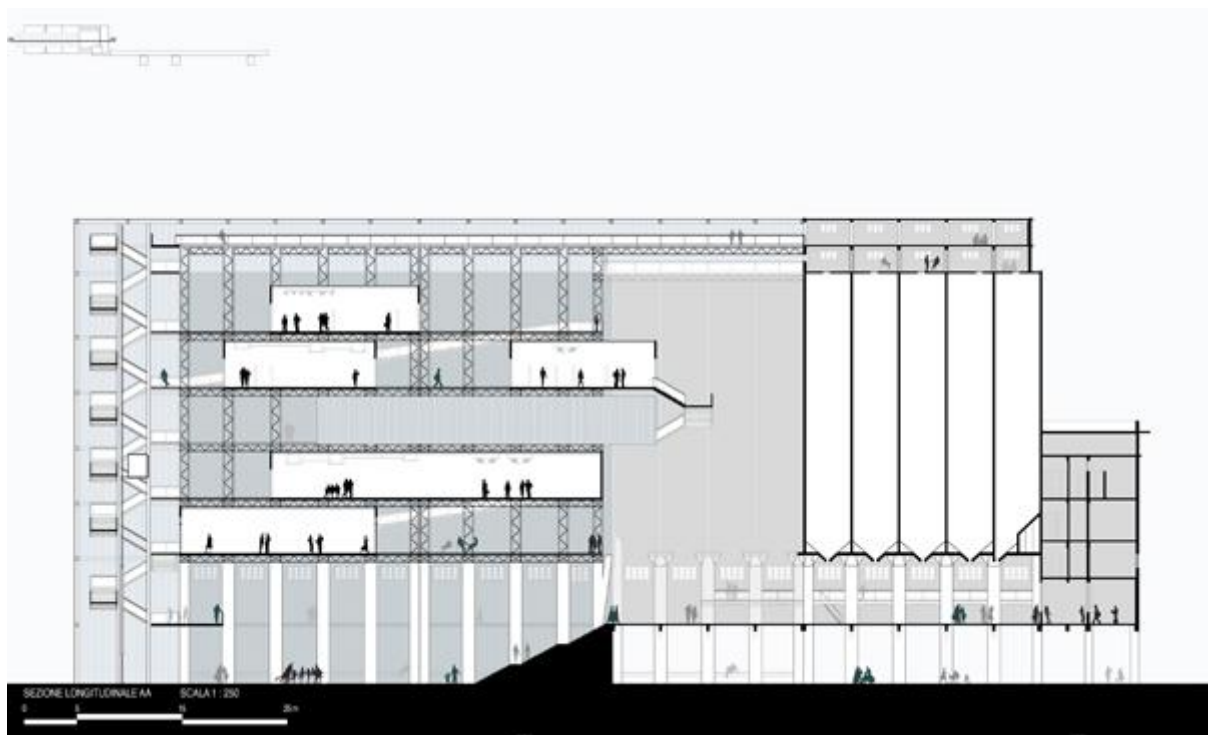
Just as the title suggest, we could divide this research into three distinct - however interrelated - areas of investigation, which each form a separate volumes. The first book, ***ABANDONMENT APOLOGY***, is devoted to - marking a little a poetic vein - the big issue of derelicted buildings: their abandonment. Those 'ghosts' that always living architecture spaces and are its meaning, its character. Focusing in particular on the great sphere of industrial buildings, this work tries to develop a few useful tools for their recognition, and even more importantly, for their critical and multidisciplinary reading.



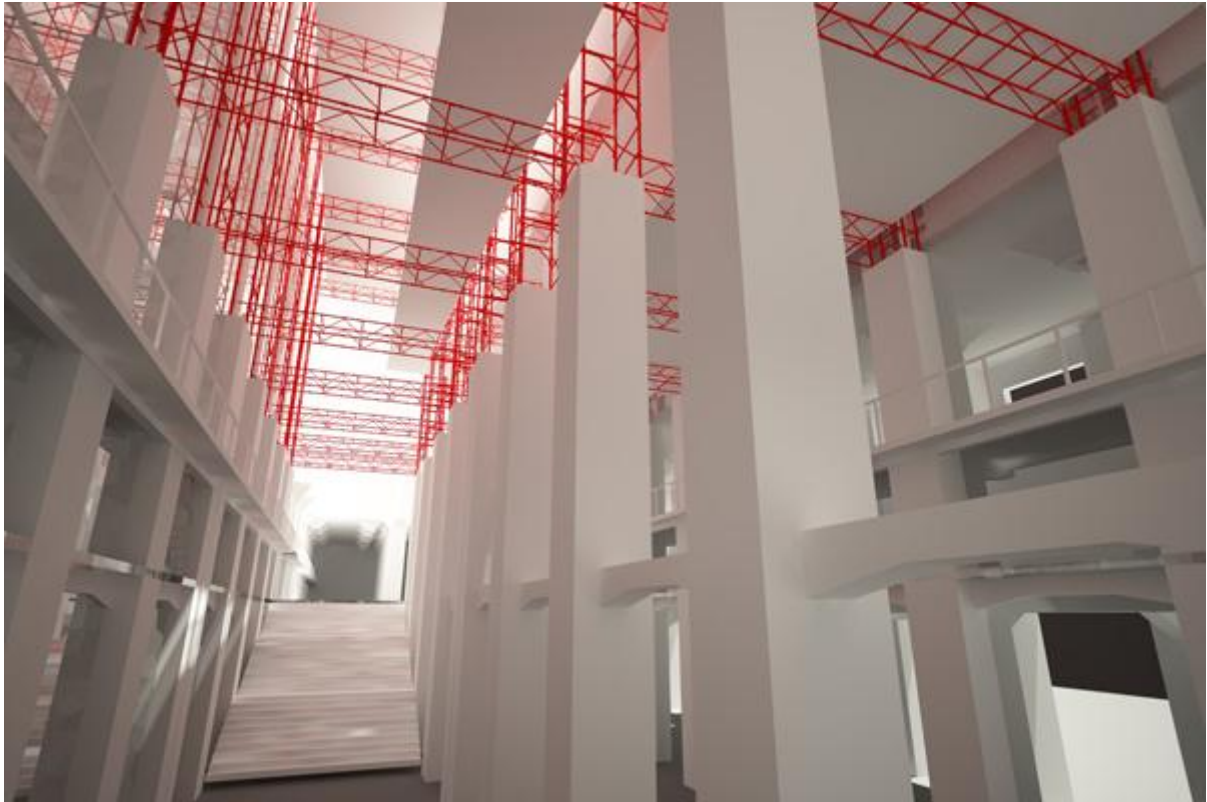
Representation of the factory: rational form. One of the photographs taken by Hilla e Bernd Becher around 60's. Image extrapolated from the book: BERND & HILLA BECHER, *Industrial Landscapes*. Cambridge, MIT PRESS 2002, pg. 31

Through the manipulation and the study of a few examples, the main attempt here is to raise doubts - however eliminating others in the process - about the nature and meaning of abandoned spaces, in order to be able to understand them better, or at least perceive the outlines of a hardly-distinguishable horizon such as of *industrial archeology*. Recognizing and reading these objects, the question that seems to arise spontaneously is: what we can do with them?

The second volume, **EMPTY ARCHITECTURE**, tries to apply, after implementing the suggestions and advices of the first volume, what has been learned from research carried out previously about the debate on architectural void, and to a greater extent, about the industrial archeology heritage no longer used. Studying in detail an object of past industrial age - in particular, thanks to an international competition, a building for cereals collecting in the Piraeus port, Athens - the *project* consists in rethinking a space not designed for human beings and transform it into a new flexible function: the Underwater antiquities Museum. Two spaces that faced the question of abandonment. Then comes the theoretical study, the comparison and the thorough research as tools needed for the project. A huge abandoned box along the greek coast becomes the center, a silent magnet for the city. All the topics declined with a simple lexical grammar.



Longitudinal section of the project The partial emptying of the Silos in the Piraeus Port, Athens. The slim and light Museum structure: dialogue between the horizontal and vertical development



Perspective view of the access plan. The monumental staircase within the volume of the museum, all of the granary is readable and understandable

The third and final booklet, entitled ***FACTORY MUSEUM***, discusses the results of a study carried out in the last two years on the theme of contemporary museums, from their origin to their current reconceptualization, both theoretical and practical. A critical analysis of all the salient points of Museography history, with the slightly pretentious aim of being understood by readers with special glasses: the filter of industrial archaeology becomes visible in the background. Potential adverse points, complexity and desires.

An interdisciplinary project which attempts to embrace notoriously complex issues, hopefully in the most convincing way. Issues which are hardly ever discussed together, and make this *project a unifying one*. Through this description of architecture, one might hate architecture itself; because as an old, lost and wise philosopher once said: to think often separates, to feel always connects.

For further information, e-mail:

Andrea Ronzino: andrea.ronzino@gmail.com

twitter: @AR_AnRo