

POLITECNICO DI TORINO
Master of Science in Architecture Construction City
Honors theses

**TITLE *OCCUPYING ESTELITA – URBAN REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT FOR
THE JOSÉ ESTELITA PIER***

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The society lifestyle has always been influenced by the strong economic and physiological connection between man and water. As a real “entry gate” many waterfronts have been, for a long time, functional and geographical centers, which determined the urban area for the rest of the city.

Throughout their existence, these areas have undergone a series of changes that, in general, have transformed their relation with the city, leading to a degradation process despite their strategic positions, historical and cultural values.

Over the last years, central and port areas have attracted one more time the interest of capital investment. However, many of the urban redevelopment interventions were implemented according to the strategic planning ideals, which use territory indifferent to the context.

This approach, imposed by the global city model, creates a kind of parallel reality in which cities seem common and banal, characterized by the consumption of visual landscapes constructed for leisure and cultural tourism. In this way, these redevelopment interventions, instead of supporting and strengthening social relationships built locally, they put at risk ideals such as the right to the city, its memory and identity, and quality of life.

Subsequently, this thesis focuses on the São José Waterfront, in the city of Recife - Brazil, in order to question the reversal of priorities in the planning process of the city and its influence on urban design.

José Estelita Pier is an important urban space regarding history, landscape and art for the city of Recife. The area had been abandoned and neglected by governments until 2012, the year of New Recife approval: a project for the area redevelopment without considering urban planning or public opinion.

With the increasing popular dissent about the New Recife design, which aims solely the logic of profit, the population created the Ocupeestelita¹ (Occupy Estelita) movement that has grown exceedingly with the discovery of illegality on sale procedures and project approvals for the area.

So, with the main objective of giving people the opportunity to think over about fundamental issues such as the citizens quality of life, city identity, the historical memory and integration with neighboring areas, this thesis provides the scenario of the waterfront interventions through a theoretical approach, a brief historical account of Brazilian district and an analysis of the project area and then, presents an urban renewal proposal for the pier.

The Occupying Estelita proposal intends to be a critical response to New Recife project rather than a specific or definitive solution; it represents a possibility among many approaches and projects that could be done to regenerate Estelita, especially those focused on building cities for people.

¹ *Ocupeestelita* website: <http://www.ocupeestelita.com.br/>



The redevelopment project, Occupying Estelita, and the urban context



View of the Dantas Barreto pier, proposed to create public spaces and to re-establish the connection between the city and the waterfront

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