



POLITECNICO
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Honors thesis

COURSE OF ARCHITECTURE CONSTRUCTION CITY

Abstract

**The light between past, present and future:
Eur quarteer in Rome**

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The lighting design is a key element, both in urban and architectural field, to characterize a place, enhance it, define and transmit particular messages to users involved. The thesis aims to draw up a urban lighting project for the EUR district of Rome, and to develop a design focus on one of the most important buildings located in it: the Central State Archive. The thesis, in its initial phase, was characterized by the participation at the International competition of ideas **URBAN LIGHTSCAPE: "Modern urban landscapes: light as a means of linking together past, present and future "**.

The Eur district, located in the south of the Capital, is a peculiar area of the city, designed for the Universal Exhibition scheduled for 1942 and never opened because of the War. Today it is an open air museum of architectures from the '30s and has been identified as the city's future congress platform. Although the district is the focus of debate for the development of Rome as an international capital and is recognized as one of the main city poles, it has many critical issues, summarized in the lack of valorization of the site. In this view, the lighting project became a solution that can bind together the disjointed fragments that now make up the area, enhancing it, and recreating a complex urban system, livable and enjoyable by a wider type of users.

The first phase of the work consisted in drawing up a general framework, based on the assumption that a project born from the knowledge of the place. So the first step consisted in the examination of the historical phases that characterized the origins and developments of the neighborhood. The research was conducted by analyzing bibliographic sources and, in parallel, cataloging various documents (articles, editorial, archival images, etc.), which have permitted us to generate a critical reading of the area and a comparison of sources related to different historical periods.

In order to develop a proper lighting design were examined plans for the territory, papers related to the protection of cultural heritage and landscape and existing lighting projects, with particular attention to examining their design methodology.

Based on the knowledge granted by this analysis, the Eur district has been studied from a morphological, sociological and perceptive point of view, with the aim of generating a reading scheme that could become the basis for the development of the lighting project.

The project of light naturally has to answer to functional objectives, related to vehicular and pedestrian traffic and to the basic needs of orientation and safety. In this background lighting, the artificial light became tool to generate a hierarchy in the perception, emphasizing the points on which to converge the observer's attention, selecting and differentiating some areas in order to create intensity gradients. The lighting in this way is loaded with meaning, becoming element that selects, amplifies, excludes, by defining a new image of the city.

In parallel with the study of urban lighting project and keeping the same methodology of work, the area of the Central State Archives has been selected to develop a detailed design that translate to a higher degree of detail the arguments developed previously and that would allow the application of the artificial light to an architectural element.

Particular attention was dedicated to the theme of the color of the light, as expressive element that could change the perception of a space or of an architecture.

Parallel to the design phase and the research connected with it, the thesis was an opportunity for the development of a critical comparison between the working methods

related to the participation in an international competition of ideas (it was possible to examine the final results of the *Urban Lightscape* competition) and the ordinary design approach.



Figure 1 – Survey of the urban artificial lighting present. It is possible to observe the lack of homogeneity in distribution of light.
Source: photographic survey: 5-7 November 2015

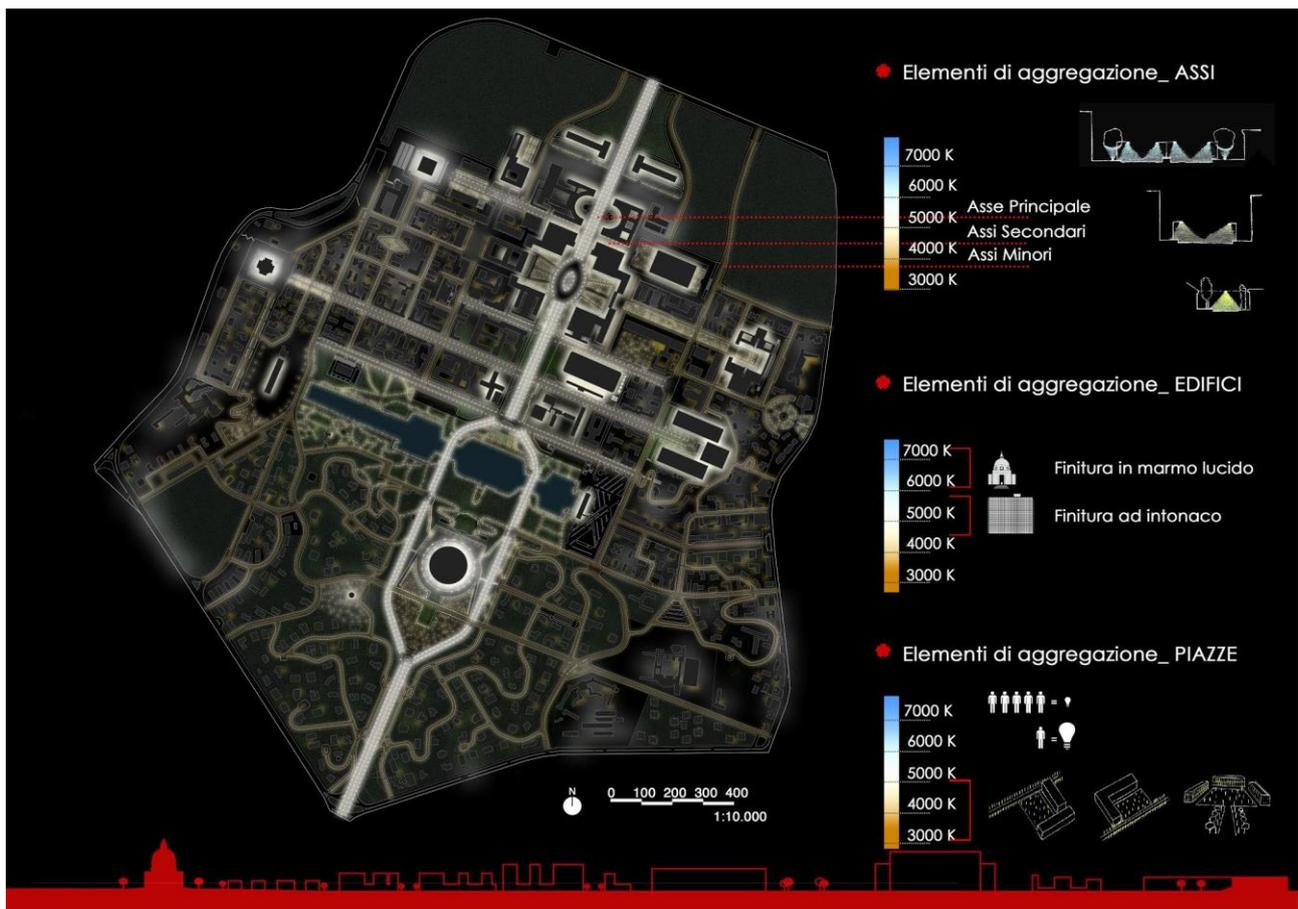


Figure 2 – Urban lighting masterplan of the Eur district. It highlights the differentiation in the use of the color temperature of the light, in order to create hierarchies among the elements constituting the urban plot.



Figure 3 – Render of the lighting project for the public area in front of the Central State Archives building.

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