

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

The new Semper-Archiv in Zurich

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The object of my Thesis of Degree consists in the ideation and in the planning of a building to Zurich action to contain Architect Gottfried Semper's legacy.

Such file already has currently center to Zurich inside the *Institut gta*.

The portion of city to which I will go to insert the new institution appears as uniform in two parts: a low part, that develops him along the shores of the river *Limmat* and a tall part, the *Hochschulstadt*, where the university citadel rises in which detach the Polytechnic planned by Gottfried Semper and Gustav Gull and the University of Karl Moser.

Among these two zones there is a very steep band in which it has risen during the years various buildings with various destinations of use.

The site in which the new intervention has been located is therefore before the West front of the Polytechnic planned by Semper: a place of zipper among two entities rather separate of the same city.



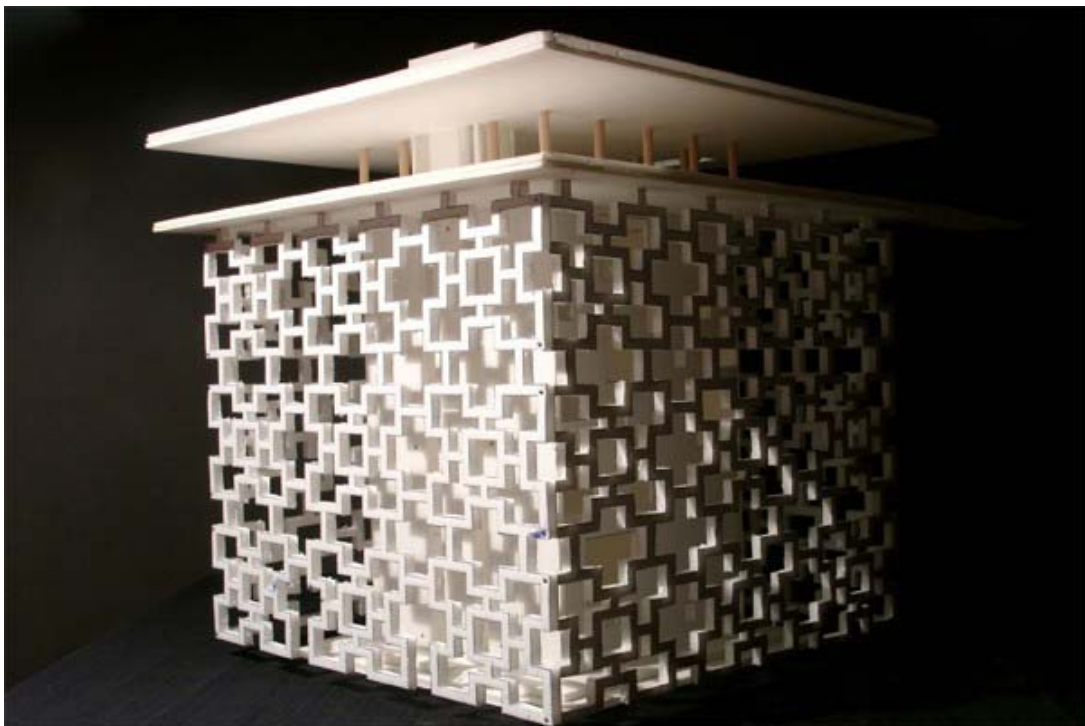
The projected building is set therefore the objective to be a new city symbol inside which to preserve the legacy of that Nikolaus Pevsner does defined "*The most important German architect of the XIX century*" but also that to cover an important role of connection among the two parts of city and to allow the students of the Polytechnic, through the fast overcoming of 26 meters gradient, to come in the classrooms in smaller time if these arrive from the low part of the city.

The job, in the complex, has been a real search of planning that has allowed me in various ways, first among the whole accurate analyses of the writings of Semper, to also explore some theoretical themes of architectural planning.

As Vittorio Gregotti sustains inside the preface to the Italian edition of the *Der Stil*, Semper has been the only one of the great German architects of the XIX century to think the theory as material of the project.

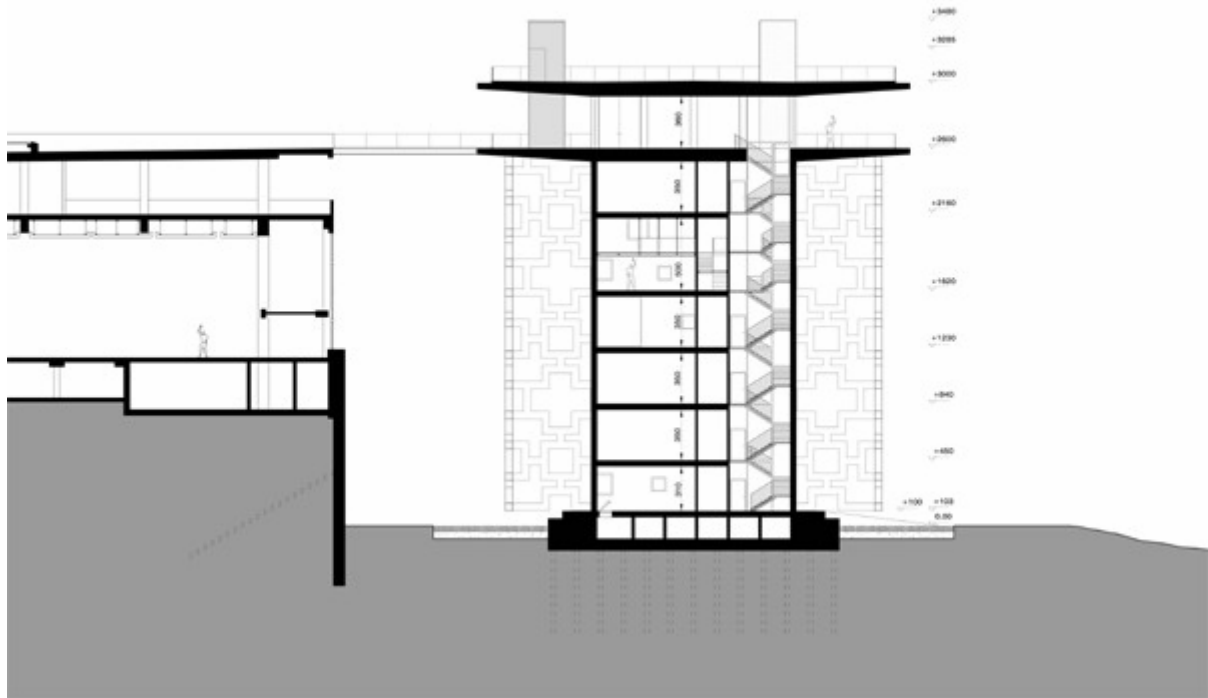
I have looked for therefore to behave me equally and through the new reading in modern key of the *Four points of the architecture*, theorized by Semper in 1851 and the new reading of some themes statements in the principal work of Semper, the *Der Stil* written in Zurich between 1860 and 1863, I have studied the formal character of the building object of the thesis.

The new reading of the Semper's *Four points of the architecture* is concretized so in the new building in Zurich through the presence of *plinth, hearth, roof* and "*dressed*". The geometry of this last element traces the decorative pattern of the walls of the Grave of Mida brought by Semper inside the *Der Stil*.



The component of the "*suit*" of the building wants to render explicit the theory of the textile origin of the wall: it is in fact an external element of closing with the only decorative function and any structural role. In plan the building, to exception of the last floor, is organized in such way that is had a principal environment that picks up the specific function to every level which is destined and an environment of service to this last.

The *hearth*, what Semper defines as the "*moral element of the architecture*" it is the true heart of the new building. In it they are contained all the tied up environments to the *Semper-Archiv*.



The theoretical aspect of the textile origin of the wall has also been explored through the superficial treatment of the cement armed face-sight of the external partitions of this element of the building.

A main point and last chapter of the thesis has been therefore an experimentation in staircase 1:1 of the hypothetical finish to be given to the hearth of the building conducted with the aid of the technicians of the Buzzi-Unicem.

Through two elements of different surface to put into the moulds, one in fiber of corn and the other in fiber of coconut, 5 test-tubes of concrete have been realized: 2 in ordinary concrete and 3 in SCC. Such throws, above all those in concrete SCCs, are able well to give that effect of wall-carpet theorized by Semper in his writings but ever experimented in his buildings.

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