

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

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**OLYMPEKed: Beijing-Torino Design Studio 2008**  
**Transformation of an olympic venue into an extra-urban park**

by Francesca Diano

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The project is the conclusion of an experience which started during the workshop “OLYMPEKed: Beijing-Torino Design Studio – a study on Beijing olympic venues redevelopment” which took place thanks to the partnership between the Politecnico di Torino and the Tsinghua University of Beijing. The aim of the project was to find different use and destinations for four of the Olympic venues: the collaboration between Italian and Chinese students led to four different projects: mine was the one situated in the city of Shunyi, in the north-east of Beijing, making part of the development plan of the capital city.

The project has been developed in three steps:

1. site analysis, individuation of the main problem to answer to and development of one among the possible sceneries (workshop)
2. deep research on the “classical Chinese gardens” (essay)
3. project of the park and of an architecture in detail (degree thesis )

As regards the workshop we designed a masterplan in which the problem of the scarcity of water in some seasons could be transformed into a resource. In this way the venue could be used not only by athletes, but also by the citizens from Shunyi or Beijing.

The project transformed the site into a linear park in which sport centres and multifunctional areas are joined together.

The core of the project is the transformation of one of the two competition courses into a wetland and into some tanks for the water storage: the raining water collected during wet seasons and filtered by the wetland is kept clean into the tanks. This solution has been developed since the water used to fill the course was taken away from the Beijing ground water, a huge damage for Beijing population. The solution we found let the site become a self-sufficient area from the water point of view; besides, the water surplus can be used by the near villages.



*Masterplan*

During the second part of the research I studied the “classical Chinese gardens” and its influence in west countries during the centuries up to the contemporary times. The third step starts out from this analysis: the linear park designed during the first workshop turned into a new park where the local landscape (woods, river and farmer landscape) meets the one of the traditional gardens.

This way the tanks’ covering becomes a real park where to walk through: its smooth surface let the landscape become like a terraced garden where each level is characterized by different functions, plants and scenery.

Somewhere this surface is cut off by some buildings which are placed under it: the buildings, according with the tradition and with the aim of integration between nature and human-land, are landscape by themselves.



*Longitudinal section through the tanks on the course*

The buildings are integrated in the nature and in the park: they open particular views on it and on the surroundings.

The spaces created are a re-reading of the balance between filled and empty areas, theme that we can find almost everywhere in the Chinese old palaces and gardens: in a way inner spaces and outer spaces flow one into the other. Besides the bearing walls are like perspective walls which, thanks to their position or rotation, let people image what they are hiding under. Buildings and tanks have also a symbolic meaning since they are a re-reading of the elements considered the base of life: water and rocks.



*Buildings' view from east*

At the end we made an experimentation with the Buzzi factory to produce a concrete tile with LECA inside: in the holes of the concrete we set some soil and planted some grass. These tiles have been thought to cover the buildings' roof and to create a smart solution instead of the typical heavy grass roof.

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