



**Politecnico
di Torino**

Honors Thesis

Master of Science in Architecture Construction City

Abstract

Cornigliano Mon Amour, Urban existences in post industrial realities

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The thesis project focused on the area of Cornigliano, a district in the West of Genoa.

This part of the city developed in different phases.

Before the 1930 the coast used to be a milestone of the Grand Tour and was mainly urbanized with villas built by wealthy families of Genoa. After this period an infrastructuring process started first with the railway following the whole Ligurian coast, and then with the industrialization process of Genoa.

Cornigliano's access to the sea was slowly privatized by landfilling the seashore to build the industry; the inhabitants will never have any access to it again and the entire water network flow is made invisible or separated from the urban daily life.

The district rapidly converted into an industrial area and populated by a flow of immigration mainly from the South and other parts of Italy.

The characterizing element was ILVA plant, producing a great part of the steel used in Europe and it was attracting workers which contributed to make Genoa a rich and powerful city in the Mediterranean in combination with its industrial port.

The problems due to air pollution, dust and dirt became significant, concerns about the death rate of the population grew a lot in this area (such as in the ILVA from Taranto) and a group of workers mobilized by a group called "Women of Cornigliano" made it clear that a change was needed.

In 2005 the factory converted a great part of its sheds to cold steel production, which pollutes less and other structures such as the two big gasometers next to the city center were demolished.

From that moment depopulation and marginalization of the district started.

The empty spaces left by the industry are the main interest of this thesis, which starts with an overview of similar processes in other parts of Italy, France and other European cities on the Mediterranean sea.

This model of industrial decommissioning left empty spaces that today are attracting our attention being part of our realities everyday. And it is not a rare phenomena.

The analysis continues focusing on the meaning we can give to those spaces.

Where natural flows used to balance a long ago and were destroyed after human intervention, after decommissioning due to lack of interest from institutions and potential investors of huge spaces, abandonment and time passing offer new ground for forms of nature that are occupying those spaces.

There are different mentalities about how to approach and design those spaces. Mine, after a long analysis, lot of reading and extensive surveys, seeing the subtly transforming site in different seasons, is about making those areas accessible in a small percentage, respecting and celebrating how the natural flows of events manipulate the area.

The thesis is for me a way of defining an ethic on planning after five years of studying how to do it, deconstructing it and finding what I think is the designerly way to less impactive solution.





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