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Honors theses

Regeneration of urban public space, temporariness, sustainability: an alternative for the former industrial area Incet in Turin

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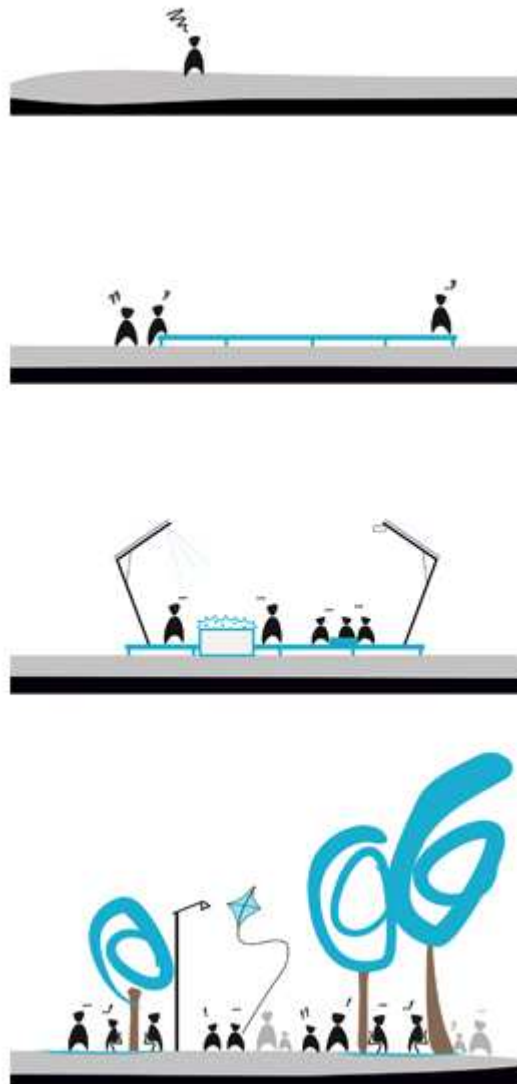
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The temporary use of spaces is a social phenomenon which, although already known elsewhere, is emerging in Italy as a key issue in the urban development of cities, as a consequence of the socio-economic changes that have occurred over the recent years. Therefore, *temporariness*, along with other issues such as *sustainability*, *sociality* and *technology*, is the point on which this thesis bases the analysis of the **outdoor public space** in our contemporary cities, of its history, evolution and features: a public space that is the structuring element of the urban texture, an element of connection between people's private and public life; a place increasingly subject to individualism, which led to the creation of emerging public spaces mainly related to the consumption and trade, which are quite different from the traditional *square*.

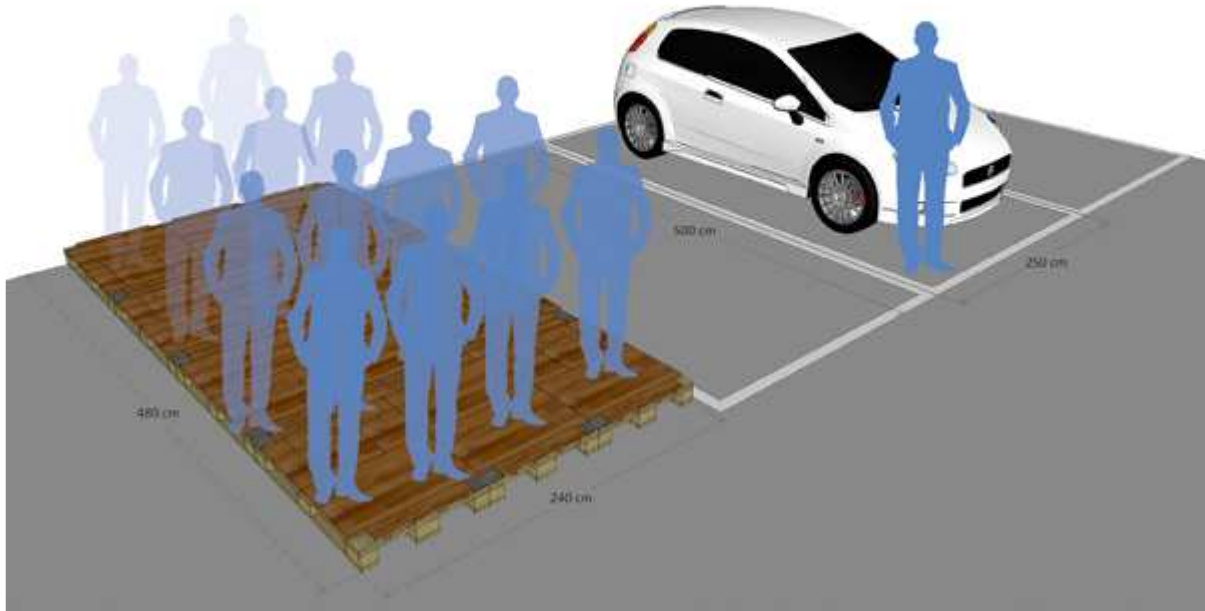
The urban connective spaces can be considered as the theater of temporariness par excellence. Due to this reason, by introducing of the variable 'time', this thesis analyzed the way this experimental method of temporary reactivation of the public space, developed mainly as actions of the citizens (often as a form of protest), could turn into an institutionalized instrument not only as a timely regenerating intervention but also on a larger scale, as a vehicle of information for citizens in the intermediate stage between the detection of a problem in an urban public space and its final resolution.

With the assistance of the City of Turin, it was possible to apply these theoretical considerations to a practical situation. The old industrial area of Incet, in the neighborhood of Barriera di Milano was selected. This choice was influenced by the strong multi-ethnicity of the residents, the urban and social problems present in the area, and the regeneration projects that were already present. After analyzing the project for the municipal area, the focus shifted to the outdoor public space. The goal of this analysis was to define some alternative solutions, of a temporary and financially-contained nature, that would empower citizen-users with the opportunity to realize physical spaces, proportions, patterns, functions, and evaluate their positive and negative aspects. Ultimately, the citizen-users could converse with the municipality and contribute towards the functionality of the project.



'Temporary phases': from the problem to the solution

Due to the “temporary” nature of the intervention, the use of low-cost technologies is a point that could not be renounced. For this reason, the reuse of recovered materials, such as industrial pallets, was considered top priority. The high availability, high resistance to heavy loads, and modularity were fundamental to the project: in fact, by assembling several pallets, it was possible to make a reference module, sized as a parking for one car. This choice aims to show everyone the amount of space that might be exploited for public use, while it is actually used as a single parking spot, for the sake of one person only.



The reference module

Located within the area like a temporary review of the permanent municipal project and, according to the logic of sustainable interventions, combined with other modular and easy to assemble/disassemble structures to reproduce trees, lighting, pathways and street furniture, the modules were first used to symbolically mark the functions that were assigned in the municipal project (where the presence of spaces for cars only exceeded the spaces for public use). Later, they were used to mark the personal solutions that were proposed for the *outdoor* public space, devoting more room to places for meeting and socialization.

Finally, it is worth remembering that the intention of this thesis is not to criticize the municipal project but to present a more conceptual reexamination of it through a final feedback with the municipality itself: the possibility to work on a sort of 'temporary full-scale model', re-doable on many occasions of urban regeneration, becomes an instrument of information and participation, that is able to give voice back to the *square* as a place of everyday life, linked to new meanings and identities, one in which residents will feel a sense of belonging and attachment.



View of the area

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