



POLITECNICO  
DI TORINO

# Honors thesis

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MASTER OF SCIENCE PROGRAM IN ARCHITECTURE  
HERITAGE PRESERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT

*Abstract*

**Convert to preserve.**

**A design exploration for the former M.Ar.Di.Chi. in Turin**

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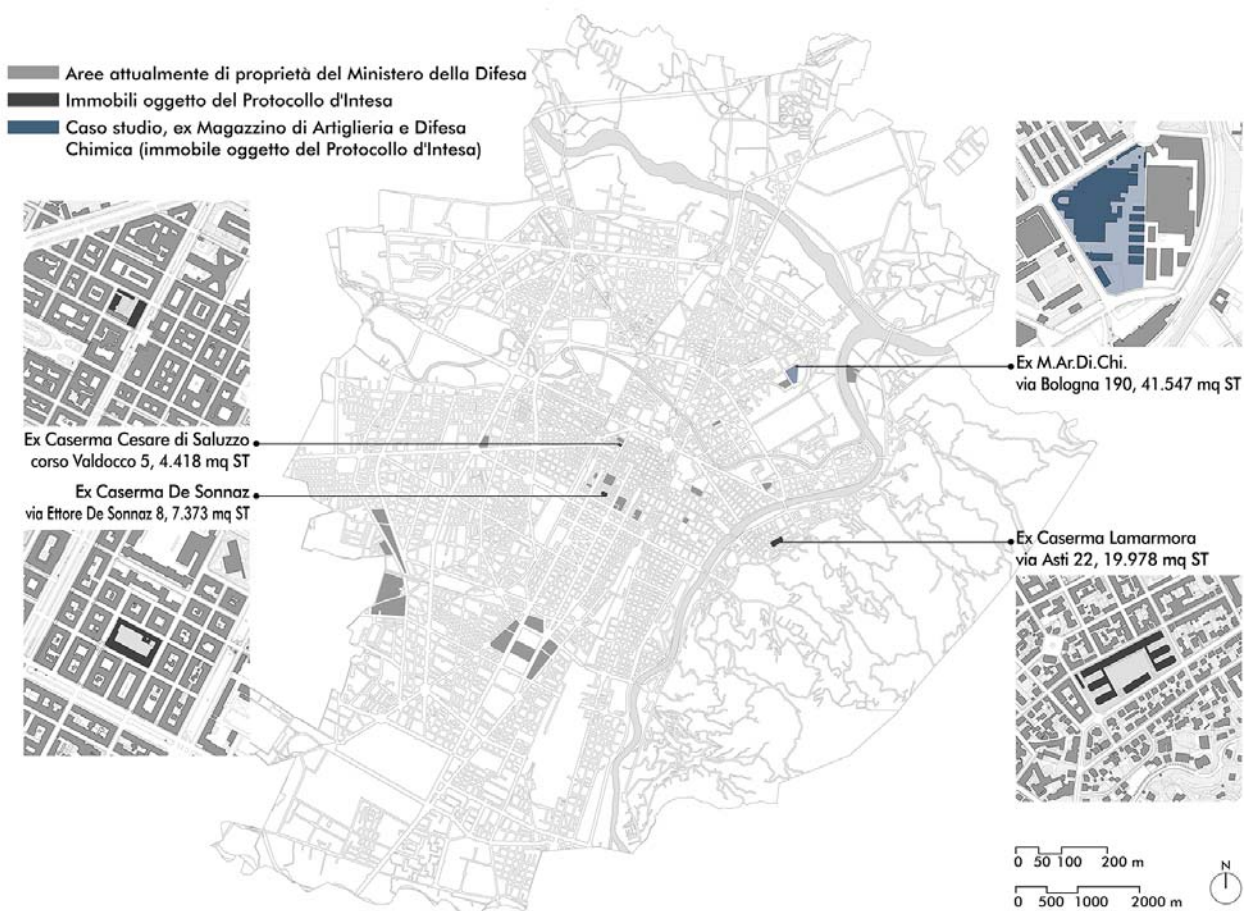
Naretto Monica

*by*

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The thesis is concerned with the reuse of abandoned military areas in urban districts. The former Artillery and Chemical Defence Warehouse (M.Ar.Di.Chi.), located in Turin between Bologna street, Cimarosa street and Monteverdi street, has been selected as case study. A research project, a redevelopment and enhancement proposal have been elaborated. The disposal and alienation of unused Italian Ministry of Defence property is a process that has been started since the 1990s. In August 2014 the City of Turin acquired four abandoned military complexes for free, which are all located inside the municipality, including the former M.Ar.Di.Chi..



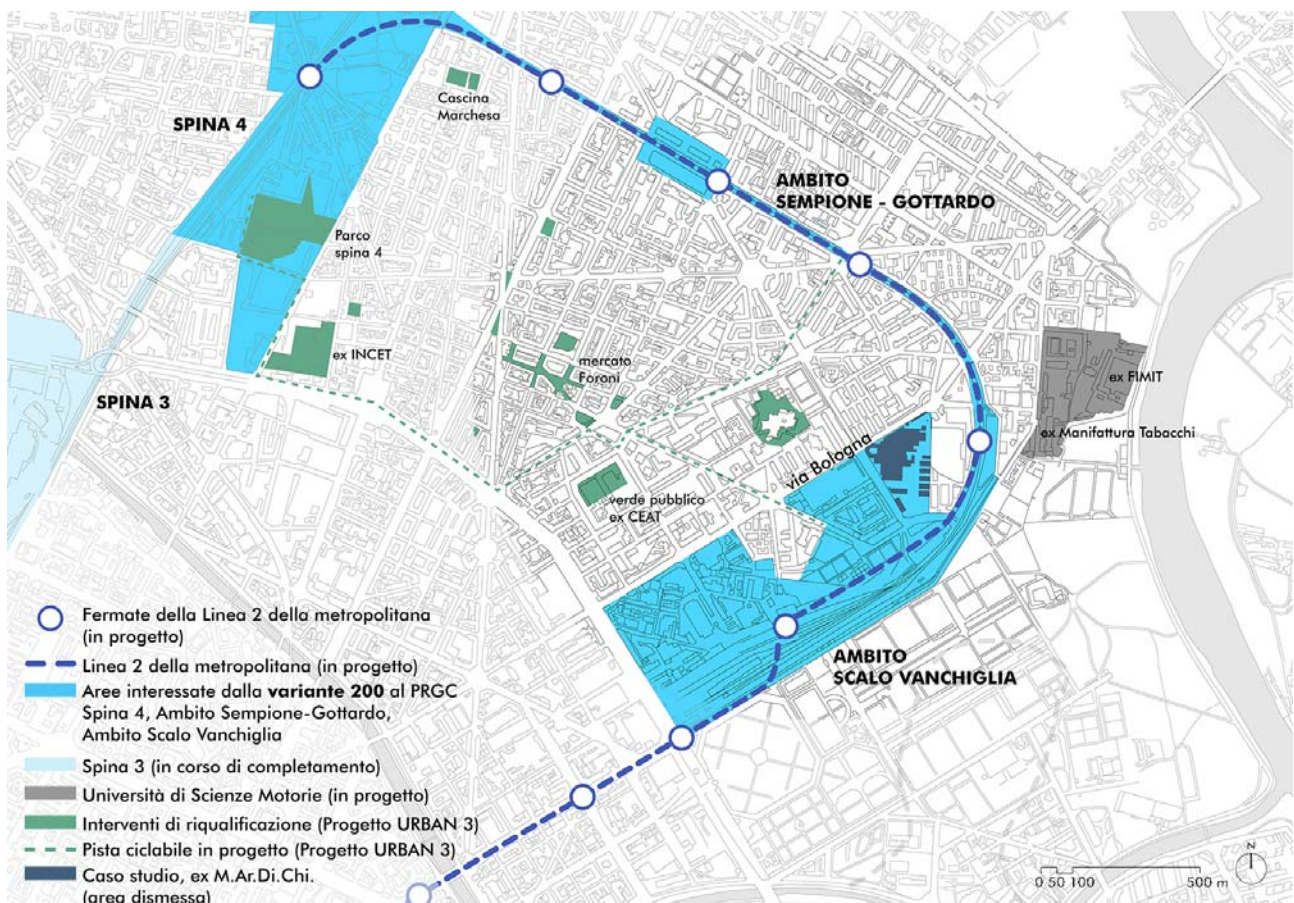
*Military properties in the City of Turin contents of Covenant signed on 07/08/2014.*

The name is an acronym, that recalls the previous military use of the area; on closer inspection, the most part of the structures visible nowadays is directly linkable to his industrial past. The complex, founded by the firm Fratelli Piacenza from Biella, was originally a woollen mill. Many renowned architects and engineers, such as P. M. Dogliotti, G. Chevalley, G. Velati Bellini, added several buildings to the earliest storage sheds, built in 1911. In 1937 the area was acquired by the Italian Ministry of Defence and used for military purposes; after a long period of disuse, the complex was definitely decommissioned in 2009. In 2012 it has been declared listed building for his historical and artistic values, as “significant example of early industrial architecture in Turin”.

The analysis and documentation of the present state of the complex has been articulated into a research on archival sources, a photographic survey of the area and of all the main forms of decay, a photogrammetric survey of the façades; because of the modular constructions of the buildings, a direct survey of some major sections permitted to characterize most of the complex.

The neighbourhood, characterized in the past by an industrial vocation, counts nowadays a lot of immigrants, young families and an increase in children. Further more, significant urban transformations interest this area, such as the Project Spina4, the Variation 200 to the land use plan of the City of Turin, the second underground-line.

The proposed project enhances the ancient building, by emphasizing the characteristic spaces of the industrial structures, but at the same time obviating the lack of facilities observed in the neighbourhood. By following the request of some local education operators, a service centre for students and youths has been proposed; it stands on a pole represented by the 5 high schools on Bologna Street and the former Manifattura Tabacchi complex (a former tobacco factory, possible future location for the University of Sport Sciences).



*Urban transformations in the neighbourhood*

The public functions are located in the historical buildings, characterized by aesthetic, formal and identity values, with huge spaces dedicated to education and cultural activities, as a nursery school, an auditorium-theatre, laboratories, study-rooms, co-working offices, a cafeteria. The new complex includes also seven new “in line” blocks, that have a temporary residential function.

The overlapped multi-identity of the architecture is the result of continuous additions, including the seven newly designed buildings; this complexity is considered as a valuable element and is organized by a new north-south axis. In order to maintain the unity of the area the old boundary wall has not been demolished and the plant has not been levelled out with the surrounding city texture.

In conclusion, the proposed redevelopment and enhancement project tries to connect the meaning of the former industrial and military area with the contemporary processes of urban development, preserving a memory of the city, but also offering a place to live in the present.



*Enhancement project. Exploded Axonometric View*