



POLITECNICO  
DI TORINO

# Honors thesis

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## COURSE OF ARCHITECTURE FOR SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

*Abstract*

Le Città di Roma\_Graduation Studio Architecture 2015-2016

### **The Street and the Water** Via Lungara: a Return to the River

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September 2016

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The street and the water. Two key elements in many cities, one of these is our eternal city, Rome. Two elements that very often have seen their events influence each other. So many cities owe their development to the courses of water, which are energy source, sustenance and communication. River Tiber has always been a place where big architectural construction lean out near small habitation. In river Tiber coexist the past, the present and the future and it evolves like a big creature. It is also inevitably linked to its disastrous floods and the final solution for solving this problem, was decided after the devastating flood which took place on December the 28th, 1870, that was 17 meters high. Started the construction of two massive walls parallel put into urban tract of Tiber. This system was very efficient for the floods but erased the routine dialogue that the people had every day with the river. Nowadays, river Tiber is afflicted by a disconcerting lack of urban life, as if the river would just be a stranger presence, forced to a fast passage through the city. The radical cut brought by the edification of these embankments relieved the nightmare of the floods, but on the other hand swept away a fabric of events and social, economic and architectural interlaces which used to elevate and keep vital a very well delimited urban concept.



Olio su tela di Hendrik Frans van Lint, vista di San Giovanni dei Fiorentini e Via della Lungara, 1739



Foto di Via della Lungara e San Giovanni dei Fiorentini, oggi

The attempt (utopian) of this planning provocation, will be an imagine of an alternative scenery.

Via Lungara it's one of the main/victims of this process of transformation of the roman lungotevere. It had two build fronts on both sides and a width of twelve meters. During the years some of the greatest roman architecture were built along the street, like Palazzo Salviati (now the Centre for High Defense Studies), Palazzo Corsini and Villa Farnesina, which houses today the Academy of the Lincei. The urban pattern developed in Via Lungara is a perfect example of medieval spontaneous aggregate of which Giovanni Caniggia speaks in his writings (assistant and supporter of the school of Saverio Muratori).

With the construction of embankments, also Via Lungara radically changes its appearance and loses much of its importance. Today it is in a lower level respect to Gianicolense Lungotevere. It has a width of 5 metres and on a side, it has a massive walls and the other side historical buildings.

It is an attempt of how the relationship would be different between the river and the city if at the beginning of 900 if different decisions had been taken (not the better choice but simply a different choice). The solutions given in this thesis start from the facts that happened in the past and they try to fix the relationship between the existent elements and the river.



Street front with mirror facade



River front with Borneo Sporenburg,  
Amsterdam



Street front with Borneo Sporenburg,  
Amsterdam



River front with Adelphi Terraces, Londra



Street front with Friedrichswerder Townhouses, Berlin



River front with student's residences of G. Grassi,  
Chieti

The hypothesis is imagining that the congested Lungotevere Gianicolense is lowered below the former street level and in its place a new front is built. In this way the street comes back to be an urban internal space with two built fronts. It wins back the width and the dignity of its origin. The street has again a direct view on the river. The new front, built with a direct view on the river, tries to mend the relationship between the road and the river. That is possible by using key elements such as staircase to the river and the double level of public paths above the colonnade, which can also be accessible when the river invades the floodplain areas, fairly frequent event during autumn and winter. By studying Roman houses, especially the typology present in Lungara street, and watching the European townhouses, I chosen three modules which summarises their principal characteristics.



The central river side are in an analogue situation of Lungara street. This scenery can be used to them and we can imagine a Rome similar to a Dutch city that returns to dialogue with the flow of water to which owes its origins.

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