

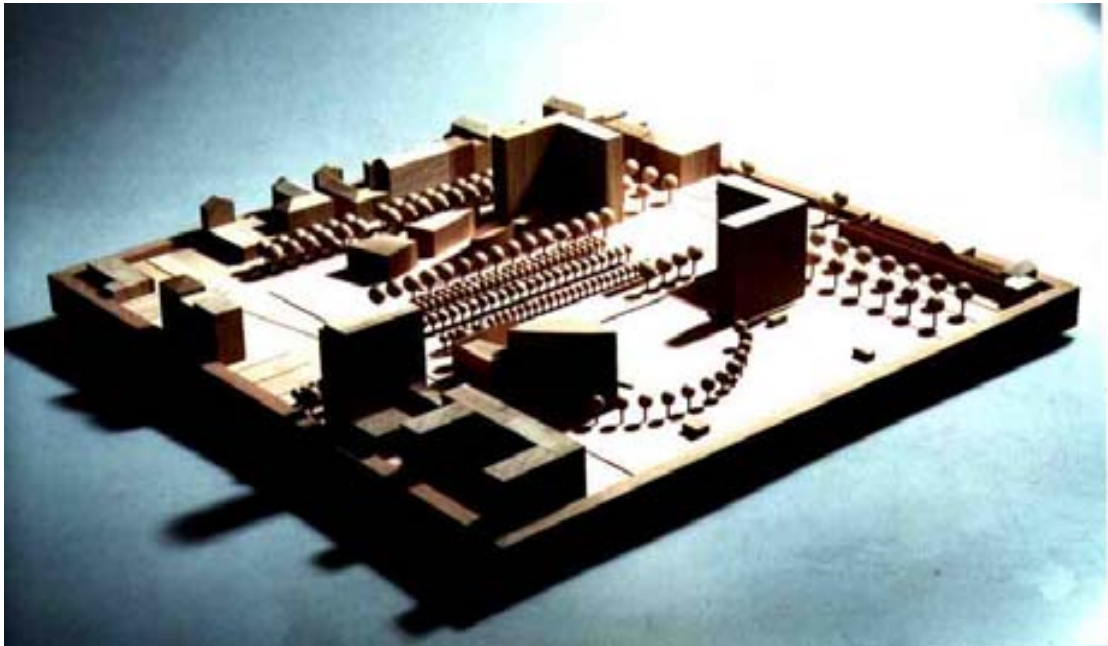
Porta Torino. A project on Spine 2

by Paolo Quirico

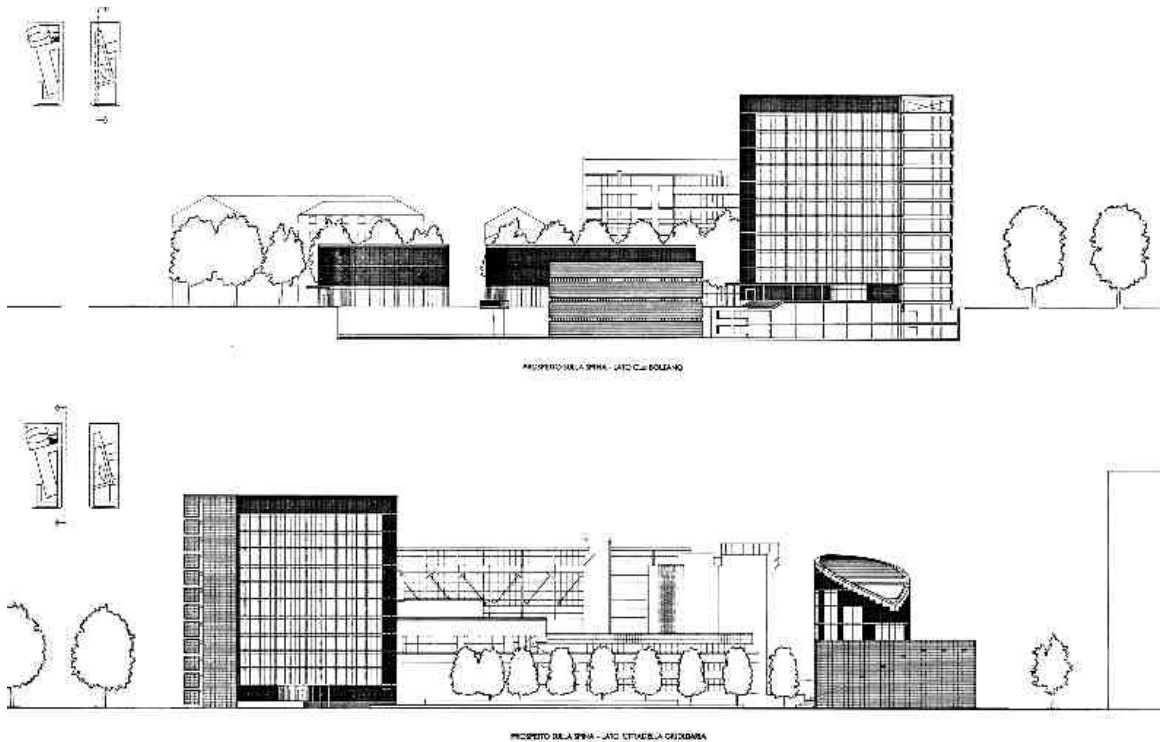
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The project develops some of the proposals regarding the General Regulatory Plan (GRP) of Turin for the realisation of " Spine 2 ". The main element of the new GRP is the creation of the passing railway, by means of a street level covering, over the existent tracks that run along an wide open trench well under street level. This trench created a significant barrier between the east and the west of the city. The project for the surface area foresees the realisation of a new, 6 km long "Spine", that will serve as a very important connection between the north and the south and will have urban parks and tertiary compounds running along it.

The object of this study is the area situated on both sides of the "Spine" starting from the new Porta Susa station and extending to corso Vittorio Emanuele II. The plan considers the GRP's proposal of constructing two identical office towers at the Vittorio Emanuele II crossing. The height of the towers is inferior to the height indicated in the GRP in order to render the intervention more compatible to the current development program in the tertiary sector and at the same time contain the disproportion with the pre-existent buildings. The reduction of height does not however diminish the importance of their position in the hierarchy of the volumes the will be constructed with the opening of the new connecting "Spine".

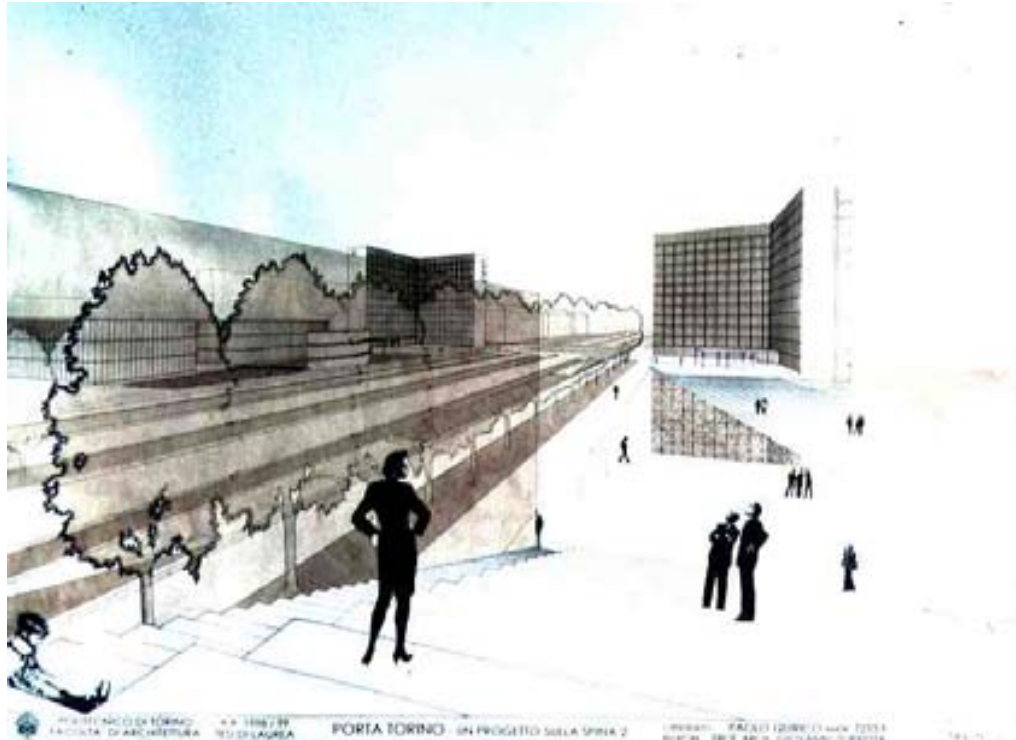


The towers represent a central reference point: signalling the entry into the historic centre and the presence of a primary node of interchange, the new Porta Susa station. The form of the identical towers symbolises two great opened doors that welcome travellers; they structure the surrounding space in accordance with the Turinese block form style urban organisation. They also constitute an ample system of reference which is easily recognisable and memorable for both travellers coming from the "Spine" and directed towards the station or the city centre and travellers coming from the station and going towards the city. As the current railway is underground, immediate external and direct contact between incoming travellers and the city is presently impossible. In consequence, upon exiting the station, travellers may find themselves disoriented: the surroundings thus become a strategic means of orientation.



The towers dominate a wide open multi-level public space in order to allow natural light to illuminate the underground areas: the most important of these being the new inter-city bus terminal which is currently on the surface area. By putting this area underground a vast pedestrian surface will be created. This area is characterised by large reflecting pools of water.

In accordance with the GRP the buildings around the pools will contain the necessary services relative to the station and the nearby judiciary offices. The services include a convex shaped hotel with a conference hall attached to the side and a centre for small temporary expositions which will serve to occupy the travellers' time while they wait for their trains or buses.



The general organisation of the project revolves around the presence of this new node of interchange and tries to give sense to pedestrian and motor routes, and to the space of an area which has not yet been fully projected by the GRP.

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