

The revision of Piazza Martiri della Libertà in Cuneo, Italy

by Paolo Mana

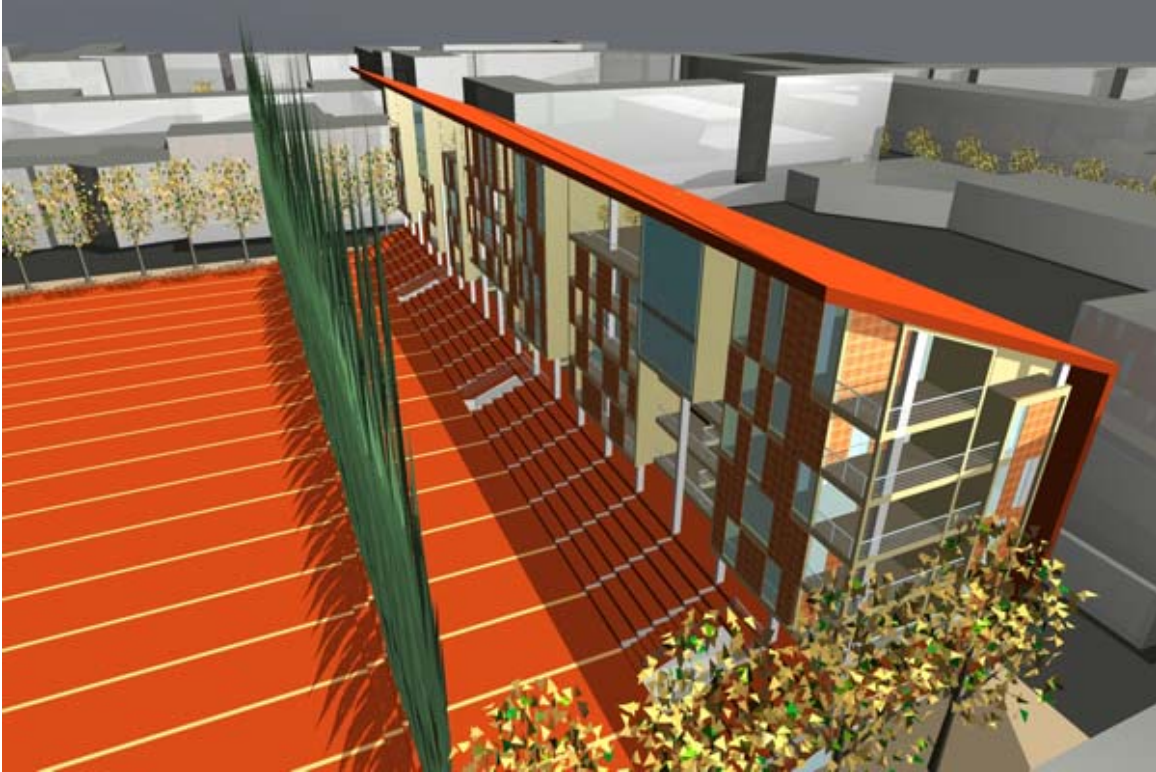
Tutor: Paolo Mellano

Co-tutor: Flavio Bruna

Piazza Martiri is an empty space in the orthogonal order of the city of Cuneo in the early 20th century: it is a tray of asphalt, edged by a row of platans on the four sides, on which to finish our odyssey looking for a parking place, reasonably near the better confectioner's. The spheristerion of the city, which is a fifteen metres wide, eighty metres long and nearly four metres high cement box delimited by a row of poplars, is laid on it. This so anonymous, hidden and trivial place reveals itself as a strongly characterized area in its primary elements: the **enclosure** (the logic which separates the two principal functions: the parking and the playground), the **game** of the elastic ball, which is rooted in the area since the end of the 19th century, and the **backdrop**, which is a natural front that I like to think the inhabitants are still used to question for understanding the approaching of the good season. On one side the box of the games, which is the materialization and the canonization of an instinctive game that gave the occasion for a hour of relaxation on every corner, wall of dairy farm, road or square, whereas in the other side the merry-go-round of the parking drew frantic trajectories, intersections of runs, brief an long stops, packages and bags. The whole material for the project was already there. The choice is to materialize a strong unifying sign, which sketches the plane of the free space and which is, at the same time, an occasion of interaction with the new projected building, denying the clean separation between the different functions.



The square crosses what was the physical limit of the playground drawing a mark at quota +080, and then bends itself to define a zone up to level +360. The sketch of the front on Vittorio Amedeo Street is given by the bending of the same slab at the level of the shops gallery. In the end, it becomes the roof of the whole building, turning on itself for the last time. The area between the row and the building maintains the dimensions of an elastic ball playground, usable for demonstrative matches or events related to the world of the "balon". To sum up, there is an only plane, which is firstly a square and then a playground, staircases, commercial level, backdrop of the square and roof. The idea is reported with the red colouration in section, in all of its extension.



Under the square zone, there is a second shops gallery (with possible double-height shops), on the back front on Vittorio Amedeo Street. The row of poplars becomes an important solution to find an arrangement between the building area and the square, guaranteeing changeable conditions all year long.

The building, which is a stick of a medium sleeve of twelve metres, consists of small volumes on various levels, which form a game of boxes on the square. The coverings play with warm materials, such as wood and coloured plaster, in opposition to the scanning of the pillar: the front of the building is composed of a pattern of wooden fixtures and high windows. The front of the northern side, instead, is more closed, with punctual openings, so that it is totally opaque.



The inner distributions prefer the spaces on the square for the kitchen and the dining-room, and place bedrooms and bathrooms on the northern side. On this side there are also small loggias.

The materials on the ground are smooth cement, with zinc-plated steel grates. The main structure is made of cement, with tile wallings and finishes made of coloured plaster. The roof is metallic.

For further information , e-mail: paolomana@hotmail.com