

Recomposition of Architecture in the Historical City. Case Study of Battaglia Terme, Italy

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Abstract The work we propose concerns the theme of the recomposition of public spaces in the ancient town. The working method is based on the belief that, in the study of urban morphology, is basic to analyse the history of the city. The history becomes an indispensable tool to know the deep reasons of the urban structure which is the memory and the image of the community. The methodology contemplates the urban form as a result of its spatial structure. The life of the urban form is investigated in its physical specificity, the only one able of giving reason of its special nature over every social, economic and political aspect, certainly important but not sufficient. Our teaching at the University of Padova (Italy) is based on fundamental 1960s studies about typological analysis. The spatial aspects and formal image of the transformations in the city are studied as a premise for the design of the new architecture. The old town centre of Battaglia Terme, not far from Padova, is one of the subjects investigated by our students, thought as an opportunity to reconfigure the lost unity of a very symbolic and representative place.

Keywords Urban analysis, Memory, Identity of the community

1. Introduction

The teaching experience presented in this article is based on the principle according to which studying the history of the city is an indispensable tool in discovering the underlying reasons for the development of the urban structure, which forms an indelible reminder made in the thought of the community. The protection of the urban landscape and its recomposition have to occur according to a coherent process based on a very close relationship between architecture and the city. The assumption is in line with the main contribution of the most advanced community of scholars in Italy on this subject during the second half of the twentieth century, the so-called *School of Venice*. According to lecturers who taught at the University Institute of Architecture in Venice, the relationship between a city and architecture, referring to the city's scale in the study of architecture, is the fundamental fact that is at the origin of an effective theory on the project in the years following the war, which defines a synthesis between analysis and design, architecture and urban planning. Between the acquisition of information and work on artefacts.

Explanation of planning outcomes in particular by Giuseppe Samonà, Egle Renata Trincanato, Saverio Muratori, and Aldo Rossi – to mention but a few of the most

important members of staff at the University of Venice Institute of Architecture – in searching with the students to find ways of planning the future in the pre-existing urban fabric by using the concreteness of history as an instrument in combining individual architecture projects to give the public space shape and form [1].

Through the years the Venetian School has deepened research into the precise relationships between urban structure and architectural organism, theorizing a complete continuum between analysis of the urban environment and analysis of its buildings.

Since the 1960s, studies in architectural typology and urban morphology have enjoyed a certain fortune in Italian design theory in regard to the construction of a rational architectural theory aimed at design practicality. This approach to architectural design is still considered by many to be of great relevance today, both from a theoretical perspective and in terms of methodology and teaching. The value of architectural typology derives from its study of historical forms, i.e. the reference to specific facts that can be compared to identify the basic motivations and essential aspects of real data.

Aldo Rossi has the particular merit of having suggested a logical-aesthetic method capable of taking real situations into account in all their complexity, including accidents and random elements, without preconceived interpretive notions. In this sense, Aldo Rossi's approach brought about a true revolution in the perspective of his time, proposing an architecture starting from real people as opposed to the modernist claim to create the present through preconceived

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interpretive schemes. Rossi therefore suggested a sense of proportion and renewal through the past (figures 1 and 2).

The instrumental value of history and the importance of deeply studying the pre-existing environmental conditions for the purposes of the project represent foundations in teaching especially now sustainability is such a crucial and decisive theme.

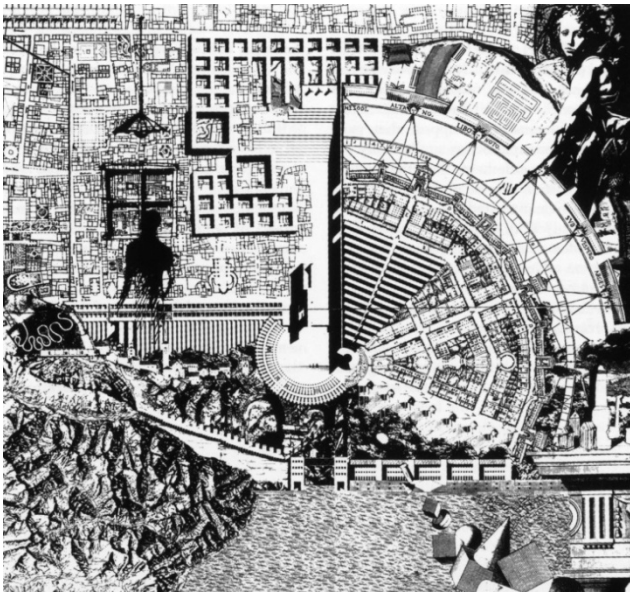


Figure 1. Aldo Rossi, Eraldo Consolascio, Bruno Reichlin, Fabio Reinhart, *The analogous city*, table exhibited at the 1976 *Biennale di Venezia*. It represents a metaphorical method for understanding and designing the city. The analogous city confronts reality, memory, and the imagination. It is a collage of the real and the ideal, the historical and the fiction. Rossi uses a painting of Canaletto with an imaginary Venice to describe his method



Figure 2. Design for a theatre in San Benedetto Po, master's thesis by students Fabio Donella, Fabio Gerola, Maurizio Berro, Enzo Gazzani, Giuseppe Stopazzola, academic year 1979-80. University Iuav of Venice, supervisor Aldo Rossi, coworker Gianni Braghieri. Representation of the ground floor plan highlighting the relationship between the morphology of the square and the typology of the existing and designed buildings

The investigation into sources, particularly the iconographic ones, is in agreement with what Gianni Fabbri wrote: "In confronting the analysis of the processes affecting the history of the physical appearance of the city, the problem of documentation of the iconography plays a central role". As Fabbri also states, "iconography after the XVIII century, and especially the land registry maps, becomes an essential reference" since in this case "the representation is subordinate to the possibility of reading the image of the real estate" [2].

The idea that the transformation and protection of the urban landscape can occur according to a unitary process is the basis of the teaching experience described below.

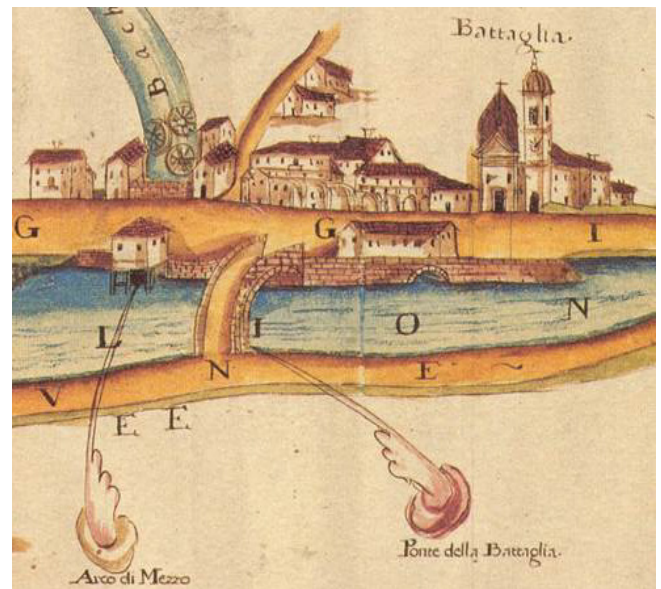


Figure 3. The old centre of Battaglia Terme richly described in a detailed map of the year 1740, with the *Arco di Mezzo* and the water that underpass the road (on the left)



Figure 4. Battaglia Terme, 1845-53. One can recognise the straight lines of the Battaglia and Bisatto Canals which, converging from north and south, then give rise to the Vigenzone Canal, at right angles at their meeting point

Battaglia Terme (figures 3 and 4), one of the subjects studied by our students, has been affected by rapid post Second World War reconstruction that has resulted in the organic unity of the old town centre with surrounding parts being lost. The order and hierarchy of the elements that characterize the form of this old place has been compromised by actions of speculation operated in the second half of the twentieth century. The ancient town, used as a case study in which the analysis and proposals for a new urban design concentrate, was particularly analysed by the students Marco Fortuna and Alessio Lorenzetto: the planning hypothesis developed as master's degree thesis is now presented.

2. Context



Figure 5. Aerial view from the east of Battaglia Terme, taken in 1950. In the foreground, can be seen the Vigenzzone Canal. In the background, beyond the hanging canal, you can see the part of the town built during the twentieth century



Figure 6. Battaglia Terme, aerial view from the west, second half of the last century. In the upper part of the photo is possible to see the historical centre, with the winding Vigenzzone canal that here begins his travel toward the not far Adriatic sea



Figure 7. Old view of the hanging canal at Battaglia Terme, at the point at which the water is flowing through the *Arco di Mezzo* (i.e. the building with three arches in the image), originating the Vigenzzone Canal. This hydraulic device, regulating a water drop of about seven metres, was for many centuries the source of power for all the local factories



Figure 8. Battaglia Terme: with the Vigenzzone Canal and the *Arco di Mezzo* (opposite side), where the canal itself starts. Old view of the basin created by water after passing through the *Arco di Mezzo* visible in the middle, still existing these days. In the image you can see river boats too, employed to transport both people and goods

Battaglia Terme is situated on the slopes of the Euganean Hills. It became known as an important commercial crossroads for river traffic following the construction of the first artificial canal in Europe, built between 1189 and 1201. The canal runs right through the town, where the waters from Padua meet the ones from Monselice and Longare, near Vicenza (figures 5 and 6). After negotiating the hydraulic regulation system at the Arco di Mezzo in the centre of Battaglia Terme (figure 7), the water then falls for about seven metres into the bed of the Vigenzzone Canal and so makes its way to the sea (figure 8). The urban development of this area therefore depends heavily on the use of waterways and river commerce. This is one reason for the absence of a circle of walls around Battaglia Terme: a characteristic of other neighbouring towns such as Este, Monselice, and Montagnana.

2.1. General information about Battaglia Terme

This important position on navigable waterways was

therefore fundamental to the establishment of the town and its subsequent growth. From 1208 onwards, Battaglia Terme developed along the banks of the canal, initially as a centre of milling activity. It was designed to be an area wholly given over to the milling industry and to the exploitation of hydraulic power. The absence of defensive systems, such as walls and a castle, the continuing existence of marshland in the area at the end of the sixteenth century, and the constant interference by the Municipality of Padua, all point to a territorial entity heavily controlled from outside and developed as a sort of outlying industrial centre. The village became a supply base and a crossroads for the transport of goods (figure 9), especially of *trachite* stone. This was taken from the quarries in the Euganean Hills to both Padua and Venice, where it was used for paving open spaces and for various public works.



Figure 9. Old view of the centre of Battaglia Terme, showing a burcio, a typical river craft, moving through the water (photo by Riccardo Cappellozza)

2.2. Morphological and Typological Elements

Battaglia Terme is more similar to a lagoon town than to other centres in the Paduan area. In the old town centre, the houses are all attached, and wind along the banks creating streets much like those in Venice or Chioggia. The two sides of the straight hanging canal are reserved for the noble residences, and behind the east bank, nestled in the Vigenzone Canal, is the old working-class district, once mainly inhabited by workers and boatmen. Here, the buildings are arranged in such a way as to create, within a labyrinth of alleyways, groups of dwellings clustered around shared courtyards. Access to the main street is by means of open passageways through the first row of houses, echoing in this system of “sottoporticos” the structure of Venetian squares. This urban layout, typically water-centred, took shape due to the presence of important navigable channels, which form a sort of water crossroads right here in Battaglia Terme. So, although surrounded by agricultural land, the town does not have the character of a farming centre.

3. Critical Aspects

As a result of various erroneous planning decisions, the canal connecting Padova to Monselice, with national road no. 16 running alongside it, has gradually become more a divisive factor for the town’s community rather than an opportunity for collective growth as in the past. Since the 1930s, Battaglia Terme has developed exclusively on the western side of the canal, leaving the eastern side where the town centre grew up over many centuries, to fall progressively into decay. Nowadays, what remains of the old town is in a very dilapidated state (figure 10), and on the way to being abandoned by its inhabitants. While to the west the modern town is extending outwards beyond the railway station, in the area on the opposite side the process of deterioration has greatly increased in recent decades.



Figure 10. Old centre of Battaglia Terme, current state. Planivolumetric plan. From the work of the students Marco Fortuna and Alessio Lorenzetto

The waterways have now lost their original function as a means of transportation. The movement of goods by river has been supplanted by road haulage, and certain types of boat have now disappeared.

Over the course of a few decades, the commercial and industrial importance of Battaglia has significantly decreased. The waterways are still potentially navigable and could, with the provision of structures such as harbours and quays, offer interesting possibilities for tourism, also in view of the beautiful natural setting provided by the nearby Euganean Hills.

The decay of the masonry work which protects the old centre from water gives rise to frequent instances of flooding. In addition, the construction in the 1970s of buildings out of keeping with the local context, and which have nothing in common with the traditional architecture of the town, has contributed to the destruction of what remained of the culture which dominated the community of Battaglia Terme over many centuries: such as the remains of the shipbuilding yard belonging to the Cobelli family, famous boat-builders.

4. Project Hypothesis as Didactic Experience

Research into this particular issue was one of the main subjects proposed to students as part of the master's degree in Architectural Engineering at the University of Padua. This was within the context of finding ways to upgrade our neglected architectural heritage and natural resources, and to promote and encourage ecological tourism. Two undergraduates, Marco Fortuna and Alessio Lorenzetto, chose a study of Battaglia Terme as the subject for their final thesis. The aim was to draw up new proposals for revitalising the historic centre, now disused waterway junction in the lower Padova region, and to develop ways to convert it from an abandoned industrial hub into a popular tourist destination. Fortuna and Lorenzetto were asked to formulate planning hypotheses starting by considering architectural analysis as part of the project.

The general guidelines put forward can be summarised as follows: 1. making the area into a traffic-free zone, with access restricted to pedestrians, cyclists and residents' cars; 2. partial enlargement and reclamation of the Cobelli shipyard, and demolition of some of the tower blocks erected around the 1970s (and which are particularly incongruous) in favour of a series of new buildings aimed at tourism; 3. upgrading of the waterways, and their integration into new harbour facilities, providing the opportunity to travel as far as Venice, via Bovolenta and Chioggia, or Padua and Vicenza, either by your own boat or by that of the municipality; 4. development and improvement of the existing Museum of River Navigation; 5. establishment of new routes for cycle-tourism and upgrading of the existing ones, in response to the growing demand for sports tourism in the context of the Euganean Hills and in the Veneto region in general. Cycle-tourism is becoming increasingly popular here, practised both by Italian tourists and those from northern Europe, who are attracted by the presence of the thermal springs too.

The proposal put forward by Alessio Lorenzetto and Marco Fortuna (figure 11) is in keeping with the general approach, directed at enhancing the urban landscape while preserving its existing historical and environmental features, and so ensuring that the necessary improvements demanded by modernisation are in tune with the traditional context. In fact, the urban design is here understood as the result of a dialectic between the values of tradition and modernity.

Therefore, the project is part of the dialectic of the historical process in which preserving and building are components of the same act of consciousness. It is thus passed the irremediable antagonism between conservatives and innovators because the restore has to be understood in the sense of a re-enactment of the past and the building activity as a continuation of the historical process. In this regard Ernesto Nathan Rogers explains: "Many, who think to be innovators, have in common with so-called conservatives the wrong that both have deep-rooted prejudices, thinking that new and old are in opposition instead of representing the

dialectic continuity of the historical process. One and the other don't go beyond the veneration for certain fruitless appearances. They are not able to penetrate the essences of the styles, pregnant with inexhaustible energy. To try to a priori build in a modern style it is equally absurd to impose respect for the taboo of past styles" [3]. This study on the theme of improvement of the old centre of Battaglia Terme has also looked at the possibility of including the project within a larger context, which would involve the integration of footpaths and cycle-ways pre-existing outside the urban limits. These routes extend through a landscape which offers both environmental appeal and significant architectural attractions, a cultural legacy that is a potential driver for mass tourism. The environmental appeal lies partly in the beauty of the Euganean Hills, as well as the presence in the area of a number of important architectural sites.

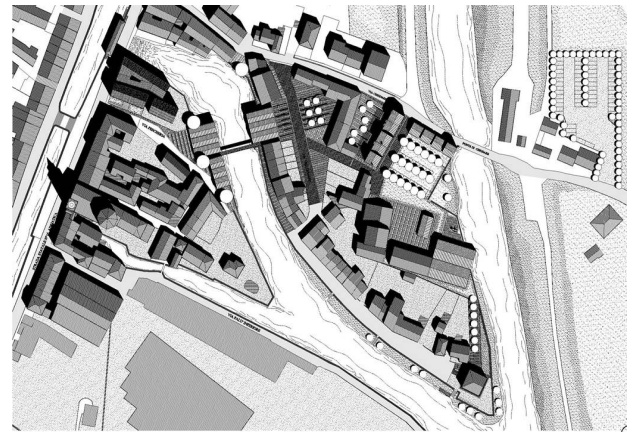


Figure 11. Battaglia Terme, improvement project for the old centre: Planivolumetric plan. Master's degree in Architectural Engineering by Marco Fortuna and Alessio Lorenzetto (University of Padova, Department of Architecture, Urban Planning and Surveying, now Department of Civil, Environmental and Architectural Engineering, academic year of 2010-11, supervisor Enrico Pietrogrande)

This collective cultural heritage includes the Spa Baths, Villa Selvatico, Catajo Castle and the Museum of River Navigation. This last place, in particular, situated inside the historic centre of Battaglia Terme, has no usable cycle paths and so currently lacks the opportunity to become a popular tourist destination.

The students' proposal contains three particular elements. Most importantly, the wall around the old centre, which protects it from the canals, needs to be restored and reinforced. This undertaking also has a certain symbolic value, as it represents a restoration of the earth/water relationship on which the various parts of the project are all based. Then there are the public spaces, identified by examining the existing town structure and with the inclusion of new elements strictly in keeping with the local architectural tradition. At last there is the cycle-way, which goes past the monuments and main sites in the town. This can be seen as a real urban element, interconnecting with the existing cycle-ways outside the town limits and in the surrounding area.

It should be stated beforehand that the project is designed to be developed in keeping with the customs of a traditional

small town, that is to say, in accordance with the model of the historic closed community which correspond to the morphological structural of Battaglia Terme.

The backbone of the project consists in planning a cyclo and pedestrian system in the town which would allow travellers from outside to gain access to its public spaces. Indeed, such a network would be designed to include all the important buildings and public spaces, such as the Museum of River Navigation and the site of the old mill known as the *Molino dei Quattro*, enhancing their historic and environmental potential. The project would also involve the reclamation of unused spaces, and the provision within the town of a series of little new buildings, designed to replace the inappropriate and incongruous buildings erected in preceding decades, and destined to be in keeping with formal structure of the original town.

According to the method proposed, the operations would be coordinated part by part in different contexts within the town. Each separate district has its own recognisable character, and would be related to the other parts by use of a traditional tourist trail.



Figure 12. Improvement project for the old centre of Battaglia Terme. View of the Vigenzone Canal, with the residents' harbour on the right and the covered market on the left. Master's degree in Architectural Engineering by Marco Fortuna and Alessio Lorenzetto (University of Padova, academic year of 2010-11)

The new buildings and structures, together with the existing ones, would be sited strictly in relation to the town trail, creating a scenic backdrop which would help enhance the urban space. The arrangement of these various elements originates in the aim of defining closed urban spaces in terms of the typical courtyard model, but with one side remaining open towards the water. In this way, the trail would pass through a succession of clearly identifiable spaces, not symmetrically arranged, following asymmetries which, while emphasising the formal structure of the town, also acknowledge its picturesque nature. The functional purpose of the new buildings is related to the nature of the whole project, which is intended to promote the tourist attractions that the old town can provide. Restaurant and hotel facilities will be combined with a new covered market (figure 12),

reminiscent of the old ruined market, and with an open-air museum space, containing a variety of old vessels. This would occupy the boat-building site in the old Cobelli shipyard, recognisable by the presence of a statue of Riccardo Cappellozza, the founder of the Navigation Museum.

Memories of the old boatyard will also be maintained in the restoration of the existing site, with a reorganisation plan which will enable the area to be rearranged to accommodate a series of covered spaces for tourist boats (figure 13).

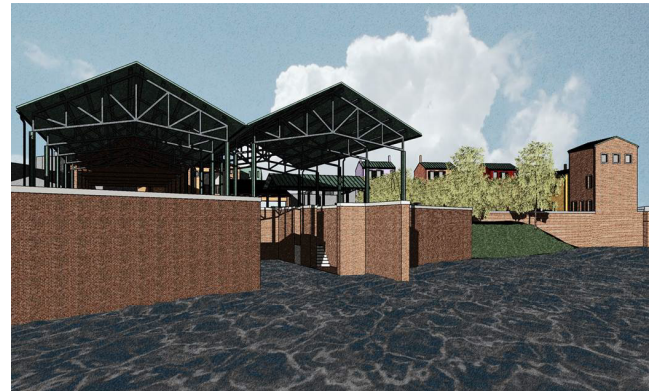
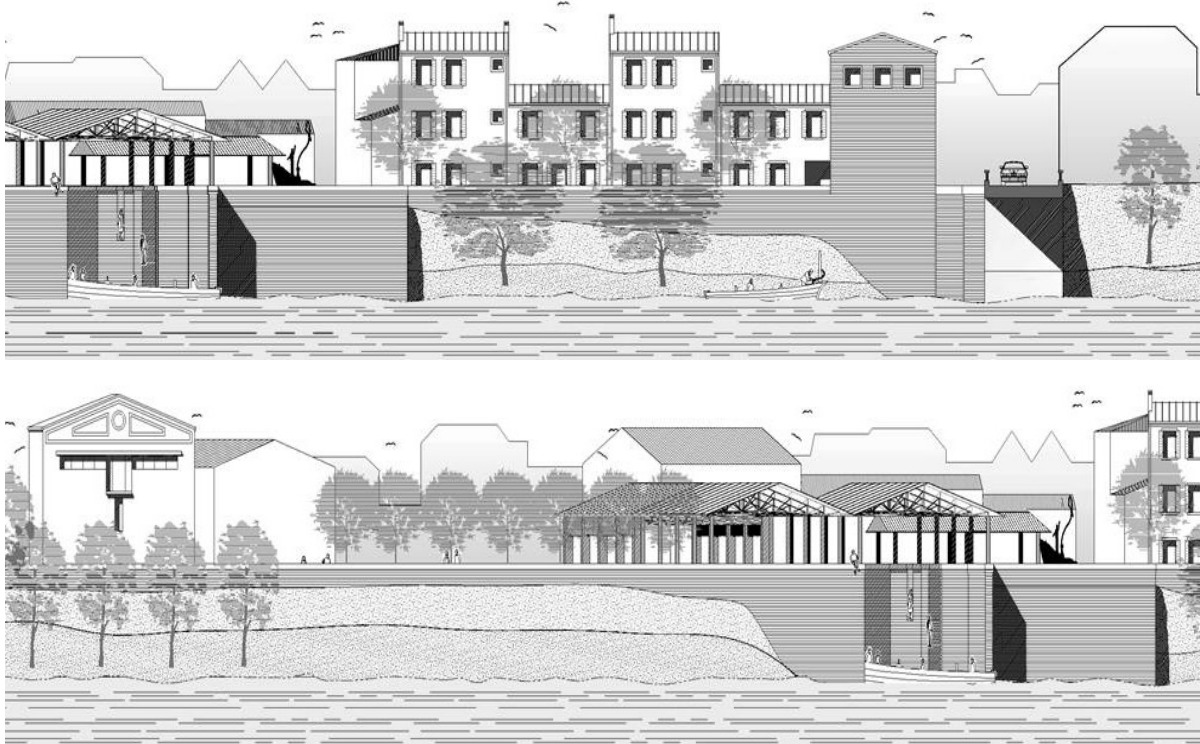


Figure 13. Improvement project for the old centre of Battaglia Terme. View from the water of the tourist harbor designed in place of the old shipbuilding yard of the Cobelli family. Master's degree in Architectural Engineering by Marco Fortuna and Alessio Lorenzetto (University of Padova, academic year of 2010-11)

The local houses, with their many colours and formal features which mark them as being of traditional design, are juxtaposed in the local manner, giving them that typical attractive appearance of villages along the Venetian lagoon. These dwellings are arranged to create public courtyards, and with frontage onto the main streets of the town.

This organisation of the various sections in a geometric formation relates to a well-established tradition, dating back to the eighteenth century, when the houses were all aligned along the main axes in a comb design. The similarity between this type of layout and that to be found in places near the sea, supports the belief of many historians, who see the origins of Battaglia Terme in terms of a sea port transplanted inland. The strict relationship between the new buildings and the context is achieved by completing these residential units with a sort of head tower, which, adopting the typical local tradition, lends a finishing touch to the residential block with the addition of this elevated feature.

A crucial element in this trail through the town's open spaces is the presence of water, which limits the extent of its expansion. The route takes you along the edges of the Vigenzone Canal and the adjoining Rialto Canal, once ancient ways of navigation for the transportation and exchange of goods, particularly stones, and symbolic of the life of Battaglia Terme.



Figures 14 and 15. Improvement project for the old centre of Battaglia Terme. Water-fronts. Master's degree in Architectural Engineering by Marco Fortuna and Alessio Lorenzetto (University of Padova, academic year of 2010-11)

The upgrading of the town also includes a plan to exploit the potential of the canals, identifying tourist routes which could continue on water. This would be a continuance of an old tradition, for in the past the water was also used by craft providing passenger transport. The reshaping of the boundary, seen as the division between earth and water, constitutes another important aspect of this project. Clearly, the wall between the two has a practical value in protecting the town from the incessant flooding which has characterised (and continues to characterise) the area in recent years, and whose growing frequency is an on-going concern to public bodies. However, in addition to this, the wall has a particularly strong symbolic significance. Indeed, the wall can be seen as the podium on which the town stands, and on which depend all the aspects of the project which are thus all connected to a principle of unity (figures 14 and 15).

The presence of the wall gives the old town centre of Battaglia Terme that sea-going character possessed by cities such as Venice, Chioggia, or Pellestrina. The wall defines in an unmistakable manner the frontier between earth and water, substituting that indefinite borderline between these two elements which so typified the traditional town.

The line of the wall is interrupted by boat shelters known as *cavane*, reminiscent of the old boatyards. The *cavane*, here designed in wood and iron materials, are essentially of a temporary nature, and characterised by their lightweight structure (figures 16 and 17).

A critical event for the town in relation to important sights linked to the network of footpaths and cycle-ways occurred during the period of post-war reconstruction, when the old

Mulino dei Quattro was replaced by an incongruous tower block, totally out of keeping with the local context. In the belief that the memory of the mill would be an important factor in reshaping this part of the town and re-establishing a cultural link with the past, Fortuna and Lorenzetto proposed the construction of a new building in place of the existing one, whose greater height would help replicate the overall volume of the original mill (figure 18). The façade of the building would obviously reflect the difference between the contemporary condition and the proposed development in terms of an ancient mill dependent on water. While innovative materials connect the new building to the needs of modern design, new routes and air links can help to restore the historic status of the mill. Indeed, the building will find a connection with contemporary life, in the belief that, in the words of Aldo Rossi, the form exceeds the importance of the function [4]. Aldo Rossi who based the study of the city on its shape – "I always refer to the shape and architecture of the city, not its institutions" – came to the conclusion that the identity (of the form) depends mainly on the form itself, rather than on reason of a functional nature or, more generally, on political, social and economic values. This is especially clear in the direct words of Aldo Rossi, who, for example, expresses his opinion in these terms about the Palazzo della Ragione in Padova: "When you visit a monument of this kind, one is struck by a series of issues that are now intimately linked. Above all, one is struck by the plurality of functions that a building of this type can hold, functions that are quite independent of its form. It is this form that remains clearly imprinted in our mind, which we live

and perceive and that, in turn, structures the city" [4].



Figure 16. Improvement project for the old centre of Battaglia Terme. Ground view of the tourist harbour. Master's degree in Architectural Engineering by Marco Fortuna and Alessio Lorenzetto (University of Padova, academic year of 2010-11)



Figure 17. Improvement project for the old centre of Battaglia Terme. View of the residents' harbour, with the new volumes that remind the pre-existing mill. Master's degree in Architectural Engineering by Marco Fortuna and Alessio Lorenzetto (University of Padova, academic year of 2010-11)

In agreement with the above, the volume of the old mill can be reinstated as a local monument while adapting itself to the practical needs of the present time.

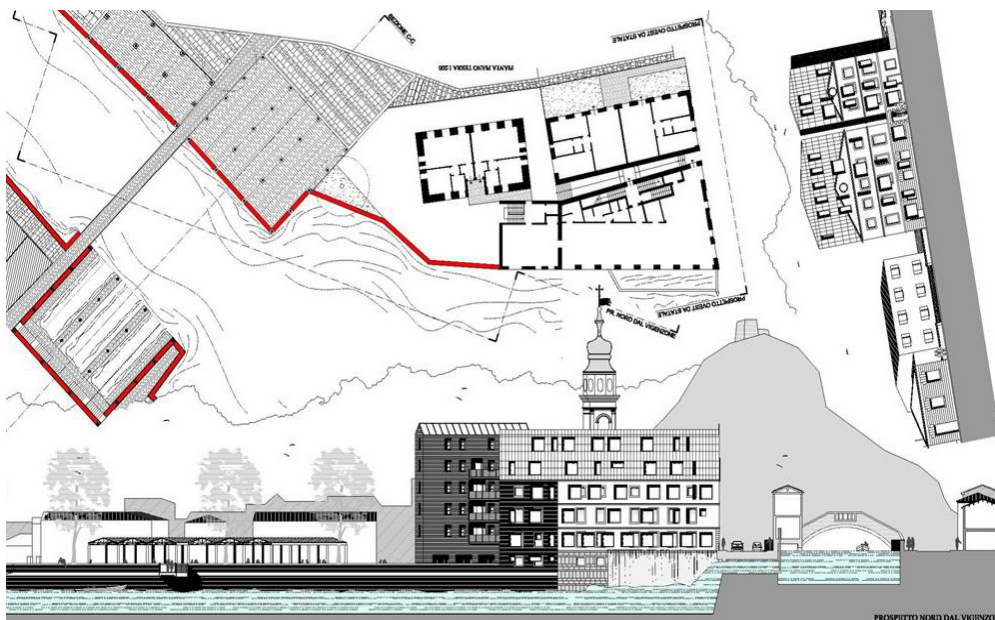


Figure 18. Improvement project for the old centre of Battaglia Terme. Plan and façades of the proposed building to occupy the site of the original *Mulino dei Quattro*. Master's degree in Architectural Engineering by Marco Fortuna and Alessio Lorenzetto (University of Padova, academic year of 2010-11)



Figure 19. Seminar on Aldo Rossi for the research doctorate in Architectural Design at the University Iuav of Venice, October 1998. From the left, front row: Antonio Monestiroli, Patrizia Montini Zimolo, Salvatore Bisogni, Carlo Aymonino, Luciano Semerani, Gianugo Polesello, Pisana Posocco

5. Discussion

The research and results produced by the Venetian school in typological and morphological studies were further advanced by a generation of young architects who believed in the possibility of rethinking architecture based on the premises of rational thought. This position, in the opinion of Antonio Monesteroli, “understands architecture as knowledge of reality, built on the underlying reasons that produced it, with the intention of making these discernible in the building. This position is linked to classic architecture, with its declared objectives, displayed construction methods and works that conform to these objectives and methods. There are examples of this approach that merit further research. We can affirm that this position has produced a theory of rational architecture.” [5]. In this sense, architecture becomes a representation of a manifest thought, an opportunity for learning: “Architecture is knowledge and projects are its main tool of verification and research aimed at understanding the city and its territory” [6].

A generation of architects and academics have been trained on the basis of this rational thought, and despite belonging to different schools, with their own autonomy, they are able to recognise themselves in a cultural reference environment in which the sharing of themes and issues, and adherence to common principles and foundations, has in effect led to the development of a school.

Following the footsteps of Aldo Rossi and the great masters of rationalist culture, they understand the role of architecture in collective rather than individual terms. From this perspective, rational culture offers the only possibility to recover the most essential and constitutive aspects of reality, where the particular and the individual are recognised in the collective. “The artist’s life and the history of society” Gianni Fabbri wrote “share this common point given by the monument, by the architecture produced by individual inventiveness, which is recognised as a part of collective history. This is where subjectivity dissolves into a collective dimension and acquires its objective character” [7].

Therefore, as part of a logical process that allows compliance with the intrinsic rules of the profession, personal experience is never denied but always channelled within a broader collective experience that never departs from the civil nature of architecture and the architect’s responsibility. The composition is still a response to the need to rediscover the sense of a productive tension between individual expressive sensibilities and commitment to the community, between being an artist and the usefulness of the artist.

Architecture is therefore understood as social art. The composition is the work of an individual but designed for the entire community or city. The city is always the common object of study for the members of the school and architecture is the element that defines the city itself. In this sense, a project is understood as an “analogous city”, composed of fragments, rediscovered architecture, known forms assembled in a new way, able to evoke meanings,

create infinite relationships with the city and, in fact, propose an alternative reality through the use of imagination. Thus the invented design consists of forms that are already known, and is therefore the result of a dialectical relationship with history, which is studied to rediscover new aspects and features. As Gianugo Polesello says, “architecture is like a large archive that includes what is already given and available, and in what is available there is also architecture to be realised, invented and proposed” [8]. However, these known forms that belong to tradition are simple, communal forms that refer to a civil dimension of architecture: they represent the shared values in which a community recognises its presence in the world.

“I therefore support a civil dimension of architecture”, Malacarne wrote, “in which urban and architectural forms are the reflection of a collective experience that can minimise the individual aspect of the works by subjecting the form to an idea intended to be intelligible and even shared. I agree with those ideas of cities referred to known places that are transcribed, reinvented and found in the project, recalling with Cesare Pavese the true wonder is in the memory and not in the new” [6].

The students of Aldo Rossi refer to this formal tradition because, for them, “the problem was not so much how the world functions, as how to represent its values” [9]. This was a new point of view, which, by placing people and their lives at the centre, allowed light to be shed on a regulated system: “It is a logical process that allows people to follow the rules, the traditions of the profession and perhaps even a certain naturalism, but in which the uniqueness of personal experience, through the choice of objects and the proposal of novel solutions, is what makes the system extraordinarily alive” [10]. This research, in the impermanence and lack of values of the time in which we live, has now become more relevant than ever.

6. Conclusions

The study of the relationship between architecture and culture of the city lies at the heart of the above displayed planning hypotheses. In-depth study of the history of Battaglia Terme is an instrument that clarifies the main aspects and opportunities.

In particular, the research into the transformations of the spaces and shapes developing through time represented an indispensable premise for checking the planning proposal that aimed at reconstituting a coherent urban fabric in which residential and touristic uses play a role in connecting the distinct monumental phenomena present.

The investigation of the history of the city formed the basis of the project solution illustrated above, in harmony with the belief that in teaching it is essential to promote a synthesis between knowing and doing. The study of what is already present in the area and the broader historical-building framework is an essential tool in the promotion of a new cultural layout based on the needs of the area.

The future image of Battaglia Terme also depends on the choices that will be made about the old city. The search for a formal reordering is motivated by the conviction that architecture is a fundamental means for promoting a new cultural and social asset in the areas investigated, where the new architecture draws inspiration from the needs of the territory. The on-going teaching experience at the University of Padova has also proved to be effective in making the relationship between lecturers and students a cohesive one.

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