

Murcia and Sant Mateu. Plots form and band of pertinence. Meaning for architectural design

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Abstract. *Some of our studies of urban morphology, implemented on historical and contemporary urban fabric maps, allow us to believe that the shape of the lot and of band of pertinence of a pathway are essential to reading the formative urban process. Different phases of formative process of an urban center seems, in fact, to be recognizable in the shape of lot and interaction between lots and path. These morphological shapes (lots) are the result of different centrality that are produced in the building fabric and, consequently, the restructuring pathways are important for understanding rules and causes of urban and architectural transformation of the city. This paper aims to offer a contribution to the definition of the elements of urban morphology. This research, part of a series of research, carried out in the Lab. Lettura e Progetto dell'Architettura of the Faculty of Roma (Sapienza), tries to be implemented in some case studies: Murcia and Sant Mateu.*

Keywords: Sant Mateu, Murcia, Urban morphology, band of pertinence, formative process.

Introduction

In the last 3 years, working in the LPA (Lettura e Progetto dell'Architettura) laboratory research activities, led by prof. Giuseppe Strappa, I've been experimenting reading of urban tissues in order to understand how urban transformations can offer suitable information for the definition of present-day architectural design, both in the type of building style and in the role, that the building must have at the level of tissue and urban organism.

The particular occasion of these two Degree theses, which were developed in correlation with some professors of the Architecture Faculties of Murcia and Valencia, offered me the opportunity to experience the reliability of this morphological analysis method. A tool that was mainly improved on the Italian cultural landscape. That is recently focused on the comparison of cadastral shape, buildings forms and through the study of bands of pertinence

of these routes, as well as the modalities and polarities, within the urban fabric, that step by step, they have regenerated the urban form. The aim of this research activities was to formulate a theory on the formation process justifying the various urban polarities that are alternated inside the urban center. And that through which it was possible to trace the basic lines for a new urban phase design and for an architectural solution congruent to the inherited form of the fabric and congruent with the present day demands. (fig 1)

In both studies, presented on this occasion, one has initially attempted to reconstruct the formative process of urban fabric, to start from recent forms and urban restructuring. Then, by subtracting of these first, one tried to highlight the previous phases and the matrix structure, which probably, directly related to the natural morphology of the territory, it has determined the place and the form of this original settlement.

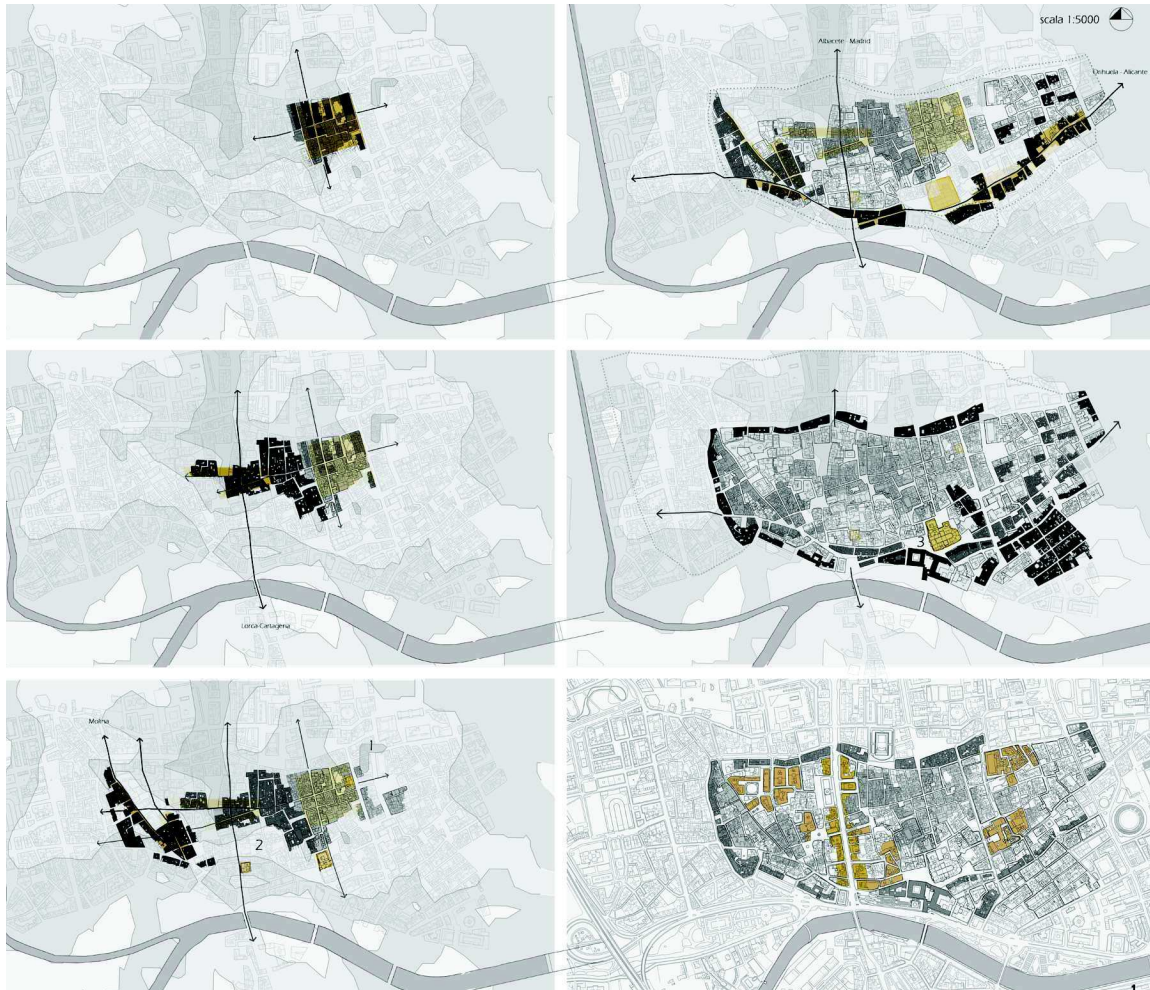


Figure 1.
Murcia: Phases of the formative process

Murcia

The subject of this architectural design in Murcia, that has been performed on this thesis, concerns the transformation of a residential building into a special building, destined to become an hotel. The building, which is the object of this degree thesis in architectural design, situated in the Plaza Martinez Tomel, is placed at the intersection between the ancient walls of Murcia, just near the bridge over the river Segura, and the path of refurbishment (puente vjejo), that in the last century, it has cut into two parts the ancient urban fabric. The reenactment of the morphological phases of the City's historical fabric, it has highlighted the current trend, that is directed towards a new layout, towards a new significant urban pole and in the direction of a consequent specialization of the residential building.

The analysis of the urban morphology and the diachronic formation of the restructuring paths, that have historically overlapped in the urban fabric, (fig 2a, b) have highlighted the tendency for formation, inside the urban fabric, of a new nodality, exactly in the vicinity of the building considered. An urban polarity that implies, obviously, a necessary design reflection on the fabric and consequently for the characters of building type.

Therefore, the thesis proposed that La Plaza Martinez be returned as urban polarity. This is to solve the problem of urban connection through a subway that would free the traffic from the historic route. This in order to return, the great urban refurbishment avenue, to the old center as a new linear square, and with the dignity of unifying polarity, that in the drawing

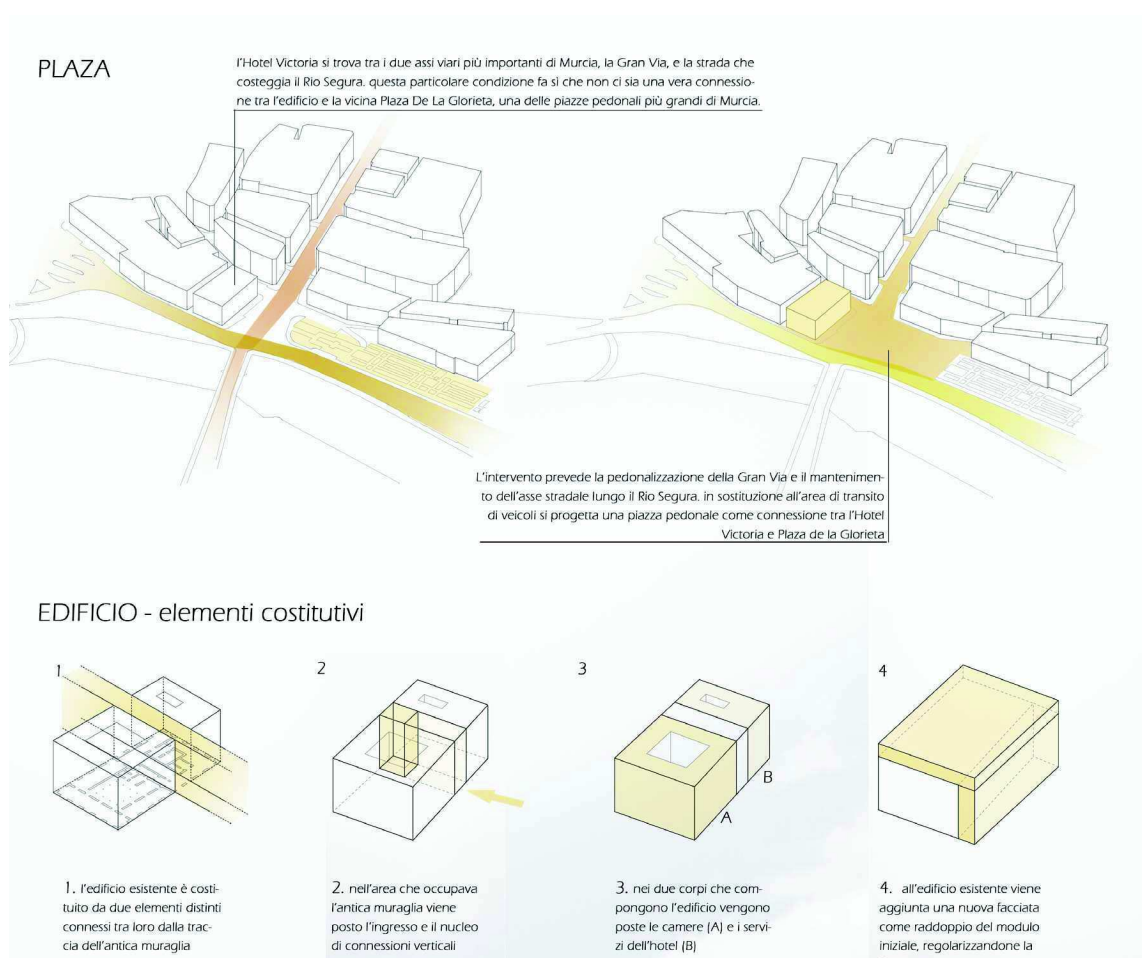


Figure 2.

Murcia: urban role and character of the building. Present day situation and architectural design

of the pavement remembers the ancient urban design. (fig 3a, b)

The building's specialization has become possible through the juxtaposition of a new building body, useful to transform a secondary prospect into main facade. So this new facade turn the facade toward the Plaza Martinez, placing it in an axial position with respect to the gardens lying behind the Town Hall and the Palacio Episcopal. The proposal to place a new building body over a secondary facade of the residential building, permit to transform the public space in a square that has the task to serve the new "palace".

The addition of a new fruitful and distributive system imposes to the building the special character. The added system transforms the most "antinodal" structures into the front and main elements. He turns the back in the front by reorganizing its serving structures

(in the building), to impose a new-look to this particular urban polarity.

Sant Mateu

Similarly, the case study of Sant Mateu, also produced for a degree thesis and with a correlator of the University of Valencia, has been developed after the analysis of characters of the urban morphology of the ancient center.

As in the Murcia thesis, even in this second example, the urban fabric was examined through the forms of individual cadastral plots, put in relation to the paths and polarities that have come, gradually, to form. The warp and the shape of the cadastral particles allowed us to highlight the various restructuring paths that have overlapped in areas that were differently orthogonal. Originally related to territorial



Figure 3.
a. (above) Murcia: Reading of the bands of pertinences to the urban fabric
b. (below) Murcia: architectural design

matrix road or to subsequently planned areas. Thus, the sequence of overlapping or juxtaposed building phases has been rebuilt, organized on mature paths or urban reorganization, reorganized through new refurbishment paths.

The subject of the architectural design has been an old winery. As the buildings was abandoned, we have reconsidered the edifice as an exhibition place and tasting-room for wine-related productions.

The building, originally placed in an antinodal position, can develop a new urban nodal role with this new definition. (fig 5)

The building located on the edge of the historic fabric, was an industrial building

characterized by a hypostyle room divided into three large parts serving and served at same time.

The building has located to the margins of a suburban planning organized in relation to the Carrer de la Quatremitjana avenue. Old winery had in nodal position the entrance serving, used for entry of raw materials into the intersection of perimeter paths.

The design hypothesis, which proposes the transformation of the building like exhibition space and tasting of the vineyards, suggests the overturning of the façade of the building and the addition of a new entrance structure destined to receptive and distributive function.

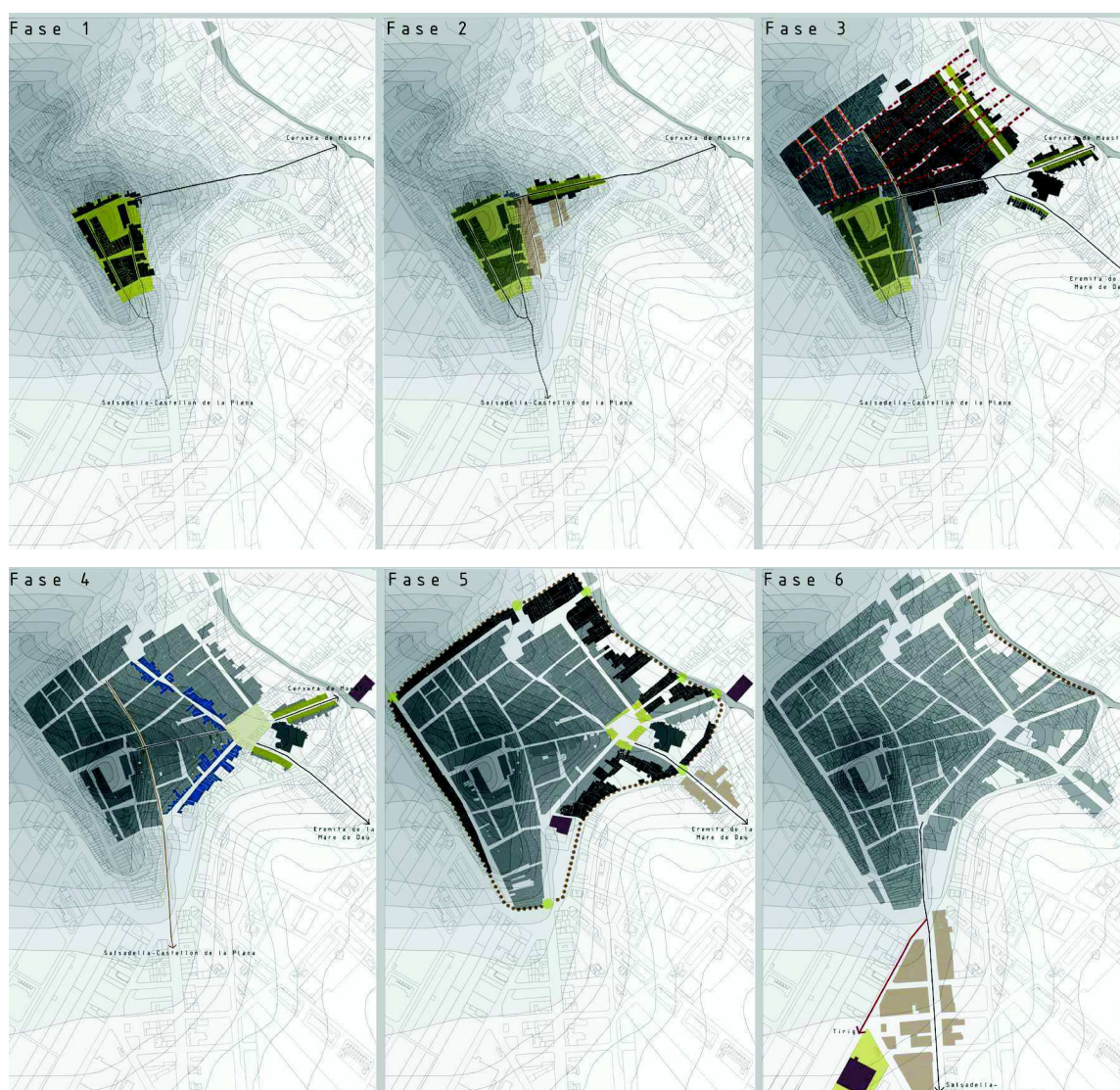


Figure 4.

Sant Mateu: reading of the bands of pertinences to the urban fabric and hypothesis of the phases of the formative process

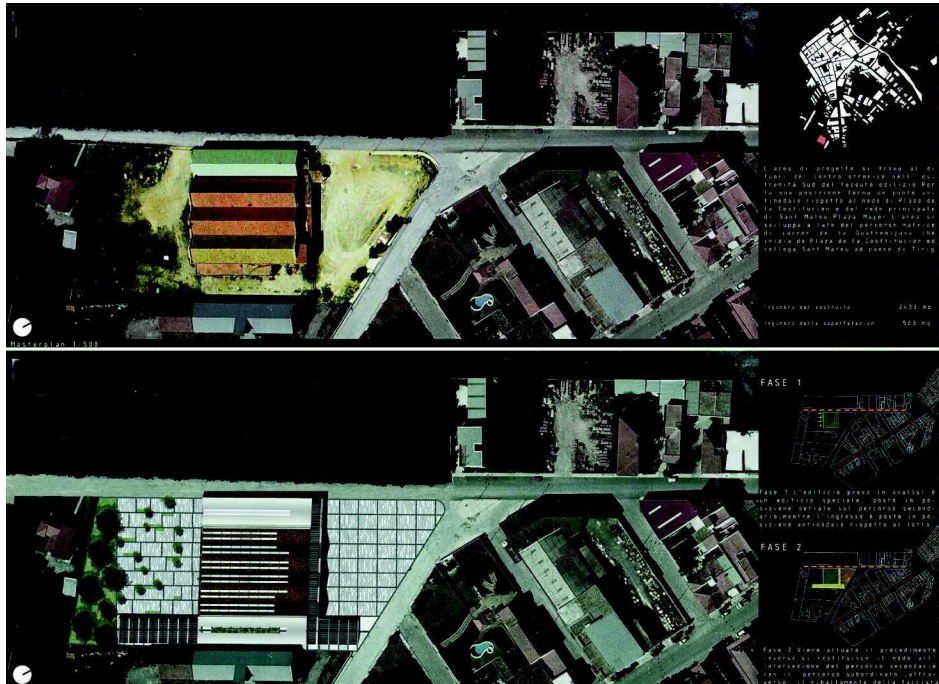


Figure 5.
Sant Mateu: present day situation and architectural design

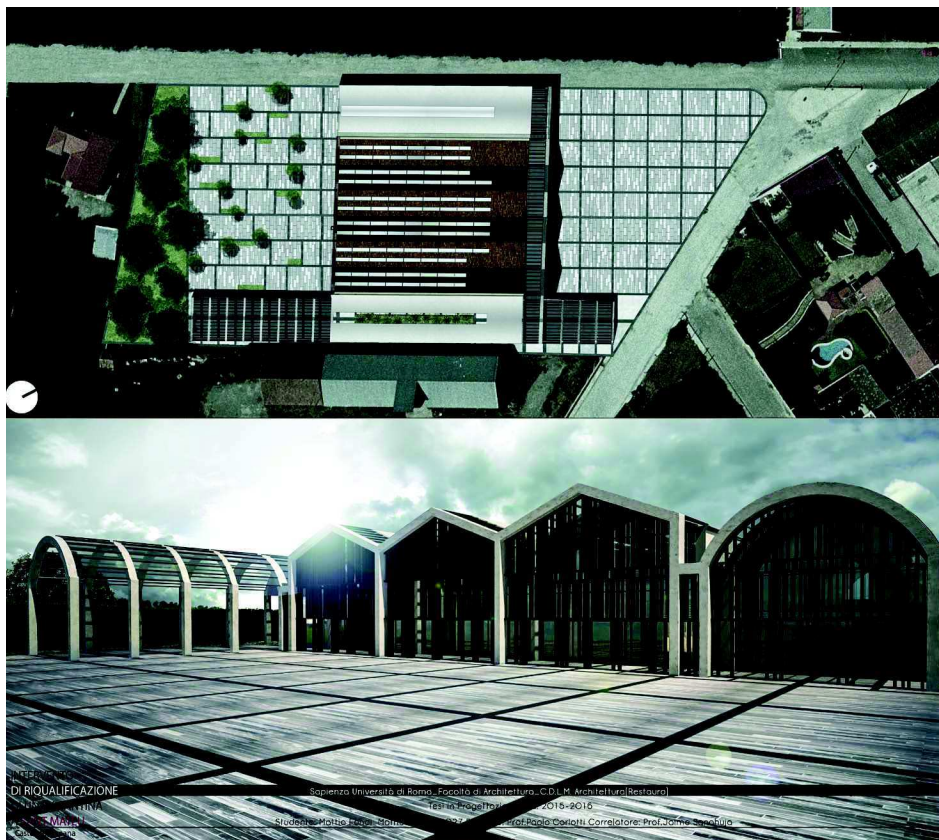


Figure 6.
Sant Mateu: architectural design. Nodality in the urban tissue and new definition of the urban organism

New atrium changes, in so manner, the frontal urban space, that has reconsidered as a square, as an exterior pertinence of this renewed building.(fig 6)

Conclusion

The analysis of the pertinence bands and the shape of the plots, in relationship to the route and to the block, allowed us, in both cases here, to expose the usefulness of the reading of the urban fabric and of the formative process. To suggest for architectural design in the historical fabric, possibility of insert a new paths urban knot together with a new building. To include A new architectural and urban design inside the similar historical process that had materially determined the history of the city.

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