



Italian military real estate assets re-use issues and opportunities in three capital cities[☆]

Federico Camerin^{a,*}, Francesco Gastaldi^b

^a Departamento de Urbanismo y Representación de la Arquitectura, Escuela Técnica Superior de Arquitectura, Universidad UVA Valladolid, Spain

^b Dipartimento di Progettazione e Pianificazione in Ambienti Complessi, Università IUAV di Venezia, Italy



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ABSTRACT

The article, through a number of case studies, aims at exploring difficulties and opportunities affecting Italian military real estate assets re-use and, also, at developing an analysis of 1990s and 2000s military assets management. After an introduction of the theme, it will critically analyze the connection between legislative framework (divide it into two periods, firstly, between 1989 and 2013 and, secondly, starting from 2014) and re-use procedures, delineating the relationship between the actors involved in the process, such as Ministry of Defense, State Property Agency, and local authorities. Afterwards, it will focus the attention on three case studies of military installations re-use processes in the Italian capital cities of Milan, Rome, and Turin, investigating a “new” actor task in the procedures, real estate fund “Investment facility for the enhancement of public assets - Extra Fund (F.I.V.)”, belonging to Investment Management Company “Cassa Depositi e Prestiti”. The paper demonstrates, on one hand, Italian public policies inertia to link military properties alienation and urban regeneration issues and, on the other hand, opportunities in a context of public financial crisis.

1. Objective and methodology

This work, through various case studies, aims to give a contribution in the field of “urban studies” regarding the difficulties and opportunities affecting the Italian military real estate assets re-use and, also, to propose an analysis of their recent history management.

The methodology is the following: starting from the few researches carried out in Italy in the field of “urban studies”, it has been introduced the theme with the current international and national literature review. Then, an analysis has been carried out on the connection between legislative framework (divide it into two periods, 1989–2013 and since 2014) and procedures introduced in order to re-use military assets: this phase of the article delineates the relationship between the actors involved in the process, such as Ministry of Defense, State Property Agency, and local authorities. After that, it focuses on the case studies, analyzing three projects entrusted to a “new” actor in the procedures, the Investment Management Company “Cassa Depositi e Prestiti”. The society, through its real estate fund named “Investment facility for the enhancement of public assets - Extra Fund (F.I.V.)”, is acting as a private stakeholders in the attempt to unlock the planning, design, economic and even social inertia related to urban regeneration projects of

former military assets in several Italian cities. In order to demonstrate difficulties and opportunities of the ongoing procedures of military real estate assets re-use, among the most significant experiences there have been selected the cases of Mameli barracks in Milan, Guido Reni barracks in Rome and Alessandro La Marmora barracks in Turin.

2. Introduction

After the end of the Cold War in 1989 and in the context of the crisis that shook the Western countries capitalistic systems (with a grave budgetary deficit), in the last decades of the twentieth century, the alienation of military properties and their transition to civilian uses began to take place (Markusen and Judken, 1992; Jauhiainen, 2002; Strange and Walley, 2007). Former military and defense sites (including all the assets built up for national defense, including arsenals, barracks, casemates, hangars, bunkers, training grounds, and so on), were being sold to wipe the public debt. Moreover, in many cases military properties no longer meet the army’s current needs. Further, they are often located in areas that over time have become marginal in the changed international strategic and logistical framework, as well as being outdated compared to a modern defensive system (or it would require

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* Corresponding author.

E-mail address: federico.camerin@uva.es (F. Camerin).

substantial resources for adapting it to new technologies, legislation, and standards).

Consequently, since 1989, based on geo-political, military, and public finance logic, American and European Ministries of Defense have increasingly encouraged the military sites' and buildings' dismantling, such as the national programs "Base Realignment and Closure" in the USA (BRAC, since 1988) (Warf, 1997) and the French "Mission pour la Réalisation des Actifs Immobiliers" (MRAI, since 1989) (Dubois-Maury, 1998). Currently, in Germany, Spain and the United Kingdom, the military property management is entrusted respectively to the Federal Property Agency ("Bundesanstalt für Immobilienaufgaben"), the "Instituto de Vivienda, Infraestructura y Equipamiento de la Defensa", and the "Defense Estate".

This "new" kind of abandonment has to be added to other abandoned areas, including former railways, warehouses, hospitals, general markets, slaughterhouses, and energy plants (Carter, 2016). As well as these urban voids, abandoned military installations are a blot on the urban environment. However, even more than other derelict zones, the inherent characteristics of former military premises make their re-use rather difficult. Some of the difficulties are the following: the lack of relations between a military zone and its context, the problems of soil and subsoil contamination and their evaluation cost of environmental rehabilitation, the very conservative attitude of the Italian Superintendence of Cultural Heritage on constraints buildings (which often leaves no space for action nor for creativity in re-use projects), and a lack of information about the maintenance status of the areas. In Italy, the process of military closures has raised new problematic issues for territorial management. It has also stimulated new design challenges not only in provincial capitals historically characterized by the Armed Forces' presence (such as La Spezia, Piacenza, Rome, and Turin), but also, in small and medium-sized cities (especially in the Northeast Italy), where public resources and functional requirements are significantly different to larger urban entities, and where "urban voids" are exposed to the greater public and private interests (Russo, 1998).

Current academic works describe the closure process, yet there is extremely little information about what happens after bases close in Western and Eastern European States (Cidell, 2003; Kriszta Kádár, 2014; Bagaen and Clark, 2016). It is assumed the former military and defense installation redevelopment involves a great range of disciplines, from geopolitics to geography (Woodward, 2014), from planning and urban studies to heritage and conservation (Brebba and Clark, 2012, 2014; Brebba et al., 2016), including agents involved in the process (many more than in ordinary land-use change) and their interaction. Indeed, the available literature on the military installations' redevelopment and rehabilitation have been relatively scant compared to the amount of redundant military sites to redevelop in Europe.

For the last two decades international literature, has dealt with the debate on dismantled military areas by exploring a wide range of issues, often including in the broader concept of "brownfields" (European Court of Auditors, 2012; Hercik et al., 2014). Among the various analysis and studies, researchers have focused their attention on the military real estate re-use in terms of participatory approaches and inclusive citizenship processes to improve the transformation processes efficiency (Hill, 2000; Van Driesche and Lane, 2002), of soil contamination problems and evaluation (Fonnum et al., 1997; Hansen, 2004), of socio-economic effects and impacts of the closure (Andersson et al., 2007; Paloyo et al., 2010; Hultquist and Petras, 2012), restoration of ecological systems opportunities and the creation of green spaces creation for collective use (Hourdequin and Havlick, 2010; Havlick, 2014).

In Italy, military real estate assets are dealt with within the more general questions regarding the public real estate properties management (IBL, 2011; Gaeta and Savoldi, 2013), and as a type of commons (Rodotà, 2013; Settis, 2014; Montanari, 2015), as demonstrated by a special section of the national conference "Commons/Comune. Geographies, Places, Areas, Cities" (Aa.Vv., 2016). In general, the literature

has dealt with the decommissioning and exploitation procedures implemented by the Italian government in the 1990s and in the first decade of 2000s (Romeo, 1995; Parlato and Vaciago, 2002; Paglia, 2004; Vaciago, 2007; Antoniol, 2010; Screpanti, 2012; Amato et al., 2013). In the field of Italian "urban studies" literature, the work carried out by Ponzini and Vani (2012) should be reported, which explores a number of Italian and European military re-use experiences. The study coordinated by Storelli and Turri (2014) focuses on the construction and re-use processes of a wide range of military barracks in Italy. Baccichet (2015) and Santarossa and Scirè Risichella (2016) focus their attention on the military base closure process in Friuli-Venezia Giulia Region after the end of the Cold War. Yet, some very recent publications (Gastaldi and Camerin, 2017a) claim that despite the fact that the strategic dismissal of a number of military bases has been affecting contemporary urban and rural areas, little attention has been paid to this complex topic at an international level, mostly in its urban planning-management issues and the results of public policies with respect to other types of urban policies. For these reasons this topic is becoming a new challenge for city planning and policy-making.

In the strategy of urban development, public local authorities have been trying to establish new uses to former military sites in their urban planning instruments as "areas to be regenerated". Nevertheless, as the role that governance has played in the planning and redeveloping of such areas, following issues have been checked both at state and local level. First, land management regarding the redevelopment of ancient military installations has to do with the role that governance at the state level has played in the planning/redeveloping of such derelict areas, which have been conceived as assets which generate financial income. Regarding the allocation of title and rights to land, the State promotes gradually by legislation the privatization of military assets, which are effectively a public land ownership. This dynamic is a symptom of a decline in state property regimes, such as economic liberalization, and privatization of land delivery channels, the accelerated disappearance of the land of open access regimes, and the public bureaucratic inefficiency. In fact, the different strategies carried out by the State have created a legislation overlapping without an intervention on the military premises' new use in urban planning instruments. Consequently, for private developers it has not been easy to make an arrangement with public administrations. This is mostly due to the difficulties of modifying and integrating the land use plan and to the doubts on juridical security on land tenure (moreover, military assets are not subjected to land registration, in contrast from the normal procedures due to the military secret). Second, the limitation of local administrations is the lack of real project capacity, necessary to imagine possible new uses of spaces and places within a general vision of transformation. In addition, the municipalities neither have economic resources, nor the human resources and skills necessary to follow such complex procedures. The absence of explicit territorial development strategies clearly fixed in programmatic and strategic documents hinder the entrepreneurial initiative and the interaction between the different actors involved. Moreover, the purely speculative and opportunistic tendency of many real estate operators, their inability to propose innovative ideas, and the absence of a real analysis of the territorial demand, lead to the failure of the military reuse operations. To sum up, the governance created uncertainty that therefore produced strategies of non-intervention on the military areas for several years. This situation was further complicated by the 2007–2008 economic and real-estate crisis.

Since 1989, Italian public debate regarding military real estate assets has been characterized by two factors. On one hand, there has been no serious or in-depth reflection on the role that military real estate re-use could play as an opportunity to trigger urban regeneration processes and territorial reorganization. Moreover, it is an opportunity to reconstruct symbolic high-value central areas. Besides, it is a possibility to minimize further soil consumption processes. On the other hand, as regards public policy analysis, there has also been no reflection on the difficulties faced by local governments in making virtuous processes of

military real estate assets' re-use and enhancement. As a result, with the exception of some limited analysis in the field of urban planning, there have not been developing neither a census of the Italian military installation. Therefore, there is a lack of information exists about the maintenance status of the areas for the so-called "military secrets", implicating the ouster from topographic maps such as aerial and satellite photographs. Plus, there is no comprehensive and up-to-date report of the situation of these assets and the results obtained by the last 25-year procedures even the difficulties encountered.

3. The 1989–2013 legislative framework and the military real estate assets re-use issues

From the first 1989 draft law submitted to the Senate (with the title "Military barracks and installations modernization and territorial redistribution by providing both an extraordinary 10-year funding and both military properties exchange and alienation") ([Senato della Repubblica, 1989](#)), there has been an impetuous law season regarding the military real estate assets decommissioning, but with poor outcomes in terms of projects. Particularly, in a context dominated by public finance targets and budget deficit reduction, in order to generate new income for Public Purse, an action line has been promoted predominantly focused on privatization, accompanied by unsuccessful special decrees by the Ministry of Defense. Among the various events occurred during the 1990s and the first decade of the 2000s, the following should be mentioned: the establishment of the company "Immobiliare Italia spa" with Law 35/1992, the introduction of public real estate funds according to Law 86/1994, the establishment of the company "Patrimonio dello Stato spa" by D.L. 63/2002, and securitization transactions sponsored by D.L. 351/2001 (denominated respectively SCIP 1 and SCIP 2). A first list of decommissioned military installations was provided by D.P.C.M August 11th, 1997, according to the Article 3, paragraph 112, of Law December 23rd, 1996, n. 662 ([Parlamento italiano, 1996](#)). It contains 302 military real estate fit to be potentially decommissioned. Subsequently, following the Armed Forces' latest assessments on structural and infrastructural needs, the list has been amended several times, with insertions/deletions of assets considered or not decommissioned by the same Ministry.

Hereafter, from 2010, a change of approach in setting the decommissioning processes has been noticed. The real estate valorization operations have been put in the foreground to be followed by a possible alienation. This new phase had to be connected by the introduction of the State Property Agency, an economic entity created in 1999 for State real estate properties management ([Agenzia del Demanio, 2017](#)). Nevertheless, there was a variable and ambiguous relationship with the Ministry of Defense, which has benefited wide decision-making autonomy in the managing and disposing processes of its assets. Despite the fact that there was an initial lack of regulation between the two institutes, by the Law 296/2006 has started their collaboration. However, it was stopped by the article 14-bis of the Decree-Law 112/2008 and stabilized by subsequent amendments in 2010 and 2011 by the creation of the "Defense Agency spa", a ministerial company for the military properties management. Essentially, until 2013 the Ministry of Defense worked autonomously in the sale operations of military assets, while only the properties included in the Value Country program of 2007 were in charge of State Property Agency.

The 2000s have been marked by the implementation of Law n. 296 of 27 December 2006 (Finance Act 2007), fostered the "Country Value" program, including the Valuation Unitarian Programs, (PUV, from 2012 PUVaT). The basic hypothesis was that once established a sufficient properties critical mass and shared an urban intervention perspective, PUVaT could be the trigger of a private initiative capable to of financing the properties' re-use, guaranteeing the State license payment fee. Since 2008, to achieve operations of rationalization, swaps, and valorization to which have to be followed variation planning agreements regarding town planning tools, other kinds of initiative have been introduced.

They were the memoranda of understanding were signed between the Ministry of Defense and the main Italian cities local governments (among others, Milan, Piacenza, Rome, Turin, and Venice). Finally, Decree Law 85/2010 introduced the "federalism state property", concerning the "devolution phenomenon, accessory to fiscal federalism, concerning the state-owned property transfer to local authorities", including those no longer useful to Ministry of Defense institutional purposes.

However, several factors have shuffled the cards on the table, making the framework within which to act even more complicated and interrupted the operations previously set. The procedures have been blocked by a series of factors, such as: the continued adoption of new laws, the introduction and modification of procedures that are not always well-defined and often in contradiction, the advantageous position by the Minister of Defense, the lack of knowledge about the current state of the assets, the undefined timing of bureaucratic procedures and implicit characteristics of military installations (including pollution and presence of buildings of historical-artistic interest). Others factors have been the crisis of both the building industry and the real estate market, the ongoing contentiousness among the many administrative levels (State and local), the undefined timing of bureaucratic procedures, the persistent lack of State public resources, the constraints imposed to local authorities by the Stability Pact, and a new legislation between 2008 and 2013 about valorization and military decommissioning ([Gastaldi and Camerin, 2012](#)).

Specifically linked with the new legislation, since 2013 State Property Agency is carrying out public property assets (including those militaries) exploitation, processing, management, and sale to real estate investment funds in order to increase their economic and social value. Financial and corporate vehicles have been introduced by the Articles 33 and 33-bis of Legislative Decree 98/2011 aiming at increasing and improving development and exploitation processes. Consequently, the Investment Management Company "CDP-Cassa Depositi e Prestiti" created in 2012 the real estate fund named "Investment facility for the enhancement of public assets - Extra Fund(F.I.V.)". The fund's purpose is to create the institutional collaboration among all those public entities interested in the military real estate assets' reuse (Ministry of Defence, State Property Agency, public and local authorities), to sell them in the market, to make it easier, international and national private investors' interests, to drive urban regeneration processes, and to reduce the Italian public debt. By the Ministry of Economy Decree of 20th December 2013, FIV-Extra Fund has acquired 40 public properties, 33 of them State-owned and 7 territorial entities owning. The transaction value was approximately 490 million euros.

4. Starting from 2014: current procedures as real opportunities in order to military real estate assets re-use?

In summary, it is noticed that from 1989 to 2013 several factors have negatively affected the attempts to re-use military assets. Particularly, three circumstances have increased the level of uncertainty and investment risk and have contributed the issue becoming more difficult. They are first the role and competence overlays between the different institutional actors both at state and local level, second, the ongoing situation of State and Ministry of Defence financial problems and, eventually, the ongoing real-estate market crisis since 2008. Consequently, in addition to the difficulty of private interests' management, local administrations have not been empowered so that they cannot be able to manage the procedures. Thus, illusions and frustrations in social and economic stakeholders have been created. Consequently, the implementation phase indeterminacy of urban and territorial transformation projects based on the conversion of dismantled military assets, are nowadays negatively affecting on cities. Mostly, they regarding urban regeneration policies aimed at enhancing the potential of the local system, collective identity, and its internal cohesion.

In the attempt to sort the military installations abandonment out, starting from 2014 the situation has changed. On one hand, a new phase has started, with a stable legislative framework. In fact, the Finance Act 2015 (Article 1, subsections 373–378) requires an acceleration of the ongoing procedures for the military real estate assets re-use. Ministry of Defense has been asked to ensure 220 million euros of income in 2015 and 100 million annually both in 2016 and 2017. On the second hand, in April 2014 an agreement has been signed to constitute a “task force” between State Property Agency and Defense Agency spa. The task force aimed at establishing the collaboration between these authorities and at improving bureaucratic steps to put into practice military rationalization’s, enhancement’s, and optimization’s re-use operations. These steps are the following: the properties identification to be decommissioned, the working groups participation with the public and territorial entities for the definition of the re-use project, and the proceeding to the sale and/or the granting rights of use. However, the great task force’s great challenge is to establish the relationship with the municipal governments. As [Artioli \(2016a\)](#) said, effectively the local authorities have lacked sufficient financial and political resources to carry out the projects and to achieve local goals in opposition to the Ministry of Defence, whose real estate objectives are themselves hampered by budgetary restrictions. The divergence of the involved actors’ goals has caused PUVaTs, memoranda of understanding, and federalism state property to fail.

Basically, starting from 2014 the military real estate assets’ re-use process is characterized by the following approach. First, some procedure modifications have been introduced for the previous initiatives, regarding new agreement for PUVaT, state property federalism new phase (after has been blocked in 2011 and taken over in 2013 by Article 56 bis of the Decree-Law 69/2013) and ratification of new memoranda of understanding. Second, new procedures have been promoted. On one hand, the art. 26 of the Decree “Unlocked Italy” (Law 11th November 2014, n. 164 of conversion of the Decree Law 133/2014) pursues to social housing and self-recovery initiative for military assets. On the other hand, “federal building” attempts to public offices rationalization and efficiency, promoted under Article 24 of Decree-Law 66/2014 about spending review.

In order to create synergies between public and private stakeholders (institutional or not), and to stimulate the intervention of those privates, State Property Agency has increasingly acquired the skills needed to management, promotion and supporting the re-use processes. These processes are based on the knowledge and transparency of the information, also they help to simplify the bureaucratic procedures. Nevertheless, the State Property Agency’s task is far away from accomplishing an in-depth analysis of military real estate properties. After the first and partial census of the State real estate assets carried out between 2003 and 2007 ([Agenzia del Demanio, 2007](#)), and the publication of the full census on its institutional website in 2016 ([Agenzia del Demanio, 2018](#)), yet there is not a specific and public census of former military installation.

In short, there is a different implementation degree in the various procedures ([Gastaldi and Camerin, 2017b](#)). They have been set up with highly articulated and heterogeneous strategies and perspectives, referring to a wide range of military real estate assets located both in urban and rural systems. Currently, no one of the former military installation included in the procedures described before has been re-converted. Nevertheless, it is sure that the procedures management can be approached as one of the most important opportunities to transform Italian contemporary cities. That is to say, these initiatives should bring back to the local communities significant urban spaces, frequently located in a central and strategic locations with a great accessibility. Also, in the whole Italy, these procedures are understood as a tool of urban planning experiment for the implementation of urban regeneration strategies.

5. The study cases

In this context, the analysis of the case studies has taken into consideration the connection between the legislative framework and three great urban projects related to the ancient military premises’ re-development in a number of Italian capital cities. The link is double: first, it has considered the ancient military assets selling to FIV-Extra Fund in 2013 and, second, their inclusion in one of the new operations starting from 2014, the “memorandas of understanding”. Specifically, the memorandas have been signed by the City Councils of Milan, Rome, and Turin as a result of the “State Property Agency-Defence Agency spa task force” works, according to the new owner, FIV-Comparto Extrafund. In this way, each Municipality commits itself, within a year from the signing of the memoranda, to provide the new destination of the assets, in accordance with the local land use plan or by its modification. Furthermore, the mechanism of the agreements provides the allocation of a quote to the municipality of a maximum of 15% of the monetary value derived from the operations of selling in the market by the real-estate fund. Milan, Rome, and Turin been taken into consideration as they represent ones of the most important Italian cities that had based their urban policy around military real assets recovery and transformation. Specifically, Milan, Rome, and Turin endeavor to solve their strategic needs for new settlements and new public equipment developing a virtuous (even if difficult) strategy aims at reducing territory consumption and at ‘building on built’.

In these three capital cities, between 2009 and 2010 several military assets were included in Ministry of Defence-local administration’s memorandas of understanding, but these agreements expired due to the default in the implementation timing. Nevertheless, on 7th August 2014 new memorandas of understanding were signed by task force’s activity, including State Property Agency collaboration. Briefly, these new agreements include 13 properties among Milan, Rome, and Turin, for about 1 million m² of land surface area. In order to carry the analysis out, three of them have been chosen as they are representative of disentanglement of military assets strictly related to new great urban projects development, which seem to put into effect in the next few years. They are Mameli barracks in Milan, Guido Reni in Rome, and Alessandro La Marmora in Turin. Particularly, the three military assets present similar characteristics in terms of typology (they are barracks, including warehouses, factories, laboratories, and wide open spaces), localization (urban areas not far from the city historic center), occupation status (they are vacant and marked by obsolescence, poor integration with landscape, poor building condition and a number of buildings present serious state of decay), heritage (several buildings are subjected to a heritage listing by the Legislative Decree 42/2004 of Ministry of Cultural Heritage), real estate profile (they have been classified as “opportunistic risk profile”). It means investment with high-risk/return strategy and need a high degree of capital expenditure), urban planning tools (barracks new use has been already identified according to urban planning tools modification) and re-use local claims (various occupations took place in the last few years by local organizations to protest about the ongoing abandon status and demand a fast re-use project).

First, Mameli Barracks is a 105.988 m² urban void located along the Milan northeastern expansion axes, among Bicocca, Pratocentenario, and Niguarda neighborhoods. The former military installation is characterized by a prevalent presence of residence, artisan business, and urban fabrics currently under transformation, with the lack of both urban permeability and public spaces. The area is classified as “urban transformation area” by the Government Plan for the Territory ([Milan City Council, 2012](#)) and constitutes one of the several deteriorate areas to be refurbished in the city. In 2015, FIV-Comparto Extra, through a selection of invitations reserved for young architects’ professional studios, has identified “OnsiteStudio” to elaborate the masterplan for the conversion of the area ([Divisare, 2015](#)). At the same time, the society has designated the Department of Architecture and Urban Studies of Polytechnic of Milan in order to accompany the elaboration of the



Fig. 1. View of the Mameli barracks.

Source: delimitation of the area starting from Google Maps, 2018.



Fig. 2. Exterior perimeter of Mameli barracks. Photo by Federico Camerin, 2016.

public spaces masterplan with a participatory planning between 2015 and 2016 (Montedoro, 2016). Mameli barracks transformation predicts a new housing district (with 50% of social housing), retail and services. The project foresees a big urban park with infrastructure and facilities for leisure time, also an environmental recovering of the abandoned buildings. The masterplan enhances the role of the six small barracks that surround the park and expects for them a re-use as public services, social housing, and retail. Further, the project also gives a new interpretation to the straight structure of the whole military site, opening it to the surrounding urban network and introducing new objects, articulated for their typology and height and characterized by functional and social mixité. Currently, the transformation has stopped by Lombardia Region because the area has been declared floodable due to possible Seveso river floods (Meyer, 2017) (Figs. 1 and 2).

Second, former Guido Reni barracks (named also “Precision electrical components factory”) is located in Flaminio neighborhood, a Roman residential zone enhanced by facilities for sport, initially built during the Fascism period and later with the 1960 Olympics. In addition, a number of cultural institutions (as Zaha Hadid’s MAXII museum and Renzo Piano’s Auditorium) have lately exploited its accessibility and permeability (Vittorini, 2004). Based on the abandonment of Guido Reni barracks at the end of the 1990s, the strategic plan “The Neighborhood of the City of Science -the Urban Project Flaminio” (approved between 2002 and 2005) (Roma City Council, 2005) identified Guido Reni barracks as a possible location for the so-called “City of Science”, but Ministry of Defence resisted to dismiss the barracks. Nevertheless, the City of Rome programmed the urban transformation of the military area. Initially, through a memo issued by City Council in September

2013, and successively through a deliberation proposal by City Administration on 27th December 2013 definitively approved by the City Council on 5th August 2014. The new great urban project has been formally agreed by State Property Agency-Defence Agency spa's task force in the memoranda of understanding (Roma City Council, 2014b: 7), and secondly by CDP fund on 3rd October 2014 (Roma City Council, 2014b: 47). At the end of the same year, the actors programmed the ancient barracks' urban transformation through an international architectural design competition as an essential tool to the enhancement of the Flaminio neighborhood as "City of Science" (Roma City Council, 2014a). The intent is not to set up a new iconic building or a series of new construction, but instead to define the urban form and its relations with the preexistent context and activities of the nineteenth century and the contemporary city. The international competition has been based on a participation process set up in 2014 with stakeholders and citizenship to define the strategy for public equipment in Guido Reni barracks and, in general, in Flaminio neighborhood (Roma City Council, 2014c). Studio Paola Viganò won the competition in 2015 with a proposal that aims to create a new permeability in the district through the realization of a new square and a sequence of public spaces, in continuity with the open space of the MAXII museum (CDP Investimenti Sgr, 2015). The project, with an estimated cost around 350 million euros, proposes an urban network perpendicular to via Guido Reni, characterized by typological and height variety, functional and social mixité and an articulated array of relationship's spaces. Before starting the transformation by the end of 2018, from 2015 CDP fund rent out the area to launch cultural temporary re-use for international and national events (CDP Investimenti Sgr, 2016) (Figs. 3 and 4).

Third, Alessandro La Marmora barracks is located in the eastern part of Turin, in Borgo Po neighborhood, one of the most renowned residential areas of the city, not far from the historic center. After the military installation abandonment, starting from 2006 the area has been used temporary for migrants and refugees accommodation. After the selling of the asset to CDP fund, in November 2014 the local land use plan has been modified by the establishment of the new use of the existing buildings to redevelop in housing (at least 60%), and services for citizens and business (40% as maximum). Later, on April 2015 it has been occupied by the local association "Freed Via Asti" to spread cultural and training activities. The relationship between the association and CDP fund-local administration has been complicated and the former barracks were emptied by policy on November 2015. On April 2016 CDP fund and Carlo Ratti Associates architects presented a

feasibility study spread with the help of Turinese Urban Center and supported by an online participatory process in 2017 (Urban Center Metropolitan di Torino, 2017). The masterplan design updates and reimagines the barracks' characteristic modular structure (also they present elevated historical and architectural values) to welcome a new mix of functions for co-living, co-making, and co-working: from labs for makers to residences for students and citizens. The site development encourages bottom-up growth, without imposing any fixed notions of how space should be used. The former military asset's re-use has been elaborated to rejuvenate the vast area among the buildings, currently hidden behind a walled structure. This masterplan will allow for the creation of a new 100-meter long, 60-meter wide public square, accessible via a large flight of steps, that will be an ideal location for events and performances. Seemingly, the project's ambition is to give Turin an iconic new public space. The aim is to transform a former Place of Arms into what Carlo Ratti called "Place of Arts" (Carlo Ratti Associates, 2017), similar in scope to Piazza Vittorio Veneto, Turin's best-known landmark, as well as one of Italy's largest squares. The transformation works, with an estimated investment of 25–30 million euros, are expected to start by the end of 2018 (Figs. 5 and 6 and Table 1).

6. Discussion

The different measures introduced by Italian Parliament (the real estate investment funds starting from Legislative Decree 98/2011 and the new memorandas of understanding in 2014) and local government actions (according to State Property Agency and the Ministry of Defence's task force) had the effect to solve the historical administrative and bureaucratic problems characterizing the ancient military assets' re-use, let the regeneration projects start. Specifically, the allocation of the 15% of the monetary value affects the juridical security on land tenure needed to attract private capital. This mechanism encourages the municipalities to modify their urban planning instruments so as to permit the tertiarization of the ancient public properties in order to make more profits. In every study cases, after several years of abandonment the introduction of a new actor (the CDP fund), plus the agreement among local authorities, State Property Agency, and Ministry of Defence, open to the local land use plan's modification and financial resources to use for the regeneration. In general, thanks to the State Property Agency empowerment and supervision, these operations pursue a great urban project implementation. Among the various



Fig. 3. The view of the Guido Reni barracks.
Source: delimitation of the area starting from Google Maps, 2018.



Fig. 4. Interior spaces of Guido Reni barracks. Photo by Federico Camerin, 2017.



Fig. 5. View of the Alessandro La Marmora barracks.
Source: delimitation of the area starting from Google Maps, 2018.

proposals for the Italian military assets' disposal and re-use, the combination “CDP fund-memoranda of understanding” represents the best tool to put into operation the urban regeneration strategies starting from the ancient military sites of the three cities.

As described before, there is a strong feeling of a real possibility to these military real estate assets to be re-used. The procedures have been marked out by the inclusion of the assets in the context of urban regeneration projects established in a strategic vision of the future's city. The masterplans for military barracks re-use have been identified after international competitions in the cases of Milan and Rome due of the great size of the assets. Conversely, in Turin, CDP fund identified

autonomously the designers. Various round table discussions took place with both the public and private actors involved (local administrations, State Property Agency, Ministry of Defense, Superintendents, citizens and local associations) in order to define the re-use strategies. The procedures success is strictly connected with a correct evaluation of the real-estate market to determine in advance what to put on the market, how and at what times. Eventually, despite the global trade and the persistence of the crisis' negative repercussions in several European Countries (non-performing loans, high public and private debt, etc.), there is a context of stabilization of the Italian real estate market and the recovery of residential buying and selling (Centro Studi PIM, 2017).



Fig. 6. Buildings of Alessandro La Marmora barracks. Photo by Federico Camerin, 2017.

Table 1

Military assets information in Milan, Rome and Turin.

Source: Federico Camerin’s elaboration, 2018.

Military assets information	Mameli (Milan)	Guido Reni (Rome)	Alessandro La Marmora (Turin)
Years of construction/abandonment	1900s / 2009	1916 / End of 1990s	1887–1888 / 2005
Plot size (m ²)	105.988	55.480	19.978
Gross floor area (m ²)	71.043	72.000	18.513
Volume (m ³) and building presence	117.000 (18 buildings)	267.003 (28 buildings)	Not given (8 buildings)
New use	housing district, retail and services, urban park	‘City of Science’ district, housing, equipment	Housing, co-working and public spaces
Initiation of work	/	2018	2018
Investment estimated	/	350 mil. €	25–30 mil. €

Seemingly, undefined timing of bureaucratic procedures has been overcome mostly for the State Property Agency tasks as a mediator in the procedures among all public entities involved in military real estate assets new uses decisions.

As stressed by [Artioli \(2016b\)](#) and [Adisson \(2017\)](#), in these three processes it is important to remark the re-use of military real estate assets is strictly related with the process of progressive restructuring of Ministry of Defence administration, within the State administrative reforms. As a matter of fact, it implies the establishment of special organizational and management methods, the establishment of new inter-institutional relations, and non-traditional procedures in order to modify the local development plans. Recent legislation, promoted at the end of 2013, spread new and collaborative behavior of public subjects involved in former military sites’ regeneration to undertake urban projects. These projects are seemed to be capable of assuming a strategic horizon, both in terms of effectiveness and awareness of the territorial needs, aspects inevitably connected to the public decision at state and local level.

7. Conclusions

Traditionally military zones spatial planning is not within the jurisdiction of city planning. In the frame of a number of reforms (first in the Defence sector, second in the management of State-owned assets, and third in the urban policies) a great number of military assets, after

the stability of their uses, have therefore become a new object of intervention. Nevertheless, these different reforms have the effect to cause the conflict of interests between the state and local actors. After almost 30 years, the abandoned military installations re-use is no longer an “emerging” issue in the Italian national context, but a permanent voice in the chapter of the empty spaces, the abandonment, and the degradation phenomenon. The dismissed military sites’ heterogeneity widespread over the country is a difficult task. Therefore, improvement of cognitive action is essential to triggering the economic valorization not only for buildings but also for the whole intervention area. Similarly, it is required an in-depth study of the range of new uses in relation to the territory and its scenarios in terms of sustainable development, covering all aspects of the environmental impacts of socioeconomic development. Plus, current urban planning tools have been conceived and approved generally before 2008, in the pre-crisis era, when they were still heavily influenced by development logics supposed to be unlimited, especially for a number of economic activity sectors, including real estate. After the crisis, in a few years the background of urban planning tools have turned out to be old and overcome by new dynamics actually difficult to tackle in a framework characterized by uncertainty, indeterminacy, poor planning, and weak confidence in the future real estate investing.

Nowadays, the change of approach in the military real estate assets management has given more importance to the State Property Agency operation in order to overcome the historical problems in the

decommissioning and re-use procedures. The ongoing processes for military real estate assets re-use (PUVaT, state property federalism, memoranda of understanding, the art. 26 of the Decree “Unlocked Italy” and federal building”) should be accompanied by the activity of exploratory surveys in local communities, and the involvement of the various actors (both at state and local level) and stakeholders in a process capable to mobilize the available resources. After the institution of Cassa Depositi e Prestiti real estate fund, the cities of Milan, Rome, and Turin are facing a great opportunity. FIV-Extra Fund is providing local and state appropriate assistance to selection and implementation of project plans: a number of military urban voids can be re-used by real market trends knowledge, transactional prowess and relationships with key decision-makers

The lessons that can be learned both from the disentailment program in Italy and namely from the selected case studies are the following. First, no further legislation is needed as the stability over time of the current framework could be a step forward in order to bring real results in processes that have been ongoing for many years. Second, the process of planning, in relation to the legal framework, has been accelerated by the transition of the competence in order to integrate these urban voids into capital cities’ new development has been done at different times. In the beginning, Ministry of Defence entrusted the management of its properties to State Property Agency; then, the same State Property Agency sold them to FIV fund; and, eventually, all these actors agreed with the local City Council the new use by the modification of the local land use plan. Therefore, thanks to these operations and the legislative framework, the new owner (CDP fund) has been empowered to decide how to transform the ancient military barracks according to the City Councils. Nowadays the new owners of military barracks, and the creation of the base conditions on juridical security on land tenure lead to the privatization of the assets and, consequently, of the city. In this sense, it would be useful to reopen a structural reflection on the destiny of public goods that foresees alternative routes and processes between the two practices today: the onerous maintenance by the State or the alienation of the areas “to beat cash”. Eventually, good management of military real estate assets (but also, overall, of all public properties) can only take place if there is the careful public entities control upstream that identifies the real prospects of transformation and economic development of their territories, after an in-depth review of the potential public and private, social and economic interests. Transparent and shared decisions would allow the realization of those mediations with respect to the conflicts that generally occur around processes of urban transformation and territorial governance. Due to the new procedures for the military reuse, a new style of city government can be experienced as it is opened to forms of coordination among different actors in search of participation and consensus on the urban project’s details. The concertation and repeated interaction promoted by State Property Agency among actors involved in the regeneration process of military assets can help to build networks supporting and structuring the innovations and collective learning processes of the local system.

Based on this analysis, further research on the issue of Italian military real estate assets’ re-use will be developed on the ongoing procedures monitoring and analysis. For the future, by the State Property Agency tasks, public debate should be improved on the issue of military disposals and re-use. Moreover, participatory processes of decision-making should take place on the local communities with the aim of developing the transformations scenarios of the assets, and also to promote the possibility of temporary use as a possible trigger mechanism for more stable and durable use processes.

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