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A comparison between different urban analysis methods: the case study of Rubattino-Ortica district in Milan

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The paper deals with urban studies focused on historical districts named Rubattino and Ortica set in the east part of Milan. It represents a focus on urban morphology's analysis and it deals with the comparison of different urban analysis' methods. The given site of Rubattino and Ortica districts in Milan is characterized by very different urban morphologies and building typologies, even if it represents a kind of big urban "cluster" in between railways and highways: the historical settlements with their monuments, the industrial era with productive spaces, the post-war expansion with housing districts, the post-industrial era with large dismissing and new speculations, the recent developments due to cultural events and activities. It is very difficult to find out just one architectural theory that fits this "hybrid" of urban morphologies, but more than one theory can partially describe its features. The aim of the study is to deal with urban analysis accordingly to pre-assigned morphological approaches, showing that they are complementary and not alternative. The approaches have been chosen accordingly to a deep preliminary urban analysis, finding out feasible ways of describing the site with clear urban indicators. Two of the chosen approaches seem more appropriate to describe site's morphology: one is based on the idea of 'urban islands' or 'clusters' that describes cities as a unity of different and independent parts. The other one is based on the idea of city as 'layers', showing also the interference of different functions and 'systems'. Describing the same site through different theory-based urban analysis' approaches represents the chance for a comparative study of theories themselves.

Key Words: alternative urban analysis, 'islands' as cities in the city, reading the city by layers.