





AQUAMACHIA

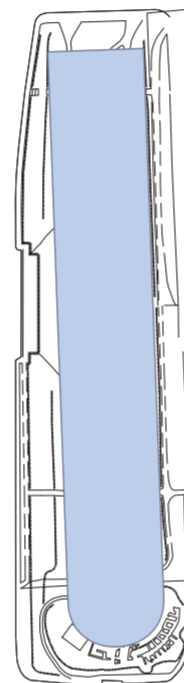
aqua (s) water + mách (ē) battle, fight + -ia -ia

Last decades the role of the city of Rome towards the Tiber river could best be described as a tamer. The Tiber had to be tamed to stop the water from damaging the monumental city centre during floodings. The stone embankments and the lateral busy roads, lungoteveri, built between 1876 and 1926 disconnected the city from its river, both physical and psychological. Nowadays this disconnection in the city centre is still present. The riverbanks are isolated, badly maintained and stimulating informal behaviour. The disconnection has some advantages though. The continuous, calm riverbanks provide a moment of rest in the by tourist flooded city centre and can act as a perfect podium and infrastructure for sports. Looking back in Time one finds a much closer connection between city and river. The Tiber shaped the landscape which shaped Rome. At the origin,

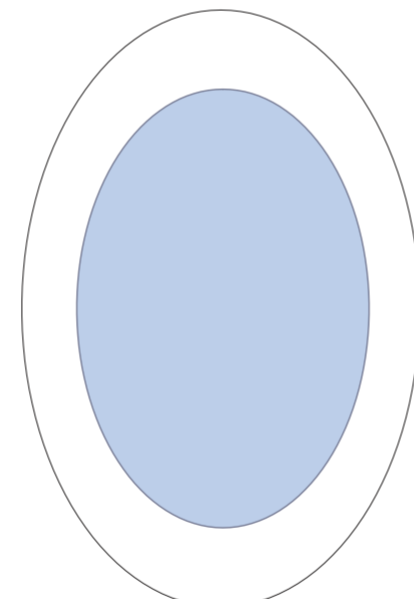
when the Romans came down from their hills, the first buildings to be erected were mainly public because they were easy to evacuate and clean after a flooding. Public life therefore developed rapidly close to the river. Rome's big emperors built many buildings in which the Tiber and water had an important presence - besides some obvious ones like bathhouses, fountains and sewage systems others -. Nero built an impressive stagnum, an artificial lake in his palace, on which later the Colosseum would be erected. Augustus built a huge naumachia, a flooded theatre, to host sea battles. And Julius Caesar extended the Circus Maximus, which could be flooded and let an impressive 250.000 people witness rowing contests. One could argue that many natural and artificial landscapes and public buildings were closely related to and interacting with the Tiber.



-  50 m x 25 m Olympic Swimming Pool
-  60 m x 40 m Naumachia Neronis
-  45 m x 35 m Naumachia Domitiani
-  60 m x 40 m Colosseum



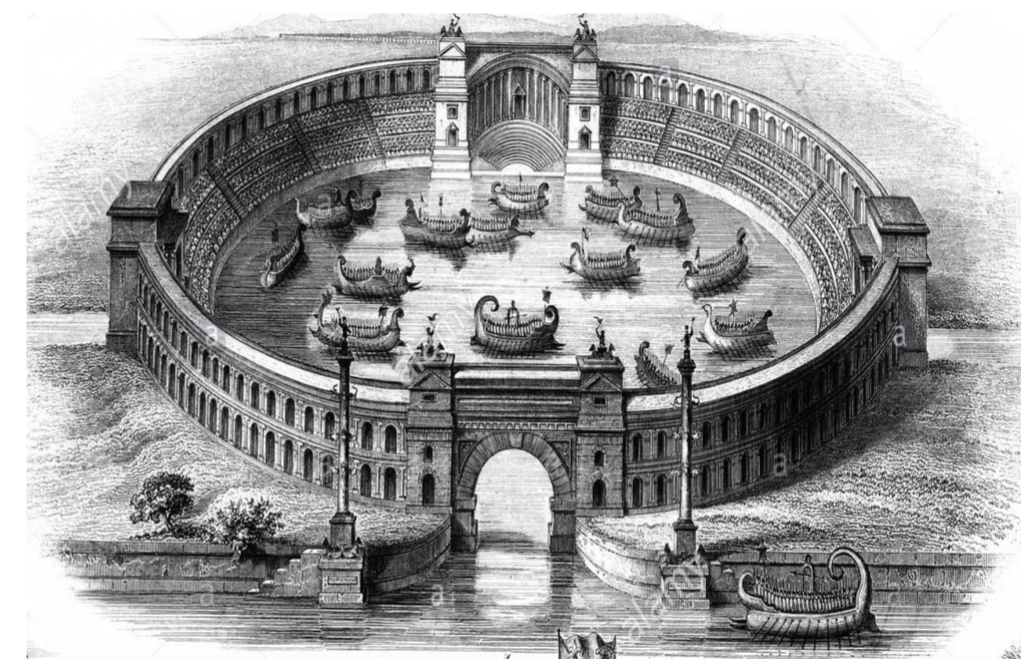
620 m x 160 m Circus Maximus



550 m x 360 m Naumachia Augusti



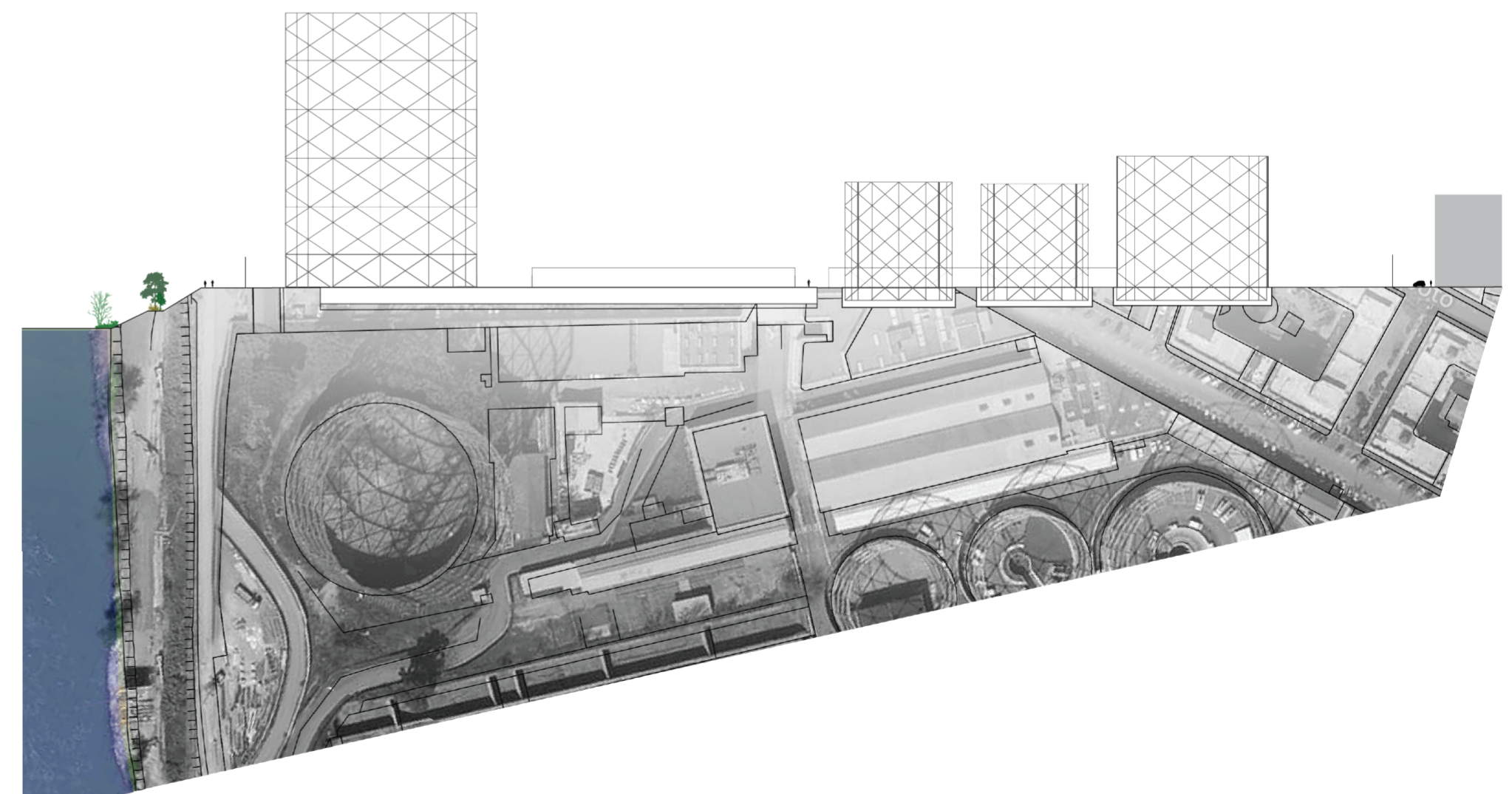
650 m Gasholder 1
175 x 35 m Bassin
400 m Gasholder 2,3
500 m Gasholder 4



Naumachia Neronis



Naumachia Augusta



section Gazometro

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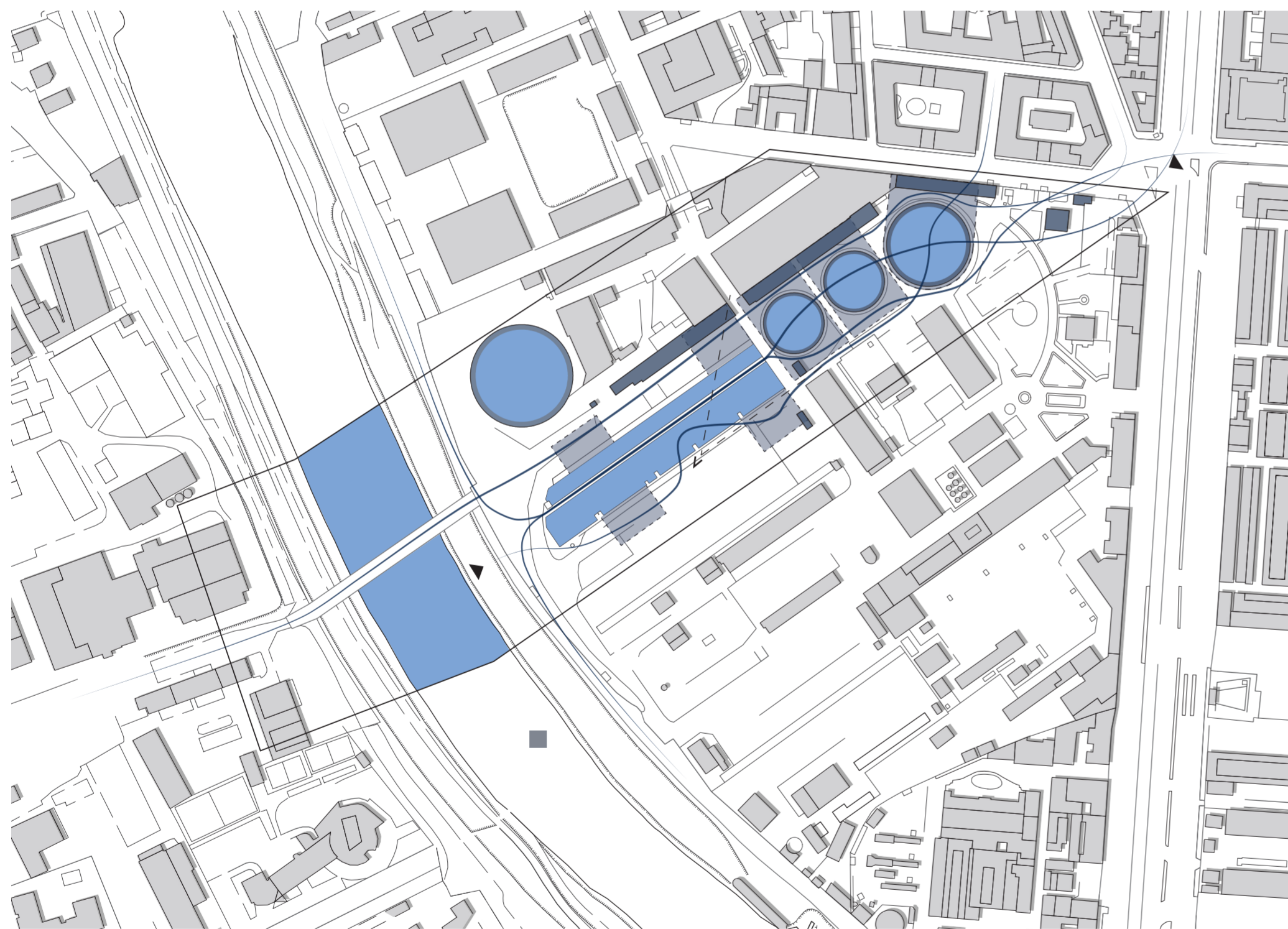
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The Gazometro's recent dependence of the Tiber is clearly visible in the physical shape of landscape and city. Approaching the site from the city centre, it is the first area where the riverbanks get less steep and are not interrupted by any fences or walls. Even the lungoteveri, the continuous roads along the river, are not present here due to the railroad tracks that are partly blocking the riverbanks. The Gazometro's gradual transition between land and river is a unique quality that screams to be exploited.

The Gazometro, being an industrial site, also had some disadvantages with respect to the city-river relationship. Since the company's property was not meant to be used as a public space, a continuous border has been built along the edge of the site. Although the Tiber had a close relationship with the Gazometro, its presence formed a huge boundary between public city life and river.

After Italgas moved out, the Gazometro became a vacant plot. Some buildings are now used by other companies, but the 4 huge steel gasholders, basin and some beautiful old concrete structures are rotting away. Although the industrial archaeological structures, especially the 90 meter tall gasholder, still have a visual value they are not connected to any activity anymore.

The Gazometro will be cut open at the side of the city to create a beautiful entrance for the public life to enter the Tiber. The industrial archaeology and the gradual transition of land and river that are both already present will guide one towards the riverbank. The Gazometro will also be cut open at the side of the Tiber to create an entrance for new public facilities. Besides that, the ancient idea of inundating landscape and building will be reintroduced to start reusing the industrial structures and to recreate the interaction between water and land.



site plan Gazometro

