



**21st Century Landscape Sustainability, Development
and Transformations: Geographical Perceptions**

Giovanni Messina, Bresena Kopliku (Eds.)

Preface by Elena dell'Agnese

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Editors



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*21st Century Landscape Sustainability, Development and Transformations:
Geographical Perceptions*

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

• Preface by Elena dell’Agnese	7
• Reference	8
<i>Introduction</i>	18
<i>1. The Fiera del Mediterraneo: a (Post)Pandemic Landscape as Difficult Heritage</i>	
■ <i>Emanuela Caravello, Giulia de Spuches, Gabriella Palermo</i>	
• Abstract	20
• 1. Introduction	21
• 2. Difficult heritage and pandemic landscape: a theoretical framework	22
• 3. The case study: the Fiera del Mediterraneo	24
• 4. Landscapes of contagious and capitalistic ruins: a (post)pandemic difficult heritage	28
• 5. Concluding thoughts	33
• References	34
<i>2. Cultural Heritage as a Mirror of Sustainable Development. Its Potential Roles and Functions in Areas of Environmental Crisis: a Case Study</i>	
■ <i>Valentina Castronuovo</i>	
• Abstract	38
• 1. Introduction: cultural heritage as a matrix for developing a culture of sustainability	39
• 2. Materials and Methods	42
• 2.1 Study area	42
• 2.2 Data Collection and Analysis	45

• 3. Results of European and ministerial policies applied to the “Taranto” contex	47
• 4. Conclusions	50
• References	52

3. The territorial challenge of the wine-growing system in Castiglione di Sicilia (Etna)

■ *Leonardo Mercatanti, Mariacristina Ruffo*

• Abstract	57
• 1. Introduction	58
• 2. Territorial framework and methodology	58
• 3. The ‘Etna Nord’ wine district	60
• 4. Castiglione di Sicilia	64
• 5. Conclusions	68
• References	70

4. The “Instagrammability” effect: a new mass tourism or a digital panacea? The case of bakeries in the Sicilian landscape

■ *Sonia Malvica*

• Abstract	73
• 1. Introduction	74
• 2. Food and local identity	75
• 3. The impact of bakeries upon food-place identity: the case of Catania (Sicily)	76
• 3.1 <i>A non-place identity case</i>	78
• 3.2 <i>A “glocalized” bakery</i>	82
• 4. Conclusions	84
• References	86

5. *Social media and the iconization of natural landscapes in tourism discourse*

■ *Simone Gamba*

• Abstract	91
• 1. Tourism and the mediatization of nature	92
• 2. Theoretical framework	92
• 3. A controversial canyon	94
• 4. An historical imaginary of the natural landscape	96
• 5. The algorithm and the tourist gaze	98
• 6. The end of romantic contemplation?	99
• 7. The material consequences of iconization	101
• 8. Final reflections	103
• References	105

6. *Heritage and tourism: the case study of the Magna Grecia Park*

■ *Mattia Spanò*

• Abstract	110
• 1. Introduction: origins and future	111
• 2. Heritage and tourism	111
• 3. Retracing ancient Kroton: territory and points of interest	112
• 3.1 <i>Capo Colonna</i>	113
• 3.2 <i>Capo Rizzuto Marine Protected Area</i>	114
• 3.3 <i>Sila National Park</i>	115
• 4. Magna Grecia Park	116
• 5. Stakeholder analysis: theory, literature, and method	119
• 6. Results	121
• 7. Final remarks	124

• References	126
• Websites	129

7. Winescapes and cultural identities: a glance on the island of Salina (Aeolian Islands)

■ *Sonia Gambino*

• Abstract	131
• 1. Introduction	132
• 2. The attraction potential of wine landscape on the island of Salina	133
• 3. The role of malvasia wine in enhancing cultural identity on the island of Salina	137
• 4. “Salina ecogastronomica”: a project to find out about high-quality productions	141
• 5. Conclusions	143
• References	145

8. Natural resources and landscape conservation in Velipoja administration unit

■ *Ervis Krymbi*

• Abstract	149
• 1. Introduction	150
• 2. Geographical position and boundaries of Velipoja administration unit	151
• 3. The potentials and the management of landscape in Velipoja administration unit	154
• 4. Velipoja coastline facing the challenges on territory and local infrastructure	163
• 5. Conclusions	166
• References	168

9. Interactions between Cultural Landscape and Gig Economy Reading New Transformations

■ *Bresena Koplaku, Brikene Dionizi, Elvisa Drishti*

• Abstract	171
• 1. Introduction	172
• 2. Methodology	173
• 3. The digitalization of economy in Albania	174
• 4. Cultural landscape and gig economy – toward new transformations	176
• 4.1 <i>Transportation and mobility –</i>	176
• 4.2 <i>The spatial distribution of Gig workers and workplace</i>	179
• 4.3 <i>Urban and rural implications</i>	181
• Conclusions	182
• References	184

10. “Sicilia Archeologica” and the Sicilian archaeological park system. A reflection on the newly launched territorial branding initiative

■ *Giovanni Messina*

• Abstract	189
• 1. Introduction	190
• 2. The issue of territorial branding. Some critical insights	192
• 3. The rebranding of the archaeological heritage of the Sicilian region	193
• 3.1 <i>“Sicilia Archeologica” project summary and methodology</i>	193
• 3.2 <i>The role of archaeological parks in the Sicilian tourism sector</i>	193
• 3.3 <i>The “Sicilia Archeologica” project. Between policies and tools.</i>	197

• 4. Conclusions	199
• References	200
• Sitography	202

11. Environmental risk perception and attitudes on climate-induced migration: survey insights among Geography students at the University of Turin

■ *Sara Ansaloni, Daniela Santus*

• Abstract	204
• 1. Introduction	205
• 2. Materials and Methods	205
• 3. Research methodology	208
• 4. Results	210
• 5 - Discussion and conclusions	228
• References	232

12. Infrastructural development under CPEC and its impact on Pakistan's agricultural landscape

■ *Muhammad Ammad Khan, Maryam Dogar, Mahreen Khalid*

• Abstract	239
• 1. Introduction	241
• 2. Transformative Impacts of CPEC on Pakistan's Agricultural Landscape	244
• 3. Sustainability Challenges	246
• 4. Sustainable Strategies: Lessons from Global Economic Corridors	251
• 5. Conclusion and Recommendations	254
• References	256

13. Cruising to the poles: narratives and representation of “last chance tourism”

■ *Gaetano Sabato*

• Abstract	264
• 1. Introduction	265
• 2. Cruising to the poles	268
• 3. The imaginary of polar tourism: the case of Ponant cruises	270
• 4. Conclusions	276
• References	278
• Web references	280

14. The African geopolitical landscape: between demography and development

■ *Giuseppe Terranova*

• Abstract	282
• 1. Introduction	283
• 2. The demographic landscape of Africa: from the slave trade to the limits to growth	283
• 3. Global population trends and the Africa’s new demographic landscape.	285
• 4. Conclusion	289
• References	293

15. Geographical analysis of WEEE (Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment) dynamics

■ *Alberto Corbino; Stefano De Falco*

• Abstract	297
• 1. Introduction	298

• 2. Geographic analysis of WEEE flows	304
• 2.1 <i>Regional scenarios</i>	306
• <i>Americas</i>	307
• <i>Europe</i>	308
• <i>Africa</i>	308
• <i>Asia</i>	309
• <i>Oceania</i>	310
• 3. Some possible positive foresight scenarios	310
• References	313
<i>THE AUTHORS</i>	317

1. The *Fiera del Mediterraneo*: a (Post) Pandemic Landscape as Difficult Heritage

Emanuela Caravello, Giulia de Spuches, Gabriella Palermo

1. The *Fiera del Mediterraneo*: a (Post)Pandemic Landscape as Difficult Heritage

*Emanuela Caravello, Giulia de Spuches, Gabriella Palermo*¹

Abstract

This chapter aims to analyse the geographical perceptions of an urban landscape through the lens of difficult heritage. The choice to speak of a difficult heritage seems to us better suited for dealing with the traces of the past that are complex, painful, and controversial, given their association with tragic events. In order to analyse this particular form of heritage, we will use the methodology of the survey, which involves both an exploratory and a dialogic phase.

We intend to consider the Fiera del Mediterraneo in Palermo through three keywords: development, transformation, and sustainability. Firstly, the Fiera was founded as an exhibition space in 1946 in an expanding area of the city. The Universal Exhibitions were its archetype, the aim was to be the bridge of the Mediterranean economic area. The transformations of the 1970s interrupted the initial idea of landscape unity by fragmenting and transforming the outdoor space and pavilions into empty spaces, to be filled with industrial products of everyday life. In the third phase, the Fiera changes its use value once again by becoming the pandemic space for the Covid-19 tests and vaccinations. Although only three pavilions were used, the Covid-19 changed the image of this area: it was the Covid-19 landscape. Thus, the question is how to deal with this difficult heritage? How to live-with and resignify this difficult heritage?

Keywords: *Difficult Heritage, Fiera del Mediterraneo (Palermo), Covid-19, Ruins, Pandemic landscape*

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1. Introduction²

In the current geopolitical context, urban spaces are increasingly traversed by multi-scalar dynamics that affect the way we perceive landscapes. Among the most incisive transformative events, the Covid-19 pandemic posed a crucial challenge and still continues to manifest its effects in spaces, practices and representations.

This article focuses on geographical perceptions of an urban landscape deeply marked by the pandemic event, as the last transformative phase of a complex process. The case study is the Fiera del Mediterraneo (Palermo, Italy), established in 1946 as an exhibition space in an expanding area of the city. The Fair has undergone significant transformations over the decades: in its first two phases it served as a trading bridge between the Mediterranean shores, then, with the neoliberal acceleration it lost its purpose; Covid-19 crisis turned it into a pandemic landscape; today it has become a post-pandemic space to question.

Our focus will be on the pandemic, as it is the period in which the image of the Fiera changed. This transformation has led us to ask ourselves what kind of heritage remains in the present and how to define it. We started with the following questions: is it possible to see the Fiera as a difficult heritage? What do the ruins signified by the trauma of a pandemic, but simultaneously by relations of contagion with which to remain in contact, suggest to us? How can we live-with and re-signify this landscape with its difficult traces?

Our reflections are based on the theoretical background of cultural heritage and in particular the conceptualisation of difficult heritage. We believe that this polysemic concept is particularly suited to deal with traces of the past that are complex, painful, and controversial. From a methodological point of view, we used the method of the exploratory and dialogical survey, which allowed us to consider the Fair as a difficult landscape in its ambivalence. On the one hand it emphasises a painful memory, a landscape of illness; on the other hand, in the landscape of care, it questions us in order to imagine sustainable ways of living together.

² Even if the article is the product of a collective work, paragraph 2. has to be attributed to Emanuela Caravello, 3. to Giulia de Spuches, 4. to Gabriella Palermo. Introduction and Conclusions are instead collective.

2. Difficult heritage and pandemic landscape: a theoretical framework

The frameworks through which heritage can be examined are multiple and pertain to multidisciplinary perspectives that intersect with each other. Lowenthal's seminal study (1985) presents the past as a landscape continually reshaped in light of present needs and instances. Building upon this conceptualisation, the theoretical and methodological domains of heritage are traceable in the economic field, discursive practice, visual representation, and affectivity. In the economic realm, theoretical approaches have emphasised the materiality of heritage and explored its role as an economic resource in regeneration and tourism. This focus on heritage objects has led to reflections on heritage commodification or over-commodification driven by marketing imperatives (Hewison, 1987; Smith, 2006). Among the studies that question how the past is interpreted in the present, Waterton and Watson (2013) suggest looking at heritage in discursive terms. Representation practices in heritage are viewed as texts that can be read and deconstructed. Theories of visual culture applied to heritage focus on how it is displayed by revealing representations and narratives in the process of construction (Rose, 2007; Waterton & Watson, 2010). Finally, another theoretical framework connects heritage to the realm of affectivity. In this perspective: "heritage and its economies are driven by affective politics and consolidated through emotions" (Tolia-Kelly *et al.*, 2017, p. 1). This embodied approach to heritage research focuses on the value, power, and politics of emotions. Heritage is conceived as a materialised social memory. The focus on the politics of emotions raises questions about authorised versus marginalised or hidden heritage, and why certain aspects are valued. In the realm of affectivity, exploring the agency of heritage allows us a richer and more complex understanding of the form of heritage we choose to call difficult. The central question then becomes: what are the affective capabilities of heritage spaces and objects?

The dimension of affectivity in the Heritage Studies appears particularly relevant because it links together the materiality of places with their symbolic value. Moreover, it involves memories and emotions, even conflicting ones, experienced or transmitted. According to Rose (1995), one can identify or not identify with places; likewise, heritage can have both a positive reference, and also be difficult, dissonant, negative, abject, and ambivalent.

This problematic dimension of heritage has been analysed in one of the most authoritative writings on the subject by Tunbridge and Ashworth (1996), who proposed dissonance as a concept that best captures the intrinsic nature of all heritage: as there are infinite ways to interpret the past, conflict

and contestation are implicit in the construction of historical narratives. Moreover, they conceived dissonance as an inalienable attribute of heritage, acknowledging that this characteristic is particularly pronounced in sites linked to negative events of the past. This feature is implied in the concept of negative heritage elaborated by Meskell (2002). He reflects on conflicted places that become repositories of negative memory in the collective imagination with the aim of considering how this negative heritage can be mobilised to master past traumas through rehabilitation for educational purposes or, alternatively, erasure.

The debate on heritage has further emphasised the concept of negativity through the idea of abject heritage, used in reference to obsolete monuments to be destroyed in the name of modernity (Herscher, 2010) and abandoned, unfinished, and destabilising spaces (Smith, 2013). Furthermore, the concept of ambivalent heritage proposes a return to a view that emphasises the various alternative interpretations suggested by Tunbridge and Ashworth. The ambivalence of heritage is investigated by Breglia (2006), who speaks of heritage as an arena where a variety of public and private actors compete for the right to benefit from its control and can give rise to claims. Heritage ambivalence therefore consists of different ways of attributing meaning and is closely connected to the theme of affectivity policies (Chadha, 2006).

With the awareness of this rich transdisciplinary debate, difficult heritage is a polysemic concept that we consider more relevant in reference to the space of our analysis. Indeed, it refers to traces of the past that are complex, painful, and controversial due to their association with tragic events, atrocities, genocides, and various forms of oppression. MacDonald first introduced the term in reference to a past recognized as significant, but simultaneously contested and “awkward for public reconciliation with a positive, self-affirming contemporary identity” (2009, p. 1). Looking at heritage as unsettling, uncomfortable, and traumatic allows for questioning the interconnections between past, present, and future, as well as the representation policies of spaces. It also allows one to deconstruct the singularity of emotional reactions and representations. Building on this theoretical and interpretive context, we note that difficult heritage is a particularly effective concept as it ties places and spaces to complex and traumatic events of the past that can influence their perception and representation. Among the traumatic events of the recent past, the COVID-19 crisis has transformed urban spaces, questioned distinctions between local and global, and also brought changes in the use and management of spaces and landscapes. In this contribution, we will therefore use the concept of difficult heritage with explicit reference to the

pandemic as a traumatic event and examine the landscape of the Fiera del Mediterraneo through this interpretative filter. As a matter of fact, the global virus of Covid-19, that spread all over the world in 2020, infected and still haunts this particular landscape in the post-pandemic scenario, signifying it, according to our research question, as a difficult heritage. While clearly the words infected and contagious refer to the terrible pandemic that ravaged the world, and whose effects we are still reckoning with, in the Environmental Humanities literature (Haraway, 2016; Tsing, 2015) those terms refer to a crisis that must be seen with a double meaning: not only as emergency, but also as potentiality, i.e., the possibility of cohabitation among the ruins of capitalism (Edensor, 2005) that produced the pandemic. By interweaving together this literature with that of the difficult heritage, the aim of this article is to query about the possibility to deal with the Fiera landscape as a problematic heritage, signified, among other spatial-temporal layers, by the Covid-19 pandemic. Is it possible to see the Fiera in its various layers sedimented over time as a pandemic – and now post-pandemic – landscape as a difficult heritage? What do these ruins, signified by death and the trauma of a pandemic, but at the same time by relations of contagion with which to stay in contact, suggest to us? How to deal with these difficult traces? What kind of memory is at work here? How to survive among the ruins of capitalism signified by the pandemic in such urban spaces? How to live-with?

3. The case study: the Fiera del Mediterraneo

The methodology used to investigate this landscape takes advantage of a multiple gaze analysis. A first view from above shows, for the most part, the visions of technicians and institutions. A second is from below, and we can divide it into two practices: on the one hand the vision of associations that have tried to animate the area during the period of great institutional crisis; on the other, our visions (the researchers). The method used was the survey method (de Spuches, 2007). It consists of two moments: the first exploratory, the second dialogic. The former is embodied in our active perceptive gaze and, at the same time, our emotional state and contact with the landscape. The latter, the dialogical surveying, occurs in the encounter with the other who guides us. One is led (even mentally) while still holding a reflexive approach. We met some challenges in making full use of the dialogic survey method as, nowadays, the Fair area cannot be regularly accessed; it opens to the public just for few rare events per year.

Therefore, we opted to proceed through interviews with the support of maps of both the city and the fair area. Some interviews were imagined providing an account of what the outdoor spaces and the pavilions are like: a sort of imaginary walk with a guide. The various voices of the privileged actors have composed the description (never neutral, of course) that we will report here.

Before exploring the pandemic and post-pandemic Fiera del Mediterraneo landscape, we want to trace the history of this fragment of Palermo. At the end of the 18th century, in the large Northern area of the city, which is the subject of our case study, an urban sprawl started and changed the face of this area in little more than a century. Numerous industrial plants sprang up and changed the urban function. However, the vast plain below the Monte Pellegrino was always used for military exercises and pasture. The Piazza del Campo, the wide esplanade on which the Fiera del Mediterraneo was to be built, was excluded from this housing development activity. Turning to visions and looking at the historical maps, the triangle of the future fairground (83,000 square metres) is clearly visible (**Fig. 1**).



Fig. 1. Palermo, 1935. Source: <https://palmohub.opendatasicilia.it> (drawn by the authors)

The first sign of urbanisation is a road that would have joined the Reale

Parco della Favorita to today's Via Montepellegrino. However, the former cartographic sign of the road will be incorporated into the internal avenue of the fairgrounds. Therefore, in 1946, the Fiera del Mediterraneo was inaugurated in this vast area (Covello, 1995). Paolo Caruso designed the entire neighbourhood in the decentralised Piano delle Falde on the edge of a heavily bombed Palermo and beneath Mount Pellegrino. The spaces were designed with simple lines but with a focus on solids and voids, Cardella's Chemistry pavilion and Epifanio's Mechanics pavilion formed this new urban landscape (Fatta, 1995). In the 1970s, at the end of the internal transformations of the Fair landscape, the entire area was intended to be a representation of the Modern (**Fig. 2**).



Fig. 2. Palermo: Fiera del Mediterraneo, 1956. Source: <https://palermohub.opendatasicilia.it>

In our view, the Fiera del Mediterraneo “object” should be analysed by distinguishing three periods: the golden age, the long transition marked by the changing landscape and by the crisis, the pandemic landscape between disease and care.

The first period still adheres to the logic of Universal Expositions and, therefore, as a place of innovation, through the ability to exhibit (de Spuches, 2002). Here, the concept of exhibition had as its purpose both the commercial side and the entertainment and leisure side. In this first period, the heritage that is formed is anything but difficult. There were no traces of contestations or oppositions, as it had been the case with the Universal Expositions; this was a time of rebirth for Palermo, after having suffered

heavy bombardments. It was an idyllic landscape, made of architectures that offered composite styles (as in the Universal Exhibitions) and had at its centre a large fountain that ordered a symmetrical space. Finally, the intention was to create the rhetoric of Palermo as the centre of the Mediterranean. The Fair was named “del Mediterraneo” because it acted as a bridge between Europe and Africa, between the West and East of the Mediterranean.

In the second period, from the 1970s to the first decade of the 2000 (the space was closed in 2007), the imperative of Modernity changed its face. Structures seek criteria of greater functionality, causing replacements and changes that transformed the whole design layout. In this period, the space of the object was privileged over the exhibition space. The industrial object of everyday life had little links to the context of the representation. The surprising effect was left to the images of the lights, introduced by the advertising signs, which attempted to recreate an urban landscape. However, once the lights were turned off, the landscape unity imagined at creation was lost and the Fiera became a space made up of pavilions without an overall vision. Interviewing some privileged actors who witnessed this great change, we report the difficulty of accepting this upheaval and the consequent disaffection towards the Fiera. We mark this first affective shift because we are already in the realm of experience, towards “the sensory realm and the materialities and affective atmospheres of heritage landscapes” (Tolia-Kelly *et al.*, 2017, p. 1). It is in this key that we have interpreted heritage spaces: in fact, through the affective relationships we have with our past, a cultural heritage can become difficult. In the voices of our privileged actors, the oscillation of affections for the Fiera landscape emerged clearly; through their situated memories, they have given voice to the various affective stratifications accumulated over time. The crisis of the commercial function of a trade fair space has been increasingly felt as the decades have passed. We have slowly witnessed the decay of activities and the emergence of an empty and abandoned space. The consideration to be made is that the landscapes of the exhibitions hardly match the swirling speed of neoliberalism.

The year 2007 is considered to be the year of the Fiera’s abandonment, even if the area has never been completely deserted, not only because some ephemeral commercial or cultural events took place, but above all because several processes of spatial re-appropriation were actually triggered and implanted. These re-appropriations of spaces have been fragmentary (pavilions 1 and 2 for the Teatro Mediterraneo Occupato [TMO]; pavillon 3 for the Emmaus association; pavilion 5 for the Lisca Bianca association) or general, with the spread of vegetation throughout the area. Interviews with

the TMO collective reveal the total rupture that these places have with the urban space; occupation is being acted out as a practice of resistance against a governance interested more in processes of gentrification and touristification than in cultural spaces for citizenship. The occupation occurred, in fact, when the governance started talking about a project for a big conference centre. And we quote “the project financing is nothing but the most refined financial architecture that allows an unequal distribution of resources, i.e. a private appropriation of public money flows” (Palermo & Sorci, 2018, p. 123). In different ways, the associations Emmaus and Lisca bianca are non-profit organisations set up to promote the social and labour inclusion of disadvantaged young people; the latter, in addition, has restored and put into navigation a boat (bearing the same name) as a symbol of Mediterranean culture and tradition.

The presence of these cultural and social activities gave new meaning to the ruined pavilions. The strength of these associations raises questions. Can we call them ruins? Edensor would answer that “ruins are sites which have not been exorcised, where the supposedly over-and-done-with remains – but at the same time as – the rapid and continual change of modernity, in which everything that is solid turns into air, may be perceived as threatening chaos or embraced as exciting” (2005, p. 835), we are convinced that heritage maintains its memories if it involves cultural and social practices. Affection for ruined landscapes finds new strength in the capacity for collective transformation.

Finally, we have the third period: the Fiera as a landscape, again, of disease and care. This period, which corresponds with the Covid-19 pandemic, needs to be treated in greater detail and attention.

4. Landscapes of contagious and capitalistic ruins: a (post)pandemic difficult heritage

In the previous paragraph, we pointed out how the Fiera del Mediterraneo has been affected by several transformations: in what seemed to appear as an urban void, several agents, human and more-than-human, have resignified this problematic landscape, from politics of re-appropriation to the urban greenery spread among the interstices of the ruins of abandonment. Between the end of 2019 and the beginning of 2020, the global outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic has grafted a new infesting agent onto this contested landscape: the virus resignified the function of the Fiera, which soon became the pandemic space par excellence in the city of Palermo (Fig. 3).

FIERA DEL MEDITERRANEO

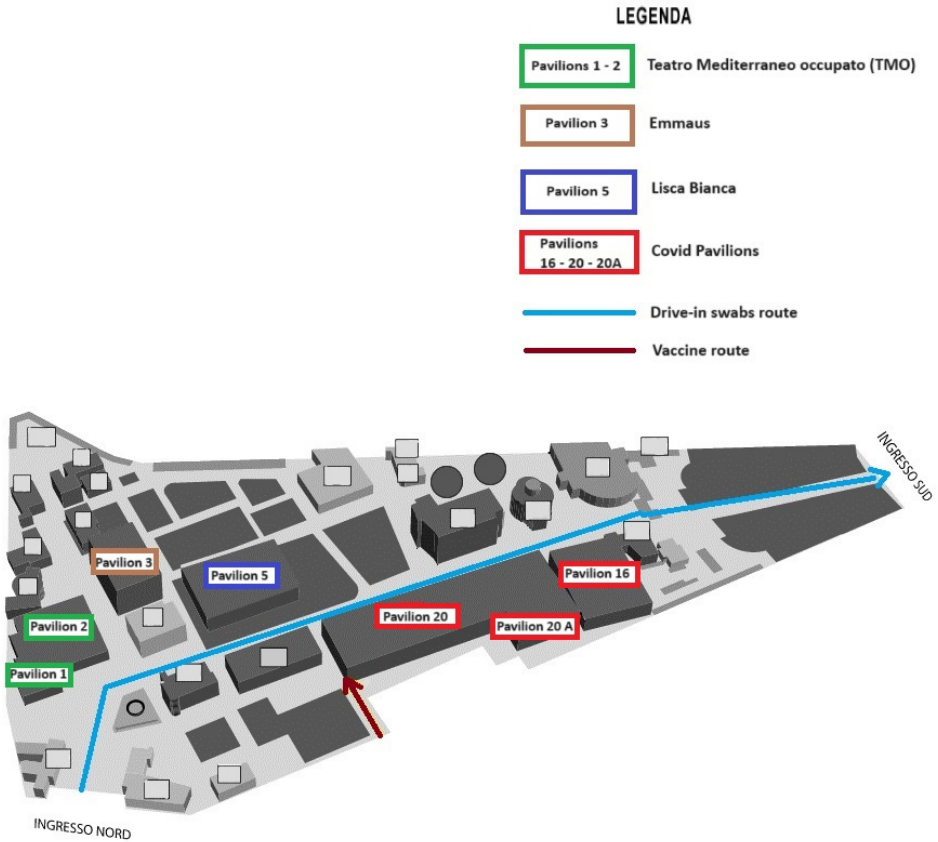


Fig. 3. The Fiera del Mediterraneo during Covid-19. Source: Ente Autonomo Fiera del Mediterraneo (drawn by the authors)

This re-functionalisation took place in different phases – which obeyed to different spatial productions determined by the political-health management of the pandemic, in Italy and in Sicily in particular. As it is well known, Italy has faced the pandemic with different strategies over time, that can be identified in three phases – and which correspond to the three phases of spatial organisation of the Fiera.

Following the lockdown implemented throughout the country between March and May 2020, the attempts to reopen to public life in the Summer of 2020 caused a large increase in the number of contagions – and therefore of

deaths – in Sicily, which up to that point seemed to remain far from the large outbreaks of the North of Italy³. This is the reason why in September 2020 a commissioner for the Covid-19 emergency was nominated in Sicily: as Renato Costa⁴ pointed out, he chose the Fiera del Mediterraneo as the hub to deal with the pandemic, because it appeared the optimal structure for the absorption of large numbers of people and the establishment of a total pandemic centre, both in terms of management and accessibility. As we mentioned before, the Fiera was at the time conceived as an urban void according to the political governance – even if actually signified by politics and relations from below. It is precisely this conceived emptiness that determines the choice of the Fiera as the perfect ‘city within the city’: the management of this pandemic space shaped thus a new landscape, both of fear and healing, both of contagion and care.

The Fiera as a pandemic hub opened in October 2020 to respond to the first emergency need: the mapping of contagion, through the administration of six million free of charge rapid swabs purchased by the Region of Sicily. The numbers of access and demand exceeded all expectations: on the first day alone, more than 3,000 people went in for a swab. In this first phase, the Fiera was organised like a drive-in, accessible only by car from the North entrance (via Anwar Sadat). The snake of cars among the ruins of the pavilions and the vegetation that had taken possession of them over the years, then reached the end of the triangular area where, under gazebos, the staff recruited during the pandemic, carried out the rapid swabs through the cars’ windows. The columns of cars, increased considerably during the months, determining the landscape around the urban area of the Fiera: every day one could witness these very long queues where the car itself was both a safety bubble, and the border of isolation from other possible infected people. In the car park inside the area, in front of Piazza Cascino (South entrance), one thus waited for the outcome: if negative, one left the Fair area with relief; if positive, one was sent back to the pavilion for the molecular swab. Thus, in the unravelling of this cars’ serpentine, the sensory and affective realm of this urban landscape emerged and materialised: waiting became a spatial device made of a shared fear of the possibility of contagion and isolation while in the cars’ rows; of a shared solidarity for the possibility of healing when someone left the parking area. Therefore, that triangular area determined a Covid landscape,

³ For an overview of the different legislative decrees and Covid-19 data in Italy, see <https://www.epicentro.iss.it/coronavirus/2020>. On narratives and pandemic phases, see de Spuches, Sabatini, Palermo, Caravello 2020.

⁴ Interview conducted in November 2023.

made of lines of cars, of masks, of waiting, of fears and relief: a landscape of contagion, made inside and outside the walls. As excessive material of this memory, a graffiti artwork is represented on the wall of the Fair in Via Sadat for Jamba, a rapper of the Palermo scene who died in 2020 in London of a possible Covid death: a trace of the Fiera landscape as difficult heritage in a space in between.

The second phase of the functionalisation of the Fiera corresponds to the peak phase of the pandemic, both in terms of the number of infected, and the start of the vaccination campaign. The drive-in for the swabs is accompanied by the opening of Pavilion 20, the largest in the exhibition area, which is thus used as a space for administering vaccines⁵. This means that, in April 2021, the Fiera is not only the place where the infection is confirmed or not, but also a place of care: a place of possibility. The landscape gains thus new horizons of meanings and above all new shades of affectivity: although fear was still condensed in this urban area, queues, now also outside the car, became meetings for sharing stories while waiting in a space of care, perceived safety, hope and healing.

A third phase corresponds to the waning phase of the pandemic, when basically the vaccination campaign seems to be working and contagions – or at least, deaths – decrease. As the new centre-right governments won the elections at national, regional and municipal level, soon started the plan for dismantling the hub, which was definitively handed back to the municipality on 20th January 2023. Pavilion 20, which until a few months ago had been the vaccination centre, within a very short period of time went back to being used for ephemeral exhibition events. The new municipal government is proposing new plans for the Fair, which have not been yet hesitated, as the space seems to be unfit for use at present.

The management of the Fiera as pandemic space had instead proposed to maintain and permanently transform the Fiera into a citadel of health, as it has been a comforting space for the city over the years: there have been multiple events where people went there looking for the staff, even for requests that exceeded the functions of the hub for swabs and vaccines. In this perspective, the Fiera emerges as a space of care, of possibility of survival, of proximity, consequently experienced with positive ease by citizens in

⁵ Other vaccination hubs are set up at the port, at the airport and in some neighbourhoods thanks to the existence of self-structured and self-financed popular clinics: this is the case of the Ambulatorio Popolare Borgo Vecchio, inside the Centro Sociale Anomalia in the neighbourhood of the same name (https://palermo.repubblica.it/cronaca/2021/10/14/news/borgo_vecchio_al_centro_sociale_anomalia_superate_le_500_vaccinazioni-322109363/, last acc. December 2023).

the great moment of crisis and precariousness of life brought about by the pandemic. Moreover, not only does Covid-19 continue to spread, albeit in other ways and with other strains, but cases of spillover (Quammen, 2012) now seem to be intrinsic to the production and overexploitation modes of contemporary capitalism, suggesting that Sars-viruses, like those spread in 2002 and 2019, will still determine the global future.

The acceleration of governance and the municipal administration to dismantle it, on the other hand, seem to suggest a desire to put an end to the pandemic and to soon forget the functionalisation of the Fiera as a pandemic landscape. It is precisely these two approaches to the pandemic's memory, as well as those of us authors of the essay – who, as embodied subjects in research, are entangled in this process through positionality and reflexivity – that let emerge the Fiera in our view as a possible difficult (post)pandemic heritage. A space of fear, of contagion, of the ruins caused by the production of capital on the one hand; a space of care, of safety, of the possibility of surviving amidst these ruins on the other. In this ambivalence of emotion, diverse co-existing affectivities, and a different materialisation of the social memory of the recent past, there is a production of a contested landscape.

Following MacDonald (2009), if difficult heritage refers to traces of the past that are complex, painful, and controversial due to their association with tragic events, and simultaneously contested as “awkward for public reconciliation with a positive, self-affirming contemporary identity”, the Fiera as (post)pandemic landscape is a condensed space of ruins to deal-with. These ruins are signified by multiple spatial-temporal layers: as industrial ruins (Edensor, 2005) of the abandonment of the exhibition space; as more-than-human green figurations, contagious practices and relationalities, thus possible figurations to stay in contact with the trouble of our contemporary time (Haraway, 2015); as ruins of a system whose increasingly precarious sustainability produces infections, among which we need to imagine ways to survive. “This is a story we need to know [...]. And yet: such documents are not enough. If we end the story with decay, we abandon all hope – or turn our attention to other sites of promise and ruin, promise and ruin” (Tsing, 2015, p. 18): the difficult heritage of the Fiera del Mediterraneo suggests and needs new ways to deal-with this excessive memory of an area that becomes a multiscale knot to understand future sustainable cities.

5. Concluding thoughts

In this article, which certainly needs further future research, we looked at the Fiera del Mediterraneo as a difficult heritage. A landscape that is signified by multiple complexities: the transformation of the area that marks the end of the golden age, a Mediterranean productive dream; a space of contestation that resignifies the urban void with other practices of contagion, human and more-than-human; the space par excellence of the pandemic. This difficult heritage, as a landscape of contagion with a contested memory, is signified in particular by the ruins: the ruins of the abandonment of the industry; the ruins of the more-than-human interregnum; the ruins of the infection of the capitalistic mode of production, whose sustainability is increasingly precarious. The urban ruins of this particular difficult heritage question us through multiple layers of meanings: dealing with the pandemic memory; staying in contact “with the trouble” of our contemporary crisis; imagining other possibilities of contagion. Perhaps, starting from an urban void that actually was never empty, but full of traces to be questioned. By looking at the development and the transformation of the Fiera, its difficult heritage emerges as a landscape of condensed contestation: a knot to imagine other sustainable cities.

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Territories continue to transform due to endogenous and exogenous development drives. The thickening of logistics and transport networks, large commercial hubs, energy supply options, agricultural and industrial policies, tourism and migrations constitute then, individually and in a systemic sense, some of the lenses available to read the transformative dynamics of territories in the crucial current geopolitical context. In addition, the increasing reach of digital technologies in the spaces and practices of our daily lives, has changed the way we perceive and use the landscape. These transformations find a reified outcome in landscape transitions, becoming a foothold for a trans-scale geographical reflection. We therefore want to insert this volume on this horizon. In fact, we have wanted to stimulate the geographical community to try their hand at landscape analysis to identify, through methodological and/or applied research contributions, problems, practices and trajectories inherent in the transformative dynamics of territories, compressed between the urgency of development and the need to change the energy and consumption paradigm.

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