



POLITECNICO
MILANO 1863

DIPARTIMENTO DI ARCHITETTURA
E STUDI URBANI
DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE
AND URBAN STUDIES

Il volume raccoglie i contributi scritti dai relatori che hanno partecipato al ciclo di conferenze *Spazi pubblici e luoghi condivisi. Progetti architettonici per le città europee*, ideato da Guya Bertelli e coordinato da Pasquale Mei. Il *symposium* è stato promosso dal Dipartimento di Architettura e Studi Urbani (DAStU) e le conferenze hanno avuto luogo, tra il 2012 e il 2013, presso la sede centrale del Politecnico di Milano e presso il Campus Arata del Polo Territoriale di Piacenza.

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The publication collects contributions by the lecturers in the series of conference *Public spaces and shared places. Architectural projects for the European cities* created by Guya Bertelli and coordinated by Pasquale Mei. The *symposium* was sponsored by the Department of Architecture and Urban studies (DAStU) and the conferences have been organized in 2012 and 2013 at Politecnico di Milano, Campus Leonardo, and at Arata Campus, in the Territorial Campus of Piacenza.

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Pasquale Mei

Spazi pubblici e luoghi condivisi

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Progetti architettonici per le città europee

Pasquale Mei

Public spaces and sharing places

Architectural design for the european cities

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SPAZI PUBBLICI E LUOGHI CONDIVISI
progetti architettonici per le città europee

Pasquale Mei, Politecnico di Milano, Dipartimento di Architettura e Studi Urbani (DASIU)

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Pasquale Mei

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Renovatio urbis versus urban creativity

Pasquale Mei

The speakers who opened the series of meetings *Public Spaces and Shared Places - Architectural plans for European cities* were both Visiting Professors at Politecnico di Milano – Polo Territoriale di Piacenza. The Catalan architect Enric Massip Bosch - Associate Professor at the Escola Tècnica Superior d'Arquitectura del Vallès and Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya, founder of EMBA office - presented a reflection on the urban development of Barcelona related to its public spaces. The second guest, who treated urban strategies carried out in the city of Seville, was Carlos Garcia Vazquez: architect and professor at the Escuela Técnica Superior de Arquitectura of the University of Seville.

The dialogic comparison showed the difference that characterizes the different design strategies carried out by the two Spanish cities at the center of the debate. After the urban crisis, direct result of the crash of the 70s' industrial growth that hit most European cities, Barcelona has adopted a real policy of *renovatio urbis*.

This expression used by Manfredo Tafuri for the sixteenth-century city – had been implemented through the issue of urban reconstruction not only to the large scale (which characterized most of the urban projects of the 80s, such as those that interested the large disused industrial empty spaces), but also in a punctually way, becoming however, opportunity for a broader

transformation.

Significant figure at the head of the office working group for the urban planning of Barcelona's Municipality was Oriol Bohigas, who from 1980 to 1984 operates a real transformation of the city's regeneration process by means of specific interventions inside the degraded areas and the urban voids.

The strategy implemented by the working group headed by Bohigas was defining the concept of a *new urbanity* by overcoming the limitations that could represent an operational tool such as the *urban plan* (together with *urban standards* and zoning directions) and it focused on specific interventions within the densely inhabited historic fabric of the city, through project actions and architectural works able to generate new relations systems between different parts of the city.

A path that includes both the strategy of *urban planning* and the tactic of the *architectural and urban design*, able, through the *planivolumetric* tool, of characterize and shape the *urban plan* and its urban indexes. A design model that helped give birth to the *build inside the built* season. Simultaneously they worked on the more recent peripheral areas of Barcelona - *Carmel, Vall d'Hebron* e di *Nou Barris* - connoted by a spatial and morphological identity not well structurally defined.



The new neighborhoods have been the subject of a densification process, trying to balance the high population density of the city's historic center. In 1984, the *Plan General Metropolitano* become the basis for new design strategies to be implemented on the occasion of the upcoming *Olympic Games* of 1992. The event of the games has been taken by the administration as an opportunity to initiate a process of urban regeneration (*Special Urban Plan of the Olympic City*). They are identified thirteen areas of transformation, of which four will be part of the Games program: *Ploblenou, Montjuic, Vall d'Hebron e Avenida Diagonal*.

In the same year it was organized in Seville, on the *La Cartuja* Island, the *Universal Exhibition*. Even without the same organizational structure that has positively characterized the design experience of Barcelona, new infrastructures are designed and built including the airport by Rafael Moneo, the railway station by Cruz y Ortiz and the Calatrava bridge. The two events - the *Olympic Games* in Barcelona and the *Expo* in Seville - have contributed to introduce the quality of Spanish architecture in the international scene.

However, as Carlos Garcia Vazquez pointed out during his speech, Seville learned from existing experiences of other cities: the work on public space experimented in Barcelona, the Madrid's attention to the social housing and

the media appeal exercised by the exceptional architectures in Bilbao. It's however interesting to note that precisely the financial crisis that unfolded in recent years has determined the conditions for a transformation of the public spaces of the city through a bottom-up process, shared with the citizens and the different categories of associations. In this regard were submitted a few examples such as the *Parque de Miraflores*, the *Pasaje Mallol*, the *Plaza de Armas*, and more the design strategies adopted by the architect Santiago Cirugeda, for a creative use of public spaces of the city.

From the debate on design strategies adopted by the two Spanish cities at the center of this first meeting, have emerged two different models that might be summarized for the case of Barcelona through the theme of *renovatio urbis* and for Seville with that of *urban creativity*. The strategies carried out in Barcelona and Seville can be seen as the expression of two different orientations of the architectural and urban design: on the one hand the design of urban form, which determined a veritable paradigm in European project culture, on the other hand a more tied to the social component orientation, open to the direct citizen participation, and accompanied by a renewed sense of creativity. A model, this last, whose effectiveness as urban transformation vector will only be confirmed after some time.