

Unione Italiana **D**isegno

UID
TORINO **2015**
17-18-19 SETTEMBRE

DRAWING & CITY
DISEGNO & CITTÀ
Cultura Scienza Arte Informazione



37° CONVEGNO
INTERNAZIONALE
DEI DOCENTI DELLA
RAPPRESENTAZIONE

GANGEMI EDITORE

UID UNIONE ITALIANA DISEGNO

DAD Dipartimento di Architettura e Design
DISEG Dipartimento di Ingegneria Strutturale,
Edile e GeotecnicaPOLITECNICO
DI TORINO37° CONVEGNO INTERNAZIONALE DEI DOCENTI DELLA RAPPRESENTAZIONE
DODICESIMO CONGRESSO UID – TORINO 17 • 18 • 19 SETTEMBRE 2015
SEDE CENTRALE DEL POLITECNICO DI TORINO
Corso Duca degli Abruzzi 24, Torino**Comitato Scientifico / Scientific Committee**

Vito Cardone, *Università degli Studi di Salerno* – Presidente
 Mario Centofanti, *Università degli Studi dell'Aquila* – vice Presidente
 Mario Ducci, *"Sapienza" Università di Roma*
 Piero Albisinni, *"Sapienza" Università di Roma*
 Fabrizio Apollonio, *Università degli Studi di Bologna*
 Paolo Belardi, *Università degli Studi di Perugia*
 Marco Bini, *Università degli Studi di Firenze*
 Francesco Cervellini, *Università degli Studi di Camerino*
 Emanuela Chiavoni, *"Sapienza" Università di Roma*
 Michela Cigola, *Università degli Studi di Cassino e del Lazio meridionale*
 Antonio Conte, *Università degli Studi della Basilicata*
 Cesare Cundari, *"Sapienza" Università di Roma*
 Antonella Di Luggo, *Università degli Studi di Napoli "Federico II"*
 Francesca Fatta, *Università "Mediterranea" di Reggio Calabria*
 Marco Gaiani, *Università degli Studi di Bologna*
 Paolo Giandebaggi, *Università degli Studi di Parma*
 Massimo Giovannini, *Università "Mediterranea" di Reggio Calabria*
 Anna Marotta, *Politecnico di Torino*
 Riccardo Migliari, *"Sapienza" Università di Roma*
 Giuseppa Novello, *Politecnico di Torino*
 Arturo Livio Sacchi, *Università degli Studi "G. d'Annunzio" Chieti-Pescara*
 Ornella Zerlenga, *Seconda Università degli Studi di Napoli*

Peer reviewer internazionali / International peer reviewers

Pedro-Manuel Cabezas Bernal, *Universitat Politècnica de València, Spagna*
 Fabiana Carbonari, *Universidad Nacional de La Plata, Argentina*
 Michele Chiurini, *Ball State University, Stati Uniti*
 Arivaldo Leao De Amorim, *Universidade Federal de Bahia, Brasile*
 Carlos De San Antonio Gomez, *Universidad Politécnica de Madrid, Spagna*
 Juan José Fernandez Martín, *Universidad de Valladolid, Spagna*
 Roberto Ferraris, *Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, Argentina*
 José Antonio Franco Taboada, *Universidade da Coruna, Spagna*
 Angela Garcia Codoner, *Universitat Politècnica de València, Spagna*
 Pedro Antonio Janeiro, *Universidade de Lisboa, Portogallo*
 Francisco Martinez Mindeguia, *Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya, Spagna*
 Carlos Montes Serrano, *Universidad de Valladolid, Spagna*
 Javier Mosteiro, *Universidad Politécnica de Madrid, Spagna*
 Pablo José Navarro Esteve, *Universitat Politècnica de València, Spagna*
 Andrey Razin, *Peoples' Friendship University of Russia, Russia*
 Juan Saumell Liado, *Universidad de Extremadura, Spagna*

Peer reviewer nazionali / National peer reviewers

Fabrizio Ivan Apollonio, *Università di Bologna*
 Salvatore Barba, *Università degli Studi di Salerno*
 Cristiana Bedoni, *Università degli Studi Roma Tre*
 Stefano Bertocci, *Università degli Studi di Firenze*
 Carlo Bianchini, *"Sapienza" Università di Roma*
 Adele Buratti, *Politecnico di Milano*
 Massimiliano Campi, *Università degli Studi di Napoli Federico II*
 Laura Carnevali, *"Sapienza" Università di Roma*
 Alessandra Cirafici, *Seconda Università degli Studi di Napoli*
 Paolo Cini, *Università Politecnica delle Marche*
 Daniele Colistra, *Università "Mediterranea" di Reggio Calabria*
 Dino Coppo, *Politecnico di Torino*
 Laura De Carlo, *"Sapienza" Università di Roma*
 Francesco Paolo De Mattia, *Politecnico di Bari*
 Aldo De Sanctis, *Università della Calabria*
 Edoardo Dotto, *Università degli Studi di Catania*
 Maria Linda Falcoi, *Università degli Studi di Genova*
 Riccardo Florio, *Università degli Studi di Napoli Federico II*
 Fabrizio Gay, *Università IUAV di Venezia*
 Paolo Giordano, *Seconda Università degli Studi di Napoli*
 Emma Mandelli, *Università degli Studi di Firenze*
 Mario Manganaro, *Università degli Studi di Messina*
 Giovanna Angela Massari, *Università degli Studi di Trento*
 Lia Maria Papa, *Università degli Studi di Napoli Federico II*
 Andrea Rolando, *Politecnico di Milano*
 Adriana Marina Rossi, *Seconda Università degli Studi di Napoli*
 Michela Rossi, *Politecnico di Milano*
 Rossella Salerno, *Politecnico di Milano*
 Maurizio Unali, *Università degli Studi "G. d'Annunzio" Chieti-Pescara*
 Graziano Mario Valenti, *"Sapienza" Università di Roma*
 Chiara Vernizzi, *Università degli Studi di Parma*

Comitato organizzatore / Organizing Committee

Coordinamento scientifico
 Anna Marotta, Giuseppa Novello
Cura e redazione degli Atti
 Anna Marotta, Giuseppa Novello
Collaborazione alla redazione degli Atti
 Marco Vitali
Segreteria
 Alessia Herutto
Grafica e comunicazione
 Marco Vitali, Elena Marchis, Ursula Zich
Progetto e gestione del sito web
 Maurizio Rocconico



Proprietà letteraria riservata.

Gangemi Editore spa
 Piazza San Pantaleo 4, Roma
 www.gangemieditore.it

Nessuna parte di questa
 pubblicazione può essere
 memorizzata, fotocopiata o
 comunque riprodotta senza
 le dovute autorizzazioni.

*Le nostre edizioni sono disponibili
 in Italia e all'estero anche in versioni abradate
 Our publications, both at home
 and abroad, are available in Italy
 and abroad*

ISBN 978-88-492-3124-3

Le traduzioni in inglese sono state fornite dai singoli autori

DISEGNO & CITTÀ DRAWING & CITY

Cultura, Arte, Scienza, Informazione
Culture, Art, Science, Information

A CURA DI
ANNA MAROTTA
GIUSEPPA NOVELLO

GANGEMI EDITORE

- 523 **Disegnare la città, insegnando a rilevare. Tecnologie integrate per un rilievo urbano 3D**
 Drawings of city as teaching method. Integrated techniques for urban 3D models
Paolo Ciani, Ramona Quattrini, Romina Nespeca, Gislio De Carolis
- 531 **Il disegno multidimensionale della città di Ohrid in Macedonia**
 The multidimensional design of the city of Ohrid in Macedonia
Luigi Corniello
- 539 **Il ridisegno della città storica: conoscere per intervenire**
 Re-drawing of historical towns: know to operate
Carmelo Cozzo
- 547 **Le architetture vegetali urbane tra documentazione e salvaguardia**
 The vegetal urban architectures between documentation and safeguard
Laura De Carlo, Leonardo Paris
- 555 **La villa romana del Casale a Piazza Armerina, tra rilievo e disegno**
 The Roman Villa del casale, between survey and design
Giuseppe Di Gregorio, Salvatore Agosta
- 563 **Questioni di rilevamento urbano e ambientale**
 Questions about urban and environmental survey
Andrea Donelli
- 571 **Disegnare la città: la lettura della continuità per la composizione dell'innovazione**
 Drawing the city: reading continuity to compose innovation
Maria Linda Falciadeno
- 577 **Per un disegno dell'antropizzazione dell'area di Testaccio a Roma: stratificazioni cartografiche e luoghi delle desertioni**
 For a drawing of the anthropisation of Testaccio area in Rome: cartographic paths and places of desertions
Laura Farrovi, Silvia Rinaldizzi
- 587 **Le nuove forme urbane: dall'esperienza della città giardino alle Kleinstadt tedesche di Schmitthenner e Teasnow**
 The new urban forms: from the experience of the garden-city to german Kleinstadt of Schmitthenner and Teasnow
Erika Ficarelli
- 595 **Ermenautica e rappresentazione della città**
 Hermeneutics and representation of the city
Riccardo Florio, Teresa Della Corte, Carmela Fragnone D'Amato
- 605 **Le città dello "Stato di San Germano", rappresentazioni tra il XVI e XVIII secolo**
 The cities of the "State of San Germano", representations between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries
Arturo Galluzzi, Michela Cigola
- 613 **Prime note per una mappatura sismica dei centri storici**
 Some preliminary notes on historical town seismic mapping
Giorgio Garzino, Bernardino Chiaia, Elena Marchia
- 621 **La città di Gerusalemme e le sue -Parti- "un progetto di rappresentazione"**
 The city of Jerusalem and its -Parts- "a project of representation"
Gastano Gliese
- 631 **Redrawing the city and its historical transformations: two examples in Palermo**
Gian Marco Giugentì, Giuliana Campanella
- 639 **L'arco quadrifronte di Caparra in Lusitania: il rilievo con Scanner Laser di un elemento di definizione topografica e urbana**
 The tetrapylon arch of Caparra in Lusitania: Laser Scanner survey of a topographic and urban element
Carlo Inglesi, Antonio Pizzo
- 647 **Architectural and Landscape Heritage of the Russian Imperial Age (1763-1843) under the Conditions of Urban Transformation**
Mariya Komarova
- 651 **Un approccio metodologico per la lettura integrata di un luogo urbano. Il caso studio di Aei Castello**
 A methodical approach for the integrated reading of an urban place. The case study of Aei Castello
Mariangela Liuzzo, Sebastiano Giuliano, Salvatore Savarino
- 657 **The integrated survey aimed at the regeneration of the urban scene in the historical urban fabric**
Federica Maletti, Federico Ferrari, Marcello Babani
- 663 **Il disegno della città e l'immagine di secondo grado**
 The drawing of the city and the image of the second degree
Anna Christiana Maiorano
- 671 **Disegno e città, fra storia e innovazione**
 Drawing and city, between history and innovation
Massimo Malagugini
- 679 **Città aperte al territorio. Il disegno di nuovi modelli urbani nella pianura pontina e nella provincia di Cáceres nel XX secolo**
 Towns open to the territory. Drawing of new urban models in Pontina plain and in the province of Cáceres in 20th Century
Maria Mariani, M^{ra} Mar Luzano-Bariolozzi, Maités Bazán de Huerta, Floriana Papa
- 687 **Il disegno della cittadella di Gozo: una morfologia complessa**
 Design of citadel of Gozo: a complex morphology
Giuseppe Masciacava, Chiara Pietropaulo
- 695 **Isola di Pianosa: città fantasma 2015**
 Island Pianosa: ghost city 2015
Maria Evelina Melley, Andrea Maiocchi
- 703 **La iglesia de Sta. Maria la Real de Sasamón**
 The Church of Sta. Maria la Real of Sasamón
Susana Mora Alonso-Muñozerro, Pablo Fdez. Cuesta, Sara Peñalver Martín
- 711 **Genaro Pérez Villamil: Dibujos de paisaje urbano y arquitectura histórica. Algunos dibujos inéditos de Toledo en 1840**
 Genaro Pérez Villamil: Urban landscape drawings and historic architecture. Some unpublished drawings of Toledo in 1840
Pablo Navarro Esteva, Pablo Navarro Camallonga, Hugo Antonio Barros de Costa e Rocha
- 719 **La construcción de obras públicas en la Ciudad de Valencia durante el s. XV. El arte de la cantería como modelo**
 Fifteenth Century Valencia and public work construction in the city of Valencia. The stonemasonry work as a model
Pablo Navarro Camallonga, Hugo Barros Costa, Pablo Navarro Esteva
- 731 **Letture diaconiche e sinoniche della città**
 Diachronic and synchronic readings of the city
Caterina Palestini
- 741 **Modificazioni e immagini di luoghi**
 Changes and images of places
Rosaria Palomba, Daniela Palomba, Giuseppe Di Gioia
- 749 **Disegnare per la città dell'industria: l'immagine di Torino e i disegni di progetto di Nino Rosoni**
 Drawing the industrial city: the image of Turin and Nino Rosoni's planning drawings
Francesca Paban
- 757 **The cultural identity of Procida island through the project design**
Maria Ines Pascariello
- 763 **Rilevare per la memoria della città: l'esperienza di via del Suffragio a Trento**
 Surveying for the memory of the city: the experience of via del Suffragio in Trento
Cristina Pellegrata, Fabio Luce
- 771 **Representation for the revitalization of brownfields: a comparison between Italian and Polish experience**
Azucena Pollicio, Magdalena Zembicki Nowak

Redrawing the city and its historical transformations: two examples in Palermo

Gian Marco Girgenti, Giuliana Campanella

THE REPRESENTATION AREA IS NOWADAY CALLED UPON TO FACE NEW CHALLENGES FOR NEW COMPUTER TECHNOLOGIES THAT HAVE DEVELOPED OVER THE LAST FEW YEARS.

VISUAL COMMUNICATION AND MULTIMEDIA LANGUAGE EXPERIENCED A RADICAL CHANGE REPRESENTATION AND VISUALIZATION, THOUGHT AND IMAGE ARE BASED ON THE BRANCH OF COMMUNICATION AND THEREFORE ON THE TRASMISSION OF KNOWLEDGE THAT CANNOT BE SEPARATED FROM THE INTERDISCIPLINARITY.

DIGITAL IMAGERY CHALLENGES MORE AND MORE ANALOG IMAGERY, CREATING A SCENE THAT IS INDEPENDENT FROM THE CONSTRUCTED REALITY AND SOMETIMES REACHING TO OVERLAP AND MERGE WITH IT: THEREFORE THE REPRESENTATION IS NO LONGER JUST A REPETITION OF THE REAL, BUT BECOMES ITSELF AN AUTONOMOUS REALITY, REITERATING ITS HEURISTIC POWER AND CAUSING THE CRISIS OF THAT TRUTHFUL, ALTHOUGH SUBORDINATE CHARACTER THAT WAS ATTRIBUTED IN THE PAST. IN THIS STUDY WE ARE INTERESTED IN URBAN REPRESENTATIONS, AND WE ASK THE QUESTION OF MENDING BETWEEN PAST AND PRESENT.

KEYWORDS: VIRTUAL RECONSTRUCTION – URBAN ANALYSIS – AUGMENTED REALITY SYSTEMS

Introduction

There is no doubt that until today the city has been analyzed according to specific and areal terms, with rather abstract conceptual distinctions. The new digital tools and the new navigation systems that use hypertext mode become the preferred instruments for the analysis of the ancient city, to read the formation and the evolution processes, to understand the physical patterns, and finally to compare and correlate the urban shape (that is static and can be read only on the maps) with its perspective and immersive image made possible thanks to the virtual augmented reality.

Our interest is directed towards this area of research: we have chosen, as the subject of investigation, some urban portions of Palermo that, over the centuries, have radically altered their face and their meanings. We reconstructed the native configurations from original documents (cartographic maps, surveys, vintage photos) in order to tell the story of their evolution and transformations.

I. Piazza San Domenico: history of a square

The first example is related to the three-dimensional reconfiguration of Piazza San Domenico in Palermo.

It is a site that has radically changed its urban structure over time. The current shape of the square is related to an urban accommodation of the Baroque age (XVIII century) that has been upset however by the hack of the via Roma in the early twentieth century: this new road had to be a new connection axis between the railway station and the new quarters of urban expansion to the north of the city. The opening of the new driveway has profoundly changed the spatial envelope and has overturned its meanings. We will show why in the following analysis.

The site in 1703 (from Lazzara)

But the history of the site is prior to the Baroque square's project, and it is possible—even if it's more difficult—to reconfigure the state of places as they looked like before the eighteenth-century intervention. Our intention is, in other words, to reconstruct dynamically the history of urban transformations along the course of the ages, and then to proceed to the architectural analysis.

The Dominican friars were present in Palermo since the early decades of the thirteenth century, when their religious order was founded. They purchased in 1270 a large garden in the neighborhood that was called "Amalfitania" near the harbor: later the mother church of their order was built here. The land was at the confluence of the long head of the "Scalcadio" (a long market-road that crossed the northern suburb of the ancient city) and the port itself, which was a crossroads of lodges, banks and business. It is also possible to read the choice of the urban settlement at a larger scale, considering the whole circuit of the medieval market-roads of Palermo and the coeval settlements of the other mendicant orders (the Augustinians, the Franciscans and the Carmelites). E.Guidoni has seen a definite symbolic scheme in the choice of places and in the mutual distances that characterize the presence and the inclusion of religious orders in the Italian cities of the Middle Ages.

The site in 1877 in comparison with a current view

The fourteenth-century church together with the adjacent cloister had relatively low proportions and was longitudinally developed for about 30 meters (it stood roughly in the area that today stands between the apse and the transept).

The Dominicans decided to enlarge the church in 1420 thanks to bequests and subsidies of wealthy families in Palermo and of the same king Alfonso V.

The work of enlarging and rebuilding lasted from 1457 to 1480: in this year the apse and the forum were completed.

Another and more substantial expansion project of the basilica began in 1640 and was continued until the church did not reach its current size. Up to this date the work touched only the church: the square in front of it, that was little more than a widening of the street on which the building stood, had not yet taken the shape of the magnificent "scenic machine" that was designed in the next century. Few traces remain of the fourteenth-century church: the cloister instead remained in its original form in two of its four sides.

It is possible to read the state of places prior to the opening of the square in some maps of the city of Palermo which were made in the sixteenth and seventeenth century: these are axonometries that have been marked on quite correct plans; the width of the voids (mainly the roads) has been conventionally enlarged to ensure the legibility of architectural fronts. It is possible to reconstruct easily the plan and overlap it to the most recent maps that were realized with photogrammetric techniques.

We used the survey in the Gaetano Lazzara's "Plano de la Ciudad de Palermo" (1703) to reconfigure the three-dimensional site. The



isometric view is drawn from the east side and clearly shows the apse of the church and the whole block where the monastery, the cloister and a small cemetery were. The façade is not visible but its "silhouette" is quite readable: the urban context is perfectly identified. We reconfigured virtually the entire block and we superimposed it to the current one (that we had previously recognized): we noticed that the plan at ground level has remained almost unchanged except for some substantial modifications.

Since 1717 the Dominicans started to buy the buildings in front of the entrance of the church, with the intention to make a square: architect Tommaso Maria Napoli, who was a member of the order, began the work in 1724; when he died Giovanni Amico continued the supervision of works.

Some images of the square and its buildings

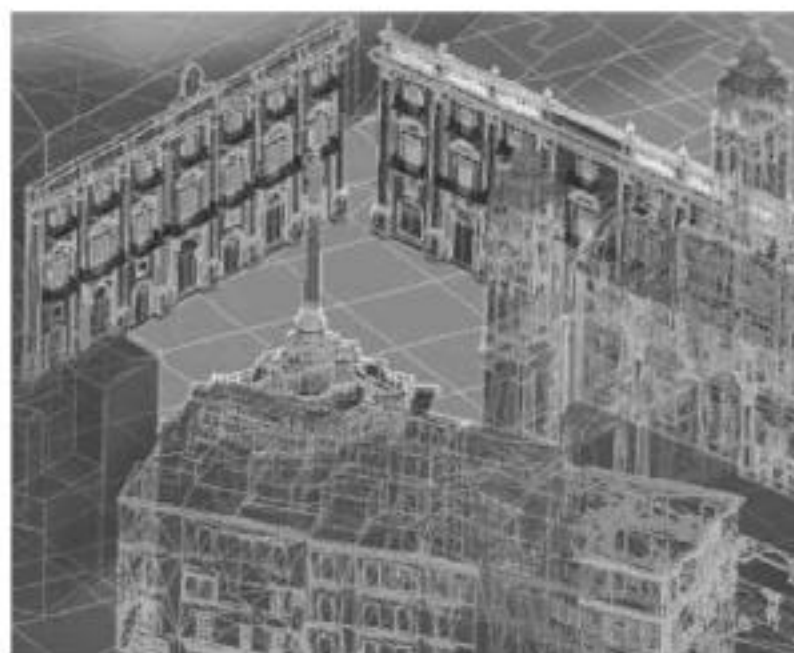
The square, which was initially called "piazza Imperiale", was one of the first urban solutions of the eighteenth century with a clear intention of urban decor criteria. It summed up the spatial concepts of the Baroque period: it was square-shaped and it overturned horizontally the width of the façade of the church; in this way the architect created a "cube space" that was highlighted by "false scenes" of the neighboring buildings (the Montalbano palace in the west side and the Tracta palace in the north side: the façades of the two palaces were designed considering more the needs of the exterior than the inner distribution). The space of the square, despite the breadth of its size, appeared gathered in relation with the surrounding streets and it was connected to the city through the side streets that were of smaller extent. The main link, that was the commercial axis of the via Bandiera, flowed into it in a decentralized manner: later, the column dedicated to the Immaculate Conception was placed at a point which established different vanishing points on the side streets: these were the via Monteleone and the via dei Maccheronai, linking the square with the Vucciria market and with the Olivella district.

The perception of space was thus subject to multiple points of view that were hinged from the fulcrum of the vertical column: in this way the façade of the church used to dilute its grandeur and lent itself to a dynamic game of glimpses with the side scenes of the square. The façades of the two palaces recent rebuilt settled symmetries that were arranged with the rhythm of the pilasters, with the same height of the caves and with the right angle formed in the western and in the northern side. The south side kept the asymmetry and the curvilinear motion of the previous road.

Virtual reconfiguration of the square

The opening of the via Roma, at the early 1900s, definitely shocked the structure and the formal balance of the Baroque square: the route of the new road, that in this stretch was made after 1906, destroyed altogether the Montalbano palace and rectified the curtain where later the current Moncada-Paternò palace was built; a long gash was so opened to the NW direction, with the removal of about one-third of the block between via Monteleone and via Torre di Gotto. Due to

3/ Some images of the square and its buildings

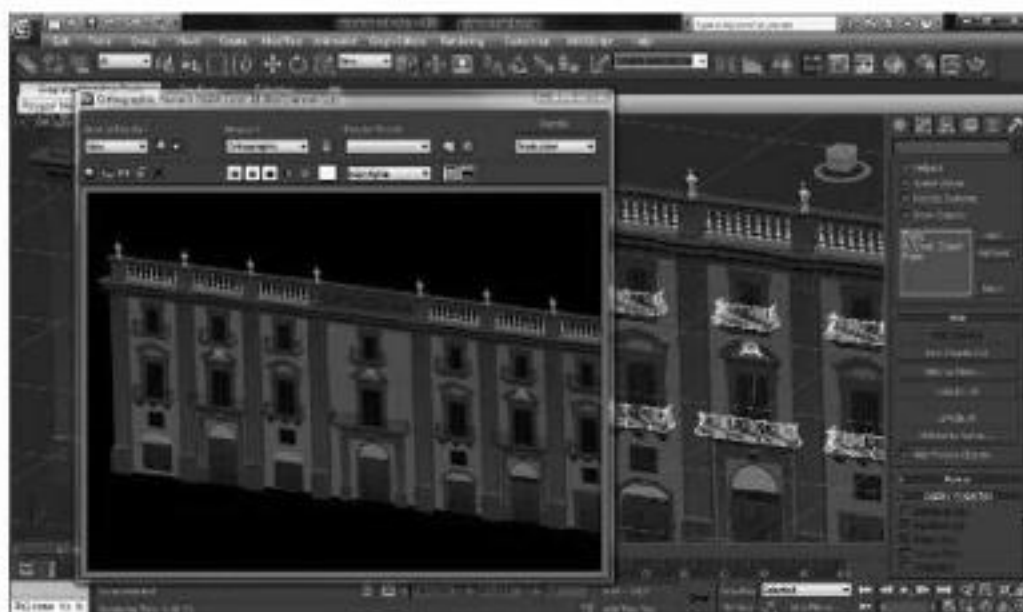


the cut the base of the statue of the Immaculate Conception came to be almost adjacent to the new road layout: currently there is only a thin sidewalk that separates the one from the other. The beautiful and elegant Baroque square lost in this way its prerogative of space: it was no longer enclosed in buildings equally composed without other openings except the narrow alleys, and it became an open and frayed space. The sudden opening of the square to the city at a large traffic way also altered the perception of the church façade in the relationship between solids and voids: it can be noted that the representations of the square made before the cut favored foreshortened views, with a rich and involving dynamism (all the protagonists of the urban scene are depicted: the column, the bell-towers, the other sides); subsequent representations, instead –like postcards and touristic images- portray only the church façade in its rigid frontal. We suppose that this reversal of sense is due to the new conception of space offered by the square.

The lavish and superabundant design face of palazzo Moncada-Paternò (which replaced the Montalbano palace) tried to counterbalance the monumentality of the church, while the northern side (where there was the Tractta palace) remained incomplete: almost half of the building remains were demolished, and in the western part a leveling work of the road surface was made: a small triangular square was opened to connect the different sections. Expropriations liberated a large area where a new building (palazzo Bonomolo) was built: this one preferred the face in front of the via Roma, and its architecture appeared in stark contrast to the remaining façade in front of the square.

5/ Digital modeling operations

6/ The original site in comparison with a current view



Digital modeling operations

In the 70s the entire block was further demolished (except the Baroque façade) and was replaced by the modern "mall" that now houses the "Rinascente".

The reconfiguration work of the locations before the cutting of the via Roma has been made thanks to the survey in the cadastral map of 1877: it was possible to redraw the urban fronts thanks to several vintage photos that we have collected: so we have overlaid the virtual image of the ancient square in the current one, and we put the results

into a virtual augmented reality software. Thanks to the management of different layers we have also included the conjectural reconfiguration of the medieval place as it appeared in the survey of 1703.

The model, starting with the current urban image, is thus able to tell backwards its own history, with a simultaneous comparison of the different transformations and offering a "memory virtual tour" to viewers.

In recent times and for special seasonal events the axis of the via Roma has been closed to vehicular traffic and has been turned into a

pedestrian "rambla": this pedestrianization has somehow sewed the market-road of the via Bandiera with the Vucciria, the commercial suburb of the ancient town, and freed the square of the uncomfortable role of parking taken in the meantime; it has also granted to the square that original role as a link between the markets and the port (even if only for the duration of the event). The panoramic terraces of the "Rinascence" are today an additional attraction for tourists and visitors, and mean that the square space continues to live and move, transforming the meaning and the perception of its forms.

II. A Quarter of Palermo in the Art Nouveau Period read through its significant buildings

The second example, instead, is concerning the history of a quarter built in the early 900s, and we want to read it through the analysis of some of its main and significant buildings.

The main urban transformations of Palermo in the Art Nouveau period concerned the area which was just located to the northern side of the city walls: this was marked by the expansion axis of the via della Libertà and by the propulsion of the great monumental architecture of theaters (Teatro Massimo Vittorio Emanuele, 1870-97; Politeama Garibaldi, 1874). The new growing city could afford to be built in a land portion that was practically free from preexisting buildings and from constraints due to previous tracks: the main guidelines were the "trazzere", some suburban roads that connected the historical center with the outer suburbs and with the neighboring countries toward Carini.

The original site in comparison with a current view

The face of the new city, modern, modernist and open to the international Art Nouveau style, gave to the architects the chance to express their creativity at the better way, in a compositional freedom that was close to the bourgeois sentiment of one of the major capitals of Italy after the Unification.

We realize, re-reading the buildings of this period, that the face of the city relating to this period of its history is irreversibly compromised and transformed from its original vocation, and this happened a lot more of the similar facts of the historical center.

There was, in other words, a process of urban transformation much more sudden and radical than the others that we have shown: all this was done, oddly (and differently from previous mutations) without major upheavals of the road layout. It took place in a point-like and spontaneous way, because it was a phenomenon that regarded the single architectures. These were brand new buildings for the time, and they were the main opportunities to try out new typologies and new construction technologies. They were, in essence, "temporary forms" from both points of view, because of their lightness and their innate propensity to obsolescence.

We are referring to the architecture intended for recreation and entertainment: kiosks, coffee-houses, "kursaal" and halls for cinema projection. They were the new protagonists of the urban scene and the reference typologies of the bourgeois city. Such presences con-

noted the new district along the main way from via Ruggiero Settimo to via della Libertà much more than the isolated and predominant event of the the great theaters. The urban blocks, that were arranged according to a strictly perpendicular grid, filled with these buildings and were immersed in the gardens of preexisting villas; in this way the city image turned the idea of a "walking", playful and filtering neighborhood that was differentiated between crossing alleys and main driveway axes. The subsequent and inevitable demolition of these buildings determined the loss of all the green areas that were connected to them, and the replacement with banks, offices and other buildings that changed the image of the quarter into a contemporary administrative and residential "city".

Salvatore Caronia Roberti (1887-1970) was one of the greatest architects of this season: he designed both the Art Nouveau architecture and the second ones, and he significantly contributed to this change. In the present study we analyzed two of his projects for cinema: the "Modernissimo" (1914) and the "Nuovo Excelsior Supercinema" (1924). We think that the story of these buildings summarizes the history of the entire district. The first one was demolished in 1973; the second one is still standing, although it was deeply upset in its architectural interiors and in its relationship with the urban context.

The "Modernissimo" in a vintage photo

We regularly reconfigured the three-dimensional model of both buildings, and we put them into a GIS virtual globe platform: we aim to reconfigure the image of the whole quarter as it appeared at the beginning of 900, for the purposes of a virtual documentation.

The "Modernissimo"

It was built on a plot that was already occupied by an "outdoor" theatre called the "Cinorkestron"; it had two entrances: one from the garden of the palazzo Cerda in via Stabile, and another one from a passage that had been housed in the lobby of the palazzo Tagliavia, in via Ruggiero Settimo. It's one of the first projects of the E. Basile's young student, and it still shows strong links with the master's style. The main design intentions face the problem of an interior composition different from the theatre (there isn't the proscenium; the hall is arranged according to projection needs; the gallery is only used for ornamental purposes). The hall was of considerable size and needed a strong concrete structure. Caronia devised a strongly rhythmic hall with three "naves" and a frame with eight spans which was formed by beams and columns. The projection booth, that was located in one of the short sides, had also a function of structural support. The "protorationalism" of style was tempered by a diffuse surface decorativism, although the choice of ornamentation was more classical than the "campy" Basile's style.

The project is amply illustrated in the plates of the S. Caronia Roberti archive which is kept at the Department of Architecture of the Palermo University, and in several vintage photos showing the front and the interior.

7/ The "Modernissimo" in a vintage photo



3d model of the "Modernissimo"
The "Nuovo Excelsior Supercinema"

It was opened in 1924 and it had, unlike the "Modernissimo", a mixed use: for this reason the interior design needed to be closer to the theatre architecture, with a real and walkable gallery and with a large stage where it was possible to place actors and musicians. It was built on a plot of 1000 sqm inside the garden of the palazzo Galati, and its presence divided the garden in two portions: one of these was for the public and for outdoor performances (café-chantant, tabarin), the other one remained as a private property of the prince Galati: he asked the architect to take advantage of a large terrace on the roof which was anchored to the theatre.

And if we read the project shape we can understand how this terrace was the real design matrix of the whole complex: it duplicated the square area of the adjacent building and it proposed a void of the same size and of considerable urban importance. The back of the proscenium was covered with false scenes overlooking the Prince's private terrace.

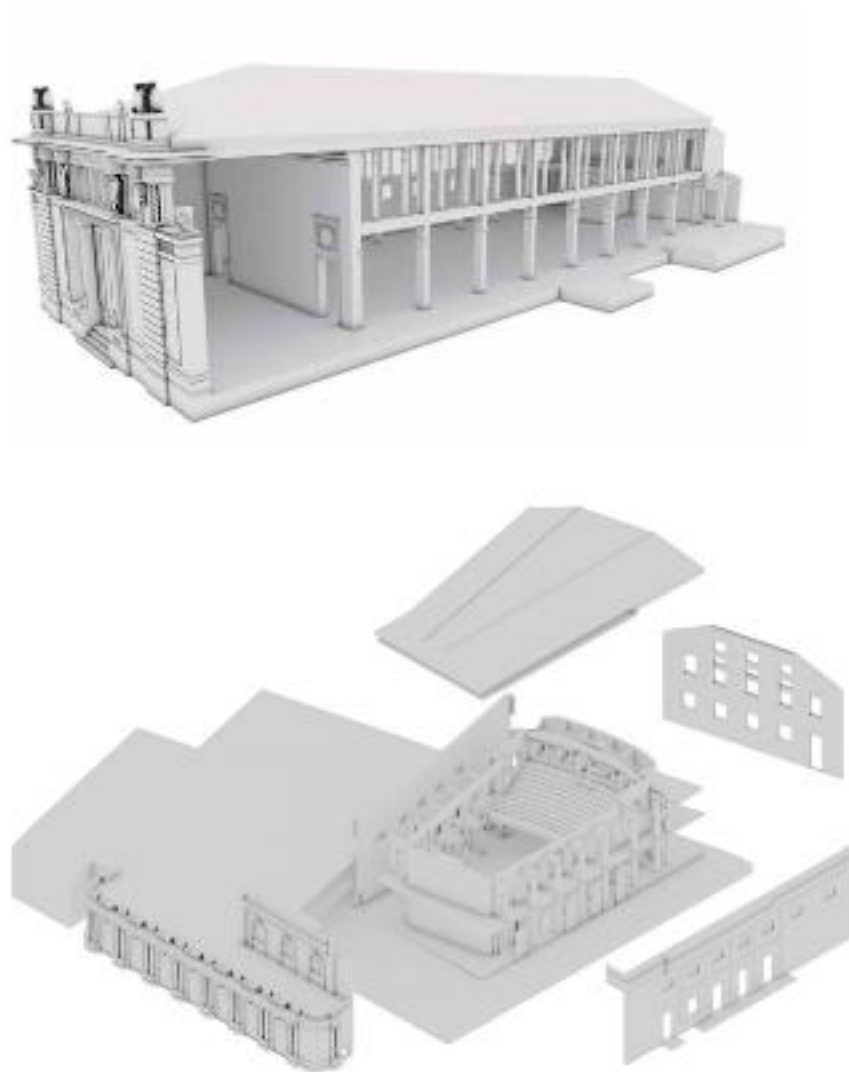
The interior of the theatre underwent continuous revisions and alterations: this was mainly caused by the need to update the sound and the projection systems. The first distortion was operated by the same Caronia in 1950, when all the ornamental lids were removed and the walls were lined with sound-absorbent materials. The building style was extensively modified, but the technological needs of the film industry were stronger than those of monument conservation.

In the same years the architect realized another and more modern cinema (Astoria, 1953) simultaneously to a large urban renovation of one urban block in that neighborhood: this (like also other prior or contemporaneous realizations) presented the final and accomplished version of the "cinema-building" architectural type, which was often combined with a condominium building. This new group of buildings

8/ 3d model of the "Modernissimo"



9/ 3d model of the "Nuovo Excelsior Supercinema"

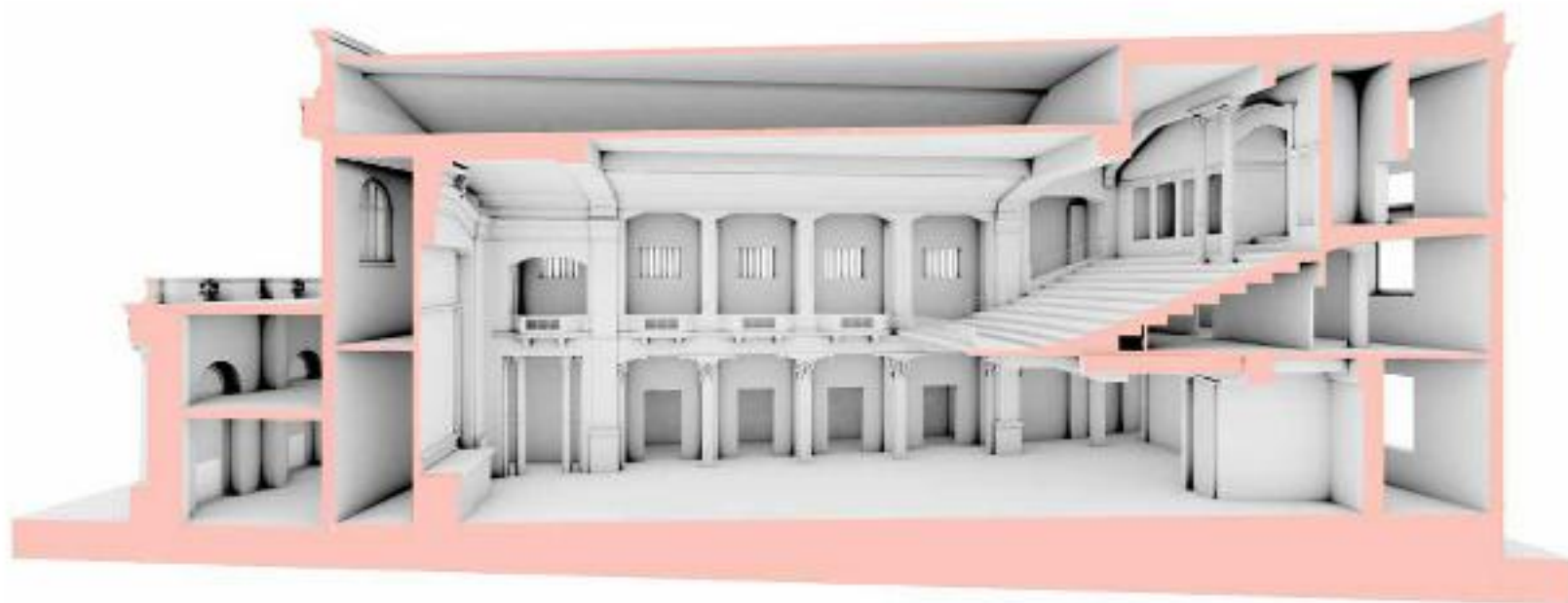


was more resistant than its predecessors, which were instead almost all demolished: together with their cancellation, the image of the entire district came to change completely.

The Excelsior complex, after a long period of closure due to the film industry crisis, has been re-used recently as a multimedia store, with a bookshop and a shop for music products. The needs of internal distribution had to clear of force the full-height space of the great hall, with a lot of questionable choices. The external elevations, although to a lesser extent, have lost similarly their importance, which was given mainly by urban relationships and pathways.

The work of virtual reconfiguring aims to bring back that image of the city that today has changed dramatically, so that it will be possible to enjoy its perspective views once again, and so understand its original meanings.

10/ A longitudinal section of the "Nuovo Excelsior Supercinema"



Bibliography

- Barbera Azzarello C., *Raffigurazioni, vedute e piante di Palermo dal sec. XV al sec. XIX*, Palermo 2008
- Barbera P., *Architettura in Sicilia tra le due guerre*, Palermo 2002
- Barbera P., *L'apertura della via Roma a Palermo: progetti, perizie, concorsi (1906-1924)* in *Un archivio di architettura tra ottocento e novecento. I disegni di Antonio Zanca (1861-1958)*, Palermo 2005
- Caruso S., *Le sale cinematografiche a Palermo dalle origini al 1953*, Alcamo 2007
- Chirco A., *Antiche strade e piazza di Palermo*, Palermo 1999
- Chirco A., Di Liberto M., *Via Roma: la "strada nuova" del Novecento*, Palermo 2008
- Giorgianni M., *Il taglio di via Roma*, Palermo 2000
- Giuffrida R., *Aspetti della ristrutturazione urbanistica di Palermo nel Settecento* in *Le arti in Sicilia nel Settecento: studi in memoria di maria Aocascina*, Palermo 1985
- Guidoni E., *Città e ordini mendicanti*, in "Quaderni Medioevali", n.4, dec. 1977
- Inzerillo S.M., *Urbanistica e società negli ultimi duecento anni a Palermo*, in "Quaderno dell'Istituto di Urbanistica e Pianificazione Territoriale della Facoltà di Architettura di Palermo", n.14, Palermo 1984
- Nobile M.R., *Palermo 1703: ritratto di una città*, Palermo 2003
- Ruggieri Tricoli M.C., *Salvatore Caronia Roberti architetto*, Palermo 1987
- Sessa E., *Salvatore Caronia Roberti. L'architettura dei cinematografi in Sicilia tra modernità soggettiva e vocazione classicistica*, in *L'architettura italiana del cinema*, Firenze 2007