



4<sup>th</sup> ISUFitaly International Conference | Bari, 26-28 september 2018

# READING BUILT SPACES

Cities in the making and future urban form

edited by  
Paolo Carlotti  
Loredana Ficarelli  
Matteo leva



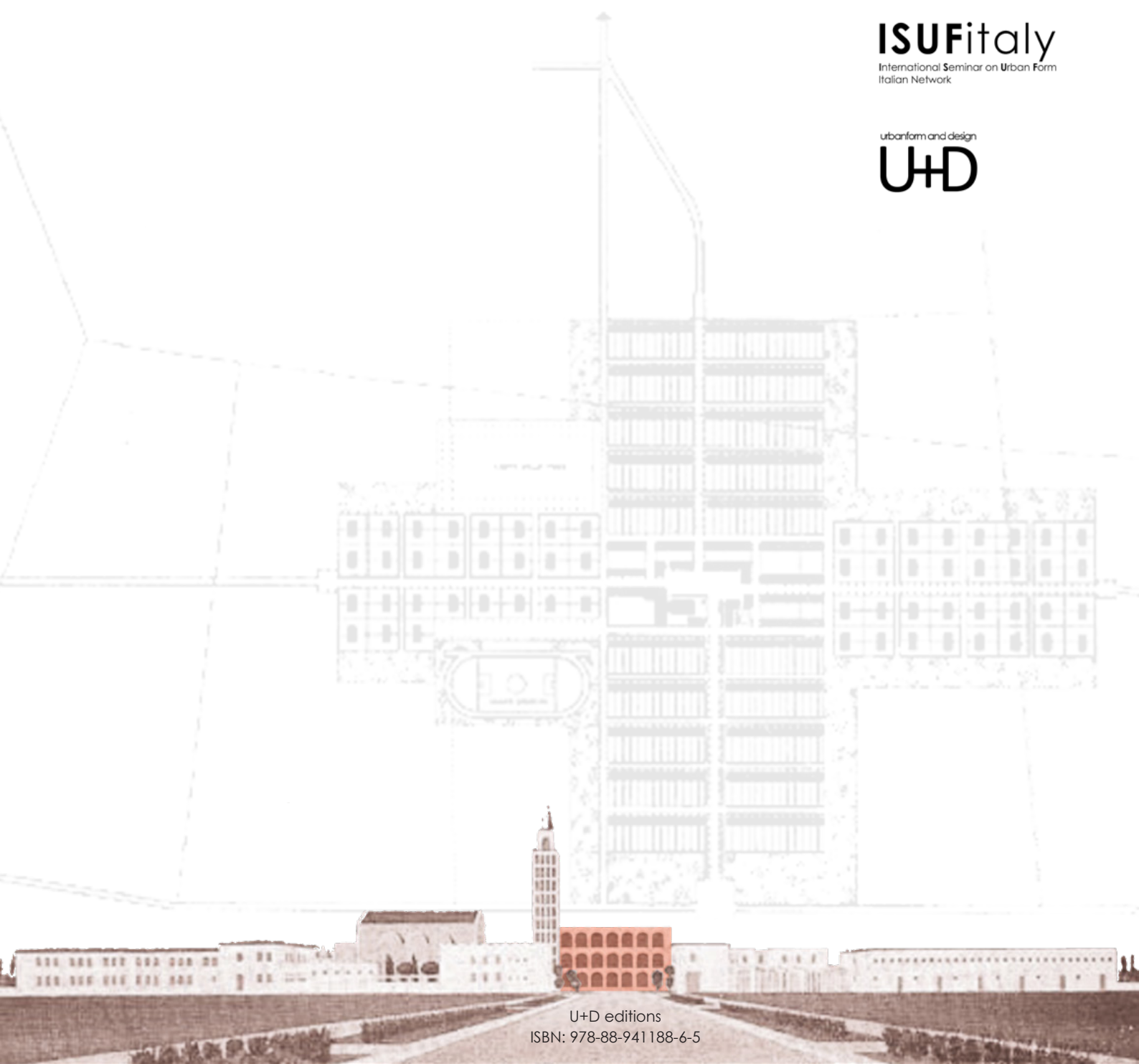
Politecnico di Bari

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# PROCEEDINGS

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## **READING BUILT SPACES**

Cities in the making and future urban form

READING BUILT SPACES | cities in the making and future urban form

# Presentation

The city is an “organism in the making”, an entity in constant transformation, not a complex of immutable elements. The city represents the entire human experiential field of the world, considered as expression of a “fundamental movement of existence” in its completeness and historicity, expressed by the formative structure of tissues and building types, by the urban hierarchies, by the relations with the territory, by the social relations, and by the values and criticalities.

The conference's aim is to propose a dialectical comparison between scholars of Architecture, Urban Planning, Urban History, Restoration, Geography, on the theme of urban morphology with an interpretative perspective based on the concept of “operating history”. Search for a multidisciplinary syncretism that eludes single analyzing techniques and aims to the complete reconstruction of the urban phenomenology in its totality and concrete essence, through the study of the changing and inflexible condition of ‘fluidity’ hinged on the world's events. An integrated thought based on the critical concept of ‘making’ that constitutes, phase by phase, the signifying element of each present, explained through the relationship between the before and the after: that is the research perspective of ‘being’ that announces the notion of transformational process.

Therefore, the projection in the future of the urban form is the central theme of the conference that proposes to stimulate the reflection on the issues as: recovery (not only of the historical city), re-use of existing urban spaces, regeneration, ex novo design in peripheral and peri-urban areas and natural spaces. All that, without neglecting the issue of sustainability, not considered with the strabismus of those who surrender to the “technique” pre-domain.



# Organization

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- C.1 Urban form between identity and spatial semantics
- D.1 Contemporary urban spaces between form and process
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## ABOUT ISUFITALY

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Welcome to the fourth Isufitaly conference.

Let me say, first of all, how happy and glad I am this conference is hosted in Bari. This city has a special meaning for us. It is not one of the "historic" places in which the Italian morphological school was founded, as Venice, Rome or Florence, but Bari became in time one of the most significant place of our Urban Morphology studies. Here, twenty-five years ago (a quarter of century!), a small group of researches and teachers created a core of serious morphological studies, which much developed as years went by.

I believe that today this core has become an heritage for the Bari Architecture School and the whole Polytechnic. I am proud to have contributed to this effort. One of the goal of Isufitaly conferences, is just to support and encourage relevant activities in the field of Urban Morphology such as those taking place in this School.

The other goal of our association is to communicate the specificities of our research. Most of us are architects, so one of the specific features of our studies is the link between reading and project, the relations between analysis of the built reality and the architectural design. This is one of the main aspects which differentiates our research form other Isuf investigations as the one made by geographers (one of the Isuf main interest is just the difference and complementarity between disciplines).

To give you an idea of the specificities of our research and studies, in opening this conference, I would like to briefly present you some of our activities in the form of a short history of our association.

The problem of forming ISUF local networks was posed in the Newcastle conference in 2004. In 2006 the topic was discussed in Stockholm from a practical point of view: how to found local parties? What should be their purpose? What their activities?

There was an approval in principle, but also some warnings were raised about the proposal as the formation of new local association could bring to a kind of "fragmentation" of ISUF as international association. I must say that we have always kept in mind this important warning and we have always considered our activities, our meetings and conferences, as coordinated and complementary to the main Isuf activity.

Two months later the Newcastle conference, in a meeting in Artimino, we began to propose the first of the ISUF local associations, which was called at that time Isuf Italia and, one month later we met in Florence to create the Italian network.

Isuf Italia was a really small group of researchers and professors in architectural design mostly interested in the city forming process and building types. We proposed a constitution which is, in general, the actual one. It is reported that the main goal of our association is to promote and develop the study of urban morphology in Italy, to encourage research, collaborate with local authorities and provide contacts between members through organizing conferences, meetings, also developing links with other networks.

The year after, on 2007, we organized in the "Casa dell'Architettura" (House of Architecture) in Rome a conference devoted to the foundation of Isufitaly.

The conference was organized in two days. The first one was devoted to one of the most discussed problem about housing in Rome, the Corviale intervention. It is a huge public housing building one kilometer long, built on the wave of modern architecture ideology,

a kind of new *Unité d'habitation* brought to the extreme. The gigantic construction had become a problem. It was the testimony of a generous effort to design something progressive and different from the general mass housing produced in the seventies, but it also was a social problem as the inhabitant didn't want to live inside its complex, unusual and conflictual space. It was a very interesting topic to discuss as it proposed different theoretical point of view, involving the modern movement heritage and its meaning today for the European cities.

I think it was a good choice to communicate the concreteness of our field of studies. The day after we started the foundation of Isufitaly, discussing with a small group of researchers, professors and professionals the goals and structure of the new association.

All the report from the meetings we had in the following years underlined the fact that Isufitaly was a free association still without a formal stature. Then we decided to have a legal frame for our activities and a nonprofit association was formed.

We also began to think about the ambitious project to host an international Isuf conference in Rome in 2015. But before the event we organized, as advised by Isuf instructions, a small conference, a kind of test before the main one. It was devoted to the relationship between urban morphological studies and design which is, as I said, the "core business" of our association.

The main conference had as title *City as Organism*. Of course it was a provocative title. All of us are fully aware that our cities are not organic, but organizers were also convinced that the notion of organicity is not just a way to read the city. It is also a goal. We read the city as an organism with the goal to build a more organic city. The conference was quite successful and produced also a two books, 700 pages monumental proceedings.

On the strength of the experience made, in February 2017, we organized the third Italian Isuf conference, *Learning from Rome*. The title indicates the organizing group own ideas about design: the designer goal is to read "urban rules" inside the city and try to continue them to produce contemporary architecture, never imitating the past but at the same knowing that we are "continuing" the existing city. As architects we are expected, it is our opinion, to continue a process, and the goal of the conference was to discuss this idea.

Just to debate our proposal in a narrower setting, we then have meetings held in Artimino, in a XVII century Medicean villa. Artimino meetings used to be for many years traditional Muratorian school seminars but recently were invited to participate also colleagues from other association. Last year also many Spanish friends and researchers urban morphology participated.

The research work of Isufitaly members is mostly developed inside University Institution, habitually PhD school and departmental laboratories.

We have in Rome a research laboratory called, not by chance, "Architecture Reading and Design".

Within university facilities we organize series of lectures devoted to relations between Urban Morphology and design in their different aspects. A series of conferences (Francesco Rispoli, Carlo Manzo, Giancarlo Cataldi, Franco Purini, etc.) were for example held on the topic of the scientific core of architectural design disciplines, a very relevant matter for us. The scientific nature of the project is indeed far from obvious, many architects retaining architecture just an artistic activity based on tools as perception. It was a good theme to discuss, useful to pose the question of the morphological analysis as alternative or integration to architecture intended just as expression of the author's personality.

We organized also series of lectures about some of the main topic of our morphology research. One of these concerned the relationship between matter and material (the first phase of transformation of the nature in architecture) which is one of the investigation recurring themes in the Muratorian school. This is also a research project carried on by some of our PhD students, about the plastic character of the Mediterranean architecture. We believed that the deep spirit of the Mediterranean building types is plastic, a character abandoned in times which only the light and transparent architecture is considered true contemporary. One of the most active Isufitaly member, Antonio Camporeale, organized a series of interesting lectures (Fernando Menis, Antonio Ramos, Vicente Mas,

Sol Madridejos) about the topic with the contribution of architects not exactly researchers in Morphology but whose studies are very important for the topic.

This strong link with the problems of construction of our researches have a long tradition in Italian schools of Urban Morphology and Typology. Following the thinking of Saverio Muratori, we believe that our work is useful if it is an operating work.

The term "operating" is central to us. Even history has to be regarded as operating. History we study is useful for action. To study the city of the past and its transformations has the goal to transform the actual city.

From this point of view the relationship between design and history is vital, a legacy cultivated not only by Muratorian scholars, but by all the Italian schools of Morphology.

In this spirit we organized some lectures and meetings to discuss the transformation of Rome made also by modern and contemporary architects. Public housing quarters built in the city outskirts in the seventies and eighties are often exemplary from this point of view. They were habitually designed by well-known Roman architects, who made great efforts to produce innovative settlements, as opposed to the characters of the surrounding city belt. They are exemplary case studies of a pioneering intervention whose problems consist precisely in the fact of not being related to the territory forming process, providing a valuable lesson for future interventions.

In the same spirit, one of the specificities of *Isufitaly* is the care about the relationship between contemporary architecture and cultural heritage. This is indeed a specificity of the whole Italian school of Architecture, not only of Morphology, also due to the custom of operating in historic centers.

We believe that we have to design contemporary architecture inside the historic fabric: if the city is an organism, as a living matter necessarily it needs to be wisely transformed to prevent it from dying. To intervene in this built matter, however, we must know and continue its forming process. We have to know its transformation rules. For this reason we dedicate a relevant part of our activities to interpreting historic built landscape and have produced a considerable amount of essays about the topic (by Paolo Carlotti, Matteo Ieva, Marco Maretti, Annalinda Neglia, Nicola Scardigno, Anna Rita Amato and others). The result, we believe, is not only of local value: we invited foreign researchers to report about their experience and we have often founded unsuspected affinities with the fabric transformation problems in other countries.

Our interest in the small part of the contemporary history that interprets modern architecture as a process is also obvious. We believe that such notion of organism and process can lead to innovative interpretations even of very well-known and highly investigated architects, as Louis Khan.

We discovered an interesting link between the Khan heritage and the Roman architecture: not what Khan has taken from ancient Rome, a matter very investigated and discussed, but what Roman modern architects have taken from Khan, showing similarities due to affinities in their formation.

We also organized lectures by architects who, even if they don't share our method, we consider close to our research interests as Renato Capozzi, Giancarlo Cataldi, Carlos Dias Coelho, Ignacio Mendolar Corsini, Riccardo Dalla Negra, Luis de Arminio, Wowo Ding, Pierre Larochelle, Alexander Schwarz, Hans Kollhoff, Carlo Moccia, Uwe Schröder, Federica Visconti, Vitor Oliveira and many others.

We try to report our researches and designing experience, of course, in teaching, also organizing workshops (often abroad), giving courses in different faculties, and trying to prove the utility of the studies of morphology for design didactics. During a semester of teaching in Quebec, by the way, I realized that the course in Urban Morphology was called "Muratorian urban morphology". It was a pleasant surprise to understand that a tradition quite abandoned in our faculties was so deeply developed abroad.

As for dissemination of information, we produce a magazine (*U+D urban form and design*) which we consider a good tool to communicate our researches and to make a comparison with other investigations. Originally on line, it is now edited by L'Erma, a well-established international publisher.

Another communication tool is a series of books, *Lettura e Progetto* (reading and

Design) published by Franco Angeli. The first of the series was "L'analisi della forma urbana" Italian edition of the well-known Conzen's study about Alnwick. Last books published are "Observations of urban growth" (edited by myself), "Architettura come lingua. Processo e progetto" by Matteo Ieva, "London Squares" by Marco Maretti, "Landscape as forma mentis" by Nicola Scardigno, while a book by Giancarlo Salamone on the formation of Viale Trastevere in Rome interpreted as a restructuring route is being published.

Of course, we organize and conduct also Urban Morphology researches inside our faculties and PhD school, someone inside ISUF itself and with ISUF members. This is one which we are carrying on in these months on the subject "Urban Morphology and urban design: cases from Nanjing, China and Rome, Italy" comparing old and new urban fabric specificities of the two cities.

The method of investigating fabric and urban organism is also the object of EPUM, a European financed research about emerging perspectives on urban morphology, researching and learning through multiple practices. We have just organized, in this frame, a workshop in Porto intended to compare our researching method, based on processual investigation on built reality, with other methods like space syntax and relational methodology.

24 To conclude: why I made this list of activities of our association? Certainly to give an idea, even if very partial, of what we do. This list is indeed also addressed to the younger researchers. We have, as group of researchers on urban morphology, some historical problems, starting with the isolated work of Saverio Muratori in the sixties and seventies, till to some nowadays difficulties to introduce Urban Morphology courses inside our faculties programs.

So, especially some young friends, sometimes feel lost inside structures in which the fashion of spectacular architecture, often the void of any rational bases, is commonly accepted and cultivated.

For this reason, I believe that collecting and presenting our experiences in our conferences can give them the conscience to take part of a lively, motivated and productive research group.

Conference like this also demonstrate that we have many road mates, some of them present here, often don't sharing our methods of investigating but sharing values and choices.

I think we can be proud of the work done, including the perfect organization of this conference.

For this reason, I thank very much the chairs this conference Paolo Carlotti, Loredana Ficarelli, Matteo Ieva and all the other ISUF members who collaborated to organize this event. And I wish to all of you a successful conference.



## Cities in the making and future urban form

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As organizer of the 4<sup>th</sup> Isufitaly conference held in Bari I would like to provide some clarification concerning themes of this event.

The title: "Reading built spaces. Cities in the making and future urban form".

First of all, let me say why it is important to face up on the theme of the reading in a conference that deals mainly with urban morphology.

Essentially, I believe that the world of architecture cannot be considered in an abstract way, as something that is given, something *a priori* owned, perceived and lived in a spontaneous and intuitive way by each of us.

To make sure that our world can communicate to us a possible truth, it must satisfy answers to questions that are put in common form, in an intersubjective way, if not even through the universal subjectivity of which Hegel speaks.

For this reason, I think, it is necessary to look at it with the lens of objectivity in order to extract from its way of being, the essence of its becoming reality that reaches us through its concrete evidence. In other words I believe our world is the expression of a collective doing that cannot be merely the prerogative of the individual who tries to interpret it. It is the immanence of the civil work it is the tangible sign of the action of more beings who produced it by sharing it. And so you can read as long as you use instruments based on criteria derived directly from the real.

Based on that, we deal with the built reality through an interest in understanding its phenomenal and evolutionary dynamics, in order to establish what strategies to adopt in view of its necessary transformation. Understanding its essence, through temporal reconstruction, also means grasping the potential expectations of necessary mutation.

The present is such only if we are able to grasp the past and project ourselves into the future!

From this point of view, reading is looking for relationships. Relationship between the interpreting subject and the interpreted object, provided that, the conditions for establishing a possible interaction condition exist. The object is given in its constructed evidence, but it is a synthesis of processes and its visible aspect shows only partly the labor of its being that establishes a relationship with the result of its becoming.

For this reason, I think it is important to establish interpretative criteria that derive - and are founded - directly on the truths of reality. All this implies that, in this relationship, our subjectivity must absolutely objectify itself.

This reflection leads us to consider also the importance of the comparison between the different methods of reading and interpretation, because only the interaction can favor the organic synthesis of the same.

The subtitle of the Conference (Cities in the making and future urban form) then draws attention to another aspect that lives in the field of speculative issues of the planner's work: the future of the city together with its future transformation, that is to the project.

Talking about in the making means to look at the urban 'being' with the critical interest of understanding the double polarity, typical of its becoming material and immaterial truth suspended between 'the being' and 'the nothing'. Every moment of transformation, as it is, exists and belongs to 'the being', but at the same time when it appears, it is superseded by the next one and, therefore, enters into 'the nothing', with a constant overcoming. However not always oriented to a form of progress.

The city constantly lives of this contradictory and inseparable binomial. But this is

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also the reason for its continuous renewal and its being an ever-changing organism. I said organism, not a whole or sum of parts that means separation and distinction of components that could paradoxically result in a temporal and structural conflict.

Therefore, looking at the city as an organism allows us to understand how each part, although originally deferred in time, ends up adapting itself diachronically, sometimes with great difficulty, to the changed concepts (of home, of special building, of fabric, of city).

Historically, the urban organism has always sought a form of updating and rebirth. Every city, independently of the initial phase, temporally remote or recent, it must be considered today an urban organism of the XXI century.

Therefore, every part of the urban organism, even if it is deferred over time, is a city, a fabric, a contemporary building type. Evidently with different degrees of criticality. But its strength the power that makes each of them always current is to be found in that mysterious mechanism that leads to the urban being, and simultaneously to man in the well-known subject-object relationship, an extraordinary capacity for adaptation and synthesis.

After all, this constructed man-built environment structural system expresses the typical condition of mutual adaptation that Deleuze calls "in the making in the middle". That is, both establish a meeting point a mediation which changes the way of being of each, which makes them skilled and projects them into a new dimension in which the city is no longer just itself with its structural constraints, and man changes his system of life de-territorializing a little, because it is in his nature.

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But if this is true, a question immediately arises regarding the condition of crisis that man expresses in this historical phase, a civil crisis which pervades all fields and, of course, also our work.

How can we imagine the future shape of our cities, also in view of the rapid changes that are producing a sudden and uncontrolled, obsolescence?

It is no coincidence that categories aimed to recognize themes to which concrete answers must be given, are recognized. Some of these categories are: fragmentation, recycle, "not-space" semantics, junk space as suggested by Rem Koolhaas which highlights the ungovernable forces that regulate today's city.

These are issues on which serious debate is needed, because these are the problems that make us the beginning of the 21st century. This is a criticality that is valid to the current building and to the historic city.

At the end of the conference, we believe that there was a discussion animated by a necessary critical component, but it is difficult to propose a balance sheet of the proposed themes because the set of contributions included here covers very different themes, mostly concerning issues of contemporaneity.

It is difficult to provide a critical balance of the proposed themes, this because all contributions, which we will soon gather in the proceedings, ranges over very different topics, mostly concentrated on issues of contemporary issues.

I find interesting the way in which all the participants, in relation to the Conference's themes, have proposed the theme of urban morphology read in its historical and procedural development.

I believe it is important to open the study of the city to different methods ... because I am convinced that, if viewed in the perspective of the complementarity it is possible to establish a form of integration between themselves.

Today it is essential to relate to the others methods by seeking a sort of speculative alliance because there is nothing objectively stable in the reality. So we need to propose a transvaluation mechanics, with which we try to reverse the sense of irreconcilable concepts that alter the meaning of things. Aspect present in many process of investigation of the built reality.

As G. Deleuze says, man, and therefore the scholar, due to the condition of crisis, must affirm himself by dialectically contrasting himself to his own opposite. The own individuality is accomplished only at the end of this contrast.

It is essentially the nature of the scholar to constantly experience the conflict of the simultaneous alternation of active forces as self-affirmation, and of reactive forces as a secondary and non-decisive moment.

For this reason too the relationship between the different methods and points of view becomes a condition which sees all of us involved with a sense of ethicality.

Let's see together the proposed themes. The interesting datum that emerges from the observation of the contents of the papers proposed in the theory, reading and project sessions, is both the variety of geographical places that pose different questions, and the points of view that show a certain interest in understanding the problems in a diversified way.

Together with the interpretative reading of urban space with a structure of thought and structuralist method, undoubtedly objective, we can see the interest in reading the morphological data through a different system ... less related to the historical and more representative of the identification of analogies or formal differences. Recognition of the morphological paradigm derived from the synthesis that each author proposes as a possible truth of the constructed model. To these methods is added the interest to look at the urban phenomenology through the analytical procedures of the planners and, although differently, of the geographers and the attention to investigate the transformations through a socio-economic investigation, undoubtedly necessary to understand the transformative phenomena of contemporaneity.

About the design hypotheses, different currents of thought have been represented. However, I think I can say that, beyond some somewhat eccentric proposals, there is almost always an interest not to neglect the mechanics of in the making as a significant emblem of historical data, expression of an idea of continuous transformation within which to enter, albeit in ways that differ according to the critical cogito of each author and his belonging to a school of thought.

It is also interesting to note the different theory that animates the Schools of Architecture in Europe, with regard to the morphological problem. A greater orthodoxy towards the themes of "history as a structure" that induces a framework to the principles of interpretation and, consequently, to those proposing principles of in the making, which propose schools such as Italian, Iberian, Central European, North African, to which is opposed the clearest vision, close to contemporary vocations, of other countries. Primarily in the Middle East where, however, there are realities that draw from the European world thanks to the contacts of some scholars who use to live the International Seminar on Urban Form experience from some time.

All this provides a glimpse of the trends underway in this historical phase that is shown to be characterized by a civil crisis that involves the architecture world, as several times emerged in this conference, especially in the considerations of G. Strappa, N. Marzot, R. Rizzi, I. Samuels.

However, it will be possible to draw conclusions only at the end of the publication of the proceedings.

Many ideas have been provided in the plenary sessions starting with the one of the prof. R. Rizzi, with his report "Monotheism of unshaping: doing without creating"; in the session coordinated by Prof. W. DING in which different methodologies for teaching urban morphology have been, by: L. A. de Armiño Pérez, Carlos Dias Coelho, M. Maretto, N. Marzot, G. Strappa; to the interesting lecture of prof. M. Noghsanmohammadi who dealt with the theme of the transformation of the city of Yazd in Iran.

The plenary session that saw the prof. C. Moccia and the prof. G. Malacarne, belonging to the Aldo Rossi School and of the so-called '*tendenza*', with a personal and effective project research, on the complex theme of "City ideas for our time".

And also, in the session "the future city" where the prof. U. Schroeder and the prof. I. Samuels showed the personal theoretical with professional and educational design proposals. Projects in Germany and Belgium and educational reflections concerning the need to consider the potential interaction between different approaches on urban morphology.

The professor C. Quintelli and the prof. J. Muntanola I Thornberg, in the session "The city in progress", which exposed the personal point of view of the complex mechanics of in the making, through philosophical speculations. Absolutely necessary to the world of architecture, especially in this historical phase, as highlighted by prof. R. Rizzi.

Finally, the round table on the current theme "Reading and Designing the European city" in which G. Strappa, C. Moccia, U. Schroeder, N. Marzot, J. Muntanola I Thornberg,

R. Rizzi discussed intensively and dialectically, proposing each one its own critical vision of the relationship between reading and design.

Why all these plenary sessions? Because I believe that the conferences must open a different perspective of discussion, overcoming the condition in which each speaker proposes only his own study, and the synthesis can only come with the publication of the contributions.

The presence of authoritative scholars, such as those hosted on this occasion, which provide food for thought that go beyond the personal experience of each author and overcome the limited condition of the exchange between scholars of a single session, can become a source of cultural wealth for everyone, especially if we are able to open up to the speculative alliance mentioned above, which allows each of us to establish himself by contrasting dialectically with the opposite.

For this reason, we have ordered the registration of these sessions and debates they will be hosted as an attachment, coming soon, to the proceedings of the conference.

## **"To go to future" of the town form as topic.**

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As in the International Conference held in Roma in 2017, during the isufitaly meeting, when we wanted to suggest the provocative title "learning from Urban Fabric", which learn from a complex cityform like Rome - *precisely for its continuous and uninterrupted becoming, paraphrasing Robert Venturi who proposed to learn from a city like Las Vegas, so as from any other important historical city of art* - so in the International Conference of Bari held in 2018, moving the target on the larger Urban and Architectural project, we proposed a comparison asking us what elements be useful observing the dynamic evolutionary dimension of the city, and what we can learn from this lesson to use in new urban project and architectural design, but above all, what we can learn from so layered cityform and with such a slow dynamical transformation.

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The city and its dense buildings network must to be usefully projected to the future. One of the first rules of conservation design, now widely shared, is the need to use in continuity, because a not used building is destined to be forgotten and to degrade. The 2017's conference has been the startpoint of a larger reflection proposed in 2018's Bari conference, which, remaining on the same subject, it wanted to devote larger space to the purposeful theme of the urban project and architectural design.

A question arises: what can be learned from the past town-shape that can be operating usefull to contemporary architectural design and to the glocal city? What are the valid rules to consider in order to continue into future the town?

New isufitaly conference of 2018 wants to try to up a new step; involving the various components of the project in the question of "go to future": directing all the component of project towards the same target, an architectural and urban composition characterized by a contemporary expressive language that combines what is inherited with what is expected, tradition with innovation, the tectonics component with its representative form, more or less intentionally expressed and formalized by a synthetic, tactical and strategic architectural fact at the same time.

The idea "to go to future" ahead contains the concept of operating memory, something that comes about in continuity with an almost spontaneous and internal system of rules and conventions within a process in continuous transformation.

The continual and experimental comparison carried out in recent years in between urban morphology and disciplines such as Design Studio, restoration and technology is therefore placed on an asymptotic line that sees the spirit of tradition and contemporary experimental research to converge.

"To go to future" of the city shape and its architectures, it mean add precious element at mosaical draw of the town composed of axis and knots, arouses and proposes forms derived from others, which together constitute that systemic network that already C.O. Sauer in 1925 intuited of the city. A whole result of a kaleidoscopic composition, sometimes the result of successful mediations but other times the unpleasant outcome of serial paratactic juxtapositions that not been able to arised themselves over time as an organized synthesis.

The future of the city and the urban landscape therefore remains an open question and that the Isufitaly International conference of 2018 wants to try to decline by summoning researchers and architectural and urban project operators, at least to try

to define the sharing points and the experimental areas of the project. It hopes to open a gap in between the studies on form and meaning of urban representation, provoking participants on the question of how and how much to intervene. Years ago architect Renzo Piano launched the idea of re-weaving the urban tissue of the informal suburbs or sometimes designed, with serial character, often disorganized and resulting of self-referential choices that over time have shown all their limits. An idea, in my opinion, that needs to be taken up again reflecting on the town form as architects had done up to 900, where every addition, both performed on the urban scale or produced on the architectural scale, had to deal with the rules, the urban knots (plaza, crossroad), the urban axis and/or pre-existing buildings, that before time one had understood how much and how it should be added to the inherited urban contest, modifying, specializing or re-establishing what had been received from the past, to regenerate and to relate to the needs of the place and the moment, as a new useful element to trigger other and perhaps more incisive further renovations.

Too often the contemporary project, even when animated by the best intents, is splitted and limited in strategies, which should instead constitute the fundamental premise and the fruitful matrix that we can be found in many masterpieces of the past. "To go to future" it is one of the most important challenges of contemporary culture, which in this new chance of discussion, we wanted to offer to the research and to the project, to ask ourselves what could be the way to go, within our discipline, and what meanings are still significant in the regenerative draw of the inherited form?

## Ancient city, urban form: EXPERIMENTAL MODEL FOR URBAN REGENERATION OF THE BARI LUNGOMARE SUD

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*The city*

*You said: "For other lands I will go, for another sea.  
Another city, more lovable than this, where all my efforts are doomed to failure,  
where my heart is buried like a dead, there will also be.  
How long will I suffer from this inertia?  
Of the long years, if I look around, of my life consumed here,  
I see only black rubble and loneliness and ruin ".  
You will not find another place, you will not find another sea. The city will come after you.  
You will go wandering the same streets. You will age in the same neighborhood.  
You will whitewash in these same houses. You will always head to this city.  
Elsewhere, don't hope, there is no ship, there is no way for you.  
Because by wasting your life in this discreet corner you have wasted it all over the earth.*

*Costantino Kavafis  
(from Poiémata, 1935)*

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Every city is a story. Bari is an intrigue whose discreet essentiality is at risk.

The city of Bari, in its current shape, presents itself as an extraordinary "concentrate" of themes, all absolutely "central" for the configuration of the contemporary project.

Bari, geographically located in the Mediterranean, represents a crucial node of the European networks in their extension to the East, a place destined, also historically, for the meeting between East and West.

It is a complex city, made up of several legible and autonomous parts: the ancient village, the Murattian village, the modern part of the 1930', expansion beyond the railway and, finally, spontaneous and informal expansion.

All cities are different from each other, some are made up of different parts, in metric and spatial relationship to each other, parts of cities and parts of territory. Different cities, different parts of cities and territories, different entities, formally independent and autonomous, but which have deep relationships of necessity. Bari linear city lying on the Adriatic Sea, an intervention field of architecture and urban planning. "The city and the territory are constituted by defined facts: a house, a bridge, a road, a forest. The combination of these facts constitutes the city and the territory, and there is the design of these facts, the integrated design of a series of these facts".<sup>(1)</sup>

This character of a city made up of parts is today undergoing a radical change. New aesthetic models and new cultural conceptions impose a rethinking that assumes the oppositions generated by the relationship between the different parts. Shaping, building forms, to provide solutions that respond to the questions posed by the contemporary city, trying once again to give meaning precisely to those contradictions that promote it.

All this implies the reorganization of its urban landscape, in terms of recovery of "beauty", starting from a clear relationship, often denied, with its coast and with the sea.

Contemporary urbanization techniques do not recognize the centrality of these themes nor do they assume potential that derives from the physical form of our territories. Urban sprawl



**Figure 1.** Stabilimenti balneari, lungomare Sud.



is indifferent to the topological characters expressed by the earth forms: the widespread city ignores the formal value of size, finiteness and interval. The goal is to overcome the reductive "ecological" approach to the theme of urban voids, to give the forms of nature, and those of construction, a foundational value in the name of a renewed paradigm of urban form.

New phenomena, new paradigms, urban and territorial, which lead to consider a reflection on the analysis and theory of urban facts as a theme that addresses the meaning of the future city even without nostalgic re-enactments but that interprets historical phenomena, and which is capable of to face transformation interventions, putting the absolute value of the architectural project at the center. This objective was at the center of study days organized by *Confindustria Bari*, where the research team of the Polytechnic of Bari, following extensive studies, contributed to the definition of the new settlement model, for the area called "*lungomare sud*", based first on the renewed relationship between architecture and city, an architecture that corresponds to a precise "idea of the city", of which it can only be the representation.

The experimental model relies on a design practice based on a controllable, repeatable, describable rational process. A precise choice among many possible, a condition of rules that gives meaning back to values such as "beauty", "measure", "rule", "hierarchy", characters still legible in the finished parts of the historical and consolidated city.

These reflections do not want to be a balance, which would also be necessary, for the ways in which those experiences that claimed to find in the plan – conceived as the quantum prefiguration of values and measures, in the formal inventiveness of the project – the strengths of an unlikely intervention strategy for the contemporary city.

Real shapes and places, drawings of cities, represented or described, pieces of cities chosen from memories, current research become the construction of a single place where all those characters, those shapes, sometimes linked to personal ideas and passions, will gradually settle, that in a new complexity of rules and relationships can become the heart of the new "city".

Techniques and procedures, however, risk reducing the operation of the project to empty formal exercises, to autobiographical closings of representation and in the worst case to mannerist attitudes. The attempt to order according to a direction, to build the foundations of a complex of principles that serve as the basis and support for a discipline, is a possible way in favor of knowledge as a prerequisite for any design operation. It would be a matter of identifying not only historical anchors but also and above all what emerges from the past in the present, from the anonymous culture of the project, to the experience linked to the transcription of the references. More specifically, within this line of work is considered a setting which can start from the attempt to re-read to re-found a design discipline mainly based on the empirical transmission of some techniques and the re-proposal of models, forms and languages supported by clear references theoretical.

A set of rules, voluntarily accepted, indispensable to continually contrast the praise of disorder, or of the unruly creative restlessness.<sup>(2)</sup>



**Figure 2.** Il Lungomare oggi.



An order as structure of things, which establishes, not only form and identity, but the ways of growth and mutation, new relationship systems guided by the idea of an innovation such as "non-ostentatious transgression".

Without a "significant order" there are no forms but only aggregations, "form is order ... Order is a creative force ... Through nature the why. Through order the what. Through the project the how . " <sup>(3)</sup>

The cognitive nature of architecture, in its analytical and design terms becomes a tool for investigating the real and being able to respond to a positive transformation through the project, recovering in the classical terms of architectural realism the relationship with history, the relationship with the architecture of the city.

"I would say that, we can make a big division, with respect to which there are more nuanced positions, complications, "distinction", between those who read a "story" from which to learn, as working material, from those who take a position that attributes to the past of architecture, to the heritage handed down to us, I would say more properly, to what on other occasions is called *exemplum* of architecture, only a critical function, "inexorably negative in the proposition, design, operational progress of architecture" <sup>(4)</sup>.

Through the critical analysis of the "ancient" cities, which arose with unitary design processes, we interpret that type of order, of complexity, the city understood as architecture, as constructive art, as artifact, as heritage, as inheritance.

The city of Bari, therefore, a place of experimentation, directly generated by the Greek Roman civilization, whose main architectural features have historically been determined by adherence to the principles and techniques of 'plastic wall' construction, is by its nature a creation attributable to numerous and several moments of training, all related to the relationship with the sea. This relationship, although declined over time according to different paradigms, is certainly of fundamental value throughout the experience of building the urban fabric: from the Greek foundation of the 'island city', to the construction of the monumental seafront of Fascism, to the conformation of the terrestrial maritime infrastructures.

Consisting of several 'parts', legible and autonomous: the ancient village, the Murattian village, the modern part of the 1930s, the post-war expansion. This condition of "city made up of different parts" is today undergoing a radical change, new aesthetic models, new cultural conceptions impose a rethinking of the same, a reorganization of its urban landscape, in terms of the recovery of beauty, starting precisely from a renewed declination of the relationship with the coast and the sea.

Dominated by the Byzantines, Lombards, Normans, then Bourbon, Bari remains a city mainly linked to trade in continuous evolution and development so as to establish itself as the first city, after Naples, in southern Italy.

"After the Hasburgs icons, very limited geographically, in modern times, at least on the

**Figure 3a.** Stabilimenti balneari, lungomare Nord.



**Figure 3b.** Stabilimenti balneari, lungomare Sud.



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Italian coast, a particular iconology emerges linked to the discovery of the sea as a health and symbolic value: I refer to the marine colonies and the fascist palace of the Nazario Sauro promenade in Bari. Before then the relationship with the sea was essentially productive".<sup>(5)</sup>

The productive and commercial development, facilitated by the net improvement of the road network, allows to this city to transform rapidly, building important infrastructures such as the new port and the railway. Petroni himself, secretary of the Economic Society of Terra di Bari, expresses prophetic words about "future destinies" that the city would have achieved with the construction of the new port and the Puglia railway. This would quickly direct the exchanges of Apulian provinces towards central-northern Italy and central Europe rather than towards Naples and the Tyrrhenian area. In 1887 despite logistical difficulties, the new port of Bari now has a size of about 15 hectares. In the following three years, with the construction of the Customs and Port Authority buildings and with the construction of the Pizzoli wharf, the new port manages to provide itself with a series of services and infrastructures that have no comparison with other Adriatic ports.

Since the mid-seventies, the construction of the Adriatic railway line and the first sections

**Figure 4.** Lungomare Sud oggi.



of the Ionian one opens a new and important chapter in the now decades-long process of building a network of infrastructures functional to the productive and commercial growth of the province and its chief town.

A series of regulatory plans have followed one another from the plan of the Gimma architet and approved by Murat in 1813, to the Trotti plan of 1867, to the Veccia plan, of 1926, to the Petrucci plan of 1928, Calza Bini – Piacentini plans of 1954, to the Quaroni plan of 1965, all gradually have excluded the urban expansion of the '*lungomare sud*' part. The railway obstacle and element of separation between an ancient, nineteenth-century Bari, which stretches along the sea and a Bari which grows beyond the railway itself. <sup>(6)</sup>

The settlement model elects as a fundamental theme the rethinking of the relationship between the city of Bari and its sea, intervening in the part of land that extends between the Valenzano Canal and Torre a Mare, the area is linearly delimited by the coastal road and the railway, preceded to north by the monumental promenade, internal from the Japigia district. The area is 5 km long and 1 km deep.

Originally designed by sequences of vegetable gardens perpendicular to the coast line and marked by the presence of the three fortified coastal towers dating back to the sixteenth century and precisely *Torre Nera*, to the south *Torre Coetta* (today's Torre Quetta) and *Torre Carnosa*.

In almost all urban planning projects this part is not considered of interest despite the attention of the population that considers it the place of bathing and recreation, in 1940 and 1949 the *Lido Trullo* and the *Lido Marzulli* was respectively inaugurated, a large bathing village with an adjoining luxury hotel, open-air cinema, in short, the city beach.

Today the area is degraded and abandoned.

The will is, therefore, to recover the relationship with the sea, to regain public space.

This part of the city that has developed between the coast line and the railway line is today in a state of complete abandonment, the planning tool has consciously decided to deny this urban part, both the historical condition of "beach and entertainment " and a new updated and contemporary growth strategy.

Besides the railway line, the city of the 60s, the *Japigia* district, and the most recent expansions. The recent redevelopment of some stretches of coast adjacent to the consolidated city, the presence of administrative buildings, the new building of the Region and the military Shrine, have stimulated collective discussion and aroused administrative

**Figure 5.** Analisi delle infrastrutture del tratto del lungomare sud.



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interest in the area called "*lungomare sud*". This stretch of coast becomes an opportunity and moment of design expression.

Yet the sea, for a Mediterranean coastal city, should not represent a limit but a destination to be reached, a space to conquer and towards which to represent the own identity, as what in correspondence to the ancient city, to the nineteenth-century city and to the 1930' city happened: cases in which the sea becomes the place of the urban scene, the most representative part of the city, the waterfront, the place of unusual rituals, irreplaceable for people who see in the water the possibility of a better way of life.

For all this that the Politecnico group has accepted the challenge by collaborating on an initiative promoted by Confindustria Bari, in the definition of a new settlement model based primarily on the relationship between architecture, city and sea.

For us, it was fundamental to think rather than a quantitative planning, a concept of space and volume, and which could correspond to a precise "idea of the city".

An architecture that observes and studies the world with balanced optimism, which does not limit itself to highlighting the crisis and defects of society, or to accepting a single point of view while ignoring complexity, which therefore exposes solutions not so much to reach a unitary form and shared project, as much as the essential concreteness of the collective project. A project that rejects the aim of proposing solutions to the "ugliness" of the modern city, which began after the war and exasperated by the building speculation techniques of many builders.

"It has been some time now that the terms of continuity and crisis have begun to lose much of their meaning in the context of Italian architectural culture. Not that the problems summarized by those terms have lost interest in the eyes of critics or architects: far from it, because never as at this moment, indeed, do they appear more current; but what feels aged, what is valued as belonging to an outdated debate, tied to interpretative schemes and expressive canons proper to a closed chapter or that is about to close, is the way to set up a problem such as that of the crisis and continuity, typical of the culture of the immediate post-war period with its long and not a little heavy aftermath"<sup>(7)</sup>

The architect is the one who tries to put together distant things. The metropolitan



**Figure 6.** Il progetto.



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archipelago and the experimental model. The case of Bari is an emblematic example to deal with the reasoning about urban form for a new part of the city.

A reference area has been identified as a field of investigation, a stretch of the "*lungomare sud*" which today exhibits the typical characteristics of the peri-urban areas, the presence of infrastructure, the railway, the coastal road, agricultural fragments, spontaneous building fabrics, areas abandoned or gradually disused.

An area where shapes define the singular landscape on the edge of the consolidated city and which, according to a preliminary abstraction for the analysis of the case study, they can rethink. The experimental model recognizes, measures and defines parallel bands that from the coast line that cross the railway and reach the historic via Japigia, each of the individual bands is given a precise formal and structural role.

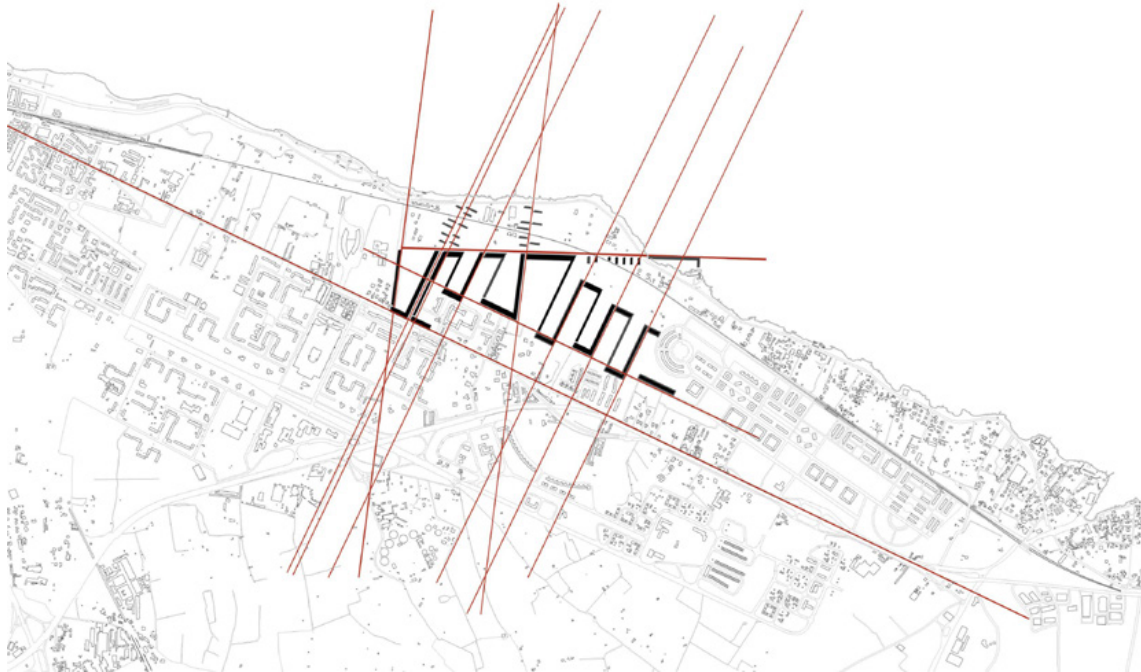
The area remains delimited to the west by the Valenzano canal and to the east by the hamlet of San Giorgio. The first strip called "the sea and bathing" is represented by the water line, rethought to allow the historic bathing through a significant redesign of the same and an important remediation of the sea.

The second strip called "the Mediterranean park" which starts from the historic coastal road and reaches the Bari / Brindisi railway line. This area, mainly free, is dedicated to equipped public green areas, all recreational and productive activities are structured inside: production spaces, fab Labs, street food, thematic clusters, botanical parks, relaxation areas, wellness paths and playgrounds. Hierarchical viability, controlled driveways, cycle paths and free and pedestrian paths.

The third "Urban Rural" zone, defined by the railway line and the limit of urban inedifiability, is explained by the beauty of the "natural" forms of the gardens and the cultivated countryside. The fourth band "The settlement model", this part dedicated to living, is designed as a large artifact formalized in all its parts. The buildings and the open space are modulated with respect to geometric figures determined by the concurrence of the different positions that remain to support the design.

This identifies an ideal and concrete order principle on which to compose the settlement parts, a rigorous order principle but open to various expressive experiments. The "street /

**Figure 7a.** Struttura geometrica del progetto.



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**Figure 7b.** Il modello / progetto.



park / square" boulevards are transversal public structures that cross the parallel strips and reach the sea, constituting meanings and unique landing points. The landing defines its new "lighthouses" important artifacts redefining the skyline of the new Bari waterfront: the Casa del Mare (aquarium, museum, nautical activities) Urban pool System, tourist and accommodation facilities. The experimentation is therefore guided by a process of rational,

controllable, rigorous knowledge in the theoretical sense, based on a continuous critical revision of the principles, methods and techniques. In this way, a precise choice is determined, among other possible ones, of a series of rules that base the research for the contemporary project on meanings and values such as measure, rule, hierarchy, beauty.

The academic clarification tends to show not so much a methodological quality, but rather an evident continuity and a clear belonging to a "school" that goes beyond the limits of the didactic occasion, opening up to a critical, operative and participated comparison on the themes of architecture and of the city. The theoretical nodes of the research also make the knowledge of history indispensable: heritage and necessary condition for the development of effective tools for valorisation, safeguarding and recovery.

The systematic study of the relationship between tradition and innovation, the typological, constructive and technical updating (in continuity with the characteristics of indigenous traditions) are the useful research tools to guide the knowledge process, also in the field of teaching. With respect to this theme, through the discipline of the project a thought develops that arises as an alternative to the epistemology of the "formless" which seems to distinguish the "environmentalist" theories of the "third landscape", a design reflection towards the critical-interpretative assumption of the phenomena of 'dissonance' and 'fragmentation', as potential compositional matrices to be finalized in search of a renewed order based on the combination of the city of nature.

Questa ricerca ha trovato diversi momenti significativi, nella collaborazione con Confindustria Bari, Ance Bari e soprattutto, nel lavoro di ricerca scientifica e didattica svolto all'interno del laboratorio di laurea "riqualificazione del tratto del "Lungomare SUD a Bari" Corso di Laurea Magistrale in Architettura Dipartimento Dicar del Politecnico di Bari a.a. 2017/2018.

Relatore: Prof.ssa Loredana Ficarelli Correlatori: prof.ssa Francesca Calace, prof. Francesco DeFilippis, prof.ssa Mariangela Turchiarulo  
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Laureandi: Alessandra Decarlo, Roberta Gravina, Mario Luigi Antonio Martello, Diomede Romano, Nicola Villani, Gianpiero Zaccaria

## Note

1. A. Rossi, E. Mattioni, G. Polesello, L. Semerani, *Città e territorio negli aspetti funzionali e figurativi della pianificazione continua*, in A. Rossi, *Scritti scelti sull'architettura e la città 1956-1972*, Quodlibet, Macerata, 2012, p. 270

2. Analytical and abstract thinking allows the dissection of the object and the isolation of its constituent components. The architectural project is the result of a complex act, determined by an ideational and an ordering process. An imaginative activity refers to the ideational process which allows to elaborate the materials taken from reality; on the other hand, a logical activity refers to the ordering process, which allows its control and transmissibility.

3. Norberg-Schulz, C, Louis I. Kahn, *idea e immagine*, Officina Edizioni, Roma, 1980, p. 6. Lo scritto "Order is" fu pubblicato su "Perspecta, The Yale Architectural Journal", 1955, 3. La traduzione italiana si trova in: "Zodiac", 1961, VIII, V. Scully Jr., Louis I. Kahn, *Il Saggiatore*, Milano 1963, pp. 51-52.

4. Bonfanti, E, *Il rapporto con la storia*, in *Scritti scelti*, Clup edizioni, Milano, 1981

5. R. Panella, *Identità e trasformazione in Piano Progetto Città*, rivista semestrale del Dipartimento di Architettura e Urbanistica dell'Università degli Studi "G.D'Annunzio" Chieti, 1995 pag. 28

6. M. Tafuri, "Ludovico Quaroni e lo sviluppo dell'architettura moderna in Italia", Edizioni di Comunità, Milano, 1964.

7. The main town plans of the city of Bari 1949/2018

1949 INA casa builds the first structured public construction works in the Japigia district

1952 The plots on the waterfront become buildable, numerous spaces dedicated to bathing are born, such as "Lido Marzulli"

40 1960 The Perotti waterfront area is subject to detailed plans rejected for too many volumes

1968 The stretch of waterfront is redesigned with a tourist vocation by implementing and rearranging the infrastructure system

1970 Elevated roads are built to overcome the railway as the Garibaldi bridge

1979 First subdivision plan for Perotti Imperatore Traiano tip.

1989 Second housing development plan presented by Andidero, Matarrese, Quistelli

1993 The plan is approved and construction begins

1997 The public prosecutor of Bari orders the seizure of the residential complex of Perotti points

1999 The confiscation of buildings under construction is ordered because they are illegal

2004 Seizure seals were placed in *Torre Quetta* on order of the Public Prosecutor's Office for "serious risk to public health"

2006 The buildings built in *Punta Perotti* are demolished

2008 The remediation of the *Torre Quetta* site ends

2015 The Cipe (inter-ministerial committee for economic planning) on January 28 approved the definitive project of the "Bari Sud railway junction"

2017 Construction of the new building of the Apulia Region and detailed plan for the meshes 21 and 22

2018 In the DPP an attempt is made to identify the formation of a coastal park and a new centrality in the Japigia district.





## When the growth of the town produces gardens

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In the beginning of the twentieth century, Leberecht Migge understood that the housing reform of the Modern Movement was also the reform of the urban orchards that could expand in wide common spaces between the buildings (Migge, 1919). The parks, in which the towns finally could stay in, included a humanized nature, organized in productive and leisure areas. Migge's envisagement of *Stadtland* had many affinities with the *Extending town* by Giuseppe Samonà, based on the shape as single matrix of built and cultivated spaces (Samonà, 1976). Both architects, forty years from each other and in different places of work - Germany and Italy - considered urban and rural parts of the metropolis as being connected in a relationship of necessity: the big town need gardens and the crisis of the agricultural production can be partially solved thanks to the urbanization. This statement has a great potential to be explored today when, step by step, the soils are about to be recognized as "cultural heritage" (CoE, 2016), similarly to archaeological or architectural monuments, to be protected and involved in the material and immaterial values of the community. People should, again, "practice", frequent the land in order to be aware of the rural dimensions of the sprawl town. On the wake of Migge and Samonà's ideas, as well the town producing gardens as qualified inter-scalar design can, at least, give a contribute to save the soils shaping a new rural-urban mosaic.

## Methodology

Migge and Samonà's assumptions are a hypothesis:

- a) The metropolis as mother of gardens (Migge, 1919);
- b) The shape as common denominator between urban and rural areas (Samonà, 1976)<sup>1</sup>.

Through the principles of the Faro Convention (CoE, 2005) those ideas can be updated and applied on the contemporary territory in order to emphasize important aspects of rural heritage as they relate to democracy: free spaces can be an open, common resource (Placemaking Movement, [www.pps.org](http://www.pps.org), 2018). In these "actions" landscape and architectural design has a relevant role.

### The metropolis as mother of gardens<sup>2</sup>

Leberecht Migge (1881-1935) was a German landscape architect who worked with modernist designers like Martin Elsaesser, Theodor Fischer, Ernst May, Bruno Taut and Martin Wagner. He was not only gardens' planner. He combined architectural and plant elements, sensing the new relationship between architecture and agriculture. Therefore, he anticipated contemporary interest about a "green life-style" in the metropolitan areas. David H. Haney explored his point of view (Haney, 2010). The general desire was not just a rural territory, but living in towns that include also the countryside as a place of food and beauty production. Deriving from the article "Is the garden a space?"<sup>3</sup> (Migge, 1908), Haney explained the origin of architectural space following the history of gardens: «Semper's influence stands out more clearly here than in any other Migge's essay. The word "Raum" may be translated as either "space" or "room" [...]. Migge struggled to 1272 redefine the concept of architectural space independently of geometric planning [...]. He began by claiming that the childhood activity of "hut-building" or "room-making" [...] manifested a sense of "protective self-closure" and "naïve spatial-definition". This individual need was reflected in the activity of early humans who had separated the "sanctity of their house" from the harsh outside world. [...] "The house was indeed completely and internally connected with the garden; the same beliefs and principles were valid for it [the garden]. It was a dwelling place. It was a space»<sup>4</sup>. Nature and agriculture can be translated into architecture (and therefore into a geometrical description) and vice versa. The German emergency program for the house was launched during the Weimarer Republic and begun with the stabilization of the Rentenmark, in 1923 producing one of the best-known opportunities to test this assumption<sup>5</sup>: the Römerstadt project of the "New Frankfurt". Ernst May designed the settlement following the topography of the descending terrain towards the valley of Nidda river; Max Bromme and Leberecht Migge planned the gardens. In particular, Migge proposed a regular system of productive gardens, as element of transition between the *Frankfurter Küche*<sup>6</sup>, the house, and the riverfront nature park, configuring a unitary system of vegetation and buildings. Detailed tables indicated to the inhabitants what to cultivate and where, in order to guarantee the production and the formal and chromatic construction of the spaces. In 1924, Migge founded, with Ernst May, a company for the development of garden cultivation by institutionalizing this foundational relationship for the construction of the modern city. «He starts from the home garden recognizing his future as inextricably linked to the results of the successful process of the house reform; [...] The gardens that Migge draws [...] seem to actually be founded on a distributional reflection finding its foundation in the house, its functional and residential criteria has been extended to the outside. In the open air there is a sort of second home, also divided into threshold and living rooms [...] production sections to satisfy food needs. The constructive elements [...] are vegetal; these are regulated on the seasons of the blooms and on the changing of the colours»<sup>7</sup>.

### The Extending town

Giuseppe Samonà envisaged a transformation of the agriculture; excluding monoculture, specialized and different productions would have characterized

architectonically, through their shape, the territory. «Each element of the countryside becomes a part of a city where the two horizontal dimensions prevail on the third», like in *Broadacre City* by Frank Lloyd Wright, «it is an extending city, based on this particular three-dimensional relationship. It is a spatial condition that should be considered to identify a common denominator between the rules of buildings and agricultural areas. [...] A city that is opposed to large metropolitan concentrations and requires them to choose a formal limit with the identification of a well-defined perimeter, which reduces or even cancels the negative marginalization of urban suburbs in large metropolises, resulting of the inability to contain, in an appropriate way with their civic life, the permanence of the most disadvantaged populations. This design of the city will certainly have to be linked to the geographical landscape and overall with the *Extending town* in the countryside, and the villages included in it; their role is open in the new urban setting, which is the rationalized campaign in the form of an open city in non-concentration territories»<sup>8</sup>. In addition to the horizontal Wrightian dimension, there is the same aspiration to subject city and countryside to common compositional rules. But *Broadacre* is open in the American territory of the wide prairies, without clearly identifiable borders; instead the *Extending town* has bounded full shapes. The project of these limits is the challenge and the actuality of his theory<sup>9</sup> like the research PRIN 2009 coordinated by Luigi Ramazzotti explored<sup>10</sup>. To select an edge, Samonà excluded «the big town» and «the large uninhabited geographical areas, which make the biologically necessary and mostly mountainous ecological reserve»<sup>11</sup>; he includes «the most or less large but not very great agricultural countryside, villages and detached houses»<sup>12</sup>. Starting from these general indications, a threshold boundary can be established to activate a dialectic between town and countryside. On the one hand, architectural, ecological, agricultural connections must introduce a continuity through the “perimeter”; on the other, discontinuities between heterogeneous rural and urban parts have to be interpreted in order to specify different identities, against the diffusion of a generic sprawl. 1273

### Towards rural-urban mosaics

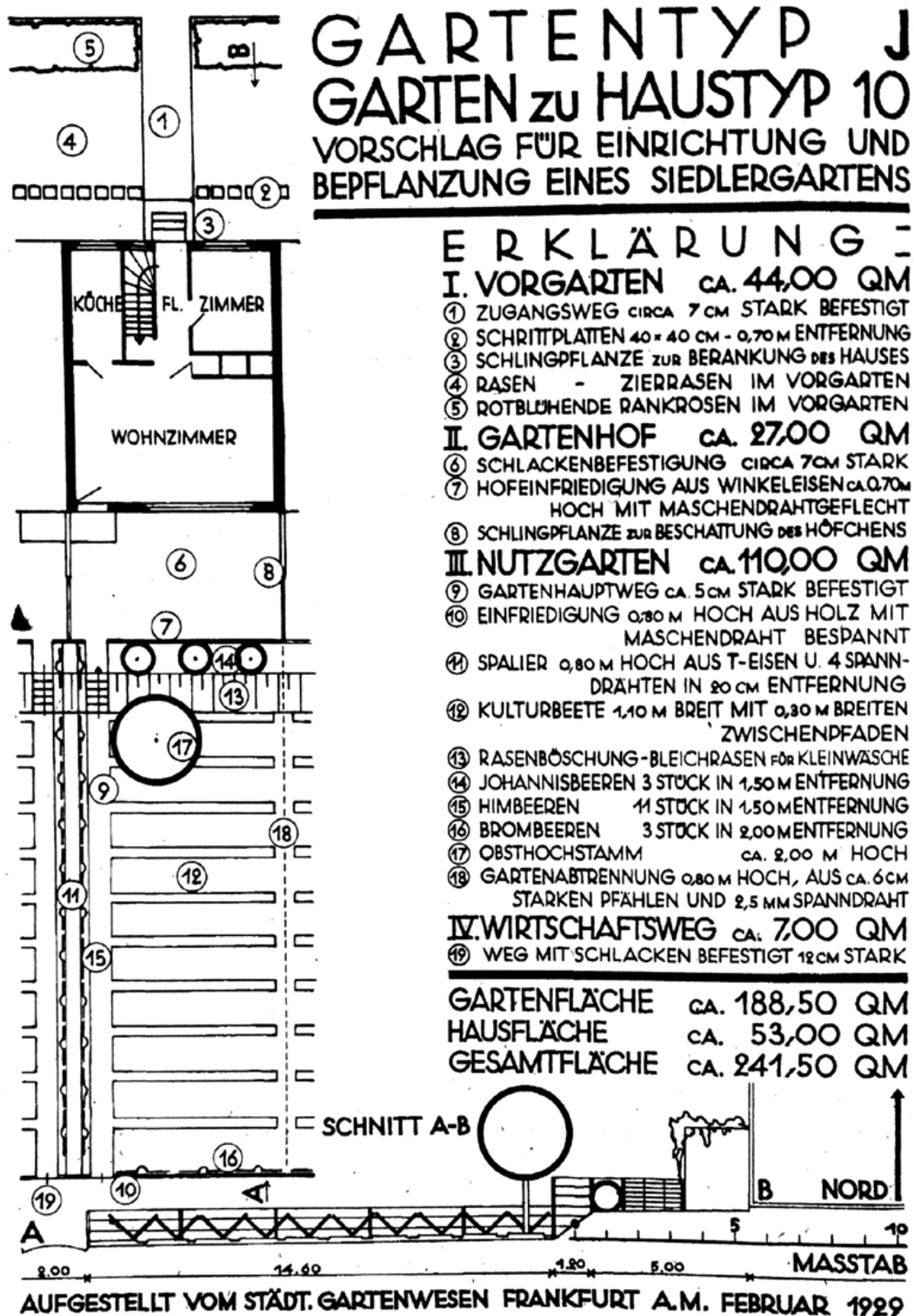
During the seventies, when Samonà related on the *Extending town*, the combination between home and garden had a particular and renewed interest: Leberecht Migge's texts on the “metropolis mother of the gardens” were reprinted<sup>13</sup>. Perhaps Samonà knew Migge's contribution, but surely he looked at modern international architecture, the works of Le Corbusier and Wright<sup>14</sup>. Migge's idea about the *Stadtland* has many affinities with the *Extending town*: city and countryside, combined in the metropolis, depend on each other in a relationship of necessity: «The big city needs gardens [...] and I even believe that it has the strength and the desire, for pure and simple pleasure, to produce gardens!»<sup>15</sup>, Migge wrote. And vice versa, the abandonment of the cultivated fields and the crisis of agricultural production, referred to by Samonà, can be avoided by urbanization of rural areas. David Harvey specified, paraphrasing Lefebvre, «that the relation between the urban and the rural [...] was being radically transformed, that the traditional peasantry was disappearing and that the rural was being urbanized, albeit in a way that offered a new consumerist approach to the relation to nature (from weekends and leisure in the countryside to leafy, sprawling suburbs) and a capitalist, productivist approach to the supply of agricultural commodities to urban markets, as opposed to self-sustaining peasant agriculture. [...] This process was “going global”; and [...] under such conditions the question of the right to the city [...] had to give way to some vaguer question of the right to urban life»<sup>16</sup>. However, as the farmers claim economic and social equality with the citizens, the citizens are looking for a right for the countryside and its values, also if only in a symbolic and aesthetic way (Donadieu, 1998). To endorse said values, a new awareness needs to be evoked, between farmers and other people actively involved in the construction of rural areas. The Faro Convention (2005, implemented by Italy in 2013) helps this process because it is based “on the idea that knowledge and use of heritage are among citizens' rights to take part in cultural life”. Interesting experiments were conducted in Venice where, since 2008, activities such as

the "Patrimonial Walks" have been organized ([farovenetia.org](http://farovenetia.org)). These actions are based on an "active conservation" of landscapes to be used, or, like architects say, inhabited. The discovery of the rural spaces is linked with their accessibility and wide perception from their inside, crossing them, trampling the ground. The European Commission, step by step, is considering the soil itself as a heritage to be known and handed down (Memola, 2014-17). The soil protection is closely connected with the design of urban borders and the dialectic between rural and urban in the metropolitan areas. An interdisciplinary cooperation can specify the complex and stratified signs of the ground resulting from the incessant anthropic processes. If among urban and agricultural traces formal matrixes are identified, according with Samonà's suggestion, as common denominator, it is also possible to design these shapes in a unitary way. The soil will be consequentially saved thanks to a qualification of its limits (Sciascia, 2014). The rural urban form should come from the same nature of the soil (soil map), geographical, agricultural and urban conditions, as it is not imposed by a plan but it should be the result of an interpretation of the sites. The same genealogy of the form allows it to support continuous mutations of the uses and, generally, of the landscapes. A lot of parts of the territory escape to a clear classification, so the perimeter is already a result of a reading (a project) about what can compose a rural urban mosaic in which it should be possible to identify paths permeating territories today often almost inaccessible.

### **Conclusion. The countryside may be dead. Long live the countryside!**

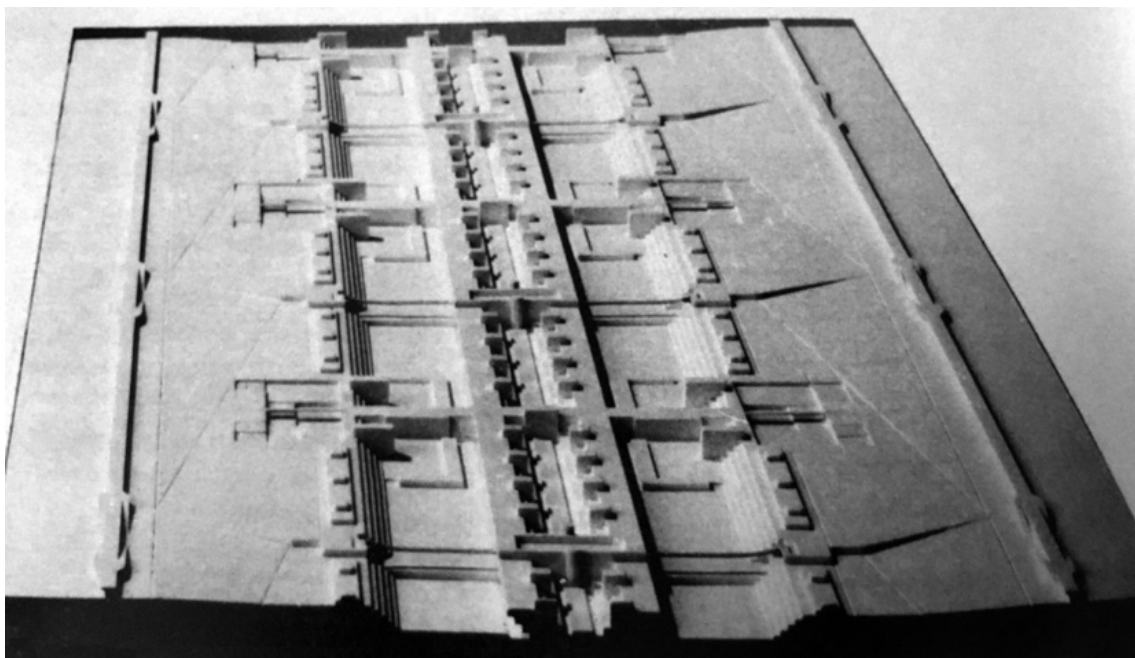
When the metropolis appears as big as ever before, rural areas show their power to organize future urban form. In Sicily this is evident and some landscape and architectural projects showed that (Sciascia, 2014). The ancient agricultural fabric has a strong order, visible also in the rural fragment inside the contemporary towns. Sometimes rural geometric layout is more precise than the distribution of the buildings. If that order and its architectural principals are recognized (the "formal matrix"), they can orient the urban growth and the design of the buildings. It is not really a change of point of view in favour of the open spaces, but a deeper and wider observation of the characteristics of the metropolis including its rural part, both in spatial and social terms. From this perspective, the urban countryside will be discovered as being still alive and able to propagate its rules and scent in its surroundings. Cultivated fields could structure systems with geographical elements (rivers, mountains, seaside...) that are metropolis' monuments and commons goods. The spirit of the Faro Convention well pushes the dialectic between rural and urban towards new spaces, not only testimonies of the past (Barbera 2014) but also makers of future habitats.

**Figure 1.** Type garden. Frankfurt Main. In: Haney, D. H., op. cit., p. 200 (Das Institut für Stadtgeschichte, Frankfurt am main, former Grünflächenamt collection).





**Figure 2.** Competition for the new University of Cagliari, 1972. Giuseppe Samonà (with C. Ajroldi, C. Bedoni, M. Di Falco, G. Farfaglio, R. Lucci, A. Samonà, L. Toccafondi, E. R. Trincanato, M. A. Chiorino, C. Doglio, F. Frattini). Model. In: Ajroldi, C., op. cit., p. 252.



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**Figure 3.** MIUR PRIN 2009, "From urban countryside to the Extending town", National Coordinator Luigi Ramazzotti University of Roma Tor Vergata. Scientific Responsible for the University of Palermo Andrea Sciascia. V. Cannizzo, E. Davì, M. Gentile, L. Macaluso, Study of rural-urban fabric between SS 113 and viale dei Platani, Partinico (Palermo), extract of the plan.



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## Note

<sup>1</sup>This was the hypothesis of PRIN 2009 coordinated by Luigi Ramazzotti Università Tor Vergata of Rome and carried out at the University of Palermo by Andrea Sciascia. See: Falzetti, A. (ed.) (2017), *La città in estensione*, (Gangemi, Roma) and Sciascia, A. (ed.) (2014) *Costruire la seconda natura. La città in estensione in Sicilia fra Isola delle Femmine e Partinico*, (Gangemi, Roma).

<sup>2</sup>Migge, L., (1909), *Die Gartenkunst*, 20, p. 7. In Haney, D. H. (2010), *When the modern was green: Life and Work of Landscape Architect Leberecht Migge*, (Routledge, London – New York), p.68.

<sup>3</sup>Migge, L., (1908), *Ist der Garten ein Raum?*, «Die Raumkunst», 14, pp. 209-212.

<sup>4</sup>Haney, D. H., *op. cit.*, p. 36, the parts in quotation marks are in the article of Migge L., (1908), *Ist der Garten ein Raum?*, «Die Raumkunst», 14.

<sup>5</sup>See: Frampton, K. (2000 – 1st edition London 1980), *Storia dell'architettura moderna*, (Zanichelli, Bologna), p. 153.

<sup>6</sup>See: Noever, P. (ed.), (1992), *The Frankfurt kitchen by Margarete Schütte-Lihotzky. The Frankfurt kitchen from the collection of the MAK*, (Ernst & Son, Berlin).

<sup>7</sup>De Michelis, M., *La rivoluzione verde. Leberecht Migge e la riforma del giardino nella Germania modernista*, in Mosser, M., Teyssot, G., (ed.), (1990), *L'architettura dei giardini d'Occidente. Dal Rinascimento al Novecento*, (Electa, Milano), p. 405. See also: De Michelis M., *Nella prima città giardino tedesca. Tessenow a Hellerau*, in «Lotus International», 69, 1991 e Taut, B., (1936), *Le mie Siedlungen*, in «Lotus International, 16, 1977.

<sup>8</sup>Samonà, G., *La città in estensione*, Stass, Palermo 1976. See: Giuseppe Samonà, 1278 *Sull'architettura di F. L. Wright*, «Metron», n.41-42, 1951. About the relation between Wright's architecture and the "Extending town" see: Sciascia, A., *Suolo, architettura e paesaggio*, in Macaluso, L., (2016), *Rural-urban intersections*, pp. 315 and ff.

<sup>9</sup>Sciascia, A., *Tra Limes e Limen*, in Sciascia A. (ed.), (2014), *op. cit.*, pp. 265-273.

<sup>10</sup>MIUR PRIN 2009, "From urban countryside to the Extending town", National Coordinator Luigi Ramazzotti University of Roma Tor Vergata. Scientific Responsible for the University of Palermo Andrea Sciascia. Among the publications concerning the results of the research, seven volumes of the "T + A Territori di Architettura" series (Gangemi, Roma) documented the explorations carried out in different parts of Italy on the "form" of the city (continuous / discontinuous) and on its "substance" (*civitas / urbs*) in which the project of architecture and landscape has been assumed as a instrument of investigation and knowledge. See references.

<sup>11</sup>Samonà, G., *op. cit.*, p. 3.

<sup>12</sup>*Ibidem*.

<sup>13</sup>Prominski, M., *Territorio complesso*, in Macaluso, L., (2016), *op. cit.*, (MUP, Parma), p. 283.

<sup>14</sup>See: Sciascia, A., *Le ville di Falconarossa*, in Marras, G., Pogacnic, M., (ed.), (2006), *Giuseppe Samonà e la scuola di architettura di Venezia*, (Il Poligrafo, Padova), pp.139 e sgg. and Ajroldi, C. (2014), *La Sicilia i sogni le città. Giuseppe Samonà e la ricerca di architettura*, (Il Poligrafo, Padova).

<sup>15</sup>Migge L., (1919), *Green Manifesto, 1919*, in Haney D. H., *op. cit.*, Routledge, London-New York 2010.

<sup>16</sup>Harvey, D., (2012), *Rebel Cities. From the right to the city to the urban revolution*, (Verso, London – New York), p. XV.

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