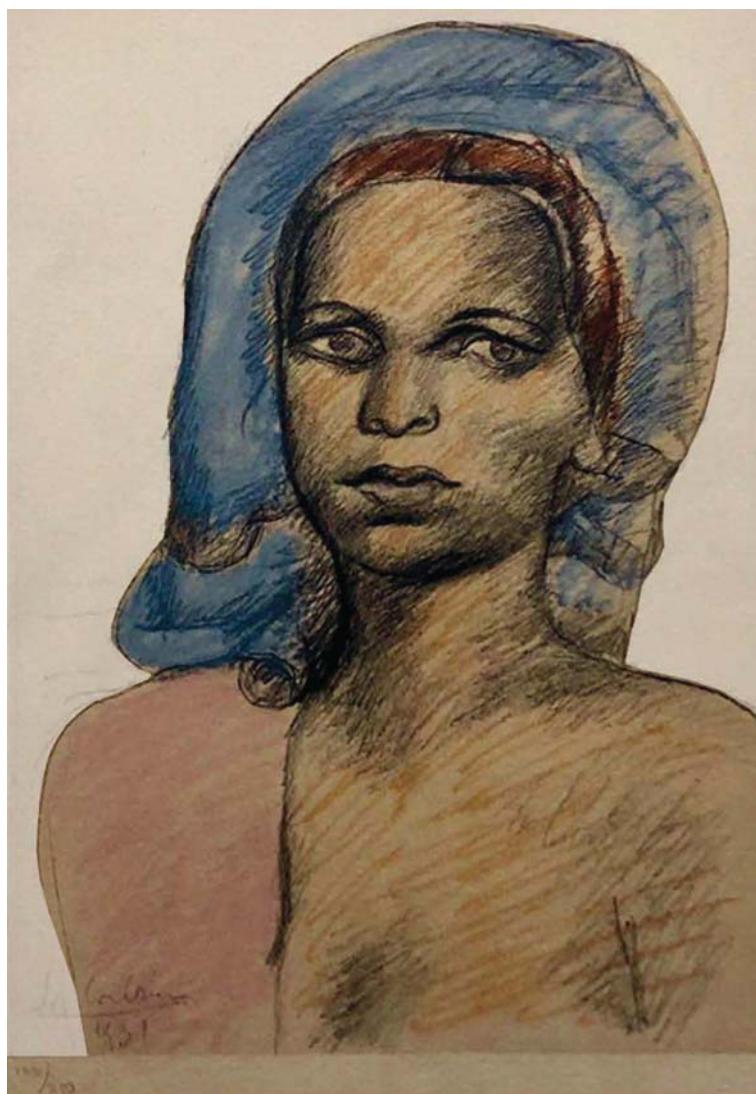


ARCHITECTURE HERITAGE and DESIGN

Carmine Gambardella

XVIII INTERNATIONAL FORUM

Le Vie dei
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World Heritage and Contamination

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Conference report 300 abstracts and 650 authors from 44 countries:

Albania, Arizona, Australia, Benin, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brasil, Bulgaria, California, Chile, China, Cipro, Cuba, Egypt, France, Germany, Georgia, Greece, India, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kosovo, Lebanon, Malaysia, Malta, Massachusetts, Michigan, Montenegro, Montserrat, New Jersey, New York, New Zealand, Poland, Portugal, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Spain, Switzerland, Texas, Tunisia, Turkey, United Kingdom.

Preface

At the state of art, with profound pride I register that the previous editions of the Forum ‘Le Vie dei Mercanti’ have favored the creation of an international scientific community with over six thousand researchers, distinguished professors, institutional and business sector representatives from more than one hundred Universities and Research Centers from fifty countries in the world. The XVIII edition of the Forum titled ‘World Heritage and Contamination’ aims to create a cross-critical dialogue, open to cultural contamination and ‘without limits’, in a logic of integration between competences which extends, and is not limited to, the following disciplines: Architecture, Culture, Environment, Agriculture, Health, Landscape, Design, Territorial Governance, Archeology, Economy, e-Learning. The activities of protection and promotion of World Heritage, understood as a asset shared by all Humanity, are particularly relevant in Italy, responsible towards the world of custody of the largest number of assets protected by the UNESCO. To the World Heritage Properties is added a landscape heritage of enormous variety and beauty to be protected also through the regeneration of degradation and of the ‘minor heritage’, in line with the provisions of the UNESCO Conventions on material and intangible assets as well as the European Landscape Convention. In this framework the multidisciplinary topics of the Forum represents a ‘thing tank’ of confrontation, exchange and cultural contamination oriented towards the United Nations Millennium Development Goals. The location of the Forum is of excellence. Campania Region with six World Heritage Properties, two Unesco Man and Biospheres, three assets registered on the Intangible Heritage List is one of the richest Regions in the world for cultural and landscape heritage, particularly ‘contaminated’ by Mediterranean cultures. No coincidence that the Forum takes place in Naples and Capri, with site visits and presentations of scientific research and operational projects by the Benecon University Consortium, consisting of five Italian Universities, head office of my UNESCO Chair on Landscape, Cultural Heritage and Territorial Governance. The papers, selected by the Forum’s Scientific Committee, will be published in the Proceedings of international relevance. Furthermore, the most innovative research and projects will be published in the ‘Quaderni’ of the A Class international magazine ‘Abitare la Terra / Dwelling on Earth’.

*Prof. Carmine Gambardella, General Chair XVIII Forum
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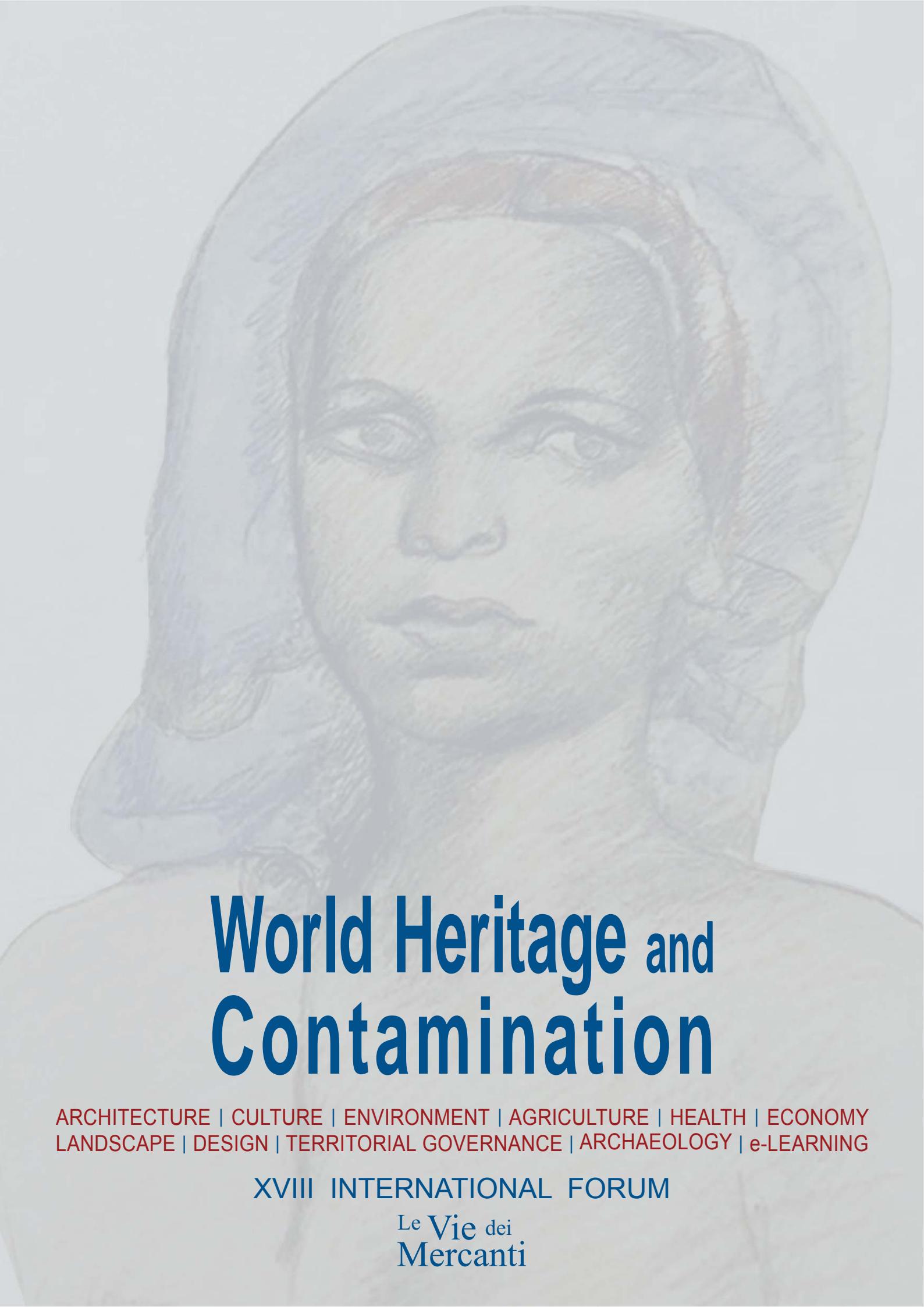
Con profondo orgoglio, allo stato dell'arte, registro che le precedenti edizioni del Forum 'Le Vie dei Mercanti' hanno favorito la creazione di una comunità scientifica internazionale costituita da oltre sei mila ricercatori, distinguished professors, rappresentanti istituzionali e del settore dell'impresa provenienti da più di cento Università e Centri di Ricerca di cinquanta paesi nel mondo. La XVIII edizione del Forum 'World Heritage and Contamination' si propone di creare un dialogo critico trasversale, aperto alle contaminazioni culturali e 'senza limiti', in una logica di integrazione fra le competenze che si estende, e non si limita, alle seguenti discipline: Architecture, Culture, Environment, Agriculture, Health, Landscape, Design, Territorial Governance, Archeology, Economy, e-Learning. Le attività di tutela e promozione del Patrimonio Mondiale, inteso come bene condiviso da tutta l'Umanità, sono particolarmente rilevanti in Italia, responsabile nei confronti del mondo della custodia del maggior numero di beni tutelati dall'Unesco. Alle Properties del World Heritage si aggiunge un patrimonio paesaggistico di enorme varietà e bellezza da tutelare anche attraverso la rigenerazione del degrado e del 'patrimonio minore', in linea con quanto previsto dalle Convenzioni Unesco sui beni materiali e immateriali e dalla Convenzione Europea del Paesaggio. In questo framework i topics pluridisciplinari del Forum rappresentano un 'thing tank' di confronto, scambio e contaminazione culturale orientati verso gli Obiettivi di Sviluppo del Millennio delle Nazioni Unite. La location del Forum è d'eccezione. La Campania con sei siti iscritti nella lista del Patrimonio Mondiale, due Man and Biospheres Unesco, tre beni iscritti nella Lista del Patrimonio immateriale è una delle regioni più ricche al mondo per beni culturali e paesaggistici, particolarmente 'contaminata' delle culture del Mediterraneo. Non a caso il Forum si svolge a Napoli e Capri, con sopralluoghi e presentazioni di ricerche scientifiche e progetti operativi a cura della Consorzio Universitario Benecon, costituito da cinque Atenei italiani, sede della mia Cattedra Unesco su Paesaggio, Beni Culturali e Governo del Territorio. I paper, selezionati dal Comitato Scientifico del Forum, saranno pubblicati negli Atti di rilevanza internazionale. Inoltre, le ricerche e i progetti più innovativi saranno pubblicati nei 'Quaderni' della Rivista internazionale di Classe A 'Abitare la Terra/Dwelling on Earth'.

*Prof. Carmine Gambardella, General Chair XVIII Forum
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CARMINE GAMBARDELLA

UNESCO Chairholder on Landscape, Cultural Heritage, and Territorial Governance; President and CEO of Benecon SCaRL University Consortium - Research Centre on Cultural Heritage, Ecology, Economy (University of Campania “Luigi Vanvitelli”, Pegaso University, University Federico II of Naples, University of Salerno, University of Sannio). Full Professor of Drawing at the Pegaso University and at the University of Campania. President of the International Forum “Le Vie dei Mercanti” since its first edition in 2003 to the XVIII edition in 2020. Editor and Founder of the series “Surveying is/or Project”, “Knowledge Factory” and “Architecture, Heritage and Design”. Component of the Scientific Committee of International Class A Magazine Abitare la Terra/Dwelling on Earth (Gangemi Editor International Publishing). He covered various roles for the University of Campania, including the Pro Rector of Institutions, Academic Senator, Director of the Department of Architecture and Industrial Design Luigi Vanvitelli, Dean of the Faculty of Architecture Luigi Vanvitelli, Director of the Department of Culture of Design, Director of Doctoral School in the Discipline of Architecture, Coordinator of the PhD in Protection, Safety and Representation of the Environment and Structures and Territorial Governance, Coordinator of the PhD Program in Surveying and Representation of Architecture and the Environment. He is author of numerous scientific international papers, publications and proceedings on surveying and representation of the built and natural heritage.



World Heritage and Contamination

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Renewed Sicilian Urban Landscapes. Transformation, Regeneration and Reuse of degraded areas.

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Abstract

The cities of the future must aim at improving the quality of living through processes of transformation and reuse of degraded, abandoned or underused urban areas. The cities of the future must generate renewed urban landscapes through recovery actions, creative reuse of abandonment, urban recycling, as new and powerful revitalizing forces in urban centers. The cities of the future must be more sustainable, more responsible but also more innovative capable of rethinking, reinventing, redesigning the forms of the settlement, mending relations with the environment and the landscape, reacting to scenarios "contaminated" by human hands and, from today, also from the covid-19 virus. The cities of the future must act responsibly towards reuse, re-cycling, applying best practices of ecological sustainability, land use planning, land use management, energy efficiency. In this study, through a multidisciplinary approach, some degraded Sicilian urban landscapes, today renewed thanks to urban regeneration interventions, will be analyzed. Cities that look to the future and that react positively to the current health, ecological and economic crisis. Urban centers that - through collective participation, the support of organizations, cultural associations and the sensitivity of local governments - are investing heavily in the theme of urban regeneration and re-cycling.

Keywords: Urban landscapes, regeneration, reuse, degraded areas

1. Introduction

The explosion of the current global health emergency, caused by the spread of the Covid-19 virus, and even earlier, the environmental emergency - caused by climate change and the continuous use of soil - are aggravating the social and economic conditions of the population, the quality of the contemporary habitat, as well as seriously endangering the beauty of our great material and immaterial heritage. Covid-19, an invisible and lethal enemy, has changed our lives by making us lose control of the daily actions that we believed we could dominate through progress and technology. We thought of ourselves as "*invincible*" and "*omnipotent*" beings, but we were wrong and very much. The pandemic has spread at supersonic velocity, changing our way of life, consequently our cities, all of society. The harmful effects are already too evident and who knows, in the future, how many other negative consequences will be there. Everything is questioned and what was certain now is no longer. Our task, regardless of any belief or plausible weakness-diffidence-fear, is to bring together all the necessary forces and skills - through the widest possible involvement of multidisciplinary and transversal approaches - of the sphere of knowledge, in order to be able to face and overcome this particularly delicate moment. Today, more than ever, the common goal must be to work together to improve the quality of life, especially in those places defined as "*scrap urban landscapes*" (1), in the peripheral areas of large cities, in smaller urban centers - developed quickly and uncontrollably - without any spatial order and symbolic value (Giofrè V., 2013). It is necessary to intervene in fragmented and disorganized spaces - a symbol of uncertainty, instability, discontinuity - escaped the traditional rules of urban planning and architecture. Abandoned dilapidated urban landscapes - no longer synonymous with beauty, as described in many cinematographic films by famous directors, or narrated in the books of great writers - where the degradation of the landscape is the mirror of social degradation. Today, unfortunately, even more evident. The literature offers us different studies and insights on the theme of the urban landscape. But what is the urban landscape? In environmental

sustainability implementation policies the term "landscape" has never been associated with a univocal and shared definition until the entry into force of the European Landscape Convention. In the Convention, the landscape is understood as that "*part of the territory that is the result of natural and/or human actions and relationships, a place of life for the population and an expression of the diversity of the cultural and natural heritage - as well as the foundation of their identity - a place of anthropic transformations*" (2). Therefore, with the term "urban landscape" it is possible to identify those territories – recognized and perceived by the populations that inhabit them – as places of excellence, places of daily life, degraded places, or places of change in the territory by the hand of man. The European Convention was created with the aim of introducing local, national and international administrations to the provisions, acts and policies of landscape protection through interventions of safeguard, management and planning, pushing all the protagonists (with decisional power over the landscape) to look towards sustainable development. All this in order to improve the quality of life of citizens and strengthen the relationship between the community, territories and cities. The urban landscape, therefore, is intended as a place of life, meeting, as a dynamic space - natural or anthropic - to explore, discover or simply reinterpret. In this scenario, the relationship between the population and the urban landscape is very important as, on the one hand, the landscape promotes the consolidation of territorial identities, and on the other it requires a certain level of competence, availability and awareness to take responsibility for the actions that affect it (Caramaschi S., 2018). Only by acquiring a social conscience will it be possible to consolidate local and regional identities and diversity, recognizing in them an interest for participation in public decisions (3). Faced with this complexity, we note a considerable interest on the part of the scientific community which, for a long time, has been questioning the factors capable of characterizing the places of those symbolic, affective and identity values of reference to one or more communities, thus guaranteeing attendance, care, shared management, perception, and a sense of belonging by the users. Some national and international urban realities, taking inspiration from the European Convention on Landscape guidelines, have applied best practices of urban requalification and regeneration which have become an example of planning worth imitating. In this study, we will tell about Sicilian redevelopment experiences that have transformed and regenerated parts of the urban landscape.

2. Urban landscapes: Knowledge, identity recognition, attractiveness

The form of a place is fundamental in the perception, understanding, readability and identity recognition of any site by its users. Identity manifests itself in various ways and sometimes with unpredictable aspects. Knowledge of a place takes place first of all through the senses, through the recognizability of symbols – capable of concretizing and transmitting profound meanings – and of the distinctive characters that emerge in the memory of those who live it, frequent it, and walk through it. These places have within them some focal points in which their character is condensed and made explicit. In fact, in contemporary urban landscapes it is possible to recognize one's own identity thanks to the scenic spatiality or the strong expressive charge of urban elements (4). Instead, the interpretative key offered by all those places that define their identity through the performance of activities that attract a large number of users is different (Corsini D., 2017). In these situations, identity and recognizability are determined by events, and by active uses and stories that follow one another with a certain continuity. Many places, in fact, are perceived by their communities in a vivid and coherent way since activities are practiced there that foresee the involvement of the inhabitants. Sociality, or public life – often referred to as the immaterial ingredient of places – elects the place as a dynamic point of aggregation that is open and animated by people. Some authors identify human activities as the first source of attraction of any space, since these offer the possibility of observing, listening, and participating. Indeed, it is through social life that individuals relate to something (Nogué J., 2017). And it is precisely the link between social life and the urban landscape that leads the community to responsible action in the territory and to an emotional, intellectual and practical approach that generates a gradual strengthening of the sense of belonging. For some scholars the functionality of a place is the parameter capable of generating attraction, grafting mechanisms, accumulation, confluence and inclusion. Functionality consists of multiplicity and the simultaneous presence of activities, functions and social practices that emerge from the discovery of the place and its free use. The success of a particular urban landscape would therefore depend on its ability to attract different uses in a close-knit network of reciprocal relationships, allowing the space to become a reference point for a small compact society. Here, particularly attractive activities and functions can intensify the characteristics and meanings of the place, generating the active involvement of people such as to trigger the positive perception of the place and a general feeling of pleasantness whilst visiting it (Zagari F., 2006). This is what happened following urban redevelopment interventions in some Sicilian cities (Fig. 1) such as Palermo, Messina, Catania and Favara (of the latter we will also talk about the first biennial of the cities of the world "*Countless Cities*"), where the functional transformation of small portions of the historical and peripheral urban landscape have induced the community to regain possession of places, abandoned for years to their own destiny, thus becoming

the driving forces of creativity and contemporary languages and sociality. In this particular period, however, it is spontaneous and inevitable to wonder what will happen, from now on, in these places. Will they be abandoned again?

Will they continue to be places of aggregation and socialization?

What will be the reaction to the change induced by the phase of social estrangement destined to perpetuate beyond the emergency?

The only certainty is that we need to bring together all the forces and resources present in the urban scenario and make them dialogue in a unanimous way.



Fig. 1: Panoramic view: Palermo, Catania, Messina, Favara.

3. Transformation and regeneration of the urban landscapes.

The urban and territorial policies of recent times together with the global financial crisis have caused significant social, political, economic and cultural transformations in urban landscapes. These changes have prompted cities to rethink the functions of the territory, reorganize the inhabited space and develop new synergies between public and private sectors. Today, in fact, planning responds to the new needs of the community through the application of participatory models - *urban local governance* - that start from the bottom. The new planning, focusing on citizens, adapts to changes in the city, restores new environmental and social quality in degraded and peripheral areas, recovers abandoned public spaces, limits urban dispersion, reduces environmental impacts, respects the landscape and the surrounding area develops the economy. In summary, it aims at the implementation of participatory democracy models through dialogue and consultation of stakeholders, through integration between civic culture, politics and expert knowledge, through collaboration between administration and community in order to allow passage from the dimension of "deciding" to that of "doing". The secret lies in seeing cities with different eyes, in rethinking the management of urban centers and suburbs, in investing economic resources for the protection and enhancement of the assets present (5) (Cilona T., 2017).T

This is what happened, as already mentioned, in Palermo, Catania, Messina, Favara, object of our study (Fig. 2). Redevelopment projects started from below and *street art* works have revitalized portions of abandoned and degraded cities.



Fig. 2: Examples of the projects of Urban Redevelopment in some Sicilian cities. From left clockwise Palermo, Catania, Messina, Favara.



Fig. 3: Examples of the Street art, from left clockwise Palermo, Catania, Messina, Favara.

3.1 Palermo. First case study

Palermo, the Italian capital of culture in 2019, records among the many experiences of urban redevelopment, the one in the Zisa neighborhood. An the former industrial archaeology area - home of the prestigious Ducrot furniture factory, consisting of numerous warehouses - purchased in 1995 by municipality of Palermo and used as a "Cantieri Culturali" (place of art exhibitions, debates, meetings, workshops, theater and music festivals). It is one of the urban areas, characterized by a strong social degradation - with a higher concentration of cultural biodiversity and greater intensity of innovative thrusts (6) - where the mature traits of a more refined concept of inclusiveness and cultural accessibility emerge. Here the barriers, not only material but also and above all immaterial, cognitive, emotional, have been broken down. A place where the rediscovery and enhancement of historic spaces has its essence of union and fusion between elements of tradition and innovation. In this sense, the "Cantieri Culturali" want to be crossed and contaminated, while maintaining their nature of collected space, the dimension of *the hortus* that is congenial to cultural production and participation, because it creates the conditions for care and assistance, keeping alive and dense space available - now rare - for concentrated attention. That of the Zisa "Cantieri Culturali" is an organization of organizations, characterized by a fractal complexity. That is, a complexity that occurs on several levels: from that of the individuals who animate the places, to that of public and private entities that share these spaces and that with their communities present a very rich diversity of institutional forms, organization models, public, networks (Fig.4). Another redevelopment intervention that should be remembered is that born in 2018 to give new life to the old Palermo district of the Kalsa through the Pangrel project (7) and the *street art* (8) that tells stories and amplifies the citizens' voice. An urban redevelopment initiative with a single theme - that of hospitality and integration - shared by five artists (9). The project also involved the Apartments of the Royal Palace, transforming the building into a center of cultural and artistic activities, a meeting place between historical and aesthetic instances, living organism that involves the visitor making him become an actor in a communicative process. And again, other corners of Palermo - such as historical markets - attached to a porous memory, made of grafts and craters, of failures and contaminations, of obstinacies and collapses, are reborn and re-invented in order to face crises, conflicts, deficiencies. The neighborhood of *Ballarò*, with its very active neighborhood committee SOS *Ballarò*, is one of those places that are putting in place virtuous processes, starting from the citizens. We work in dialogue with the circumscriptions, we monitor the municipal activity, we focus on promotion and enhancement, we collect proposals to improve common areas. *Ballarò* partly changes its connotations and takes care of the public space through the participation of the community. A key factor that everyone should invest in: artists, intellectuals, entrepreneurs, administrations.



Fig. 4: The "Cantieri Culturali" in the Zisa neighborhood, Palermo. Panoramic view and particular.

3.2 - Catania. Second case study

The city of Catania is the second case study taken in reference. The urban redevelopment interventions planned in two important districts of the city - San Giovanni Galermo, Trappeto Nord (Fig. 5) - aim at the urban-social-economic recovery, expected by the community for too many years. These are concrete actions useful to improve the quality of life of citizens, the transport system, the renovation of buildings, the completion of the road network, and at the same time reduce the digital gap, the learning deficit of part of the youth population, putting a brake on early school leaving.

A project aimed at controlling the territory, social activities, educational orientation, the development of a culture of the common good, linguistic and creative workshops, theatre, music, sport, the promotion of favourable investment environments and the development of innovative start-ups. The future role of the district of San Giovanni Galermo is to encourage a growing integration with the rest of the city through the provision of neighborhood facilities, the creation of places of socialization, the search for a function other than residential. The decision to provide a ring road to lighten internal traffic is accompanied by a more decisive redevelopment policy for the neighborhood.

Also for the North Trappeto district there is a lack of integration with the rest of the city. Integration, apparently entrusted to a road network that has geometrical characteristics of great connection, little "urban", at least according to the canons that have been typical, for centuries, of the European city and Catania in particular. This objectively unsustainable condition is further aggravated by the insufficiency of primary urbanizations not only on the surface, where there are numerous incomplete roads, but especially in the subsoil due to the absence of sewerage and gas network. As well as other newly established suburbs - ghettos built in a hurry as dormitory neighborhoods - this neighborhood must contribute to the revival of the image of Catania overcoming the urban quality gap, of social cohesion, of identity that separates it from the most fortunate neighborhoods of the metropolis.

In this sense, after decades of neglect, it seems that the awareness of the undelayable of the redevelopment of Trappeto is a priority along with the application of recovery policies from social deviance, of support to the weak groups of residents, reducing early school leaving and encouraging vocational training and employment. Improving and upgrading the territory through active and conscious collaboration with communities.



Fig. 5: Catania. Neighborhoods of the San Giovanni Galermo and Trappeto Nord. Panoramic view and particular.

3.3 Messina. Third case study

The redevelopment interventions, described below, concern the suburban districts of "Fondo Saccà" and "Fondo Fucile" to the southeast of the city of Messina (Fig. 6).

Through a process of urban regeneration, the elimination of some settlements characterized by the presence of post-earthquake 1908 shacks and dilapidated buildings and, at the same time, the creation of new opportunities in different spheres of human action including housing, work, sociality.

All this in order to guarantee people in difficulty new opportunities to rethink and rebuild their lives and those of their families. The project, called CAPACITY, was approved with a co-financing of about 18 million euros as part of the Extraordinary Programme for the Redevelopment and Safety of the Urban Suburbs in 2016, and started in April 2017.

The characterizing element of the project is the sharing and social participation within the transformation processes. The proposal applies an integrated strategy that follows the principle of concentration of investments and provides for complementarity between different interventions by putting in place tangible and intangible, social and urban actions (punctual, area, reticular).

CAPACITY represents a real sustainable policy, oriented to experiment and promote economic approaches that have as external constraints to the logic of profit maximization the progressive expansion of the instrumental freedoms of the most fragile people, the progressive construction of social capital, environmental sustainability and beauty

The CAPACITY project, working on the resilience of natural and anthropic systems, works to reverse the gaze of long years of planning characterized by:

- 1 - poor valorisation of natural areas and the landscape context of enormous environmental quality, and inability to govern the spatial ordering of fringe areas (countryfronts);
- 2 - projects and processes of transformation implemented through partial, fragmented and outside interventions of systemic visions and patterns;
- 3 - absence of a territorial reading of ecological-landscaping.

In the redevelopment project, the typical mechanisms of ghettoisation and stigmatisation associated with shack evictions and the creation of additional areas where social marginality can be concentrated are prevented. The space freed from dilapidated and unhealthy housing has become a *common*, a small theme park and educational on the themes: architecture and sustainable engineering with the opening, in a home of the ecological condominium, of socio-educational services. Among the relapses is the opening of a new shopping center. Public spending has been reduced and social housing policies have been made more efficient. Thanks to the economic and professional enhancement of the maintenance activities carried out by the beneficiaries themselves, the properties on the free market otherwise subject to dilapidation have been upgraded. In addition, the construction of social housing that involves the consumption of public land has been avoided and a model for social housing has been offered. Half of the households were able to access the credit market by restructuring past debts and reducing the risk of usury. To date, under no circumstances has there been a credit default situation. One third of the beneficiary households that have bought houses have, in fact, increased the stock of capital that they will be able to transfer to their children or grandchildren, thus counteracting the intergenerational transmission of inequalities. Finally, for 500 people there will be an important improvement in environmental conditions and a reduction in health risks linked to serious health and hygiene deficiencies and environmental pollution, which over the last 30 years have resulted in 7 years of average life expectancy less than residents of other areas of the city of Messina.



Fig. 6: Messina. Neighborhoods of the "Fondo Saccà" and "Fondo Fucile". Panoramic view and particular.

3.4 Favara. Fourth case study

Favara is located in southwestern Sicily, in the province of Agrigento, a few kilometers away from the Unesco heritage site the Valley of the Temples. The city is of Arab origin, is rich in history and unique architectural heritage and value and has a particularly degraded urban fabric, which has undergone a profound transformation in the first decade of the 2000s, following an experience of self-managed urban regeneration - implemented by Farm Cultural Park (10) - which has attracted numerous subjects from all over the world: architects, urban planners, artists, entrepreneurs, cultural operators, ordinary citizens sensitive to the protection and safeguarding of the common good (11). The interest area, now partly inhabited, called the Cortile Bentivegna, and known to the inhabitants as "*U curtigliu de setti curtiglia*" due to the seven small courtyards one beside the other - has been transformation through a project of urban regeneration, which has radically changed both its appearance and identity. The built environment, made up of small houses - *dammusi* and *case terrane* - has been transformed in a contemporary key into art galleries and residences for artists. The project, which does not take urban planning rules and norms into account, aims at the enhancement of a historical site and to strengthen its position in the tourist circuit through contemporary art, and the languages of design and contemporary architecture. The idea of the original project only involved the recovery of some dilapidated houses. Then some residential buildings were subsequently transformed into exhibition halls by identifying a museographic path that can be used both inside and outside the space. The Farm area is a social innovation construction site: an ambit in which a community of citizens and creatives collaborate to solve the problems of the city and propose intervention strategies through reuse, re-cycling, recovery, reinterpretation, and revitalization. A precise example of participatory democracy (12) that starts from below - urban local governance - through dialogue and a consultation of the interested parties, as well as an integration between civic culture, politics and expert knowledge, by way of a collaboration between the administration and the community. Favara is therefore configured as a model to imitate and an important example of rebirth and renewal of the territory. It is in this same town of Favara, on the premises of the "Farm", that it was possible to visit - from the 29th of June to the 27th of October, 2019 - the pavilions of the first biennial of the cities of the world "Countless Cities" (Fig. 7), (Cilona T., 2019). The first biennial of the cities of the world it was an event where, through meetings, debates and the construction of exhibitions, it was possible to deepen the theme on the future of urban landscapes with the aim of understanding what cities are, how they work and what makes us love these places where more than half of the world's population currently live. The biennial involved scholars, urban planners, artists, photographers, architects and creatives who resort to different approaches and languages to tell the visitor about various cities of the world by focusing on good practices and innovative ideas that contribute to making them special. There were three main themes of the first edition of the biennial:

1) Governance and Leadership; 2) Urban Resilience; and 3) Woke Youth.

The event/exhibition took place in various pavilions located in five locations around the historic center of Favara: Cortile Bentivegna, Palazzo Micciché, Palazzo Cafisi, Quid vicololuna and Opera Pia Barone Mendola. The central pavilion of the Biennale is located within the seven courtyards of "Farm XL". Here is an exhibition - by the English architect David Adjaye - dedicated to the architecture of 54 African cities. Inside the Seven Courtyards are also the Pavilions of New York, Chicago, Addis Ababa, Asmara, Meknès, Tbilisi, Tangier, Tunis, Cairo and Riad, and Molisn't: the hidden metropolis. Near the Seven Courtyards we also find Palazzo Micciché, a new exhibition space inaugurated for the occasion and characterized by the mural on the façade created by the artist NeSpoon. There exhibitions dedicated to various cities can be found including: Beirut (with the evocative installation curated by Jad el Khoury), London (with the photographic work "Brutal London" edited by Alessia Gammarota), Luxor (with the work of the children and kids center Funtasia developed by the Elisa Sednaoui Foundation), Berlin, Birmingham, Detroit, Douala, Koniakow, Nairobi and Tel Aviv. In this venue there are also exhibitions titled: "Augmented cities," "The Sound of Resilience," and "Matera, Architectures of Shame" as well as various art installations including the site specific work "Eden" by MOG and "OP 19 - Seismic Crater Piceno" curated by Collettivo OP (Luca Lagash, Morgana Orsetta Ghini, Alex Cremonesi and Thomas Boehm). Palazzo Cafisi hosts the mural of Salto Ligama and the three exhibitions "Design break - Beijing/Suzhou/Shenzen;" "Garbage City - Cairo;" and "Grand Tunis. Cities Stratification: The Heterotopic Vision of a City." In fact, the two orient - the one closer to Europe and the one further away - are compared, and remind us how the direction of world development has now shifted and how reciprocal influence and Chinese "pressure" on the African continent cannot be dismissed as episodic but have now assumed the character of regular exchange. Perhaps it is precisely the synchronic reading of these three pavilions that can help us understand the future of our cities (Pierro L., Scarpinato M., 2019). Other venues are located at the Quid and the Opera Pia Barone Mendola. The Quid hosts two exhibitions dedicated to the city of Smyrna and the invisible borders of Asia Minor. In the first set-up entitled "Progetti stesi. Città Italia_Città Sicilia" - edited by Orazio la Monaca and Luigi Prestinenza Puglisi - the theme of the Internal Landscape is dealt with by playing on the ambiguity of the term. On the one hand the internal landscape alludes to vast areas of

Italy where degradation and the phenomena of depopulation are taking place and where it is necessary to intervene decisively by reinventing reasons for development, activating urban transformations, innovative economic activities, and alternative spatial assets. On the other hand, the theme alludes to the space of the interior: a theme that has always been considered secondary. The second exhibition, entitled "Territori di transizioni" and edited by Stefano Pugliese, Güven Incirlioğlu, and Ali Matay, explores the theme of the discovery of invisible borders that exist in the coastal city of Smyrna in Turkey. At the Opera Pia Barone Mendola a pavilion was organized to carry out the Plastic Free activities on the need to reduce marine pollution. A large written sculpture made from building materials was built that denounces the convulsive and dangerous use of plastic.

The first biennial of cities is therefore an opportunity to reflect on the future of our cities and propose possible actions to be taken in order to guarantee an optimal quality of life.



Fig. 7. Farm Cultural Park - Cortile Bentivegna planimetry, the redevelopment interventions photos (before and after); Exhibition Photos "Urban Landscape in transformation" in the Biennial of the Cities of the world; Collina Belvedere, Beneficenza Mendola Street - Large written sculpture made from building materials; Opera Pia Barone Mendola. Pavilion. Exhibition Photos "Plastic free".

Conclusion

There are different factors and elements that identify a place and make it special: the physical and spatial conditions of the context, the activities, the events, the collective and individual experiences that take place there. From this point of view, it appears evident that actions - on any landscape of the contemporary city - must put forward a process of analysis and evaluation of all those forms and contents that help urban communities recognize such places. In this scenario, the system of participatory and concerted planning strategies must pursue quality of environment as an objective – that is both anthropized and urban – and which requires tools and an integrated approach among all the actors of the production chain to transform the city into a "Competitive city". The territory and its urban quality are not negotiable elements, they belong to the community and are elements of public utility, and sustainable urban development policies must necessarily move towards qualitative paths. For these reasons, we are all called to contribute to the revision of an innovative, participatory cultural model for the regeneration of the urban landscape and its transformation, contributing to the promotion of projects that are capable, competitive and strategic, by way of processes of integration and comparison as well as the promotion of processes of involvement of the entire stakeholder chain in urban transformation. The secret lies in seeing the cities with different eyes, in rethinking the management of urban centers and suburbs, and by investing economic resources in the protection and enhancement of the assets that are present (Cilona T., 2017). In this study the experimentation carried highlights how participatory processes are the tool for the success of the reuse of abandoned spaces and buildings and, at the same time, through the experiences of reuse and re-cycling it is

possible to activate creative workshops on a local and supra-local scale. Unfortunately, in the past the combination of two elements were lacking: a widespread cultural awareness and economic interest, which – as in basic chemistry – sets in motion a process which involves the participation of those who are striving for profit above all else. If we consider the returns in the middle to long term as well as their environmental costs, always left to be paid by others, a complete revision of our methods of building, living and enjoying our cities would be advantageous: avoiding waste and recovering and recycling where possible. And if the urban landscape is a mirror of society, we must not waste any more time.

Notes

- (1) Giofrè Vincenzo (2013), *Re-Cycle Italy-Reggio Calabria: nuovi cicli di vita per i paesaggi dello scarto*. Environmental Journal, Bimonthly on the environment and the territory with the patronage of the Ministry of the Environment and the Protection of the Territory and the Sea and the Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport. Alpes Italy, Rome editions.
- (2) Taken from the "European Landscape Convention", a document adopted by the Committee of Culture and Environment Ministers of the Council of Europe on July 19, 2000 and officially signed at the Palazzo Vecchio in Florence on October 20, 2000. To date, 32 Council of Europe member states have ratified the Convention and six have signed it, Italy has ratified the European Landscape Convention with law n.14 of January 9, 2006.
- (3) Taken from Good Landscape Practices, taken from GELSO - Local Management for Environmental Sustainability, www.Sinanet.Ispraambiente.it
- (4) For example the Eiffel Tower for Paris, the Colosseum for Rome, Tower Bridge for London, the concrete Pyramid of the modern era for Tirana.
- (5) As indicated since 1948 in art. 9 of the Constitution, and later specified by Law n. 83 of 31/05/2014 and by law n. 104 on the 29/04/2014.
- (6) The *Cultural Sites* are develop over an area of 55,000 square meters, more than twenty public and private entities coexist and cooperate: the Institut Français, the Goethe Institut, the Goethe Zentrum, the Hellenic Sicilian Community, the Verein Palermo-Düsseldorf, the Academy of Fine Arts of Palermo, Arci, Tavola Tonda, Spazio Franco, the Gramsci Siciliano Institute, the laboratory of the Teatro Biondo stable in Palermo, the Ditirammu Theater, the Experimental Center of cinematography, the International Photography Center , the Lumpen, Skené and G273 cultural associations, Legambiente Sicily, the NGO Bibliothèques sans frontières and the community hub Cre.Zi. Plus, in addition to the Vittorio De Seta public cinema and the ZAC - Zisa Arte Contemporanea exhibition space.
- (7) Pangrel is the first edition of the civic experience project wanted by the Federico II Foundation in collaboration with the Department of Cultural Heritage, the Abatellis Regional Gallery, and the Regional Center for Design and Restoration involved five national artists to create four installations. The aim is to recover one of the oldest neighborhoods in the city.
- (8) Street Art is the artistic expression that arises in urban spaces as a dialogue between contemporary art, previously considered understandable only by an elite audience, and mass culture. The term has its roots in the 60s and 70s in America and its theoretical foundations are found in Pop Art. Unlike the latter, in Street Art the artist takes possession of the public place leaving no choice for the observer who is forced to communicate, manages to give voice to certain difficult realities, acquires a very significant social and cultural function, thus allowing the increase of tourist flows, in places otherwise ignored.
- (9) Four interventions on the facades of three public housing buildings and a perimeter wall a few meters from Piazza Ventimiglia in the heart of the Palermo district of Kalsa by Basik, Camilla Falsini, Mbret Fats, Rosk E Loster.
- (10) Contemporary cultural tourism center.
- (11) The urban transformation project of Favara was presented at the 15th and 16th Venice Biennale, arousing interest at national and international level.
- (12) The participatory planning model applied in Favara is that of Action planning.

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