Manual of best practices for a blended flexible training activity in architecture for higher education institutions
This volume returns the results of the Intellectual Output 03 of the research project “ArchéA. Architectural European Medium-sized City Arrangement”, with the aim of analyzing and restating the state of the art achieved in the field of flexible mixed training in architecture, strongly encouraged by the emergency period of the Covid-19 pandemic. The result is a collection of good practices carried out internally and externally to the ArchéA partner network, in the context of higher education institutions, made possible by new virtual tools capable of mediating teaching and mixed and flexible learning around the disciplines related to the project.

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Introduction

The different cultural experiences analyzed in the world and between the East and West, have found that the men have always related to the natural context from which they have drawn resources and opportunities for life. Even architecture was born out of respect for this dialogue that the communities were able to establish by relating to both terrestrial and astronomical nature.

The architecture has made it possible to make changes to the natural context in relation to the needs of the individual communities. But architecture has increasingly come to characterize itself for the functions required of it in close relation to the natural context and hence forms and therefore constructive typologies closely related to local resources: let us think of earth houses in the regions of the African continent or Latin American, to stone houses in central and southern Europe, to wooden houses in northern Europe and Asia.

Every place, also through the architecture, has told the story of men. Here we talk about Art and Architecture of the cultural landscapes.

Cultural landscapes — cultivated terraces on lofty mountains, gardens, sacred places ... — testify to the creative genius, social development, and the imaginative and spiritual vitality of humanity. They are part of our collective identity.

Now the pandemic situation in the world allowed us to reflect on the importance of the “Human heritage: community” and above all on the need to enhance our natural resources and to establish a stronger dialogue between the natural landscape and built city.

In Japan, the ancient traditions and the observation of traditional architecture teach us the role of this important dialogue with the natural landscape. However, the problems of regeneration and valorization of the traditional resources, within the city of Tokyo and in many Japanese towns, are important issues because they concern the landscape, environmental sustainability, the well-being of the community. In Tokyo, in several cases, we also see the management of the use of the territory that not respecting good practices for the protection of the environment.

So, for these important premises, it was remarkably interesting to start lectures research to be able to analyze the urban context and the best policies of urban planning and landscape protection in the Prefecture of Tokyo and in other small towns in Japan. In fact, the Japanese territory has extraordinary environmental and landscape features that it is essential to preserve and enhance. In large-scale urban developments, the role of urban planners has been very important for harmonious planning but now the reality is very critical, and we need to propose new solutions and new paradigms.

BECC Laboratory: Beauty, Education, Community, and Creativity

In 2021 at the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Faculty of Engineering and Design of Hosei University in Tokyo started an international and interdisciplinary academic program aimed to analyze the urban landscape in Japan in relationship with the need to valorize its historical paradigms. Retaking the four elements of the cosmogony: air, water, earth, and fire — on which both the East and the West have conceived a close connection between the human microcosm and the natural macrocosm — we have reinterpreted these four elements with new four keywords: Beauty, Education, Community, and Creativity. Thanks to these four
The Urban Landscape defines the characteristics of the cities and of the public space and the relationships that man establishes and builds in the urban context. The public space is a mirror of cultural traditions. In the specific case of Japanese cities, this specific study is extraordinary precisely because of the cultural diversity that has intervened throughout history and that today preserves important traces in the planning of the cities. This topic is very strong also in Tokyo. This is an interesting topic of "contemporary urban archaeology" where the traditions, that have generated urban contexts and their development, are amazing.

So, following the importance of these four keywords (Beauty, Education, Community, and Creativity), BECC laboratory has analyzed interesting towns in Japan and especially in Honshu Island at the Prefectures of Chiba, Gunma, Ibaraki, Iwate, Kanagawa, Shizuoka, Tochigi and Tokyo and in Kyushu Island at the Prefectures of Fukuoka and Kumamoto (Fig. 02). The proposed methodology has been organized in two steps: Analysis and Proposal. In the first step (Analysis) all students have identified the site and clarified the motivation for the choice with the support of ancient map, historical and actual photos, and specific details of the site; in the second step (Proposal) every student has elaborated a presentation with the support of images and graphics and written a text with the main purposes of the project and the dialogue with the local communities. These results are being published in a small e-book and shared with the students in different country of the world. BECC laboratory has also promoted a symposium with professors of different disciplines to discuss and share topics on the reading of the city and new methodologies of planning.

Conclusion
This academic project is not common at a faculty of Civil Engineering in Japan, but the dialogue between architecture, history, heritage, and civil engineering allowed us to realize an important challenge: to approach young engineers (Master's class) to the reading of the urban landscape and to promote actions of urban regeneration. This experience helped us to promote the interdisciplinary dialogue and to demonstrate the importance to open participatory meetings and not building walls among scholars.

Werner Heisenberg, a German theoretical physicist, Nobel Prize for the Physics in 1932, affirmed

[...] It is probably true quite generally that

Notes
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