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# **Coronavirus, city, architecture. Prospects of the architectural and urban design**

edited by

**Carlo Quintelli, Marco Maretto, Enrico Prandi, Carlo Gandolfi**

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**Magazine del Festival  
dell'Architettura**

ricerche e progetti  
sull'architettura e la città

research and projects on  
architecture and the city

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The call for papers provide authors with the possibility to choose between two types of essays:

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- b) long essays greater than 20,000 characters (including spaces) whose revision procedure is divided into two phases. The first phase involves sending an abstract of 5,000 characters (including spaces) of which the Direction will assess the relevance to the theme of the call. Subsequently, the authors of the selected abstracts will send the full paper which will be submitted to the double blind peer review procedure.

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In any case, for both types of essay, the evaluation by the experts is preceded by a minimum evaluation by the Direction and the Editorial Staff. This simply limits to verifying that the proposed work possesses the minimum requirements necessary for a publication like FAMagazine.

We also recall that, similarly to what happens in all international scientific journals, the opinion of the experts is fundamental but is of a consultative nature only and the publisher obviously assumes no formal obligation to accept the conclusions.

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Reviewers are advised to read the document [Guidelines for the review of books](#).

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**52/53 april-september 2020.**

**Coronavirus, City, Architecture.**

**Prospects of the architectural and urban design**

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n.	Id Code	date	Type essay			Evaluation
1	475 532	lug-20	Long	Yes		Peer (A)
2	428 540	lug-20	Long	Yes		Peer (A)
3	472 531	lug-20	Long	Yes		Peer (B)
4	413 496	lug-20	Long	Yes		Peer (B)
5	336 501	lug-20	Long	Yes		Peer (B)
6	380 492	lug-20	Long	Yes		Peer (B)
7	416 502	lug-20	Long	Yes		Peer (A)
8	381 535	lug-20	Long	Yes		Peer (A)
9	452 517	lug-20	Long	Yes		Peer (B)
10	459 498	lug-20	Long	Yes		Peer (A)
11	342 537	lug-20	Long	Yes		Peer (B)
12	356 518	lug-20	Long	Yes		Peer (B)
13	449 528	lug-20	Long	Yes		Peer (B)
14	467 530	lug-20	Long	Yes		Peer (A)
15	491 534	lug-20	Long	Yes		Peer (B)
16	427 500	lug-20	Long	Yes		Peer (A)
17	468 539	lug-20	Long	Yes		Peer (B)
18	403 499	lug-20	Long	Yes		Peer (B)
19	485 513	lug-20	Long	Yes		Peer (A)
20	490 538	lug-20	Long	Yes		Peer (B)
21	345 494	lug-20	Long	Yes		Peer (B)
22	424 504	lug-20	Long	Yes		Peer (A)
23	473 527	lug-20	Long	Yes		Peer (A)
24	478 529	lug-20	Long	Yes		Peer (A)
25	360 508	lug-20	Long	Yes		Peer (B)
26	376 515	lug-20	Long	Yes		Peer (B)
27	446 519	lug-20	Long	Yes		Peer (B)
28	463 522	lug-20	Long	Yes		Peer (B)
29	461 493	lug-20	Long	Yes		Peer (A)
30	476 526	lug-20	Long	Yes		Peer (A)

## Next Issue

**54 october-december 2020.**

**Artschitecture. On the relationship between Architecture and Arts  
edited by Lamberto Amistadi and Enrico Prandi**

After issue 51/2020 on the relationship between play and architecture or between playing, teaching and architectural composition, the next issue 54 proposes the idea of the constructive and poetic wisdom of man, of a know-how with respect to the foundations of art and architecture they are not that far away.

Starting from some considerations on the degree of kinship that architecture has with music, painting, sculpture, cinema, photography, literature and theater up to an unpublished writing in Italy and in Italian by Steven Holl, which Time magazine elected "America's best architect."

That the best architect in America places music at the center of his work as an architect and if Gottfried Semper brings together music, architecture and dance, unique among the "cosmic arts", it must mean something.

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Carlo Quintelli, Marco Maretto,  
Enrico Prandi, Carlo Gandolfi

## Questioning about the architectural and urban design during the pandemic

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### Abstract

The following article consists of the accompanying text of the call for papers launched by the FAM last April, when in Italy and in the rest of Europe, normal life was gradually starting to resume after the lockdown.

The text was born as a collective reflection of the four authors following a series of discussions in which each brought certain aspects to the (virtual) discussion table. Although it was intended to illustrate the reasons for the call, it seemed of some use to the editors to propose it again at the opening to readers.

### Keywords

Covid-19 — Project — City — Architecture — Resilience

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*The aim of this call is to solicit critical and proactive reflection on the part of architectural culture, and in particular that of architectural and urban design, on the phenomena triggered by the coronavirus pandemic which, as we write this text, sees us still in an emergency phase but with our sights set on a future regarding which a varied set of possible scenarios and perspectives is already developing. A contribution which, moreover, would like to attempt to compensate for the marginality of our active knowledge compared to others that today are much more strongly called upon to provide answers, not only for the immediate future, in the fields of bio-medicine and pharmacology, new technologies, economics and social behaviour. The coronavirus problem, or rather a set of phenomena which are the effect but also the cause of that problem, to be tackled more and more in a global perspective without forgetting to also find adequate answers in the local dimension, certainly involves aspects related and strongly incidental to habitation logics and living in built-up areas as well as to those of a social, environmental and climatic nature. The contribution of architectural and urban forms will therefore be of no little importance in contributing to providing an effective response to the pandemic problem, seen not only from a viral perspective. Even more so, if we are able to propose new or rediscovered models, of both a futuristic and a historical nature, through a process of circumstantial criticism of the neo-liberal dynamic of understanding the city and its architecture and in general regarding the entire territory in a delicate balance between anthropization and nature. It thus becomes a matter of understanding, researching and elaborating habitation strategies, flow modes, urban layouts and forms, new types from the dwelling unit to collective spaces and structures, according to a multiscale logic able to encourage the systematic nature of the project as a prerequisite for its strategic effectiveness, both with respect to the upcoming emergency and to an overall improvement of urban life within a (sole) reformed "normality".*



**Fig. 1**

Antonello da Messina, *San Girolamo nello studio*, 1474-1475. National Gallery of London.

*If we consider space as the raw material of architectural and urban design, the definition of which in a complete form has largely distinguished the material identity and the civil expression of social processes, we could well immediately ask ourselves whether the pervasiveness and strength of the historical accident of the coronavirus pandemic could, or perhaps should, open a new phase in the conception of inhabited space at all the scales and in all the contexts of global geography. Can the question therefore be recognized in epochal terms, i.e., from a perspective of significant if not radical change?*

*On the other hand, there is no doubt that the pandemic phenomenon, already yesterday, still today no less than tomorrow, is part of evident critical planetary situations with heavy negative repercussions for local realities: on social, economic, environmental and climatic levels, against a background of uncontrolled demographic growth in many parts of the world. No less uncontrolled is the relationship between anthropization and habitation logics, according to a use of space that corresponds more to the opportunism of exploitation, in its different forms, than to the satisfaction of the primary needs of the entire population understood in its different cultural and civil identity aspects.*

*The question of the next upcoming space over which we should ponder therefore falls within a very vast phenomenological framework, the contradictions of which are highlighted precisely by the emergence of the virus, which on the one hand reveals to us, were it necessary, the corollary of critical conditions of which the pandemic is above all an effect rather than a cause, and on the other hand conveys us to a dimension so complex and multifactorial that, we must admit, it is not easy to outline and give effect to the action of the project on a level of renewed rationality.*



*It also seems evident, in this sanitary juncture capable of involving our own bodies and the places in which they live, but also of determining reactions and releasing energies, might we say, of the entire human race, that the architectural and urban component, as a science applied to the design of inhabited space, is perceived as lateral and accessory, not included in the basket of scientific fields called to give short and long-term answers such as epidemiology and health in general, but also economic, statistical rather than socio-political and institutional forms, psychological, communication and not least the new technologies and environmental sciences. On the other hand, this is evident not only now if we consider, for example, the total absence of "architecture and urban spaces" within the research topics characterizing the mission of the ERC (European Research Council).*

*In actual fact, architectural and urban science, and the project instrumentation intrinsic to it, contributes significantly to the determination of concentrated, urban or widespread habitation procedures, with the involvement of the surrounding area, and therefore to the organization of behaviour and social functions, to the relationship between man-made spaces and natural spaces, in general to forms of life and therefore to the well-being of the population. A science, as demonstrated by its historical tradition which, starting from the criticism of 19th century urbanisation through the models of industrial modernity and the new standards of public hygiene in the city, reaches the experimentation of collective living, of disurbanisation rather than the rediscovery of the morphological and life dimension of the historical city. A laboratory full of critical and propositional contributions on how to organize and shape built-up areas which seems to have lost its role on the stage of public planning. And this should give rise to further questions, and perhaps to self-criticism, on the causes of this scientific laterality cultivated, among other causes, through the trivialization of professions or pseudo-scientific nature created at mass media level which, for example, promotes alleged environmental sustainability in reality only suitable for gathering the most naive consensus.*

*The architectural and urban project cannot at this juncture only be called upon to reiterate the generalized hope of a so-called return to "normality" instead of a generic "restart", watchwords that certainly do not help in any way to analyse and take steps forward, with awareness and authentic critical investigation, as regards the most appropriate guidelines and criteria to deal with the current critical situation but especially that of the future and not only in terms of pandemic risk.*

*Starting, therefore, from a point of view which has not been completely identified and rather aimed at understanding the structural nature of the open questions, two distinct but complementary ways exist of looking at the problem, to be addressed starting from the "coronavirus" contingency.*

*The first is that of the predisposition of criteria and instruments which the forms of anthropized space can assume so as to face and make themselves as resistant and resilient as possible to phenomena of this nature, without forgetting other causes of risk determination on a global scale, starting from climate change. It is the dimension of an architecture and a city predisposed towards defence and therefore able, in addition to other organisational factors with a functional and material predisposition, to cope with the emergency by reducing its negative effects and consequent social costs. Collective urban spaces and equipment, predisposition and multi-functionality of places and architecture in the city, forward-looking configuration of designed housing and workplaces able to achieve in a systemic way the best possible response to the emergencies*



*to come. A reflection that cannot but be multiscale, from architecture to the city, but we could also say from the inside to the outside: from the architecture of habitation that affects us all as users of domestic spaces that in this situation have been severely tested and where the theme of an "Existenzminimum" also suitable for conditions of segregation/quarantine emerges, up to the spaces of the city also invested by typologically unforeseen needs, starting from hospitals, but also commercial buildings, schools, workplaces, and where the theme of the predisposition to the rapid transformability of the city in emergency conditions can be included among the strategies of the project to be developed. In architectural and spatial (and not only conceptual) terms it would be a question of evaluating a subversion between full and empty spaces, of temporary alteration of the density of uses and population of the spaces themselves. This means that the residential district and the individual housing will no longer be just places to live in, but also places to work, and that it will be necessary to reflect on the change of gradient on the endowments of the immediate inhabited community.*

*The second is more concerned with the root causes that generate the pandemic risk (and not only) to which the forms of settlement and inhabited and in any case anthropized places also actually contribute, as demonstrated by the genesis of the coronavirus which not surprisingly arose from the metropolis of Wuhan and from the many urban villages that constitute its marginal and degraded aspect. This theme, on the one hand, highlights the problem of the critical production and social-housing problems of large urban agglomerations, which are highly attractive, both in a global context and as regards local rural areas, according to a complementarity between poverty and wealth functional to the metropolitan regime but at risk of a social rather than health short circuit, and on the other hand, a widespread and aggressive anthropization of natural spaces both in terms of settlement speculation and above all of productive exploitation (between agriculture and animal breeding) capable of altering environmental and socio-cultural balances, with strong repercussions also on the problem of uncontrolled urbanization, thus initiating a perverse circular system of cause and effect. With respect to these phenomena, with strongly dystopian implications, the spatial structure, the constructed forms and the functional regimes of the city and the surrounding district should return to the centre of scientific focus according to a planning perspective which is planetary but open to the many different local contexts.*

*On the other hand, we must be aware that the pandemic emergency has obliged the world to force situations traditionally resistant to change, to create new ones, to break down a whole series of customary structures. Thereby experimenting with new forms, at least in different contexts starting from the workplace, especially through the use of the digital technologies characterizing ICT (Information and Communications Technology). Thanks to technology, it is possible to work from home, saving time otherwise spent traveling, to be allocated to leisure time, sport, family, often to the benefit of the domestic economy. The advantages for the environment in terms of polluting emissions, or in terms of business and service productivity through smart working, which seems to record significant results in certain sectors, are far from negligible. This perspective is supported by a concept of simultaneity, of co-presence, of "virtual ubiquity", so much so as to suggest a "return" to those conditions of unity, of non-specialized totality, typical of pre-modern societies. Conditions of life in which the times and places of daily activities could be less separated, ordered, by functional categories but rather by "priority values" in the simultaneity of their experience. A scale of everyday life according to an idea of "village", instead of neighbourhood, street or district, which prevails over all the others,*

*which sees the radical reduction of the daily range of movement as an assumption of a new socio-habitation paradigm as an alternative to the phenomena of dormitory neighbourhoods in urban suburbs. Certainly limiting movement is ok, but how can this be done without in any other way undermining the absurd rhetoric of infinite freedom of movement? That which, if we think about it, has made low cost tourism proliferate, and which in twenty years has cost us the lethal aggression of cities like Venice, the air traffic of millions of flights filled with trolleys and people and goods of every kind and everywhere.*

*In this scenario, at the architectural scale emerges the need to rethink living spaces, and once again include in these those "work spaces" that modern culture had expelled from the home for at least a century (the shop, the laboratory, the study have always been an integral part of the home). It is hardly by chance that for some time now all E-commerce strategies have been moving in this direction, through the progressive use of devices, home deliveries (lockers, delivering and pickup points, hubs, etc.) and where marketing is oriented towards multi-tasking and multi-purpose strategies in which urban public space is the place of hybridization of experience, between shopping, leisure, leisure, services. A system of urban behaviours, individual and collective, but not without contradictory and disturbing implications, linked to the idea of a citizen who is first of all a consumer and of a bio-politically understood amazonization of life forms in which domestic space, in certain conditions, assumes the alienating dimension of socializing which is only virtual and regimented by technological devices. And where there is a redefinition of the limen between categories semantically misunderstood as necessary, urgent, indispensable, useful, superfluous, routine, all of them drugged in their conceptual, content and operational scope by neo-liberal models of consumer induction.*

*No less involved in this fantasy are the collective spaces in which to live "collaboratively" the experience of the city in particular in terms of housing and work, environmental sustainability (containment and energy production, waste collection, water resource management, etc., etc.) but also an urban morphology designed for a new sense of community and revaluation of space-time in the present.*

*In any case, quite apart from the formulas that can be adopted, there is no more justification for the uncontrolled growth of human settlements in land areas. There is no more space for the so-called "informal city". Certainly, the city, like society, of Information and Communications Technology, could be the freest, the most adaptable, the most efficient (and perhaps the richest) only if it were to renounce, a priori, some degree of (presumed) unconditional freedom, which neoliberal practices have conveyed towards uncontrollable critical situations in different areas, including that of settlement development.*

*But how can we redefine in terms of spatial proxemics an idea of a city animated by community effects and at the same time capable of producing protected but participating individualities? To exemplify, it is as if the aggregative character that we find inherent in the bounded horizontality of collective spaces of historical matrix, could be subverted by architectural thickenings which see deep inhabitable loggias surrounding (and protecting at the same time) the perimeters of the built volumes, and the visual contact between people and families which populate these transitional spaces were able to generate new relational models (only by living during the day in the apartment in a city do you have the opportunity to see, i.e., to know visually and dialogue with the community overlooking the street, the courtyard, the open space, and exchange opinions, advice, impressions, to listen to the silence of the city on the one hand*

*and, on the other, to experience the new habits of the inhabitants). In this way new types but also new figures of architecture and of the urban scene, new landscape are prefigured.*

*In this dual yet unified vision of the problem, as it emerges from the "corona-virus" phenomenon, it becomes necessary, however, to overcome the clichés of architecture and the sustainable city, of which the mitigation of greenery, up to the paradox of its verticalisation is emblematic, to identify in depth the possible themes on which to focus real alternatives capable of influencing both the sets and the timing of the problem, considering them as part of a single process, as coherent as possible, of a holistic nature, of patient construction, through a dialectic in which knowledge and design are the basis of non-modelling logic project progress.*

*The objective of this invitation, starting from a number of considerations aimed only at stimulating those to whom it is addressed, is to realize a first corollary of propositional analysis that opens and solicits the definition of a clear and unavoidable perspective of the contribution of architectural and urban design that cannot be postponed and which is as systematic and generalized as possible, albeit in the declinations which the local conditions of the global world can positively put in place.*

*What should we learn from this emergency situation and from what is implied? What aspects of inadequacy has architecture and the city shown in this situation? What themes and objectives should be identified and what kind of project strategies should be developed according to short, medium and long term perspectives?*

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Marco Maretto is an Associate Professor in Architectural Design and Urban Planning at the Faculty of Architecture of Parma. He graduated in architecture at "La Sapienza" University of Rome and obtained a PhD at the University of Genoa. He is a member of the International Seminar on Urban Form. His publications include: *Il Progetto Urbano Sostenibile* (FrancoAngeli, 2020); *London Squares* (FrancoAngeli, 2019); *Teaching Urban Morphology in a Sustainable Perspective* (Springer, 2018); *Saverio Muratori. A Legacy in Urban Design* (FrancoAngeli, 2015); *Sustainable urbanism: the role of urban morphology* (Urban Morphology, 2014); *Il Paesaggio delle differenze* (ETS Edizioni, 2008). Editor of Springer for the series "The Urban Book Series", Scientific Referee for the magazines Urban Morphology, Urban Design International, the Journal of Urbanism, Sustainability, Building, FAMagazine, since 2014 he has been the founder and co-director of U+D International. In 2014 he founded RAM Researches in Architecture and Urban Morphology ([www.r-a-m.it](http://www.r-a-m.it)).

Enrico Prandi (Mantua, 1969), architect, graduated with an honours degree from the Faculty of Architecture of Milan. He has collaborated with Guido Canella in teaching and research work. He is a Doctor of Research in Architectural Composition and Urban Planning at the IUAV of Venice obtaining the title in 2003. At the moment he is Associate Professor in Architectural Composition and Urban Planning at the Department of Engineering and Architecture at the University of Parma. He is Director of the Festival of Architecture of Parma and founder-director of the first class international scientific magazine FAMagazine. Research and projects on architecture and the city (ISSN 2039-0491; [www.famagazine.it](http://www.famagazine.it)). He is scientific director for the Parma unit of the ARCHEA project. Architectural European Medium-Sized City Arrangement (<https://site.unibo.it/archea>). His publications include: *Il progetto del Polo per l'Infanzia. Sperimentazioni architettoniche tra didattica e ricerca* (Aión, Firenze 2018); *L'architettura della città lineare* (FrancoAngeli, Milano 2016); *Il progetto di architettura nelle scuole europee* (in European City Architecture, FAEdizioni, Parma 2012); *Mantova. Saggio sull'architettura* (FAEdizioni, Parma 2005).

Carlo Gandolfi (London, 1980), architect, studied at the Faculty of Civil Architecture of Milan Polytechnic (laurea con Giorgio Grassi) and the FAUP of Porto. Research doctor in Architectural Composition at the IUAV University of Venice. Editor of the scientific magazine «FAMagazine», he is coordinator of scientific research on Roberto Menghi at the CSAC of Parma and member of the strategic partnership financed by the UE "ARCHEA – Architectural European Medium-sized City Arrangement". Researcher in Architectural Composition and Urban Planning at the Department of Engineering and Architecture of the University of Parma, he teaches design. His architectural projects have won awards and acknowledgment and his articles and essays are published in international magazines. He has translated and edited the Italian version of the volume *Motion, émotions* di Jacques Gubler e pubblicato, i volumi *Matter of Space. Città e Architettura in Paulo Mendes da Rocha*, e *Il padiglione come tema*.

**Old and new topics in architectural and urban design**

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**Abstract**

Of the articles selected for the call for papers *Coronavirus, city, architecture. Prospects of the architectural and urban design*, this article offers a critique regarding their content, grouping them in a number of thematic blocks in order to achieve a better organisation of the knowledge for the purposes of transmissibility. A complex varied picture emerges in which the topics of the call are directed at situations that are very remote, such as in the case of Korea or China, with useful observations and operating recommendations that will certainly provide food for thought in the disciplinary research of architectural design and urban planning.

**Keywords**

Covid-19 — Urban design — City — Architecture — Transmissibility

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With this double issue (the most substantial ever) FAM wished to offer the scientific community of architectural and urban design a place in which to collect a great number of ideas that the unusual lockdown situation has stimulated in many (if not, all) experts on architecture. In fact it is due to our professional training that we usually analyse situations in order to propose solutions.

As we have seen, many architects have expressed themselves through the various media available and have perhaps presented an alternative to the debate on Covid-19 second only to that of the doctors (virologists and epidemiologist) and politicians. In that period of excited initiative we have seen many proposals (from the most quixotic to the most elementary) but above all at the limits of professional and deontological ethics. For our part, in the conviction that the disciplinary corpus of architectural and urban design has much to propose, we have worked towards the creation of an international call for papers, the broadest in terms of acceptance of proposals centred on the viewpoint of architectural and urban design.

Thus the proposals received by the editorial staff were numerous with more than one hundred and thirty abstracts from all over the world. This was a remarkable result considering the concurrence of dozens and dozens of schemes that the magazines or the scientific community offered for architects to think about. Of all the abstracts, the vast majority were at a very high level and of unquestioned scientific quality.

The articles were selected (in the meantime increasing from twenty to more than thirty to make room for researchers to express themselves)



following the criterion of greatest relevance to the topics stated in the call with a propensity for those that put questions (and offered answers) which were of use within the discipline. The material received was also subdivided into thematic blocks (or organisation by topic) which made it possible to give some order to the contributions (all to the benefit of the critique).

Selection is always a difficult task, sometimes unpleasant, but necessary also for the purposes of transmissibility of the content and coherence with the cultural objective that we set ourselves.

The articles selected were then subjected to a double blind peer review procedure and for the first time fielding a considerable number of registered reviewers to whom I wish to express my thanks.

\* \* \*

Concerning the end of the call text (previously presented), some questions summarised the operating nature of the experts' call concerning the situation experienced<sup>1</sup>.

All the articles in fact tackled the problem directly or indirectly, analysing it and considering possible corrective planning actions to either mitigate or solve it completely or at least partially.

Although the articles always treat the matter broadly, we thought it would be useful to identify the main features of the content in order to guide the reader through the various types of solutions.

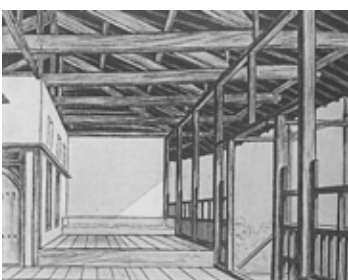
The thirty articles selected were in fact organised and grouped into thematic blocks each responding to a particular feature.

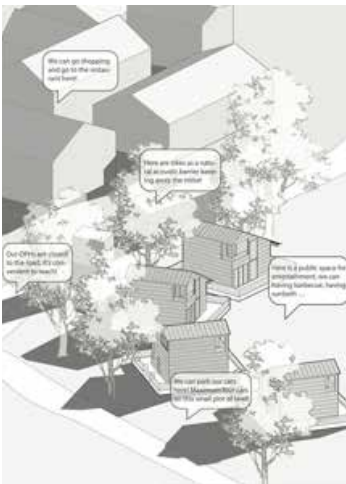
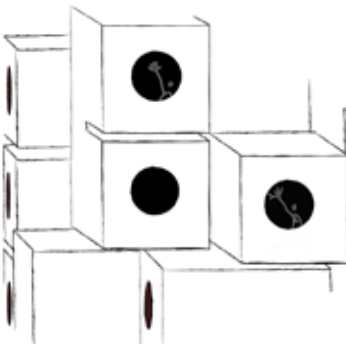
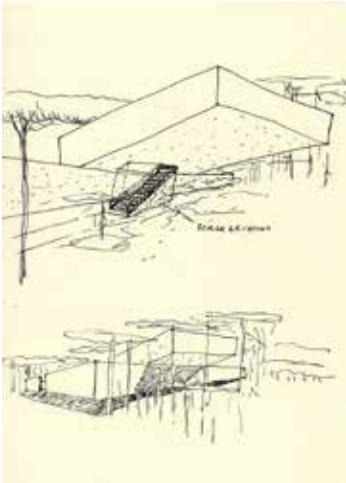
### 1. On the home

The first thematic block gathers the articles that commented on and proposed solutions on the home and the domestic environment in particular. They are articles which start with the condition, often experienced directly or seen and understood, and propose solutions connected with the place of primary importance.

The first concept that emerged was the flexibility of domestic space, in other words the consideration that a certain functional independence of spaces can be attributed without giving them a specific purpose in a rigid uncompromising way. Massimo Zammerini develops a solution which starts with some concrete examples and identifies the spaces which can effectively be adapted to different functions such as work, sport and hospitality, but also independent living in the case of children showing the first signs of independence from the family for which there are corresponding cases. The discussion clearly becomes increasingly complicated as the idea of the flexible room/space interacts with the various types of buildings, from the most unfettered in terms of spatial organisation (single-family dwelling) to the more constrained cases of multi-storey terraced houses.

The article by Giorgio Gasco and Giuseppe Resta can be considered on the same level. They identify the sofa as an interesting space, as the threshold of a traditional Turkish home, to be introduced in the modern home. Following the post-war studies of Sedad Hakki Eldem they describe some of their experiments at Bilkent University of Ankara aimed





at demonstrating how the Turkish sofa can also be a venturian “device for inflection in the composition”.

Ottavio Amaro, considering the mainly transformative possibility of design, considers the home as a new central place in which to perform the various necessary functions and find the primary value of protection. A domestic microcosm in where functions usually carried out in the city take place.

If in the vision of Amaro the home is and remains in any case a real tangible fact that re-appropriates its original function of giving form to man’s needs also through an archetypal concept, the view of Grazia Maria Nicolosi, on the contrary and by analogy with a certain cyborg culture, raises questions on the home as a space of the virtual, or simulated reality: this leads one to consider new architectural forms that better adhere to the physiognomy of man (eliminating any possibility for artistic expression for the sake of techno-scientific expression) as a capsule, a shell or house-body. The article becomes an interesting review of the experiments conducted around the concept of virtual architecture and that Covid-19 has contributed to causing a crisis and highlighting its limits with respect to man.

While around the single person and the construction of one’s minimal living space – *One Person House* –, revolves the considerations of Alberto Bologna and Marco Trisciuglio who transform the contextual situation experienced into a didactic stimulus through which architecture students attempt four design exercises of the type “research by design”. They are substantially based on the analogy between man and architecture from which they obtain the elements to design.

Antonino Margagliotta and Paolo De Marco, are hoping for liberation of the home to bring it back to the spirit of necessity, ethical aspiration and aesthetics of the essential. A type of home that we imagine located in a situation of collective living, as the modern architecture has suggested by the Unité of Corbusier to Social Housing. The real principle on which to rely in design, analogously to what happens for the disabled, is adaptability: a predisposition for the different tasks to be done in the current home including study and work.

## 2. On the home/work combination

It is precisely on this aspect, the configuration of space destined for doing work at home, that the second thematic block is dedicated and which we can consider as an extension of the preceding block. There is no doubt that the pandemic condition experienced has affected in various ways the relationship between the home and the workplace. One aspect in particular concerns the possibility, made conceivable by openness to remote working to combine the two categories of home and work in a single space (the domestic one).

In the first article the author, Marianna Charitonidou, takes up the theme of the studies by the Greek architect Takis Zenetos who, in the seventies, designed the IT revolution of the home and the city of the future, studying and anticipating its repercussions. In particular he takes up the idea of a home optimised to the conditions of remote working (individual living unit) within which he designs multipurpose furnishings and a “postural chair”, understood as an extension of the human body.



The second article by Edoardo Marchese and Noemi Ciarniello, uses the categories of production and reproduction within which they metaphorically place their considerations on the home space. There is no doubt that production (work) has undergone a process of domestication during the pandemic: recalling the concept of Mack Sennet on porosity, the two authors however extend the consideration to include the type of home, suggesting collectivisation and sharing of functions that would optimise human life between productive work and reproductive work.

Roberta Gironi shifts her focus from the home to the landscape of work spaces, pointing out how for some time they have evolved from the compartmented fixed work post toward the multipurpose open space. Furthermore, following this evolution, the author arrives at a concept of the office workplace as a new relational hub made possible by the relocation of production into homes. This concept, altered by the flipped classroom, allows a redefinition analogous to a new flipped workspace formulated on the acknowledgement of different types of work (communication, concentration, contemplation, cooperation) that lead to proposing environments organised specifically for different purposes (brainstorming, presentation, focus, relax, socializing, etc).

### 3. Between the building and the city: space for relations

The third thematic block specifically concerns space for relations, variously defined in architectural literature also as an intermediate, neutral, threshold space, in between, infra, etc.

Giovanni Comi focuses his thoughts on the empty space between the building and the city, the space for relations which is too often undervalued (and rejected) in favour of economic performance. The author opens by presenting the difference between the habitable and inhabitable which leads him to underline the importance of the intermediate architectural elements (threshold, portico, roof) unlike certain spaces in the modern city which would be uninhabitable due to the inability to conceive how to inhabit them before even thinking about how to build them.

Claudia Sansò and Roberta Esposito use the representative potential of a collage to demonstrate through dystopian visions how during the pandemic there has been an inversion of the busy city which has become empty and the emptiness of indoor spaces which have become full. Between the urban desert and the domestic dream reigns the space of the threshold, consisting of the window (frame from the film) which is made to react with the pictures.

Paola Scala and Grazia Pota apply the concept of an elastic place (a place conceived to favour the building of social networks but also able to react in the event of emergency and becoming equipped spaces) and propose an intermediate design scale that starts with the experiences of Chermayeff and Alexander concerning the relationship between public and private spaces.

### 4. At the scale of the settlement: design of the contemporary city

Leaving the residential microcosm and entering the urban macrocosm we come to the fourth thematic block which deals with the question of designing the contemporary city, its form in the light of the recent experience we have had. It is pointless to say that the articles analysed





below contain a harsh criticism of the city as it has come about and been established in recent years and which has revealed its functional limits during the period of the pandemic.

A city without form and without limits, which has grown over time by the addition of nucleuses that continue to revolve around the main city centre, has led Antonello Russo in his article to propose an idea of urban expansion by nucleuses in which architectural densification and urban thinning out are possible simultaneously. What follows is a composition of archipelagos and islands, distinct but interconnected settlements that originate from experiments on the district, from the horizontal city to the extended city up to the more recent experiments.

René Soletti proposes the theories of Samonà again – reinterpreted through the projects of his student Polesello on Venice – identifying the category of architectural empty spaces as the instrument for replanning the post-Covid-19 city: in fact the empty space is an organisational element, an instrument of measurement and dynamic balance. Apart from the unquestioned “compositional” value of this approach, planning with empty space also becomes an opportunity to reorganise the places and parts of cities.

Pascal Federico Cassaro and Flavia Magliacani place emphasis on the regenerative potential of the urban fabric and identify the European city block (and in all the studies, mostly French, aimed at developing it and emphasising its design value) as the spatial element to be used in proceeding with the planning of the post-Covid-19 city. The city block or multiple thereof, the îlot or macrolots, a possible collective dwelling in multifunctional conditions (with this term referring also to the satisfaction of needs for sport, wellbeing and leisure time) and energy and environmental sustainability. A sort of city within a city defined by the perimeter of the public streets which takes inspiration from the works in Schützenstraße in Berlin by Aldo Rossi.

Similarly Giuseppe Verterame, in his article, is inspired by the macro city block understood as a spatial prototype which, starting with the invariant morphological type of the block, improves the quality of living conditions by means of compositional operations in the dialects between construction and open space, in the context of new primary functions, local services and improvement of the standards of environmental sustainability. In these terms the macro city block contributes to creating a settlement structure where the continuity of the fabric is determined by independent parts created that have a mutually relationship that depends on the various levels to which they are complementary.

The article by Li Bao and Die Hu, takes stock of the critical points that have affected Chinese cities during the pandemic and suggest a series of proposals that involves three distinct planning areas (urban, architectural and community) capable of providing an even better answer to the pandemic situation in the future.

The article by Ken Fallas and Ekaterina Kochetkova indicates the resilience of the Korean city as a model for intervention against Covid-19. The situation of modern man's isolation and social inequality described in the recent film *Parasite* are renounced in favour of a global urban planning approach defined as K-urbanism based on the use of technology but focused on man. This is a type of approach made possible by a capillary



IT infrastructuring and an urban model different from the European one.

## 5. The role of the public space

The fifth thematic block concerns the relationship and role played by the public space in the way the city works. In general the considerations and planning approach collected here are more in the management-administrative sphere and often connected with planning methods that are endorsed, shared and cooperative that also include the reclaiming and consequent reuse, even if only temporary, of abandoned spaces. It is interesting to note how the three approaches presented originated differently from urban planning, cooperative architecture and tactical urban planning, even though they converge on the objectives and solutions.

It is precisely on the temporary reuse of abandoned spaces that the article by Nicola Marzot concentrates. After an articulate analytical explanation he presents the experience of the “Ex Scalo Ravone” area of Bologna, a symbol of the reclamation of disused spaces, the subject of a specific exploration of original solutions to include in the regional implementation plan. It is a public area that is proposed again for its multiple possible uses which are also compatible as a place for reconstruction of the sense of community.

Similar to the preceding article Riccarda Cappeller also suggests putting areas of an important historical past of the city to uses in a new way and not originally considered in order to involve the population in active participation and reappropriation processes. Not just reuse but considering the spaces and architecture as “open to continual change” and open to modernisation. On the basis of the works proposed the idea of cooperative architecture, understood as the co-creation of places, spaces and opportunities for use, makes sense.

Fabrizia Berlingieri and Manuela Triggianese propose a strategy of reappropriation of residual public areas for the purposes of greater capacity for adaptation to risk by means of methods typical of the so-called Tactical Urbanism. This involves low cost projects carried out with the active involvement of the population (creation of cycle tracks, redevelopment of squares and reappropriation of residual spaces). Various projects in cities of Milan and Rotterdam are given as an example.



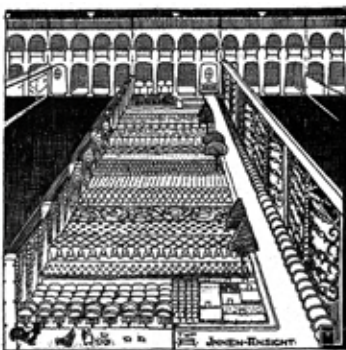
## 6. Planning culture in relation to the Pandemic

The sixth thematic block includes articles that deal with the question of planning culture in relation to the pandemic. Two articles in particular emphasise renewed interest in proxemics, a discipline that could help architects and architectural design – the same echo in the foreword of the book published in Italy by Hall refers mainly to them – specifically dealing with the relationship between space and the body. An outline is thus given of a flexible elastic city that has many independent centres rather than a single centre around which the external parts revolve.

In his article, Luca Reale proposes restarting with ‘bodies in space’ rather than the ‘city as a body’ (sick and in need of regeneration). Besides the general considerations on domestic space the author imagines a new balance between city and public health which would confute the tendency toward densification in favour of a rebirth of the district (perhaps reassessing the INA-Casa experience) and its pedestrian use.







In the article by Anna Veronese proxemics is proposed as a specific planning instrument useful for rethinking the spaces “on a human scale”. We are thus reminded of the four spheres of distancing (intimate, personal, social and public) by which we can imagine respective scales of city organisation. A concept that measures the distance which in the event of use underpins the project of La ville du quart d’heure produced by Carlos Moreno – the expert of the Sorbonne Smart City – in the context of the programme for re-election of Anne Hidalgo, the mayoress of Paris. By the paradigm of the raft with which humanity is to be saved, according to the thinking of Richard Neutra in *Progettare per sopravvivere*, Elisabetta Canepa and Valeria Guerrisi propose a review of the main Italian magazines on architecture during the great health crises of the 20th and 21st centuries in search of how planning culture reacted to previous pandemics (Spanish flu, Asiatic flu, Hong Kong fever, Swine flu). The outcome shows how regardless of the extent of contagion it is the media amplification that creates the base or the project magazines which most of the time deal with the urban problem in terms of livability and consequent accessibility, as well as the danger of high density.

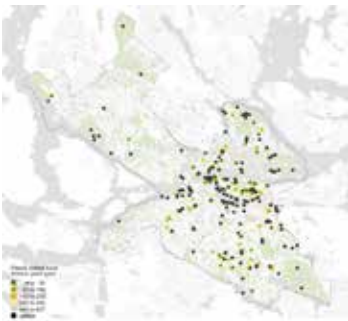
## 7. The care of the city paradigm

The seventh thematic block gathers together articles that have recourse to the Geddesian paradigm of care. The city is seen as a sick organism and as such in need of care: needless to say that in this case the condition that generated the problems, including those of an urban type, i.e. the medical health problem, ended up shifting in an abnormal spillover also to the city and to architecture changing the scheme of diagnosis/cure by medical practice. In particular the article by Alessandro Oltremarini considers the characteristics of the cure intersecting them with those of measurement: if the cure attends to the plural relations between different parts and their continually changing meaning, it acknowledges the character of necessity that belongs to the measurement of “things” and the relations between them.

The cure of the city, – but also with the meaning of care – from the viewpoint of Landscape Architecture is the content of the article by Sara Protasoni in which it is necessary to find a new balance between architecture and nature. For example, the author presents a planning approach of this type, describing it as the work of the three architects Mitte, Figini and Porcinai.

Silvana Segapeli reinterprets and applies a good part of the Geddesian lesson to the current reality, outlining in four specific points the concept of care applied to planning. It is the article that most resumes the theories of Geddes to whom the reader is referred for an exhaustive treatment

There are also some articles that take up the defence of the city and in contrast the defence of suburban life in the abandoned or underpopulated districts. This tendency is also considered in the article by Enrico Bascherini who, supporting the broader and more general movement which for some years has tended to develop and repopulate internal areas, identifies the greatest problems (or risks) such as ensuring that those places are refounded in community terms, starting a medium to long term process. I agree with the author when he affirms that in this collective



rediscovery of being a community, a feeling can and must arise in which the district system can be a social and economic life choice but definitely not a substitute for the city.

In fact, not only the necessity of having a city, which cannot be replaced, is the conviction of Costantino Patestos but also that it has not exhibited any serious defects in handling the pandemic. It must be (regarding the care paradigm) cared for, says the author, but not hospitalised. Against the speculators of the situation, guilty of using the pandemic to rehash already superseded solutions, he proposes some fundamental disciplinary points including: defence of the old city centre; opposition to inequality; replanning of internal peripheries of the city and promotion of a new territorial multicentricity; reclamation of the quality of public areas.

Lastly, some contributions on functional subjects outside the primary ambit of living such as that of Laura Anna Pezzetti and Helen Khanamiryan that deal with the space of the schools or investigations on change in urban behaviour in Sweden analysed by Ann Legeby and Daniel Koch.

In the first article the two authors dwell on the importance of the educational space and its implementation in regard to advanced functional criteria (space as a “third educator”) and to use in the emergency pandemic conditions such as we still have<sup>2</sup>.

Ann Legeby and Daniel Koch instead, sent questionnaires to the population of three Swedish cities (Stockholm, Uppsala and Göteborg) during the pandemic to record the changes in behaviour consisting of greater use of services bordering the residential areas and public parks and spaces typically having extensive open spaces.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> It should be said that in regard to a truce in the summer, at the time of writing, 31 October 2020 we are going through a second wave of the pandemic which in Europe is creating alarm (a few days ago France went into lockdown again and Great Britain is trying not to despite having an even more serious situation): after the first partial closure order we will probably see a new lockdown, perhaps a total one or at least geographically limited to the areas most seriously hit.

<sup>2</sup> In summer 2020 an attempt was made ensure ongoing teaching and the resumption of lessons introducing specific distancing measures in the schools. At the moment lessons are attended in primary and middle schools while senior school lessons are held using remote teaching methods.

Enrico Prandi (Mantua, 1969), architect, graduated with an honours degree from the Faculty of Architecture of Milan. He has collaborated with Guido Canella in teaching and research work. He is a Doctor of Research in Architectural and Urban Composition at the IUAV of Venice obtaining the title in 2003. At the moment he is Associate Professor in Architectural and Urban Composition at the Department of Engineering and Architecture at the University of Parma. He is Director of the Festival of Architecture of Parma and founder-director of the first class international scientific magazine FAMagazine. Research and projects on architecture and the city (ISSN 2039-0491; [www.famagazine.it](http://www.famagazine.it)). He is scientific director for the Parma unit of the ARCHEA project. Architectural European Medium-Sized City Arrangement (<https://site.unibo.it/archea>). His publications include: *Il progetto del Polo per l'Infanzia. Sperimentazioni architettoniche tra didattica e ricerca* (Aión, Firenze 2018); *L'architettura della città lineare* (FrancoAngeli, Milano 2016); *Il progetto di architettura nelle scuole europee* (in European City Architecture, FAEdizioni, Parma 2012); *Mantova. Saggio sull'architettura* (FAEdizioni, Parma 2005).

Massimo Zammerini

**The home as a resource.**

**From privacy to relations, between rooms and open spaces**

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Abstract

During the current pandemics several themes have emerged also concerning architecture. Among these there are the different forms of home living. This has been an extraordinary situation in which we had to do more activities within the same home environment: education, work, and workout have claimed their own legitimate space within our homes in order to enable us to continue carrying out multiple tasks at the same time. We have felt the need of an alternative dwelling model and realized that we should require our homes to be more adaptable, even in not so dramatic emergency circumstances. The need of housing flexibility requires a re-thinking of distribution criteria which could affect the structures of our buildings.

Keywords

Flexibility — Home — Work — Room — Architecture

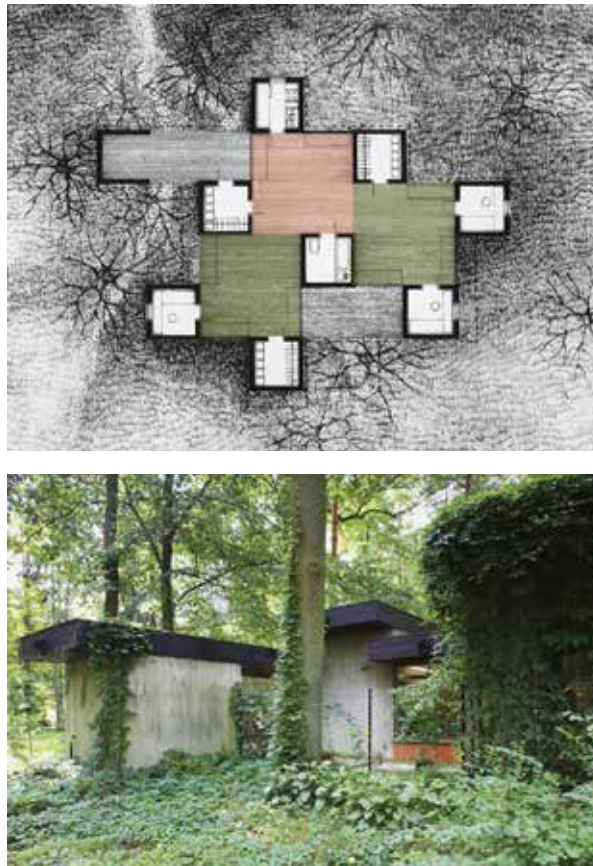
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A home conceived as an assemblage of small independent units which can be joined into a single or more units according to ever changing needs can offer economic advantages and thus become a resource if we assume that some of these parts can function as places attached to the home to work, study, host people and generate income<sup>1</sup>. A certain number of changes can be made to the inner space during the 24<sup>th</sup> day/night cycle.

A further theme has come out in the lapse of time between the pre- and post-Covid periods: before the pandemics outbreak we could notice in the new generations a certain marked indifference for face-to face interaction, replaced by a preference for virtual relations. I could observe a certain degree of indifference in students of Architecture when asked to think about the two main places of communal life, the living room inside the home and the square as a space framed by buildings which give it its own peculiar gathering features<sup>2</sup>. When compared with the popularity of social networks, real space seemed to have been entirely forgotten. The loss of interest for the space of communal real life represents a historical oddity which could have serious consequences even for the city's cultural and architectural heritage. A few months later, this tendency seems to have been replaced by the wish to go back to face-to-face contacts with people and things<sup>3</sup>. The effects of this new phenomenon are hard to predict. The search for a new housing model providing a link between private and public space can be a first step towards a new idea of complexity connecting the house to the city in the different settlement models: consolidated city, village, suburban sprawl, natural resort, etc.

We are aware of the consequences of globalization on people's lifestyle, on their daily habits and search for standard comfort and we also know about





**Fig. 1-2**

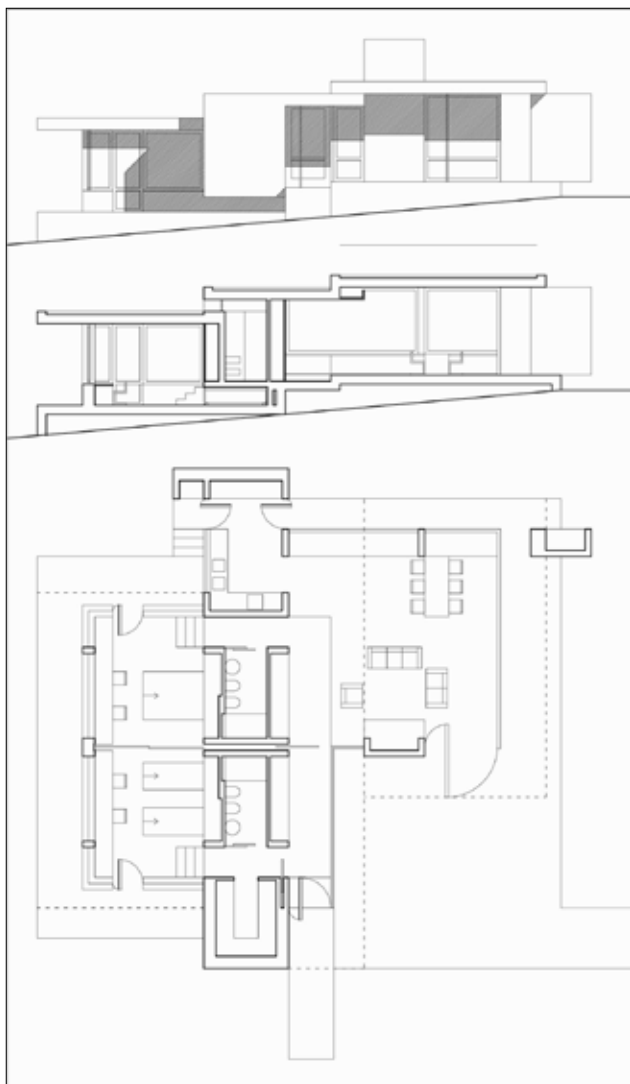
Jan Szpakowicz, house in the wood in Zalesie Dolny (Warsaw) -early '60s.

On the top hand-side, floor-plan of the three living rooms facing the separate nuclei of the two sleeping rooms, kitchen, bathroom and wardrobe. At the bottom, a picture by Marek Kambler showing the different heights of the floor-slabs and the connection between the building and the wood.

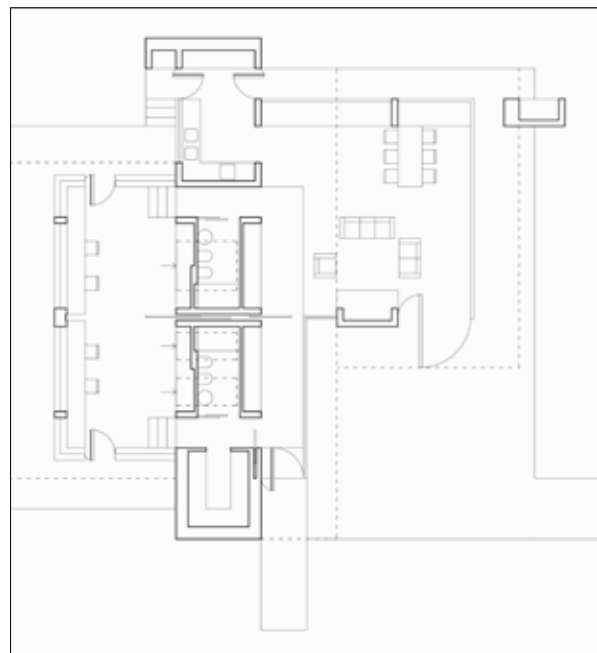
the changes of family patterns and that even the traditional family requires a higher degree of flexibility. A kind of lifestyle based on some certainties necessary to face an idea of the future seems to coexists with the impossibility to give it a full shape. The uncertainty of the future is by no means a contemporary issue but one which is profoundly human. We can state that, as architects, we are faced with questions which are deeply rooted in human society. The question of time in housing looks back to an endless tension between the past idea of the house, sometimes not even linked to real -life experiences but full of memories and longing and a desire for a future housing project which is somewhat stereotyped, displaying an idea of modernity inspired by glossy fashion- magazines, advertising and the media.

Beyond the Coronavirus pandemics, housing design has been addressing the theme of flexibility for quite some time, even though the proposed solutions seem to focus principally on how to make the maximum use of space in small-sized dwelling units and emergency residences<sup>4</sup>.

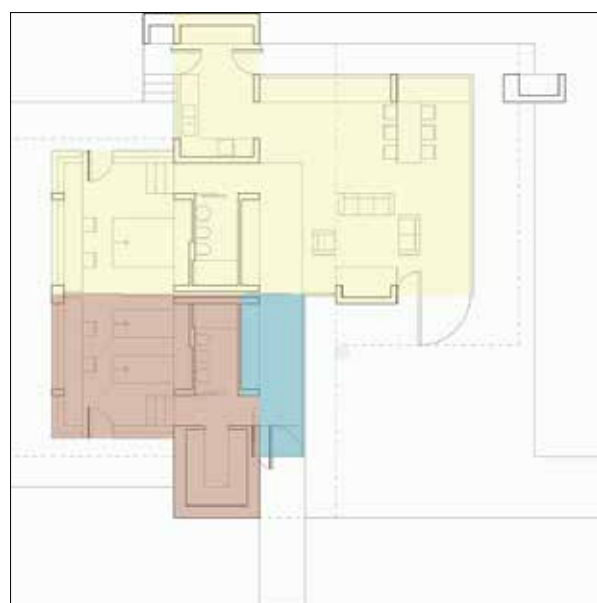
Here, instead, we would like to face the distribution issues connected to the idea of flexibility beyond the boundaries of types and sizes, assuming that it is possible to develop partly old and partly brand new solutions. The new element which could affect the execution of the architectural project is social distancing, provided we have to continue living with the Covid pandemics in the future, a hypothesis we make with some caution. Recent scientific indications show the necessity to assign each individual their own portion of space, a sort of air pocket of a given thickness. The consequences of this on the concept of minimum space and people's relations are quite clear and are going to affect people's behavior. Had we to apply this to life inside a dwelling space, we would not be able to ignore the problem of the high housing costs, above all in big cities, where this is

**Fig. 3**

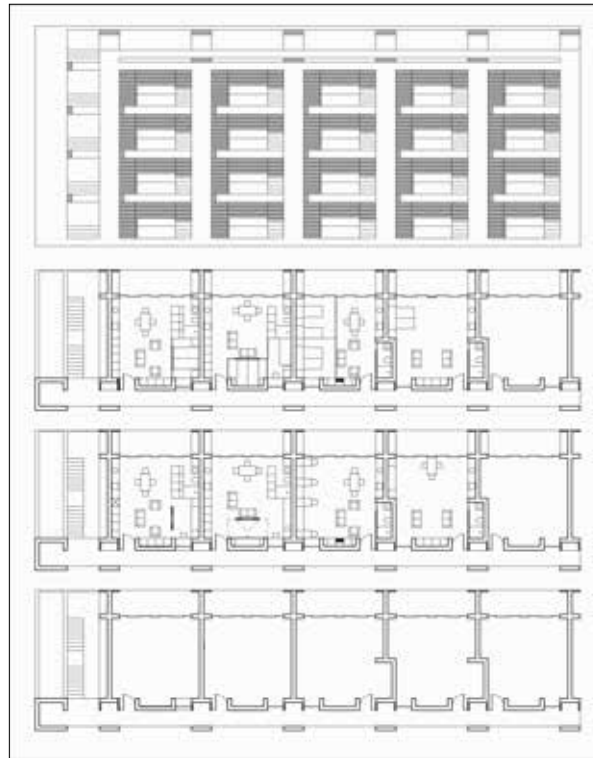
M. Zammerini, study of a single-family house, 2020. Floor plan with pulled-out beds between the two overlapped floor slabs in the sleeping space, section and perspective.

**Fig. 4**

M. Zammerini, study of a single-family house, 2020. Floor-plan with the beds located inside the space between the two floor slabs to realize two study rooms which can be joined to form a single work-, study or workout place.

**Fig. 5**

M. Zammerini, study of a single-family house, 2020. the three colours show the communal hall, the bigger flat, and the unit which can be turned into an autonomous dwelling space.

**Fig. 6**

M. Zammerini, study of a multiple-family residential unit with communal walkways with 40 sq.mt dwelling spaces for as many as 4 occupants, 2018.

Each unit can be divided into parts and converted into a living space for study, leisure, work and workout activities. From bottom to top: the serial shell structures, the living space floor-plan, the sleeping space lay-out, the perspective.

calculated in square meters. Social distancing could take place in a wider domestic environment, that is, in a bigger and thus more expensive house. However, we'd rather go down the easier path, which consists in changing the distribution criteria of the dwelling space, a process which is already unfolding before our eyes beyond serious emergency circumstances<sup>5</sup>.

The idea behind a flexible house is very easy: it is a floor-plan conceived by pulling together independent dwelling units, which can also be joined so as to form bigger and bigger dwelling spaces. If we reverse the process, we get a house with an unchangeable surface, which can be separated into smaller and autonomous units to meet several needs such as:

- the possibility to collocate at the side of the house a workplace for one or more household members;

- the case of a family house containing a small dwelling space to host domestic personnel once grown-up kids leave home or turn into a small source of income for an elderly person who lives alone;

- the need to host guests while granting them total privacy;

- the possibility to live a family life in which each member enjoys their own private space.

Given these partitions, it is necessary to turn back the communal space of the living room to a sort of square where the family can socialize.

The house designed by Jan Szpakowicz for himself and his wife Grazing in Zalesie Dolny near Warsaw in the 60's (Fig.1) is an extremely interesting and almost unknown example of the importance of geometry as a way to control a flexible space, beyond the undersized dimensions of the bedrooms, according to our standards: nine square-plan concrete nuclei of 2,4 meters side, eight of which with a vertical window, containing respectively three "monk-like" rooms with a bed and a desk, a bathroom, a kitchen and three wardrobes: their well-planned and fixed location gives rise to three square-plan living room spaces which are connected to each other but can be separated and are equipped with big glass-windows linking the interior space with the wood outside. The cement parallelepipeds are of different



heights and support floors of various heights creating light stripes between one and the other. The three “squares”, one of which is close to the kitchen and bathroom and is used as hall/living room, can be joined into a single fluid multifunctional space and make it possible for each small private nucleus to communicate with the communal space<sup>6</sup>.

In order to achieve a high level of flexibility it is not easy to plan several outdoor access points, the distribution of bathrooms and toilets and their ventilation, the allocation of facilities, the maximum use of sunlight.

Different models and dimensions require some specific refection: if the single-family house lends itself to not so easy solutions, the multiple family house needs to be investigated starting from well-known models, which can give us some hints to increase flexibility and lead to new forms of housing aggregation and internal lay-out.

The typical Anglo-Saxon row detached house, for example, thanks to its repetitive pattern and its different heights and widths allows to realize a kind of urban settlement based on the alternation of streets and squares. The presence of two facades favors the existence of at least two access points, to which others can be added to create parts separated by the two gardens. In the longitudinal section of the row it is then possible to plan a sequence of three independent units which can be joined together<sup>7</sup>.

The residential building, which was very popular in Italy in the 50's and 60's, contained a certain number of dwelling units for floor and two or three access points, which could be used with a different aim and provide a good solution to locate the access points dead-centre to the floor - plan of the flat. This will have easily predictable consequences for the distribution of the inner spaces, their separation and aggregation<sup>8</sup>.

The multi-storey building with communal walkways looks more interesting due to its communal route which could be turned into an interesting communal space, provided its width and a higher degree of privacy on the balconies are taken into account.

The two project studies in the pictures below show a single-family and a multiple-family house with communal walkways, both inspired by an idea of inner flexibility.

The 140 sq.mt. single-family house (Fig.2,3,4), built on a slight slope, shows the possibility to turn the two bedrooms into two study rooms with independent access points, by sliding the beds into the space obtained by overlapping the two floor slabs of the living and sleeping rooms, a solution made possible by the natural sloping shape of the surface ground. The two study rooms can be joined together by sliding the walls inside a second space which separates the two bathrooms. Besides, the house can be divided into two autonomous units, one smaller and one bigger, without the necessity of any further work.

The multiple-family house with communal walkways (Fig.5) is created by pulling together a series of 40 sq.mt. dwelling units. The walls dividing the units are designed as two-faced shells which can contain 60cm thick wardrobes, folding beds, technical volumes and kitchen worktops, desks and chairs. Each unit is equipped with a ceiling sliding track onto which movable panels can be hung, which allow different lay-outs for as far as four beds and can be converted into a living space with work -and study places that can be joined or separated.

The theme of a cyclical return to an empty inner space assigns to perimeters and unchangeable elements (technical facilities like bathrooms and kitchens) a fundamental role. This leads to a rediscovery of

previously experimented architectural solutions, in which the idea of the wall and its capacity to organize functional spaces exists alongside the dematerialization of the modernist building envelope and with the idea of a nucleus of autonomous and structurally relevant services, borrowed from the modern office block. This foreseeable mix links to more complex idea of home living contemplating work, study and workout activities which can already reveal its new attitude from the outside.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Let us consider, for example, the extreme case of the Moriyama House by Ryue Nishizawa designed in 2005 in Tokyo for a client who, having given up work, decided to use a plot of his own land to build ten buildings of different sizes and very close to each other, including one which only hosted a shower. Each of these units can be rented out.

<sup>2</sup> I'm thinking of a debate session held within the "Laboratorio di Progettazione III" during which lots of students, when prompted to express their own views, showed a marked indifference in designing living room spaces destined to family gatherings, conversation with friends and more in general socialization. This tendency showed itself in the undersized dimensions of the living room space and the odd seating arrangement, with very few seats all located in front of a TV set. The same tendency was clear when designing a square defined by its architectural stage sets placed in such a way as to create the typical gathering effect of historical squares.

<sup>3</sup> It is interesting to notice that at the end of the lockdown the same students expressed diametrically different wishes. The effects on the work-in-progress have been positively surprising and have led to a different appreciation of several texts, among which the one by Camillo Sitte on *The art of city building*.

<sup>4</sup> The case of Schroder House designed in 1924 by Rietveld in Utrecht is perhaps the clearest example of an idea of interior flexibility, a model which has not been adopted for quite some time. However, there are relevant echoes of an idea based on this house in the work of Giò Ponti (Flat in via Dezza, Milano, 1956/57), Herman Hertzberger (Diagoon Housing, Delft, 1977/70), Shigeru Ban (2/5 House, Hyogo, 1995), PKMN architectures (Casa Mje, Salinas, Spain), Oki Sato Nendo (Drawer House, Tokyo, 2011/13), CLEI ("Elastic living", Biennale di Milano), Arrhov Frick Arkitektkontor (Hammarby gard . Hus 2, Stockholm), Ensemble Studio (Cyclopean House, Boston, 2015), Jack Self (Cenobium, 2016) plus other international studies. <sup>5</sup> Gli studi sul tema della flessibilità si sono concentrati soprattutto su sistemi di arredo interno e meno sui caratteri distributivi.

<sup>5</sup> The studies on flexibility have focused more on interior decor systems and less on distribution criteria.

<sup>6</sup> The source of this project is the article by Lukasz Stepnik "The Avant-Garde in the Forest. The house of Jan Szpakowicz" in: *Przekroj* n. 3567/2019.

<sup>7</sup> Among others, the row detached houses designed by Eduardo Souto De Moura from 1993 onwards are conceived in plans so as to be reinterpreted for our research on flexibility.

<sup>8</sup> From the Furmanick building by Mario De Renzi on Lungotevere in Rome to the twin detached houses by Venturing Venturi in via Piccolomini, the floor-plans of the Roman flats in the residential building offer lots of hints about the strategic role of access points.

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Giorgio Gasco, Giuseppe Resta  
**From the Elizabethan long gallery to the Turkish  
 sofa: rethinking the art of inhabitation**

#### Abstract

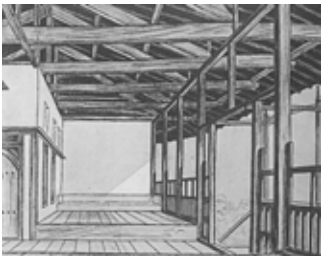
During the last century, optimisation processes of the residential architecture have been eradicating many archetypal spaces of the pre-modern house from domestic layouts.

The *sofa* of the Turkish house, among these archetypal spaces, is a relevant precedent that can help us question and eventually undermine the typical features of the western domestic interior. Its basic essence as a transition space originates from the ancient Anatolian courtyards. This paper aims to discuss both spatial and typological features of the *sofa* to emphasize its intrinsic modernity, as it has been done in the case of recent reconsideration of the Elizabethan long gallery.

*Sofas* allowed a domestic experience to be filled with visual richness, deep intimacy, and spatial variations. The sofa could extend, adjust, and widen the experience of the private realm letting diverse uses and accommodations. This is exactly the degree of indeterminateness that a contemporary flat dramatically lacks.

#### Keywords

Inhabit — Domestic space — Pre-modern house — Turkish house — Sofa



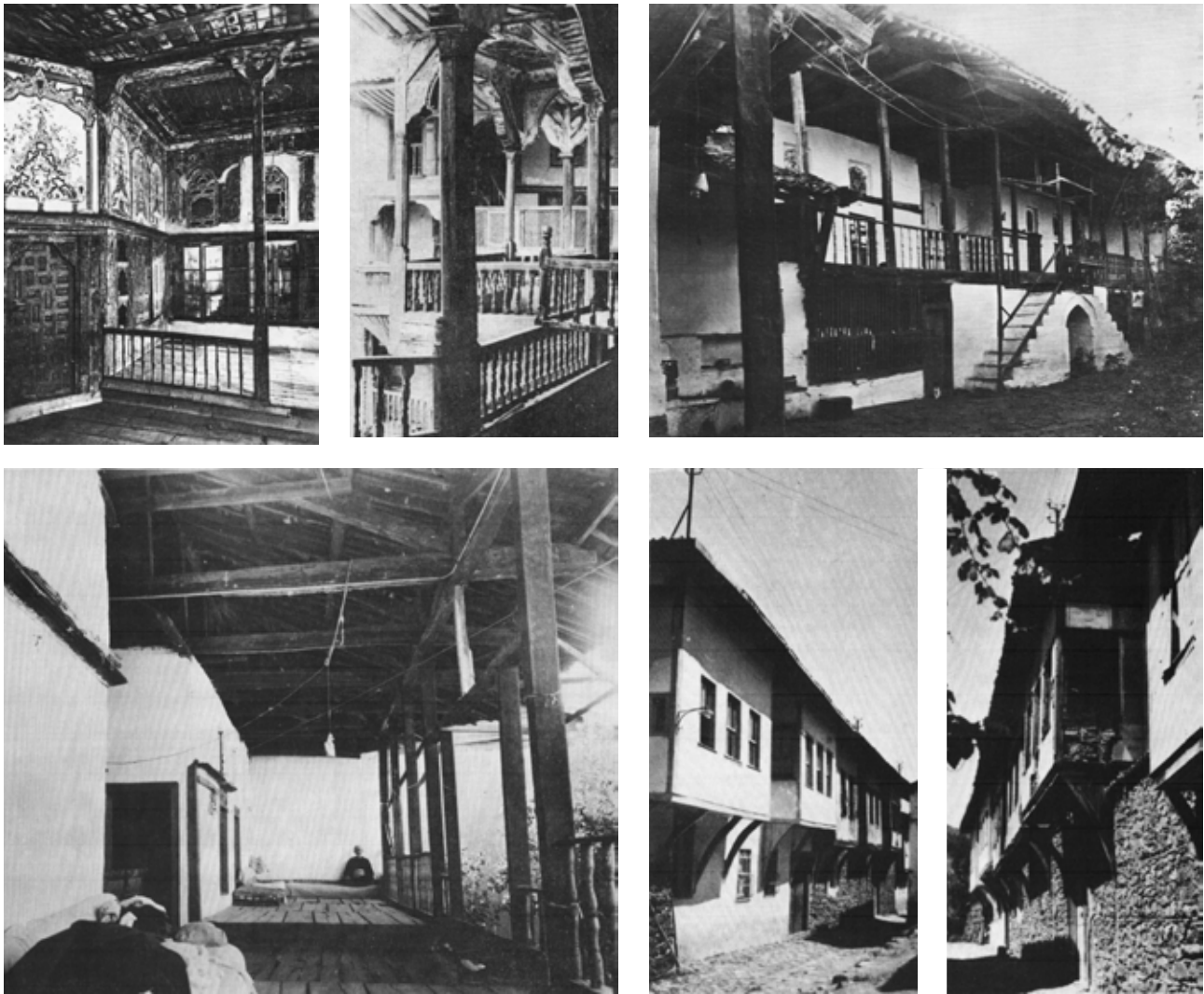
**Fig. 1**

Sedat Hakki Eldem, Drawing of the *sofa* (in *Turkish Houses*, Istanbul 1984).

Recent restrictions due to a global pandemic brought to light that the domestic space, in the flats where we live, got suddenly narrow. They have shown to be dramatically dreary in conveying any imaginative deepness attached to our daily experience (dreams, *rêveries*, memories, imagination, inner journeys). Moreover, many essential activities turned out to be hard to perform: hide ourselves from others, define our own space of solitude, and interact socially with the public realm from distance. While being forced to stay within our living-space, we eventually realized how arid daily life experience might be in a modern flat. Hence, the importance of a space that is rich and ample. Allowing and adapting to unexpected circumstances has become a landmark concern. In spite of its qualified functionality, as well as a compact and rational organization, the modern house may fall short of that range of uncertainty that is so essential for social life.

The paper aims to review some archetypal spaces of the pre-modern house that over the last century have been cut out, or in the best cases just reduced, in the name of the dwelling optimisation. In pre-modern houses, spaces without a function were empty, open to be arranged according to different needs. Such spaces acted as a thick threshold, where domestic life could connect to the exterior, being a device for public relation or rather for retreating in private. Along a domestic journey, transitions by difference could produce visual lushness.

The aim of the text is not that of promoting a historicist revision of the traditional house, but on the contrary is to prove the possibility to enrich contemporary residential plans with spaces that are considered to be superfluous. Namely those narrative spaces that stimulate movement and use, in opposition to hideous corridors that thwart evolution of our flats.



**Fig. 2-7**  
Sedat Hakki Eldem,  
View of the *eyvan*.

Perspective from inner *sofa* in a multi-story *konak*.

View of the *hayat* at the first floor overlooking the back garden.

External *sofa* with level articulation.

Façade articulation from the street.

Images taken from: *Turkish Houses*, Istanbul 1984.

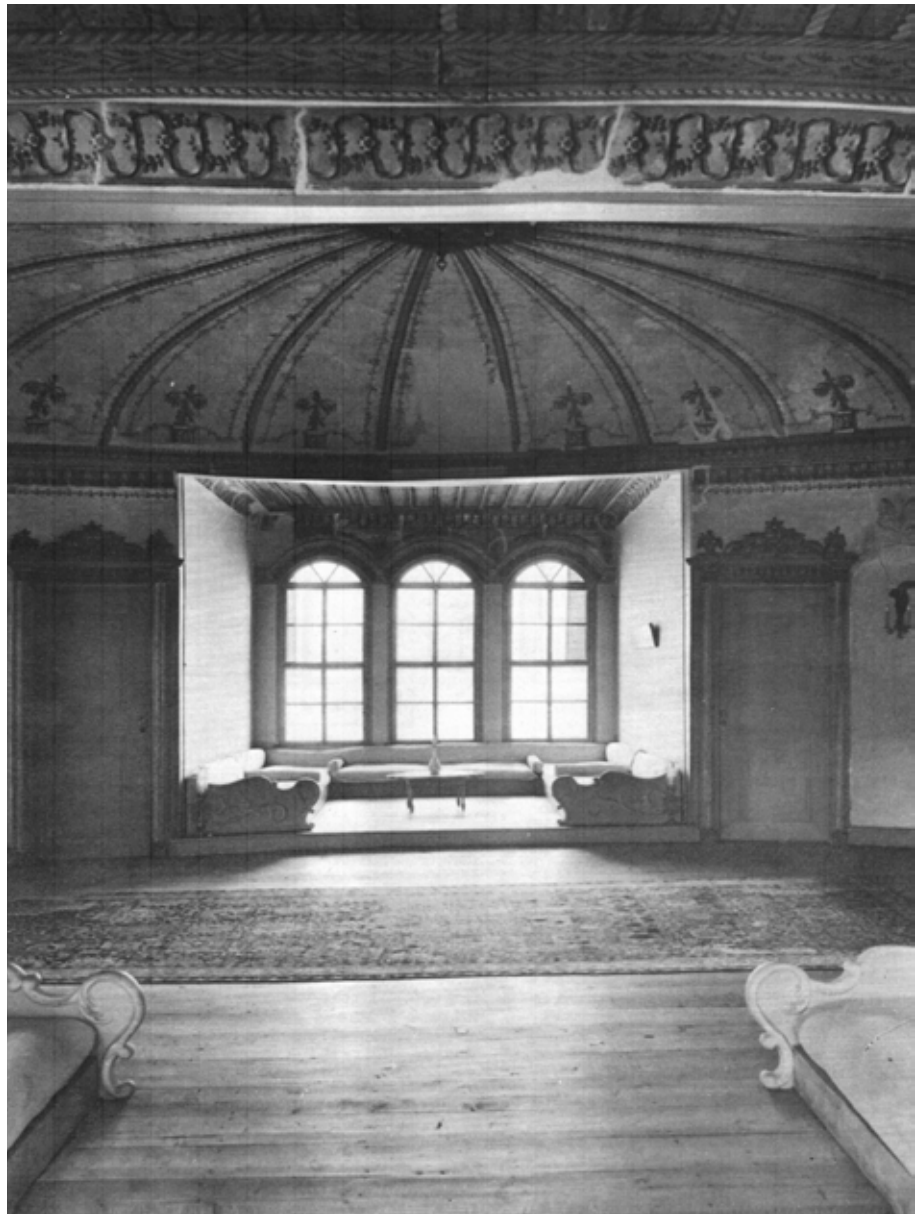
### Empty space and neutral space

Interest for spaces without a function resurfaced at intervals in the discourse of different scholars, which sought to enrich the articulation of domestic space.

In particular, Peter Smithson several times pointed out a specific spatial feature he referred to as *emptiness*. Emptiness has a quality in its potential to be filled, «the empty room is the same as the empty stage. You furnish it with those things necessary» (Spellman & Unglaub 2005, p. 64). This is what a house should convey, a place that is able to react/adjust to the circumstances, a place to be turned into a void, where one may experience the void. Smithson concluded his conversations with students with the following advice that today sounds prophetic: «you have to culture your path and set yourself to recover space and the notion of emptiness» (Spellman & Unglaub 2005, p. 68).

The Elizabethan long gallery (14th century) offers a striking example of a neutral space. The grand houses of the aristocratic class, in this period, had an accessory space in the form of a long and ample corridor open to the landscape. It was used for walking and talking when the weather was bad, as well as for the display of paintings. The same definition as corridor-gallery emphasizes the multi-purpose nature of this space. The Elizabethan long gallery actually was an aristocratic and refined version of the Italian *loggia* and in general of the porticoes to be found in monasteries (Coope 1986, pp. 43-84). Several domestic spaces scattered everywhere around





**Fig. 8**  
Sedat Hakki Eldem, *Central sofa with kiosk* (in *Turkish Houses*, Istanbul 1984).

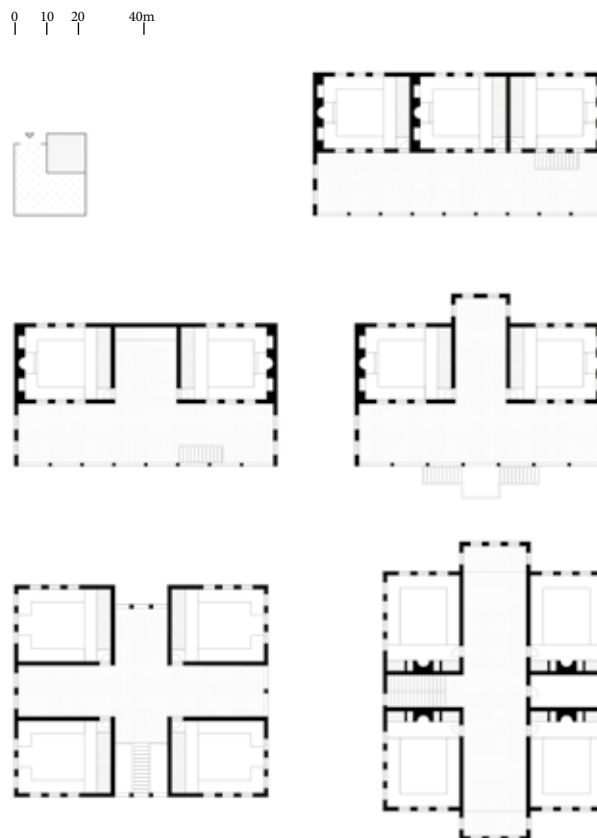
the Mediterranean, from the modest vernacular houses to more noble and grand examples, shared similar threshold-spaces for the transition between the interior and the exterior. Certainly, these kind of spaces were the real essence of the art of inhabitation. Neutral space of the pre-modern house is the set of a domestic scenario conveying discoveries for the imagination of the dwellers. These interior landscapes brought flexibility in terms of space and time. Eventually the very ability to squeeze and expand, and to translate into something else, is today fundamental for a renewed residential design.

Among different examples of neutral space, the Turkish gallery-loggia (*hayat*) stands as an open and convertible form<sup>1</sup>. The *hayat*, after a process of integration with other local archetypes, produced a more complex form that is known as *sofa*.

### The Turkish Sofa

The *sofa* of the Ottoman house had been preserved in its authentic forms until the beginning of the 20th century, when it was shrunk as an entry hall or further compressed in the form of a corridor.

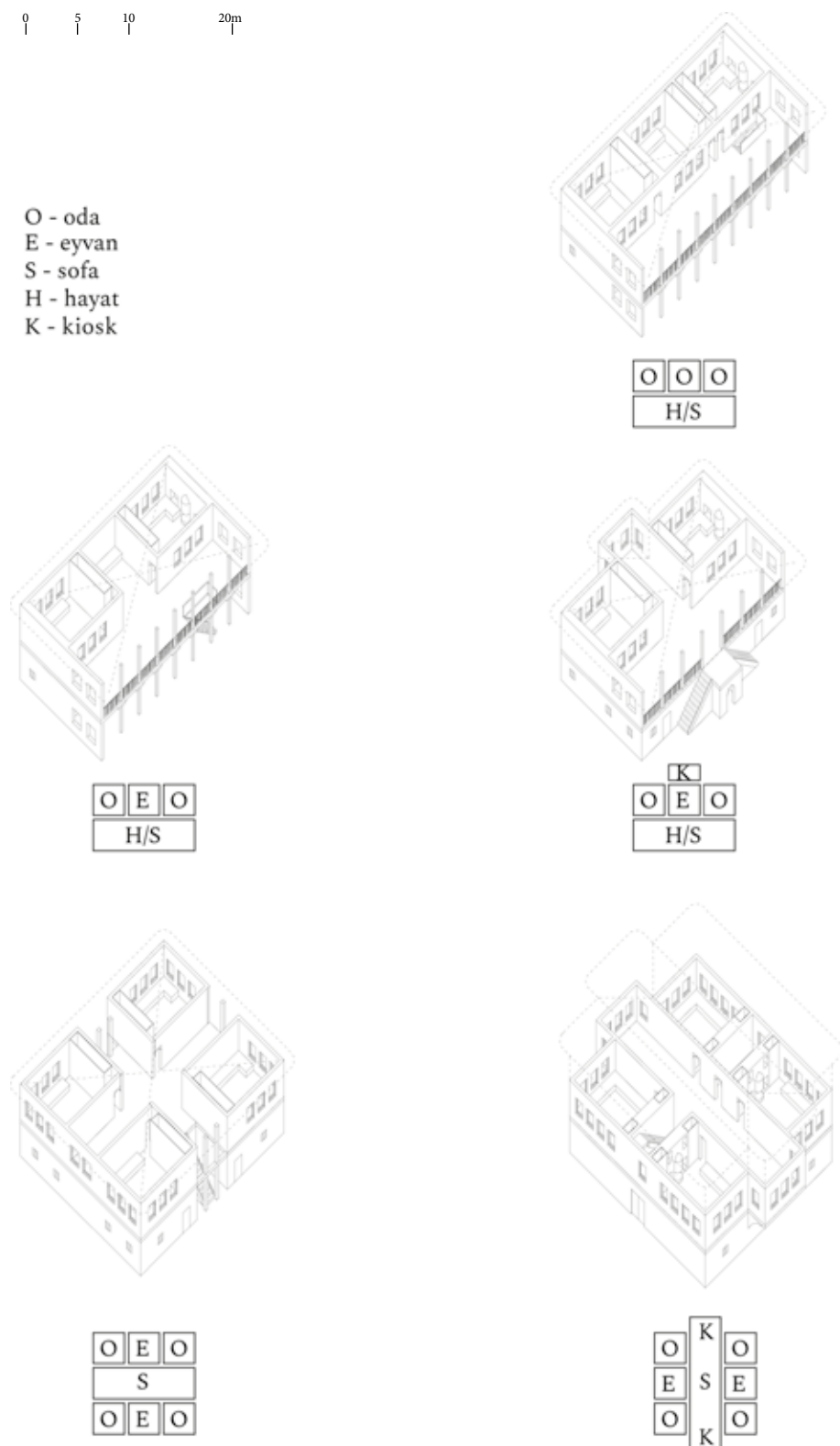
The Turkish architect Sedat Hakki Eldem was the first to offer a formaliza-

**Fig. 9**

G. Gasco G. Resta, Progress of the sofa from simple, vernacular examples, to more sophisticated and refined cases.

tion of the *sofa* by the way of a typological study based on a wide catalogue of plans.<sup>2</sup> As a result, he organized the set of plans within four typological categories in relation to the position of the *sofa*: without *sofa*, external *sofa*, inner *sofa*, central *sofa*. According to Eldem, the *sofa* was the most decisive factor in the composition of the Turkish house plan, for the type of the house was determined directly by the shape and the location of the hall (Eldem 1954, p. 16). In particular, he emphasized its manifold nature both from a functional point of view and from a spatial one. On one hand the *sofa* allows the transition and the communication between different rooms, on the another it is a suitable place for meetings, where to celebrate weddings and other festive events. End areas, freed from circulation, were used to sit. These were separated from the central hall and shaped as recessed spaces between a series of rooms (*eyvan*) or as cantilevered extensions connected to the hall (*kiosk*). Due to the articulation of such supplementary spaces (recesses-*eyvan* between rooms and extensions-*kiosk*) the plan, although elaborating a specific type, can be organized in different variations and combinations (Eldem 1954, p. 31).

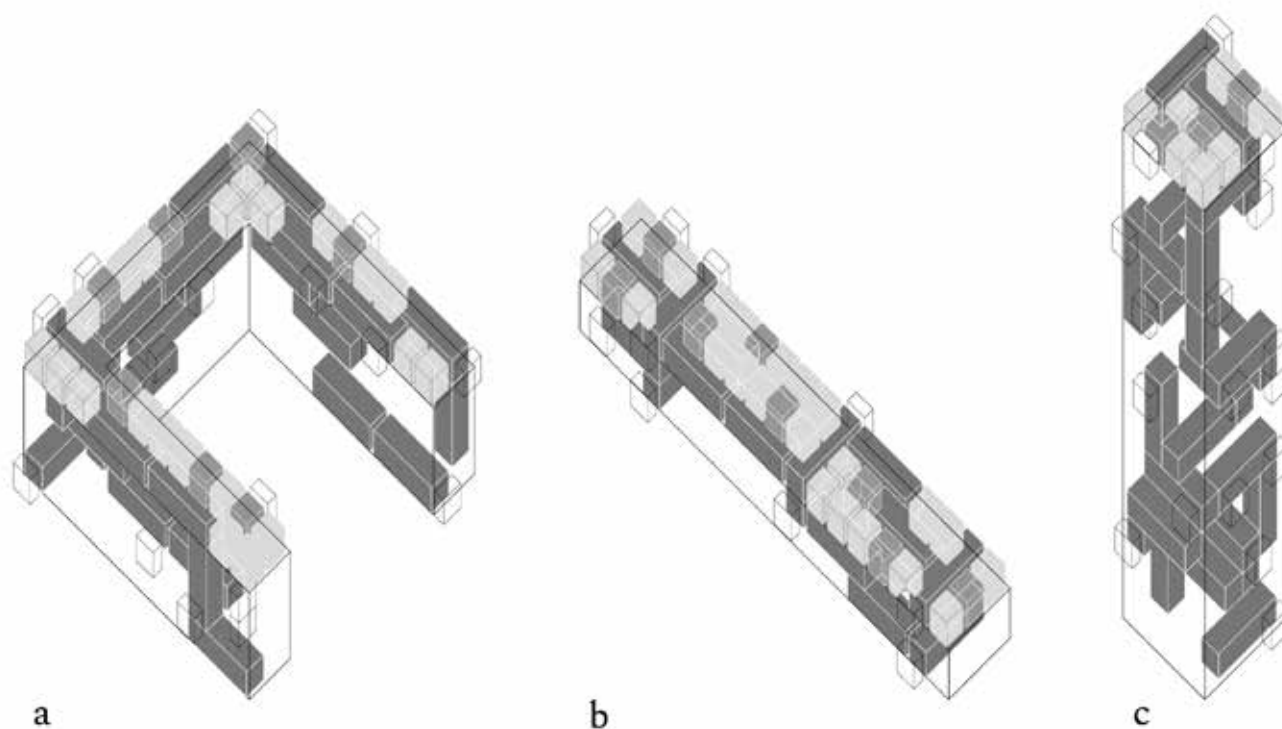
More recently the historian Doğan Kuban (1995, p. 42) criticized the abstract fashion of Eldem's approach and the rigid approach of his typological study. Kuban endorsed a more evolutionary process, taking place in different times and progressing from simple, vernacular examples, to more sophisticated and refined cases. This resulted in the transition from one configuration to the other (Kuban 1995, p. 21). Kuban insisted on a development in consecutive stages of two basic units: the corridor-gallery (*hayat*) and the recessed space (*eyvan*) (Kuban 1995, p. 24). Eventually the *sofa*, as the result of the diverse arrangements of the *hayat* and *eyvan*, extends and widens the space between the rooms. The same progression has been elaborated and represented by the authors in the figures provided for this paper.

**Fig. 10**

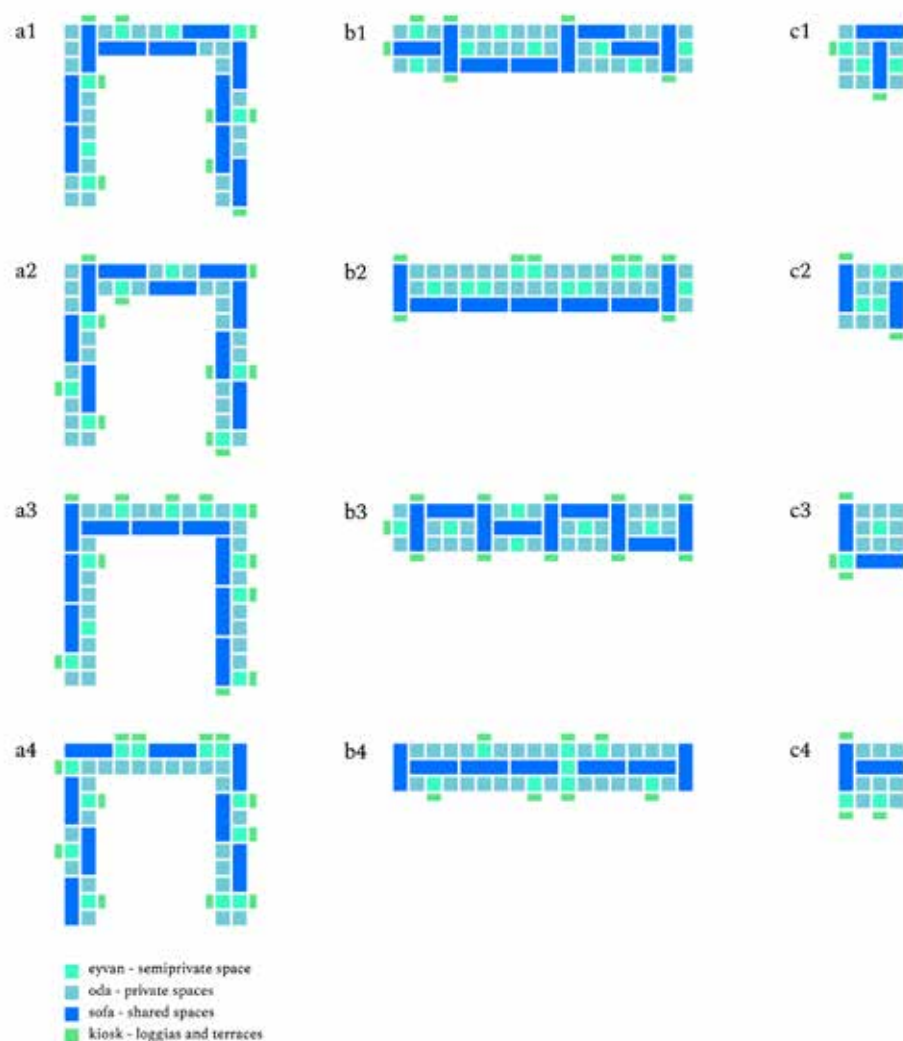
G. Gasco G. Resta, Planimetric progression of the sofa combining *hayat* and *eyvan*.

It is clear how these spaces show a combinatorial character, for they increase their level of complexity while new components gradually are joint together. The whole composition layout of the Turkish house is based on this progression/transformation, which eventually originates the configuration of the *sofa*. The latter, from its inner location may expand towards the exterior turning into an autonomous element of the façade. The resulting distribution of the house is essential to achieve a visual relationship between the private and the public, or rather those parts looking out the *sofa*. The *sofa* does not have any specific functions, yet it has a very peculiar nature: that of a void, a free space, apt to accommodate unpredictable uses



**Fig. 11**

G. Gasco G. Resta, Sofa as contemporary compositional device to design community housing blocks.

**Fig. 12**

G. Gasco G. Resta, Studi compositivi sul *sofa* come strumento per il progetto contemporaneo di edifici residenziali. Possibili combinatorie.

without a formalization on the paper. Hence, its nature is far more complex than that of a corridor/hall. Ultimately, in order to suggest a definition of the *sofa*, we cannot refer to a specific space; rather we need to analyse the spatial arrangement that ensues from the combination of two archetypal spaces: the *hayat* and the *eyvan*.

### **The *sofa* as a modern template**

All these features render the *sofa* as a viable domestic design element, to such an extent that it may be linked to some contemporary discourses.

First, it is the result of an assemblage of parts. Hence, paraphrasing Robert Venturi, the *sofa* can be considered as an “inflection device” in architectural composition. According to Venturi, «inflection in architecture is the way in which the whole is implied by exploiting the nature of the individual parts, rather than their position or number» (Venturi 1966, p.88). In a very similar fashion, the relationship between different parts of the *sofa* is triggered by their combinatorial properties, which imply the key for their mutual assemblage.

Having the quality of a space of transition, the *sofa* can be analysed according to the concept of threshold as Herman Hertzberger theorized it. «The threshold provides the key to the transition and connection between areas with divergent territorial claims and, as a place in its own right, it constitutes, essentially, the spatial condition for the meeting and dialogue between areas of different orders» (Hertzberger 2005, p. 32). Likewise, the *sofa* enables a gradual transition, in a way that is more a spatial articulation rather than a separation/closure (Hertzberger 2008, p. 49).

In the case of *sofa*, the transition/articulation process unfolds both as internal organization rationale and as a device for relations with the exterior. In this perspective, the pre-modern Turkish house is equipped with a buffer area that enables a hierarchical internal organization of the private spaces and at the same time the connection to other living spaces by means of its outer ramifications<sup>3</sup>.

The production of such a dynamic space for connections may relate to the *cluster* form of the distribution patterns developed by the Smithson in their early urban proposals<sup>4</sup>.

In conclusion, the *sofa* stands out as a relevant spatial archetype with a potential to be further explored. As a compositional device to organize a plan, it is suited to overturn the serial layout of contemporary flats. As a threshold space, the *sofa* allows soft transitions, where diverse use patterns may overlap and alternate. Lastly, as an element for external articulation, it implies new modes to connect, unite, and separate different residential units within the same building<sup>5</sup>.

All multiple articulations originating from a renewed interest in the *sofa* can lead to original paths toward a different art of inhabitation. In this way, the static, predictable experience of dwelling would be enriched by the changing, dynamic, fluid experience of the movement.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> The *hayat* was the transition space between rooms and external world. Of ancient roots it shared common traits with similar domestic archetypes of Greek-Mediterranean culture, as well as Hittite and Syrian. The sofa is a space characterized by a more complex articulation that is usually defined in a reductive fashion as a hall. See: Kuban D. (1995) – *Türk 'Hayat'lı Evi*. Mısırlı Matbaacılık A. Ş., Istanbul

<sup>2</sup> Eldem launched the first studies on this subject in 1936 within the National Architecture Seminar he directed in the Istanbul Fine Arts Academy. This early body of experimental work, was later followed by a systematic research eventually published in 1954. (Eldem 1954)

<sup>3</sup> The feature to connect different units within the same building had been already analysed and categorized by Eldem as an independent type named as “multiple partitioned plan” (Eldem 1954, p. 149)

<sup>4</sup> See: Smithson A. & P. (1957) – “Cluster City: a new shape for the community”. *The Architectural Review*, 122, 730. Although the city cluster idea addressed no doubt an urban scale, yet at time turned out to be suitable to elaborate plans on an architectural scale, as in the case of the ‘streets in the air’

<sup>5</sup> In relation to this point, we are experimenting similar compositional templates for community housing blocks at the Faculty of Architecture.

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## Ottavio Amaro

### Which measure for the invisible

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#### Abstract

In the condition of post-Coronavirus catastrophe for the architectural project it is not a question of identifying new urban foundational models on a territory reduced to its zero degree, but rather of intervening on the existing city and the sense of living.

We are in the presence of an epochal ideological inversion: the house, as a new centrality, arrives from the *existenzminimum* to the need to expand, overcome 'free space' for new individual 'enclosures', proposing itself as a workshop.

The city revises the concept of identity, in the search for new 'measures' in the relationship between the workplace and the place of living, between public and individual space, between extensiveness and slow infrastructural networks, in a new process of demineralization and therefore of mingling with nature.

#### Keywords

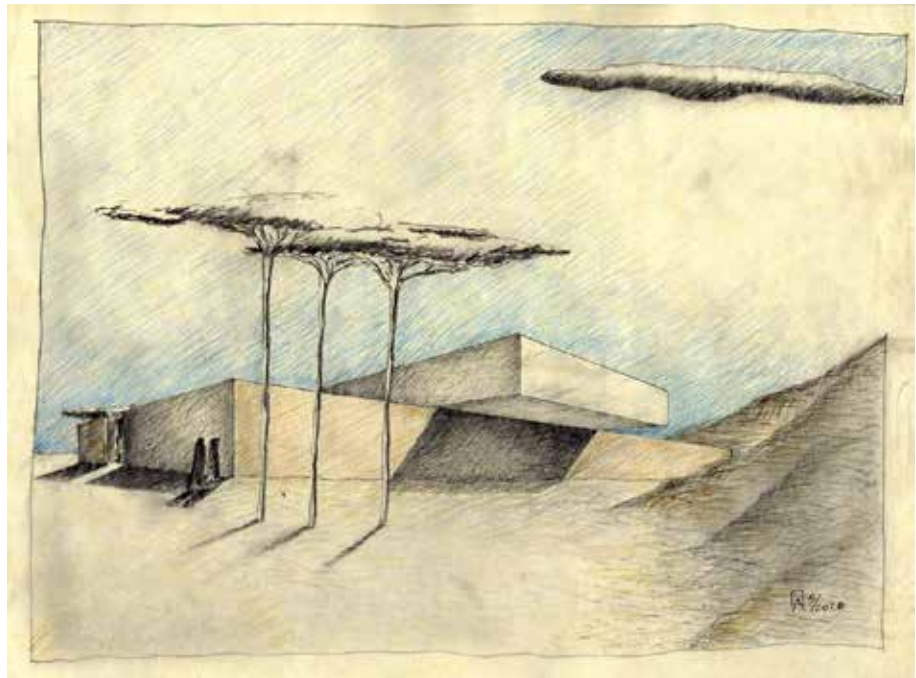
Catastrophe — Measure — House — City — Security

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«At the beginning of the scourges and when they are over, there is always some rhetoric. In the first case the habit is not yet lost, and in the second it has now returned. Only in the moment of misfortune does one get used to the truth, that is, to silence».  
(A. Camus, *The Plague*, 1947).

In the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic state, the only certainty on which we need to reflect is that we are facing an epochal change, with uncertain and unpredictable outcomes, which in any case has upset, for the first time on a global level and with the involvement of all forms of social and urban communities, lifestyles, habits, customs and consolidated cultural characteristics, individual and collective organizational statutes. The awareness has taken over that there is a watershed between a before and an after. All created by an 'invisible enemy', as much as it is active, capable of causing a 'freeze-frame' proposed to rethink and review our relationship with the world and the things that surround us, starting with the home and the city. As Olga Tokarczuk (2020) says «It is as if we had been subjected to a test, thanks to this we will also know what kind of society we really are»; a test administered in the midst of a silent catastrophe, which, unlike those we are used to historically – wars, earthquakes, tsunamis, – does not have the appearance of a destruction capable of wiping out the space and time of a place, but manifests in its abstraction of data and statistics, leaving the city immune in its condition of spectral emptiness.

But speaking of catastrophe also means bringing back the reflection on its meaning linked to *overthrow*, to *revolution*, and therefore also to change or *transformation* (Curi 2008), which presuppose, above all for the city and places, new founding acts and prefigurations. This in an existing physical scenario that has not changed, which has not lost its evolutionary time,

**Fig. 1**

Ottavio Amaro, *Casa con scala levatoia*, may 2020, perspective.

The drawings are taken from the virtual exhibition *Te.CA Altrove, Viaggio intorno alla stanza. Visioni domestiche* edited by Marina Tornatora, in *TE.CA, temporary compact art*, Dipartimento d'Arte, UNIRC, april-july 2020 - [www.teca.unirc.it](http://www.teca.unirc.it)

which is not reduced to 'zero degree', but which has found itself inadequate, subjected to concrete adaptive experimentation during a specific time frame. In this context we are faced with a role of the project that seeks its dimension of immanence in the idea of transformation, adaptation, rethinking of the city and the existing sense of living.

An architectural and urban role relaunched by the emergence of new security needs and by the innovative acceleration posed by the spread of the pandemic that overwhelms historical customs consolidated on the level of work and collective and individual relationships. In this sense, we can say that the indispensability of architecture in the construction of human well-being is still returning, understood as being better on earth and therefore as an approach to the beauty of living. Therefore a need for a project that does not renounce its premise of vision and 'utopia', but that looks at the metamorphosis of reality with new points of view that from the terrestrial scale reaches that of the city and the house.

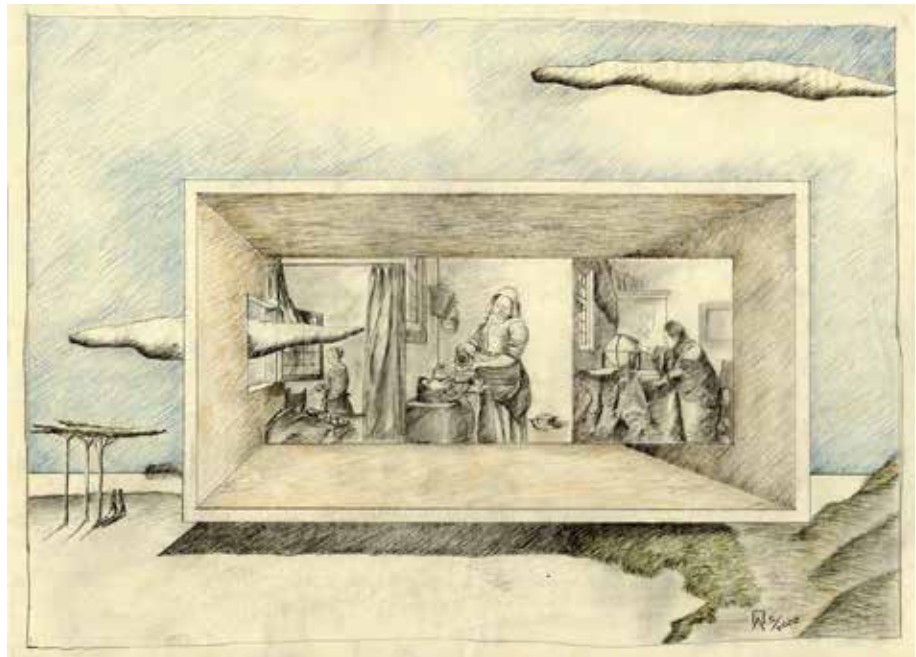
A vision now capable of reading the phenomena of entropization in their global relationship of use of resources, of territorial governance and above all in a new idea of soil transformation, putting answers to the excessive 'mineralization' in the expansion of the city, to the immeasurable energy consumption and a distorted idea of unlimited development, often suited to the nihilism of a science that is not always positive.

The biggest victim is certainly the city, as it has historically been determined. Simultaneously struck by the virus worldwide, from a place of crowds and a 'wonderful machine to live in', it has been brought back to the place of silence so far 'appreciated' only in De Chirico's figurative metaphysical atmospheres or in Hopper's melancholy.

All the past terminological apparatus of definition of city: metropolis, megalopolis, ecumenopolis, or widespread, generic, indefinite, postmodern, postindustrial city, is subordinated to the predominance of fear, therefore to security, dictated by an invisible entity, as much as present its own citizens.

The same division between the center and the periphery of the city, the historic city and the contemporary city, collide with a condition of horizontality of destiny to be rethought, not only in their settlement relationship, but



**Fig. 2**

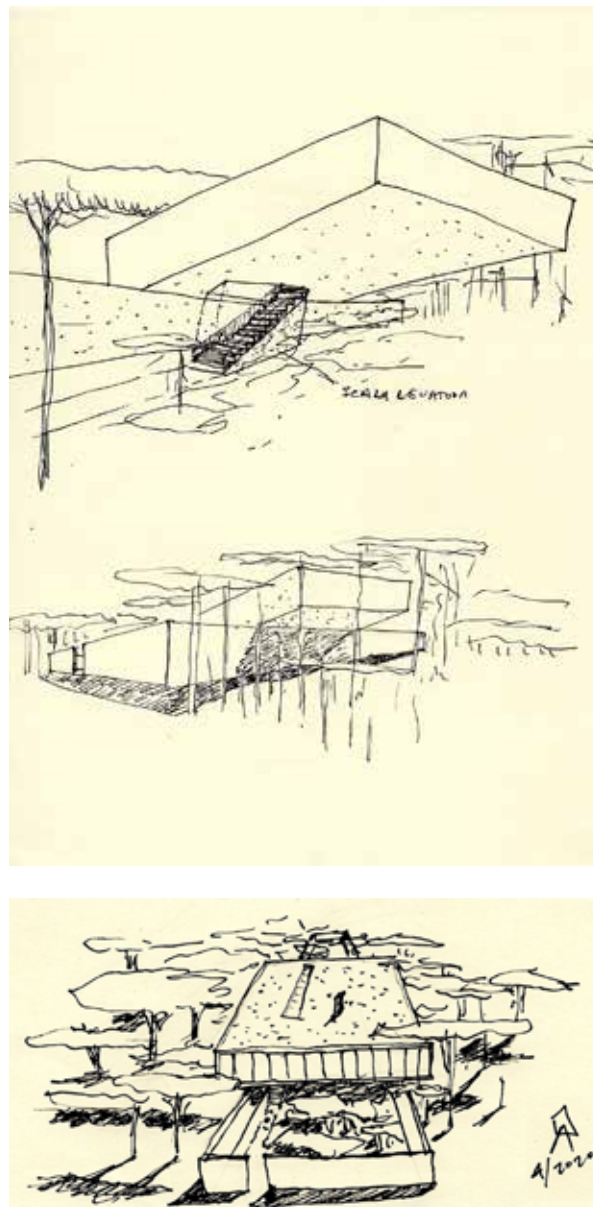
Ottavio Amaro, *Casa con scala levatoio*, may 2020, interior.

in the response to the security needs of the pandemic crisis, in terms new with respect to urban science and contemporary evolutionary certainties. And it becomes obsolete to express definitions as a 'dormitory area', when compared to the new dimension of a real workshop crammed into its domestic interiors, inverting the relationship entirely within modern culture between the house and the city. Modern culture supporting a zoning that built a city for homogeneous areas, opposed to the needs that emerged in the current crisis of a city for self-sufficient parts, where categories such as multifunctional, 'disorder', 'disharmonic' are not a negative factor, but perhaps a quality necessary for the city of the future. A scenario that together with the condition of multi-ethnicity will assume heterogeneity as an identity. We could speak in this sense of what Mirko Zardini a few years ago defined as a return to the 'picturesque', as a result of an inclusive and integrated action in the functions.

At the same time, the earth and the air, or rather the ground and the sky, return as fundamental elements of the urban scenario. The historical construction of the city was characterized as a subtraction of nature, becoming, as Emanuele Coccia (2020) claims, «a strange project of mineralization of life based on the illusion that human life can be nourished only by contact with stones, steel, glass». The liberation of horizontal space, already hoped for in Le Corbusier's urban visions, is a response to the dual need for public places and distances between people, just as the 'sky' can respond to articulated and self-sufficient housing functions «*Sur le toit de l'Immeuble-villas, existera une piste de 1000 mètres où l'on pourra courir à l'air*» (Le Corbusier 1956).

A return to the primary and concrete elements even at the time of the primacy of virtuality and the digital world that bring the city back to revise the concept of 'measure' as an enlargement or narrowing of its relations between workplace and place of living, between public space and individual, between density and increase in open space, between extensiveness and slow infrastructural networks, between public space as a 'place of the crowd' and the need to isolate oneself and distance oneself.

This does not mean less city or giving space to an unlikely debate on the natural as opposed to the urban, on a return to the rural dimension of an



**Fig. 3-5**

Ottavio Amaro, *Casa con scala levatoia*, may 2020, sketch.

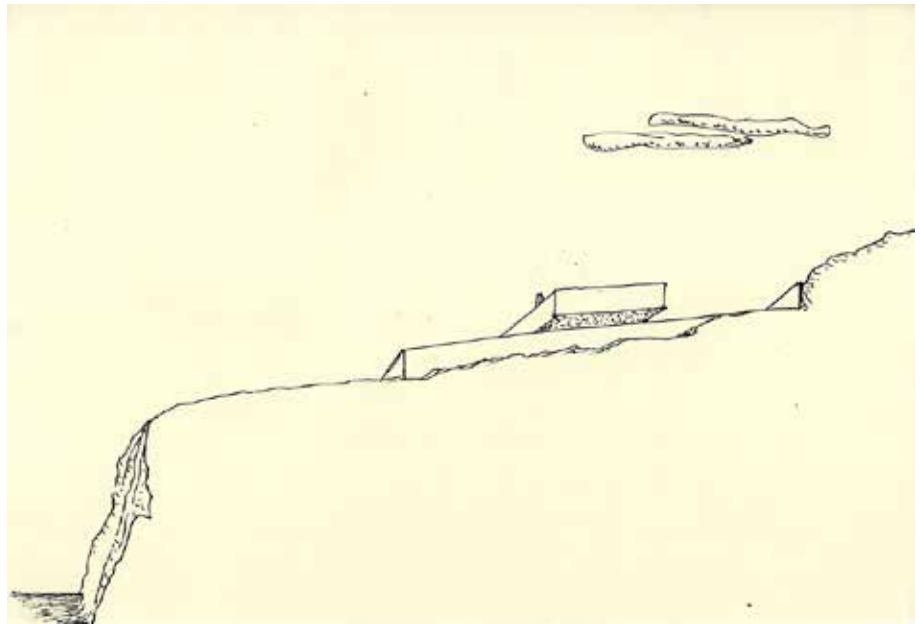
ideal pulverized settlement system that perhaps presupposes a new ‘ruin’ of the existing city. When Le Corbusier called to contribute to the new urban visions evoked by the Russian Revolution, he peremptorily stated that «One of Moscow’s disurbanization projects proposes thatched huts in the forest. Wonderful idea! But only for the weekend» (Ceccarelli 1974), he did not reject the concept of nature as much as the prevalence of a subordinate and non-interactive relationship with it in response to a contemporary living and settlement condition.

A condition that is confronted mainly as a return to the primacy of the home, still a formidable moment of interpretation of the evolution of human needs and social changes.

The return to its centrality, accelerated also with respect to the preconceptions of Alvin Toffler (1987), coincides with a theoretical and functional reinterpretation that distorts its connotative elements assumed above all in the contemporary city.

Definitions like those of Gaston Bachelard return

«It supports man through the storms of heaven and the storms of life, it is body and soul, it is the first world of the human being. Before being ‘thrown into the world’

**Fig. 6**

Ottavio Amaro, *Casa con scala levatoia*, may 2020, sketch.

as the lightning-fast metaphysicians profess, man is placed in the cradle of the house and always, in our rêveries, the house is a great cradle» (Bachelard 1975).

In the current epidemic crisis, the most evocative dimension of living in fact – the house as a ‘treasure chest’ of memories or the house object of ‘desire’ where we would like to live – is added, until it prevails over the others, the dimension of the house as ‘protection’. There is an ‘involutional’ return that brings us back to the idea of ‘fortress’ perhaps not far, given the ‘prison’ condition, from that of a ‘cell’, bringing the house back to a suspension that makes it isolated and immune from interference therefore safe from contamination.

The concept of physical limit, barrier, pre-modern separation between interior and exterior is re-proposed, as a necessary return to the universe of eternity. As in Vermeer’s interiors in a newfound slowness, ‘domestic microcosms’ are recreated, everything passes while we live: we tele-work, study, love, take care of the body, socialize, laze, rest.

We are in the presence of an epochal ideological inversion: the house, from the *existenzminimum*, where the individual was himself a cog of the ‘perfect’ dimensional mechanism, arrives at the need to expand, widen and reformulate spatial modularities, overcome ‘free space for new individual enclosures’. The house needs to assimilate new functions, that is, to propose itself as a workshop, no longer a place of silence.

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His projects and drawings have been shown in various exhibitions: Italian architects under 50 - Triennale di Milano 2005; South Project - City of Stone, 10th Venice Biennale 2006; ITALY IS NOW - Tokyo 2011; Skopje Biennial; XVI Venice Biennale 2018.

In 1989 he was awarded the prize for the theory, image and study of utopia - Third International Congress of Utopias Studies.

He is the author of about 150 publications.

Grazia Maria Nicolosi

**Constrained inhabited space. Real or virtual?**

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**Abstract**

Throughout the period of social withdrawal when each person, in a different way, had to tackle such an emergency as the pandemic, the proposed paper offers some reflections on the possibility that a non-resolving condition of the emergency will likely happen shortly. Namely, that an extremely catastrophic eventuality will occur. What would happen for humans and therefore for architecture if Covid-19 were not defeated? What are the consequences if humans, forced into persistent social distancing, are only allowed to live in a delimited, circumscribed, measured, virtual space?

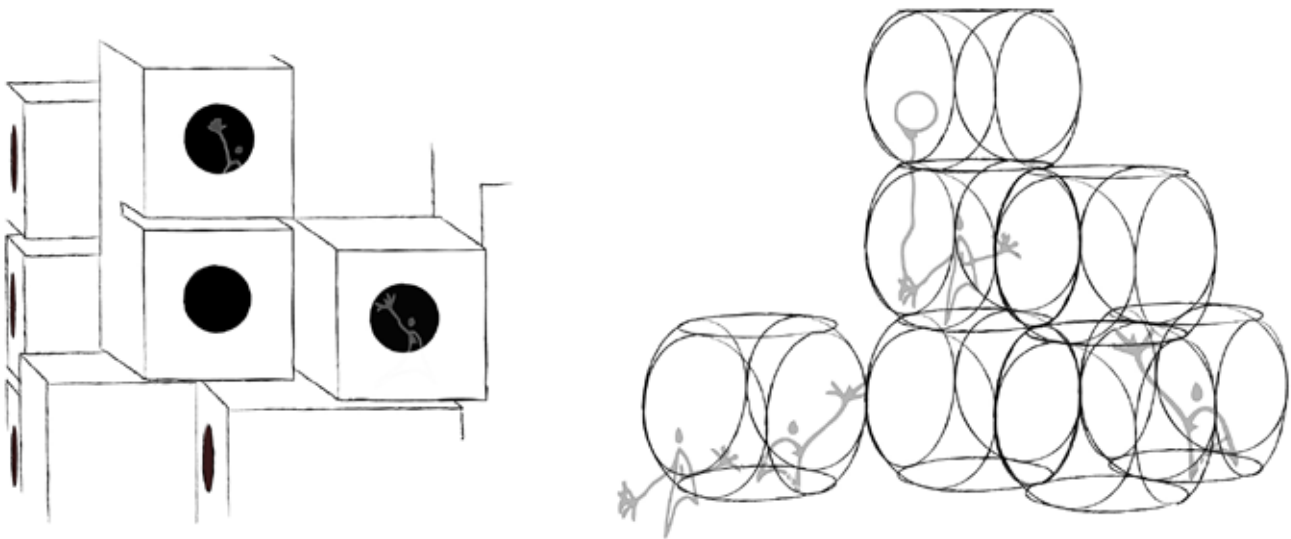
**Keywords**

Cyberspace — Denaturalization — Smoothness — Micro-architectures — Meta-data

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The period of social withdrawal that forced each person, in a different way, into persistent social distancing and to inhabit a delimited, circumscribed, measured space led to precise considerations of the relationship between man, space and living environment and of the meaning of death. What would happen if contemporary humans, nomadic inhabitants of the world, accustomed to considering one's personal home as a place in which to take refuge, were forced to live exclusively in the contraction of their own domestic space? This paper attempts to show that the months of social withdrawal have been the staging of a reality that, lacking in physical, social, recreational relationships has led man to renounce his own corporeality and to inhabit a place made of connections and exclusively virtual relationships. A world made of non-real, simulated space, of cyberspace that for architects like Marcos Novak could be the occasion for new poetic shapes and other rules for architecture. Non-gravitational, non-perspective, non-Euclidean rules. He writes about liquid architecture that pulsates and breathes and about cyberspace as the place in which complex information, inputs, simulations and metadata are programmed and processed to generate the outputs in the virtual reality. Cyberspace becomes for Novak a habitat 'for and of the imagination' (Novak 1991). What will be the consequences? Will capsules, micro-architectures, technological caverns that incorporate, fossilize, immobilize the human body be inhabited? Will the inevitable end for architecture be announced? Will blocks of meta-data be designed? Will there be a return to a primitive man? Novak (2001) writes about 'transarchitecture', about 'interactive media interspaces' and about 'telepresence'. What will be the destiny of humans? Will they disincarnate, will they get lost in the network? A network made of likes, of smoothness as Byung-Chul Han (2015)



**Fig. 1-2**

Kisho Kurakawa, *Nakagin Capsule Tower*. Sketch.

Yona Friedman, *Mobile Architecture*. Sketch.

writes. On such premises, two reflections have been achieved: the first one on the meaning of contemporary living which seems to induce men to look towards the past; the second one, on the meaning of contemporary architecture during a period when technology and science seem to dominate over humans. Looking at the past for dwelling in the ‘house of a prophet’ as is written by Kahlil Gibran (1923) or in the ‘house of the future’ (Bachelard 1957). For imagining a ‘shell’ like the one described by Walter Benjamin (1982). For wanting an ‘anonymous house’ (Rogers 1958) or to understand it as a ‘social right’ (Ponti 1957). For inhabiting the ‘Bollington tower’ of Carl Gustav Jung (1961) or a house ‘as a metaphor of a body’ (Augè 1994). A ‘home for everyday life’ (Rossi 1981) or a house for the ‘events’ (Tschumi 1994). Namely, a house to ‘dwell’ wrote Heidegger (D’Urso 2009). For Baudrillard (1988) humans live in the era of the disappearance of art and in the era of a society consumed by ephemeral values. Paul Virilio (2002) in *Discorso sull’orrore dell’arte* recognizes a progressive and precise desire to eliminate the art techniques and old means of expression, in favour of a typology of art defined by the author as ‘the art of the motor’. This theorization is the transposition of the clash between men and the general and disarming confidence in technology, machines, dis-values linked to speed and hyper-technique. Why speed? If time is money, then speed is the power to make money. Humans are moving towards a sort of divinization of techno-science assuming that it is necessary and inevitable. What are the consequences? The gradual disappearance of perception, physicality and corporeality for humans in favour of automaton. But not all human perceptions are contemplated in cyberspace. And the question becomes more complex when the design of it takes place through stochastic algorithms or when the algorithmic process is iterated on the basis of random parameters. Greg Lynn FORM at the 2012 Biennale Interieur held in Belgium proposed the *RV prototype house*. He showed a rotating prototype, transposition of an ever-changing space without any relationship with the specificities of a context. The FOA studio designed the Virtual House in 1997. A ribbon wrapped around itself. For which site? Anywhere. A virtual house which shifts «constantly between a lining and a wrapping condition – a quality that seems suited to the cyborg’s – partiality, irony, intimacy, and perversity» writes Alejandro Zaera (1998, p. 40). The Asymptote studio directed by Hani Rashid and Lise Anne Couture designed the *Virtual Guggenheim Museum* in 2004 demonstrating that the imagination could also transcend the materiality. The virtual walls

of the museum change their shape according to the simulated 'movements' of the 'visitor'. A really stimulating virtual space for the human mind. What are the constants of such architectures? Virtual or real objects without any physical sensory involvement of humans. In these experimentations, suggested only by a mathematical matrix of non-Euclidean space, the organism's physicality is forgotten. They are the result of metadata contained and managed by algorithms. They are surrogate and abstract models of a world devoid of diversity and imperfection. An artificial nature that generates a forgery and therefore a counterfeit aesthetic. Yet, Donna Haraway writes that the cyborg, hybrid between machine and organism, between social reality and fiction, makes humans free from 'all forms of addiction'. The cyborg breaks the dualisms: machine-organism, nature-artifice, body-psyche, material-shape. This process of de-naturalization is opposed to what Gillo Dorfles (1968) sought when he wrote that artifice object could become a natural object. The *apocalyptic telos* of abstract individualism (Haraway 1995) is contrasted by an *aesthetic and sociological telos* necessary to maintain 'the creative and experiential capacity of humanity'. One theory bases itself on a de-naturalization process of the automaton, the other one, on the organism, on the human being and their own capacity of naturalization. Because, Heidegger recalls, if there is a device capable of remembering, of creating, of elaborating better than humans, man will probably gradually lose their own ability to do it, namely, to carry out all those activities for which a mechanical system would work better. And, if it is true that social, historical, cultural, environmental and therefore also technological factors intervene in corporeality because the body is a complex organic system bigger than the sum of its components, one wonders whether, similarly, in the cyborg, the sum of the terms cyber and organism, is still included the corporeity of the human being. In this scenario of general anesthetization of human feelings, it is probable that we theorize about the end for man, for art and architecture. Paul Virilio (1980) wrote about the aesthetics of disappearance. Once again it is a cancellation. Similarly, to what happens in art for which the avant-gardes seem to want to cancel previous artistic techniques as if they wanted to eliminate history, the virtual space seems to want to remove the real one. For Allan Kaprow, the word *art* should even be deleted from the dictionary. Martin Heidegger (1976) puts himself in an intermediate position by stating that the action of revealing the truth, *Wahrheit*, also takes place through technique, as well as through the creation of artwork. The occurrence happens through the action of 'being there'. Where is the place of the particle 'there' in cyberspace? For cyborg architecture the technology is the end to itself. The material space of architecture is destined to be reduced until it disappears in favour of the virtual space of the network. And, the Coronavirus seems to have forced us to do so. But, the months of lockdown, months of virtual connection, have shown that communication between human beings is not exclusively verbal or visual. What was missing was the perception of one's own body in relation to the body of others. The philosopher Massimo Cacciari (2004) writes that if the body is the first-place humans inhabit, how could the human being not look for other real places? And that although the soul may not have a fixed abode, an *a-oikos* because it is nomadic, *dynamis*, and intellectual energy, it is still necessary to have places to inhabit. Changeable and unstable but physical places. They are essential in order not to lose the human capacity to imagine, to plan, to get excited, to create. For Paul Virilio (2002) it would be necessary to restore value to the body and therefore to the architecture. There is no architecture without a human being.

There is no Christianity without incarnation. There is no art without its medium. What is the antidote? Virilio identifies a way out in the accident. Every time a new technological product or a new technique is invented, the corresponding accident is also conceived. The invention of the ship coincided with its shipwreck. The incident of art with its representation. For Virilio, the accident makes it possible to regain value. Could Covid-19, therefore, be the accident of virtualization?

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Alberto Bologna, Marco Trisciuglio  
**Tectonics for an architectural pedagogy.**  
**The One Person House project and new theoretical paradigms**

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Abstract

This paper presents the methodological assumptions and the results of an educational path developed during the Covid-19 *lockdown*. Starting from a reflection on the construction of a minimum living space, the design theme developed was the concept of a *one-person house* (OPH) to cope with additional lockdowns and social distancing in the future. A process of research by design pursued through four propaedeutic exercises, anthropomorphically inspired and conceptually linked by ideal and progressive actions of assembly and control of measurement. A pedagogy of design based on the material nature of architecture, following a construction philosophy that focuses on one of its founding principles, tectonics, or the art of assembly.

Keywords

One Person House — Research by design — Tectonics

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**I. The bamboo hut in the Crystal Palace**

One of the many paradoxes that a period such as spring 2020 allows us to experience is that of teaching the intrinsic tangibility of the construction process, using tools that are conceptually based on intangibility<sup>1</sup>. The school has grown from being a physical place of exchange and debate to an ethereal container of remote teaching. Students and teachers, guided respectively by their task and their profession, finding themselves reflecting at a distance, thanks to a double object/two-dimensional tool (the screen and the keyboard), on the architectural project, understood here as a pragmatic systematization of creative intentions in three-dimensional built forms.

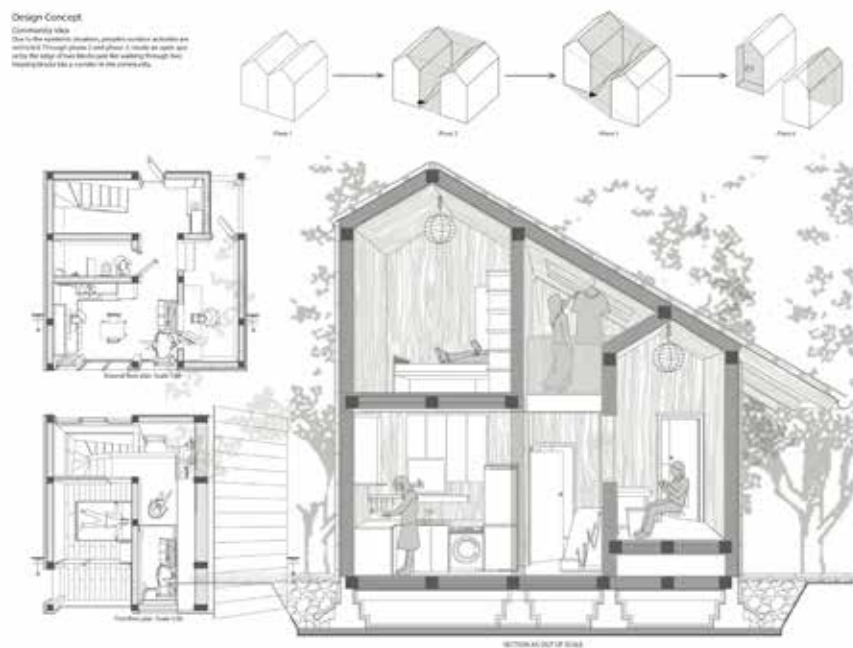
It was crucial to conceive a pedagogy of design based on the tangibility of architecture, of its being a space studied and derived from actions of assembly of elements with different functions and compositional hierarchies, according to a veritable construction poetics that looks at one of the founding principles of architecture, tectonics, the art of assembly. Starting with the same etymology as the Greek word *tékton* and the corresponding verb *tektainomai*, a pedagogical approach has been developed on the basis of the intrinsic characteristics of the traded of the carpenter who, according to the Sapphic meaning, also takes on the role of poet (Frampton 1995, pp. 3-7).

The theme of the project was the concept of a one-person house (OPH) to cope with further periods of lockdown and social distancing in the future and to provide an effective low-cost housing response, to be placed into the urban morphology and the natural landscape.

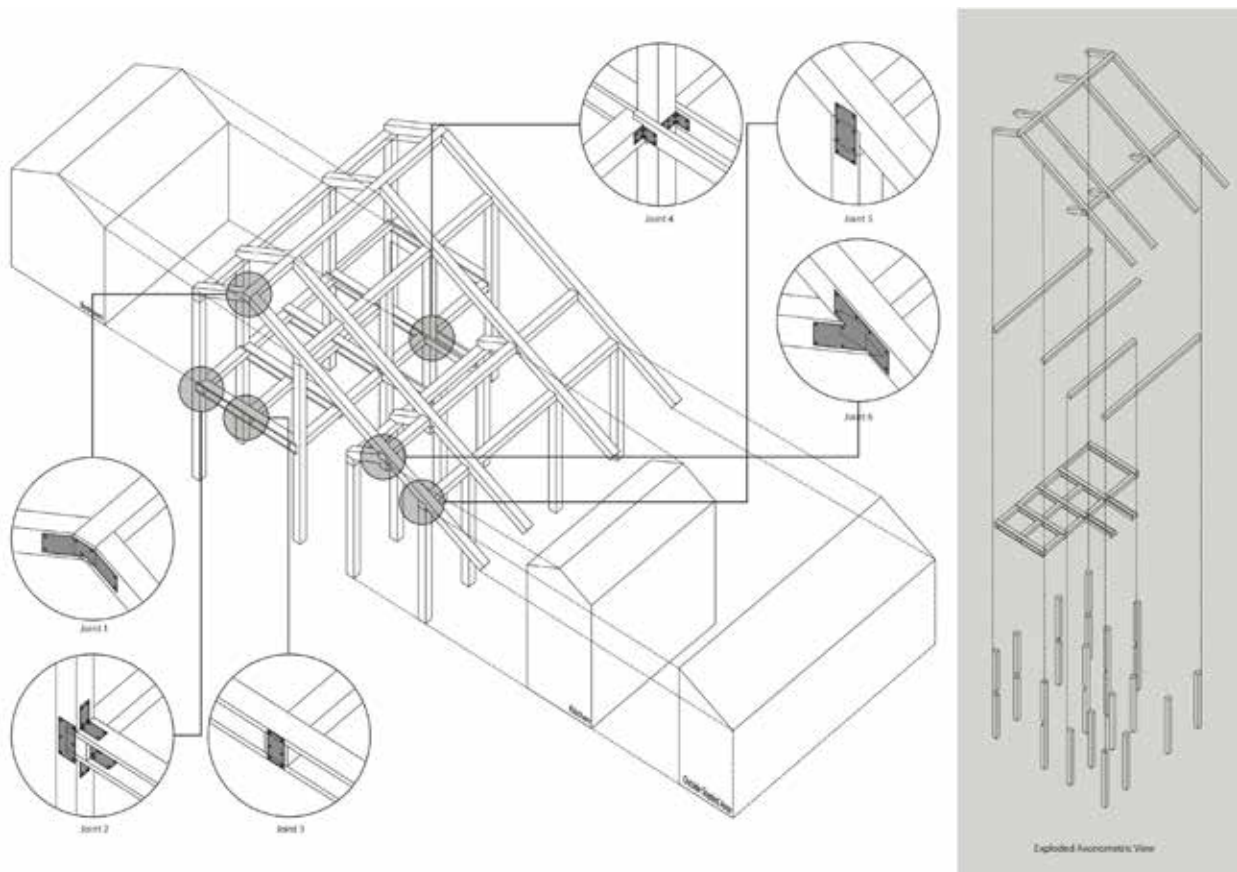
It was the lockdown itself that pushed each student, forced to work alone

**Fig. 1**

The One Person House in its relationship with the human body (drawing by Yuan Bing).

**Fig. 2**

The One Person House and its structural frame (drawing by Yuan Bing).



in their own home, to reflect on the construction of a minimum living space: the definition of space through the movements of the human body, the use of a structural frame, the conception of an epidermis that acts as an envelope and the compositional role of articulations identified in the technological systems and connections between the various parts. This topic triggered a process of research by design carried out through four propaedeutic exercises, anthropomorphically inspired and conceptually linked by ideal and progressive actions of assembly and measurement control. The compositional readings of four buildings considered to be



iconic in terms of the themes of the four preparatory exercises for the conception of the OPH placed architecture at the centre of each student's attention, in that it is a synthesis of space, form and construction. Initially conceived as an object without context, the OPH eventually took on the same physical and symbolic value as the Caribbean hut that inspired Semper's theories, assembled as a small tectonic *unicum* offered to thousands of visitors within the framework of a conceptually ethereal environment, like the Crystal Palace at the Great Exhibition in London in 1851. Just like Paxton's colossus, the web at the time of Covid-19 takes on the role of an immense intangible container, while being a vehicle for the transmission of a small architectural object and its physicality.

## II. The body

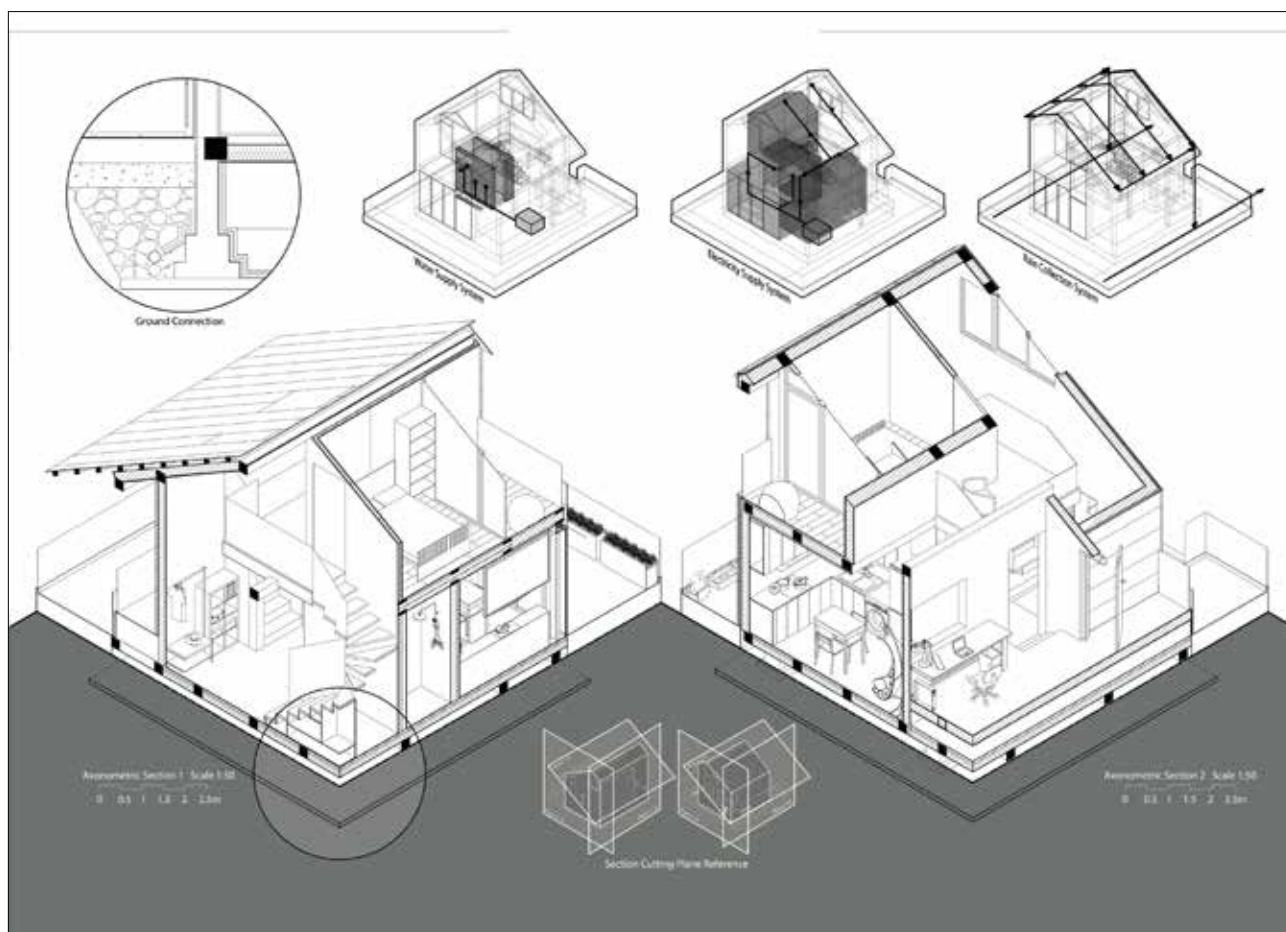
The measurement of your body, its redesign on a scale of 1:20 and its transformation into a rotating physical shape (made of cardboard) capable of generating an ideal cube, corresponding to the three-dimensional space required for the movement of a single person, marks the beginning of the experience of research by design: a sought-after methodological assonance with the pedagogical creed professed by Riccardo Blumer, according to which the body represents the main reference for the architect throughout the entire design process (Neri 2018, p. 13). The assembly of four cubes generates a minimum living space according to the typological archetype identified in Le Corbusier's *petit cabanon* and an approach to planimetric and functional definition inspired by the spatial concept based on the use of *tatami*.

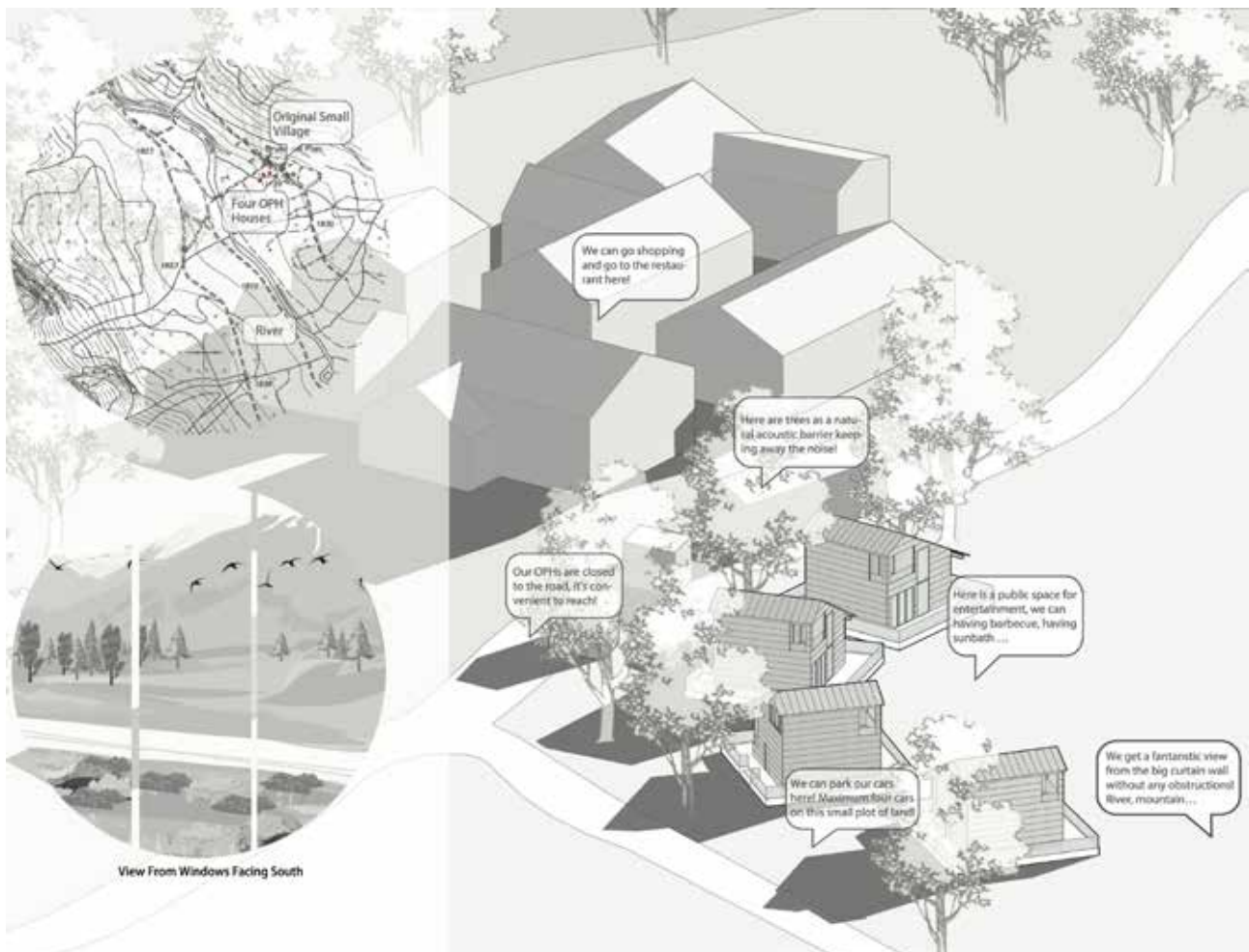
## III. The frame

The different forms of primitive shelter designed to serve as a living space presented by Filarete in the *Trattato di Architettura*, Cesare Cesariano in *De Architectura*, Marc-Antoine Laugier in his *Essai* and Semper himself in *Der Stil*, which depicts the famous Caribbean hut, are based on the idea of a wooden structural frame that is independent of the infillings. It is this construction concept, which also lies at the basis of the construction of Robinson Crusoe's home, described by Daniel Defoe, which has generated the most significant effects on the composition and form of architecture over the last two centuries: think of Herzog&De Meuron's building in Tavole, Glenn Murcutt's Marika-Alderton house or Snøhetta's *The 7<sup>th</sup> Room* pile-dwelling. The progressive development of a design sensitivity aimed at defining the living space in relation to its construction instances takes place via the drafting of an assembling scheme for the ideal frame for the dwelling of a shipwrecked man, located on a beach and built using materials available on site and with makeshift work tools.

## IV. The skin

The design sensitivity towards the ornamental component of architecture is cultivated through an analytical operation carried out by means of a space-time short circuit, capable of making us reflect on the potential interaction between the design cultures professed by Leon Battista Alberti and Frank O. Gehry. The observation, analysis, measurement and graphic drafting of the façade of Palazzo Rucellai allow the exploration of a notable architectural episode, capable of clarifying the role of assembly between parts in the conceptual definition of ornament, understood here as the epidermal outcome of an assembly process that contributes to defining the character of architecture. At the same time, starting from the



**Fig. 3**

The One Person House and its skin, intended as an envelope and ornamental component of the architecture (drawing by Yuan Bing).

**Fig. 4-5**

The One Person House and its joints: connections and the circulatory plant system of the architectural organism (drawing by Yuan Bing).

Serie of four One Person House ideally assembled in an alpine valley near Sauze di Cesana (drawing by Yuan Bing).

compositional reading of the Gehry House in Santa Monica, capable of explaining the relationships between the material essence of the envelope and the visual and tactile sensations generated by it, the design exercise consisted in the creation of a new entrance to be applied to the façade of Palazzo Rucellai: the juxtaposition of panels to form walls, the result of interweaving or assemblies of components experimented with starting from rudimentary physical models.

## V. The connections

The compositional potential expressed by essential technological systems and equipment, such as guttering, drainpipes or chimneys for the ventilation of the rooms in the OPH, is explored once again through the ideal dismantling of exemplary architectural experiments that make the concept of technological innovation a genuine compositional paradigm: Jacques Lagrange's Villa Arpel and the prototype for the *Diogene* housing module designed by Renzo Piano become the starting point for a new exercise on the theme of the anchor of the building to the ground and the connections of the technological systems and equipment to the sub-services. Inside the plot of Villa Arpel two *Diogene* modules must be fitted adjacent to each other to form an OPH and raised by means of a structural frame under which a car can be parked. The compositional integration of the frame, the descents of the technological systems and equipment and the external stairs, with the formal result obtained by assembling the two *Diogene* modules, becomes the main theme in relation to its architectural, structural and technological implications.

## VI. The OPH project as the outcome of an ideal assembly in a real site

The effectiveness of the distributive, formal, spatial and constructive choices of an OPH is tested with a project developed in phases that respond to the specific research questions posed by the student during the exercises. The project develops with a view to defining a standard housing type capable of guaranteeing both ordinary housing functions and adequate spaces for working from home or for sport, in the case of further lockdowns in the future. The OPH is designed by a dry-assembling process made by prefabricated components (a structural frame and an infilling system of panels): construction elements capable of contributing to a resignification of both the notions of *existenzminimum* and sustainability, and the concepts of architectural character and ornament.

Two different configurations of a series of four OPHs to be placed in two very different sites in terms of context and topography (the first is a small alpine valley near Sauze di Cesana and the second in an urban gap along the River Dora in Turin) lead to the drafting of pilot projects for small agglomerations which can guarantee both social inclusion and distancing, in the private space and the public space connected to it.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> This reflection is the result of the teaching experience carried out by the Authors as owners of the Architectural Composition module in the Building Construction Studio in the 2nd year of the three-year BA degree study course in “Architettura/Architettura” at the Politecnico di Torino, held online, in English, in the spring semester of the 2019-2020 academic year and attended by 106 students from 30 countries. The Authors consider their individual contribution to the writing of this paper as 50%, being the result of constant debate and joint effort. For the sole purpose of academic evaluations, it should be noted that paragraphs I, III and V were drafted by A. Bologna and revised by M. Trisciuglio and paragraphs II, IV and VI were drafted by M. Trisciuglio and revised by A. Bologna.



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Alberto Bologna (Turin, 1982), architect, graduated with honours from the Faculty of Architecture of the Politecnico di Torino with Pierre-Alain Croset and Sergio Pace. He is a Ph.D. in History of architecture and town planning at the Politecnico di Torino, gaining the title in 2011. He currently teaches "Contemporary Architectural Design Theory" at the Department of Architecture and Urban Studies at the Politecnico di Milano. Among his publications: *Pier Luigi Nervi negli Stati Uniti* (Firenze University Press, Firenze 2013); *The Rhetoric of Pier Luigi Nervi. Concrete and Ferrocement Forms* (con R. Gargiani, EPFL Press-Routledge, Losanna-New York 2016); *Chinese Brutalism Today. Concrete and Avant-Garde Architecture* (ORO Editions, San Francisco 2019); *The resistance of Laugier. The classicism of Murcutt* (LetteraVentidue, Siracusa 2019).

Marco Trisciuglio (Turin, 1966), architect, graduated with honours from the Faculty of Architecture of the Politecnico di Torino with Emanuele Levi Montalcini and the archaeologist Giorgio Gullini. He is a Ph.D. in Methods problems in architectural design at the University of Genoa, gaining the title in 1997. He is currently a full professor in Architectural and Urban Design at the Department of Architecture and Design of the Politecnico di Torino and at the SEU-Arch in Nanjing (China). Among his publications: *Scatola di montaggio. L'architettura, gli elementi della composizione e le ragioni costruttive della forma* (Carocci, Roma 2008); *I paesaggi culturali. Costruzione, promozione, gestione* (Egea, Milano 2013, con Michela Barosio), *Typological Permanencies and Urban Permutations* (SEU Press, Nanjing 2017, with Bao Li and other), *L'architetto nel paesaggio. Archeologia di un'idea* (Olschki, Firenze 2018).



Antonino Margagliotta, Paolo De Marco  
**#Stayhome.**  
**New forms of domestic living**

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Abstract

Hygienic-sanitary regulations have always influenced urban planning theories, cities transformations and forms of dwelling. While waiting for the medical solution, the answer to Covid19 goes through spatial considerations. The most immediate changes can begin from home, with a poetic thought and in opposition to the idea that everything depends solely on technology. The reasoning about the domestic space implies reflection on new needs (which the emergency has exacerbated) and on the search for quality, with a revision of the living minimums. Isolation has opened our eyes to possible domestic landscapes and, if the house is still the principle of dwelling, from it – with a multi-scalar vision – wider changes and transformations can be targeted. From this point of view, the contemporary project recovers some reasons and experiences of modernity as a reference for further elaborations.

Keywords

Emergency — Architecture — House — Confinement — Existenzminimum

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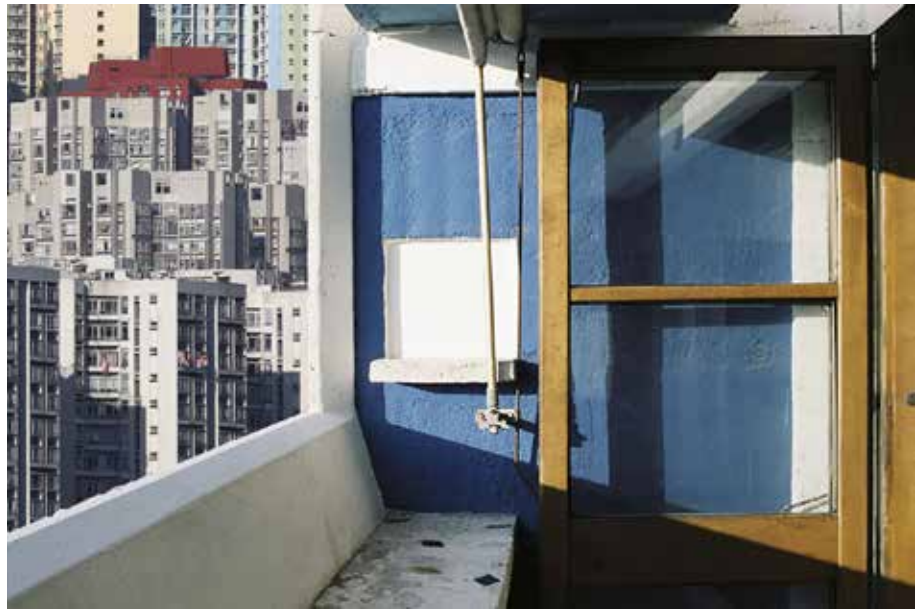
Health emergencies have always influenced urban planning theories and transformations of cities, as well as the contributions from medicine have influenced the definition of new forms of living and of architecture.

In the eighteenth century, the antibacterial properties of lime helped to spread the myth of white in architecture at the same time that Winckelmann was elaborating his theories on classicism; in turn, the first urban planning laws of the nineteenth century linked planning action to hygiene regulations, motivating the *street levelling*, *cuts* and *demolition* of historic fabrics of many European cities.

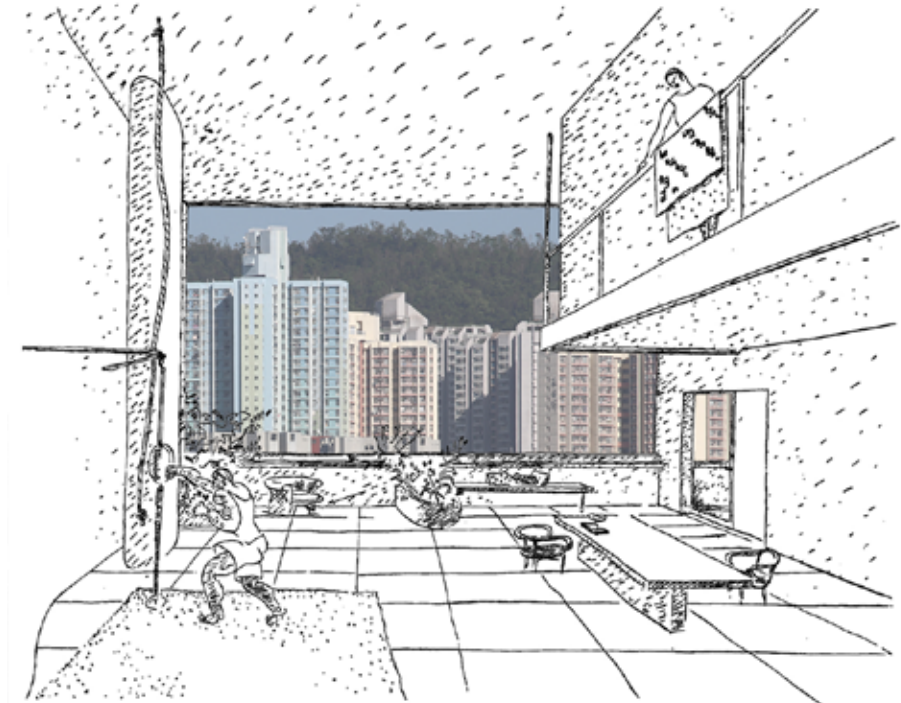
The spatial experiments of the early decades of the twentieth century in health centres soon converged into the health and hygiene standards of the home (Colomina 2018, Barras 2020): the large glazed openings and the sunny terraces of the sanatoriums first appeared in the *machine à guérir* and immediately later in that *à habiter*; therefore the houses and residential complexes were equipped with terraces and garden roofs to welcome nature into the domestic space and carry out the actions of a healthy life; these principles have also innovated schools with open-air teaching in classrooms that can be fully opened and ventilated or that are totally duplicated outdoors. And yet, the health recommendations were taken as a metaphor of the *new spirit* innovative principles for which the *law of Ripolin*, formulated by Le Corbusier, *whitewashes* the language, the home and the life of modern man: «There are no more dirty, dark corners: *Everything is shown as it is*» (Le Corbusier 2015, 191)<sup>1</sup>. Finally, medical terminologies end up by hybridizing the words of architecture for which still today we speak of *skeletons*, *bones*, *skins*, *pathologies* that explain the similarities with which the architects presented buildings as spatial devices to protect the body and the psyche.

**Fig. 1**

Photomontage of the domestic open space of Le Corbusier's Unité d'Habitation in Marseille and the crowding of the contemporary metropolis.

**Fig. 2**

Photomontage of contemporary metropolitan landscape with the hanging garden of a collective residence by Le Corbusier (1928).



Even now, while waiting for a medical solution, the answer to Covid19 goes from spatial considerations as at the moment only space can mitigate the infections, isolate and confine; However, the emergency has highlighted already evident environmental and urban criticalities which, in any case, will survive the pandemic itself. But since cities will slowly change, due to the inertia to transformations and the complexity of phenomena on an urban scale, many reflections – and in any case necessary and immediate results – can start by thinking about the spaces we live in and, in particular, the house seen from the interior. Concentrating the reasoning on what already exists also allows us to stem a feared *urban dispersion* that would cause disastrous results for the territory and the countryside.

In the period of isolation we have enhanced – or questioned – our spaces: the house has become the *threshold* that if on the one hand it has imposed a boundary on our lives, on the other hand it has made evident new needs and opened our eyes to possible landscapes. Perhaps, unexpectedly, the



**Fig. 3**  
Ryue Nishizawa, *Garden house*,  
Tokyo, 2012.

confinement gave back to the house a different value from the real estate one and has rediscovered the ancient meaning of *domus*, that is, a space for family and for sharing. The house has returned to being, in an explicit way, the domestic refuge, the place that guards and protects, which represents the primary and primordial sense of living. Staying at home, *dwelling*, was an opportunity to reflect on spaces under the light of renewed needs, for possible actions that can then be extended from the home, with a multi-scalar vision, to *things* and the city. And since the house has always been the *principle of dwelling*, from it, it will certainly be possible to proceed towards wider changes and transformations.

A first level of intervention (for reasons of logic and feasibility) concerns our homes to bring them back, after so much talks about *nomadism*, to the value of permanence and to face actions of everyday domestic life with a *poietic* thought: the needs of emotional life and personal intimacy, of healthy eating and living, of work or distance learning (even for the entire family unit), the needs of body and spirit, of contact with nature, the possibility of isolate oneself even in general isolation. After all, the house (especially in the city) has always been the family's private space, totally separated from the urban exterior (public and collective) – except for the balcony, now rediscovered as an external projection of the private space (Gabrielli e Tettamanti 2020, 29-32)<sup>2</sup> and transformed into a *scenario* of domestic life – as well as separated from the activity of work and leisure.

The *internal* question therefore concerns the need to *make* and *give space* to these activities, overcoming the consoling misunderstanding that it concerns only technology, since this – says Umberto Galimberti – «does not open scenarios of meaning or salvation, but it simply works: as Pasolini said, it is not progress but development» (Crippa 2020)<sup>3</sup>. This is confirmed by the introduction, for some time now, of remote work which was intended as a mere question of technological instrumentation without implications for space; we must instead think about this, as telematic work will be encouraged and enhanced: *apps* are not enough, we need suitable spaces that house does not always have (Zevi 2020, II).

Proceeding in terms of complexity, a *project* action is therefore to keep the house in order – in an architectural sense – and *free* it from the clutter, bring it back to the spirit of necessity, to the ethical and aesthetic aspiration of essentiality; also because, if the shape of the house and lifestyle influence each other, this leads to the establishment of a strategy for daily sustainability, for the reduction of waste and garbage, for the conscious consumption. The challenge also concerns design, to establish a new cultural and emotional bond between man and his objects, to refer new consumption and the rules of living to sensory and *emotional values* as suggested by the concept of *hot house* (Branzi 1984)<sup>4</sup>.

The arguments become even more emblematic if the house is contextualized in the urban landscape; not so much, however, in *social distancing living* (the house in the countryside, in the village or in the country, in a few months transformed from problem into resource) as in *shared* living in metropolitan areas and crowded conurbations which, as the news has shown, constitute the real ground for spreading epidemics. In these configurations, the house is the apartment (by definition, the place to stay apart), a domestic space that is affected by interactions with the urban scale and allows us to think about a city *by compartment*. In these contexts, the project can recover and re-establish principles and experiments already began in architecture, including some ideals that have fueled the transformations of



**Fig. 4**

Ryue Nishizawa, *Moriyama house*, Tokyo, 2005.

**Fig. 5**

Waro Kishi, *House in Nipponbashi*, Osaka, 1992.

the Modern; it also induces to update the minimums of living – the concept of *existenz-minimum* – to guarantee spaces of adequate size and offer a certain quality of life in an extended and general way. This is the further level of intervention regarding the design of the new, which can refer, then, to the utopias on collective housing (the recent theme of *social housing*) which has given rise to many architectural and urban innovations; It is also possible to recover the ideas expressed in the *unités d'habitation* which, with their service spaces or *to create community*, allow outdoor activities or can have green spaces on the roof (then, detached from the ground with the *pilotis*, the *unités* evoke large ships that lift their moorings and give salvation); the social and spatial value of phalanstery (of utopia and concretizations) or of large settlements with autonomy of services in which often the internal courtyard (the *shikumen* used by Chinese planners long ago) is often a place of meeting and socialization, filter between private space and the city (Sennett 2020, 13).

The project of the new in shared living should assume different rules – almost with a revision of urban planning standards – to account for the today *needs*: internal social spaces; domestic green, at ground level or on the roof (to be encouraged with bonuses and strategies for restructuring, but without incurring the aestheticization of the green), to ensure truly accessible vegetable gardens or vegetated spaces, equipped for the sporting activity of condos and children; patios, habitable balconies and loggias for each house (preventing them from turning into verandas); natural lighting; coworking spaces – as a neighbourhood hub – to go to during the smart working hours, to separate the space of the home from that of work; spaces for study in homes (in the period of confinement any horizontal surface of the house, including the kitchen table, became a workstation) perhaps guaranteed by adaptability, as it is with accessibility for the disabled. Sanitation parameters will then be necessary for the common areas, ventilation and lighting for the rooms, control and *purification* of the space with the arrangement of essential, removable and light furniture, and integrated – according to the Loosian principle – in the wall thickness. However, the challenge must also look at ethical and existential issues since the project, of any house, must help to feel and create *community*. To

be alone and not feel alone, so as not to become dormant and get sick with another virus – the plague of insomnia of *One hundred years of solitude* – which has as its evolution from not sleeping to the inexorable loss of memory, the cancellation of «consciousness of one's own being», yielding «to the spell of an imaginary reality [...] which was less practical but more comforting». And without forgetting those who have no home.



## Notes

<sup>1</sup> In 1925 Le Corbusier enunciated the *Loi du Ripolin* (Law of Ripolin, a famous French brand of paints), inviting the use of the «extremely moral» white of lime to clean the houses of ornaments and welcome the new spirit of modernity. Ethical and spatial principles are linked to define lifestyles and the new language of architecture.

<sup>2</sup> Suddenly the balconies, as well as the terraces and verandas, were rediscovered as privileged places in the home to communicate with the street, the neighborhood, the city, becoming devices for communication and reaching, thanks to the media, much wider audiences. This and other recently published books document situations and reflections that emerged during the period of confinement.

<sup>3</sup> For some time now we have been living in the so-called age of technology that assists man in almost all the practices of everyday life, moving him away from the earth; the months of the lockdown – according to Galimberti – showed the precariousness of this system of purely technical relationships.

<sup>4</sup> Andrea Branzi's book summarizes some research themes of radical design of the seventies and eighties, formulating a new proposal for a design aimed at a domestic civilization; the hot house represents the cultural and emotional link between man and everyday objects and identifies the emotional value as «the only one capable of constituting a point of reference within new consumption».

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Antonino Margagliotta, graduated in Building Engineering and Architecture in Palermo, PhD and currently Associate Professor of Architectural and Urban Composition in the Engineering Department of the University of Palermo. He is Coordinator of the Degree Course in Building Engineering - Architecture.

Among his books: *Le forme del dialogo* (Abadir, Palermo 2006), *Aesthetics for living* (Libria, Melfi 2010), *Progetti in una mano* (Arianna, Geraci Siculo 2014), *Strada Paesaggio Città. La città in estensione tra Palermo e Agrigento* (Gangemi, Roma 2015), *La bellezza efficace* (Libria, Melfi 2018), *Omaggio a Dedalo* (40due Edizioni, Palermo 2019). Ha pubblicato lavori di architettura nelle riviste *Abitare*, *Almanacco di Casabella*, *AND*, *Casabella*, *Costruire*, *Parametro*, *L'industria delle Costruzioni*, *Il Giornale dell'Architettura*.

Paolo De Marco (Erice, 1988), construction engineer-architect, he studied at the Universidade de Coimbra and graduated with honors from the Department of Architecture of the University of Palermo. PhD in Arquitectura, Edificación, Urbanística y Paisaje at the Polytechnic University of Valencia.

He carries out research and collaborates in teaching in Architectural Design courses of the Department of Architecture of the University of Palermo. He is the author of essays on the theme of white color in architecture, on design teaching and on recent architectural experiences (CIAB9, 2020; Agathòn, 2019; A.MAG, 2019; Technè, 2018; etc.). È autore del volume *Abitare l'inabitabile* (40due Edizioni, Palermo 2016).

Marianna Charitonidou  
**Takis Zenetos's City and House of the Future.  
 Resynchronising Quotidian Life**

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Abstract

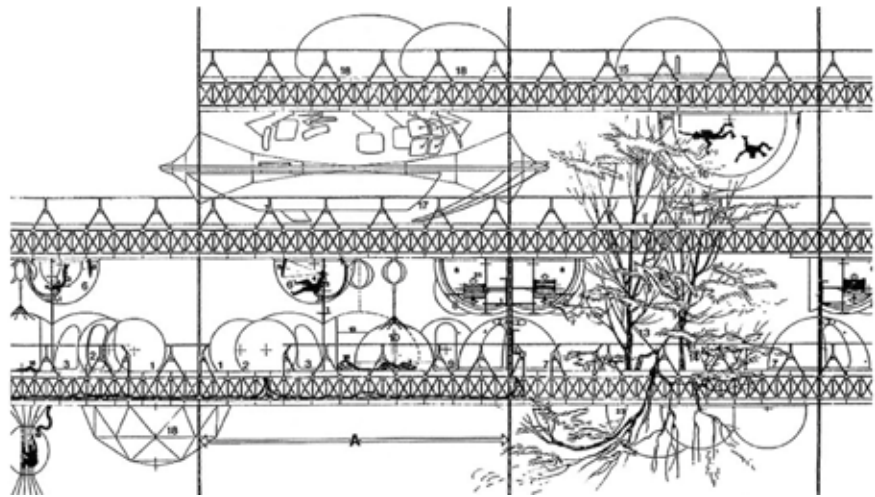
The article focuses on the analysis of the work of architects as Takis Zenetos, Yona Friedman, and Archigram and examines how he conceptualized the reinvention of the relationship between the living units and the home-office conditions. It pays special attention to his concern about incorporating the new conceptions of “tele-work”, “tele-communication”, and “tele-education” in architecture and urban design. It departs from the hypothesis that several of the core ideas of the experimentations of Zenetos concerning the living units in the city of the future could be incorporated in the design of architectural and urban projects aiming to contribute to pandemic preparedness. Particular emphasis is placed on Zenetos' endeavour, in his “Electronic Urbanism” to take into account the complexity of the psychological and physiological needs of the citizens.

Keywords

Takis Zenetos — tele-work — tele-communication — tele-education  
 — electronic urbanism

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My objective, in this text, is to reflect upon the ways in which architects as Takis Zenetos, Yona Friedman, and Archigram conceptualized the reinvention of the relationship between the living units and the home-office conditions. Both Zenetos and Friedman were interested in the reinvention of the home-office conditions and in the strategies according to which architecture and urban design could respond to distance working. Their thought was characterised by the intention to suggest methods concerning both architecture and urban design aiming to incorporate the new conceptions of “tele-work”, “tele-communication”, and “tele-education”. They envisioned a new mode of thinking urbanism, able to be adapted to the continuous mutations in both social and technological domains. Worth mentioning regarding Zenetos' reflections about the re-invented relationship between urbanism and “tele-work” is his project entitled *The City and the House of the Future* by Takis Zenetos, which aimed at the design of flexible systems for both buildings and infrastructures. This project by Zenetos was based on his intention to take into consideration the accelerating mutation of the living units in the cities of the future. *The City and the House of the Future* was based on a systematic research on the development of applications in the domain of electronics. Studying articles in scientific journals of the time, such as Science magazine, Zenetos defined the forthcoming applications of “tele-management”, “tele-work” and “tele-services” and their relationship with architecture and urban planning. In 1973, he introduced *Town planning and electronics* with the following passage Science magazine: «...Technology properly used may be the only short-term answer to the city's problems because it will take time to check population growth...Why cannot people live



**Fig. 1**

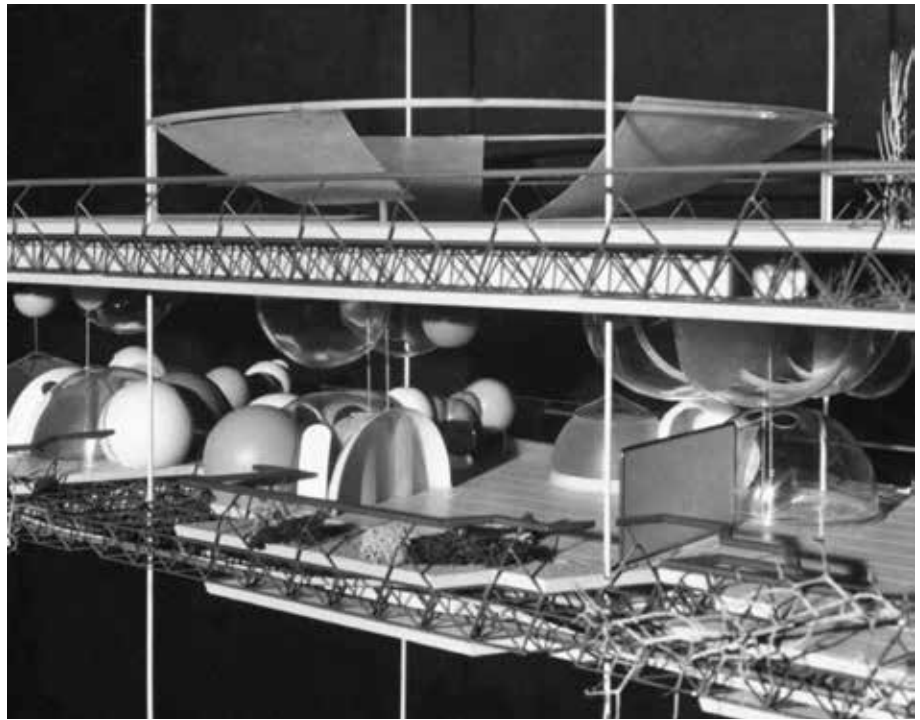
Takis Zenetos, drawing for “Electronic Urbanism”.

Fonte: Orestis Doumanis, ed., Takis Ch. Zenetos, 1926-1977. Athens: Architecture in Greece, 1978, p.62.

wherever they wish and congregate electronically?». Several of the core ideas of the experimentations of Zenetos concerning the living units in the city of the future could be incorporated in the design of architectural and urban projects aiming to contribute to pandemic preparedness.

Both Zenetos and Friedman intended to provide comfortable, flexible and independent home-office conditions through the design of “individual living units” using advanced technological achievements. A close examination of their work is useful for better understanding how architecture and urban design could respond to the challenge of providing contemporary home-office conditions within the conditions of pandemic breakouts, such as the coronavirus breakout. The fact that both Zenetos and Friedman employed very often the term “parallel city”, invites us to reflect about the common points between Zenetos’ *Urbanisme électronique: Structures parallèles* and Friedman’s *Ville spatiale* (1958). Zenetos paid special attention to the complexity of the psychological and physiological needs of citizens within such conditions and to how the home-office conditions affect class struggles and the citizens’ social behavior. For this reason, a close analysis of his designs of living units adapted to the conditions of working from home, and his texts would be useful for addressing the psychological and physiological needs related to the home-office conditions (fig. 1, fig. 2). Friedman was also interested in the citizens’ physiological needs, as it becomes evident in an ensemble of diagrams entitled *Transformation of the collective psychology* he sketched in 1961 (Friedman et alii 2015).

Takis Zenetos worked on his project entitled “Electronic Urbanism” for more than twenty years. He started working on it in 1952, when he was still living in Paris and was studying at the École de Beaux Arts in Paris. Despite the fact that he officially completed this project in 1962, he continued to expand and modify it until the year of his suicide, that is to say until 1977. He presented this project on several occasions, such as the *Exhibition of the Modern Housing Organization* in Athens in 1962, and at the first building exhibition at Zappeion in 1971. Worth-noting is the fact that Zenetos incorporated in this project his design for an all-purpose furniture, including the design for the so-called “posture chair”, which was distinguished in October 1967 with an honourable mention at the “InterDesign 2000” competition, for which he also manufactured a 1/1 prototype of the “posture chair” (fig. 3). Zenetos had described this chair, which he conceived as part of his “Electronic Urbanism”, as

**Fig. 2**

Takis Zenetos, model for “Electronic Urbanism”, 1971.

Fonte: Personal archives of Zenetos family

“a second human body”, and as «[a] mobile spinal agent of the body for every use, equipped with a remote control for tele-activities and a control center for optical-acoustic contacts, which will aid in the execution of tele-activities» (Zenetos 1972 10-12). Zenetos’ “posture chair” could be compared with Archigram’s “Cushicle/Suitaloon”, which was designed by Michael Webb in 1966, as well as Archigram’s “Bathmatic”, which was conceived by Warren Chalk in 1969.

Zenetos was sceptical vis-à-vis Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and Le Corbusier’s understanding of living units and blamed them for having failed to establish architectural and urban design strategies capable of going beyond the division between the interior and the exterior conditions. More specifically, Zenetos underscores, in Takis Ch. Zenetos, 1926-1977:

«I did not imitate Mies van der Rohe, much less Corbu who, while giving interior space a unity, created a definite boundary between interior and exterior, thus making handsome boxes. My own effort has been to integrate the interior with the environment, with no clear dividing line between the two. For the sake both of the resident himself and the man in the street.» (Doumanis 1978).

Zenetos was a member of the *International Association of Cybernetics* and had attended numerous congresses on cybernetics, such as the First International Congress of Cybernetics in London in 1969. In parallel, he was also an avid reader of the writings of Norbert Wiener, often cited in *Urbanisme électronique: Structures parallèles* (Zenetos 1979). The main interest of Zenetos’ “Electronic Urbanism” lies in the fact that it does not only constitute an artistic contribution to experimental architecture but is, instead, characterized by a new social vision promising to resynchronize practices of quotidian life, through the use of electronic communication systems that would allow the transmission of data and information. A close understanding of Zenetos’ endeavour to use of electronic communication systems in order to reinvent the practices of quotidian life would be very useful in our contemporary efforts to reflect upon how architecture and urban design could respond to the need of pandemic





**Fig. 3**

Takis Zenetos, drawing and model of furniture designed for “Electronic Urbanism”.

Source: Personal archives of Zenetos family.



**Fig. 4**

Draft of the front cover of Takis Zenetos' *Urbanisme électronique: Structures parallèles*.

Source: Personal archives of Zenetos family.

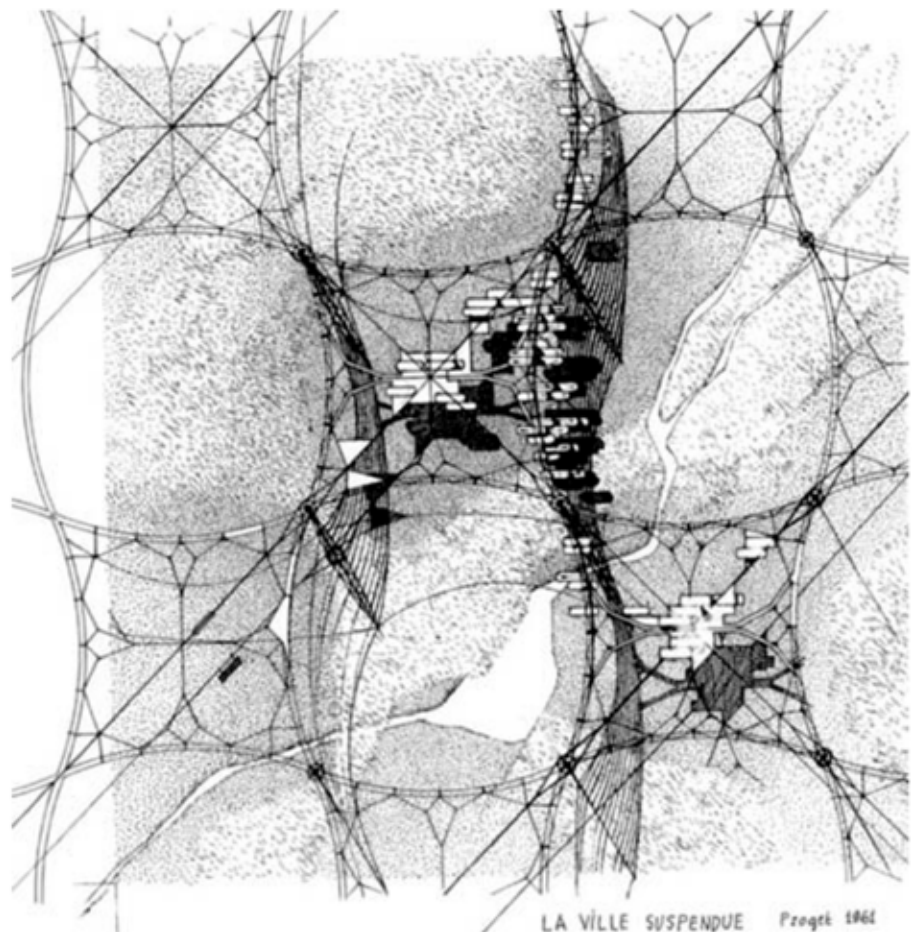
preparedness.

The interest of Zenetos in “individual living units” was not only at the heart of the reflection developed in the framework of his project *Urbanisme électronique: Structures parallèles* (fig. 4), but also at the heart of his graduation project at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris entitled *Micropolis: Unité d'habitation autonome*, which he completed in 1953, and of his project entitled *La ville suspendue* (1961) (fig. 5), which concerned the design of a suspended city. The questions he addressed through his work on “Electronic Urbanism” were already present in his thought and work during his studies in Paris. This makes us think that the Parisian scene played an important role in the development of his ideas concerning the design strategies employed in the case of the “individual living units” of the city of the future.

Zenetos' *Urbanisme électronique: Structures parallèles*, which consisted of individual living units spread over a vast infrastructural domain, presents many affinities with various projects of suspended megastructures, such as the utopian urban network over Paris designed by Yona Friedman, the *Plug-in City* by Archigram and the *New Babylon* by Constant Nieuwenhuys. In the fifth issue of the journal Archigram, published in 1964 by the British group Archigram, one can see the *Plug-in City* by Archigram, the *New Babylon* by Constant Nieuwenhuys and a sketch of a floating megastructure by Zenetos in the same page under the label “Within the Big Structure” (Anon 1964). In the same issue of Archigram, which was devoted to “Metropolis”, featured drawings of architects such as Yona Friedman, Hans Hollein, Arata Isozaki, Paul Maymont, Frei Otto, Eckhard Schelze-Fielitz, Paolo Soleri and Kenzo Tange. Although these projects have affinities with Zenetos' projects as far as their morphology is concerned, they differ from them as far as their social vision is concerned. More specifically, what distinguishes Zenetos' approach from those of Archigram are his social concerns, which become evident in his following statement: «Man desires and has the right to acquire a ‘home’ in a quiet environment, close to nature and close to his place of work and the various public services» (Zenetos 1969a 116).

Revisiting the ideas of Zenetos about the reinvention of the living units in order to respond to the needs of distance working, one could better grasp





**Fig. 5**

Takis Zenetos. General plan for the project entitled “La ville suspendue”, 1961. Fonte: Personal archives of Zenetos family.

how architecture and urban design could respond effectively in the case of pandemic breakouts, such as the coronavirus breakout. Zenetos maintained that «[n]on-material media in managing business and production operations, such as light or sound, are cheaper and faster, and can replace the present vast and expensive installations, offering at the same time the advantage of total flexibility» (Zenetos 1969a 118). He envisioned a new mode of thinking urbanism able to be adapted to the continuous mutations in both social and technological domains. For him, “tele-operation” was closely connected to significant changes in the social domain apart from the technological.

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Edoardo Marchese, Noemi Ciarniello  
**Living producing reproducing.  
Political projects for homes**

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Abstract

The purpose of this article is to analyse ways of life and home environments through the categories of productive and reproductive work, in order to outline new practicable solutions to some of the issues presented. The lock-down has connected the interior of the home – the private, space of reproductive work – and the exterior – the public, space of productive work – in an unprecedented way. It is precisely within the relationship between outside and inside, public and private, production and reproduction that lie many of the contradictions and the potentialities of living. These spaces could be reshaped through political and non-formal design strategies. Working on a plan encompassing both private homes and urban design, we outline options to intervene on collective residences within the city.

Keywords

Housing — Work — Social reproduction

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The lock-down measures enacted to control the spread of the Covid-19 epidemic have had large consequences on people's home environments and ways of life.

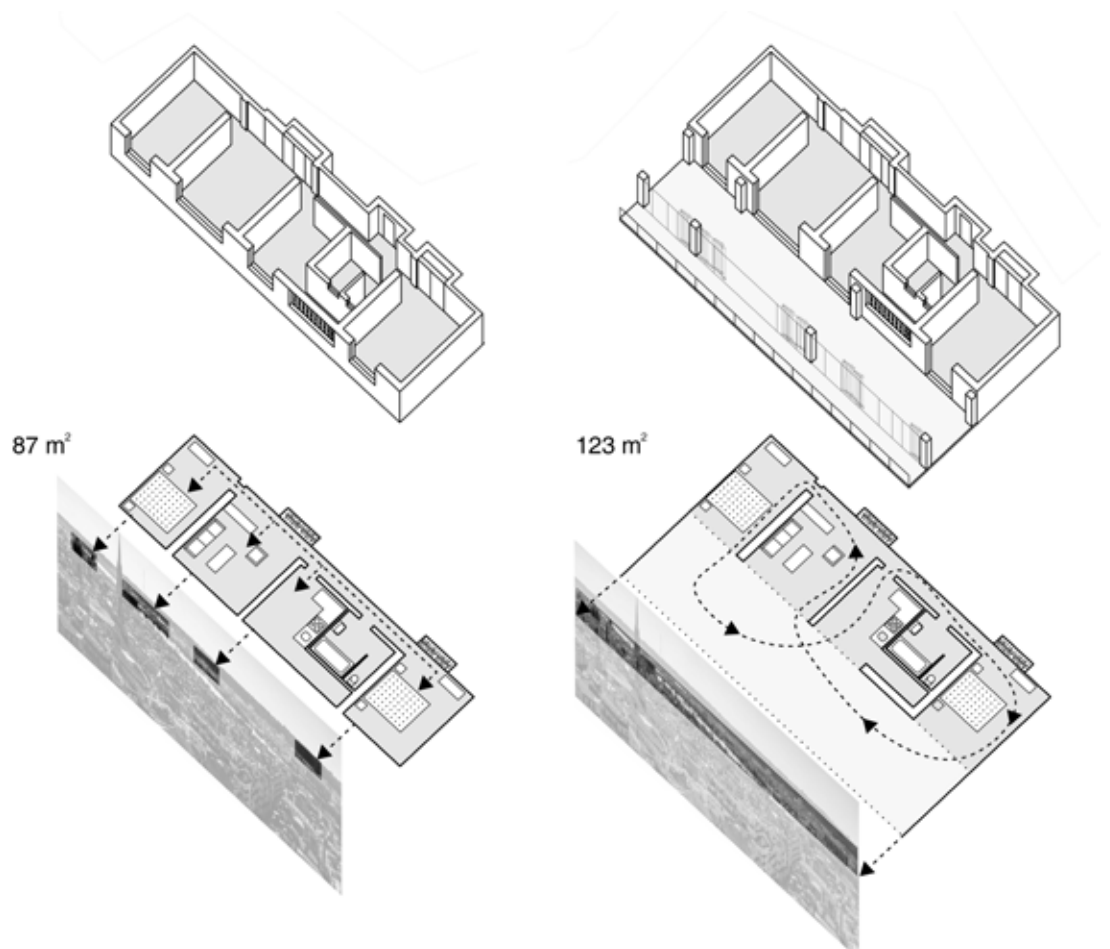
In particular, the measures enacted in March and April 2020 accentuated an ongoing process, never before seen on such a wide scope, to connect the home environment-the private living space, the place of reproductive work – and the outside – the public space, the place of productive work.

Productive work here is intended as waged work. Reproductive labour or social reproduction, on the other hand, is all that work, traditionally female, that serves the reproduction of the individual and the society (Marx 1867).

The massive entry of women into the labour market following the lowering of average wages and the simultaneous downsizing of welfare have redesigned the relationship between productive work and reproductive labour, further privatising the latter in a symbolic and material sense and making women's productive work precarious and undervalued (Fraser 1996). This not only influences the market downwards, but also makes it imperative to create new conditions of work flexibility that enable domestic and reproductive labour to be taken over.

Flexibility is often demanded by women workers themselves in order to reconcile 'work' and 'life' – it also happens to be a 'productive resource' (Standing 2011) that allows companies to implement significant cost reductions.

Lower wages, minimum benefits and longer working days, in particular, are motivated and guaranteed by the exploitation of the living environment. If these trends were already visible before, the lock-down has led to their extension to almost the entirety of the employment market, blurring further

**Fig. 1**

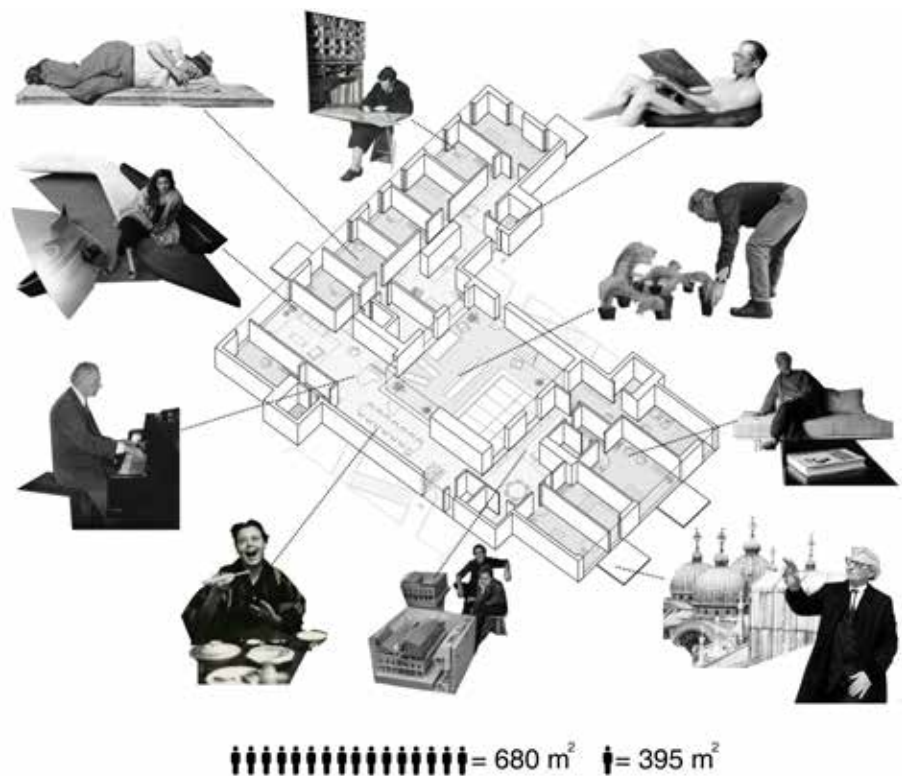
530 Dwellings in Bordeaux Lacaton & Vassal 2016, existing condition (left side), project (right side). Drawing by the author.

the boundaries between public and private space, between production and reproduction (Martella, Enia 2020). The house, in fact, has had to accommodate unforeseen activities, transforming itself into a classroom, a gym and a meeting room. Virtual life has depended on real space, shared and disputed according to everyone's needs, which in turn have depended on the unequal roles closely linked to gender attributed by society and by the labour market. In this sense, the lock-down has acted both as a catalyst for flexibility and as a magnifying glass for the problems it generates. Among these are depression, anxiety and insomnia, which appear to have affected women twice as much as men (Campolongo S. Amore M. 2020). One of the main causes of these phenomena is the shortage of space for themselves and the absence of open areas. It is not surprising: women still carry out a large part of the reproductive work, and the imposed interruption of the paid care work (domestic help, baby-sitters, carers, etc.) has forced them to individually reconcile productive and reproductive work, but now in a living environment. Cross-referencing these data with ISTAT data (ISTAT 2020) it is possible to trace how, during the lock-down, women managed to create work spaces inside the home, especially in the rooms traditionally dedicated to reproduction, such as the kitchen. This shows that reproductive and productive tasks intertwine in women's lives, pushing them to a 'flexibility', also in terms of physical space, which is difficult to sustain.

During lock-down, the home has become for all a 'mixed' ground, in which production and reproduction merge. That mixture can have dangerous effects on certain aspects of life. It is useful, therefore, to investigate options that would mitigate these dangerous elements.

Working in parallel on both individual residences and urban scale, the pro-



**Fig. 2**

Zwicky Sud Zurigo. Schneider Studer Primas e Kraftwerk1 2016. Typical floorplan. Drawing by the author.

posed strategy aims, through the outlining of concrete examples, to define potential actions to intervene rapidly on the home environment in the context of the city.

### Private space within the home

In our homes, especially in the city, each room corresponds to an activity that must be carried out with maximum efficiency, in the shortest possible time and with the minimum waste of resources. In practice, this trend is based on market laws that have compressed the available space in one's accommodation to an excessive degree.

During the lock-down, the process of undermining the specific purpose of the rooms was accentuated. The activities to be carried out at home have multiplied, and so too has the need for additional, multifunctional spaces that can accommodate more than everyday, invisible, private reproduction. The pressing need to continue working has accelerated a process of supplying specific environments – separate areas, acoustic and luminous control – beneficial to the domestication of production (Chayka 2020).

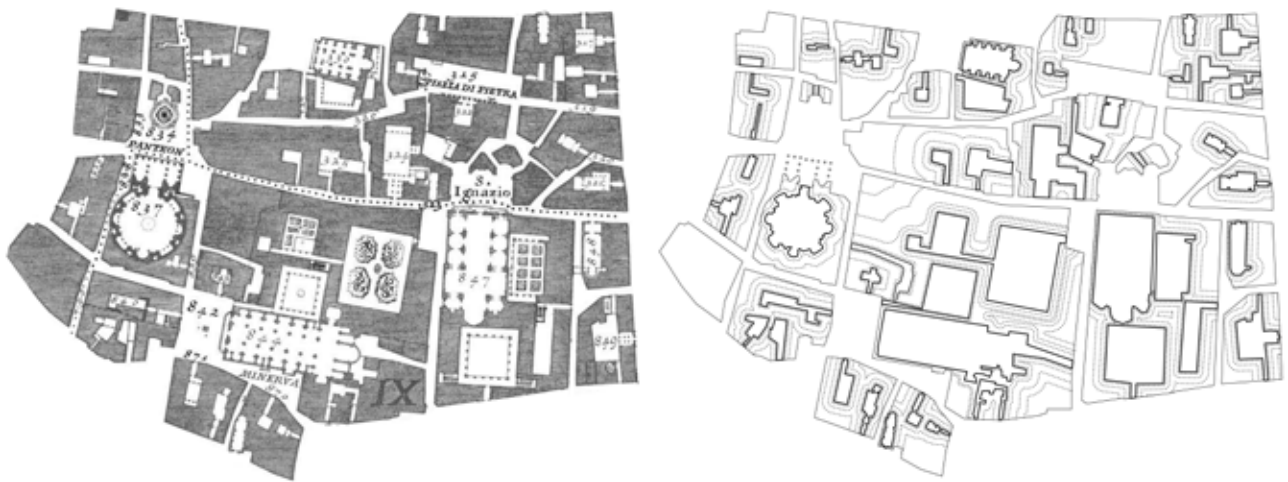
This trend changes the shape of the home, but not its nature. It conceives a space with assigned functions, and therefore does not free the residents from the related roles that depend on it, which are often gender-related. In this sense it is worth mentioning the redevelopment experiments of Lacaton & Vassal on social housing in Paris and Bordeaux.

The winter garden they have created is a neutral surface, and the opposite choice to those market logics that would have favourably seen the demolition of the property (Mayoral Moratilla 2018), and which are accustomed to making air, space and sunshine marketable, thus rendering them available only to those who can afford their price.

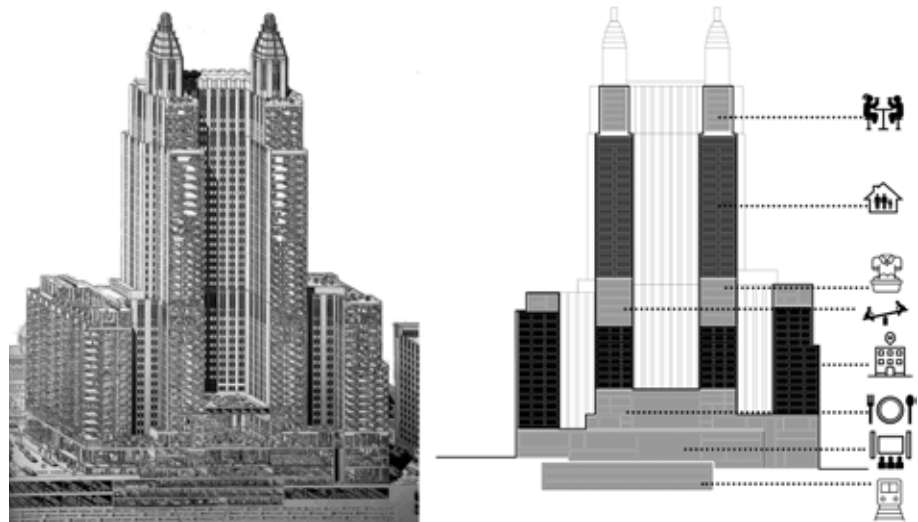
How essential these characteristics actually are emerged during the lock-down, when balconies and terraces, however small, acquired a new, central, role in the lifestyle of the residents.

In Zurich, the radicalisation of spatial – and economic – inequalities of this



**Fig. 3**

Plan of Rome G. Nolli 1748. Porosity and Urban Membrane. Drawing by the author.

**Fig. 4**

Waldorf Astoria section. Crowninshield, F., The unofficial palace of New York a tribute to the Waldorf-Astoria, New York, 1939. Drawing by the author

kind has had the effect of encouraging widespread experimentation with collective residences (Bideau 2015). A significant example of this is the Zwicky Sud, designed by Schneider Studer Primas. The choice made for the conversion of the former industry into residences was to collectivize a large part of the private areas, sharing large spaces within the community. On the one hand, this arrangement is capable of redistributing surfaces, guaranteeing for everyone a very high quality of life at a minimal material and ecological cost. On the other hand, it virtuously modifies relations between the residents, favouring the development of welfare networks, and decentralising, even during a pandemic, the burden of reproductive work on a wider community, to the benefit of the population groups that suffer most from its privatisation.

### The public space between the houses

The lockdown showed how some spatial configurations on an urban scale contributed to relational dynamics of assistance and mutualisation. These include housing development courtyards, common outdoor spaces where it was possible to meet and play, or the city's squares, capable of hosting open-air cinemas, fuelling communal life even during social distancing. It is therefore important to further expand the scale of reasoning on the residence through the introduction of the notion of porosity, borrowed from Richard Sennett (Sennett 2018 p.304). The definition applies, in the relationship separating public and private space, a distinction between border and membrane. The membrane has characteristics of selective porosity, capable of mediat-

ing the quantity and quality of exchanges that take place between the two spheres of urban life. It is remarkable how Sennett emphasises the abstract and general characteristics of the membrane, starting from the concept and then condensing it into spatial outcomes. Porosity, thus, is a quality found both in historical and horizontal examples (Rome as represented in the Nolli plan) and in contemporary and vertical buildings (the New York Times skyscraper by Renzo Piano). A particularly interesting case of porosity and collectivization of the services of the residence is the Waldorf Astoria. The building, operating in the first three decades of the 20th century in New York, simultaneously housed public services for citizens – hotels, theatres, restaurants, panoramic terraces – and private homes, creating a complex system of both internal and urban relations (Puigjaner 2014). The individual residences, integrated into the system of collectivization of facilities, could actually do without private kitchens and instead benefit from the common preparation of meals. The building was a great success until its demolition. The quest for porosity, from a practical point of view within the city, suggests a selective readjustment of the spaces available at any one time – infrastructures, public buildings, spaces interposed between private individuals and the city – aimed at opposing «the divisions that capitalism has created» on the basis, for example, of «recomposing our lives and reconstituting a collective interest» (Federici 2018 in Castelli 2019 pp.148-149) fragmented, among other reasons, by the separation between production and reproduction on which the original process of accumulation is based (Ivi).

### Conclusion

The lock-down acted as a trigger on what were already socially widespread problems. One of these is «the contradiction» (Fraser 2016) between reproduction and production and the resulting conflict over its spatial formalization. Rather than following the trend that sees in work flexibility and individual purchasing power, the solution to this contrast is to favour project examples that can collectivize and socialize this conflict.

The reading of urban space – and inevitably also of domestic space – as a place of conflict is in fact «in opposition to neoliberal dynamics» which exploit «community rhetoric» producing «gated communities, gentrification, inequality and expulsions» to ensure that «urban territory» remains «a place of extraction of ever-increasing profit margins by global capital» (Castelli 2019 p.146).

For this reason, it is pivotal to analyse the private residential sphere and public urban sphere by questioning their margins. The possibility is that of «making kin» (Haraway 2019) both inside the residence, contributing to the improvement of the intrinsic living conditions, and between the residences, through the weaving of a dense network of relationships nourished by the city and its borders. Both operations can contribute to loosening the burden of responsibility to produce and reproduce, not through the search for flexible individual balances but by contributing to the reconstitution of a sense of community based on solidarity, for which Covid19 has highlighted both the need and the desire.

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Roberta Gironi

**Flipped space: The inverse relationship between home and work**

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**Abstract**

The lockdown has imposed a systemic shift online of fundamental activities, such as work, education and interpersonal communication. In particular, remote working has shown advantages in reducing office management costs and has stimulated a rethinking in the relationship between home and work. In this scenario, we want to reflect on two possible aspects: one relating to the reinterpretation of the offices from the perspective of the flipped workspace, deriving from the didactic model of the flipped classroom in the school sector; the other related to the reconfiguration of homes, which acquire a public-private dimension with interchange-filter areas.

**Keywords**

Work-home relationship — Hybridization — Flipped workspace

**Fig. 1**

Margeaux Walter Studio, *Secret Baby*, Photography, (from «The New York Times», april 2020).

The lockdown has overturned the relationship between the workplace and the home, emptying public spaces and transferring new functions to private ones, in a more synchronic perspective<sup>1</sup>. The relationship between the offices, the “factories of the new millennium”, and the homes becomes more fluid, revealing new organizational possibilities. As noted by the Observatory on Remote Working of the Polytechnic University of Milan, the experience of remote working imposed by the pandemic is pushing many companies to consider remote working as a preferable organizational option, to be introduced in a structural way<sup>2</sup>. Workers also enjoyed working at home, but pointed out a necessary rethinking of private work spaces<sup>3</sup> and suffered from traceability stress<sup>4</sup>. All this opens up new scenarios. The office, like the factory in the industrial era, has in fact attracted and allocated housing demand in cities<sup>5</sup>, but today remote working and technology allow millions of commuters to be freed from the obligation to travel daily along congested main road arteries. Thanks to a good web connection, one can opt for extra-urban housing choices<sup>6</sup>, in more secluded, liveable and less expensive contexts.

The petrol crisis of the 1970s<sup>7</sup> had already forced millions of people to change their habits of life and therefore also of work. However, today the combination of the impact of the health crisis and the possibilities offered by technology makes it possible to structurally introduce a new organizational model, more performing in terms of sustainable development and quality of life<sup>8</sup>.

The topic is not entirely new: in the last 20 years, digital work has compromised the *static nature* of the workplace – maintaining a reminiscence of the teaching of *bürolandschaft*<sup>9</sup> – in the name of breaking down separation barriers, implementing aspects of flexibility and establishing new balances between physical space and digital dematerialization. The possibilities of-





**Fig. 2**  
SelgasCano, «Mercado de Ribeira», Coworking SecondHome-Lisbon, (photo by Iwan Baan, 2016).



**Fig. 3**  
Google Zurich, Camenzind Evolution, Hurlimann Areal, 2008.

ferred by the web and the very short time in which remote working has been imposed on a global level, due to the health crisis, are nowadays completely new.

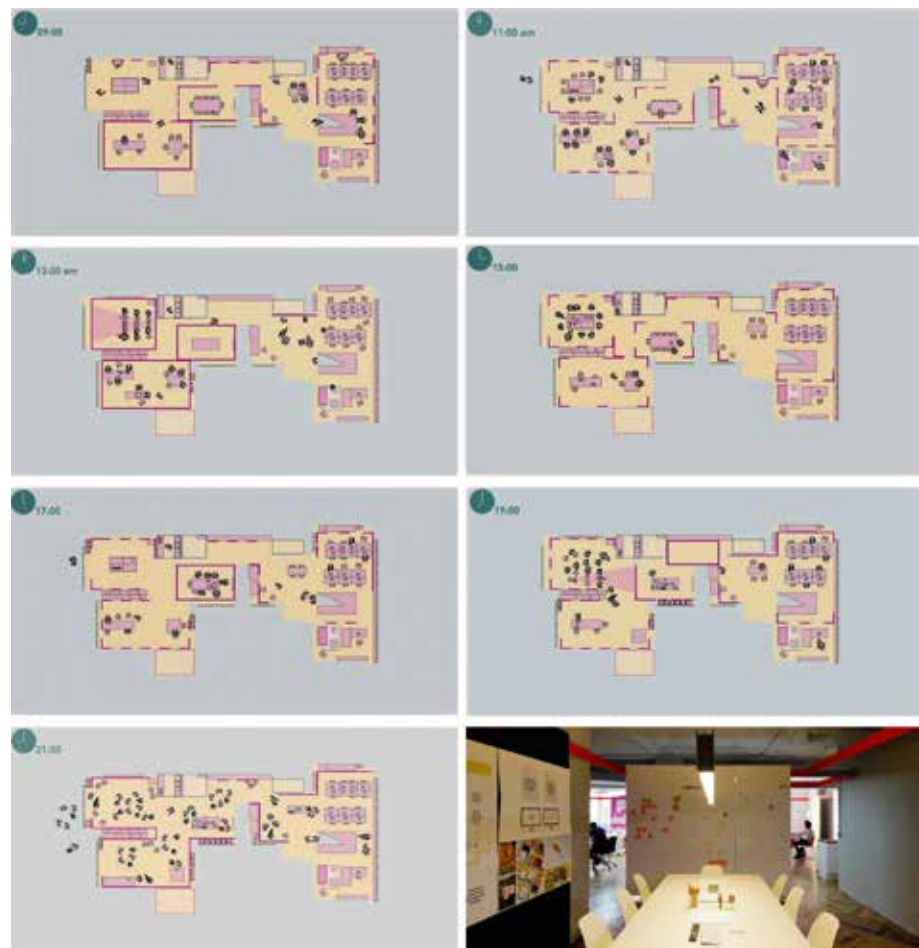
It has thus become evident that the office can no longer be configured as the *workplace* but as a *working environment*, in a broad vision of the production environment that also involves the social, emotional, as well as productive sphere, as in the case of coworking spaces which sometimes satisfy public purposes. The Betahaus project in Barcelona or the coworking facilities designed by Selgascano for the Second Home company, such as Oasi in Los Angeles or the Mercado da Ribeira in Lisbon are indicative of this change.

In a few days, the global organizational model had to reinvent itself due to the virus, moving towards a new scheme – the *flipped workspace* – according to which the real work of the individual is carried out at home, while the company headquarters, the old office, becomes a relational hub, a place for feedback and meetings, for cultural and professional growth, for the use of services, and for team building. The overturning of the perspective applied to the offices refers to the turning point that already occurred at the beginning of the millennium in relation to the *flipped classroom*<sup>10</sup> that overturned the concept and use of the school building, starting from a revision of the learning methods and its transposition in spatial terms, with the abandonment of the desk as the reference measurement for design purposes. The classroom is converted into a broader projection, into an organic architectural matrix that involves the entire building, encouraging an approach aimed at comparison and exchange even between distinct classrooms. The space is enriched with nuances and diversified environments are outlined (educational, individual, explorative, informal spaces, the agora and group areas) where furniture plays a fundamental role of definition in a new perspective linked to values of connectivity, sharing and modularity, as well as *networking pedagogy* (Tosi 2016).

The “flipped” approach appears in offices as a spatial reformulation whose corollary lies in the overcoming of the fixed position assigned to the individual, towards a new work environment conceived as open and multifunctional, as it is mainly dedicated to the activities of team confrontation, coordination, brainstorming or formal meetings with the client, and the actual work is done remotely from home. In this new model, the actual results and outputs, definitively prevail over the value of physical presence.

The office, no longer organised around the desk, as its characterizing element, assumes the value of a nomadic place for meeting and aggregation, a space *aimed at relationships* capable of satisfying different needs, not necessarily for the benefit of a single company but of a network of users.





**Fig. 4**  
Carlos Arroyo, «Unstable Office», Madrid, 2013.

The overcoming of the twentieth-century office is radical, so much that according to Carlo Ratti<sup>11</sup> we will move «from the workplace to the landscape of work». The office environment is characterized by attributes such as *public*, *privileged* and *private*, identifying respectively: fertile points of exchange; close contact areas, such as meeting rooms and individual work spaces; and customized perimeters for individual work.

Going far beyond pure working activity, areas are available for relaxation, sport, assistance, cultural and scientific study, for welfare services: real recreational spaces for human resources, where the worker is immersed in a fluid and stimulating system.

After the various compressions and decompressions that workplaces have recorded over time – from the Taylorist office, the open space, to the rational models of the modern movement, with personal cubicles, passing through the free arrangement with flexible furniture – we now come to the current “liquid” condition of the space, thus highlighting a further gap<sup>12</sup>. The case of Google<sup>13</sup> is in this sense representative because it has created a configuration based on the emotional and psychological factor, playing on the evocative scenarios of a *domestic* dimension and alternating different types of settings from the most structured to the informal ones for free use.

In this perspective, a reduction of the individual workspace in the offices of the future can be assumed. This might be obtained, if necessary, with mobile partitions, in favour of collaboration areas. As it happened in schools, where the *flipping* innovation has led to a regeneration of all spaces, conceived in terms of possible learning spaces (from the corridor as a place for informal exchange to workshop spaces for shared learning), also the work environment starts to undertake a path of spatial redefinition based on the



**Fig. 5**  
Riken Yamamoto, «Jian Wai SoHo», Beijing, China, 2004.

recognition of different working styles (communication, concentration, contemplation, collaboration) which lead to propose environments articulated according to different purposes (brainstorming, presentation, focus, relaxation, socializing, etc).

In this sense, the modularity plays a fundamental reconfiguration role, allowing the common spaces to be converted, expanded or compressed into temporary workstations (for example, the smart canteen transforms the canteen into work spaces, huddle rooms become places for meetings, videocalls and brainstorming), as in the case of the *Unstable Office* project by Carlos Arroyo.

The possibility of remote connection and the flexibility of the spaces therefore allow a strong resizing of the overall surfaces necessary for the exclusive use of individual companies, with consequent savings, opening up to dynamic and shared solutions that mainly satisfy time, representation and coordination needs.

Like the office, homes are also called upon to play a different role. The new ways of working remotely require a dimensional expansion and a reconfiguration of the home. Starting already with the condominiums, arrangements and functions has changed: «The building as a system, with its intermediate and annexed spaces, becomes the ‘buffer’ absorber of new uses and functions, subtracted and introjected from the city, which can’t be satisfied by the house alone» (Tucci 2020). Furthermore, in the house «the theme of the need to move from the traditional two-dimensional ‘entrance threshold’ to an area that acts as a ‘filter-zone’, an interface for exchanges between exterior and interior, as places to be controlled and protected, today and perhaps even tomorrow» is established. The home entrance is ‘ritualized’, with gestures and actions that now take on a renewed value of respect and protection of health, as well as becoming a potentially suitable place to be transformed into a work environment when necessary.

In this sense, the research by Studio Riken Yamamoto on an intimate relationship between home and work space is interesting, as it makes the latter

a natural extension of the house. The SoHo proposal (Small Office-Home Office) conceives an environment to be used as a work, study, teaching area in direct contact with the distribution corridor of the rest of the accommodations in the building. It therefore appears as a multipurpose room that also becomes a filter between the public and private dimensions, both spatial and social, renouncing separation also through the choice of a transparent closing partition.

The web has opened a public space-time window within the private dimension that is a prelude to its hybridization: homes are reconfigured with multipurpose spaces (private and public), which are divisible and adaptable. Environments that allow teaching and working activities carried out remotely. Realities demarcated by mobile partitions, panels, backgrounds: solutions that preserve the privacy of the home from the inexorable eye of the PC camera. Spaces that can be redefined throughout the day are established, passing from a clear private vocation to the interaction towards the outside, in a total immersion of the home in the network, within an entirely digital and interactive perspective.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> «There are two ways to plan activities in the centre of a city. In the first, a crowd of people gathered together does different things at the same time; in the other, they are grouped to do one thing at a time» (Sennett 2018).

<sup>2</sup> In the last 6 months, the Observatory recorded a change of address by 62% of public administrations which introduced remote working.

<sup>3</sup> In the Piepoli Institute's survey for Designtech (4 May 2020) 63% of Italians think that «it will be necessary to reorganize private spaces».

<sup>4</sup> «Today, monitoring atomized and remote work is easier than when it was concentrated in a single building. By keeping the staff at home, superiors can disrupt the community» (Sparrow 2020).

<sup>5</sup> From the theories on decentralization and delocalization of the early 2000s, the economic crisis has given a countertrend impetus and cities have once again become the fertile ground for productive activities, especially of intangible assets (Ragonese 2012).

<sup>6</sup> Stefano Boeri foresees a future decentralization of the population towards «the small Alpine and Apennine villages where greater social distancing occurs».

<sup>7</sup> «Suddenly, the American work culture, cantered on the use of the private car, seemed unsustainable. That same year, Jack Nilles, along with other scholars, published the essay *The telecommunications-transportation trade-off*, in which he stated that the traffic problem was only a communication means problem» (Newport 2020).

<sup>8</sup> «Workers, and therefore their consumption, could leave the now-too-expensive metropolises and revitalize places which are off the beaten track» (Newport 2020).

<sup>9</sup> In 1958, the brothers Eberhard and Wolfgang Schnelle proposed an innovative solution for offices, starting from the removal of the repetitive distribution of desks to introduce a more organic system based on the insertion of free furniture and vegetation: the *bürolandschaft*, or «office landscape».

<sup>10</sup> The origin can be traced in 2006 with the experimentation of video lessons by two teachers, Jonathan Bergmann and Aaron Sams, in order to reach also the students absent from classes.

<sup>11</sup> *Ricerca Copernico. Il nuovo paesaggio del lavoro* in collaboration with Copernico co-working, BNP and Arper.

<sup>12</sup> See the edition of the a + t magazine dedicated to the transformation of the workplace: *Workforce, a better place to work*, (2014), «a + t», nos. 43-44.

<sup>13</sup> For example, the Google Campus in London or the Google headquarters in Zurich, just to name a few.

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Giovanni Comi

**Designing the uninhabitable.****Reflections on the space of relationships**

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**Abstract**

Thinking about the post-Covid city represents an opportunity for a reflection that, starting from the differences inherent in each city, from the knowledge of its history, of its past, critically analyses the conceptual fracture operated by the globalization. When asking about the way of inhabiting a space whether private or public, is necessary to read the opposing levels that the city is built on. The “ability to inhabit” is therefore constituted as an immanent quality of places, proposing solutions that establish degrees of “collaboration” between building and urban space and forms of relationship that the contemporary city seems no longer able of producing: therefore only by developing a “prescient” environmental vision and recovering the ethical need to imagine the city beyond contingency.

**Keywords**

Inhabit — Urban space — City

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When asking ourselves how the way of inhabiting a space whether private or public has changed, we need to know how to read the opposing levels that the city is built on; this is to be found within the relationship between volumes and voids, the latter being the place of relationships, where a collective organization becomes aware of itself and which is «the setting for the simultaneity of urban facts» (Espuelas 2004, p. 13). Indeed, the aggregation of individuals (synechism) has led to the creation of many cities where the idea of community preceded and formed the basis of the inhabitants' identity<sup>1</sup>. At a time when we have found ourselves living “imprisoned” the public space has been removed and with it the failure of the very idea of a city founded on social interaction. The virus has heightened and exacerbated social disparities between the protected and the unprotected, reinforcing existing contradictions and questioning the very “relational matrix” between us and our surroundings which only recognizes in alterity the essential condition which can determine the move from “the individual subject” to the collective (Tagliagambe 2008, p. 121).

Moved by an «immune drive, by a stubborn will to remain intact, entire, and unharmed» (Di Cesare 2020, p. 23), the individual has thus found himself forced into his own isolation, deprived of the freedom that derives exclusively from the “infra space” (Arendt 1994): the historical-political dimension which ensures plurality, the existence of individuals not squeezed in one on top of one another, not deprived of their individual boundaries but where, rather, public space has a representative role that «associates a collective ideal with that of the individual» (Tagliagambe 2008, p. 208).

What happens when this distance increases to the point of becoming separated when the citizen puts their own protection before participation in pub-





**Fig. 1**  
Jay Crum, *Second Nature*, ink  
and collage, 2010, © Jay Crum

lic life? That's when the feeling of immunity prevails, thereby creating a sense of identity crisis, replaced by the singularity<sup>2</sup>.

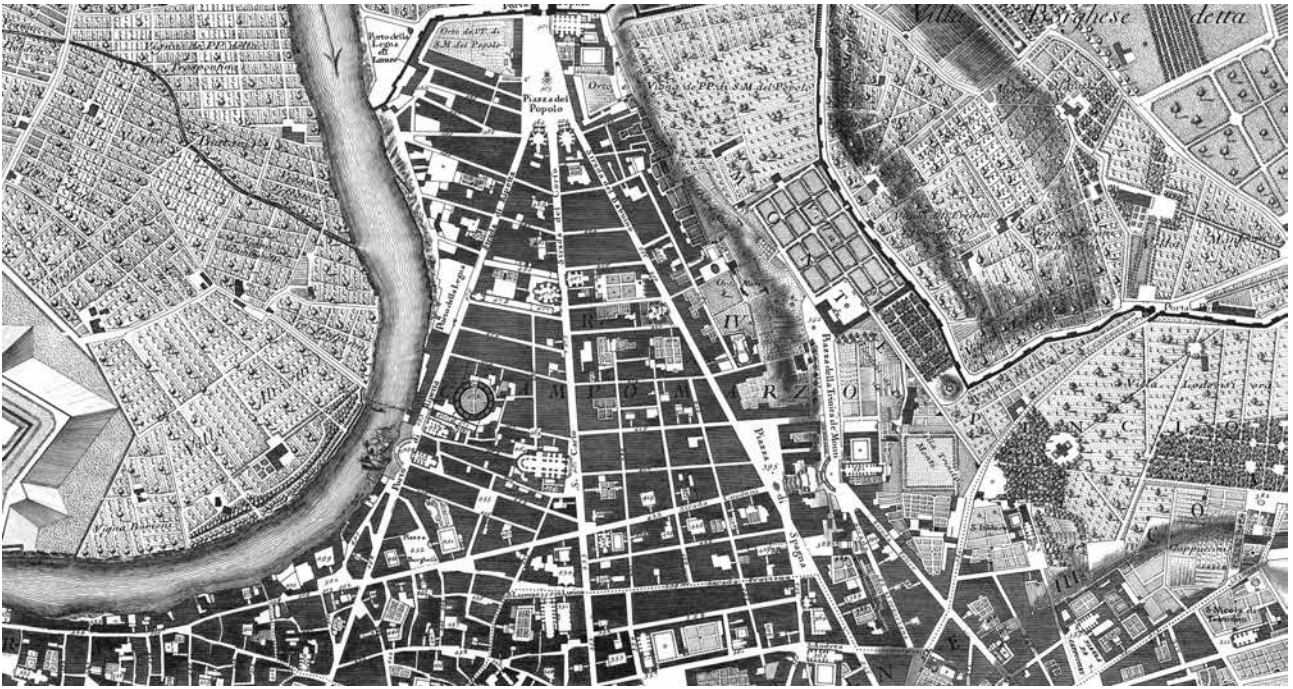
It is therefore necessary to avoid the mistake of thinking about space, private or public, without thinking about the city; indeed architecture is the art of building to the extent that it is also art of living<sup>3</sup> understood as the way men act, relate to one another and give a real sense i.e. not alienated and abstract, to their being in a given place. Freed from any finalistic conception of space, "the ability to inhabit" must therefore, be constituted, today perhaps more than ever before, in so far as it is a quality inherent to the places offering solutions that establish levels of "collaboration" between building and urban space, recovering in other words those forms of relationship that the contemporary city no longer seems capable of producing.

The pandemic appears to be the result of too much time in the past spent underestimating the problems related to the expansion of the city as if environmental and social phenomena associated with it could be easily controlled and managed. The "state of exception" has shown an unwillingness to address the crisis with a long-term view, although only by developing a "prescient" environmental vision is it truly possible to take care of the city, give it an ethical foundation, an ensemble consisting of the individual and the community (Emery 2011, p. 113).

The risk is that the city shows itself once more to be incapable of designing urban spaces and instead falls back on existing rules (for economic reasons) tending towards private use<sup>4</sup>.

If in its first and most acute stage the pandemic intensified the sense of confinement, now the role that open space has come to play, being a place of





**Fig. 2**  
Giambattista Nolli, Nuova Pianta  
di Roma, 1748, (detail)

movement and coming together, lends itself to considerations about the shape and the use of those unresolved intermediate spaces, a *zwischenraum* between the building and the street. In such circumstances the design of the buildings' take on the ground is seen as a conformational structure with the aim of achieving a spatial continuity of relationships similar to what happened in the past thanks to architectural elements such as the threshold, the porch, the roof cover – interpreters of a mutual sense of belonging between public and private – an expression of a way of thinking about the urban project that seems to have been almost completely removed in the contemporary city.

The city of globalization that destroys its own limits and engulfs the surrounding landscape by extending its shadow over the countryside, at the same time creates many internal borders which define a succession of “inside” and “outside” but without being able to give shape to these places. Koolhaas calls it *Intermediate-stan* – “middle ground” – the border that from caesura becomes threshold and recaptures the etymological sense of *limes* as an essential condition of urban space: the city is such precisely because it has a beginning in time, and a limit in space<sup>5</sup>. Nolli's *New Plan*, which was then made a “pretext” for the laboratory that was *Rome Interrupted*, is emblematic because it shows a dialectic relationship between volumes and voids where space is genuinely moulded into an integrated system in which the densification is the result of a design of the city through its architecture. While destruction and transformation are intrinsic to architecture, it is important that this leads to a consequent “production” not only/no longer of economic capital according to the rules of speculation but rather of “civic capital” (Settis 2014, pp. 57-58). To date however it seems that the ideas and proposed solutions in the face of danger and urgency are addressed by reasons more economic than ecological.

Conversely the pandemic phenomenon has made even more evident the need for reflection, too often rejected, on those architectures which, given their very function, construct “uninhabitable” spaces because they are designed with the clear purpose of limiting/denying the very meaning of habitation. In a pandemic, places which more than others question the architecture as to its direction and, in particular, on the rigour with which the architecture itself assumes the responsibility of “building” before “inhabiting”, aware that

**Fig. 3**

Le Corbusier, *Urbanisme*, Rio de Janeiro, Brasil, 1929 (Plan FLC 32091)

only by overthrowing the usual consequentiality does coexistence become plausible and, perhaps even survival: to design you need to know to how to inhabit, and indeed we must learn to inhabit.

How to design situations in which the cohabiting is forced, where being confined is the rule and not the exception? «What architecture is it that is based on the impossibility of inhabiting» (Agamben 2018)? An architecture that no longer recognizes that its starting point and its rule is habitation, will be hostile to those whose needs, transforms into an “alien dwelling”, so that the *heimlich* is transfigured into *unheimlich*. A feeling of “disturbing” that showed how much “habitable” and “uninhabitable” are in fact contiguous, next door neighbours, separated by a fine line. The “uninhabitable”, the negation of architecture, constructed before or without being inhabited i.e. without being thought out, until that moment removed from the architecture, has resurfaced with the experience of the pandemic<sup>6</sup>. No longer a split so much as in conflict with the inhabitable space, which can enrich the architectural thinking and generate a creative tension which would otherwise be unattainable. Places for which you need to re-establish a re-composition of urban relationships so that these structures no longer present themselves as a separate body in the fabric of the city. In Michelucci’s plans for the *Garden of Meetings* in the Sollicciano Prison we can recognize the desire to address the issue of the uninhabitable by constructing a space that appears to cancel the separation between inside and outside which evoke one another in their use of materials and the figurative choices; in which structural clarity is not simply displayed but is at the service of the invention of a new spatiality whose intrusion provokes a somewhat complicated semantic crisis compared to the very idea of prison.

If the answer to the Covid-19 emergency was addressed by adopting a common strategy – the lockdown – thoughts on the post-Covid city must rather be an exercise in specification which, starting from the inherent differences in each city, from the knowledge of its history, its past, is capable of pro-



ducing a glimpse of the future: a trivialization of the answer would only surrender the city to the same problems to which the aestheticization of architecture has condemned it until today. Vittorio Gregotti's conclusions on the self-referencing nature of *bigness* are useful for distinguishing the current disaffection with the past that feeds contemporary architecture by the rejection for the past of some avant-garde movements from the beginning of the 20th century represented a distinctly utopian interpretation of the architectural project as an alternative.

The *poietic* vision that animated the work of architects such as Le Corbusier, and which now appears to have been completely replaced by a pure aesthetic emotion, was actually the result of a deep reflection on materials, a profound look at the historical and geographical connections of the location of the project. What turns out to no longer postponable is precisely the need to recover this ability to imagine the city and not just to design it, or deal with an extended and ample period of time which does not think in terms of the contingent but rather reflects on the future so to be able to give back to city its own memory, going beyond the *Generic City*<sup>7</sup> and proposing a radical rethinking of urban space. In other words to analyse the conceptual fracture resulting from globalization in a more current perspective that, without the illusion of producing a viable urban structure anywhere, embraces the specific condition and has as its prospect the city understood as a complex artefact, rich, differentiated<sup>8</sup>; a process that moves from the constant interpretation of the city before the project and the transformation brought about by the project.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> «[...] L'Aquila's medieval statutes ordered the inhabitants to produce collectively (*uti socii*) public spaces (squares, fountains, churches) before settling individually (*uti singuli*) in the home» (Settis 2014, p. 91).

<sup>2</sup> Singularity, what not supported by alterity, is fragile and exposed to fragmentation unlike identity which is supported by the principle of community. We can thus delineate a paradoxical "immune democracy" summarized by Di Cesare as *Noli me Tangere*. At the centre there has to be your safety – today in relation to the virus, more generally toward what is different – based on the separation between the condition reserved for the protected as compared to the excluded "others".

<sup>3</sup> Etymologically the Latin verb *habitare*, the frequentative form of *habere* has the meaning of "continue to have" in the sense of "have a habit" of being in a particular place as a result of the action of the person who owns and thus retains the place they inhabit, by transforming the space from natural to artificial.

<sup>4</sup> «In some places, both rural and urban, the privatization of space has made it difficult for citizens to access areas of outstanding beauty; elsewhere "ecological" residential areas only available to a few have been created, where they make sure people are not allowed in who might disturb an artificial peace». (Pope Francis 2015, pages 44-45).

<sup>5</sup> Argan's words in the introduction to *Rome Interrupted* ring truer than ever today for many cities: «There being no longer any relationship between history and nature or architecture and countryside, Rome has begun to swell and deform like a bladder, no longer having either architecture or countryside [...]. It is no longer a city, but a desert packed full of people, disrupted by the same speculation that has allowed it to grow out of control» (Argan 1978, p. 12).

<sup>6</sup> The debate surrounding the "uninhabitable" has deep roots (in the philosophical and the psychological sense) and is already recognized by Adorno when he affirms that «to inhabit, in the true sense of the term, is now impossible» and Heidegger's attitude to the shape of the "modern" house that despite it being a response to unhealthy conditions appeared to be entirely focused on the pure functionalism of the technique, making its inhabitants like guests separated from their fate.

<sup>7</sup> «The generic city is the city liberated from the bondage of the centre, from the strait-jacket of identity. The Generic City breaks this vicious cycle of dependency: it is simply

a reflection on today's needs and capacities. It is the city without history. It's big enough for everyone. It's convenient. It does not require maintenance. If it becomes too small it simply expands. If it gets old it simply self-destructs and renews itself. It is equally interesting and uninteresting in all its parts. It is "superficial" like the boundary wall of a Hollywood film studio, which produces a new identity every Monday morning» (Koolhaas 2006, p. 31).

<sup>8</sup> «Urban design means taking as a starting point the geography of a given city, its needs and suggestions and introducing the architectural elements of language to shape the site. Urban design means keeping in mind the complexity of the work to be done rather than rational simplification of the urban structure. It also means working inductively, generalizing what is particular, strategic, local, generative» (Solà Morales 1989, p. 8).

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Claudia Sansò, Roberta Esposito

**Pandemos: 'in' space, 'between' space and 'net' space**

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**Abstract**

The essay proposes, starting from the pandemic emergency, considerations *sub specie architecturæ* with an interscalar character: the 'contained' dimension of the house taken as a space of 'interiority' which — like the Bau (den) of Kafka's book — welcomes and exiles its inhabitants rejecting the 'enemy' that spreads in space from the boundless dimension of 'externality'. The condition denies individuals the encounter with the community that takes place through a third virtual space, called the 'net'. Through dystopian representations, showing Foucaultes internal 'heterotopic' and external 'urban deserts', scenarios of spaces in crisis are hypothesized with the aim of triggering reflections on the likely future scenary of the city's architecture.

**Keywords**

Third space — Dystopia — Utopia — Heterotopia — Collage

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«What makes [windows] mysterious and often monstrous is that every time we look at them, and through them, our senses and thoughts immediately go to inhabit different worlds – worlds in which internal horizons might emerge as external and distant places seem closer than the immediate surroundings» (Koepnick 2007).

The separation between what generally happens inside a house and what instead occurs outside it, in the spaces of the city – which can be seen through the opening of a window – has dissolved following the pandemic that has engulfed the entire planet. It could perhaps be said that the subdivision in the development of human activities in the two spaces of the interior and exterior has been altered. The interior spaces of the houses have welcomed, in addition to the canonical indoor activities, also all those actions that were usually carried out in the spaces outside the city. In this way the outside space is no longer the place where human actions take place. The 'Coronavirus' emergency has, in this sense, triggered urgent reflections on physical space as a theme specific to the discipline of architectural and urban project. The pandemic has produced 'full' spaces inside houses and 'empty' spaces in the city.

Assuming and exasperating this as a tragic condition and triggering a reflection *sub specie architecturæ*, the reasoning intends to propose dystopian visions capable of predicting a future that is anything but utopian. At the same time are proposed images strongly critical of the probable future scenarios of the architecture of the city, to try to counter the condition where the distant and immaterial virtual space can become the only possible space. These scenarios therefore consider a 'third space', whose presence in the recent months has manifested itself with more power. The virtual space tries to 'appropriate' of all those places where community human action takes



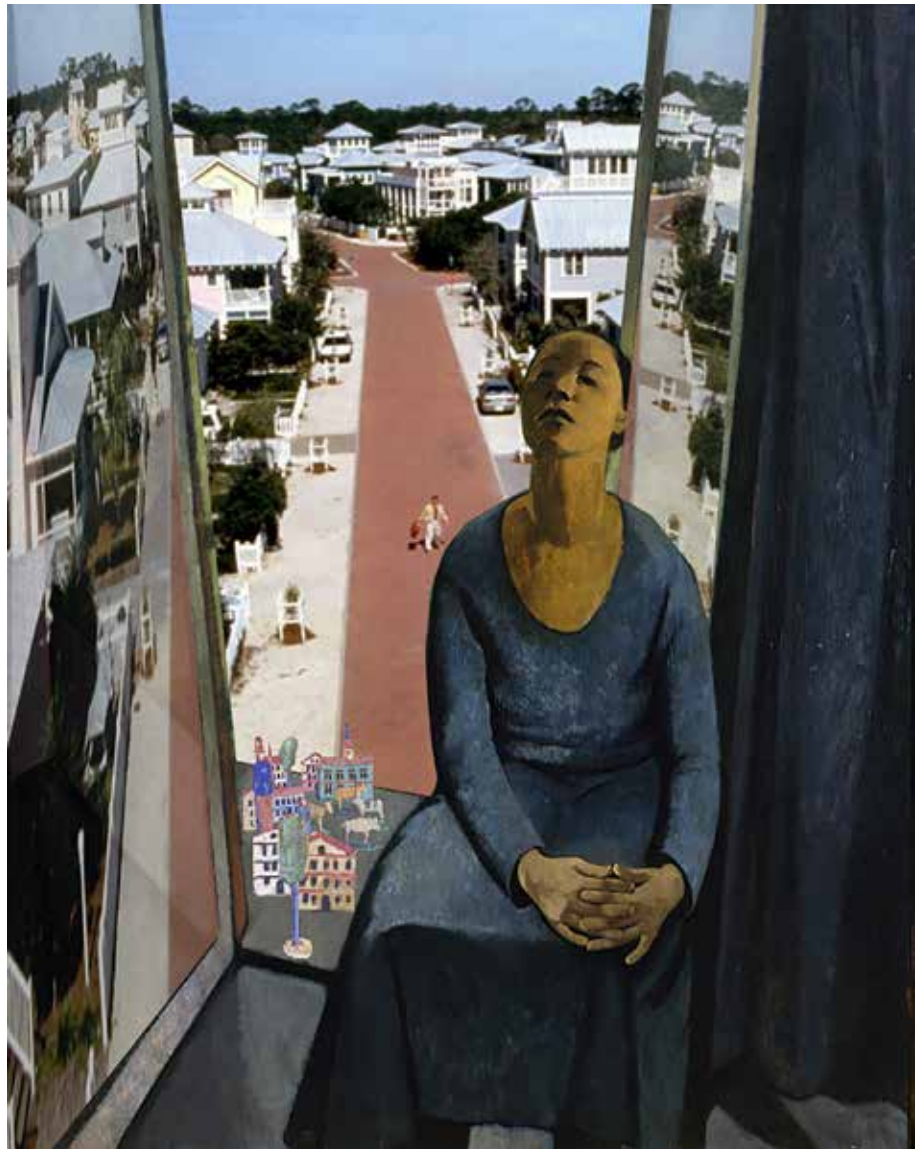
**Fig. 1**  
Collage 1: Silvana Cenni, 1922, tempera on canvas, cm 205x105, by Felice Casorati + Bagdad café, 1987, direct by Percy Adlon.

place, making unattainable. The school, the library, the museum, the market, in the 'third space' become immaterial places to the extent that architecture disappears, dissolves, and the collective experience becomes a mere sum of unrelated individual experiences. This determinates a denial of the real relationship with the community which finds its moment of encounter, in this tragic condition, in the 'net' space.

Specifically, the 'in' space, corresponding to the internal space of the house, becomes promiscuous: place of work, place of school education, place of virtual encounters. As claimed by Michel Foucault, the inner space becomes 'heterotopic'<sup>1</sup>, corresponding to a real place actually created but which is configured as a place outside of any place. Therefore, the lair, as claimed by Kafka (1931), has been, at the same time, a refuge from the world and from external events, but also a trap. The intimacy of the house is, therefore, both, separation and exclusion; the inhabitant feels similarly the safety of the refuge and the lack of freedom. Specifically, the inactivity of its inhabitants, immobilized and excluded from the community that hosts them, reveals the 'naked life', which considers the gap between the individual and the community and which effectively exiles from the politics of the polis. In other words, the 'naked life' corresponds, as Giorgio Agamben (2018) states, to the 'form-of-life': «Men are linked forms-of-life, but this is unrepresentable because it consists precisely in a representative void, in the deactivation and inactivity of every representation».

On the other hand, the external space, to guarantee health safety, relies on (a) social distancing and is distorted by placing things and bodies at an adequate distance. 'Between' one architecture and another the public place, where the representation of the community is staged, it becomes a deserted place, by taking this expansion and distance to the limit. Referring to the recent 'prospects for the future', the city, in order to cope with the emergency by reducing its negative effects, increasingly renounces many of its architectural *oultis* since all activities can virtually take place in domestic spaces that adapt to transform in incubators of experiences, to configure new 'net' spaces corresponding to definitive and pervasive extensions of the global network to the home. Non-physical spaces and uninterrupted connection are envisaged that can accommodate multiple activities or perhaps give the illusion that these activities can here be welcomed: from virtual shopping to on-line teaching, from smart working to personal care, from physical activity to hobbies of all kinds. The interior space is, therefore, designed by hybridizing the usual characteristics of the city and the house, felt as a space for staying and dwelling, acquiring a perfect mirroring of the dimension of 'exteriority', bringing inside what was previously placed outside. The nature, or rather its intangible substitute, explodes inside the house, offering its inhabitants the illusion of being outdoors.

The dystopian visions of the probable future scenery could lead to the re-discovery of as commonly called the 'intimacy' of the political dimension, considered, therefore, of fundamental importance for the survival and non-estrangement of the human being. Both distressing dimensions — the 'urban desert' and the 'domestic dream' — placed in relation and made to coexist at the same time, contrasting with what happens on the other side, are oppressive and lead to the loss of the sense of 'indefinite' of open spaces of the city and the sense of 'defined' of the interior spaces of the house. The hypothetical visions that 'patch' film frames on paintings by Felice Casorati, intend to lead, in this deliberately paradoxical and aporetic (or antinomic) perspective, to a radical rethinking of the architecture of the city, of its spatial models.



**Fig. 2**

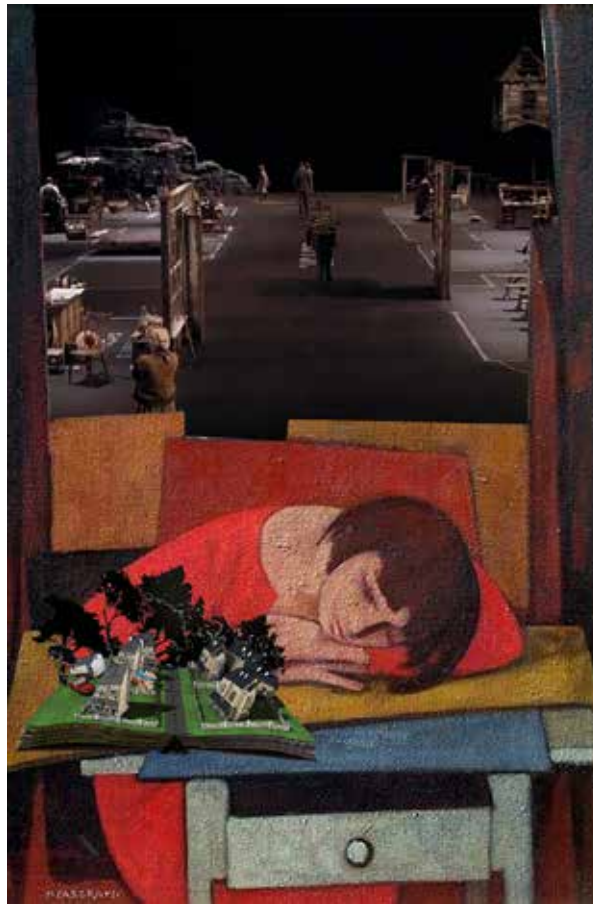
Collage 2: Daphne a Pavarolo, 1934, oil on plywood, cm 121x151, by Felice Casorati + Giocattoli, 1915-16, tempera on canvas, cm 61x57, by Felice Casorati + The Truman Show, 1998, direct by Peter Weir.

In this sense, imaginative visions of houses and cities are proposed that can be seen through the 'painter's windows'. (Im)possible scenarios depict the mutation in the way of living the house and the city by inhabitants who from actors become spectators of a tragedy. People's ability to inhabit such spaces changes, also the way in which the city and the house are built.

It is the window, the place where the close dialogue between the protective domestic space and the dangerous external world is determined, that is used to restore the contemporary spatial condition.

«The house» – writes Gaston Bachelard (1948) – «gives the man who dreams behind the window [...] the feeling of an outside, the more intimacy is in his room the greater diversity is from the inside. The dialectic of intimacy and the universe seem to become more precise thanks to the impressions of the hidden being who sees the world in the window frame».

But people figured in the artworks of the collages' construction look away (or even close their eyes), desperate, from the space that surrounds them; they are unable to 'dream behind a window' of a world that is different from the internal or external one that presents itself to them. The window is, in this case, the threshold towards an undesirable 'elsewhere', which is why the visions are strongly expressive of a longed-for freedom and at the same time reflect the intimate 'family prison' and the quiet 'public prison'.



**Fig. 3**

Collage 3: Riposo, 1955, tempera on paper, cm 70x50, by Felice Casorati, + Dogville, 2003, directed by Lars von Trier + Favolacce, 2020, directed by Fabio and Damiano D'Innocenzo.

The frames of the movies placed 'behind the window' are meant to be symbolic of a disturbing condition 'emptied' of the sense of architecture: the 'slow' *Bagdad café* (1987), directed by Percy Adlon, which frames the desert of Arizona in which there is nothing but a motel in which the whole story takes place indicates the excessive distancing between architectural 'objects' such as not to allow to measure a hypothetical distance between one thing and another; the very recent and harsh *Favolacce* (2020) by D'Innocenzo outlines the virtual reality that completely takes over the real and concrete one; the space of Lars von Trier in the city of *Dogville* (2003), defined exclusively by white lines drawn on a floor, is configured as a void in which the inhabitants have the possibility to move; the artificial city of *The Truman Show*, directed by Peter Wier, is a place where the inhabitants have the illusion of feeling safe even in the streets of the city and not just inside their homes.

The (un)expected result depicts confused scenery of internal, domestic, 'full' spaces, into which the 'exterior' is catapulted which, for its part, empties of meaning and architecture. The vision is that of undesirable lives, where the internal spaces, detached from the uncertainties of the external world, dreamy, unreal, full of poetic suggestions – which however are equally distressing – look, without being able to inhabit it, at the external desert where above all it is arid life which, thanks to the dehumanized power of technology, from 'true' becomes 'apparent' and de-realized.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> The term heterotopia, coined by Michel Foucault, means those spaces that have the particular characteristic of being connected to all other spaces, but in such a way as to suspend, neutralize or reverse the set of relationships that they themselves designate,



reflect or mirror. Cfr. M. Foucault, *Utopie Eterotopie*, Cronopio, Naples 2006; M. Foucault, *Eterotopie*, in: Archivio Foucault, Feltrinelli, Milan 2014.

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Paola Scala, Grazia Pota  
**Elastic places and intermediate design**

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Abstract

Most of the architectural and urban considerations conceived during and after the Covid-19 pandemic seem to allude to the invention of new development paradigms, alternative to the idea of global city and metropolis. Is this answer really possible or, once again, a gap between architecture and reality that is difficult to bridge is being generated? In the following article, we try to tackle the theme of the post-Covid-19 city starting from the existing one. In particular, starting from the suburbs; neighbourhoods built on the idea of standards that arises from the architecture-health relationship. The design of both housing and public spaces in these areas has often generated abstract places that make social networks difficult to being realized.

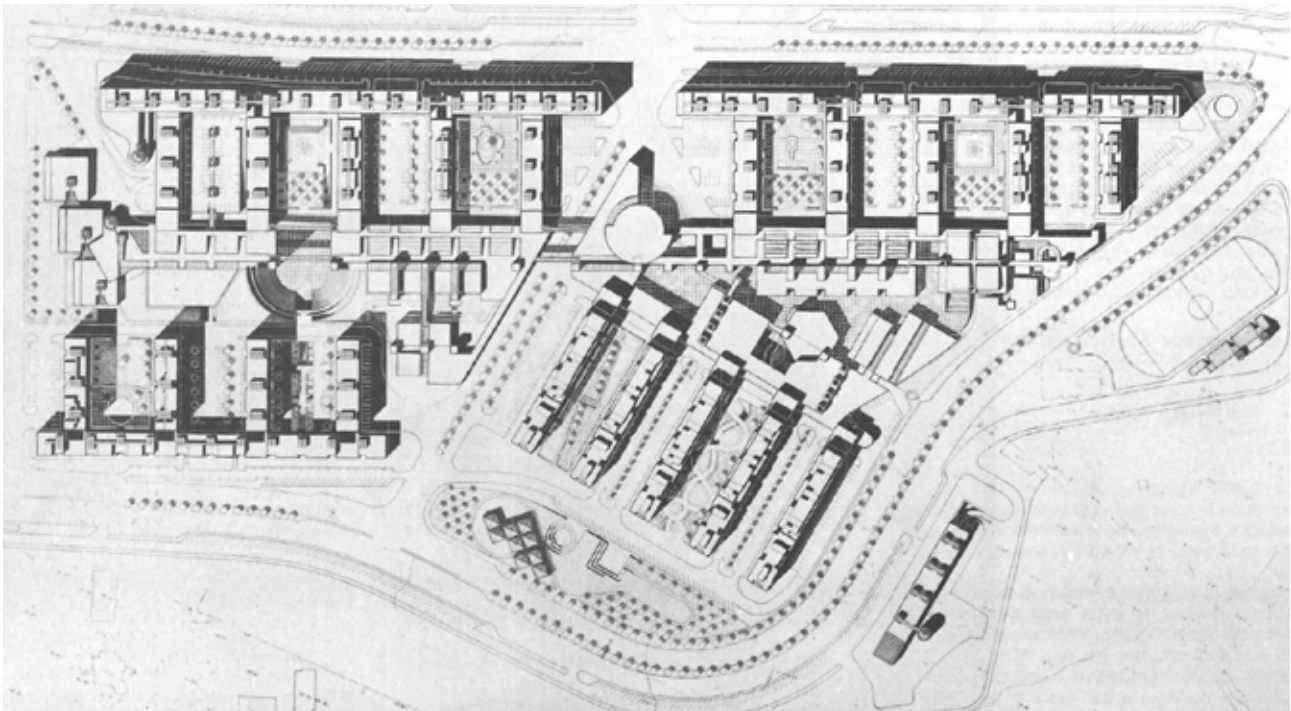
Keywords

Periphery — Resilience — Publicness

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«Noi abbiamo bisogno di abitazioni a buon mercato e igieniche, che rendano possibile agli abitanti il risparmio di forze fisiche e psicologiche. Tali abitazioni non implicano soltanto una salute migliore della popolazione ma anche un vantaggio per il patrimonio nazionale perché risulterebbero ridotte le spese per ospedali, sanatori, etc.». Alexander Klein (1930).

The modern city is built on the relationship between architecture and public health. Research on the minimum dwelling, capable of ensuring a minimum “modus vivendi” rather than a “modus non moriendi” (Gropius 1930), rapidly effected not only the dimension of the building but also that one of the neighbourhood, public space and the modern city. This is not the place for retracing a well-known story, started with the CIAM, continued with the pre and post-war experiments, passing through the great Utopias of the sixties and seventies, and sadly ended with the banality of many of our suburbs. However, the COVID emergency has framed the issue of these areas on the city edges in a new perspective, highlighting the real reasons of modern urbanism. The suburb question was one of the hot topics in the Italian research in architecture before the pandemic. The suburban plan, strongly supported by Renzo Piano, started several urban regeneration processes in the Italian cities peripheral areas, despite the freezing of funds realized in 2019 by amendment 13.2 to legislative decree no. 717. Some of that was based on studies conducted within universities<sup>1</sup>. The pandemic has turned off, at least for the moment, the spotlight on this issue by moving them to other horizons; other ideas of cities and territorial development such as the recovery of inland areas through the construction of small villages with ecological corridors that allow wild animals to coexist with men.



**Fig. 1**  
Ponticelli (Naples), Lotto O, Masterplan. Source: Urbanistica Informazioni, Quaderni 1/82.

The reality is that, at least at the moment, most of us will continue living in our cities and suburbs. Before the pandemic, a Neapolitan research group coordinated by Prof. Laura Lieto had begun to work on the eastern periphery of Naples within the Hera European Project, entitled *PUSH, Public Space in European Social Housing*<sup>2</sup>. In particular, the object of the research conducted in the University of Naples Federico II is the “Lotto O”<sup>3</sup>, a set of buildings built as part of the PSER, extraordinary residential building program, at the end of the 1980s. The research aims to investigate the places of the *publicness* within the neighbourhood. Downstream of the pandemic, the question that echoed in our heads was: does it still make sense to talk about *publicness* in the post-COVID era and, above all, what is *publicness* now?

The “Lotto O” is heir to the idea of “modern” living based on the concept of standard as a guarantor of quality (Le Corbusier 1924) which quickly became a quantity principle. It has some features that makes it interesting in a post-COVID city project point of view. First of all, the geographical position. It is located on the eastern outskirts of Naples, on the slopes of Vesuvius in an area that is still highly agricultural. Secondly, the design system, that is characterized by buildings and open spaces relationships set on correct dimensional criteria. Finally, the flats distribution, in which each stair serves two flats per floor. This structure allows more controlled access to the stairs which is particularly important during the pandemic.

As a consequence of what we said, it might seem that theoretically, suburbs are better suited to face emergency than the historic city. The following considerations are still purely speculative since it is probably still premature to draw conclusions about what has happened. However, from the first inspections carried out and from the news collected during the emergency through social media, the historic city would seem to have proved much more “resilient” than the modern one because in the narrow alleys, made deserted by the pandemic, social and economic practices were activated to support the weakest sections of the population. Therefore, reality has shown us that what really held up during the lock-down were social networks, those of the neighbourhood unit and communities that seem to be



**Fig. 2**  
Ponticelli, Naples, Lotto O.  
Photo by Grazia Pota.

much more typical of the “alley” than of the modern neighbourhood. This answer, which manifests itself in times of emergency, in “times of peace” is built through the creation of a *publicness* made up of “common spaces” in which communities can meet and recognize each other. In the “Lotto O”, as in most of the peripheries of the world, it is difficult to find the places of the *publicness* while the places of the public space are clearly visible. They often correspond with big facilities, almost always not built. The two concepts of *publicness* and public space are not overlapping; referring to the *Commons* concept by Elinor Ostrom, it is possible to argue that the idea of public space is linked to the state ownership while that of *publicness* is linked to “adoption” and the management of space by a group of people held together by bonds of knowledge and unwritten laws. This idea is not new in architecture, it recalls that of “realisable utopias” theorized by Yona Friedman, according to which society is a utopia realised by a group of people who daily manifest their own behaviour joining a common project (Friedman 1947). In order to make it possible, a high communication level between people is necessary, capable of making the project shared. With a certain pre-visionary capacity, before Otterlo’s CIAM, Friedman hypothesized the failure of “global” development models caused by the fact that they are based on communication not built within a community. On the contrary, it moves to a higher level being imposed and managed by groups and authorities outside the community itself.

On an architectural point of view, public space can be designed, *publicness* cannot. We can only create some spatial conditions to make it possible. First of all, the definition of spaces with a human dimension where people can recognize each other and build a structure of relationships. These spaces are usually in antithesis to those provided by the “standards”. The





**Fig. 3**

Naples, Historic centre, the “panaro solidale” (supportive basket) during the quarantine.

places of *publicness* need to be colonized by different types of users. It means they need a certain level of programmatic indeterminacy (Mau and Koolhaas 1995), capable of making them work as “open works” (Eco 1962) with respect to the possibilities of use. Many of the main theoretical contributions in this sense can be found in the 1950s and 1960s. The appropriation of space by Alison and Peter Smithson, experimented in the project for the Golden Lane Estate Building, with the “streets in the air” and the concatenation of different sharing degree spaces (Smithson 2001). The studies on “in-between” spaces by Aldo Van Eyck, for their capacity of being neutral and easily colonisable (Venturi 1966; De Silva 2018). The contribution of the critique on the “Mass Housing” by John Habraken who highlights the impropriety of this system compared with practical and creative needs of men who needs to build his own space (Habraken 1961). How is it possible to combine these issues with pandemic restrictions and social distancing? A possible answer is in the definition of “elastic places”. On the one hand, they are designed to facilitate the construction of social networks. On the other hand, they are capable of reacting to emergency equipping themselves for managing people flows and applying safety protocols. Therefore, the design of these spaces concerns a project that we can define as “intermediate” because it crosses all scales, from the urban one to design, and also because it tries to keep two approaches together. On the one hand, it is an open process which begins from a deep observation of all those spaces which are “suspended” between public and private, able to accommodate flexible and unexpected uses and easily colonisable by different types of users. On the other hand, it requires a more scientific approach capable of translating security protocols into spatial structures. A possible approach to the problem should start from identifying some categories of spaces capable of producing *publicness*, due to their characteristics of neutral and intermediate places. A critical redrawing of those spaces should abstract general criteria and parameters which consider, on the one hand, immaterial data able to qualify the space and, on the other hand, quantitative data that reconcile the distancing protocols with the minimum dimensions necessary to increase indeterminacy in terms of use. The redraw could be carried out using the parametric design tools in order to obtain a repertoire of possible strategies which, instead of being crystallized in predetermined forms, are transferable through parameters and criteria capable of proposing a repertoire of possible spatial configurations. Such a research restarts, in content, from “post-modern” contributions of

Team 10. At the same time, it recovers, in the methodology, the systematic approach that characterized the Modern Movement. It is useful to mention the Chermayeff and Alexander work in which the relationship between public and private space is investigated through a systematic approach. The result of their study is a set of criteria and diagrams that act in opposition to the predisposition of forms, typologies and stereotypes in architecture (Chermayeff and Alexander 1963).

It is still early for knowing if and how the pandemic risk will impact on our lifestyle and on our urban paradigms. However, this crisis could represent an opportunity to overcome some long-standing dichotomies in architecture, such as the contrast between modern and “post-modern” thought. Facing the post-COVID city challenge maintaining this double register probably means re-reading disciplinary tradition in order to rethink design ways, methods and tools. These variations should move through an adaptive logic that allows spaces to be experienced as “places” and, at the same time, to react to external forces and, above all, to emergencies.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Cfr. ECOWEB TOWN n. 19, june 2018. *Dossier: Progetti urbani per le periferie* edited by Maria Pone.

<sup>2</sup> The European research Push (Public Space in European Social Housing) is part of the HERA research program “Public Spaces: Culture and Integration in Europe 2019-2022”. It is conducted by four European partner universities: The University of Copenhagen in Denmark, The Norwegian University of Life Sciences in Norway, the ETH of Zurich in Switzerland and the “Federico II” University of Naples in Italy.

<sup>3</sup> The “Lotto O” covers a total area of 143,000 square meters. It is organized into four sub-areas. Three of them house comb-shaped buildings, while the fourth is occupied by five long buildings. The neighbourhood is designed to house around 3800 people distributed in 1084 apartments of five different sizes, with living space ranging from 45 to 115 square meters. The comb-shaped buildings are organized around C-shaped courtyards, equipped alternately with public squares and parking. The apartments living areas are oriented, as far as possible, towards the squares. The same criteria are used in long buildings. Furthermore, the original project provides a central zone of public facilities.

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Sitography

[www.pushhousing.eu](http://www.pushhousing.eu) (luglio 2020)

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Antonello Russo  
**Densify / Scale Down.**  
**The archipelago as a response**

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Abstract

The escalation of the health conditions concerning the recent emergency amplifies the problems already expressed by the evolution of the urban organism. The alternation between the appropriate need for confinement of the inhabitants in limited groups and the policies of social distancing aiming at stemming the spread of contagion of a virus that is as lethal as it is peculiar, proposes, in these current times, a general reflection on the composition of the *forma urbis* to refine settlement grammars that, in the face of the expansion and dispersion of the informal city of the twentieth century outlines, on the other hand, in the concentration and discontinuity of the built-up areas, in the identifiability of a finished figure of the settlements, in the control of the void as the primary space of agricultural production and sociability, the operational conditions to define the characters of a plausible urban dimension.

Keywords

City — Isle — Fabric — District — Home

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**The idea of a city.**

The idea of limitless and shapeless urban expansion has revealed to be, in the recent public health emergency, most starkly inadequate, and amplifying its already underlying state of crisis. The need to redress the employment of land, the urgent need to optimise resources, the need to limit the expansion of network services dispersed into capillary streams to reach individual scattered destinations, have today new connections with mandatory health and safety restrictions suspended between a propensity to confinement of urban dwellers in delimited areas on the one hand and on the other, appropriate measures of social distancing between individuals whose provenance is not known. The resulting idea of the city suddenly entrusts new life to marginal places provided they are widely associated with inter-modal links, be them material or intangible, purposeful to the exchange of ideas, goods and people. There follows a reflection on the regulations of the form of anthropized areas capable of powering a critical debate on the evolution urban dwelling. Beyond the idea of a *city by parts* perpetuated in the Modern, along with the additional resolutions of a *polycentric model* which assigned to the satellite cores functions dependent on the consolidated centre, the urban body currently aims to an *antihierarchical* idea of its extension, characterized, in outdoor areas, by the onset of *tensional* balance between the medium-sized cores with independent identities. Like the formal aggregations distinguished on the background of *Campus Martius* by Piranesi, the zenith interpretation of the surrounding areas reads the spontaneous composition of *clumps* seen as intermediate entities between concluded urbanity and fragments of the city. Attributable, in Italy, to the residential settlements characterizing the scope





**Fig. 1**

Laura Thermes with Paola Albanese, Fabrizio Ciappina, Alessandro De Luca, Francesco Messina, Antonello Russo, Gaetano Scarcella, project of the new city of Ling Gang near Tianjin, China. Consultation by invitation - Italian Architecture for the Chinese City (sponsored by the National Academy of San Luca for the Universal Expo, Shanghai 2010).

of the *city district* (which recognizes in the late twentieth century an important period of experimentation on the composition of finished parts of the urban system), such concentrations are put forward today as a prospective *waiting* for suitable completing, new additions of services, large and healthy demolition of every shapeless proliferation, as strategies aiming at the establishment of high-density yet more compact cores. In this context, reflecting on the *form* of the urban organism leads to honing a settlement grammar that, in the face of *expansion* and *dispersion* of the urban sprawl, conversely identifies in the *concentration* and *patchiness* of built-up areas, in the *definition of an exact limit* to settlements, in the *distance* between distinct areas, the operating conditions to define the characters of the peri-urban areas also involving, by the same token, the regenerative processes of large discontinued compartments placed inside the consolidated cores. Updating the studies on the *Horizontal City* of Irenio Dotallevi, Franco Marescotti, and Giuseppe Pagano, critical interpretation of the surveys on the *Expanding City* of Giuseppe Samonà, of the *City in the City* of Oswald Mathias Ungers, reworking the scope of the research on the *Urban Plates* of Salvatore Bisogni, the idea of the urban *archipelago* made up by distinct settlements outlines the making of a system from a dense and compact materiality as the operating point of dense relations between organized multi-scope matrices, each, in a spatial order that is varied, stratified and interconnected with the various constituent elements. A critical projection of the potential expressed in the definition of *urban sprawl* by Francesco Indovina, encapsulating and reminding the idea of *ground* as a supportive infrastructure that holds each settlement, already expressed in the Eighties by Bernardo Secchi, such representation defines a model featuring a prevalence of outdoor spaces useful in the materialization, on farming land, of

sudden *coagulation* of fabric determined by the completion of densification and *lumps/districts* existing to provide, at a *critical distance*, of settlement *islands* that can accommodate no more than twenty thousand permanent residents. Distinguishable as finite additions, the urban individuals amplify their presence by virtue of the definition of a *figure*, identifiable as a contrast to the weft of the surrounding fields. Located in the vicinity of the infrastructure strips, which as navigable channels ply the agricultural soil, these thickenings define complementary relationships between adjacent *islands* in their arrangement of a settlement *archipelago* characterized by multiple landings. Suitable to interpret a virtuous relationship between city and nature, this model therefore outlines, in the *void*, in the negative *green* between settlements, in the distance between distinct agglomerations, not a residual range but, rather, essential to recognize the physical characters of the hosting nature and the civil value of the city as equal interlocutors of a high dialectic.



**Fig. 2**  
A zenith aerial view of Venice.  
Source: Google Earth

### The Island

At a distance the individual conglomerations materialize their image in the definition of a horizontal *skyline* balanced by vertical counterweights identifiable as *urban landmarks* which, like the towers and bell towers of historical cities, make up the territorial references on a large scale. Within the fabric, the need to maintain a prolific *tension* between the identity of *urban events* and the conformity of the *residential areas* outlines a virtuous conflict between the *permanence*, arranged by the iteration of a measure, and the evolution of a controlled *mutation*, distributed by large typological variations imprinted on the individual elements of the composition. Specialist buildings, services with territorial scope and places for collective work distinguish the accelerations of a metric in which the open space, in its progressive variations – public, semi-public, private – outlines the intervals in the built up areas and the measure of spatiality for the rites of collective appropriation with implications related to *urban proximity* and *neighbouring units*. Mindful of the porous consistency of Louis Sauer's American neighbourhoods of the second half of the Twentieth century, the idea of *scaling down* is arranged as a post-composition of a thick *density* for measuring *gaps* characterizing the polarities and spatial references of the basic layout. Instrumental in controlling an effective *aesthetics of variation*, the squares, the plazas, the courts and the quads, but also public parks, gardens, lay-bys, parking lots, the in-between places, arrange successively the nomenclatures of a type list of *exteriors* that can generate sudden expansions aimed at giving a new lease of life to the density of the fabric. Interpreter of urban discontinuity theorized in the experiences of OMA – in the project for the *Ville Nouvelle of Melun Sénart* around Paris in France and, more clearly, in the plant for *Chassé Terrain* in Breda in the Netherlands – it is the identity of the open space that drives the composition by resorting, however, to a close measurement of its form to define an identity appropriation alternative to the decontextualizing intentions of the *generic city* and the informal dimension of contemporary *junkspace*. As in 18th-century Rome sketched in Nolli's plant, the connection between alveolar *voids* has in the pedestrian crossing, in the informal encounter, in the presence of art, the customs of a more human and civil dimension of urban living. In this framework, analyzing, imagining, composing the architecture of the city from the consistency of the *void* reverberates the need for a more evident intelligibility of the forms of the most representative

**Fig. 3**

Antonello Russo. The city by Islands Educational experiments in the Roman countryside. G.C.Gigliotti's undergraduate dissertation, Mediterranean University of Reggio Calabria, AY 2018-19.

buildings which, as massive and heavy *cornerstones*, propose themselves as sudden material solidifications that anchor to the ground the idea of a *weak monumentality* of the composition arranged, in the contemporary, as new exegeges of the tectonic dimension of the artefact.

### The home

In this context, the domestic space acquires new importance, recording in the measure and variations of the housing core the *elementary primary unit* of the fabric. Primary spot for shared conviviality, the urban residential interior records the instances of every *performative* action of the individual, contrasted by the growing demand for *indoorness* capable of reserving the character of ultimate *haven* of living to the home. As in the Miesian studies of the 1930s, in this ambiguity, the demand for a progressive dilation of the spatiality of the domestic interior corroborated by the provision of open spaces – lodges, terraces, gardens – confluenced in a progressive weakening of the threshold of passage between interior and exterior space of the residence. Silent and assertive, suspended between exhibition and introversion, between the *density* of its functions and the *scaling down* arranged by the presence, inside, of large open *voids* pointing to the sky, the space of the house outlines in the *patio* its *type* of reference.

### Provisional conclusions

With the conviction that only by adhering to a broad and general theory about the city it is possible to proceed to manipulate even the smallest of its parts, the proposition of an idea of the *shape* of the urban organism identifies in alternating *density* and *rarefaction* as the primary actions of an articulated syntax aimed at interpreting a scalar sequence that combines the characters of the territory and the landscape, involving the urban dweller down to the spatiality of their household interior. The result is an attitude to a specific attention to what is already available, for marginal areas, for the aggregations already present at district level, for smaller villages, as active participants of a dialectic operating between urban aggregations and natural spaces such to determine through *void* the information of a real, positive, appropriation.

**Fig. 4**

Antonello Russo with Moduloquattro Architects. Study of a housing unit for one person in Layers-Vema, Italian Pavilion X, Venice Biennale 2006.



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Antonello Russo (Messina 1972), gained an honours degree in Architecture under the supervision of Laura Thermes in 1999, and has been carrying out continuous educational and university research activities since 2000. He has authored volumes, essays, and contributions published in texts and journals including *Elementare e Complesso* (Lettera Ventidue, Siracusa 2020), *Vuoto e Progetto* (Lettera Ventidue, Siracusa 2018), *Dall'immagine all'etica. Riflessioni sull'abitare urbano* (Gangemi, Rome 2012), *Sequenze didattiche* (Iiriti, Reggio Calabria 2012). His drawings and projects have been exhibited at the Parma Architecture Festival, the Venice Biennale, the Academy of San Luca, The M.A.C.RO. Museum of Rome, and the Shanghai World Expo. Part of his design activity is published in the monograph *Moduloquattro-Spazio Misura Structure* (EUno Edizioni, Enna 2012, author Maurizio Oddo)



René Soleti

**Designing with void.****The structuring role of the wide open space**

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**Abstract**

Starting from the void as an opportunity to redefine urban balances in social and environmental terms. Resume the idea of the "city by parts", the role of the dispositio, the stripping of the urban pattern (as an increase in those "urban voids", indispensable material for the genesis of the architectural project). The cases treated in this paper propose a well defined city, which works through urban islands and recognizable complex architectural units. They build an identity dictated by regulatory criteria, based on distances and isolations. The construction or transformation of urban part can be thought as an organized and coordinated manageable system, capable of responding more effectively to pandemic emergencies.

**Keywords**

Architectural void — City defined — Separation — Wide-open space — Gianugo Polesello

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The “Polesellian” Venetian projects are associated by the almost paradigmatic exceptionality related to the experimental place: the city of Venice. They are easily comparable and interpretable as variations of a single huge project. The final goal is to reinterpret the city as architecture and formal identity parts that must be recognizable. This method starts by reading the urban characters and processes, in order to search the meanings of those iconic forms, which are often coming from the history.

This architectural approach is part of venetian school and it is not a simple rhetorical exercise, but it would be a platform built in order to discuss through the project (this is perhaps one of the most important aspects) «so that the reference is not just a figurative register, but a kind of way to interpret it» (Canella 1969).

*Novissime* is one of the first competition projects launched in Venice in 1964, for a new island of Tronchetto. The project was signed by G. Samonà, C. Dardi, V. Pastor, G. Polesello, L. Semerani, G. Tamaro, ER Trincanato. It was mentioned for its “explosive” and innovative use and acquisition in terms of geography and urban morphology of the structure, oriented towards the *architectural void*<sup>1</sup> as an essential factor of “the urban character”.

*Novissime*, is based on compositional operations requiring subtraction and addition of parts of the city, in order to define a peculiar urban character. A distinctive basic lexicon that crosses the boundaries of the Venetian school by spreading a scientific approach to architecture starting from a theory of the city by parts (Aymonino 1977).

This study highlights the growth and the development of the settlement through the *architectural void* that is an essential factor of the project. In particular, the selective use of history and fragments taken as tools of conti-

**Fig. 1**

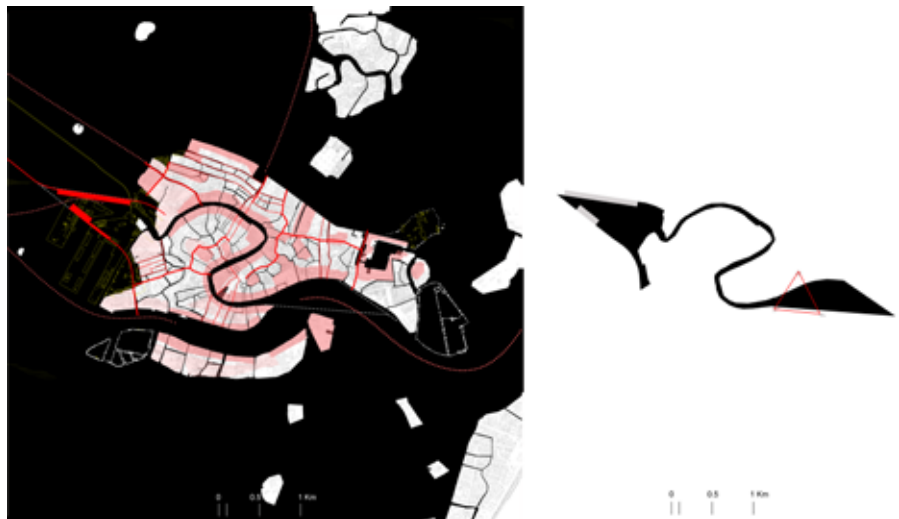
Model of “International Competition for the drafting of the urban planivolumetric plan for the New Sacca del Tronchetto”, Novissime 1964.

Projects Archive of the Iuav University of Venice, Egle Renata Trincanato fund.

**Fig. 2**

Summary plan of the interventions and figure of the great void of the Grand Canal, Novissime 1964.

Reproduction of the author.



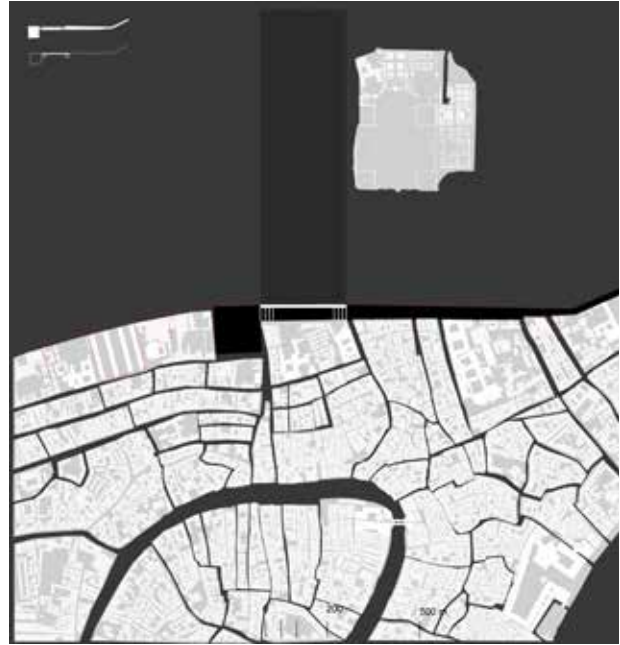
nuity and transformation respectively is now essential. This procedure is almost summarized in the definition of the principle of “creative conservation” (Samonà 1964), theory used in the description of the first *Novissime* project, «a new interpretation of the city for compact nuclei with conservative voids» (Ibidem).

The principle of “creative conservation”, is an idea that interprets the historical urban form of Venice and reinterprets it with a personal itinerary of reflections, that collects categories and rules that keep the parts and sub- parts of the city together, reversing the idea of conservation and transformation from full to empty as well.

First in *Novissime* (Fig.02) and then in *Venice port-city* (Fig.03), *Fondamenta Nove* (Fig.04 - 05) and *Venice West*, it becomes simple to identify the Venice represented by Benedetto Bordone<sup>2</sup>, that is a Venice and the constellation of smaller islands, enclosed within a populated perimeter that corresponds to the modern belt of the land near the coast. In this representation, the *architectural void* (Samonà 1964) condition becomes central with respect to the historical city. In this condition, it is possible to read an operation to preserve the voids, understood as *architectural voids*, as monuments and historical parts in the



**Fig. 3**  
Termination of the great void  
of the Grand Canal, *Novissime*  
1964.  
Reproduction of the author.



**Fig. 4**  
The thickness of the limit, Venice  
city-port 1973.  
Reproduction of the author.

urban composition that mainly refers to the idea of separation and the structuring role of the open space, of the void.

The fragment, the space “between”, a continuous search of a conclusion, awaiting an identity. These ideas are involved in the project as in a game of lying positions that, according to the general principle that governs spatial relationships, they determine a heterogeneous, but formally finished, overall system.

The compositive principle foresees to use an architectural linguistic database, not just in its first elements but also in the figures and in the most complex groupings.

Such approach contemplates a dual dimension that highlights a relationship between the plan and the project, in which elements are in tension through a position relationship and this aspect becomes the main part of the “poliselian architectures”.

The architectural composition turns into a logical moment, recovering the original meaning of “composition” as a combination of elements in a structured ensemble.

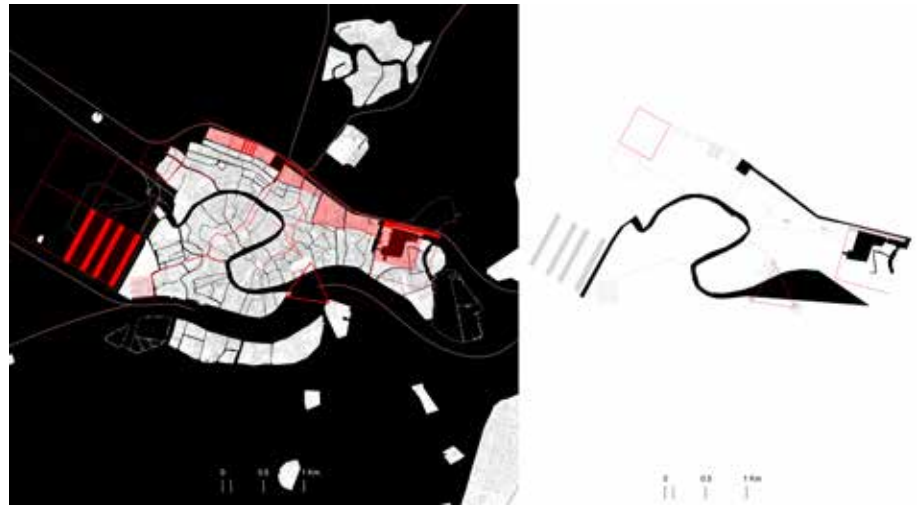
In several cases studied, it is evident the presence of geometric shapes, clearly visible, according to their simplicity, regularity and reiteration.

These simple figures are repeated, they connect the fragments in a system of rules and structuring relationships, that determine the final shape.

Construction and relationship, are categories in which the *architectural void* arises through ways and rules, according with the organized space is charged with a specific meaning, with the arrangement of certain elements within it and the relationships that they establish from a distance. *References from a distance* that bring the space back to a global unity: the poliselian Venice. These references are modulated and ordered by the project through the use of axes as ideal vectors along which the elements are organized.

In fact, the *dispositio* as a compositional practice, enhances the importance of the tension between the elements according to a defined project design, that configures a space not limited by elements themselves.

In the urban design, the *architectural void* represents an organising element, an instrument of measurement and dynamic balance. It is the space between the buildings, a place for the relationship between different parts. The void



**Fig. 5**

Geometries and shapes of the void, *Fondamenta Nove* 1973. Reproduction of the author.

obtains a central role so strong, to leave the singularities of the architectural objects themselves in background, in favor of a unitary system that combine it with the full.

A space intended as a populated “place” with a significant value of forms and catalyst of the main urban identities.

In addition to the compositional aspect, it is worth to notice the collective dimension of the city, the human space organized by discontinuous fields of multiple social and cultural relationships (Secchi 2013, p.5). The growing gap – highlighted not only by B. Secchi and Z. Bauman (2015) – between prosperity and poverty, increases the current democratic and social crisis by contradicting the capitalistic idea according to, in a long term, the economic development would ensure similar levels of wealth all over the world (Secchi 2013, p. 5). With the first pandemic emergency, the economic and social structure ran into a crisis, bringing the urban issue in high priority, in particular the issue related to space and its physical structure<sup>3</sup>. The organization of work and life has been drastically revolutionized respect to how it works, the relationships between wealthy class and poorer class, how it appear. These aspects generate debates and experiments (many times in opposition to one another) on policies and projects about the city. The separation, the idea of distinction and exclusion of some high-risk areas, is the most widespread practice to contain the epidemy, but which give a temporary answer unable to keep alive the idea of a city democratically organized as we know today.

Looking to the health crisis diffusion and its consequences, it is possible to understand how the urban reference model must accommodate ecological, technological and social criteria in a vision where the public actor should be able to guarantee organization and coordination of the urban transformation in order to respond efficiently to the emergencies. «We must to insist on creating only the building, spaces and objects that serve as a more fitting background to those conditions we now recognize more clearly as fundamental for society and human life» (Chipperfield 2020). This would require a public approach which should recover a detailed planification of urban and territorial transformations with a single actor, thus not compatible with an individual liberal approach. Architecture and economy require a new season of revitalization under controlled management where the final goal must be the common good and the civil commitment for future challenges (Sennet 2020). Re-thinking architecture as a civil commitment could rise again this discipline to a leading position in a new policy, where the urban form is not imposed by simple speculative approaches, but becomes again to a much



broader meaning<sup>4</sup>. Make experiments starting from the void, as an opportunity that requires to leave the building settlement speculation in favor of the structuring role of the empty space as a common good of public importance.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Giuseppe Samonà's theory of the finiteness of the ancient city and the theory of *architectural voids* (Samonà 1964).

<sup>2</sup> B. Bordone, Italian cartographer author of the representation *View of Venice* from the *Venice Island* of 1528.

<sup>3</sup> C. Schmitt's view that there are no political ideas that are not referable to a space, as there are no spatial principles to which political ideas do not correspond, is taken up again.

<sup>4</sup> «Return to reflect on a spatial structure of the city that develops the demand for the plus grand nombre, not to rely on questions from social and technological niches». (Secchi 2013, p. 71-78).

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Pascal Federico Cassaro, Flavia Magliacani  
**The European block as a renewed spatial entity among  
 collective living, functional autonomy and sustainability**

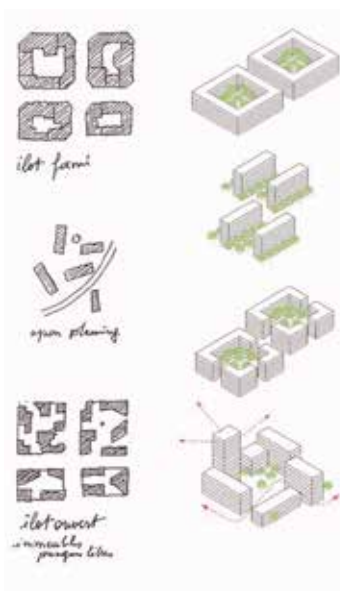
#### Abstract

The regeneration of the existing urban texture by understanding and defining new solutions is a priority in the current health crisis. In this context, this work aims to explore the potential of a type-morphological model already fully inserted in the line of the European city development: the urban block as structural core that generates the urban fabric.

The proposed actualization lies in the possible maintenance of the traditional characteristics and at the same time in its reinterpretation, guaranteeing a collective residential dimension despite the potential isolation – in terms of health, functionality and energy – from the surrounding urban texture.

#### Keywords

Urban Block — Urban Density — Energy sustainability



**Fig. 1**

Christian de Portzamparc, «Les trois âges de la ville et l'ilot ouvert», draw (da *Où va la ville*, Jacques Lucan, Paris 2012) © Christian de Portzamparc

The recent health crisis confronts us with the urgent need for a significant rethinking of urban space. Despite the cities have shown the limits of an unsustainable condition in many ways, the urban one remains nevertheless an unavoidable housing reality. It therefore becomes a priority to focus attention on understanding and defining new solutions to current problems with the ability to reflect, at the same time, on the regenerative potential of the existing tissue.

Even though the collective attention has largely focused on the need to rethink the space of private lodging as an individual confinement area for carrying out the daily activities, the search for solutions able to preserve and foster social relationships remains fundamental, overcoming the fatalistic resignation to a future made of isolation and individualism. Beyond the role of the single dwelling, it becomes important a level of analysis at the urban scale. In this context, is interesting to explore the potential of a type-morphological model already fully inserted in the historical development line of the European urban reality: the urban block, the city's structural core and generator.

Specific element of spatial organization that «the nineteenth century transforms and the twentieth abolishes» (Panerai 1980), the complex evolutionary process of erosion, dissolution, recompositing and opening of the block coincided with the last century's major urban transformations (Reale 2012). Its progressive decomposition, desired by the Modern movement in an attempt to destroy the concept of the *rue corridor* in the name of freedom to place the architectural objects on the urban ground, led to the transformation of *De l'ilot à la barre* (Panerai, Castex, Depaule 1980). However, after the Second World War, its gradual rehabilitation has once again affirmed



**Fig. 2-3**

ANMA, Îlot Armagnac : 161 dwelling and public space's overview, Bordeaux, 2020 ©2012 ANMA

ANMA, Îlot Armagnac: internal courtyard view, Bordeaux, 2012 ©2020 ANMA

its important role in the urban reconstruction.

In continuity with an approach definitively established since the late 1970s, aimed at rediscovering the values of place's identity (Rossi 1966) and community (De Carlo 1976), the block still represents a spatial device of great interest and renewed experimentation. In recent decades, numerous architects and urban planners have in fact identified block like the unit from which to take off again in an effort to regenerate the fabric of cities (Portzamparc 1994): a belief that has determined promising architectural experiments such as the *macrolot* French model<sup>1</sup>: a solution of widespread operational success in major French cities considered a valid response to the contemporary planning great challenges (Fromont 2012).

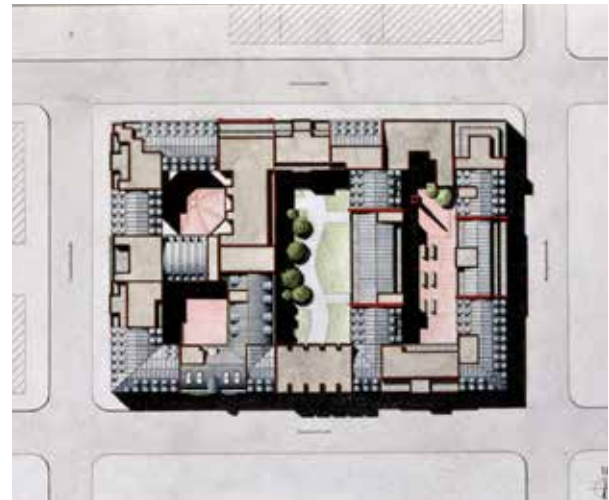
The *macrolot* model is a theoretical-planning evolution of the *îlot* – the block traditionally understood as an autonomous and primordial urban entity – but it proposes a deeper reinterpretation and actualization, opposing the excessive spatial fragmentarism of the *urbanisme parcellaire*<sup>2</sup> that would hinder the pursuit of an *intelligent density* (Michelin 2010). If the contemporary city must be rethought at the scale of the block, the unitary project of a *grand îlot* makes it possible to rethink the traditional plot in a new way: a urban dimension composed of subsets no longer autonomous, but capable to generate new *unités de vie*<sup>3</sup> (Lucan 2012).

In the *macrolot*, residents share – in terms of ownership, right to use and management – the semi-private space of the internal courtyards, various common services and some areas dedicated to collective functions, for a principle of co-ownership that emphasizes the importance of spaces *between* buildings, spaces for free time and sharing.

Despite the emergence of various problems due to the complexity of these operations (difficulty of concertation between a large number of actors, harder distinction between collective and private property in terms of financial and maintenance management, etc.), the «*esprit de copropriété dynamique*» (Lucan 2012) that identify this model's design approach constitutes the major factor of interest for our research. In fact it reveals two main aims: firstly, a renewed search for that social, spatial and relational complexity typical of *neighborhood units* in a porous urban spatiality, an intermediate area between the house and the neighborhood investigated for a long time since the 1960s (Team X 1962); secondly, the desire to integrate different uses, housing types and levels of users in an organic urban entity that constitutes at the same time the minimum generating cell of the entire fabric.

One of the numerous realizations, the *Îlot Armagnac* made in Bordeaux by ANMA, materializes the model described in an articulated functional *stratigraphy*: a sort of small village in a single macro block. As in most cases,



**Fig. 4-5**

A. Rossi, Overview of the block at Schützenstrasse, Berlin, 1996  
© Philipp Meuser

A. Rossi, Plan of the block at Schützenstrasse, Berlino, 1996  
© Fondazione Aldo Rossi

it reveals a redevelopment strategy used for new construction and recovery of large abandoned areas with high functional density programs (Guislain 2016).

However, the approach described can bring together several design and construction choices: the search for a wise spatial modulation (from the private home to the public universe of shared spaces) and the experimentation on housing models that encourage the presence of collective life, should in fact constitute the common denominator of an operational practice that addresses new ways of intervening also on the existing city.

Although the recent health crisis has imposed the word *isolation* as a dictate of a new housing dimension requesting more control and safety, the need for open spaces and places for socialization has emerged as clearly. In this context, it takes on importance rethinking the consolidated city as a system composed of cells (the blocks) and the related possibility of providing autonomy and isolation from a functional, management and energy point of view.

Operationally, we are proposing to intervene at the block scale in an integrated way, with an approach that could be said inspired by Aldo Rossi's working philosophy applied in the *Schützenstraße* block in Berlin. It's about a restoration of a block in which maintenance and integration of part of the pre-existing buildings reflect the progressive stratification of the fabric, of which we are interested in the strong desire to confer a collective urban significance to a heterogeneity of components: an operation conferring new vitality and importance at the interior space as *trait d'union* between buildings, in an attempt to encourage a common sense of belonging and the re-appropriation of spaces beyond the threshold of the individual apartment.

However, rethinking the block in these terms requires today, and in light of the changed social, environmental and sanitary needs, a greater effort in finding solutions for the new housing needs geared towards guaranteeing an ever greater programmatic mixité: the provision of spaces for carrying out sports activities, for coworking and studying, recreational areas and open places for free time, the provision of essential services easily available, are some of the elements that could be condensed and coexisting within an urban module. With similar assumptions, it would nevertheless be possible to guarantee adequate quality in the daily life of the inhabitants even in cases where is required a major social isolation and the natural continuity with the surrounding urban space should be temporarily interrupted.

The newfound unitarity would also allow us to achieve important results



from an energy point of view. In the search for sustainability on multiple levels, the possibility of sharing spaces is in fact potentially linked to the possibility of sharing ways of consuming and producing energy<sup>4</sup> (Ratti 2017; Salat 2011). Considering the block in its entirety, rather than the individual buildings in a fragmented way, would facilitate the continuity of energy exchange through a short and efficient energy path, minimizing situations of unitary disadvantage, promoting the overall energy balance and a greater control of scale in planning and management (Lehmann 2010).

The proposed reinterpretation of the block can take form through several transformative hypotheses, but all necessarily based on some common orientations intended to foreseeing a unity of intervention to make the existing blocks as energetically autonomous and socially rich urban cells, through the “mending” of fabric fragments, the insertion of new collective functions and an adequate rethinking of common spaces. The final aim is the provision of spatial identity and functional complexity to guarantee adequate housing quality.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> In urban planning, a *macro-lot* is the association of small lots, which can in some cases reach the scale of the urban block (IAU ÎdF 2011).

Like the macrostructures, this new organizational tool of the city takes up, develops and emphasizes the principle of the unity of the parts in the totality of the block.

It concretizes the aspiration to coexistence and the intertwining of different functions – usually distinct – in a single organism with a strong programmatic mixité and urban density, not rejecting however the dialogue with a traditional type fabric with which instead it seeks continuity and relationship (Guislain 2016).

<sup>2</sup> By *urbanisme parcellaire* or *découpage parcellaire* we mean the traditional parceling of blocks into heterogeneous and disconnected lots.

<sup>3</sup> The term “*unité de vie*” is often used starting from the 1950s and 1960s (Team X, 1962) to indicate the “neighborhood units” which, multiplied and mutually articulated, make up a neighborhood or an urban district.

<sup>4</sup> Numerous studies on relation between morphological and energy characteristics conducted by the Urban Morphology Institute in the last ten years have in fact shown how the block represents the right scale of intervention for obtaining high energy performance at local and urban network level.

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Giuseppe Verterame

**The city in quarantine. Perspectives of urban regeneration through the experimental model of the *macro-block*.**

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Abstract

The *lockdown* showed a city often unsuitable for emergency situations, such as that caused by the pandemic. Nevertheless, the population, confined within their homes, expressed the need for the urban experience and to live the open space. The emergency thus becomes an opportunity to rethink the city through a review of models. Within a line of research by the University of Parma on urban structure and density as factors of regeneration, settlement methods are being tested on the model of *macroblock*. A spatial prototype that, starting from the block, improves the quality of living by means of compositional operations in the dialogue between the built and the open space, in the context of new primary functions, proximity services and improvement of environmental sustainability standards. In these terms, the *macroblock* contributes to create a settlement structure where the continuity of the fabric is defined by completed autonomous parts that relate to each other according to different degrees of complementarity.

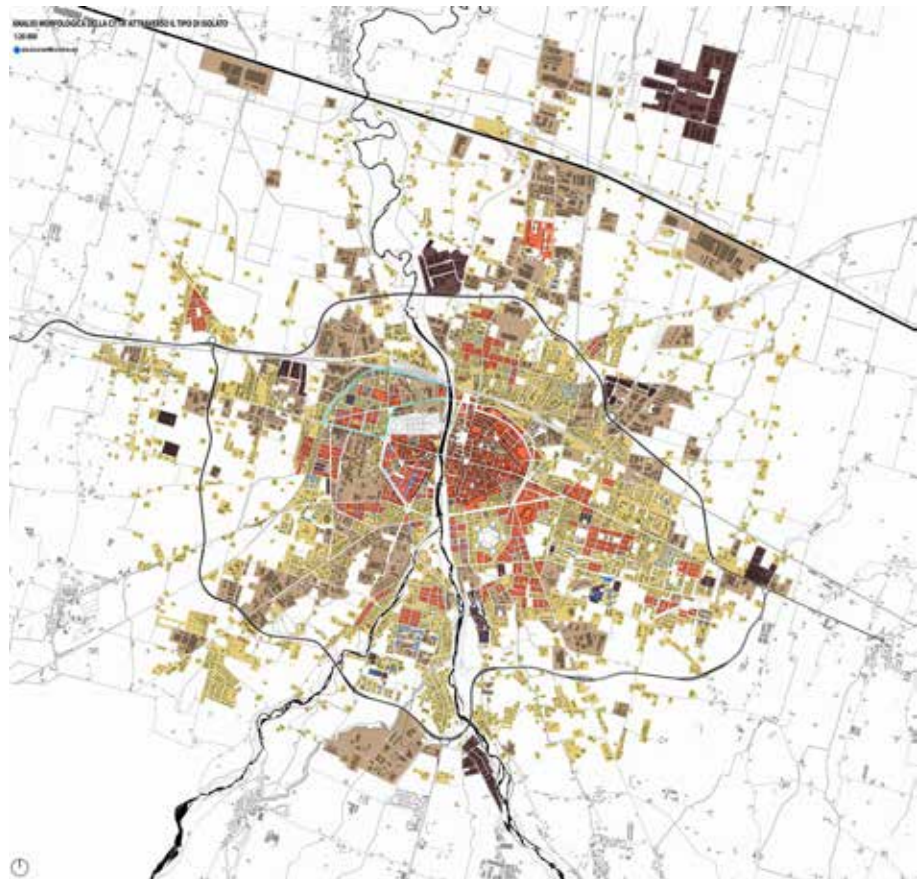
## Keywords

Urban regeneration — Urban tissue — Macro block — Public space — Urban community

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The health emergency caused by the spread of Coronavirus has proven to be a significant *crash test* for settlement facilities. This has caused, among other effects, the crisis of ordinary social, economic and cultural structures; it has highlighted important criticalities of the current urban model – that can be generalized for several contexts, whether they are of different dimensions or geographical conditions – produced by a short-minded development that for decades has neglected the physical conditions of environments that favor sociality, sharing of spaces, structures and services of collective nature. This phenomenon mainly went on until the crisis of the global markets in 2008, which did not give rise to counter trends, such as that of giving priority to the *care of the city* and the enhancement of the existing heritage. Those who were able to build continued to insist firmly on the capitalist urban model, operating and expanding a *body already sick*, conditioned by numerous criticalities until the crisis of the very concept of city.

Covid-19 struck suddenly, at the same speed and pressing pace that people were accustomed to organizing their everyday life. Without realizing it, a few days after the first outbreaks, all were affected by the consequences of the measures to combat the spread of the virus, some of the most severe in the world in the context of democratic states. The domestic walls have become the scene of a domestic imprisonment and the discovery of a new virtual life. Here, all the contradictions and social differences emerged between those who live in minimal housing – where they had to invent impromptu solutions to allow the entire family to continue to exercise a digital routine – and those who instead passed the lockdown in large suburban residences. The measures adopted have resulted in some effects, including



**Fig. 1**

Analysis of the city of Parma through the typologies of the block.

a city no longer available, a public space denied, a domestic enclosure as the only area of relationship, with the exception of supermarkets, besieged in the initial phase and then used by many as a diversion to isolation. In such a situation, it did not entirely surprise the desire to experience the urban dimension, expressed by many through flash mobs that allowed to *dwell* the thresholds – balconies, terraces, windows, courtyards – of houses and so claiming that human drive for community expression and social relationship.

The organization of the city – on a physical, functional, social level – was a factor that did not favor the containment of the diffusion.

It is precisely for this reason that it becomes crucial to restructure its fabric, often devoid of a systematic nature as well as urban characterization. This condition has made the virus more lethal, because «it is in the city – especially in the largest ones – that the contagion is easier and faster, the mortality higher, the containment strategies harder» (Settis 2020).

The urban issue, however, in the context of the debate between competences called to address the emergency, has taken a back seat. In fact, isolation has shown how the standard dwelling is not suitable for periods of domestic imprisonment, as it is designed to meet minimum legal standards, then adapted to various needs.

Many have focused on the *home of the future*, able to withstand, in terms of functional flexibility, stress such as that caused by the pandemic. However, interventions on the individual housing are often inappropriate, being that, for example, it may be included within condominium complexes that are difficult to transform. It is in cases such as these that it becomes important to think of a *large house*, or a *house of houses*, where proximity and the intermediate size between housing unit and city intervenes to complete the functional deficiencies of the domestic sphere.



**Fig. 2**

Analysis of the Pablo district of Parma through the typologies of the block.

**Fig. 3**

Reconfiguration of the fabric of the Pablo district through the experimental model of the macro-block. Design experimentation on a fabric sample (*macroblock 2*).



To speak of the need to put the city back at the center of future plans is reductive, given the neglect and inadequacy that affect some urban parts, especially the suburbs but today also many historic centers.

In 2018, the United Nations Department of Economy and Social Policies drafted the *World Urbanization Prospects*, where it is estimated that in Italy the population living in densely populated areas will increase from 55% today up to 81%.

Assuming, for the sake of argument, that there is a trend of demographic increase so optimistic and projected to thirty years from now, it becomes fundamental as urgent to reorganize the settlement conditions of the “built”, through new urban paradigms that make it possible to start regeneration processes in many parts of the city that can improve its organization, reconfiguration and management of ordinary and extraordinary situations, such as those caused by health or environmental emergencies.

At the same time, it is becoming increasingly clear that «a large part of our suburbs can be considered “self-built” in the sense of an “added construc-

tion”, completely foreign to the problematic dimension of dealing with a comprehensive design of the city» (Quintelli 2016). Therefore, in this scenario, «the compositional process will not make use of writing, on the blank page of the undifferentiated space, but of re-writing, of the note, of the footnote. The relationship with the concreteness of the built, and of those who live in it, forces the design interpretation to penetrate the structural factors of the place, praises its imaginative contingent gratuitousness and, in the need to deepen, derives ethical responsibility» (Quintelli 2016). Starting from these theoretical guidelines for research related to the urban form and the system of spaces already built, in November 2018 – as part of the Ph.D. Program of the Department of Engineering and Architecture of the University of Parma – a research on the urban (proto)type of the *macroblock* was launched. It is the spin-off of a line of design investigation on the theme of building in the built, started in 2013 entitled “*Designing the built. New models with integrated quality for the compact city*”, scientific tutor prof. Carlo Quintelli, as part of the research of the UAL group – Urban and Architectural Laboratory (Professors Carlo Gandolfi, Marco Maretto, Enrico Prandi).

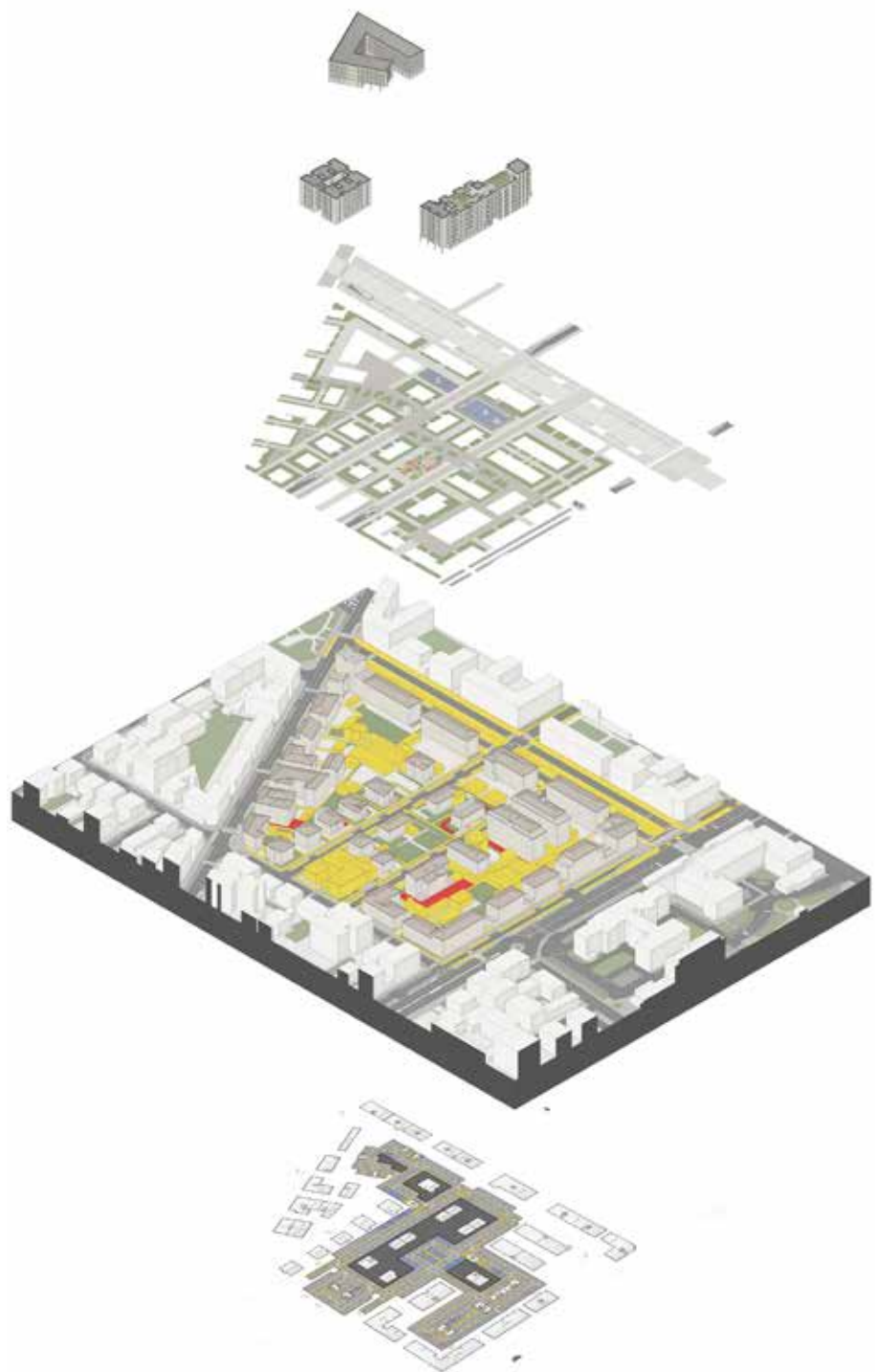
These researches, taking as a sample the average cities of the Emilia-Romagna context, have found a substantial availability of space resource within the urbanized, to be reformed and redefined according to parameters of morphological structuring and functional reconfiguration based on the principle of urban centrality (Nolli, Montini, Strina 2013).

The ongoing research is now applied to the intermediate fabric instead of the core of centrality seen in Nolli, Montini and Strina: within that, it seeks the reasons to re-establish the image of a new model of settlement community able to respond to the needs of contemporary lifestyles, environmental sustainability and emergency situations caused by calamities, not least pandemic ones.

The analyses carried out led to the proposal of an urban model, according to the configuration of the *macroblock* that becomes a tool to start regeneration processes and, more precisely, to renew the space of living, through different phases and scales of architectural and urban design.

The methodological process starts from the typological invariant of the block – in this case that of the historical suburbs of the Emilian average city. In addition to being a constitutive unit, the block has assumed over time an alteration that has led it to be the symbol of a divided, fragmented city and one that confines the interior to claim individual properties. Starting from this twofold consideration, the *macroblock* mutates and adapts a historically consolidated typology: the association of several blocks establishes a new entity of higher rank and above all a sufficient size – of spatial, social and functional type – through which we can intervene to reconfigure and regenerate it.

Once established, the macroblock becomes a body on which to operate, on the level of form and in particular that of urban voids, as well as from the material point of view – with demolition, reconstruction, redevelopment of buildings from the point of view of energy and seismic danger, redevelopment of open spaces – and from a functional point of view – with the inclusion of support structures for health, education, sociality and especially for the more vulnerable classes. In addition, the macroblock exceeds the single-function of housing typical of the suburbs and establishes the conditions of a minimum urbanity that, in adherence to individual housing units, offers spaces for sociality, rethinks soft mobility, experiments with a



**Fig. 4**  
Components of urban regeneration of *macroblock 2*.

new organization of proximity welfare. This way, an urban microstructure is obtained that establishes high living conditions – even in emergencies – and a balanced model between living, work, services and leisure.

In Barcelona, a similar operation has been put into practice for a few years, defined in the document “*La supermanzana, nueva célula urbana para la construcción de un nuevo modelo funcional y urbanístico de Barcelona*” proposed by Salvador Rueda (Agència de Ecologia Urbana de Barcelona). The idea of *supermanzana* starts from considerations linked to a radical change in trend compared to current planning processes with the aim of improving the urban ecosystem: increase public space and decrease the road surface, improving the air quality and environmental resilience of the city. Rueda stresses the need to unite *manzanas*, to recover space and achieve «a cohesion that welcomes a critical mass of population and people

capable of generating cities, building public space and promoting functional *mixité*» (Rueda 2019).

This way, urban units such as the *supermanzana* or the *macroblock* define the measure of the part with respect to the continuity of the entire urban fabric and of the housing community with respect to the citizenship. A *smallness* is circumscribed, a fine-grained urban entity (Ward 2016) that establishes a relationship between the architecture and the city, thus proposing a new economy of urban resources.

The urban spread of this autonomy – in the functional sense – is a condition for dealing with the pandemic health crisis like the one we are experiencing: the *macroblock*, which can by definition be isolated, allows the inhabitants to enjoy a variety of primary services, receive collective supplies, carry out health control activities and support to central hospitals – burdened by the activity of care and the risks of extreme contagiousness. Germany, which many believed to be a simulator of the actual data of the epidemic, has, in fact, reduced the effects thanks to the widespread presence in the urban fabric of structures that have supported hospitals in the screening phases.

A new urban identity described this way is also useful for a less stringent phase of isolation, as it can provide spaces for leisure and coworking within 100-150 meters from home, so as to reduce the social and economic effects.

Someone has feared further and future possibilities of being affected by similar situations. Among the long-term prevention solutions there is surely that of involving the deepest meanings of the city and working on its body to bring it to an adequate stage of resilience.

Only through a new urban paradigm will we be able to tell the younger generations that everything will be fine.



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Li Bao, Die Hu

**Reflections on the Design of Urban Community and Residential Buildings in China in the Post-epidemic Era**

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**Abstract**

The epidemic of COVID-19 is a public health emergency of international concern. China cities have taken many measures to control the outbreak, which are timely and effective, but the problem and weaknesses in the urban planning stage have emerged. At the urban level, a comprehensive disaster prevention planning for the dual situations of normality and epidemic should be concerned. At the community level, the necessary improved facilities, the reasonable form, optimized spatial structure can support to construct a resilient community. At the architectural level, it is necessary to conceive the variation of residential buildings and the flexibility of living space to respond to the changes in daily lives in the Post-epidemic Era.

**Keywords**

Dual Situations — Buffer area — Resilient community — Space flexibility

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The epidemic of COVID-19 is a public health emergency of international concern. The rapid spread of the epidemic depends not only on the flow of people but also on the urban spaces and buildings that act as carriers. This paper will firstly explore the countermeasures to prevent the epidemic of COVID-19 in China cities, then discuss the paradigms of responsive cities, urban communities and living space for the Post-epidemic Era.

**I. Make a comprehensive disaster prevention planning for the dual situations of normality and epidemic.**

After the epidemic outbreak, China cities have taken many measures, such as postponing restart of schools and factories and suspending most inter-city public transportation to prevent virus transmission. Meanwhile, the makeshift hospitals were quickly built and in operation, and a few public gymnasiums have been transformed into mobile cabin hospitals and temporary quarantine points (Fig.1). Though the response is quick and positive to stop the disaster, the problems and weaknesses caused by the previous urban planning have emerged.

The control of epidemic needs to restrict urban mobility, while the implementation of epidemic prevention needs to guarantee the mobilization of rescue materials, personnel and equipment (Yang et alii, 2020). The urban administrative management unit lacks alignment with the epidemic control system, which has led to the insufficient and unevenly distribution of urban public resources and services. For example, the medical facilities are unevenly distributed for urban residential areas, especially the aging communities (Li et alii, 2020). After the rapid ur-



**Fig. 1**

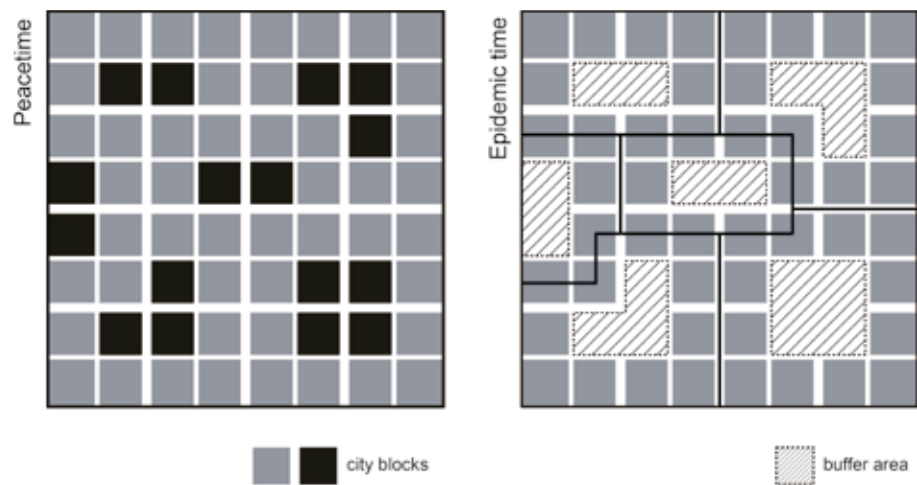
Mobile cabin hospitals in Wuhan.  
Source: <https://www.ettoday.net/news/20200219/1649257.htm>

banization and disordered development, the urban space is overcrowded and complicated to be managed or controlled (Duan 2020). In addition, the function of urban nature ecosystem to prevent and control epidemic has not been fully realized (Yuan et alii,2020).

Some possibly effective measures have been discussed corresponding to the above problems. First of all, a better mix of work and living in planning can reduce unnecessary mobility. A dynamic digital map of the city epidemic situation can be used to assess and formulate the emergent rules, such as to switch the quarters' opening or to adjust the transportation systems. Second, the urban administrative management unit can be subdivided into smaller 'defense units' which can operate as a self-sufficient unit with necessary urban infrastructure and public service facilities. Last but not least, a more comprehensive disaster prevention planning should be formed for public health emergencies. As an essential part of the urban natural ecosystem, the blue-green space can function well while combining with the system layout and local conditions for dual situations. Learning from Dujiangyan Irrigation System in China, which has been working for field irrigation at regular days and water discharge in flood season over 2200 years, we can also set up the buffer area in the city to enhance the dynamic adaptability of the existing urban spatial system and the resilience of the city. The buffer area can participate in urban life in normality and reorganize the urban space in an emergency. This could be the starting point of rapid response and the core of urban operation (Fig.2), it can make use of vacant buildings and the areas with a sustainable approach as well.

## **II. Improve the necessary facilities, optimize the spatial organization and construct a resilient community.**

The management for a matrix of urban communities has been carried out to prevent the epidemic, with setting up passes to limit the entry and exit of residents (Fig 3). As the popular form of the residential blocks in China, the gated communities have clear boundaries which are efficient to control the epidemic. However, the daily necessities are



**Fig. 2**  
Buffer area in Peacetime and Epidemic Periods.

insufficient, especial at the beginning when the public service and commercial facilities could not work ultimately. Thus it is hard to maintain the communities' everyday life, and the low resilience has been revealed soon. The large scale and high density in space and population of most existing communities have made it more difficult to respond quickly and effectively.

Meantime, community isolation leads to an increase in the duration and number of residents staying in outdoor space. The contradiction between people gathering and safe distance, between space sharing and division has asked for the redefinition and reorganization of the public space of community.

#### *i The commerce and medical facilities in the community*

With the strengthened epidemic prevention measures and the requested home isolation, the residents' lives rely on the community commercial services increasingly. Community commerce can not only make up for the shortage of urban market but also serve as an essential part of improving the urban emergency security system (Wang and Wang 2020).

The current community level's commerce should be increased in the whole urban system. Furthermore, the modes of commercial service can be more flexible and diverse to achieve the balance of cost and efficiency and to promote the standard of community commerce which based on the information technology and logistic support, such as online integrated with the offline sale, warehouse store direct for community group purchase. Regarding the community as the basic urban defense unit, it is vital to complement the medical facilities in communities and improve the medical service. Also, all of the facilities and services have to adjust during the different periods of the epidemic.

#### *ii The reasonable form and the optimized spatial organization*

The high density of the community means the high population of residents with the high-rise buildings. It has become a prevalent phenomenon in China cities, highly detrimental to epidemic prevention. To decrease such high density has become a crucial issue. The decentralization or multi-centralization of city development, the multiple types of productions, from tower apartments to single house in real estate could be effective solutions.





**Fig. 3**  
Community setting up passes,  
(Photo by author).

The dynamic balance between opening and closure of urban settlements has attracted much attention (Wu et alii, 2020). To cope with the dual situations, a three-level spatial prevention and control system of the urban community has taken a crucial role in preventing the epidemic: large open block, medium controlled community and small isolated unit.

The scale of community and the structure of the street need to be carefully defined in planning, open communities with smaller neighbourhoods and denser street networks could be taken for more flexible and controllable. The roads should provide alternative routes according to the demand of the balance between traffic mobility and management convenience.

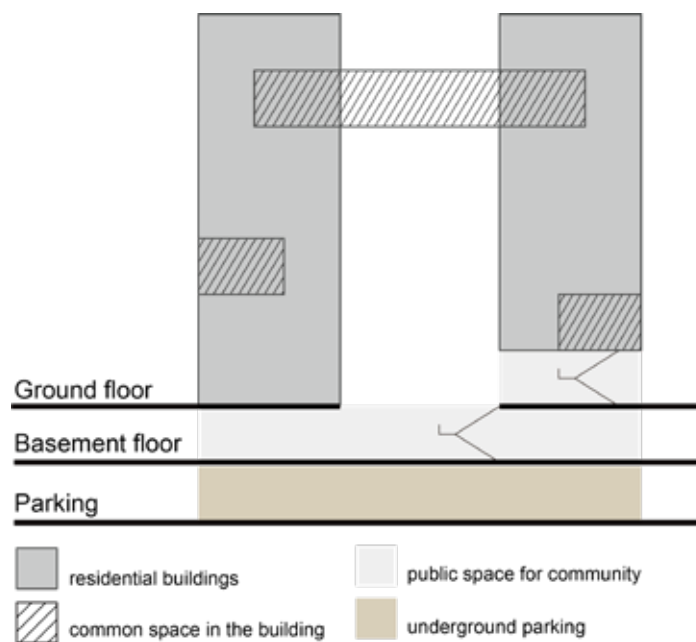
Moreover, the concern has raised in the public space of the community (Fan and Li, 2020). The continuity of green space shall be enhanced in the community. And the flexibility of public space can be reconsidered and reexamined, in the forms of the sunken passage or hanging platforms combined with the available space to create hierarchical public spaces at different heights (Fig 4).

### *iii Residents' self-organization and intelligent community*

The Internet and other technological means have shown the advantage of building up the intelligent community in terms of building maintenance and community management. Along with that, the residents' self-governance can also help to form a resilient community against the emergency, such as establishing the owner committee and jointly managing the living space.

## **III. The variability and flexibility of residential buildings and living space**

During the period of home isolation, children should stay at home and study online courses, while the parents also have to shift into online working mode. The grand-parents prefer quiet space, but the kids always make noises. The family members' behaviours are mixed, living



**Fig. 4**  
Hierarchical public spaces at different heights.

with working and studying. The interferences and conflicts have frequently occurred in limited space. Therefore, the living space has to be variable and flexible to meet the various demands, especial in families with three generations.

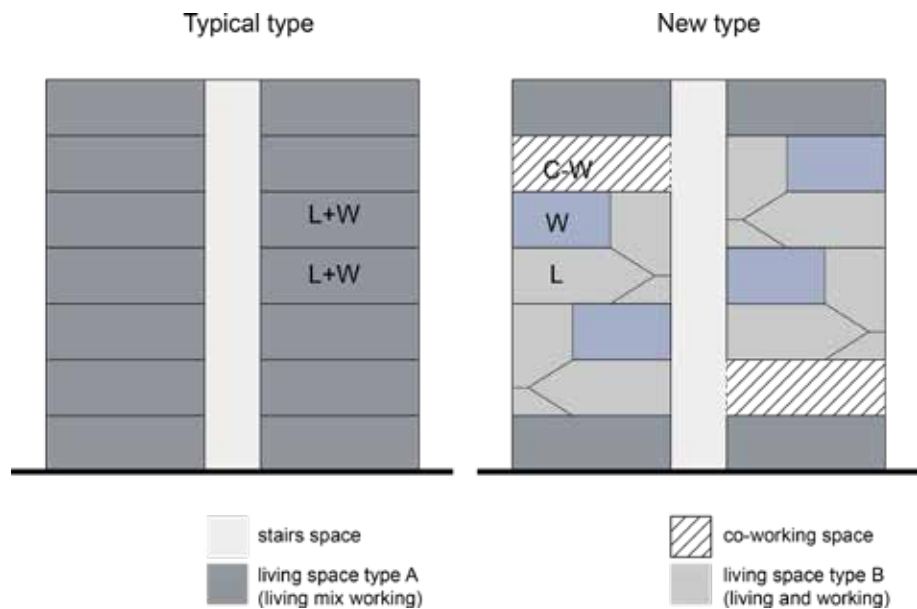
#### *i Variability of residential building*

Relying on IT and digital technology, a new mode of production and lifestyle has appeared. The home isolation has reinforced the demand for workspace at home and tightened work with life closely. Therefore, new residential buildings can provide more space for fitness, entertainment, and other activities during isolation. Also, the residential towers can contain common spaces vertically and separated. For instance, some floors can be inserted into the tower for co-work shared by a particular group of neighbours in the same building (Fig 5).

#### *ii Flexibility of living space*

Staying all-day-long at home with family is a 'sweet trouble'. The various demands of each member should be taken into consideration. The flexible layout with movable partitions of furniture and the overlap of usage time become an effective strategy. Also, it is useful to provide the space redundancy either in terms of the area of indoor space or enough height of the space, which can define an extra-upper level workspace.

The measures taken in China cities are timely effective to deal with the sudden epidemic. However, the problems in urban planning, communities, and residential buildings design have been also revealed. Firstly, a more overall view of the comprehensive disaster prevention planning should be formed based on public health emergencies. Then to further improve the necessary facilities and optimize the spatial organization can support to build up a resilient community. It is also required to conceive the variation and flexibility of residential buildings and living space for the changes in daily lives.



**Fig. 5**  
Co-working floor.

Though China has been gradually back to the normal state, the city, the communities and residential buildings still request the dynamic adaptability to respond to the future uncertain emergency. Through the interpretation and reflection, the experience of the last few months in China can give the lessons and inspiration for the Post-epidemic Era, which is the intention of this paper.

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Die Hu (1995) architecture graduate students, she graduated with honour from Architectural Department of Southeast University.

She has won the national and international competitions with her teammates from SEU and Politecnico di Torino.



Ken Fallas, Ekaterina Kochetkova  
**From Parasite to Pandemic. How Korean Cities  
 Can Lead the Way to a Global Post-COVID Urbanism**

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**Abstract**

Nature does not negotiate, and Covid-19 proved it by triggering a real-time experiment on a self-confined civilization trying to cope with its effects over our most densely inhabited environments: cities. Just within weeks, South Korea shifted the world's attention from its "Parasite" film's satire on urban social inequality and modern isolation, to become one of the most virus-affected territories, ending up as a top reference on flattening the curve. Yet, Korean cities' resiliency did not only rely on a trace, test and treat system, but on an emerging technology-based and human centered urbanism. This article aims to analyze the South Korean urban experiences which allowed them to overcome the current crisis and how this can guide the way for other cities in the post-COVID world.

**Keywords**

Covid-19 — South Korea — K-urbanism — Burnout Society

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**A virus of truth**

During centuries, architecture and planning were considered health disciplines, confronting diseases through environmental approaches that shaped new movements, such as the modernism with its functional, clean and well-ventilated spaces against "bad air". (Campbell 2005). But the progress made by scientific research in a world ruled by hyper-speed and hyper-connectivity allowed us to act quick and more efficiently than ever before, exempting design fields from these tasks; thus influencing a "globalist urbanism" that focused on market-led solutions to problems faced by capitalist cities, equipped with smart systems and prefabricated standard characteristics regardless of context considerations, as reimagined generic cities (Greenfield 2013).

However, are there any differentiable urban characteristics on design and planning causing that only some cities succeed on containing the current pandemic crisis while others struggle with such a heavy impact?

For instance, Chinese and Russian cities followed similar paths through tech-assisted policing and lockdowns. European cities established special measures for quarantine but a more restrained usage of technologies due to data privacy concerns. American cities on the other hand, found themselves alarmingly unprepared, as well as many urban centers in developing countries. But just a small group of cities, especially in Asian countries, showed capabilities for controlling the outbreak.

Yet, even from architects and planners perspective, much of this discussion on cities' virus-response (as it happens with climate change or migrations) has being restrained by ideology-techno-governance blinders comparing outcomes from main contenders: liberal democracies vs. authoritarian mod-



**Fig. 1**

Scena di (nuova) vita quotidiana a Seoul dove l'utilizzo delle mascherine è ampiamente diffuso già da tempo. Seoul, Corea, 2020. © starstruck2049 / Shutterstock.

els, capitalism vs. communism, or ultimately, a cultural clash of east vs. west (Harari, 2020; Carrion 2020; Agamben 2020; Zizek 2020).

This approach has reduced our capacity to understand that regardless of ideologies, COVID-19 has acted as a “virus of truth”, shaking power structures and unmasking vulnerabilities. The pandemic biggest impact is not merely a sudden health issue, but a collective anguish, paralysis and isolation due to an extended quarantine used as the only tool available at the moment for fighting the virus. Yet, this confinement effect is amplified since the quality of spaces we all live in make us experience it in very different ways due to a global persistent urban shaped problem: inequality.

### **From *Parasite* to pandemic**

In pre-pandemic days, Korean film *Parasite* (2019) satirized the relation of a family surviving in a small and deteriorated semi-basement unit with few hopes of leaving the “bottom of society”, and a privileged one enjoying a quasi-perfect life in a hill mansion. A normalized gap between socioeconomic groups cohabitating the same city, but which for its director Bong Joon-ho, this feature does not represent a Korean-only condition, but a common element of the late capitalist society we are all living in globally (Hagen 2019). The rich can work, live, play and study from home without worrying for income, food or medical attention: the system provides. While for the rest, the film suggests that there is no escape from poverty and the pre-established unequal distribution of opportunities regardless of how hard you work: meritocracy is now a myth.

During the last decades, Korean economy success pushed its cities for fast growth and high competitiveness, triggering a race for access to housing, mobility and services, but also pressing citizens to believe that this performance and merit-based system will be the key for owning those resources as their pursuit of happiness. This, according to the philosopher Byung-Chul Han, has transformed South Korea in an “achievement society”, leaving many behind with a burnout effect characterized by excessive working time, high income inequality, social privilege segregation, self-exploitation, overwhelming youth unemployment and proliferation of stress-related disorders (Han 2015). This tendency is also widely spread in western societies, which has evolved into a state of general exhaustion and isolation especially in cities. It is no secret that architects and planners hold an important share of

**Fig. 2**

Scena dal film *Parasite* (2019) diretto da Bong Joon-ho. Bagno dell'appartamento seminterrato. Seoul, Corea, 2020.

responsibility since they shaped these cities that are now shaping us.

However, for South Koreans there was no time to celebrate *Parasite*'s international success, neither to appropriately analyse nor confront the very same urban and social challenges the film exposed. On February 18th, the 31st COVID-19 case was reported, catalogued days later as a super-spreader that moved Korea up the charts as the most affected territory outside China (Hernandez et alii 2020).

### **Beyond test, trace and treat**

The Korean strategy was clear; apply all learned lessons from past pandemics (SARS in 2003 and MERS in 2015) through policies allowing rapid distribution of diagnostics, but more importantly: identify infected carriers' path before the contagion spreads (Lee & Jung 2019). For that, officials took advantage of the last 20 years investment on urban digital infrastructure, allowing them to keep track of everyone who tested positive by crossing interviews, CCTV records, phone GPS data, credit card history or any source that can provide a real-time geolocation of the virus path. Much of this data was publicly available through media, websites and the national mobile alert system which warned residents by customized messages if new cases were detected nearby. In collaboration with the private sector, several apps were also developed to help users find near clinics (and drive-thru test booths), mask vendors and clean zones. This ICT and public-private-partnership approach has been vastly covered by preliminary reports aiming to guide other nations based on Korean experience (ROK Ministry of Economy and Finance 2020). However, despite the undeniable main role of tech features to contain the spread, much of this success story has been portrayed as "hyper-tech capacity", "cultural exceptionalism" for rules compliance, or even as "normalized fashion" for the use of masks, yet diminishing the influence of the planned built-up urban resiliency that helped Korean cities to minimize daily life disruptions without extended lockdowns, fear monger or economic depression.

Korean architects and planners' approach on urban inequality have evolved during the last decade (despite still dealing with failed attempts caused by sprawl-induce models such as new towns with speculative generic housing, basic-amenities deserts and car dependency) (Lee 2019) to reconsider urban renewal strategies and multi-nucleic systems as a return to the community.



**Fig. 3**

Una postazione per i tamponi walk through. Incheon, Corea, 2020. © Rapture700 / Shutterstock.com

This has widely increased levels of public participation and local interventions, not only in megacities like Seoul, but in small and mid-size urban centres all over the country. The Happy Living Zones and tools developed by the Better Life Index guided effective planning for assuring a multiscale physical and digital decentralization of essential services, welfare, education, culture, medical assistance and green public spaces (Kim 2013). Compact cities within cities, providing 15-minutes-walkable equal access to urban diversity and its benefits, in other words: cities for people (Gehl 2010). This have been reinforced by governmental transparency and public trust, which is key for digital data sharing, revealing an emerging technology-based but human centred urbanism, shaping the core for the recently launched Korea's *Digital and Green New Deal* (Economic Policies, H2 2020)

### ***K-urbanism* and the challenges ahead**

It should not be a surprise that these urban concepts described above appear to summarize much of the already-known global progressive design strategies that many other cities are currently pursuing. Korean cities have been developing these concepts into their own agenda, yet major challenges remain, especially in terms of providing access to quality housing, encouraging public community life through active and welcoming spaces, transitioning to healthier work environments and responsibly assimilating digital systems to urban daily life. This pandemic exposed that quarantines are not a new phenomenon since our current urban living paradigm has been producing a systematic isolation. However, *K-urbanism* comes to show that, far from perfect, it is possible to co-create a model for improving urban quality of life tailored for local needs while targeting competitiveness, sustainability and equality.

This has been proved effective during the pandemic providing living zones fully equipped with physical and digital amenities to cope with social safety, reducing exposure to the virus without breaking daily routines for workers, students, elders, etc.

The philosopher Byong Chul-han suggests that temporal crisis will only be overcome once the *vita activa* (active life) incorporates again the *vita contemplativa* (contemplative life) (Han 2017). In other words, it is crucial to repurpose our time for critical analysis of the present circumstances, iden-





**Fig. 4**  
Progetto di rigenerazione urbana Seoullo 7017 e area limitrofa. Seoul, Corea, 2020. © Nghia Khanh / Shutterstock



**Fig. 5**  
Vista sulla torre di Namsan e skyline del centro di Seoul. Seoul, Corea, 2019. © PKphotograph / Shutterstock

tifying how our cities can integrate these changes to cope not only with the COVID-19 pandemic, but with other major environmental and social issues that cannot be postponed anymore. The challenges ahead will require decisive actions based on a deep revision of what we truly consider valuable as an urban specie, but most importantly, that architecture and planning should overcome the noise of political polarization that distracts its core goals and take back responsibility for people's safety and happiness.

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Nicola Marzot

## The Reclaimed City. Islands of resilience in the urban archipelago. “Temporary Use” and transformation in emergency conditions

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### Abstract

The crisis resulting from the effects of the pandemic has revealed more than just a financial impact, but also the inability of our cities to react to pressing changes that cannot be postponed. Only a portion of this can be traced back to the structural inertia in modifying a social framework founded on automatisms that involve both action (*praxis*) and production (*poiesis*). The primary cause can be found in the deontic function of the Plan and its regulatory corollaries. In this restrictive context, the need for intervention in emergency conditions in our country required a dangerous dependence on the “state of exception”. Some pioneering practices nevertheless demonstrated the existence of effective alternatives to extraordinary measures, legitimising the pre-eminence of the culture of design in urban transformation.

### Keywords

Crisis — Resilience — Practices

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### Preamble

The pandemic emergency generated by the spread of coronavirus, well beyond the dramatic nature of its effects, revealed that we were ill-prepared, in a more general sense, for facing a systemic crisis. In fact, management of the crisis required the declaration of a “state of exception”<sup>1</sup>. Invoked every time a grave threat to State institutions occurs, to guarantee rapid and effective implementation of counter measures, it triggers the temporary suspension of current laws governing civil society, and the simultaneous implementation of a “governmental” regime (Agamben 2003). In recent history in the West, this phenomenon occurred in the budding American democracy<sup>2</sup>, with effects that rapidly extended to Europe, stemming from an economy that is more and more globalized and finance-based.

Among the immediate consequences of these decisions, the progressive exponential increase in unused spaces, public and private, was beyond a doubt the most macroscopic and evocative phenomenon, with the relative political, economic, social, and cultural implications, which would soon impact the entire country. With regard to this, it can be affirmed that the list of “vacant” buildings and areas that require reclamation increased in quantity as never before, simultaneously expanding a widely articulated catalogue in terms in quality (Marzot 2013a).

If all of this resulted in rapid interventions of an exceptional nature (especially in the healthcare sector), the immediate domestic residential spaces were charged with responsibilities that, ontologically speaking, were outside of their realm, including work, education and free time activities. The semantic implications that this abandonment phenomenon created have remained totally unexplored as of yet, despite their magnitude. Through a



**Fig. 1**

Former Ravone railway station, Bologna. The real estate market crisis lends itself to the adoption of an incremental value building process where "temporary use" of unused existing buildings constitutes a brand new starting point.

necessary process based on truth, this essay has the intention of bringing to light the aporias characterising the Government's approach to the transformation of the territory, at all levels of intervention, which significantly inhibited the propensity for change in Italy, affecting the debate as well as the modes, timing and results of the interventions.

### **On the concept of Property, or the ambiguity of the *munus***

The recent crisis deactivated, even though temporarily, all "conventional", typical distinctions between the public and private spheres, on which the foundations of the social framework are built (Ferraris 2012), crushing them while, at the same time, forcing them into an unforeseen, overwhelming and undefined domestic dimension. The home, unexpectedly and unwillingly, became hypertrophic, without – in the majority of cases – this new condition being accompanied by an adequate preparation in terms of spaces, and above all lacking the capacity for handling the unexpected burden, if not in a total condition of emergency. The sudden undistinguished nature of the aforesaid concepts indirectly revealed the rhetorical weight of the concept of "property", both material and immaterial, with rare, and therefore meritorious, exceptions.

With regard to this, it should be mentioned that in the Italian word *patrimonio* (meaning "property") the root of the compound *pater*, evoking the principle of authority, is associated with the termination *munus*, the concept having been the object of extensive and crucial philosophical reflection over the recent years (Agamben 2001; Nancy 2002; Esposito 2006). The ambiguous oscillation of its meaning is understandable only in the light of a continuous prospective revolution in its use and role, for which the crisis is responsible. In fact, its alternating chapters are the cause of the semantic transformation of the term, from its original meaning of "obligation", or "duty" set forth by the rules of civil coexistence for which each generation has the right and the duty to set aside for itself and its contemporaries, to its current meaning of "gift" to the generations to come, in the hopes that they are dutiful heirs, multiplying its value (Marzot 2019; Rispoli 2019).





**Fig. 2**

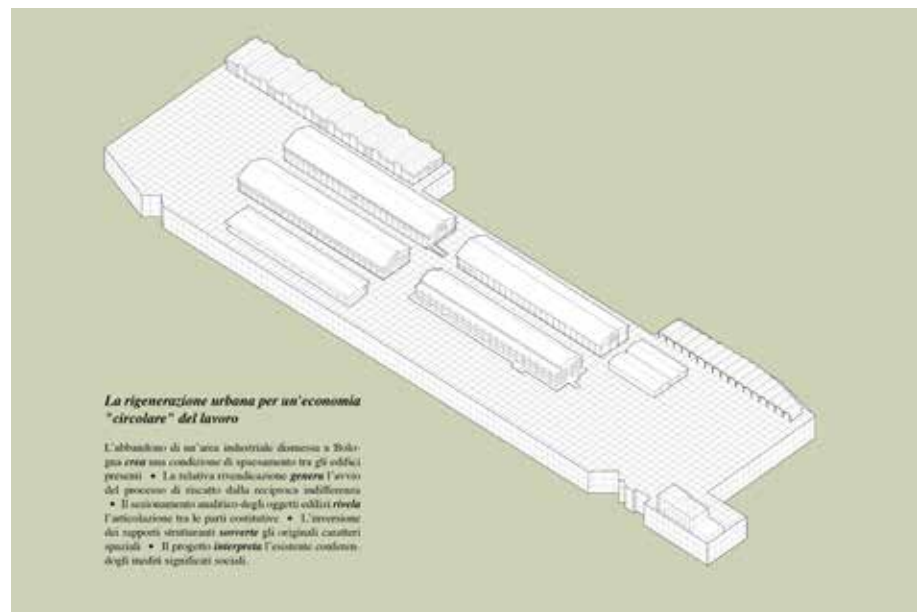
The "Temporary Use Master Plan" is the new governance tool shared with local Administrations, used to identify "vocations" for the single vacant buildings based on relative intrinsic characteristics. Within the assigned perimeter, the correspondence between closed spaces and external areas guarantees additional degrees of freedom, expanding the possible configurations for facilitating the required changes.

### Urban planning as *katéchon*, or the power that restrains

And yet, the *munus*-gift offered as a sacrifice to posterity after the crisis is not, in the actual reality of Modernity, immediately available, as anyone who aspires to it knows well. Paraphrasing a masterful essay by Massimo Cacciari (2013), what unexpectedly holds back the potential (for regeneration), delaying the manifestation of any real benefits, is indeed a system of rules, as invisible as they are pervasive and wide-ranging, for which the declared katechon-esque function inhibits the possible transformation of the *status quo* (Marzot, 2016). In this sense, the so-called "transitional measures" are to the Plan as the "state of exception" is to the State institutions, guaranteeing conservation in eternity. Therefore, not only is the possibility to responsibly claim these properties denied, but also – and above all –, the right to take possession of them through a necessary process of reassignment. Finally, the urban planning framework reserves the right to restrain the *kairos*, or opportune time, without which the wait for renovation is destined to continue indefinitely.

### Duration, or the impossibility of abandonment in Italy

The subsequent paradox is that especially in our country, outside of a "state of exception" (Agamben 2003), it seems that nothing can be properly abandoned. We are hostage to a *status quo* where the liberation of creative energies contained in every social-historic framework, through the use and processing of the same, seems to be basically unthinkable, like a simple ontological category, rendering change almost impossible, in its multiple and unforeseeable varieties (Marzot 2018). Above all, this induces a sense of resignation in the younger generations, who see every legitimate attempt to claim a sense of belonging thwarted, taking into consideration emerging autonomist movements, seeking responsible transformation of a space that, although unused and often degraded, cannot be altered.

**Fig. 3**

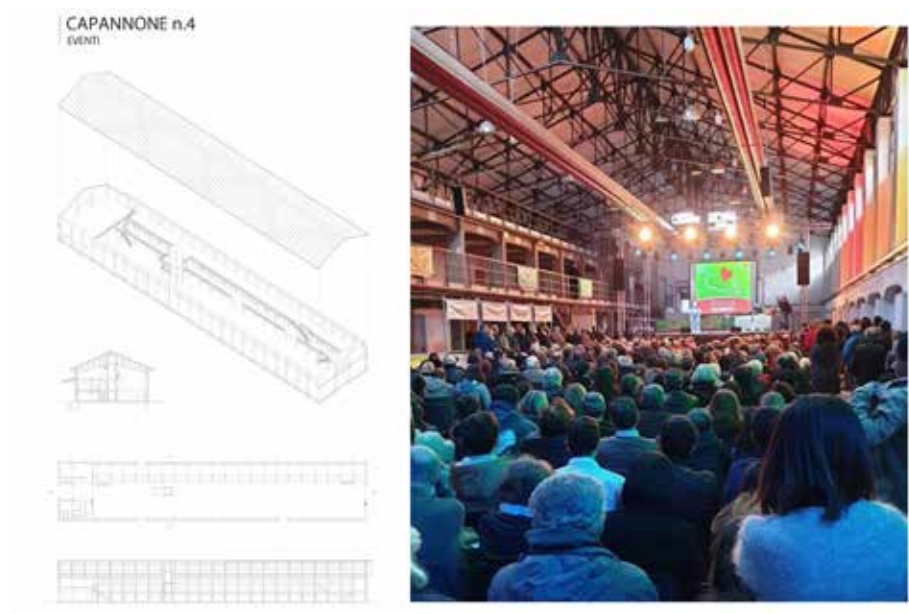
The conceptual axonometry of the section dedicated to the exploration of new solutions, to be tested and possibly inserted in the implementation phase of the Urban Implementation Plan (PUA), expresses the sense of estrangement of vacant buildings in respect to the anonymity of the surrounding Plan.

### The pioneering role of reclamation practices in the spaces expelled by the city

Faced with the aforementioned obstacles, based on the many exemplary success stories demonstrated in recent publicity, over the course of the last decade procedures for reclaiming abandoned and/or under-used spaces have progressively constituted a new phenomenon in scale and in their methodological implications. Primarily thanks to the pioneering role played by cultural associations (Albertazzi 2019), and the contributions of designers who are more open to ideas coming from the international scene (Marzot 2019), a transversal opinion has emerged that supports the proclamation of the first Regional Urban Planning Law<sup>4</sup> which acknowledges “resilience” as the foundational principle of a new concept of city, built on the responsible transformation of what already exists. In particular, starting from the first experiences in Bologna<sup>5</sup> and Ravenna in “Temporary uses” (Bonetti, Marzot and Roversi Monaco 2016), art. 16 of the text introduces the principle of transitory suspension of the stringency of urban use regulations, on which the classification of the Plan bases its deontic logic – establishing a moratorium for all properties that, once they reach the end of their life span, are made available for experimental, renewed uses. The importance of this decision, which has no precedents in the history of Italian urban planning, does not only pertain to the willingness to rehabilitate a proactive role for subjectivity in the construction of urban space, as demonstrated to a greater and lesser degree in contemporary politics (especially sensitive to the idea of rehabilitating its public image to respond to the evident at all levels of representation), but also, and above all, in the implicit acknowledgement of architecture as an exploratory tool, to research innovative responses to the issues emerging in the present.

### Hybridisation and regenerative processes

It follows that regeneration of unused property, both material and immaterial, significantly impacts the human dimension and the urban dimension within a mutual relationship, the effects of which one cannot produce unless by way of the other, and vice-versa. The *de facto* primacy of a phenomenological-existential approach to “doing”, therefore placed *ex lege* at the foundation of the necessary reinvention of “know-how”, requires a heuristic method, to be

**Fig. 4**

Warehouse no. 4, with its single hall plan, has an assembly structure that lends itself well to the presentation of a new political roster for the regional elections (obtaining the Vice President's Office of Emilia-Romagna).

found and reinvented by trial and error, through the architectural practice (Marzot 2017). But all of this implies acknowledging the hybrid nature of the latter, assuming the programmatic de-containment and contamination (between nature and artifice, subject and object, instruments and results, research and theory) as its own ontological condition. In this way, the prejudice of classic Apollonian standard, resulting from the tensions of the 1960s and 1970s, is finally unmasked and faced with its Dionysian (and erotic) *alter ego* (Marzot 2013b). In fact, rational thought does not contemplate the confusion of codes, and even less so the ambiguity of meaning, “tragically” denying its spurious and paradoxical original archetype.

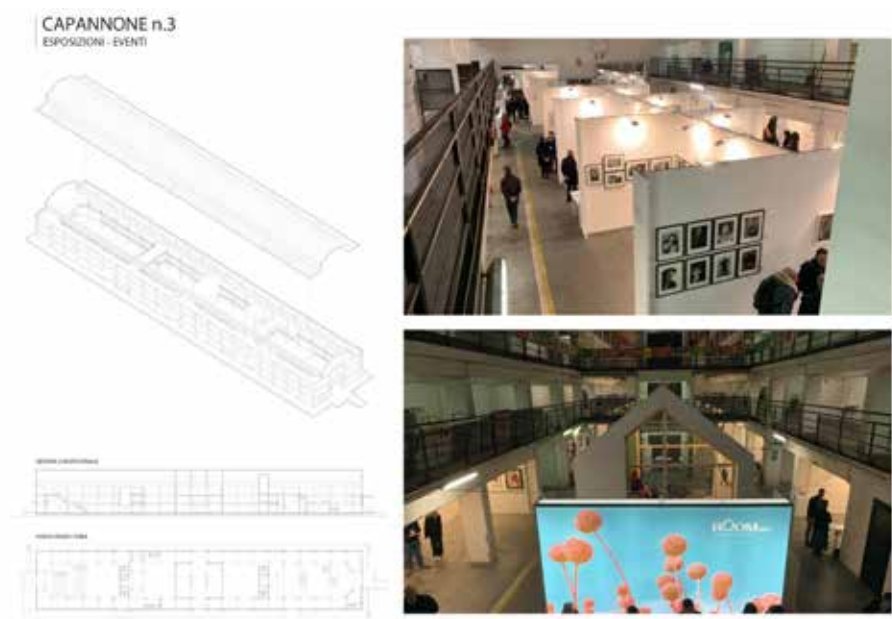
### The reconstruction of a sense of Community

The ongoing experimental practices demonstrate that a renewed sense of *cum-munus*, or the voluntary, shared choice of a *super partes* entity to belong to (De La Boétie 2013), can neither emerge from the tired rhetoric of discursive practices, where the noesis of participation is evident, nor from preconceived consolidated practices, already assuming what the community must jointly find to be able to define itself autonomously. On the contrary, it requires the direct and responsible involvement of all those who, in various roles and based on the willingness and different abilities expressed, aspire to be *engaged* players in the same regenerative processes. Above all, this implies that the reassignment of meaning to buildings that are vacant and unused, and available for new purposes, results as a conditional factor for the possibility of innovating behaviours, which, symmetrically, direct their results. “The community to come”, paraphrasing Agamben (2001), is in fact the changing result of mutual implications between “subjectivity”, which vindicates the natural right to be the protagonist of change, and spatialized “objectivity”, in the search for possible new frameworks. In this perspective, design has the priority to create a plurality of interests within a general overview, which can exceed and integrate the same interests based on a higher pursued objective.

### From “the city in the city” to the archipelago of resilient islands

The 1980s were animated by pervasive collective transgression, intended as cathartic *ludus*, through violent conflict between classes, confrontations





**Fig. 5**

Warehouse no. 3, with a basilica structure, was temporarily transformed into an exhibition space dedicated to hosting events from the last edition of the International Art First / Art Fair.

between autonomist movements and resistance to institutions, in the present and recent past, inexorably falling into an aesthetic beyond (Menna 1983). In its most abysmal depths, the point of view of “structuralism”, up to that point dominating in all fields of knowledge, dissolved joyously into a kaleidoscopic variety of poetics. From the ensuing fragmentation of the disciplinary *corpora*, “the city in the city” became the unifying retroactive manifesto, where Ungers and his best disciples imagined the forced abandonment of entire parts of the city, due to crisis, as sudden as it was unstoppable, implicating the haemorrhage of its human capital, a harbinger of more imminent and biblical collapse, in which Berlin is the case study and predestined emblem (Hertweck and Marot 2013). The progressive dissolution of the urban framework into an advanced state of ruin, with an explicit neo-romantic flavour, progressively leaving space for a brand new re-naturalised landscape, which the narration evokes as a mere, endless field of indetermination, to be crossed by new inter-modal flows and corresponding nomadic-evenemential lifestyles. From its infinite extension, distant fragments on urban landscape emerged, reciprocally estranged from the loss of contextual references, further removed of meaning and collective recognition after surviving demolition. In this way, the prophecy of the modern city coined by Abbé Laugier in his *Essay on Architecture* (1753) was renewed, where the revolutionary *Esprit* becomes the surprising actor of an *ante litteram* deurbanization through the “*tumulte de l'ensemble*”.

While this model, brought forth by its most zealous interpreter, Rem Koolhaas, to the hypertrophic scalability of *Bigness* (Koolhaas 1995), seems to undeniably wither following an unprecedented financial crisis in the western world, of which the pandemic is an unexpected epilogue, a new urban horizon is slowly and timidly raising its head.

Here, nevertheless, the compositional mechanism adopted in the theoretical project by Ungers and his collaborators, a scholarly revisiting of the archetype of the *tabula rasa*, sees a radical inversion in polarity. Upon the emergence of urban fragments (intended as full/positive) of “liquidity” in contextual relationships, which distinguishes the evoked Manifesto, the prompt combustion of the structure of the Plan generated by the “removal” of unused areas and abandoned buildings takes precedence (read as empty/negative). The re-naturalized areas, intentionally taken from the system of



rules that the “conforming city” exemplifies, become islands of resilience on the outskirts of the new urban archipelago. Returned to experimentation without the limits of the architectural project, these are the idle testimony of a “vindicated city” through well-aimed actions, challenging the stringency of the Plan in the background, *de facto* stripped of any value. Nevertheless, these are not “Indian reservations”, dedicated to managing social conflict, in the name of *post-modern* pluralism, through the variety of the cultural offering. On the contrary, they are innovative Living Labs for exploring new forms of urban life, potentially able to cultivate existing forms, destabilising internal limits. Oases of resilience in the contemporary urban desert, sterilised by the permanence of rules that are impermeable to any unplanned changes; areas for transformation made ideal through the preventive liberation from any form of social-historical conditioning, offered up to the exploration of new forms of living, to take root well beyond the *ex-lege* limits of the present.

### **Towards a new *habitus***

If the building type is the promise, and the preface, for the city to come, the meaningful reclamation of abandoned areas (that coronavirus multiplied, bringing the culture of excess of globalisation to its maximum expression) is the prototype, necessary for the preventive building of consent around the possibilities and opportunities of the former. It is only in the remote exile from any possible conventional form of *civitas* and *urbs*, finally, that the debate on the Autonomy Project (Avidar, Geerts, Grafe and Schoonderbeek 2003; Aureli 2016), from a human and disciplinary perspective, can find its fullest expression of original meaning, returning its limitless wealth of radicality, beyond any tiresome discursive and disciplinary rhetoric.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> The declaration was anticipated by the Prime Minister's Decree on 8 March 2020, which extended the preventive measures that were first applied only to the "red zones", the first outbreak sites, to all of Italy. The relative validity of the declaration will expire on 31 July 2020 unless an extension is ordered.

<sup>2</sup> This also refers to the restrictions imposed following the Twin Towers terrorist attack in New York, as well as to the measures introduced following the sub-prime mortgage scandal, with the goal of preventing the risk of a national default. With particular reference to the latter, it should be reiterated that the outgoing President George Bush, as well as Obama, both introduced and confirmed State aid packages to support the financial system, amounting to 800 billion dollars, surpassing the constitutional principle that excludes the intervention of Administrations in issues involving the financial markets.

<sup>3</sup> In various ways this was the result of regional regulations that reformulated the spaces dedicated to housing, including terraces, balconies, porticoes, solarium and porches (considered as accessory spaces), as part of the comprehensive viable spaces in new buildings, not rendering them remunerative for the investor, considered equal to useful spaces in an urban sense.

<sup>4</sup> Based on Law no. 24 of 2017 of the Emilia-Romagna Region.

<sup>5</sup> In this sense, the renovation of the former railway station Ravone is a pilot project, on a national scale, where the Urban implementation Plan (PUA) – currently being drafted by the PERFORMA ARCHITETTURA+URBANISTICA studio – becomes an incremental process, where the temporary activation of the existing dismissed buildings is the foundational strategy for the implementation phase. The Plan, officially activated in May 2019 with the assignment of a supervisor, today constitutes an occasion for exploring, in advance, solutions that the PUA could implement, if considered to be successful and capable of building consent around the general process of enhancing value in the area. The prototype nature of the project is already confirmed by the decision taken by the Administration to modify the system of regulations to align the process for "temporary use", as defined in the new Urban Planning Regulations (RUE), enacted on 15 September 2020..

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Riccarda Lea Cappeller  
**Cooperative Architecture.**  
**Urban Space as Medium and Tool to share Narratives**

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Abstract

Understanding the already existing space as socio-cultural dimension, cultural capacity and atmosphere that can be approached in many different ways, is connected to the idea of using space as a medium that opens up discussions, fosters social connections and is able to reveal socio-political contexts, cooperative processes of planning, production and change, questions of everydaylife, the design and use of space throughout the past and visions towards the future of our cities. Changing the perspective on space and using it as a medium and tool for knowledge creation is addressed through the concept of cooperative architecture. This concept rethinks and reactivates the architectural and urban design discipline as social, creative and common practice as well as it defines new roles within the discipline and at the intersection with other disciplines.

Keywords

Reuse — Cultural capacity — Inventive methods — Design modes

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**Raising questions in a new context**

Thinking about how space in an urban environment is able to react to the users requirements and how we have to shape it in future to be able to permit enough room, flexibility, distance and possibilities for encounters, have been part of the big questions of architects and urban designers for centuries: How can many people live and work together and how should living, working and space for leisure be organized spatially? How can the wish for autonomy and privacy within an urban context, of having an own little island, be brought together with the necessary exchange in public space that prevents us from isolation and a high segregation of the society. How do we have to imagine the very basic concept of coming together, the “agora” of the Greeks – a common place for cultural production, political organization and social togetherness in the current Everyday life of our spaces?

All these questions have a new topicality and have received a rising and much more outreaching, also public attention across the world. The Corona Pandemic is forcing us to rethink the way in which we live together as well as how we as architects and urban designers act and create space – «addressing the intertwining of the systemic and the personal» (Roberts 2020, p. 10) anew. It asks for spatial ideas to distance people from each other, closing or sharply restricting many unsecure localities and events, especially the working places, but also others, that allowed unexpected encounters to happen (smaller cultural institutions, café's, sport clubs, workshops etc.). Employees are forced to work from home and to organize life in a different way, which rapidly has shown social differences through spatial division and distribution; a dissimilar access





**Fig. 1**

Filmic parts – atmospheres of the three spaces. Photo by Riccarda Cappeller.

to open spaces, mobility, and private refuges, just naming some of the constraints leading to a more and more segregated society. So, looking at the current challenges on a long term view, how do we have to design urban space and which kind of urban action is needed?

To answer, at first we have to reveal the very basic understanding of urban space as a place of physical encounter that especially in the digitalized network society of today, which Manuel Castells describes (2005) has become indispensable. Topics like the complexity and multiplicity of social and spatial relations (Boeri 2004), shown in the mix of heterogeneous aspects, programs and user groups (Cappeller in Schröder and Diesch 2020), as well as a spontaneous encounter of people in the Everyday, have to be highlighted more than ever as positive. They provide a huge variety of social, economic and cultural resources for their citizens, the “homo urbanus”, as the Filmmakers Ila beka and Louise Lemoine name the species. Working with these parameters to foster new connections, allows our spaces to adapt to changing requirements and grow and learn together with us – continuously transforming. It is connected to the aim of creating a space that reveals a philosophical idea of a democracy, which looks for political equality, allowing the same conditions – in living, working, education and access to public institutions – for everybody (Allen 2020).

### Unforeseeable use in existing urban Spaces

As Jane Jacobs states «old materials are needed to reinvent the cultural life of innercity environments and seen to resist high speed capitalisation.» (1963) The existing spaces in our cities, the leftovers from a historic past and often former industrial sites within the city centre are important places to test out programmes and ideas and create new linkages, working on multiple scales and topics in relation to their neighbourhoods, fostering possibilities for unexpected events and allowing a creative engagement and inhabitation of space to take place, change and further develop the spaces through the people involved. Their material substance works as integrating element, as it brings together memories and stories keeping it alive and creating new kinds of communities for the Future that go beyond the material. They are *Lived Spaces*, socially influenced

and subjectively perceived spaces that gain their significance through practice and use in the everyday (Lefebvre 1974), were re-cycled, re-used and interpret in new ways that don't represent but enact the dependency of the social and the material. In this point I completely agree to and still find very relevant the statement of André Corboz in his article *Old Buildings and Modern Functions*, published in 1978. He states:

«If the work of a building [here understood as spatial situation] is considered from the start as a product in constant development created as part of a programme with an aim in mind, and provided with a cause of adaptability, the reanimator [architect or urban designer] is then dealing with objects open to modernisation». (1978, p.77).

Scaling this up, the idea of objects open to modernization becomes urban space that changes and further develops, which is not realized in a before and after but in a process which has to be read in its different facets and modes of production. It is a social, political and spatial process, an atmosphere and cultural capacity allowing and producing interrelations in-between the live and space matters always under construction as time goes on (Massey 2005).

Proposing this increasing attention to already existing spatial situations, their context and the to it bound communities, I follow the general idea of contextualism from the 1970s and relational theories that lead to a situated knowledge, a strongly contextually routed notion of space that reads and interprets the layers of palimpsest-spaces (Corboz 1983) before designing or realizing space. There are many spaces where one can see this kind of process, many spaces where different user groups merge and produce different kinds of happenings and many spaces where old buildings are re-used to produce something new. Nevertheless I would argue that there are very few spatial situations where all these aspects come together and are bound not only to a changed attitude of architects and urban designers, really engaging in situ and working with what they found in the place, but also to the actions happening in place, the spatial practice and active engagement of people living, working and being there, based on alternative models of ownership and organization that relate to a broader and cultural dimension of space connected to the will of its inhabitants to transform and change it.

### **Introducing "Cooperative Architecture" as concept**

Cooperative Architecture as conceptual idea brings together these multiple topics of the city and through the analysis of selected projects shows a different attitude in the social and spatial design and production as well as an understanding of space as ongoing process and sequence of situations that allow spatial differentiations. Derived from the latin "*cooperor, cooperaris*", whereas "*co-*" means *together* and "*opperari*" to be occupied by or work on something, it points out the active doing of architecture as an act of collaboration and co-creation. Another in the word inherent meaning is "*opus*", understood as a musical, artistic, literary or scientific work, a labour or composition – an abstract, conceptual but at the same time interpretative and intuitive compilation of knowledge. It refers to a work of art or product of labour, with a connection to the artistic that can re-view the practice of designing. Architecture is defined as the art and science of designing and making buildings or the style of a building itself. "*Opus est*", means it is necessary, so the act of co-creation in thinking and projecting space becomes compulsory.

Referring to this reinforces the mutual dependency of the social and the material, its visual experience and sensory perception as well as its “*Po-esis*”, the mentally reflected theory and “*Praxis*”, the through action expressed concept or spatial and material realization, Aristoteles defined. Both have to be re-defined and re-integrated into the architects and designers education, which can be done, and this also lies in the nature of the wording, through artistic and interdisciplinary approaches provoking a change of perspective and a re-discovering and new invention of creative solutions and situation-bound ideas. So what is needed now is a shift of architectural and urban design (Nilsson 2013) towards an attitude connecting analysis and design, theory and practice more deeply and reflexively, highlighting a performative understanding of space. A shift that tries out new tools and modes of designing to propose innovative, promising, maybe even utopic ideas – turning the existing upside down. It is a new appropriation of space that allows improvisation (Dell 2019) and experimentation (Marguin 2019), the merging of bottom-up and top down strategies, temporary and enduring spatial interventions and the realization of frameworks allowing flexible and at the same time sustainable spaces in constant development.

Through looking at three exemplary spaces; the *Exrotaprint* in Berlin (Germany), *Granby four streets* in Liverpool (United Kingdom) and *Can Batllo* in Barcelona (Spain), my ongoing research on cooperative architecture reflects on spaces of multiplicity forming a spatial translation of a contemporary understanding of democracy and the changing role of architects and urban designers, addressing the complexity of thinking, projecting and realizing such composite urban situations. It opens up to the academic and the practice but also to people beyond the discipline, a broader public, that will take part in an active creation, production and discussion, stressing the how and why of spatial agency – the designerly action, public engagement as connection to plurality and the openness and freedom, referring to Hannah Arendt, that doesn't predefine everything in advance but allows to evolve in process.

The projects were approached through an inventive exploration – a material-based examination, using the fieldsite as device (Candea 2013). The Inventiveness of methods according to Lury and Wakeford, who collected a whole range of examples that investigate, engage with and try to «contribute to the framing of change» (Lury and Wakeford 2012, p. 6) is «the relation between two moments: the addressing of a method [...] to a specific problem, and the capacity of what emerges in the use of that method to change the problem» (Ibid., p. 7). So the challenge is to find a visual and narrative expression for the cultural aspects inherent in spaces, evaluating and transmitting the findings while reflecting both the practice and the theory, leading to a critical spatial practice (Marguin 2019).

The “As Found”, introduced as interdisciplinary movement by the Smithsons also increased attention on the existing, opening a field in between art and science, based on observation and reflection of the world as experienced. It departs from a spontaneous, unconscious, practical approach to space as inspiration and elaborates a theoretical background through its aesthetic reflection. Art in this sense doesn't mean the actual production of an artwork, but aims at an art of thinking and doing, which reaches much further than the basics of design (Bürkele 2012), often un-

derstood as aesthetical interpretation but also being a creative and active doing.

Working with «open-ended and socially engaged approaches» (Dodd 2019 p.11) and sensory methods like experimental film to visualize the tangible and intangible through an experimental approach creates textual interpretations of the space's capacities, the subjectively perceived and qualitative values as transformability, cultural capacity or atmosphere. This is important to “see” the potential of sharing a living environment where diverse knowledge is collected (Julien 2016), and shared as fundamental education – which is the opposite of the idea of social distancing.



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Fabrizia Berlingieri, Manuela Triggianese  
**Post-pandemic and urban morphology Preliminary research perspectives about spatial impacts on public realm**

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Abstract

As Covid-19 evidence, urban density[\*] proved to be a health risk factor, reclaiming the rethinking for higher sustainability. The investigation on post pandemic strategies in the metropolitan cities of Milan and Rotterdam shows emergent modes of spatial re-appropriation towards better risk adaptiveness.

[\*] «Density is really an enemy in a situation like this, with large population centers, where people are interacting with more people all the time, that's where it's going to spread the fastest.» (Dr. Steven Goodman, epidemiologist at Stanford University). Citation in: Brian M. Rosenthal (March, 23, 2020) "Density Is New York City's Big 'Enemy' in the Coronavirus Fight" on <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/23/nyregion/coronavirus-nyc-crowds-density.html> (accessed 08. 05.2020, 11:00 a.m.).

Keywords

Covid-19 — Urban Morphology — Public Spaces — Social Distancing — Spatial Proximity

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**Adaptive, resilient, reversible**

In the post-pandemic phase, the central question 'how does the infrastructure of public space and mobility need to adapt to a 1.5mt rule of social distancing' has been tackled by socio-economic metropolitan agendas. New York City is an exemplary case to describe the ongoing challenge in decentralizing public spaces (Hu, Haag 2020). The city closed more than 60 miles of its road network to allow the decongestion of main parks and squares, within an extremely compact urban structure characterized by fragmentation and lack of non-privatized open spaces.

Grounded on the experience of the *Superilles* project in Barcelona<sup>1</sup>, new pop up and temporary bike lanes appeared in Berlin, Bogotá and Milan, while New Zealand has become the first country to experiment tactical urbanism as official governmental policy during the pandemic (Reid 2020). Temporary and *tactical urbanism* configure a common strategic approach to roll out effective techniques to cope with health emergency, that drive towards adaptiveness and resilience to risks. In the European context, the cities of Milan and Rotterdam are two interesting cases to look at regarding design strategies and tools for the post-pandemic phase, as they also differ in urban morphology.

**Tactic urbanism and public realm. A comparative analysis on Milan and Rotterdam**

The "comeback to a new ordinary" is the leading motto of the Milan municipality (2020) in the adopted *Urban adaptation Strategy*. The strategy invests in public realm in a preponderant way, focusing on two main aspects: the reorganization of the road network and the reuse and implemen-





**Fig. 1-8**

1-2. Cycle routes in Porta Venezia e Corso Buenos Aires, Strade Aperte, Milan 2020 (source: Municipality of Milan).

3-4. New arrangement of Porta Genova, Piazze Aperte, Milan 2020 (source: Municipality of Milan).

5-6. Belloveso, Piazze Aperte, Milan 2020 (source: Municipality of Milan).

7-8. Tactic urbanism project, Dergano, Piazze Aperte, Milan 2020 (source: Municipality of Milan).

tation of free open spaces at the neighborhood scale<sup>2</sup>. Both actions *Strade Aperte* and *Piazze Aperte* deal with the negotiation of public land occupation policies to guarantee and redesign free common services in the logic of the “15-minute city”<sup>3</sup>. Regarding the reorganization of the road network, the street section of several boulevards and the urban arteries of entry to the consolidated city has been reformulated for new cycle routes and slow mobility systems, reducing the space of vehicular traffic and installing promiscuous uses. Also new playgrounds and temporary pedestrian zones appear near to road junctions and leftovers, due to the new car speed limits. The cycle routes of Corso Buenos Aires and Corso Venezia, the Lazzaretto diffuse public spaces and parklets are some of the planned test beds for the redevelopment of open urban spaces in Milan.

Through tactical urbanism interventions, the aim is to provide new spaces as social relief valves for residents through unconventional re-appropriations of leftovers and residual spaces. The first actions have been taken especially in neighborhoods with scarce availability of public services. Temporary reuses and reversible interventions, able to face adaptability of the urban system to pandemic risk management, are the main features of the municipal strategy, with a prerogative for dialogue and social consultation. In highly dense neighborhoods, with a scarcity of public open spaces, the choice of urban interventions depends on the morphological characteristics of the city. In the logic of sustainable development linked to new urban mobility systems (individual and collective), a new trend emerges for the compact city: redistributing common and collective spaces in a widespread way, at the same time thinking of a less defined public space that brings new quality to the whole.

Similarly, in North Europe from the Dutch ‘intelligent lockdown’ to the national motto ‘distancing gives freedom’ for both indoor and outdoor policy, the City of Rotterdam is working out on its urban resilience and recovery strategy after the crisis<sup>4</sup>.

Rotterdam council realises the need for a paradigm shift in the way the city is managed, towards bottom-up and resilient alternatives and a so-called *adaptive governance* which entails the involvement of multiple actors in decision-making. For example, because it is difficult to keep sufficient distance to each other in the city center, the municipality is distributing the available space as fairly as possible in close consultation with entrepreneurs for the re-arrangements of dining areas<sup>5</sup>. The social infrastructure of the city made of green spaces, market places, waterfronts and walkways has responded to the pandemic phase and it has become the tool for fast way to adapt city structure to the current demands of its recovery (van Eck, van Melik e Schapendonk 2020).

Through new seven urban projects<sup>6</sup>, Rotterdam council aims at giving more space to green urban lungs, as attractive public places where residents and visitors meet, move and recreate. Giving more space for cyclists and pedestrians, possibilities for new water storage in the city centre, for reduction of heat stress, urban renewal and densification is at the core of these strategies. The transformation of Hofplein roundabout and parts of the busy motorway Westblaak to urban parks is an example.

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Photo: Municipality of Rotterdam



Photo: Municipality of Rotterdam

**Fig. 9-16**

9-10. Tactic urbanism project, Angiliberto II, Piazze Aperte, Milan 2020 (source: Municipality of Milan).

11-12. Spatial reconfiguration in Venini-Spoleto streets, Piazze Aperte, Milan 2020 (source: Municipality of Milan).

13. Re-arrangement of (outdoor) dining areas in Nieuwe Binnenweg, Rotterdam 2020 (Ph. Credits Yagiz Soylev).

14. Re-arrangement of the lecture room at the Kunsthal (interiors), Rotterdam, (Ph. Credits Yagiz Soylev).

15-16. Blaakpark at Westblaak now and in the future, Rotterdam (source: Municipality of Rotterdam).

Hofplein roundabout and parts of the busy motorway Westblaak to urban parks is an example<sup>7</sup>. Here, *Temporary and tactical urbanism* as strategic approach from one side and a *redefinition of the role of local government* from the other side emerge as interwoven instruments to cope with the conditions that pandemic arises. Several studies are currently being carried out on how Rotterdam can recover from the COVID-19 crisis, learn and thrive<sup>8</sup>.

### Preliminary research perspectives

The brief overview on the adaptation strategy of the post-pandemic phase in Milan and Rotterdam has addressed specific spatial assets that belong to their urban and metropolitan contexts, dealing with density and public open spaces<sup>9</sup>.

By enlightening effective tools and alternative models of re-appropriation of urban voids, to “make” space for the community or to temporally re-occupy it, this contribution aims at establishing the basis for a deeper exploration on the concept of “space of proximity” and a new urban model of *public space decentralization*<sup>10</sup>. Not only temporary solutions facilitate physical distance in the event of pandemics, but sustainable high-quality public space, easily adaptable to future challenges become crucial in the short, medium and long term in dense urban areas (Honey-Roses, Jordi, et al. 2020).

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> The *Superilles* or *Supermanzana* project and its current stage of execution is available in real time updates on: <https://ajuntament.barcelona.cat/superilles/es/> (accessed 21. 07.2020, 7:00 a.m.).

<sup>2</sup> Two main documents have been published from Comune di Milano. They are Strade Aperte, and Piazze aperte, as executive branches of the Adaptation Strategy regarding the rethinking of public realm in post pandemic conditions. See: [https://www.comune.milano.it/documents/20126/992518/Strade+Aperte\\_IT\\_200430\\_rev.pdf/a100d04c-6b55-ae74-e0f8-b52563e07822?t=1589460655416](https://www.comune.milano.it/documents/20126/992518/Strade+Aperte_IT_200430_rev.pdf/a100d04c-6b55-ae74-e0f8-b52563e07822?t=1589460655416)

<sup>3</sup> Natalie Whittle (July, 17, 2020) “Welcome to the 15-minute city” on: <https://www.ft.com/content/c1a53744-90d5-4560-9e3f-17ce06aba69a> (accessed 23. 07.2020, 1:27 p.m.) The model refers to the concept “La ville du quart d’heure” developed by Carlos Moreno and currently experimented in Paris Metropolitan Area.

<sup>4</sup> For Dutch measures against coronavirus see: <https://www.government.nl/topics/coronavirus-covid-19/tackling-new-coronavirus-in-the-netherlands/public-life> (accessed 20. 07.2020, 4:00 p.m.).

<sup>5</sup> Measures Coronavirus Rotterdam see: <https://www.rotterdam.nl/wonen-leven/coronavirus/> (accessed 20.07.2020, 4:00 pm)

<sup>6</sup> For the description of the seven urban projects of the City of Rotterdam, as a recovery strategy in the post-pandemic phase, see: <https://www.rotterdam.nl/bestuur-organisatie/stadsprojecten/> (accessed 10.09.2020, 4:00 pm)

<sup>7</sup> On the Research-by design proposal of Shift Architecture and Urbanism: <https://www.stirworld.com/see-features-shift-au-creates-research-by-design-market-to-control-covid-19-contamination2> (accessed 20.07.2020, 4:00 p.m.).

<sup>8</sup> About the ongoing study on the impact of COVID-19 on Rotterdam see: <https://www.ihs.nl/en/news/ihs-vcv-study-impact-covid-19-rotterdam> (accessed 20.07.2020, 4:00 pm).

<sup>9</sup> About the relation between urban density and the Covid19 diffusion see the preliminary analysis of the American case in: Richard Florida (April, 3, 2020) “The Geography of Coronavirus” on <https://www.citylab.com/equity/2020/04/coronavirus-spread-map-city-urban-density-suburbs-rural-data/609394/> (accessed 08. 05.2020, 11:10 a.m.). However urban density shows also limits and challenges for post pandemic urban design as pointed by: Lloyd Alter (April, 8, 2020) “Urban design after the corona-



virus” on <https://www.treehugger.com/urban-design/urban-design-after-coronavirus.html> (accessed 15. 05.2020, 3:50 p.m.).

<sup>10</sup> Beyond Georg Simmel and Emile Durkheim social studies on spatial settings, references are also to: Löw M. (2016).

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Luca Reale

**Bodies and spaces in the public city.  
Towards a new proxemics?**

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**Abstract**

The pandemic outbreak has put in crisis some values of the contemporary metropolis that seemed to have been achieved: the trend to urban concentration and the widely shared equation between density and sustainability, the speed and ease of physical mobility, the idea of space sharing, and more generally all sharing economies. Beyond the rhetoric of a return to "normality", it is necessary to rethink even the structure of our cities by enhancing the positive acquisitions of modernity and some experiences prematurely discarded - proxemics, the city as a place of the relationship between bodies and spaces, the resumption of reflection on public space as a shared value of *civitas*.

**Keywords**

Urban space — Proxemics — Quality of life — Public city — Urban experience

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The 2020 global pandemic has helped us to understand that the project should resume some interrupted paths: the studies on proxemics and perception of space in relation to the distance between subjects, the reflection on the issue of space (public, common, shared), the need to start again from the *bodies in space* rather than from the *city as a body*, a sick organism in need of regeneration.

In terms of dwelling, the "coronavirus" contingency has shown how social inequality is much more evident in the domestic context, in the private spaces of our homes: violated by a constant remote connection with the outside world (in turn represented by other private spaces), they showed us, crudely, not only the differences linked to economic, technological and housing conditions, but a generalized condition of "alienation".

I do not think that the discouraging phase of lockdown has helped us to make up for a lost time or to look at the world with more sensitive eyes on the little things in life, but rather it has produced an "estrangement" of the domestic dimension, in the sense of the term that Bertolt Brecht used about the theater, which "alienated", problematizing it, everyday life, and making its "background" emerge.<sup>1</sup> The Covid-19, forcibly relegating us to our homes, made us deal, even brutally, with our family role, with living within a few square meters, with being parents or being single; perhaps it made us look, with more truth, at the meaning of our humanity. The habits of life have been upset, losing their unreflective and spontaneous dimension, even in the few occasions of experience of urban space. Every action, even the most common and daily (breathing, coughing, walking, entering a café) has become an act that must be "observed". The distrust and suspicion, the feeling of being shunned, seeing a person change sidewalk

**Fig. 1**

Piazza di Spagna, Rome, June 15, 2020

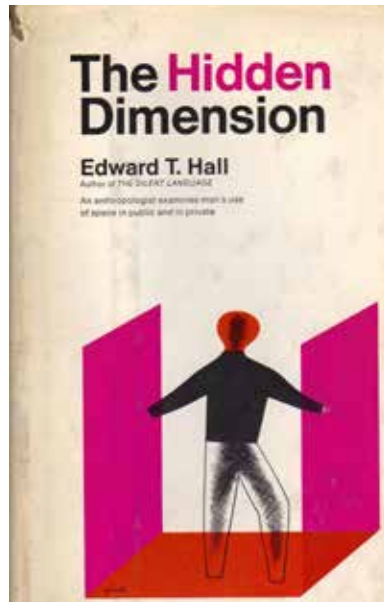


as we pass, have become everyday experiences that have made us feel, perhaps for the first time, the condition of being foreign bodies in public space, no longer “lived bodies” in Böhme’s meaning. In the idea of space that can never be defined in the absence of a subject that inhabits it, outside the interaction between bodies and the “atmospheres” to which they are subjected; (Böhme 2001) or that otherwise reproduces scenarios similar to those outlined by Foucault’s *biopolitics*.

### Body techniques

The physical distancing between people imposed during lockdown has made the encounter among persons mainly focused on the gaze, «and the window onto “within” is our eyes. These days, when you meet someone close to you (or even a stranger) and maintain a proper distance, a deep look into the other’s eyes can disclose more than an intimate touch» (Žižek 2020). This return to perception, and the (mainly) visual relationship, in which “seeing” regains the privileged position it had always held in Western aesthetics, once again procures a separation between percipient subject

**Fig. 2**  
Safe travels



**Fig. 3**  
Edward T. Hall, *The hidden dimension*, Garden City, N.Y. 1966

and perceived object (space), but also between subjects interacting with each other in space.

The basic principle of a discipline, almost abandoned in recent years but rather in vogue in the 60s and 70s, comes back to the fore: *proxemics*,<sup>2</sup> i.e. the study of the perception of space by human beings and how the distances that individuals keep between them influence interpersonal relationships and the spatial organization of places. It is therefore a question of the use made of the space and the attitude of the body, but also of the gaze, the voice, and everything that influences perception. The assimilation of proxemics to a sort of “human ethology”, especially in the studies of socio-biology,<sup>3</sup> did not do a good service to this discipline in the following years. If ethology mainly concerns instinct-driven behaviors, proxemics refers to learned behaviors, cultural processes linked to our biography, age, cultural and geographical context.

At the same time, in underestimating the relationship between space and body, we have perhaps misunderstood the idea of the body itself, neglecting for example its “techniques”. Marcel Mauss in *Les techniques du corps* (1936), reminding us that each proper technique has its form, claimed that the mistake was to have thought that techniques existed only in the presence of instruments. Before the techniques based on instruments, there is the whole of the body techniques, understood as “effective traditional act”. In this sense «the body is the first and most natural of instruments» (Mauss 1965).



**Fig. 4**  
Physical spacing in a street market in Kalaw, Myanmar

### Scenarios and perspectives

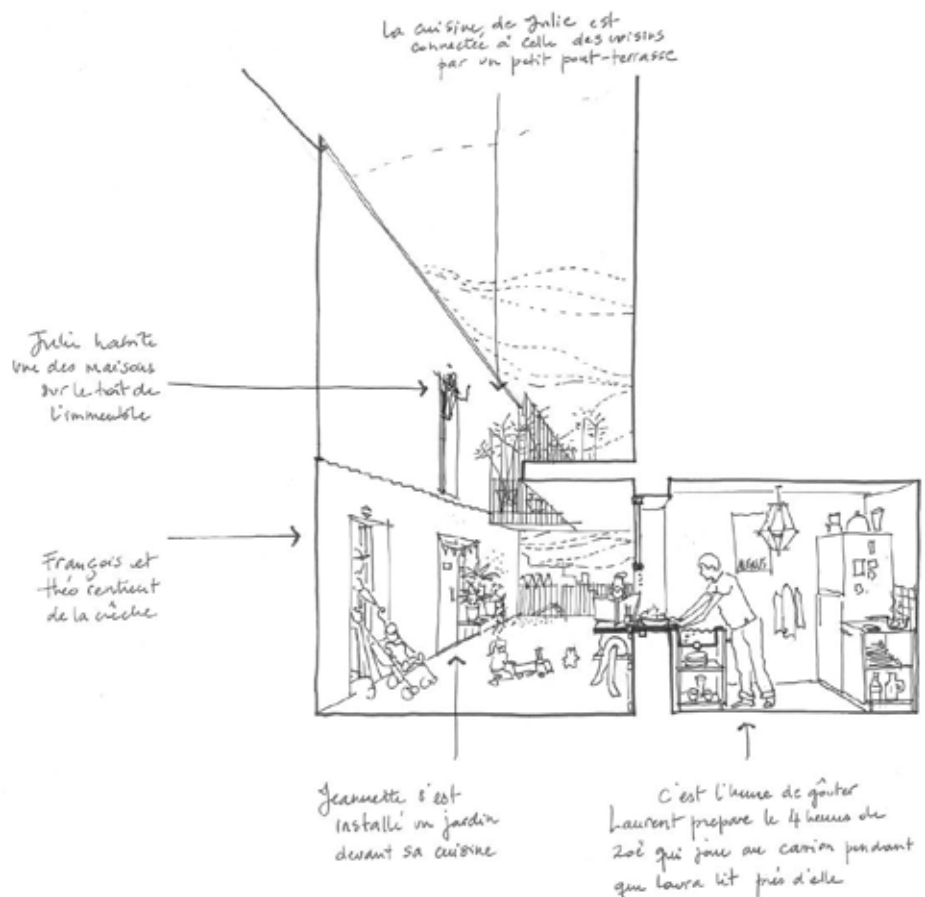
At this point, the design themes for architects appear very evident: on the scale of private living, there is a need to leave great organizational freedom of space, even going beyond the rhetoric of flexibility and concentrating action on co-responsibility of choices by users up to non-allocation of space,<sup>4</sup> technological and network efficiency, temporary division of spaces, recovery of privacy in the home even in the presence of remote school and working.<sup>5</sup>

On the urban and public space level, the Covid-19 affair, in fact, in the unthinkable and sudden transformation of our lives, has also highlighted – as a contrasting liquid – processes that have long been recordable in the health condition of the city's body. The issues of physical distancing and social containment had been growing in importance and interest in recent years, already marking a first decisive advance in the measures that followed the terrorist attacks at the beginning of the millennium (Foucault 2007). On the other hand, issues of control and security can be considered fundamental aspects of the city since the beginning of Modernity (Berman 1985), the other side of the coin from the idea of the city as a place of the conquest of anonymity and freedom, in that mixture of detachment and inebriation of urban life that will accompany a few decades later Benjamin's *flaneur* or Baudelaire's *dandy*.

But it is the very idea of a contemporary metropolis, in its high-density global dimension, that is questioned in this contingency. Shortly the conflict between public health and climate will be one of the crucial elements on which the project of cities will focus, which in the long term will most likely return to being increasingly inhabited, compact and promiscuous. But at the moment the explosion of the pandemic has put into a crisis some values that seemed unquestionable: the trend towards urban densification and the widely shared equation between density and sustainability, the speed and ease of moving physically in the city (and on the planet), the idea of sharing space, and more generally all sharing economies. Should we re-discuss the values of the contemporary city or try to identify which, nevertheless, are non-negotiable?

The restrictions to free movement imposed by the emergency in the first months of 2020 have therefore shown, on a private level, that social inequality is blatant at home; on a public level, that the urban experience in the future will assume different qualities (also atmospheric and “affec-



**Fig. 5**

Relationship between private and communal spaces in the Lo-Mon + project for 36 accommodations in Montreuil, France

tive”) when the very idea of *urbanity*<sup>6</sup> – that extraordinary mix of proximity and social complexity, stratification of activities and uses, mixtures, and conflicts – has suddenly collapsed.

The containment measures then revealed how much surface area cars occupy in “normal” conditions, and how much public space needs to “make room”, rebalancing the percentage between pedestrians, parking spaces, and roadways, reconfiguring the road section or diversifying it in favor of cycling.<sup>7</sup> More generally, by refuting the rhetoric of the return to “normality”, a radical rethinking of the very functioning of our cities now seems more necessary than ever, even starting from ideas that are not so radical (but manageable) as in the recent strategy for the *Ville du quart d’heure*,<sup>8</sup> which attempts to reconcile the limitation of travel and consumption, physical activity, and reduction of air pollution.

On the one hand, this perspective powerfully brings into the game the public city, the suburbs of the metropolis, where the availability of surface area, the distance between houses, and the reserve of *standard* square meters make it possible to foreshadow possible scenarios, new opportunities for designing public space. At that time the idea, specifically modern, of segregation of activities and separation of pedestrian and vehicular flows – rejected by generations of architects – could now have a new appeal. On the other hand, this direction, perhaps also looking at past experiences (INA-Casa, the Amsterdam playgrounds in the immediate post-war period), will lead architects to experiment (again) on the intermediate dimension between the urban and domestic scale (the neighborhood) and on the intermediate thresholds between public and private, which will necessarily – proxemically – be more “dilated”. And in this regained space<sup>9</sup> new (or renewed) forms of relationship, sociality, and sharing will hopefully take place.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> The *estrangement* effect (*Verfremdungseffekt*) taken up by Brecht from the Russian formalists, led the actor to express together with the acting action the possibility of another action that is not performed. It is the technique that produces the opposite effect of the identification. And it corresponds, in philosophy, to the (Socratic) principle of refuting traditional answers to the questions of man and life. (Rocco Ronchi, *Brecht. Introduzione alla filosofia*, et al., Milano 2013).

<sup>2</sup> The term *proxemics* is coined in English by the American anthropologist Edward T. Hall at the end of the 1960s: from the Latin *proximus* (next) and the Greek *séma* (sign). Proxemics is a discipline that studies what personal and social space is and how man perceives it. Edward T. Hall, *The hidden dimension*, Garden City, N.Y. 1966.

<sup>3</sup> Consider for example the popular works of the English zoologist Desmond Morris, from *The Human Zoo* (1969) to *People watching* (2002).

<sup>4</sup> As stated by the architects in the *Unité(s) Experimental Housing* project in Dijon (Sophie Delhay architecture, 2018).

<sup>5</sup> Only in Italy has it been possible to translate distance working into *smart working*, effectively equating the terms *smart* and *online*. Abroad more correctly we speak of working from home, often contracted in the acronym WFH.

<sup>6</sup> New York (2001), Madrid (2004), Londra (2005).

<sup>7</sup> As in the document *Milan 2020. Adaptation strategy*, elaborated in May 2020 by the Municipality of Milan in an open forum to the contributions of the inhabitants.

<sup>8</sup> The proposal, submitted by the Socialist Mayor of Paris Anne Hidalgo, was soon taken up by many other European cities.

<sup>9</sup> Such as co-managed common areas, condominium premises, outdoor areas about the apartments, “neighborhood” coworking, etc..

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Anna Veronese  
**Architecture post Covid-19.**  
**Using proxemics in spatial design**

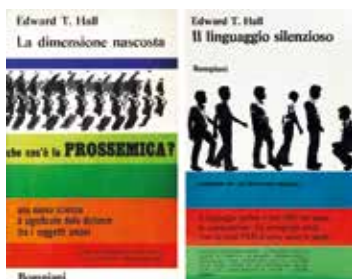
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Abstract

The outbreak of coronavirus and the worldwide spread of the concept of social distancing have made it necessary to reorganize the space around us according to new measures. In this regard, it could be useful to deepen the study of proxemics, a discipline theorized in the 1960s by the American anthropologist Edward Hall with the aim of understanding the meaning that men attribute to the concepts of distance and space. Since we will need to think of a new kind of architecture, Hall's theories will be able to offer a precious help that covers all the scales, from the city to the neighbourhood to the single building. We have the chance, not to be missed, to review the model of the contemporary city: let's make it an opportunity to rethink spaces on a human scale in order to reach a new normal.

Keywords

Architecture — Proxemics — City



**Fig. 1**  
 Edward T. Hall, *La dimensione nascosta*, Bompiani, 1968 and *Il linguaggio silenzioso*, Bompiani, 1969.

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«This book constitutes a highly provocative scientific contribution: even where it can justify some objections, it will not fail to open new avenues of research. It can be expected that it will stimulate not only communication scholars or cultural anthropologists, but also psychologists, educators and – above all – architects and urban planners».

It is with these words that Umberto Eco introduces the book *The Hidden Dimension*, written by the American anthropologist Edward Twitchell Hall in 1966 and published in Italy by Bompiani in 1968. In his work Hall systematizes the reflections – already mentioned in the 1959 book *The Silent Language* – that led him to the theorization of a new science: proxemics. With the term proxemics, which comes from the union of the words “proximity” and “phonemics”, Hall refers to that set of observations and theories that study the meanings that man attributes to the concepts of distance and space. According to Hall it is possible to identify four main spheres of distance that mark the relationships between men and that can be imagined as bubbles around each human being: the sphere of intimate distance (1 to 18 inches), where the physical contact of couples or family relationships takes place; the sphere of personal distance (1,5 to 4 ft), for interaction among friends; the sphere of social distance (4 to 12 ft), where the exchange with colleagues or acquaintances takes place; finally the sphere of public distance (more than 12 ft), for public relations and speaking. While considering that the cultural factor plays a primary role in the study of proxemics – just think of the difference that occurs in ceremonies and human relationships between, for example, countries of the Mediterranean and the Far East – it is interesting to note the attempt to establish precisely measurable spheres of distance, stable and ready-to-use categorizations beyond cultural differences.



«The ability to recognize these various zones of involvement and the activities, relationships, and emotions associated with each has now become extremely important. The world's populations are crowding into cities, and builders and speculators are packing people into vertical filing boxes—both offices and dwellings. If one looks at human beings in the way that the early slave traders did, conceiving of their space requirements simply in terms of the limits of the body, one pays very little attention to the effects of crowding. If, however, one sees man surrounded by a series of invisible bubbles which have measurable dimensions, architecture can be seen in a new light. It is then possible to conceive that people can be cramped by the spaces in which they have to live and work» (Hall 1990, p. 129).

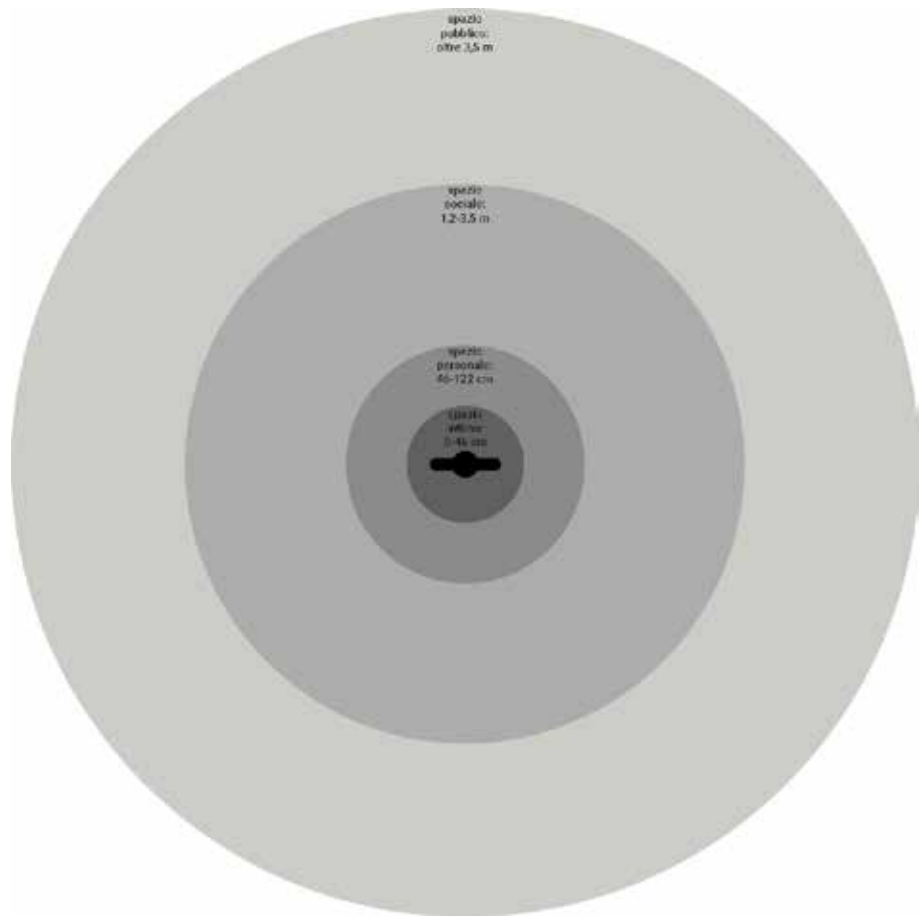
Today, with the outbreak of the SARS-CoV-2 virus, the fear of contagion and the global spread of the same concept of social distancing, Hall's proxemics seem to acquire a particular importance. The first months of 2020 marked an enormous change in the relationship that the contemporary man has with time and space, highlighting the crisis of the model of the city in which we live. The interruption of the frenetic flow that regulates urban contexts, the redefinition (and reshuffling) of work time and free time, the depopulation of public places and the confinement in our homes, are some of the factors that have exasperated the evidence of these problematic nodes.

Certain images typical of the ordinary pre-pandemic life have become unthinkable and pose the need to redesign the places that housed them according to new measures and new objectives. I'm thinking about the atomization of living spaces, the studios of a few square meters, the promiscuity and overcrowding of public transport, factories and open space offices, and finally the management of all structures with a collective vocation (schools, universities, museums, but also barracks, prisons, etc.).

In a very short time, we found ourselves watching identical images of very different cities: the threat of the virus would therefore seem to impose a new necessity, that of rethinking spaces according to some new global rules and needs.

In this scenario, the study of proxemics, with its vocation for the universal synthesis of data, could be a valuable tool for the architects called to design the city of tomorrow.

Trying to think of the classification theorized by Hall in terms of architecture and city planning, the concept of scale immediately emerges. We can talk about "intimate scale" (housing), "personal scale" (spaces for interaction among friends), "social scale" (workplaces and schools) and "public scale" (spaces for public relations and public speaking). With a minimum recommended distance of at least one meter between people, we are effectively witnessing the crushing of the intimate and personal spheres into one category. From an architectural point of view this can be translated with the rediscovery of "filter" areas such as courtyards, balconies, condominium terraces and stairs: semi-public spaces that allow the occasional extension of the private and domestic dimension in one more open and convivial, while respecting the measures of the social distancing. Although they are not much used in normal times, during the last few months these spaces have made a significant difference for those who have been able to use them and given their number and often their considerable extension, they represent a capital of great importance in the economy of buildings, especially in big cities. Therefore, aiming to ensure a much greater flexibility for living spaces in case of another confinement, their role will certainly have to be rethought and given new value. The recon-

**Fig. 2**

Explanatory diagram of proxemic spheres of distance.

struction of the idea of *community*, typical of places and architectures of the past and which in the current crisis has found a new meaning, will go hand in hand with them.

From a purely urban point of view, the same idea of contraction and expansion of space, depending on the needs of the context, is the basis of the theory of the “elastic city” (Ware, Lobos, Carrano 2020) and the notion of self-sufficiency of neighbourhoods or large sectors of the city. It would be a question of thinking about a structure on an urban scale that could be quickly divided into smaller, temporarily autonomous units in case of necessity. Real neighbourhoods in normal times, they would turn into self-sufficient blocks in case of crisis: this would result in a multicentric organization of the city, which would also offer an answer to the problem of subordination of the suburbs to the centre. In this hypothesis, proxemics could be useful in defining these new neighbourhoods, establishing maximum distance spheres between the citizens and the various goods and services of basic necessities which are indispensable for the function of each unit in case of isolation. The study of a system of distances “on a human scale” within the urban fabric would also help for a progressive abandonment of the car in favour of light mobility, with the consequent recovery of part of the public space now occupied by roads and parking lots.

An example of this is the project *La ville du quart d'heure*, designed by Carlos Moreno<sup>1</sup> for the city of Paris and part of Anne Hidalgo's program in the campaign for her re-election as mayor of the city. The idea of Moreno, a Smart City specialist, is to make all the basic social functions within the various *arrondissements* accessible to everyone in a maximum of 15 minutes on foot or by bicycle.

Though at a great cost, the pandemics of the past have certainly forced ar-



**Fig. 3**

A condominium terrace of a Roman "palazzina", photographed on March 11th, 2020.

chitecture and urban planning to evolve and improve. The bubonic plague, which spread in Europe in the fourteenth century, conditioned the decisions on an urban scale that marked the transition from the medieval city to the Renaissance. In the mid-19th century, the epidemics of yellow fever and cholera inspired the urban plans of many European and American cities – such as Haussmann's proposal for Paris or Frederick Olmsted's proposal for New York. Plans that, with the aim of sanitizing and making the building fabric healthy, led to the introduction of wide roads, systems of green areas and parks inside or on the edges of cities, sewerage infrastructures and underground water drainages. Likewise, the spread of Spanish fever at the end of the First World War contributed to the subsequent reflections on the post war construction of new neighbourhoods and therefore on the expansion of cities and suburbs, which then animated the discussions of urban planning during the twentieth century.

The crisis we are experiencing must therefore be an opportunity, a fundamental turning point for the evolution of both architecture and cities. An honest analysis of the crisis we had arrived at will be of vital importance so that we do not miss the opportunity to rectify the approach. Architects, urban planners, engineers must have the courage to return to listen to other professionals, anthropologists, sociologists but also ordinary citizens, in the project of a new normal. Books such as *The Hidden Dimension*, although conceived in a very different historical moment, can serve as a starting point for reflections that consider all the *scales* – from the city to the neighbourhoods to the buildings. We are now facing the need to codify a new proxemics, which can help us to go back to considering people as the active centre of the space around them and therefore to «finding suitable

methods for computing and measuring human scale in all its dimensions including the hidden dimensions of culture» (Hall 1990, p.179).

## Notes

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Elisabetta Canepa, Valeria Guerrisi  
**The Pandemic Storm and the Design Culture's Rafts.  
 A Review of the Main Italian Architecture Magazines  
 during the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Century's Major Health Threats**

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**Abstract**

While the Covid-19 emergency has launched a widespread debate about the role of architecture, it is not the only health crisis to have impacted the 20th and 21st centuries. A survey of the leading Italian architectural magazines was performed to better understand how the design culture treated past pandemics, such as the Asian, Hong Kong, and Swine influenzas. Although the review did not reveal explicit reflections, some design constants in the planning of the city emerged cyclically in the background. This paper shows how, thanks to the debate on Covid-19, an incubation process that began a century ago is being completed, allowing only today the clarification of the media function of architecture in the construction of a critical awareness towards the pandemic phenomenon.

**Keywords**

Pandemics — Architecture review — Urban design constants — Journals/Magazines

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**Storm**

«Mankind precariously floats to its possible survival on a raft, rather make-shift as yet, and often leaky: Planning and Design». These words by Richard Neutra (1954, p. 17) are appropriate for commenting on the evident difficulties that architectural science encounters in metabolizing the transformations of contemporaneity – even more so if the trigger is an international health crisis.

The Covid-19 emergency has prompted a widespread debate about the responses expected from the design disciplines, fueling a loud and fragmentary movement of interpretations, a movement which suffers the risk of accelerated decay. Although the debate is mainly carried out online, it is perhaps thanks to the specialized magazines, which actively participate in the exchange of reflections (Chipperfield 2020a-2020c), that it will be handed down. If we look at the different pandemic cycles that have occurred since the beginning of the 20th century, it is possible to identify a series of behavioral constants in the human reaction to dangerous health conditions (Alfani and Melegaro 2010).

These collective attitudes have been influenced by the received communicative narrative, which has shaped the sociocultural criteria of risk perception. It is worth understanding what the media function of architectural culture has been in witnessing the various pandemic scenarios: for this purpose, we reviewed leading Italian architectural magazines, including «Casabella», «Domus», «L'architettura. Cronache e storia», «Ottagono», «Controspazio», and «Zodiac», limited to moments of peak contagion.



**Fig. 1**

Selection of the bibliographic sources reviewed. The magazines belong to the Passarelli Fund

## Review

The health crisis that began at the end of 2019 was not unique in its shaking of western societies in the last hundred years. An infectious disease passes the epidemic condition and becomes a pandemic when it spreads rapidly on a global scale. In the span of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, despite advances in medicine, the widespread quality of urban environments, and deep-rooted improvement in eating habits, four influenza pandemics occurred: the Spanish (1918-1920), the Asian (1957-1958), the Hong Kong (1968-1969), and the Swine (2009-2010) flus. In March 2020, the World Health Organization declared the viral respiratory epidemic caused by the coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 to be a pandemic.<sup>1</sup>

The Spanish flu was «a health holocaust removed for almost a century from the collective memory and historical investigation»<sup>2</sup> (Tognotti 2015, p. 13). It is estimated to have provoked 400,000 deaths in Italy, but knowledge of its impact was suppressed by government censorship imposed on the press and civilians, in order to support compatriots committed to the war front. «Every outward display of grief was now forbidden by law. No bells tolled» (Collier 1974, p. 165).

The Asian and Hong Kong influenzas are estimated to have caused, respectively, 30,000 and 20,000 deaths in Italy. Although characterized by very low lethality rates, the total number of infections was high.<sup>3</sup> The attention that the press of the time dedicated to those two pandemic cycles has been progressively growing (De Luca 2020): contained and devoid of alarmism at the end of the fifties, with ever-increasing dramatic and screaming tones the following decade. So far, a lack of historiographical research has been carried out on them.<sup>4</sup> The Italian design magazines, which were absent during the 1918 flu pandemic, do not report explicit traces of these events,<sup>5</sup> not even when discussing the rehabilitation of the inhabited centers do they question the minimum conditions of urban health (Romano 1959) or the felt need for scientification of the discipline (Beguinot 1968).

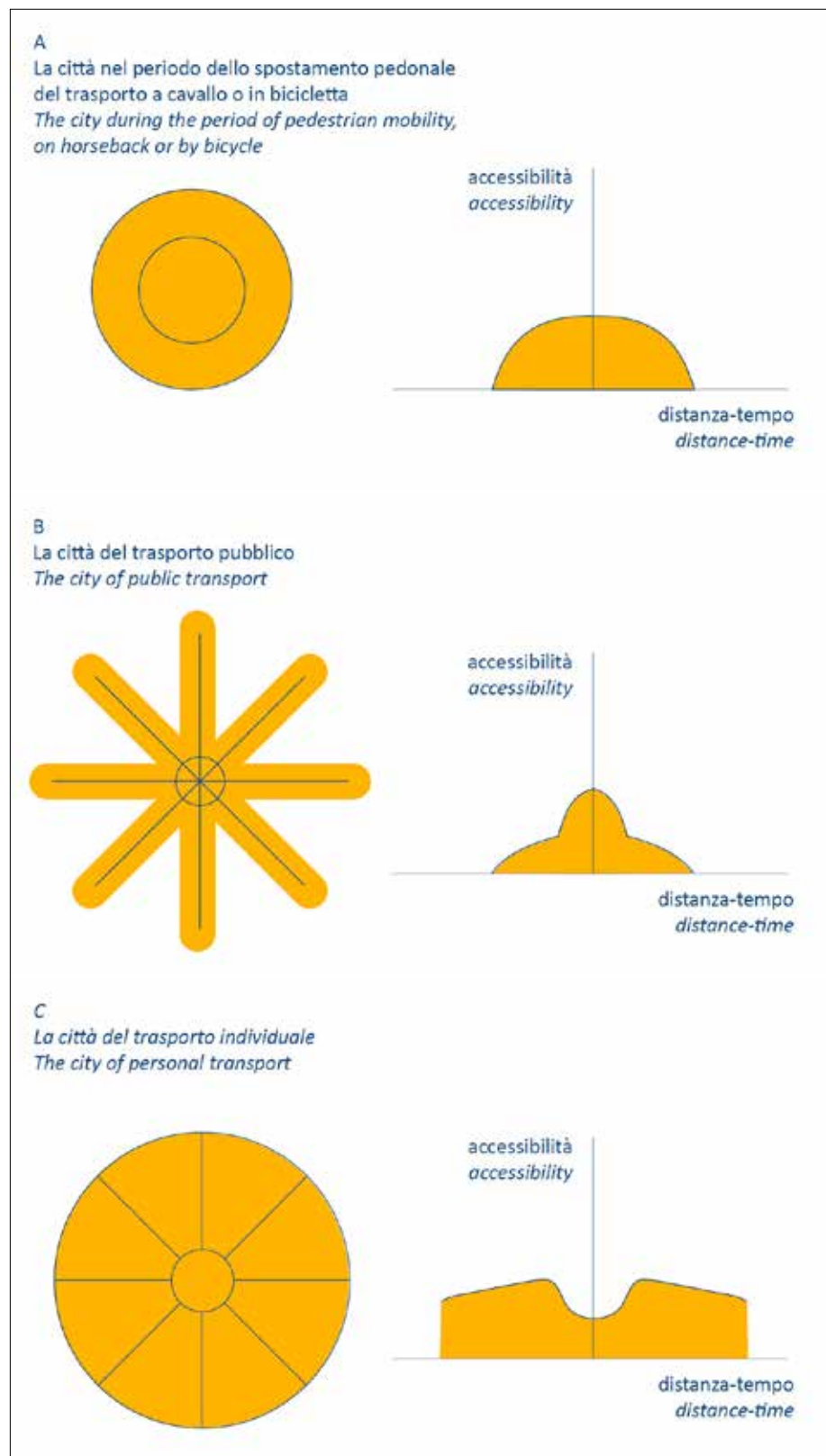
In 2009 the Swine influenza, the lightest modern pandemic,<sup>6</sup> triggered a collective infection psychosis, manipulated by the virulent media ferment, which swelled exponentially within a few weeks. Architectural culture seems to have remained immune from it, at least from the magazines' pulpit<sup>7</sup>, despite the permeating background debate on the generational crisis (first of all, economic) and the urgency of a renewed sustainability.<sup>8</sup>

Ten years later, the media bubble, fertilized by the fear of the new coro-

**Fig. 2-4**

Schematization of the city's structure and its accessibility features.

The drawings illustrate three primary phases of urban development in relation to evolution in technology and communications (reproduced from Allpass et alii 1968).



navirus, assimilated even the architecture magazine's circuit. Trying to interpret the persistent silence detected by our review, three hypotheses have emerged: the absence of comparable circumstances, a lack of interest from the architectural community, and the presence of undercurrent reflections attributable to the pandemic matrix. The number of infections and victims, as well as the growing media pressure, confute the first hypothesis. The second also seems unconvincing. Our idea is that an incubation process, which began a century ago (with the threat of the Spanish flu), is being completed

only today, allowing us to clarify the media role of architecture in building critical awareness towards the pandemic phenomenon. The fervor of today's debate is the most tangible sign. It is possible to identify – specifically for past major health crises – some undercurrent premises, even though they may still be imperfect analysis tools, which constitute the first rafts to reach «the future of urbanity» (Chipperfield 2020d).

### Undercurrent

Beatriz Colomina (2019), in *X-Ray Architecture*, explores the strong connection that exists between medicine and architecture. The 20th century witnessed the consolidation of the modernity-hygiene dogma. Le Corbusier's medical semantic is one example (p. 20). Yet, although the pandemics cyclically represented an opportunity for specific reflection, there was no apparent reverberation in 1900s architectural criticism.

One possible explanation considers pandemics as *processes-accelerators* rather than generative causes. This thesis is applicable in interpreting the processes underlying the urban evolution of the last sixty years.

Those of the Asian flu are the years in which the Modern paradigm is found to be weak in elaborating a reaction to the transformations that society is undergoing. The architecture magazines do not face the effects of the ongoing health crisis (of which even the experts and the media minimize the danger). They are committed to analyzing Modern architecture's fate: the discussion reaches its climax in the famous exchange of articles between the then director of «Casabella-Continuità» Ernesto Nathan Rogers (1957) and Reyner Banham (1959).

In the meantime, some design questions about urban planning sprout, which return with punctual recurrence on the occasion of the health emergency of the following decade (when public nervousness begins to increase) and during the pandemics of the new millennium. Already sixty years ago, the key issues to discuss were the programmed decentralization of individuals and functions, the progress of communication systems, and the transition towards a global society.

The obvious but necessary premise is that the spread of an infectious disease is proportional to the number of interactions. *Density* and *accessibility* are crucial variables not only to manage urban planning and the mobility of information, goods, and people (Allpass et alii 1968), but also to contain the propagation of infections transmissible via personal contact.

In the early 1960s, not far from the Asian pandemic and the aforementioned Rogers's editorial (1957), «Casabella» turns its gaze to city models from England, dedicating a special issue to them (250, April 1961). It presents the *New Towns*, urban self-sufficient units dimensioned on non-vehicular mobility and efficiently connected with the metropolis (Lewis 1961, p. 30). The decentralization topic returns to prominence during the Hong Kong flu season. In those years, the potentiality of new means of communication brought to abandonment the necessity of concentrating the distances for traveling within the pedestrian scale (Beguilot 1968). The ever-increasing role of telecommunications in the city structure is reflected in the projects by Kishō Kurokawa, published in «Casabella» in 1968: elementary cells, whose expansion matrix is based on «the density, rapidity and multiplicity of communication» and which «lives and spreads freely in all directions» (Riani, p. 10). At the same time, awareness of an increasingly global society is growing. In November 1968, John McHale, artist and futurologist, writes in «Zodiac» a programmatic agenda for mankind and the environment, start-



ing from the prerequisite that humanity was heading toward a unique global ecosystem.

Evolving and strengthening, these theories invade the «Domus» editorials by Flavio Albanese in 2009, the year hurt by the Swine flu's "media virus": *Architectures of Thought in Perpetual Beta* (2009a), *Sustainable Mobility* (2009b), and *Planetary Landscapes* (2010), to mention some.

### **Rafts**

By sifting through the examined time intervals, it was possible to observe the evolution of the media role of the design culture concerning pandemic processes. Despite the press hype during the Swine era, the shock of the 2020 lockdown has been the determining factor for the architecture magazines to openly take a critical position. During the past world pandemics, even if the topic was not directly debated, undercurrent bases of those reaction behaviors to the emergency horizon were outlined, capable of enabling the contemporary society to manage the Covid-19 emergency. Some rafts took shape, unexpectedly solid. In particular, the karst recurrence of thoughts on density and accessibility has modeled specific urban design constants, which are extremely current today.

*The article was composed in collaboration. Sections 1-2 were written by Elisabetta Canepa, while sections 3-4 were written by Valeria Guerrisi.*

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Sexually transmitted pandemics (such as AIDS, which is ongoing) are a separate matter, due to their contagion mechanisms, not being linked to daily social behaviors, and on which therefore architecture does not exert any direct repercussions.

<sup>2</sup> Quote translated by the authors. Original: cf. the Italian text.

<sup>3</sup> The Asian flu has infected about half of the Italian population; the Hong Kong pandemic nearly one in three Italians.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. the sources mentioned within the bibliography note by Alfani and Melegaro (2010, p. 162).

<sup>5</sup> Magazines analyzed in the context of the Asian flu (1957-1958; the first cases in Europe were recorded toward the beginning of summer 1957).

«Casabella-Continuità», edited by Ernesto Nathan Rogers: numbers 215 (April/May 1957, year XXI), 216 (September/October 1957), 217 (November/December 1957), 218 (February/March 1958, year XXII), 219 (April/May 1958), 220 (June/July 1958), 221 (September/October 1958), 222 (November/December 1958), and 223 (January 1959, year XXIII) ▪ «Domus», edited by Gio Ponti: numbers 331 (June 1957), 332 (July 1957), 333 (August 1957), 334 (September 1957), 335 (October 1957), 336 (November 1957), 337 (December 1957), 338 (January 1958), 339 (February 1958), 340 (March 1958), 341 (April 1958), 342 (May 1958), 343 (June 1958), 344 (July 1958), 345 (August 1958), 346 (September 1958), 347 (October 1958), 348 (November 1958), and 349 (December 1958) ▪ «L'architettura. Cronache e storia», edited by Bruno Zevi: numbers 20 (June 1957, year III), 21 (July 1957), 22 (August 1957), 23 (September 1957), 24 (October 1957), 25 (November 1957), 27 (January 1958), 28 (February 1958), 29 (March 1958), 30 (April 1958), 31 (May 1958, year IV), 32 (June 1958), 33 (July 1958), 34 (August 1958), 35 (September 1958), 36 (October 1958), 37 (November 1958), and 38 (December 1958).

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<sup>6</sup> In Italy, the victims related to Swine influenza were 229, according to data provided by the latest statement of the Ministry of Health (February 2010).

<sup>7</sup> Magazines analyzed in the context of the Swine flu (2009-2010; the World Health Organization declared the pandemic alarm in June 2009).

«Casabella», edited by Francesco Dal Co: numbers 778 (June 2009, year LXXIII), 779 (July 2009), 780 (August 2009), 781 (September 2009), 782 (October 2009), 783 (November 2009), 784 (December 2009), 785 (January 2010, year LXXIV), 786 (February 2010), and 787 (March 2010) ▪ «Domus», edited by Flavio Albanese: numbers 926 (June 2009), 927 (July/August 2009), 928 (September 2009), 929 (October 2009), 930 (November 2009), 931 (December 2009), 932 (January 2010), and 933 (February 2010).

<sup>8</sup> Cf. the editorials by Flavio Albanese in «Domus» in the years 2009-2010.

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Alessandro Oltremarini  
**Care and measure.**  
**While everyone around makes noise**

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Abstract

The text raises the questions of the role of architecture and the architect's responsibility in the society during the pandemic. It develops around four dialectical couples: normality-emergence; safety-care; global-local; real-virtual. I want to affirm the contrast between the autonomy of architectural research and the dominant contemporary interests which confuse "practical problem with aesthetic problem" (Persico 1935) and cause the alteration of values and information. Furthermore, within it, I intend to identify the concept of care as a methodological paradigm for architectural thought, in which its characteristics (slowness, rituality, plurality) could preserve memory and values of a democratic culture and of what represents it: the city.

Keywords

Care — Measure — Form — Architecture — Value



**Fig. 1**

Yves Klein, *Leap into the void*, 1960.

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The transition from Michel Foucault's disciplinary society to the William Burroughs' one of control, which Gilles Deleuze (Deleuze 1990) highlighted thirty years ago, has today undergone a further transformation: Covid-19 has imposed on society both, discipline and control. First of all I therefore believe that it is necessary to reflect on the sense of the hope for – and on the convenience in – a return to normality: we know that this normality follows a norm and that today it is defined by the constant state of emergency that communities and urban policies have accumulated over the past fifty years, even before the pandemic. Covid-19 is accelerating the process that is already underway, widening the social gap that is engulfing the middle classes and investing the weakest: all of this is also inevitably reflected in the relationship between its spread and the living conditions of the more marginal urban realities, on which the contemporary architect is called to express his position. Surprisingly, while the lockdown has accelerated the enhancement of virtual skills and relationships, almost in contradiction the need for physical distance has imposed attention to the concreteness of the measure that the virtual tends to ignore.

In this scenario, a very specific question takes on a key role: what should architecture represents? Has it to respond, in retrospect, to technical and social needs and contingent necessities, or is it possible to affirm its role as a discipline useful for providing society on the one hand with alternative visions and on the other some cultural grids? This question is part of a well-defined framework: we have learned, in the last half century, that the right way is between building "for" and building "against" something; but in this third way we have unlearned the implications of the two extremes: this my impression is based on a principle of generational experiences. I mean that the current



generation, to which I belong, has not experienced the tragedies and euphorias of the fathers of modernity and democracy, except in the indirect form of the narrative: instead we live – and we are the second or third generation in a row – the failures of those experiences which, as such and having removed the reasons for those failures, they take on the function of a preventive warning that forces some people on the average path of the minimum risk and attracts other one on the nostalgic path of myth. The first, the most mediocre way of nihilism, the other, the way of the most exalted surrogate.

Both attitudes trace the lines already traced on a precise ground that corresponds to an equally precise interpretation of history. This partial and usually inherited interpretation is taken as certainty and feeds the desire for a specific requirement: the security. In the city, this desire replaces interest for its definition with interest for its control. It also reduces control to supervision, eliminating its potential as a conceptual tool for the project and for the comparison between phenomena. A dominant condition derives from this: it corresponds to the identification of the control of the city with the attempt to submit its parts and their relations to the instrument of an intelligent grid and mathematical rules. This identification between purpose and instrument, considered too often necessary and even sufficient, not only brings with it the reverberation of a functionalism that in history has proved sterile, but risks producing a generational and cultural amnesia, and consequently an inability in being able to preserve, reconstruct and transmit a collective thought and knowledge, a human heritage that includes the sense of architecture and the city. In this sense, Giorgio Agamben's plea (Agamben 2020), during the quarantine proves to be exemplary: in an attempt to avoid an alleged risk, we risk erasing and forgetting in indifference the rituals and human behaviors that constitute the foundation of the civil values that we have over time conquered.

The images of silent, immobile and metaphysical cities, even the images of the pope in a deserted St. Peter's Square, have laid bare the substance of the cities: they have shown that the monuments and symbols of a community are the only facts that can preserve its history, its places, its identity but, above all, that they can represent the values in which it recognizes itself (or which it does not recognize). The expressive and poetic power of those images (much denser than many films and TV series) in my opinion represents the claim of the specific and the general, according to the meaning given by Deleuze (Deleuze 1968), as an alternative to the generic city that Rem Koolhaas had prophesied and that his "Countryside, The future" exhibition – inaugurated in February and still on display at the Guggenheim Museum in New York – confirms.

This observation strengthens my conviction: the sense of the city corresponds to its formal contents that constitute the substance of urban spaces; furthermore, the change, rectification and actualization of the city and its semantic values are based on knowledge, which «includes what is not yet known» (Monestiroli 2014), and these values – and contents – are formed between the anthropomorphic interpretation of history and a sort of "revelation" which usually has an individual origin (Giedion 1956). So, if it is true that both are, by their nature, unpredictable and uncertain variables, it would be wrong to say that the technical use of algorithmic models corresponds to a conflicting and contradictory action with respect to the task to which the architect is called and who resides in the «reference to the human and everyday substance of living» (Purini 1985)? Isn't it fair to say that in this call, in the human and in the everyday, the principle of care is manifested

and that it is contradictory to the one of security even etymologically? In fact, if the first evokes strength and certainty, the second expresses kindness and unpredictability: immediacy versus slowness, gestures versus rituality, univocity versus plurality.

Here I want to mean the care as a labile condition, in the sense of provisionality and therefore authentically in reality, attentive to the plural relationships between different parts and their continuous change of meaning. The care recognizes the character of necessity that belongs to the measure, both of “things” and of the relationships between them. At the same time, it allows the coexistence of specific and general choices, of rules and exceptions, according to an inferential process of an abductive type, uncertain and therefore always open, which implements the ideological deductive and inductive ones, of the two ways. Furthermore, this condition accepts the inversion of the relationship that had consolidated on the global territory: cities, metropolises become, for those who have the possibility, centrifugal hubs towards more reserved places, usually small villages, which have the characteristic of being outside the global connection network on which the virus is moving; while in the ordinary the danger branches out, the extraordinary becomes the refuge.

I think that operationally this call to care and measure can only be accepted if we look at the authentic value of their meaning. There is no care that is not calm, that is not attentive and methodical, reflective, rational, measured. There is no measure that is not double, at the same time transitive (to *measure*) and pronominal (to *measure oneself*): it imposes on the one hand a measure in the sense of proportion and thus reveals the meaning of the design action, or of an intelligible system concerning the relationship between the parts, between the forms; on the other hand it determines a clear confrontation with reality, of critical exploration of the unknowable, aimed at knowledge and even its contradiction.

We can, we have to ask ourselves how all this is reflected in the architectural project, if the standards will undergo a slight updating or if we will be able to overcome their quantitative conception even in practice. And again, we ask ourselves about the settlement and housing responses that are more coherent and responsive to current needs. These questions fall within the problematic relationship between current interests and the possibility of affirming the autonomy of research. Not only because it, slow by its nature, can't compete in speed with the former, but above all because it is believed that these are responsible for altered values, transfigured information and the determination of what Siegfried Giedion called «dominant taste» (Giedion 1956). It is therefore necessary to be careful not to confuse «practical problem with aesthetic problem» (Persico 1935). The emergency may prove to be an opportunity to highlight the inconsistency of the myth, which has consolidated in recent years and which has a disjunctive as well as dogmatic character, in favor of treatment as a new *logos*: its inclusive and democratic nature allows differences to take on a dialectical and compensatory dimension that scientific knowledge should convey in the new methodological paradigms and in the constituent parts of the city.

To do this it is necessary to clearly distinguish the problems that Persico has highlighted; at the same time it is necessary to be immersed in reality and to be extraneous to chaotic speed, hysterical screams and the ordinary homologation of the contemporary. I turn my thoughts to Vittorio Gregotti: «My most important advice is: when you make architecture, make as little noise as possible. This is achieved with attention and patience, without ever

forgetting that architecture is a job. Main rule for those who start planning, keep quiet around, to be more careful, and able to see small: among things» (Gregotti 1985).

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Sara Protasoni

***The green element and housing in the quarantined city***

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**Abstract**

The article addresses the issue of the new demand for a relationship with nature in and around our homes that these months of pandemic have put back at the centre of housing behaviour. The aim is to search for lines of continuity, fractures, radical transformations and unexpected returns within the disciplinary culture in relation to the dialectic between innovation and tradition and around the possible resilience of the modern project (understood as based on the continuous questioning around its own instruments and its role on an ethical and political level) in the face of changing conditions. In addition to Luigi Figini's decades of research in the field of Italian Rationalism, it examines the contribution of Pietro Porcinai and the work of Leberecht Migge in Germany.

**Keywords**

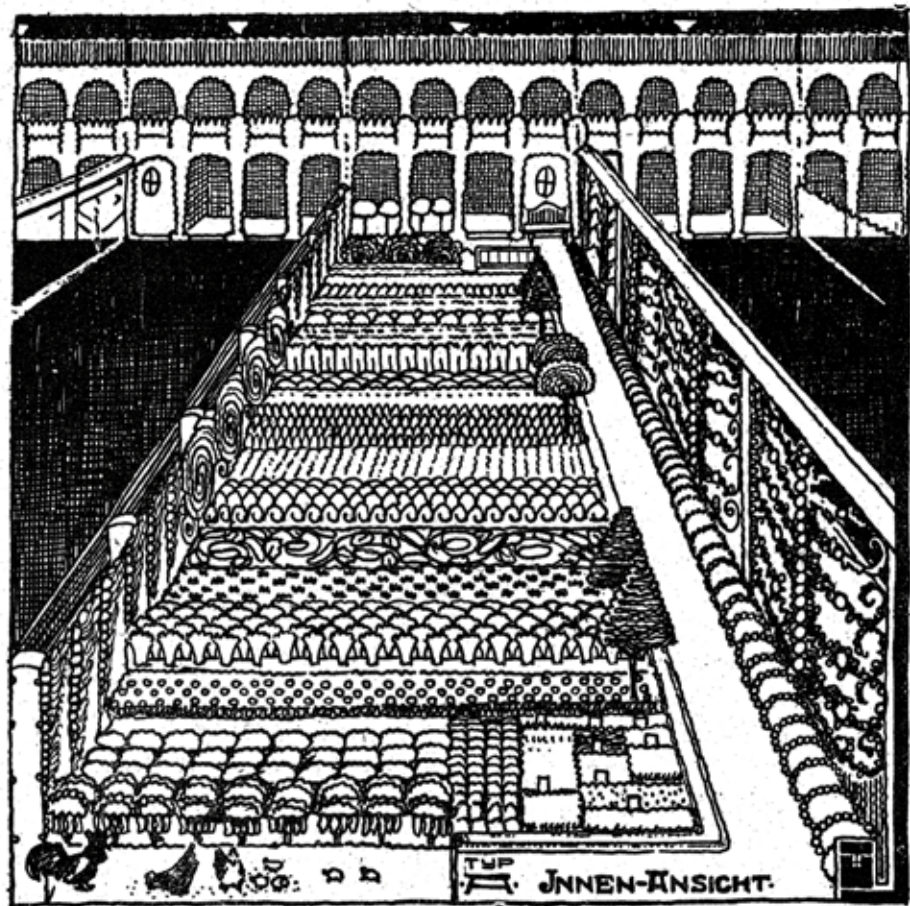
Urban greenery — Garden — Modern project

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In recent weeks the word *cure* (but more precisely the English word *care*, which indicates not only the *cure*, but also the attention and concern for something (Tronto 2015) – has acquired a central role in the public debate:<sup>1</sup> not only as a task of the State with its apparatus and a priority objective for political action, but also as an individual responsibility that must inform the complex system of our relations with other human beings, with all living and even non-living within the places where we live. An approach to the project that can be ascribed to the paradigm of care has long been practiced and theorized by some of the most interesting landscape architects (Clement 2012, Corner 1999, Mosbach 2010), for whom care as action is based on one hand on the close observation of the elements present in a place; on the other on the choice of strategic interventions, which derive from the strict application of that principle of economy proper to the traditional techniques of landscaping. Leaving things as they are or how they could evolve as much as possible, presupposes a project based on the study of reality and critical judgment with respect to the conditions and timing of the transformations taking place. A project capable of triggering processes that do not tend towards unattainable completeness but rather articulate decisions (to be understood as the assumption of responsibility within an approach that is essentially a negotiating and adaptive one) and actions (which include the problem of construction, management and maintenance techniques) related to the stretched time of the transformations of a place, between nature and culture. A project capable of working even with the unexpected.

In relation to these new commitments, it becomes central to retrace the structures and figures of the spatial imaginary that, as architects, we are





**Fig. 1**

Leberecht Migge, Scheme for the Kleinsiedlungen, the rear garden. Image taken from the booklet "Jedermann Selbstversorger", Jena 1918

called to delineate and make fully understandable in public discussion, with particular regard to the dimension of *naturalness*, between the individual sphere and the system of collective and public relations. But it also becomes essential to specify the lexicon that, in relation to this commitment, is a fundamental tool to make the disciplinary contribution in the public debate effective. As architects, the pandemic has confronted us with the awareness that the places where we live are a small portion of the entire planet and the definition and evaluation of the transformations for which we are responsible can only cross different scales, from the microscopic scale of a virus or micro-organisms responsible for essential biological processes such as biocenosis, to the macroscopic scale of architecture, city and land. Alexander von Humboldt (Wulf 2017) had already understood this dialectic two centuries ago, coming to represent for the first time our Earth as a large living organism where everything is connected in a dense network of dependencies to be investigated at multiple scales (von Humboldt 1845).

The responsibility from which we cannot escape is to recognize, highlight and prevent some very dangerous drifts: trivializations (for example, rethinking the design of public land as a mechanical transcription of the geometry of the spacing); hyper-technological leaps forward (which feed the infatuation for digital technologies regardless of the social, cultural and above all spatial implications of their pervasive application); simplifications of the complex biological and symbolic relationship between nature and architecture (how to propose plant, green or flowery separating scenes, regardless of the appropriateness with respect to places and the possibility of an effective care and management of plants).



**Fig. 2**

Patio on the roof-garden of the Figini house in the journalists' village in Milan, 1933-35.

### Two metaphors: the garden and the forest

Paradigm of this virtuous interaction between man and the environment based on the values of *care* is undoubtedly the garden, understood both as a complex construction that is generated by the slow settling down in a place of intentional transformations and maintenance interventions affecting the shape of the soil, vegetation and equipment; and as an aesthetic construction (literary and figurative) with many meanings, connected to the idea of space in architecture and its relationship with the space of nature (Grimal 1974). With the new awareness that, as Gilles Clement (2012), reminds us, the first garden is the food garden snatched from the forest, born with the sedentarisation (Pollan 1991) of mankind. In this view the forest is a myth: a quintessence of nature not influenced by man, a space of uncertainty in which anything can happen, as opposed to the city, culture and history.

Today the reflection is moving beyond this oppositional vision. The contemporary crisis and revision of the representations of the natural world and the study of the stratifications of natural systems in the context of ecological processes (both along the time line of transformations and in the depth of the possible sections that cross competing systems) has made it possible to understand how the interaction between non-anthropogenic and anthropic factors is one of the main causes at the origin of some characteristic biotopes, in particular forests (Küster 2009). The new centrality assigned to the paradigm of care has highlighted the need to rethink our way of being present and active in the processes that modify our habitats. Human beings transform the world to inhabit it. But so do other living beings, both plant and animal. In one of his recent essays, Emanuele Coccia (2018) proposes a *phenomenology of the medley*, of living beings of which the plant world (and the forest in particular) is a metaphor, suggesting that the world should be thought of as a design work for other species in which territoriality, cohabitation, mutual adaptation are the dynamics that preside



**Fig. 3**  
The park of Villa Fiorita in Saronno by Pietro Porcinai, 1952-58

over transformation and impose a radical revision of the ethical and technical dimension of design.

### **Leberecht Migge, Luigi Figini, Pietro Porcinai**

In the face of these demands, never more than at the moment it is necessary to reiterate the centrality of a project idea which, even in the field of landscape architecture, does not renounce questions about its tools and its role on an ethical and political level, especially in relation to the dialectic between innovation and tradition in the face of the changed conditions caused by the pandemic. To achieve this aim I believe it is important to return to reflect on some architectural texts of modernity in order to search for lines of continuity, fractures, radical transformations and unexpected returns within the disciplinary culture. With the conviction that architecture, with respect to the ecological challenge, cannot renounce what Tomàs Maldonado called *critical awareness of technical process* (1970) In the following are a few ideas.

Leberecht Migge (1881-1935)(Haney 2010), working in Germany on the design of the *Großsiedlungen* in Frankfurt am Main and Berlin with leading modern architects of the time<sup>2</sup>, took up some of the results of research conducted in the world of nature sciences (in particular the contribution of Raoul Francé<sup>3</sup>) to outline a biotechnical approach to the design of new settlements integrating homes and gardens through innovative infrastructures. A new approach to the planning and design of open spaces at different scales based on a circular biological model that outlines new possible interactions of the inhabitants with land, water, air and light for food production and waste management that is a strong precursor of the issues currently on the agenda (Migge 1919).

Migge's technical-scientific and poetic approach is also at the basis of Luigi Figini's reflections (1903-84) published in the «Domus» *L'elemento verde e l'architettura*, recently printed by Ornella Selvafolta (Figini 1950). Conceived as a repertoire of references and technical solutions in a series



that, due to the sectorial nature of the themes proposed, is in a strand that can be traced back to manuals, the volume is proposed as a true manifesto of a different idea of the relationship between nature and architecture. Figini works around an idea of the garden as a space for reconciliation between man and nature and identifies the physical and symbolic form of the hortus conclusus as the ideal solution for addressing the question of a re-founded relationship between the green element and the home. For Figini – after rationalism – «painting and poetry of our time echo the twofold motif of this invasion of external greenery into the interior of man's home, of this evasion of “interiors” into the external vegetable/greenery “medium” in houses – houses in the green» (Figini 1950, p. 25). The house in the Journalists' Village, which Figini designed and built for himself between 1933 and 1935, represents the manifesto work of this poetics of domestic architecture focused on the relationship, both physical and symbolic, between architecture and nature.

In Pietro Porcinai's work (1910-1986) (Treib, Latini 2010) technique and art provide as well the operational tools for a design capable of measuring itself against the different scales of the landscape, from the close scale of the object and the texture of the materials to the wider scale of the landscape. After World War II Porcinai was invited on several occasions to discuss with architects and town planners the importance of garden and landscape design in the construction of the contemporary inhabited world. In his writings and public speeches he strongly advocates the need for collaboration between the arts and sciences for the formation of landscapes in which a synthesis between beauty and utility can be fully achieved, in keeping with Ernesto Nathan Rogers' well-known formula, «to the extremes of their tension, where architecture can be defined as the Usefulness of Beauty or the Beauty of Usefulness» (Rogers 1953, p.312).



## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Among the many contributions it should be noted: Giorgia Serughetti, *Democratizzare la cura / curare la democrazia*, Nottetempo, Milan 2020.

<sup>2</sup> Among others: Ernst May, Bruno Taut e Martin Wagner e Martin Elsaesser.

<sup>3</sup> Francé has had a considerable influence on many exponents of the Modern Movement, as highlighted in Detlef Mertins, “Living in a Jungle: Mies, Organic Architecture and the Art of City Building”, in Phyllis Lambert (a cura), *Mies van der Rohe in America*, CCA-Montreal, Whitney Museum of American Art-New York, Hatje Cantz Publisher Montreal 2001, pp. 591-641.

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Silvana Segapeli  
**Pandemic versus collective space?**  
**Towards a topology of care**

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Abstract

During this health crisis a miracle has occurred. Beyond its tragic and painful aspects, the breach of confinement rules has led to unexpected changes, profoundly altering urban scenarios that were believed long established. With the lockdown over, attempts are now being made to design new biopolitical scenarios and define priority themes for a post-crisis urban regeneration, in terms of the constitution of social innovation practices and regarding the stimulation of urban cultures and policies, aimed at a greater care of the multitude of subjectivity of which the *civitas* is made up.

Within this framework, the theme of care represents an important challenge for a new epistemology of the crisis, on which to implant experimental policies of shared administration, new visionary capacities and renewed practices of communing.

Keywords

Commons — Common spaces — Urban design — Urban regeneration — Care

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**Collaborative urban spaces**

«It's a miracle», Hartmut Rosa begins without ambiguity:

«(...) all the evidence of a climate crisis, often physically felt in many parts of the Earth in recent years, all our political intentions, have done nothing to stop or at least slow down these inner workings. Not even two hundred years of powerful criticism directed against capitalism and its engines of accumulating wealth. But now, they are at a standstill. And we are still alive! We can do it! We have done it!»<sup>1</sup>.

Yes, during this pandemic a miracle has occurred. Beyond its tragic and painful aspects, this enormous, terrible, planetary plague has had an extraordinary transformative power.

In the daily life of cities, the onslaught of the health crisis has brought about unexpected changes, profoundly altering urban scenarios that were believed long established.

In this general slowdown, urban practices have been called into question and many of the observed mutations do not fall within a sphere of loss, quite the opposite: the rediscovery of neighbourhood life, the strengthening of closeness networks and different forms of solidarity, the reactivation of pedestrian and bicycle circuits, the renewed perception of environmental systems and ecotones, etc. All elements that have emerged from the experience of confinement and that represent precious resources for a post-crisis urban regeneration, in terms of the constitution of social innovation practices and regarding the stimulation of urban cultures and policies, aimed at a greater care of the multitude of subjectivity of which the *civitas* is made up. (Hardt, Negri, 2009)

The shapes, meanings and roles of the urban space had already changed



**Fig. 1**

Saint-Etienne, “Saint-Roch s’éveille”, project. Active citizenship actions (Photo Silvana Segapeli).

over time; in recent decades the opening of a post-capitalist future, the constitution of common assets as forms of resistance to the intensified privatisation of capitalism and social structuring following a heterarchical form (Citton, 2018) – thus endowed with a plurality of value systems – had already begun to configure new scenarios.

With the lockdown over, a different consciousness of urban space is gradually taking root; public spaces and common spaces are conceived by the most mindful as places of exploring different ways of co-constructing and living together, as fields of experience of civic action and platforms of diffusion for the new maieutics of active citizenship.

The experience of confinement has taught us the city is a place full of “*espaces d’espaces*”<sup>2</sup>, namely a variety of spaces of relating: from the apartment block terrace to the entrance hall, from the collective *parterre* to the semi-private garden, from the common courtyard to the shared patio. The heterotopia<sup>3</sup> discovered as a result of physical distancing are spaces of resistance that could remain, perhaps in new ways, in the design of a post-crisis city.

What has been understood, clearly and unequivocally, is that organising the urban space must be opportunely correlated to the framework of social relations and to the system of common assets – inappropriable, material or immaterial. This node cannot and should no longer be dissociated, nor should it be considered a marginal parameter in conceiving the urban project, «(...) to use does not simply mean to utilise something, but to stay in relation to an inappropriable» (Agamben, 2017).

#### **Place/Work/Folk<sup>4</sup>, towards a topology of care**

«What people can do is begin this process of change themselves. It is a process which should both examine the cause of our present condition and pose new ways for building more humane places to live.» (Robert Goodman 1973)

In the careful analysis of the ongoing mutations, among the most important issues coming to the fore emerges the theme of care, a Geddesian (Tyrwhitt 1947) metaphor that is well suited to the experiential picture of urban phenomena in times of a health crisis.

It was 1946 when Lewis Mumford, in the introduction to the collection of Patrick Geddes' reports from India<sup>5</sup>, as though a kind of premonition, described the eminently pioneering nature of the approach presented in those writings, underlining the scholar's ability to anticipate areas of investigation that would in the future become pivotal subjects of collective reflection on urban issues: solidarity, collaborative action, cooperation, man-nature reconciliation, community, common space. These are the same instances manifested – often in the form of urgency – during the months of crisis, as an unexpected humus, a precious substratum favouring the blossoming of that universe of possibilities (Rancière, 2009) of which the city, with its frame of unresolved common and public spaces, has a pressing need today. During the lockdown, the media and social networks never ceased talking about alternative uses, urban spaces regained from vehicular traffic, reconversions of use as common meeting spaces, arising from new ways of living, especially between neighbours (respecting the rules of physical distancing). In other words, it has emerged that the capacity for transformation of collective action (Harvey, 2012), the power of the community (Sennett, 2020) and the constituent praxis of common assets (Dardot, Laval, 2014), considered as synergic forces, make it possible to rethink the weave of the city, starting from the common spaces of relationship, in the 'micro' dimension of the neighbourhood and the scale of the neighbourhood's contact spaces (Choay, 2003).

Within this framework, the theme of care represents an important challenge for a new epistemology of the crisis, on which to implant experimental policies of shared administration, new visionary capacities and renewed common practices.

What forms of planning intervention should be encouraged to favour the creation of care communities in urban spaces? Co-design round-tables, think tanks for orientation and reflection, assemblies, communities of inquiry, etc. seem in many places to be configured as collaborative scenarios within which to conceive the necessary transformations of neighbourhood spaces. It is precisely in these spaces that the metaphor of Geddes is embodied and becomes current: observing, caring for, healing the city's nodes of vulnerability are the phases of a collective process that serve to regenerate neglected or abandoned urban spaces (Tyrwhitt 1947). At this point it is worth dialectically comparing the two perspectives: on one hand, that dictated by a need for *Gemeinschaft* (Tönnies, 1887), a sense of community, made up of warm social relations, of contact, and is linked to the scenarios of reception (Sennett, 2000). On the other, the one oriented by the need to review the terms of social interaction, according to the rules of the pandemic, whose regulations impose a redefinition of the notions of accessibility and distance. In concrete terms, it would be difficult to try to resolve the antinomies at the crux of the health crisis without rethinking the way in which space is designed and governed and the types and times of interrelation that this will determine. Following in the footsteps of Geddes' legacy, we can analyse the question of what the treatment and care is at the moment, setting these in terms of a right/duty to configure effective design lines:

1. Care means equipping oneself with the theoretical and practical tools necessary to build an adequate, eco-responsible and sustainable environment, beyond the oppressive logic of the society of abundance: the concrete "eutopia" of Geddes, in other words.
2. Care is pursuing an «intelligent and responsible frugality» (Magnago



Lampugnani, 2020) in planning interventions, a sobriety that resembles conservative surgery<sup>6</sup>, in a house-to-house mode, case by case. In some way this same course includes all the design actions aimed at unhinging the logic of standardisation, such as tactical urban planning or urban acupuncture.

3. Care is to activate and innervate “attention regimes” (Boullier, 2014), through preliminary investigation, physical exploration and walking as a cognitive practice – the survey before planning<sup>7</sup>. in Geddesian terms. Only through in-depth observation of the places and communities that inhabit them can new ways of accessibility and distance be defined.
4. Care means building inventories, through community mapping (of which Geddes mentions the prodromes<sup>8</sup>), to read and interpret the city through a mapping of social infrastructures, of places that configure a system of relationships, that coordinate networks of collaboration and solidarity<sup>9</sup>.

Through these principles, centred on the concept of care, there is no attempt to impose the features of a new localism, which would be burdened by the risks of incongruous consequences – such as the intensification of exclusion mechanisms and the proliferation of uncoordinated micro-interventions. Policies of social cohesion and social innovation should underlie the logic of intervention to be set up. To this end, new forms of governance remain to be fine-tuned, articulating experimentation at different scales, in order to increasingly move towards a horizontal and participatory management of places of urban communal living.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Hartmut Rosa, “Le miracle et le monstre – un regard sociologique sur le Coronavirus”, in AOC media - Analyse Opinion Critique, avril 2020. «C’est un miracle (...) toutes les preuves d’une crise climatique, souvent ressenties physiquement dans de nombreux endroits de la terre ces dernières années, toutes nos intentions politiques n’ont rien pu faire pour arrêter ou même ralentir ces roues. Pas plus que deux cents ans de puissantes critiques du capitalisme face aux moteurs d’accumulation du capital. Mais là, ils sont à l’arrêt. Et nous sommes encore en vie! Nous pouvons le faire! Nous l’avons fait!».

<sup>2</sup> Georges Perec, *Especies d’espaces*, Galilée, Paris 1974. «Le problème n’est pas d’inventer l’espace, encore moins de le réinventer (trop de gens bien intentionnés sont là aujourd’hui pour penser notre environnement...), mais de l’interroger, ou, plus simplement encore, de le lire.»

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Michel Foucault, “Des espaces autres”, Conference held at Cercle d’études architecturales, 14 march 1967, in *Architecture, Mouvement, Continuité*, no 5, october 1984

<sup>4</sup> On geddesian triad “Place, Work and Folk” Cf. Patrick Geddes, “Civics: as Applied Sociology”, conference held at School of Economics and Political Science, University of London, 18 july 1904, <https://www.gutenberg.org>

<sup>5</sup> Cfr. J. Tyrwhitt, op.cit. «The life and work of Patrick Geddes prefigure the age in which we now live. The tasks that he undertook as a solitary thinker and planner have become the collective task of our generation», p.7

<sup>6</sup> Cfr. J. Tyrwhitt, op.cit. «The best way in which congestion can actually be reduced is by the creation of open spaces. Whereas the new street will only too readily destroy any remains social character within an area, the new open space will do much towards renewing the values of village social life.», p. 85

<sup>7</sup> Cfr. J. Tyrwhitt, op.cit. «The conservative method, however, has its difficulties, it requires long and patient study. The work cannot be done in the office with ruler and parallels, for the plan must be sketched out on the spot, after wearying hours of perambulation (...)», p. 44

<sup>8</sup> Cf. J. Tyrwhitt, op.cit. «One of the parts of a city survey that can easily be undertaken by any interested and intelligent person of active habits is to mark on a map those vacant plots of land that are used for cultivation.», p. 89

<sup>9</sup> Cfr. J. Tyrwhitt, op.cit. «How very different from the present state of affairs would be a city in which such active co-operation could arise spontaneously between the citizen and their town council!», p. 65

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Laura Anna Pezzetti, Helen Khanamiryan  
**Accelerating Innovations.  
 Wellbeing and Requalification of School Buildings after the  
 Pandemic. Towards a “New Extraordinary”**

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Abstract

The lockdown caused by the Covid-19 emergency has emphasised why the school is a physical realm of learning spaces influencing cognitive, emotional and affective relationships that cannot be surrogated by distance learning technologies. Besides, the subsequent need of physical distancing has highlighted the lack of resilience of Italian school buildings. Given that Health is not only safety but also wellbeing, the quality of spaces is crucial for learning, wellbeing and inspiring behaviours. Yet, the pre-pandemic “ordinary” of school buildings and debate in Italy was marked by endemic inadequacies and *clichés* respectively, which are discussed by the paper in relation to their poor resilience to physical distancing and on the base of the fieldwork conducted for Milan Municipality. Considering the new requirements of health measures as a potential accelerating factor, the authors delineate new principles of spatial setting and adaptive strategies for school buildings’ resilience to meet the new requirements while overcoming the endemic need of innovation and requalification of Italian schools, moving towards a ‘new extraordinary’.

Keywords

Resilience — Learning architecture — Space and wellbeing

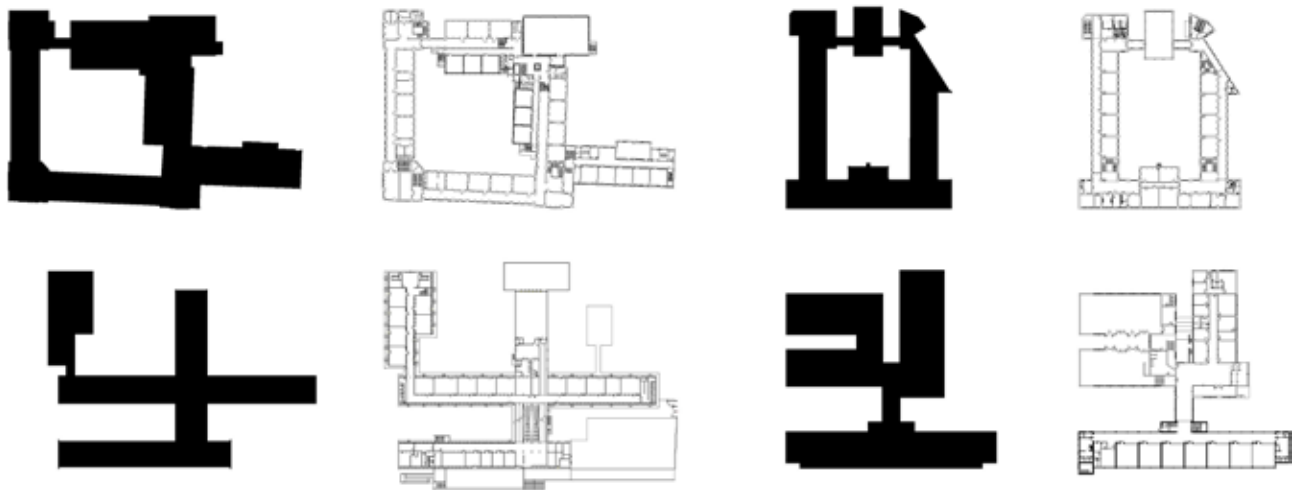
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The lockdown caused by the Covid-19 emergency and the need of physical distancing have emphasized a general lack of resilience of school buildings and the urgent need to explore new parameters and ideas in their requalification. Besides, the global schools’ closure in response to the pandemic has presented unprecedented risks to children’s education and wellbeing (UNESCO, UNICEF, WB, and WFP 2020).

Although virtual learning enabled teaching students, it has exacerbated socio-economic and geographical areas inequalities due to unbalanced accessibility to technological devices and Internet network. Besides, the overall quality of educational processes has weakened, not to mention the increasing phenomena of “digital autism”.

While public administrations wish for returning as soon as possible to the ‘ordinary’, the Italian educational buildings’ reality before pandemic was that of an endemic need for requalification, upgrade and innovation that goes back to the aftermath of World War II (Rogers 1947, 1953-54; Pezzetti 2012) as denounced in the 12<sup>th</sup> Triennale di Milano entitled *La casa e la scuola* (1960).

According to the data presented by the Italian Ministry of Education (MI), among the 58,842 school buildings (MIUR 2019; MI 2020), more than half were built before 1976 and about 30% have been adapted from other functions. The rest are usually pre-fabricated “containers” based on a rigid classrooms-corridors system (the last often less than 2.4 metres large) lacking sufficient communal free spaces. Moreover, classrooms are usually small and overcrowded and are generally not resilient beyond the number of twenty-two students. When the first protocols for physical distancing issued by the Ministry of Public Education adopted the



**Fig. 1**  
Different school buildings types  
in Milan from “Abaco di Aule e  
Tipologie”.

“dynamic metre”, their degree of resilience was close to zero. The “static metre” adopted later (MI 2020) became a necessity to ensure school reopening in September 2020.<sup>1</sup>

Besides, the lockdown has unquestionably highlighted that the school is a physical realm of learning spaces influencing cognitive, emotional and affective relationships that cannot be surrogated by distance learning tools and technologies. Space, as the “Third Teacher” (Malaguzzi), is also crucial in health, wellbeing, and behavioural characteristics of individuals. It creates the pre-conditions that enhances or impedes learning outcomes (OECD 2010). Indeed, the qualities of this physical realm are also desirable learning outcomes in themselves.

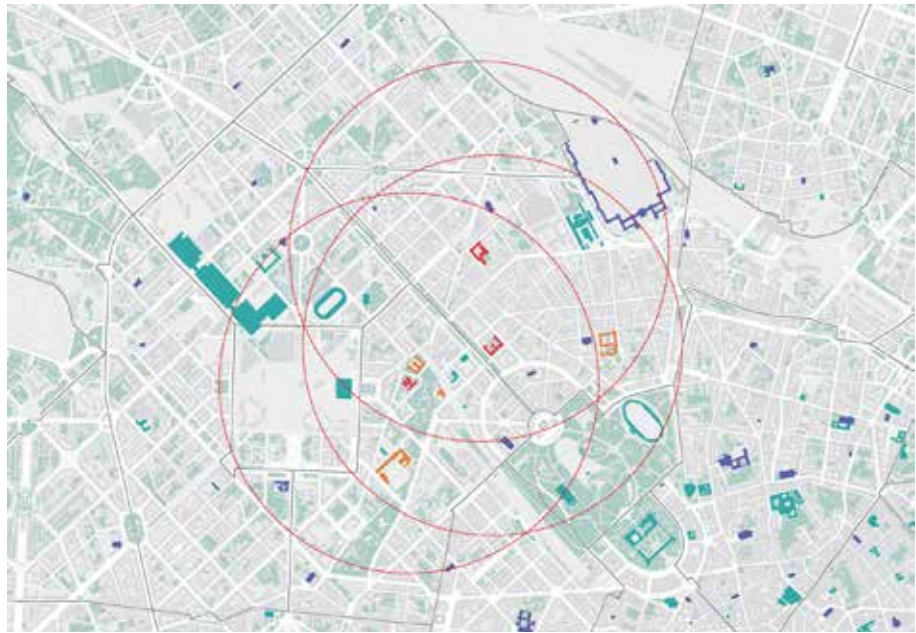
«Architectural space is not only an active player in influencing the conditions of learning and development, but is also a constitutive element in the formation of thought and a specific tool of critical, cultural and imaginative knowledge of reality. Organising space means organizing the metaphor of knowledge» (Pezzetti 2019, 2015).

However, even before the pandemic, architectural space was weakened in the potential and meaning of its codes and syntax by the unstructuring role accorded to digital technologies favouring blurred learning environments. Within the *cliché* of 2.0-3.0 schools (soon 4.0) and for some mainstream pedagogical approaches, the collaborative participation of learners focusses mostly on the interaction with technological fetish-object (IWB or BYOD). “Ustructured schools”, assuming the ideology of open plan, were seen by many as the schools of the future.

Yet, a scenario that substitutes a structured architectural space with a fluid or modular environment is the least resilient during a pandemic. The new requisites, such as compartmentation in stable groups, physical distancing, control of people flows and air changes, are now challenging and questioning old and new “dogmas” of school innovation. Often dictated by a mechanic “translation” of pedagogical theories in spatial layouts, both old corridor-schools and new “unstructured schools” proved they are not resilient to changing needs, such as the physical distancing in stable and restricted groups.

The work conducted by the authors on a large number of schools for Milan Municipality by the Osservatorio Scuole (OS)<sup>2</sup> shows that the schools organised by corridors form the majority of the existing buildings, no matter their period or type. Because of their classrooms’ limited dimen-





**Fig. 2**

Schools and urban resources in a range of 15' in Milan, Municipio 8.

sion (41-45 sm), distancing not only calls for abolishing the “chicken roost classrooms” introduced by the Gelmini Reform, but even to reduce the standard number of students per class below the critical level (twenty-two). In existent corridor-schools the possibilities to extend teaching outside classrooms are low, as the latters are arranged rigidly along narrow corridors and lack further communal spaces.

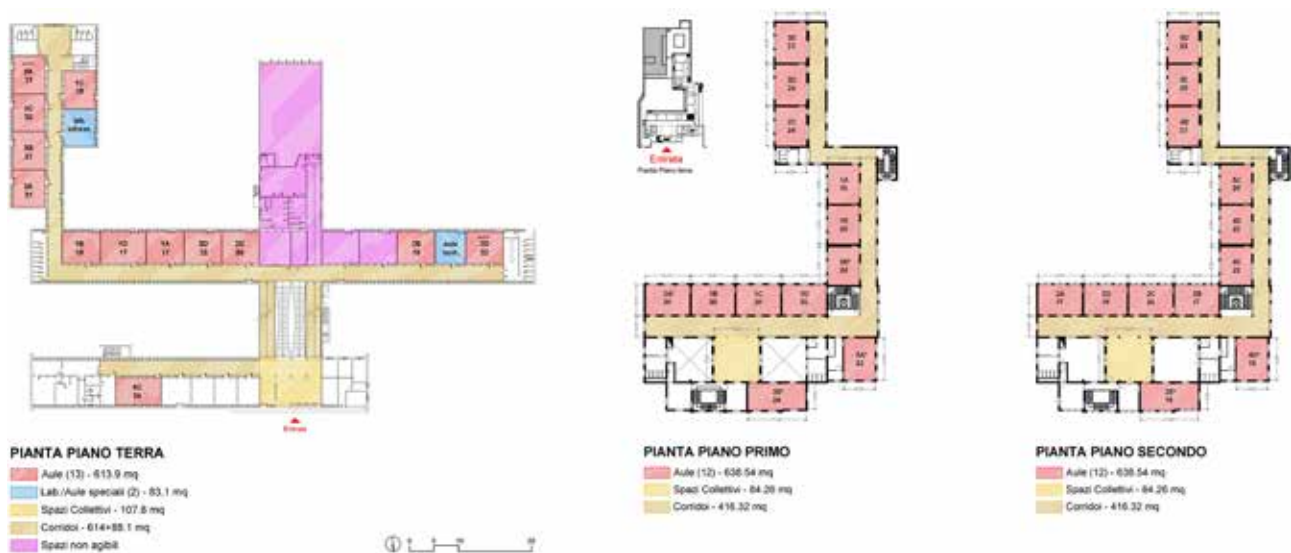
Health and renovation issues therefore converge towards the need to increase the surface of classrooms and communal spaces as well as their reciprocal porosity, suggesting also the grafting of new volumes or spatial layers, which would also upgrade the quality and performances of facades.

In turn, the abolition of classrooms forecasted by “unstructured schools” undermines resilience since stable classroom-groups cannot be compartmented and flows can hardly be controlled.

Besides distancing issues, the fluid environment of technology-driven *cooperative learning* leads to *unstructure* the entire school into an informal open plan. As boundaries become blurred, the school's various realms lose their distinctive architectural character. The potential of the tactile and dynamic exploration of physical space, the manner in which the activities are structured, and the boundaries between individual and collective space seem to give way to the seduction of a despatialised reality to be experienced in an architecturally undifferentiated “container” (Pezzetti 2019).

As form and thought are linked, when the open plan is assumed as a pedagogical ideology, learning space tends to reflect the informal and dissolutive character of contemporary *liquid society* and its *non-places* described by Augé (2008). When knowledge is made to coincide with information, the experience of space becomes that of a nomad who wanders from workshop to workshop with a *tablet* underarm. Yet, if the school's spaces become indefinite, there is no longer much left to explore, exchange, or recognise (Hertzberger 2008).

Schools, as public buildings, are cultural manifestation of a given society and assets for local communities. Their life cycle is longer than shifting pedagogical models. Spatial innovation should never depend on any specific view on education, which is just a starting point for design. Ar-



**Fig. 3**

Primary schools *Console Marcello* (arch. A. Arrighetti, 1956) and *Rasori* (established in a former military barracks in Milan).

chitects should instead explore spatial conditions that favour and widen the possibilities for learning within a general framework that is flexible enough to respond to continuous changes in educational pathways (Hertzberger 2008) while being characterised around durable themes and spaces (Pezzetti 2019). The challenges of resilience in pandemic and in face of shifting pedagogical models seems now interconnected.

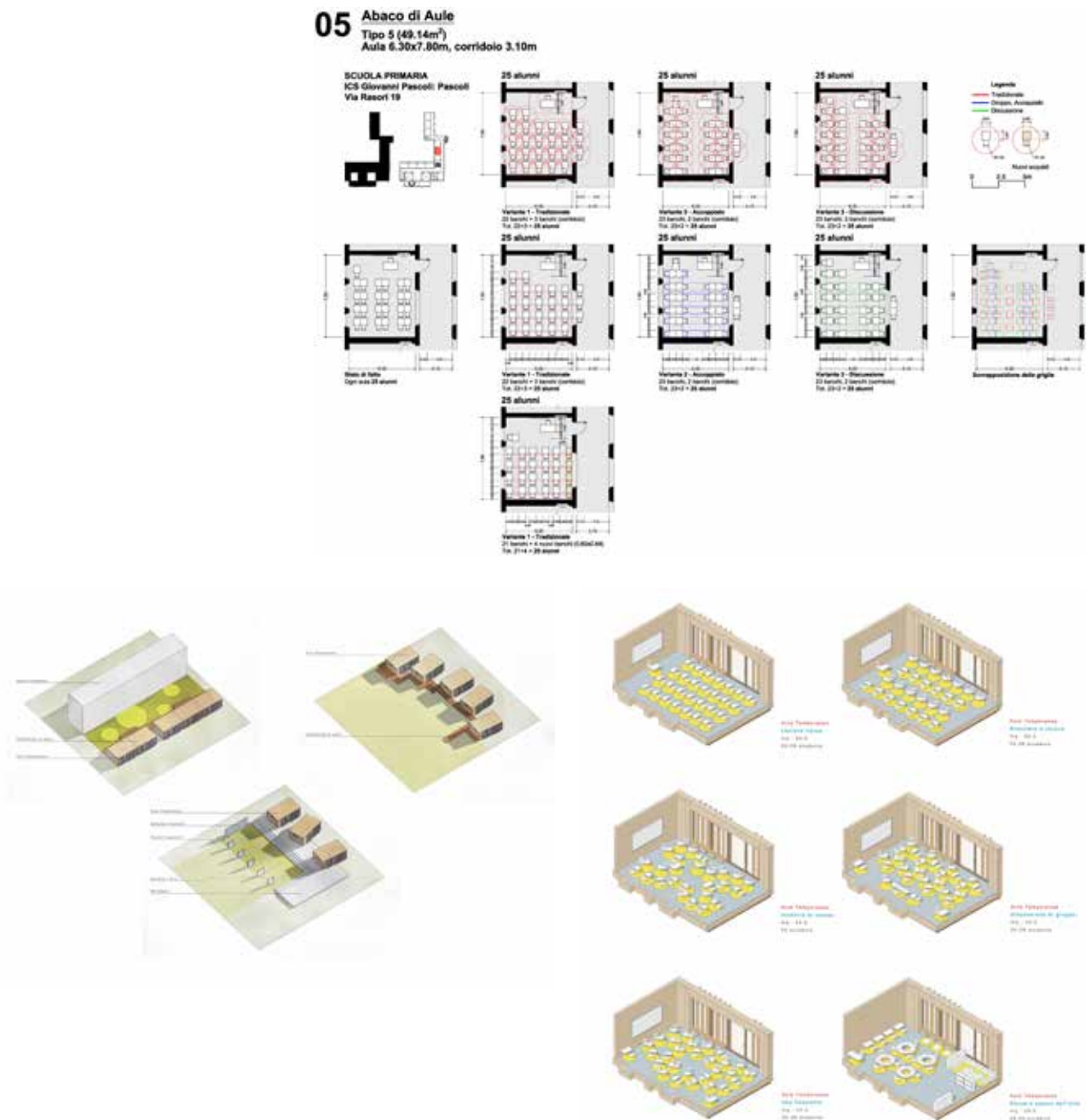
Schools should aspire to duration as they constitute the legacy of our time for the future. The Greek-Roman Gymnasiums, although in ruins, are the emblem of a merciless contrast with the banal modularity of our time. If architecture is what creates beautiful ruins (Perret), the contrast between the school by Vittorio Garatti in Cuba and the remains of one of the thousands schools-containers makes clear which one features a spatial idea in a pure state of ruin and which one is only wreckage. The new upgrades and designs urged by pandemic resilience may deviate from this inclination of our time to produce only rubbles (Augé 2003).

The role of space makes clear that the present emphasis on “innovative furniture”, recently reinforced by the Government’s supply of desks and chairs, is misleading if the spatial qualities of schools remain conventional and poor.<sup>3</sup> Significantly, as Ernesto Rogers declared in 1947, «the problems of education cannot be accomplished without a *learning architecture*».

While architecture is a language, the vague and indeterminate concept of *environment* is not. Modularity and open plans appear as easy shortcuts compared to researching spatial articulations that enable students to recognise different *space-places* and degrees of responsibility while exploring self-learning possibilities.

Typological experimentation joint to architectural themes enables investigating new structuring principles to which subordinate innovative spatial organisations for the home base-classroom and space-units, thus expressing a sense of unity, identity and construction for the school’s community.

Along this line of thought, and considered the inadequacy of existing buildings and design guidelines, the post lockdown Phases 2 and 3 should not pursue the return to the ordinary situation before the pandemic. Rather, they should envision a “new extraordinary” and develop innovative design principles and themes of spatial reorganization that encompass adaptive strategies, the resilience to future pandemics included



**Fig. 4-5**  
Plate from the “Abacus of  
Classrooms and Types” and stu-  
dy for a wooden prefabricated  
classroom unit, Cantiere Spazi,  
UNLOCK Milano, 2020

as a design challenge for space and wellbeing as proposed in the Manifesto of our Osservatorio Scuole (O.S. 2020).

In fact, a key issue for both reopening and future renovations or designs, is that Health in buildings is not only safety but also physical, mental and social wellbeing. In a resilient and healthy city (Health City Institute 2020) all factors that promote the wellbeing of people in education places should start to be seen as inseparable components.

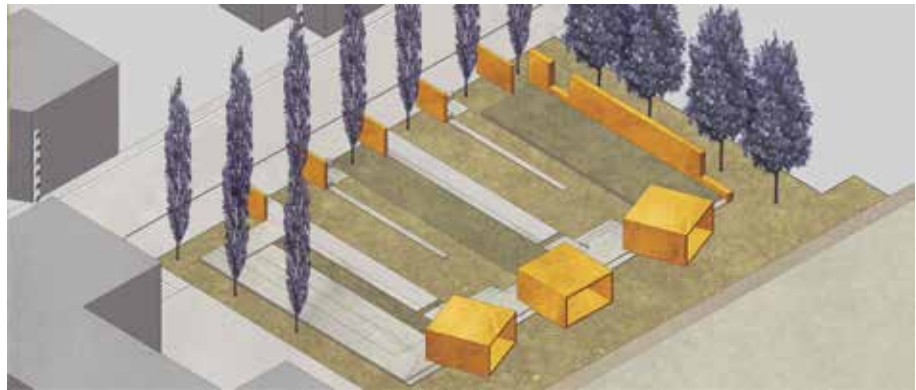
In the present, the pandemic alarm has interrupted the arduous process of innovative teaching in poorly responsive school structures. Within the Table “Unlock Milano”, the OS has elaborated for the Municipality the “Abaco di Aule e Tipologie” to guarantee restart and address physical distancing in terms that are not merely mechanically functional but that allows for innovative teaching in safety and wellbeing.

In the next Phase 3, new requalification strategies, grafting, and types



**Fig. 6**

L. Pezzetti, Design for open-air classrooms, 1st prize, Cesano Maderno, 2015

**Fig. 7**

L. Pezzetti, Design for an innovative school at Monreale, 2016



should be explored. Rather than adopting standardised models, learning architecture and active education may learn from ateliers and museums to arrange multiple *space-places*, each tasked with proposing as many possible centres of attention and stimulating aesthetic qualities, as well as allowing for innovative teaching addressed to small teaching groups. The *home base* classroom should be enlarged to allow both distancing and multiple settings. People flows should be separated through architectural means, by reinventing communal spaces. In association with informal learning spaces and workspaces, classrooms can form a continuous fabric that has the complexity of a small city and landscape, being characterised by different depths of field and heights; degrees of partition and sharing; rooms, habitable recesses, *squares* or multifunctional theatres; shaded patios, ramps, paths and gardens. Learners could then experience architectural space in its full richness of space-places, meanings and symbols, metaphors and metonymies attributed to forms; in the play of different scales, heights and layouts, which predispose and stimulate different kinds of behaviour; and in the expression of tactile and aesthetic-perceptive values (Pezzetti 2019).

In addition, the history of European cities features qualities that have been forgotten but which are instead crucial for both a new school's ontology and urban resilience: a degree of integration of multiple activities as an inherent character of learning places since the ancient Gymnasium; a civic dimension as a main resource around which society concentrates; and the experience of 'en plein air' schools. Their exploration offers new insights to set guidelines and identify new design themes.

We can learn, for instance, from the aforementioned Greek-Roman Gymnasium, the integration of multiple activities in a dynamic relationship between the introvert peristyle and its opening to the whole city. The



**Fig. 8**

L. Pezzetti, H. Khanamyrian and Q. Liu, Design for an “Atelier delle Scoperte” in Ruffini Primary School for expanding learning beyond classrooms, Milan, 2020



schools of today, in fact, should constitute again the beating heart of districts while providing a number of community functions and becoming hubs for lifelong learning connected with urban resources fifteen minutes walking. The school as a *community centre*, nonetheless, is a subject already emphasized by the Italian experience related to typological criticism (Tafuri 1968), namely in the projects by Aymonino at Pesaro and Canella in the Milanese *hinterland*.

The pandemic has also brought out the importance of outdoor spaces, which have been forgotten by contemporary pedagogy. Open-air education, instead, has a rich architectural tradition in the ‘open-air schools’ of the 1920s-30s and even before in Milan’s Rinnovata Pizzigoni (1911). They feature several issues that the pandemic calls for reconsideration: outdoor classrooms, equipped open air spaces, foldable and openable facades, and an active use of flat roofs. The author’s design for multifunctional open-air classrooms (2014) could be seen as an early prototype to extend safe and versatile teaching spaces into the districts’ parks.<sup>4</sup>

Finally, urban paths and spaces in front of schools, which nowadays have no character, should become car-free areas and a major subject for both flows control and renovating urban space. The experience of Aldo van Eyck’s playgrounds suggests new investigation of prototypical elements to be applied in site-specific urban designs strategies for new socialising spaces.

In conclusion, the constraints caused by the pandemic emergency may constitute an accelerating factor for an organic process of renewal of educational buildings jointly with their urban role, pushing towards new spatial configurations, grafting and expansion of the school into healthy and resilient districts while bringing new urban life inside schools. The collaborations launched with Milan Municipality and Provincia di Monza e Brianza will provide a testing ground towards a “new extraordinary”.<sup>5</sup>

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> “Adozione del Documento per la pianificazione delle attività scolastiche, educative e formative in tutte le Istituzioni del Sistema nazionale di Istruzione per l’anno scolastico 2020/2020”, Decreto N. 39, 26 giugno 2020.

<sup>2</sup> The Osservatorio Scuole (OS) is a think tank of ABC Department, coordinated by Laura A. Pezzetti that has worked on the “Cantiere Spazi – Scuole” to enable Milan’s reopening of school buildings after the pandemic in the framework of “UNLOCK Milano”, a collaboration between Milan Municipality and Politecnico di Milano.

<sup>3</sup> Learning spaces such as the ones promoted by the “Future Classroom Labs” by European Schoolnet are in fact substantially devoid of formal and architectural connotations, focusing solely on functional flexible aggregation of environments, modular furnishing and introduction of 2.0-3.0 equipment.

<sup>4</sup> Il progetto di Laura Pezzetti è parte della proposta a scala urbana per il concorso “Riqualificazione dell’asse Conciliazione-Cozzi a Cesano Maderno”, 2015, 1° premio.

<sup>5</sup> Accordo per il progetto di riqualificazione del campo scolastico di Vimercate nell’ambito del “Programma Re-Start” della Provincia di Monza e Brianza.

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Ann Legeby, Daniel Koch  
**The changing of urban habits during  
 the Corona pandemic in Sweden**

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Abstract

During the Corona pandemic, extensive interventions have been introduced to limit the spread of Covid-19. Authorities, companies, and organisations introduce comprehensive restrictions. To capture new routines, we launched a web questionnaire (PPGIS) including maps in three cities in Sweden; Stockholm, Uppsala and Gothenburg. From the first month results, we see dramatic changes of habits. Places still used are primarily where people find service, while places people avoid are where they normally work or study. Places used more, are where people find seclusion; primarily green spaces and easy to access. This pandemic reinforces existing urban inequalities. Access to urban resources and green spaces becomes even more important in areas characterized by poverty and overcrowding.

Keywords

Coronavirus pandemic — Change of habits — Unequal living conditions — Diversity of public space — Sustainability

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**Introduction: a pandemic that leaves an imprint on the city**

During the Coronavirus pandemic, life in Stockholm has undergone comprehensive changes, and people use spaces in new ways. Starting in early March, several restrictions were introduced that dramatically limited people's movement patterns and the use of the city (Region Stockholm webpage). Physical distancing was proclaimed to be the most effective measure to curb the spread of the virus (Prem et al., 2020). The restriction that anyone with symptoms should stay at home was followed by a recommendation to work from home and avoid public transportation unless absolutely necessary. Universities and upper secondary schools shifted to distance learning. Gatherings of more than 50 people were forbidden. The fact that physical distancing would inevitably influence everyday practices and routines became apparent in all parts of the city. But the conditions for being able to practice physical distancing and working and studying from home vary considerably, and neighbourhoods characterised by overcrowding and a high dependency on public transportation saw the most obvious negative effects (Hansson et al., 2020). At the same time, access to nature and parks has been shown to be essential, as these spaces offer seclusion and are beneficial to the well-being of city dwellers (Hartig and Kahn 2016, Samuelsson et al., 2018). To capture the changes in how we use the city, we launched a web questionnaire (PPGIS) on 25 March in three Swedish cities: Stockholm, Uppsala, and Gothenburg. The informants are asked to describe how their habits have changed in terms of the places they use more, use the same, or avoid by marking places on a map and adding information about what they do there. The aim is to better understand how the pandemic and subsequent restrictions influence habits and to capture what places are used or avoided and why.



This study contributes to the further development of earlier research concerning how the city provides places that may counteract segregation, how unequal living conditions produce and reproduce patterns of segregation (Legeby 2013, Legeby and Marcus 2011), and how architecture, the material and spatial arrangements of cities, and configuration are related to power and representation (Koch et al., 2019). The study also contributes to research into mechanisms of and conditions for avoidance (Koch 2016). Public urban space is seen as crucial for an ongoing exchange and negotiation between citizens (Young 1996, Zukin 2005, Amin 2012), where configurative properties create conditions for various social processes (Hillier 1996, Hanson 2000, Vaughan and Arbaci 2011). Architecture and the built environment create a landscape of opportunities where the living conditions that are created in different neighbourhoods are influenced by access to various societal resources. Groups with fewer resources are especially dependent on amenities and resources found in close proximity to their neighbourhoods (Fainstein 2010, Tonkiss 2013). As a result of the outbreak of the pandemic and the restrictions that followed, many have been homebound, for example as a result of distance working, distance education, unemployment, or being laid off. As people are advised or forced to stay at home, they become highly dependent on the services and opportunities that are locally accessible. The crisis has made inequalities an even more urgent issue, placing people with limited access to societal resources and services at an even greater disadvantage.

This paper will specifically look at places that people have started to use more frequently according to self-reported data from a web questionnaire. The results show that during this pandemic, people are still visiting places, for example to access services, but they have also sought out other places to access nature, to visit parks and other green areas. The informants report that one reason they visit these places is that they are easy to access. The results illustrate the importance of having services in close proximity to one's neighbourhood and having easy access to parks and green areas. We argue that this calls for a need to reduce inequalities in urban areas and to ensure the creation of a walkable or bikeable city where people can access services, workplaces, and societal resources just a brief walk or bike ride away.

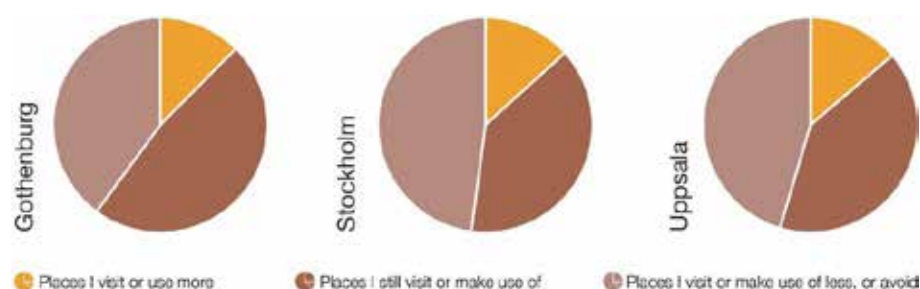
## Results

The results of the survey, which was initiated on 25 March, cover the first month of the study in three cities and include 2,297 answers. The informants responded by marking where they live on a map, what places they still use, what places they avoid, and places they have used to a larger extent than before the Coronavirus outbreak and the restrictions. For each place respondents marked, they have reported what they do at these places or what they normally would do at the places they now avoid. A comparison between the three cities shows that the share of places used to a greater extent is rather similar. However, in Gothenburg, the share of places avoided is smaller compared with Stockholm and Uppsala, which also means that the share of places that are still visited is larger in Gothenburg. This indicates that the changes in habits have been more evident in Stockholm and Uppsala, cities that have seen a much greater impact from the COVID-19 outbreak.

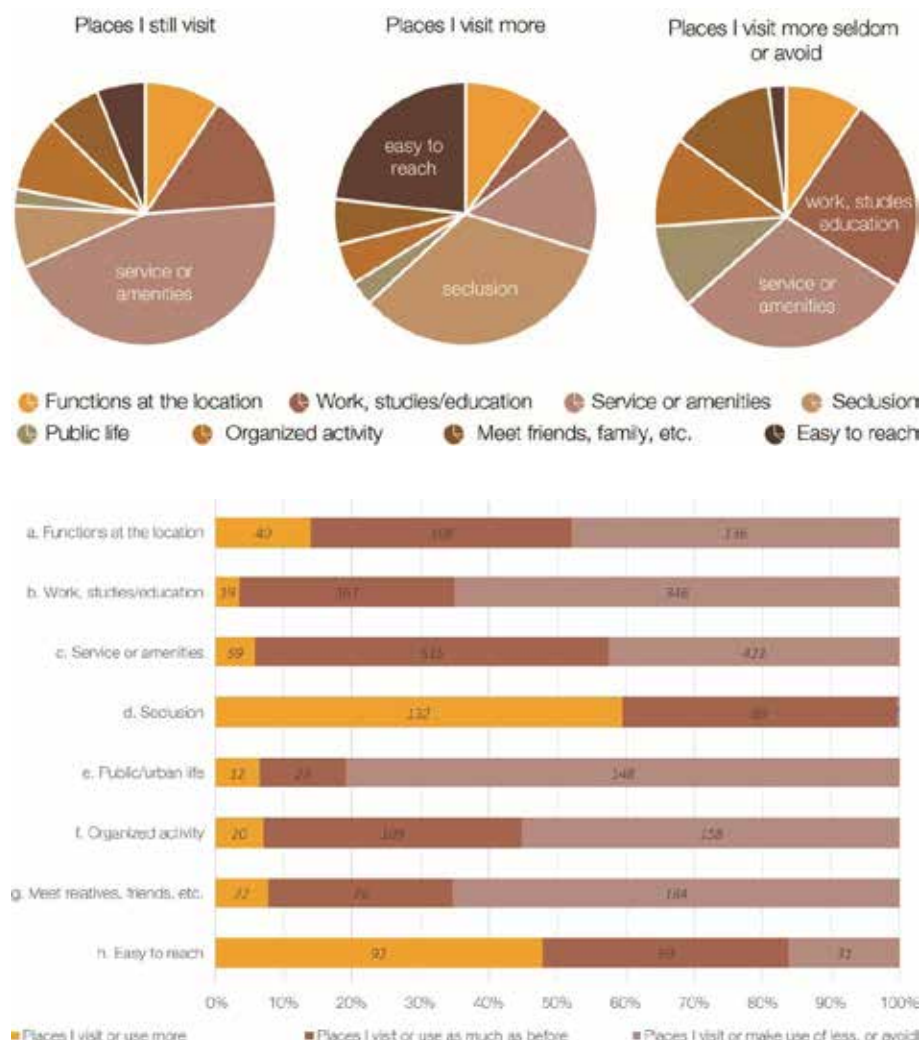
This paper will primarily focus on the survey responses from Stockholm, which includes 895 answers. The majority of the informants are women, and the dominant age group is between 25-64 years.

**Fig. 1**

The distribution between places,  
all three cities

**Fig. 2-3**

The distribution of uses



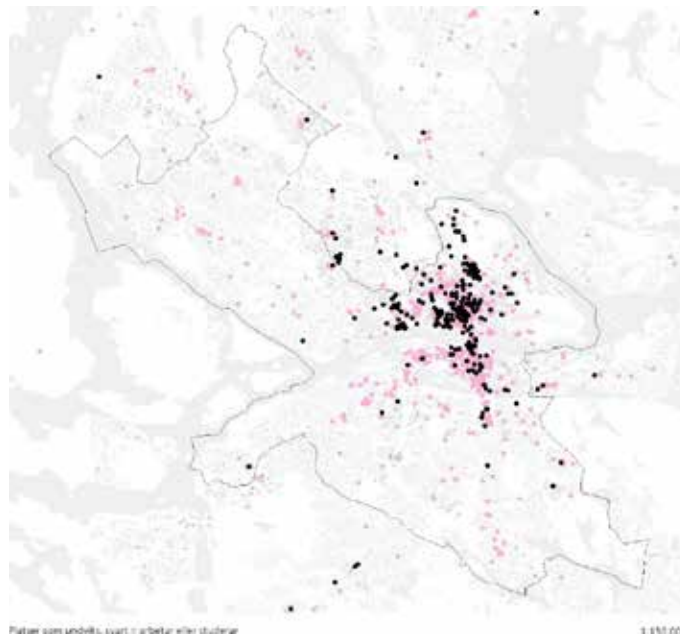
Of all the places reported, 44% are places that people still visit. The main reason given for visiting these places is to access a service (e.g. shops, health care, restaurants, etc.). Other reasons reported to a notable but lesser degree are, for example to work or study, participate in an organised activity, access key functions at the destination (e.g. playground, bus stop, etc.), and to find seclusion.

Places that people report that they avoid or use less constitute 42% of all places reported. Similar to places that are still visited to the same extent, the informants report that these destinations were normally used to access a service or a location where they worked or studied. To a lesser degree, respondents report that places they avoid are locations where they would normally meet friends and family, participate in an organised activity, seek urban life, or use facilities such as playgrounds and bus stops.

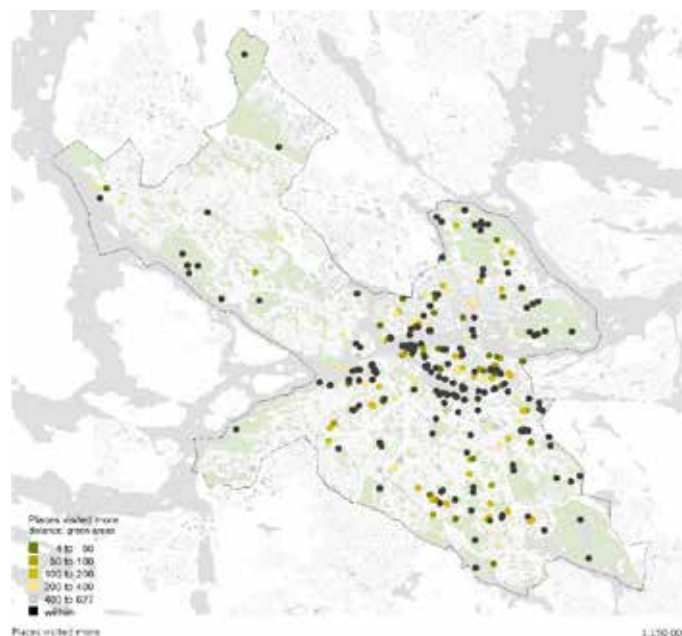
Places respondents reported that they used more constitute 14% of all places. These places are primarily visited to find seclusion, but the fact that these

**Fig. 4**

Places avoided, where those related to work/study, are marked in black.

**Fig. 5**

Places visited more and their relation to parks and nature



places are also easy to access is another factor. Thus, new everyday routines include using places in proximity to where people live. In the written comments, respondents frequently note that they seek out these places for a walk, contemplation, to access nature, access the forest, or for recreation and relaxation, hiking, or excursions. This indicates that parks and other green spaces have been important during the pandemic. We therefore performed an analysis of where the reported locations are in relation to green areas. Of all the 434 places noted, almost 2/3 are located within a green area. Of those places that are not within a park or a green area, 43% are located less than 100 metres from a park or green area.

### Conclusions

It is evident from the results that people have changed their habits due to the pandemic. Respondents report that they still visit places to access certain services, while they avoid places they normally visited for work, studies, or to access other. The fact that 'service' is an important category in all three response alternatives suggests a reconfiguration in who is using which

services (for instance shifting closer to home) or a shift in what types of services are prioritised. In a smaller share of the answers, respondents report places that they visit more frequently, mainly to find seclusion in places that are easy to access. These places that have now become a part of peoples' everyday routines are, to a large extent, located within or in proximity to urban green spaces, parks, and natural areas.

This means that cities or neighbourhoods with poor access to parks and green spaces provide unfavourable conditions for people to cope with the pandemic and restrictions. This implies that people in these areas will be more negatively affected by limitations to their movement patterns, self-isolation, or practicing physical distancing, which restricts their ability to access services and make use of secluded public spaces, or forces them to travel longer distances—potentially by using public transport. Thus, we argue that cities and neighbourhoods that provide access to parks and green spaces are more resilient towards these kinds of crises. But the results also illustrate that the use of services is still important to residents, suggesting that access to amenities, such as grocery stores, health care, and playgrounds is critical, as is access to cultural institutions, such as libraries. Adequate access becomes especially important in neighbourhoods characterised by overcrowding, lower income levels, or high unemployment rates. This relates to concepts such as accessible cities (Marcus and Koch 2017), or walkable cities, that are associated with a continuous street network (Hillier et al., 2010, Vaughan et al., 2015, Legeby 2013). The mayor of Paris has highlighted a similar concept during the pandemic: the “Fifteen-minute city”. We argue that a planning practice that more accurately accommodates a more varied set of urban practices can better prepare our cities for crises that may arise in the future. From a sustainability and a resilience perspective, urban planning and architectural practice need to create equal living conditions and create greater diversity in public spaces, places that accommodate a vibrant social urban lifestyle on the one hand, which counteracts segregation, and places that allow residents to seek out seclusion, on the other hand.

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#### Notes

<sup>1</sup> The Sociotope map of Stockholm used include parks and green areas larger than 0.5 hectares.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-02-18/paris-mayor-pledges-a-greener-15-minutes-city>

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Enrico Bascherini  
**Repopulating abandoned villages.  
 New housing strategies for the pandemic**

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Abstract

Social distancing has brought the issue of repopulating abandoned villages and inland areas to the forefront. Italian experiences speak of the situations of communities, policies and projects which for years have been seeking an answer to the issue of empty inland areas and the country's two thousand semi-abandoned villages. The pandemic has accentuated the problem of lost places and shone a spotlight on these settlements, which could actually become a partial response to Covid-19. Today we must ask ourselves whether living in villages or small towns could be a model for a way of life that offers protection, or whether it is an experimental retreat, an act of bucolic revenge by those who have always been against cities and their lifestyle.

Keywords

Village — Repopulation — Staying — Internal area

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Today science demands that we practise social distancing, which essentially means the cancellation of human relations, living in a condition of physical isolation and limiting movement from place to place. Such restrictions cannot fail to have an effect on our living spaces and the places we share, on our towns and our cities.

Even though – in Italy at least – with the loosening of these restriction we appear to forget the difficulties we have recently suffered, the issues that have emerged in the sphere of lifestyle as a way of combating the pandemic find no answers in science.

Among the countless hypotheses around finding a cure and preventing the coronavirus from spreading and hence a new way of living, the issue of abandoned villages appears to have taken hold not only among experts in the field, architects and town planners, but also among sociologists, anthropologists, economists and ordinary people: «Like the earthquake, the coronavirus is an accelerator, in the sense that it brings to the surface critical situations which already existed» (Properzi 2020). A recent article by a well-known paesologo reflects on the idea of repopulating the villages and landscapes, «regenerating a strategy for inland areas, because the pandemic has objectively opened up a space for major public intervention. Looking after small villages [...] is not a gift but a service given to Italy» (Arminio 2020). The question we must ask ourselves concerns living in villages or small towns, in other words whether this could be a model for a way of life that offers protection, or merely an experimental retreat, even an act of bucolic revenge by those who have always been against cities and their lifestyle. Leading voices in architecture suggest that large cities should adopt villages as genuine outposts for the flight from the city; a shallow response



**Fig. 1**  
Colletta di Castelbianco (Savona),  
the dryers.

which triggered an intense debate and led to the retraction of results of numerous studies on the true state of policy in the SNAI (National Strategy for Inland Areas) or associations such as UNCEM (National Union of Mountain Communities) and ANCSA. The system of abandoned villages is backed by experiments with solid results for «community welfare micro-projects» (Carrosio 2020), which could provide a starting point for the evaluation of an effective and concrete reappropriation of such places. In such cases, it is not so much a matter of repopulation but of staying

«Staying has nothing to do with conservation, but requires the ability to relate past and present, to redeem lost but inhabitable streets which modern life has missed, bringing them back to life and the present. What was seen yesterday as backwardness may no longer be so. Unproductive and abandoned mountain areas today offer new resources and new opportunities for life» (Teti 2020).

Today the debate seems to centre on the epidemiological aspects, but in the issue of village living appears to many people as banal and little-understood:

«Beyond the widespread wishful thinking that runs through this kind of intervention – which rarely considers questions of resources, policies, tools [...] – or the cities which ‘help’ inland areas, as if they were empty shells lacking community, plans and desires, and their only assets were nature and history» (De Rossi 2020).

It is inevitable that the size of settlement, the concentration of society, the space for interaction and relations between towns generally give rise to more questions than answers:

«Is it really housing density itself that is a problem, or could it be the density of physical relations (considered as the amount of close physical contact between people) and the ways in which this is experienced? If the problem were physical-relational density, there would be no need to encourage residential dispersion, which would not necessarily reduce physical-relational density» (Chiodelli 2020).

It is no accident that there are villages like Orticoli, Attigliano and Sillano di Garfagnana, which have had no cases of Covid-19; small, isolated villages, self-sufficient communities which managed to achieve social dis-



**Fig. 1**  
Colletta di Castelbianco (Savona),  
the rampant stairs of the housing  
units.

tancing not on an individual level, but as communities. The dichotomy of isolation/protection versus isolation/abandonment is ethically and scientifically dubious: on the one hand the word isolation can easily be understood as protection, but it can also have a facet of abandonment. The debate therefore centres on a renewed interest in human settlements which have always constituted a way of living in their own space – i.e. villages, small towns and inland areas – «as a new frontier» (Tantillo 2020).

We are at a momentous point in time, in which philosophies based on the recuperation of inland areas may ride the wave of the country's interest. «We'll have no recipes, no best practices, no established routes to follow. In the small villages we'll only have three things: creativity, the agility that characterises small projects, and the desire to do it» (Dall'Ara 2020) and we can also claim that «the mountains themselves are [...] the main reservoirs for sustainable development, the so-called *green economy*» (Tarpino 2019).

Isolation evidently means protection; and new technologies allow us to stay at home and work remotely; indeed, to isolate ourselves from others. But this model of living certainly cannot wholly and instantly replace the current system in terms of industry, trade and relationships. In fact, if we look at Italian experiences of living in solitude, the existential gap becomes quite clear. One of the first redevelopments of abandoned villages, Colletta di Castelbianco near Albenga represents both the best and the worst of possible outcomes. Colletta di Castelbianco is a medieval village whose origins can be traced back to the early Middle Ages, with buildings from the 13th and 14th century in the village centre. Development during the 15th century can be seen along the access roads and the main street; buildings from this period tend to have just two storeys, or three in exceptional cases. After the 1887 earthquake, the population of the village began to fall, a gradual decline which concluded with definitive abandonment in the 20th century. One of the few remaining fortified villages in Liguria, Colletta constitutes a hugely valuable open-air textbook on urban planning and architecture. The intervention in Colletta in the early 1980s allowed architect Giancarlo De Carlo to repair a rift with the past by recovering the urban environment with the addition of low-impact building techniques. The aim of the project was to restore the village and make it inhabitable



once more. De Carlo was many years ahead of his time with his idea of living in extreme isolation. The question to be asked here is one that De Carlo always asked himself: who are these new residents the village aims to attract?

«It all comes from an idea of business [...] so the work was done to bring cable to the village and also fibre optics, focusing on the idea of remote working. And it worked, although in the end the foreigners fell more in love with the stones and the history of the place than the technological possibilities» (Ricotta 2016).

The idea of living in a remote place in close contact with nature and a slow pace of life, a place of balance between urban space and human space. Once again De Carlo was farsighted: today, 30 years later, there are countless individuals and families seeking to find a simple, comfortable life for long periods of holiday time, not necessarily linked to the seasons, but able to meet today's criteria for health and safety. The current way of living, not only in legislative terms but also spatially, led De Carlo to design larger rooms and different connections between them. The installation of utilities was done with the least possible impact, including under-floor and wall heating. In the case of Colletta the project was an almost philological reconstruction of the entire village; Giancarlo De Carlo succeeded in interpreting the topographical accretion, typological aspects, lexical nuances and the architectural vocabulary of the lesser elements. The result is the work of a single planner, and based on a well-defined standard; even today there is an appointed "architect" in the village, who is entrusted with any further intervention. In effect this role, initially played by De Carlo, is currently occupied by Ole Wig, who provides general guidance on the aesthetic impact of any work carried out in the village and checks the suitability of necessary interventions. All interventions bear a clear, unambiguous signature, i.e. the search for an architectural language whose purpose is stylistic restoration; the reborn village is a reconstruction that leaves no room for new additions, and the result is a snapshot of an idealised time, when the village was at the height of its splendour. Ultimately it could still be called a dead village, precisely because interactions between humans and space are controlled, and therefore could be called the sought-after result of an anthropological outcome. Initially, the entire village was intended as a model for modern living far from the city, but over time this system of living in solitude, even in a highly globalised era, gave way to the usual multi-property hotel complex. Colletto is simultaneously a positive and a negative example which may convey a provisional and non-exhaustive conclusion. Today we are experiencing new and unexpected collective reflection; shaken by exceptional events, today's society is asking questions about the issue of everyday space, but also about collective space, and whether it really corresponds to a model which meets our needs. The repopulation of abandoned villages and sparsely-populated areas cannot be a conclusive response to health issues. If anything, during this crisis we need to grasp additional values in life that we had perhaps lost at the individual level. In our collective rediscovery of the meaning of community, it is possible and desirable that the village model is seen as a life choice for social and financial reasons, but certainly not a replacement for the city. The example discussed above shows that specialisation on a single function for its own sake cannot be an adequate motive to declare completely positive results. A striking example is Civita di Bagnoregio,

«a medieval village that has miraculously escaped the passing of time [...] in a momentous phase during which the village underwent a radical transformation [...] with beautification and spectacularisation of the village [...] for the use and consumption of the tourist industry» (Attili 2018).

The inhabitants of Colletta themselves are very far from living a rounded social and family life; the presence of adult family groups, the lack of children, the sporadic nature of residence all point to the fact that repopulating a village is very different from living in it. Today Colletta di Castelbianco seeks in every possible way to maintain social tension (by rediscovering and replanting olives and chestnuts), but it is not a complete village in terms of services, development and underlying local economy. Italy's villages can be a partial response to the emergency and change and, as in the densely-populated city, the most important thing is to

«learn to live with uncertainty and change: change and crisis are part of the evolutionary process of complex systems; one of the key ways of maintaining and increasing resilience is actually to live with the phenomena that change» (Colucci 2015).

A provisional conclusion cannot fail to highlight the only partial successes of this kind of «realised utopia» (Anele 2020); abandoned villages and small towns really can be a valid alternative to cities and a clear response to the current emergency, but we should not fall into the linguistic and urbanistic trap between living in solitude and living in isolation, to avoid confusing a village with an industrial building converted into an isolation facility.

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Costantino Patestos

**From the diffused city to dispersion into the abandoned villages, or: the new solitude of the compact city**

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Abstract

The new SARS/Covid-19 pandemic did not bring to light any major defects in the compact city, but gave its detractors another opportunity to attack it by endorsing the accusation that its density makes it insanitary. But even were we to accept that diagnosis, we are currently unable to imagine what kind of new architecture could make the city secure against any pandemics, of whatever kind. What we can do, instead, is defend the idea of the historic city, counter the new problems we face of social inequality and housing, re-assert the central importance of public space, redesign the inner suburbs, and map out a new type of territorial polycentrism.

The great loser of the present pandemic has been populism; now is also the time to definitively unmask populism in architecture, with its much vaunted smart buildings and its vertical (or horizontal, or diagonal) forests.

## Keywords

Compact city — Urban life — Public space — Residential density — Territorial polycentrism

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As a preface to the considerations that follow I hope I may be permitted to advance a hypothesis that I believe is almost a certainty: the new pandemic has not brought to light any major defects in the existing city and its architecture such as would necessitate radical structural changes<sup>1</sup>. Certainly, the existing city requires therapeutic treatment but despite its ailments, it does not need to be actually *hospitalised*.

Historically, as the architecture of the city has developed, hygiene (Colomina 2019, 13-59) – has been one of its inherent functions; we should not forget, for instance, how a building typology of specifically rural origin, *the courtyard building*, was transmigrated from the country into the city as a cure for the insalubriousness of the *sickly* urban blocks that had originated in medieval times; since then, moreover, issues of urban health have in fact been the generators of new trends in response to pandemics and sanitary emergencies of which our own age's most direct experience, according to Beatriz Colomina, has been modern architecture. But in the debate about an alternative way of living in the city that began after the official declaration that SARS/Covid-19 was a pandemic, almost all those contributing to it have avoided formulating actual design proposals that would have the ability to protect the health of our cities, limiting themselves instead to putting forward suggestions for what they assert would be improvements to the housing typologies to which we are accustomed – too often forgetting that in the construction process, there are key factors external to architectural design itself that play a determinant role. But even if we leave to one side the more ingenuous of these ideas (such as, for example, one-person lifts, public open spaces marked out with squared-off areas set one metre apart, wide benches to accom-





**Fig. 1**

Ambrogio Lorenzetti, *Allegory of Bad Government*, 1338-1339, fresco. Siena, Palazzo Pubblico, Sala della Pace.

modate families) there are plenty of other suggestions that do impinge on matters of design, narrowly defined. (Pica Ciamarra 2020).

From a reading of these various proposals a first question arises that should be addressed to those who suggest we need apartments with balconies as big as small parks, huge areas of glass looking out on nature or the monuments of the city centre, rooms for homeworking in every apartment (even though their numbers of potential users are in fact extremely small<sup>2</sup>) and living rooms with swimming pools. What kind of people do they think would live there? And how much of our social housing, how many council homes, and indeed how many privately owned high-rise apartment buildings would be able to act on the suggestion that they use their common areas for shared activities, for erecting rooftop nursery schools, organising spaces equipped for leisure-time uses, or for creating their own green roofs?

What is more, those who are currently proposing, in various ways, that we should supersede the compact city and its architecture<sup>3</sup>, are exploiting this new pandemic, on the one hand, as an alibi for seeking to replace familiar old ideas with carefully and ingratiatingly restyled new versions whose only purpose is to bamboozle frightened local authorities and city-dwellers into accepting them whilst, on the other hand, exhuming more or less picturesque proposals and naive simplifications: old pseudo-romantic digressions passed off as new ideas that it would not be wrong to think of as a new “neo-bucolic” architecture.

The vast majority of these proposals share a common denominator: the certainty that people must now be isolated from one another; buildings must be widely separated by “in between” interstitial spaces, repudiating the urban density that exists in our historic centres with the accusation that it is not sanitary.

So do they expect us (we partisans of the compact historic city) to confess the error of our ways and admit that Le Corbusier (some decades ago) was right and that our technology-obsessed friends of today are also correct when they propose that the quality of a new architecture based on sustainability depends on ensuring that there is a physical distance between buildings? I really think not.

As has recently been confirmed, in fact, our actual experience of what we still call social housing shows that density of habitation (i.e. large scale *urban densification*) continues to be a decisive element in urban quality<sup>4</sup>. And yet on the other hand – and despite, for example, the not-to-be-forgotten, fundamentally failed experience of Giancarlo De Carlo’s so-

**Fig. 2**

Marcel Breuer, *Appartamento per Erwin Piscator*, camera da letto, Berlino, 1927

**Fig. 3**

Walter Gropius, *Community Lounge for a High-Rise Apartment Building*, Berlin, "Deutsche Bauausstellung" exhibition, 1931.



cial housing – it seems that in our own localised version of *participatory planning* we may be destined yet again to embark on another revival of the *neighbourhood unity* concept and a return to *advocacy planning*<sup>5</sup> even though at the same time no-one is bothering to explain whether there might be any possible connection between strategies of that kind and the need to lock down our cities with high-security protection or how, in our struggle against the virus, decisions of that kind would be appropriate or would guarantee success.



**Fig. 4**  
Good-for-You / Good for Col-  
lective.  
(<https://gehlpeople.com/>).

Referring to the exhortation of the American sociologist and literary critic Richard Sennett that we must “co-produce and work with open forms” (2018) we are seeing the conceptual evolution, so to speak, of the idea just mentioned. Being citizens in a metropolis where the ideas of *building* and *dwelling* contradict each other should not mean limiting ourselves to choosing whatever architectural and urban projects architects put before us, but developing them by ourselves on an equal footing with those architects or, even better perhaps, without any architects at all.

And despite the timeless German adage, which dates back to medieval times, assuring us that *Die Stadtluft macht dich frei* (the air of the city makes you free) we are also witnessing a proposal to abandon cities altogether and return to living in the villages: a way of facilitating *dispersion* and of *withdrawing from the urban*<sup>6</sup>, returning to live in Italy’s historic villages that were abandoned due to obvious reasons of structural stability; in that way the healthy, ever-hospitable countryside is repopulated and becomes the place for the next *Utopia* to emerge as part of a *Green New Deal* on a planetary scale.

Some others are saying – apparently – that other alternatives could consist of once again creating and cultivating urban allotments; extending to infinity the network of pedestrianised streets, or seeking out forgotten empty spaces and (without following any defined plan) transform them into communal places – once again rediscovering and re-proposing Aldo van Eyck’s by now played-out *playgrounds* paradigm.

Finally it is being suggested that in order to create voids (but not the *urban pauses* defined by Giuseppe Samonà) we should create cities that rely on long journeys and low densities; voids that are not collective places, not settings for social interaction, but makers of social distancing. A city, we are told, whose internal fabric would have the ability to “dilate” and breathe, and could weave a new relationship with the land.

Over time the consolidated concept of the historic city centre has been subjected to attacks of various kinds. Simplifying for the sake of clarity, our city in the here and now is no longer the complex and composite organism it used to be, but has been reduced (by the dominant building culture) to a multicoloured jumble which even at its best is nothing more than an assemblage of spectacular buildings that in every case are only an expression of personalism and indifferent to the context to which they ought to belong.

We can also record that there have been some attempts to purloin a number of characteristic urban building types (museums, libraries) and some of the city’s physical elements, for the purpose of creating a hyper-technological immateriality. In *18 Lessons of Quarantine Urbanism* Benjamin H. Bratton notes that:





**Fig. 5**  
Restaurant in Amsterdam, after  
the pandemic, 2020.

«We are uncomfortably adapting to psycho-geographies of isolation. In course we learn new vocabulary, such as “social distancing-compliant building design.” As amenities that were once known as places in the city are transformed now into apps and appliances inside the home, public space is evacuated and the “domestic” sphere becomes its own horizon». (Bratton 2020).

So what proactive role and what appropriate action can now be taken by a politically committed form of architectural and urban design, i.e., that is aware of its social role in the new sanitary conditions imposed on us by this new Covid-19 pandemic but in the certainty, whatever may happen, that the current situation is a temporary one that must be resisted, firstly, by an effective public health system that operates in a redesigned territorial system, and by a reforming administrative political will of good governance?

Perhaps this is a moment in which we are not able to think about, conceptualise, or develop the elements of an architecture that would be completely different from that we inherited from the great masters, or from architecture as it has evolved over time; perhaps in the here and now we are not ready to define precisely, for example, new residential building types that would need to be completely different from those in which we are now living. Even those who are currently experimenting with such ideas are limiting themselves to reworking examples they have extracted from a particular modernist epic, and particular experiences that are concerned with the common spaces in large residential buildings. Broadly speaking the same can be said of the work being done on new types of spaces for work and education, and increasing in scale to include the design of public open space.

But when it comes to types of building like cemeteries or hospitals, perhaps now things may indeed be done differently. For some time hospitals have become debased to the status of “health factories”<sup>7</sup> and this seems to me like a significant point at which to note that there is certain new interest, on the part of some authoritative specialists, in returning to pavilion hospitals: a typology that was abandoned much too recklessly<sup>8</sup>.

In order for this to be a contribution to delineating the perspectives that are now being disclosed for architectural and urban design, I think I should mention, *inter alia*:

\* Defending the idea of the historic, compact city and ordinary architecture



against the architecture-as-spectacle that has dominated the world panorama of design in recent decades.

- \* Countering the old and new inequality, and the unacceptable housing problems that go along with it; the social regression we are experiencing; the effect of the politics of the dominant (neo) liberalism, its *gig economy* and, importantly for us architects, its way of *understanding the city and its architecture and in general, the territory as a whole*.
- \* Redesigning the inner peripheries of the city and promoting a new territorial polycentrism; enhancing our semi-rural places by re-collocating them as components of a new system, in a new ecology of functions; and mapping the real needs of the inhabitants of cities (i.e. not attempting to satisfy their simple, abstract *desiderata* with rhetoric and demagoguery) .
- \* Demanding a politics that produces high-quality public space; defending and re-proposing the central importance of public space as the essential and indispensable *core* of the historic European city that was abandoned in recent times by local authorities that are now at the mercy of financial speculators.

If, in these pandemic times, it can be said that populist rhetoric has been the big loser, it can also be said that this is the moment to finally tear off the mask of multi-coloured architectural populism with its so-called *smart buildings* on the one hand and its vertical (or horizontal, or diagonal) forests on the other.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> «For now what we have found out is that Covid-19 has not killed our cities and did not infect, overwhelm, or redesign them. That is because cities are resilient: ready to face and resist pandemics, floods, wars, earthquakes and other human and natural disasters»: Elena Marco, “Dopo il Coronavirus: come ricominciare a convivere nella città” [“After Coronavirus: how to begin living together again in the city”] «7»- supplement to «Il Corriere della Sera», [corriere.it](http://corriere.it), 2020.

<sup>2</sup> «Italy has responded to the coronavirus emergency by making massive use of home-working. According to an Infojobs survey that also analyses the future expectations of businesses and users with respect to the development of remote working, in a very short time 72% of companies made available the means and tools to enable their personnel to continue working remotely. However it is clear that not all types of business, and not all functions, can be carried on by working from home; only 15% of all Italians are working in that way. The remainder of the workforce currently appear to be staying at home without earning any income (45% of respondents, a percentage that rises to 50% for women) or are on holiday or leave (25%) whilst only 13% are still going to their workplaces without making any changes to how they carry out their tasks.». [www.corrierecomunicazioni.it/digital-economy](http://www.corrierecomunicazioni.it/digital-economy).

On the other hand, some people are already talking about being burned out by home-working: “Lavorare da casa stanca: domande e risposte sul burnout da smart working” [“Working from home makes you tired: questions and answers about burnout caused by homeworking”], [repubblica.it](http://repubblica.it), 2020.

<sup>3</sup> I am thinking, for example, of the attacks suffered by public open space and the supposedly “advanced” proposals to replace public squares with *cyberspace* and *internet cafés*.

<sup>4</sup> «Low-density urban developments have led to erosion of the territory, an increase of harmful emissions, and higher energy consumption» (Gelsomino, Marinoni 2009). The long-term objectives of sustainable development, on the other hand, impose the densification of our cities”: A. Boito, “Housing sociale: strategie di densificazione per la rigenerazione urbana”, «Urbanistica 3», no. 6, January-March 2015, p. 59-64; see also L. Gelsomino, O. Marinoni, *European Housing Concepts*, Editrice Compositori, Bologna 2009.

<sup>5</sup> *Advocacy planning* was formulated in the 1960s by Paul Davidoff and Linda Stone Davidoff as a pluralistic and inclusive planning theory in which planners try to repre-

sent the interests of various groups within society. See also the theories of Christopher Alexander.

<sup>6</sup> This is nothing but kite-flying: yet another of Stefano Boeri's "ideas" (which even arrives at the disconcerting proposal to establish a new Ministry!). However, at least one person has already promptly dismissed this suggestion, likening it to a videogame: see F. Cotugno, "Wi-Fi, amore e fantasia. Che cosa fare per ripopolare i borghi italiani (e avere tutti un po' di spazio)", *Linkiesta*, 23 April 2020.

<sup>7</sup> «Up to this point, everything seems to follow an incontestable logic. It is a pity that many European hospitals have pushed a policy of 'industrialising' their care offer by constructing large floor areas with shared services, where dozens of doctors of different specialities offer hundreds, if not thousands, of consultations per day. Working in large open spaces with secretariats, nursing care, porters, and shared auxiliaries, can ensure a number of economic advantages but the clinical gain is less clear: these 'health factories' are a long way from the desired personalised medical treatment and, what is particularly crucial for chronic illnesses, the centralisation in large 'efficient' systems means it is not possible to respond to the need for rapid personal contact between patient and caregiver». G. B. Piccoli, "Il vaso di Pandora, il Coronavirus e gli ospedali 'fabbriche della salute'", in: (AA.VV. 2020).

<sup>8</sup> «Has the time come to return to the Utopia of healing with nature and beauty, and to the elegance of pavilion hospitals? (...) The limitations of large common spaces may lead us to reconsider a way of organising activities that privileges direct contact, a hospital as a home, recognisable and reassuring, in which the patient can identify not only the doctor, but also the secretary, the nurse, and, why not, the walls themselves as reference points», *Ibidem*.

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Costantino Patestos was born in Athens on 22 May 1955. He is an architect at the Politecnico di Milano (1982), PhD (1990) and postdoctoral fellow (1991, 1992) at the IUAV (University Institute of Architecture in Venice), associate professor (1998-2004) and full professor (2005-) at the II Faculty of Architecture, now DAD - Department of Architecture and Design of the Politecnico di Torino, where he teaches Architectural and Urban Composition. In 1991 he participated in the Fifth International Architecture Exhibition of the Venice Biennale with his project for the new Greek Pavilion, and in 1995, with his project for the Milanese site "ex Innocenti est" at the XIX Triennale di Milano. He has translated into Greek and edited the publication of the following books: Aldo Rossi, *Autobiografia scientifica* (Hestia, 1995), Giorgio Grassi, *Scritti di architettura* (Kastanioti, 1998), and Antonio Monestiroli, *L'architettura della realtà* (Kastanioti, 2009). He has published in Greece, for Kastanioti, the following collections of architectural writings: *To Kivotio tou Modernou – Kimena yia tin arhitektoniki*, Athens 2001 and *Apo to Vima tis Arhitektonikis*, Athens 2004. In 2006 he published the collection of writings: *L'ostracismo del Partenone. Scritti d'occasione sull'architettura*, LibreriaClup, Milan 2006; reprint: Maggioli Editore, 2008. In 2013 he published the monograph: *Architetture in attesa. Scritti, progetti e un edificio*, LibreriaCortina, Milan 2013. In 2018 he published the monograph: *Racconti urbani. Cinquantanove elzeviri d'architettura*, Maggioli Editore, 2018.

Rossella Ferorelli  
**The theory on the balcony.**  
**Among the postpandemic landscapes of Lockdown Architecture**

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Editor: *Nina Bassoli*  
 Title: *Lockdown architecture.*  
 Subtitle: *L'architettura e la Pandemia. Quaranta lettere per Lotus*  
 Language: *italiano*  
 Publisher: *Lotus Booklet Extra*  
 Characteristic: *6x11 cm, 172 pages, paperback, black and white*  
 ISBN: *978-88-6242-401-1*  
 Year: *2020*

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If there is one thing that can be said about the Covid-19 pandemic, it is that it has triggered, starting from its global spread last winter, an explosion in the production of theoretical elaborations that is unprecedented in recent history. The phenomenon is unprecedented as for quantity of contributions (appeared online and on all kinds of newspapers), for their density (if we compare that quantity to the brevity of the period in which it originated) and for the variety of fields in which the pandemic seems to have generated such impacts to trigger the need for mass intellectual speculation.

One year after the beginning of this production, a polarization of the theoretical heritage gradually began to take shape. After all, the pandemic very directly questions how we inhabit, the vulnerability and normability of bodies – that is, space and biopolitics – and therefore those who were galvanized the most were, above all, the enthusiasts about both disciplines. Among which there are, of course, a myriad of architects.

*Lockdown Architecture*, curated by Nina Bassoli and recently published in the Lotus Booklet series, collects forty contributions on the subject commissioned, starting last June, to as many architectural firms (mostly) and academics, writers and intellectuals.

Placed in alphabetical order by first name of the authors, the contributions are arranged fluidly through the volume, without specific thematic or stylistic hierarchies, a desire expressly declared by the letter of engagement – also inserted at the beginning – in which the participants are called to free reflection.

The small but dense series deriving from it is a collection whose reading results in a satisfying experience both for those who are approaching these themes for the first time, and for experienced voyeurs of post-disaster planning.

For the former, the collection can be considered a useful overview of the main urban issues raised so far by the pandemic. Scanned by the voices of the relevant selection of exponents from the world of the project disciplines involved, cardinal issues clearly emerge, including the new role of the domestic dimension and the world-home in which everything takes place, the emergence of a sort of new environmentalist localism, the observability of new physical and immaterial boundaries in the space-

time of everyday life, the centrality of public space in urban dynamics, the relevance of open residential spaces (balconies, terraces, courtyards) and of the relationships they enable, the new Foucauldian spectra of total surveillance, the emergence of drives leading towards an anachronistic, regressive and socially disintegrating counter-urbanization, which is also one of the possible scenarios, should our society decide to rely entirely on the concept of distance. The use of legitimate doubt among the extreme alternatives “nothing will ever be the same again” and “everything will be back to what it was” is also very widespread among the authors, suspended between Gattopardesque perplexities and desires for revolution. At the same time, for the latter – that is, for the already savvy observers of the ongoing apocalypse – the book itself can perhaps be considered an almost architectural device. Like a sketch pad, each reflection similar to a theoretical drawing, all portraits of the same, very complex, thing, executed from forty points of view each separated by a minimum angle of observation. Some traits are therefore similar, subjects drawn and redesigned (a very architectural way of elaborating and transmitting thought indeed), while others completely overturn the contours of the investigation, reaching almost opposite conclusions. And it is in these subtle interpretative gaps that less beaten paths emerge. More unusual concepts whose direct discovery I suggest. They can be anticipated to the reader only through a selection of interesting images: happiness, lucid vigilance, last ones, critique of reality, redesign of supply chains, occupied landscapes, access to multiple focal lengths, loss of boundaries, struggle, ghosts, generic space, dreams, nocturnal biographies, car-free suburbs, Mediterranean city, multiscalar green infrastructure, intergenerational mix, theory-based practice, forests, empathy, us, civil servant, face disarming, guaranteed connectivity, climate medicine, atmospheric envelopes, radical adaptation, urban sponges, survival through design, metaphysical necessity, freedom, responsibility, a mobile school that reaches all places, accessibility, Potteries Thinkbelt, global community, re-spiritualization of life, public landscape, bicycles everywhere, coexistence. Like any valuable theoretical product, *Lockdown Architecture* contains old and new words, promising new spaces of thought, and therefore it also acts as a preparatory tool for the development of forthcoming theoretical discourses.



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Editors: *Angelo Lorenzi, Carlo Quintelli*

Title: *Ignazio Gardella others architectures*

Language: *italian/english*

Publisher: *Il Poligrafo*

Characteristic: *25x18cm, 238 pages, paperback, black and white, colors*

ISBN: *978-88-9387-133-4*

Year: *2020*

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It is a well-known fact – confirmed by all those of us who read the newspapers every day – that a ‘good’ title can be decisive in encouraging us to read something and, at the same time, in orienting us, thanks to a summary indication of a particular point of view.

I think I can safely say that also the title chosen by Angelo Lorenzi and Carlo Quintelli, editors of a recent volume dedicated to Ignazio Gardella, should be counted among those that are particularly spot-on. All of which is down to the introduction of the simple, indefinite adjective ‘other’, a word by which reference is made to a concept of differentiation with respect to anything that has already been said or tacitly alluded to.

Ignazio Gardella other architectures is the title that has been given to the book; but, other than what? This is the question which springs to mind when glancing over the cover of the volume on which small, disparate pencil drawings cluster side by side almost like single frames making up a single filmic sequence.

However, it is the index which I would say unequivocally clarifies what the adjective ‘other’ refers to: the ‘other’ works of architecture referred to in the title are those less well-known, or perhaps simply less often studied, but all in any case heavily bound up with Ignazio Gardella’s design philosophy, demonstrating a coherence and methodological continuity that could link very different project scales.

Four strands are investigated in the volume: the construction of the domestic interior, that of the commercial and artistic exhibition space, and, last but not least, cultural training in reference also to the teaching of design and to relations with personalities from the academic world.

For each of these fields of investigation, a wide-ranging essay – entrusted to a different author each time – sets out to introduce the various issues addressed. These find a specific portrayal in the description and interpretation of some selected project experiences in a series of illustrative sheets drafted by young scholars and researchers.

This volume, the result of research work carried out over a period spanning approximately four years at the CSAC – Study Centre and Communication Archive – of the University of Parma which keeps all the work of this Milanese architect, represents an example of teamwork in which different voices and languages run side by side, building an interpretative

path of great coherence to underline that “idea of architecture as an experience of oneness” claimed by Ignazio Gardella on several occasions. This same ‘oneness’ of vision is also found in the composition of the volume which, although constructed starting from an examination of four different questions, is not divided into as many separate parts as such but, as if to reaffirm the coherence and continuity of a method, approaches the different themes in such a way that we constantly step from one to the other, almost effortlessly.

At the end of the reading – made particularly enjoyable by a rich iconographic apparatus consisting of archive drawings, documents for the most part previously unpublished, and beautiful original photographs in addition to those on the Casa Coggi made specifically by Marco Introini – certain words continue to haunt our mind: a few terms which sum up the general meaning of each of the projects illustrated, regardless of their specific function.

Gardella’s rejection of so-called ‘naïve functionalism’ is an important issue which, among other things, appears particularly clear when scrutinizing the so-called ‘more ephemeral’ projects linked to occasional use, the only purpose of which seems to have been the presentation of whatever it was intended to exhibit (the history of the Italian chair, or Borsalino’s hat designs, and so on...).

“Without a strong idea, it is difficult for me to begin a project,” said Gardella in a long interview given to Antonio Monestiroli more than twenty years ago, revealing that every work of architecture is the result of a learning path necessary to formulate the idea. Of course, in this research programme it has not been possible to avoid considering ‘function’ as such, but this is never the centre of the project development, which instead focuses on ‘representation’, on the theatrical nature of a project, sought as much in the construction of a city and its parts as in the design of an apartment or even a small exhibition stand.

Aldo Rossi – who, among other things, collaborated closely with Gardella on the project for the Carlo Felice theatre in Genoa – wrote that architecture is the “fixed scene of the affairs of humankind”: words which seem to me extremely fitting to describe Ignazio Gardella’s work. The ‘other’ works of architecture gathered in this volume are in fact the testimony of their capacity to build scenic spaces capable of changing character thanks to the life they find themselves containing from time to time. And this is as true for the artistic settings – the wonderful photograph of the exhibition on “The Italian Chair Over The Centuries” is just one of the many examples – as it is for the apartments or even for the commercial spaces. Each of these projects becomes the scene for a performance whose main characters are also the users of the spaces, as we can easily experience by entering that small ‘jewel’ namely, the PAC of Milan, which frequently pops up in the text.

This same theatricality can also be found in the domestic interior designs, whether apartments housed inside buildings of the historical city or homes inside buildings built from scratch. Gardella’s approach never wavered: to provide a scene for the performance of life, a life made up also of a precise relationship with the city which, in turn and with enormous consistency, also becomes part of a performance capable of linking history and ‘contemporaneity’. The tools used for interior design are the same as those which have been handed down to us for the construction of the conventional house, but each of them is redesigned and reinterpreted,



### Images taken from the book

Milano, Casa Coggi sixty years later. Photo Marco Introini.

Preparation of the exhibition "La sedia italiana nei secoli", Milano, 1951. Photo Ancellotti.

Stand Borsalino, Fiera Campionaria di Milano, 1964. Photo Casali.



to represent the underlying idea consistently and to build a place where one 'feels at home'.

"I want a house that looks like me (but more beautiful): a house that resembles my humanity," Ernesto Nathan Rogers wrote, when resuming publication of the magazine "Domus" in 1946, being rebuilt bottom up. Ignazio Gardella's other projects studied, described and gathered in this lavish volume can be read as none other than the practical realization of this great hope.



Riccardo Petrella  
**The eye of the architect.**  
**A journey in the look of 33 architects during Covid-19 period**

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Editors: *Federico Bilò and Riccardo Palma*

Title: *il cielo in trentatré stanze.*

Subtitle: *Cronache di architetti #restatiacasa*

Language: *italian*

Publisher: *LetteraVentidue*

Characteristic: *16,5 x 24cm, 163 pages, paperback, colors*

ISBN: *978-88-6242-451-6*

Year: *2020*

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The book by Federico Bilò and Riccardo Palma offers the reader an interesting anthology of reflections, elaborated by various authors during the lockdown period which followed the Italian Government Decrees in response to the spreading emergency of Covid-19.

Following the authors' own admission, the same assumptions appear in line with the collective attitude and the situations we all lived during those days: the attempt to build and strengthen virtual relations with others, trying to accomplish a new routine of living; an initial «divertissement, which could generate, at best, a collection of interesting consideration arising from the condition of the domestic confinement»<sup>1</sup>.

Subject of the volume is the living space of the person, both intended as physical and mental, observed and analysed through the eyes of 37 actors on 33 stages – human and urban *scaene* – that are shown and described as interior dioramas, outlooks towards the space outside, walks through one's own interior world or along imaginary horizons, correspondences between intimacy and community, crossings and collisions.

The several contributions organized by Bilò and Palma offer a deep and conscious interpretation of the space – and the meaning this have for us, the people – since all the authors are architects and interpret the space for living as the primitive matter to work with and the final result to achieve.

Each voice of the these scenes is given a defined space for words and graphics to describe their own view, a physical and sentimental monologue, being used as professionals and architects to work and talk about the Space. The research by Bilò and Palma follows the path of the artistic tradition of performing the space surrounding the artist, interpreted through his eyes and mind; none of the contributions lacks, in fact, of literature or artistic memories, as references chosen to set up its own frame of the reality outside.

The variation proposed by the curators relates with the impossibility of the subjects to exit from their own domestic landscape. This leads to introspective reflections on one's own private space, that goes far beyond the mere observation of what it is; but follows instead the imagination of the architect, who recognize the singularity of the individual space as part, or a synthesis, of the collective one, as L. Kahn clearly sentenced in 1972: «the architect can build a house and build the city in the same breath, if he

only thinks about it as a marvellous, expressive, inspired realm»<sup>2</sup> .

All the contributions are than private atlas, organized by the curators in chapters, which generate the plan of the house of the man; the corridor, the room, the studiolo, the garden, the yard and the window – eventual metaphor of the eye of the author looking outside.

The reflections emerging from this anthology focus the reader's attention on the elements of the house and, consequently, on the way we live our space and, moreover, the way we could imagine, design and act on it differently to live these same spaces at best.

<sup>1</sup> Bilò F., Palma R. (2020) – *Il cielo in trentatré stanze. Cronache di architetti #restatiacasa*, LetteraVentidue, Siracusa, p. 6

<sup>2</sup> Louis I. Kahn, lecture held on the occasion of the International Design Conference of Aspen (IDCA) in the 1972.

Marina Tornatora

***Journey around my room* in Te.CAltrove Digital migration of the micro-gallery Te.CA\_TemporaryCompactArt**Exhibition Title: *Viaggio intorno alla mia stanza*Concept and edited: *Marina Tornatora*Scientific Committee: *G. NERI, O. AMARO, E. ROCCA, M. TORNATORA*Editorial Coordinator: *F. SCHEPIS*Research Team: *R. E. ADAMO | M. BAGNATO | B. BAJKOVSKI | A. DE LUCA*

Te.CAltrove, digital gallery of the dArTe Department – Mediterranean University of Reggio Calabria

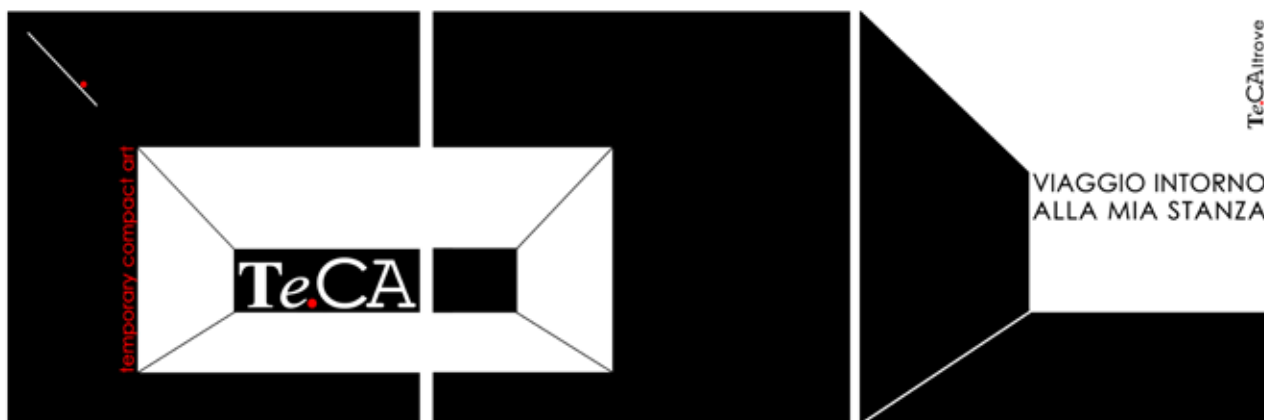
Link: <https://sites.google.com/view/teca/>

The SARS-CoV-2 virus marks the fulfillment of a prophecy of the pandemic explosion and annihilates the certainties that supported our vision of the world. It has been constructed a dimension that forces us to confront the unknown and changes the perception of the world as guardian of the history, a familiar space subjected to the control of homo sapiens, compared to an unknown for centuries postponed to somewhere else. Instead, the atmosphere of suspension triggered by the virus marks an important moment in the history that imposes new points of view, derived from the awareness of the human vulnerability. Therefore, it has been acquired that «our future isn't directed by historical progress» (Morin 2000), nor by economic engineering or by the criteria of efficiency or the free market, imposing a dialogue with the uncertainty of the future. More precisely, this kind of condition requires an unexpected necessity of knowledge and curiosity that during the lockdown led to a surge in digital visits to museums and art spaces.

Virtual tours, open collections, digital exhibitions, guided tours, live streaming, each cultural reality has increased digital services by re-delineating the perception of the art and relationships with the cultural proximity.

Thus, *Te.CAltrove* is part of this framework, digital relocation of *Te.CA\_TemporaryCompactArt*, the gallery envisioned by Gianfranco Neri in the dArTe Department at the Mediterranean University of Reggio Calabria. *Te.CA* is micro exhibition space with dimensions of 32x55x23cm, perhaps the smallest ever, carved in a wall that is positioned in a transit area at the university, space in-between microcosm and macrocosm where since 2016 have been organized exhibitions and meetings. During the lockdown, the gallery proposed the digital exhibition *Journey around my room*, a moment of reflection on the pandemic as an opportunity to re-think our “humanity.”

Architects, artists, designers were invited to participate and share their experience of staleness – as an action of dwelling in place – trying to trace a survey between multiple definitions of inhabiting the domestic space and narrating that disjointed landscape that in prophetic scenarios of the globalized metropolis was dissolving into progressively shared and fluid spaces. The works presented each week on the gallery website try to



understand how much the current pandemic condition leads on renaming the areas of our daily life, the relationship between physical and virtual, our own way of living and interacting with nature, forcing us to rethink the concept of privacy and the border between inside and outside that was gradually dissolving.

Gianpiero Frassinelli opened *Te.CAltrove* re-proposing the *City 2000.t.* (1971) by Superstudio, montage of cells with permeable walls, in which a receiving screen transmits brain impulses to an electronic analyzer, a prophetic vision that control the desires of individuals that aspired to equality conditions. The collages of Carmelo Baglivo are deeply related to this imagery as well as the panoptic device designed by the Analogique team is linked to this imaginary, which emphasizes the contradictions between the safety of collective health and the protection of individual data.

Another journey is *Stanze della casa di me* of Beniamino Servino and the collages of Luca Galofaro who during the lockdown continues to travel dwelling the home, materializing stratified memories through the manipulation of the images of his archive.

Desks as workshops of thoughts are those of Carmen Andriani, Maria Luisa Frisa, Gianluca Peluffo shots as well as Luca Molinari's *Fragile Room*, where the objects and the books are like the soundtrack notes that try to tune in with the outside world.

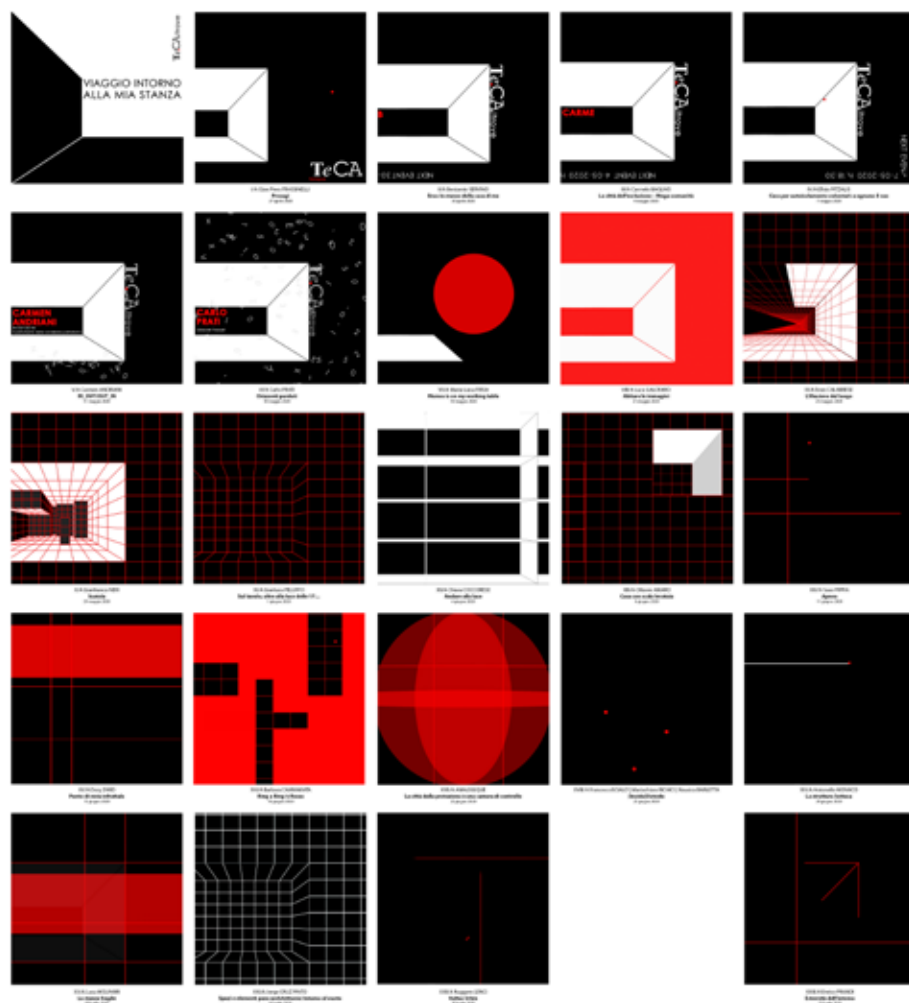
The protagonists of the theater-box from Gianfranco Neri are entities that draw trajectories of meaning starting from their forms, materials in which the reflection in the mirror places us on the backdrop, de-situating us directly on the scene.

The house as a small town, proposed by Enrico Prandi, put the accent on the externality of the interior, while Ottavio Amaro designs a domestic microcosm, inspired by the interiors of Vermeer, the house as a treasure chest of memories, fortress and monastic cell, where the search for individual enclosures reflects on the relationship between interior-exterior and the condition of free space. Enclosures broken by the materialized light of Chiara Coccoresse bursts into the domestic space creating dynamic vortices.

Carlo Prati's drawings also offer a reflection on dwelling as a result of the mutilation of the public sphere, his *Lost Horizons* reveal a dystopian scenario that aspires to a renegotiation of the relationship between architecture and nature. While the artist Barbara Cammarata refers to the link between our existence and the natural laws, portraying the mutation of the human and animal species.

Therefore, 23 micro-installations construct a permanent digital exhibition





reinforcing the idea of the *Te.CA* gallery, providing a multifaceted space for reflection through art as an everyday experience, particularly in context of the university increasingly subjected to adaptive overpressure to economic and technical questions.

List of Invited: Gian Piero FRASSINELLI, Beniamino SERVINO, Carmelo BAGLIVO, Efisio PITZALIS, Carmen ANDRIANI, Carlo PRATI, Maria Luisa FRISA, Luca GALOFARO, Enzo CALABRESE, Gianluca PELUFFO, Gianfranco NERI, Chiara COCCORESE, Ottavio AMARO, SasoPIPPA, Dory ZARD, Barbara CAMMARATA, ANALOGIQUE, Francesco SCIALÒ, Antonello MONACO, Luca MOLINARI, Jorge Cruz PINTO, Ruggero LENCI, Enrico PRANDI.

