



Index  
and english translation  
of the articles

Problems, policies and research	<p><i>Paolo Avarello</i></p> <p><i>edited by Massimo Bricocoli, Lina Scavuzzo</i> <i>Massimo Bricocoli, Lina Scavuzzo</i> <i>Wolfgang Foerster</i> <i>Massimo Bricocoli</i> <i>Lina Scavuzzo</i> <i>Lina Scavuzzo</i> <i>Lina Scavuzzo</i> <i>Lina Scavuzzo</i></p> <p><i>Agatino Rizzo</i></p>	<p><b>The time of the urban project</b></p> <p><b>Social housing projects and policies in Vienna</b> Introduction Housing policies in Vienna: continuity in innovation and perspectives Places and policies. Social housing under observation Innovative housing projects: theme and places Frauen-Werk-Stadt. From women to women: a project to daily living AutoFreien Mustersiedlung. The car-free housing settlements The residential complex Alte Busgarage and redevelopment of the station Nordbahnhof</p> <p><b>Border cities in the Baltic sea</b></p>
	<p><i>edited by Paolo Colarossi, Antonio Pietro Latini</i> <i>Stefano Garano</i> <i>Carlo Gasparini</i> <i>Antonio Pietro Latini</i> <i>Mosè Ricci</i> <i>Elio Piroddi</i></p>	<p><b>The liveable city and urban design</b> Urban planning and quality New stories in the contemporary city Principles of urban design Beyond the 'progetto urbano'? Urban design, from and architecture</p>
Projects and implementation	<p><i>Paola Briata</i></p> <p><i>Ilario Abate Daga, Andrea Ballocca, Paolo Foietta</i></p> <p><i>Lucio Giecillo</i></p> <p><i>Francesco Domenico Moccia</i></p>	<p><b>Beyond safety: urban policies and immigration in Turin</b></p> <p><b>The soil exploitation in the Province of Turin</b></p> <p><b>Suburbia year zero? Subprime mortgage crisis and metropolitan development in the U.S.</b></p> <p><b>City planning in climate change times</b></p>
Profiles and practices	<p><i>Michele Talia</i> <i>Elisa Grandi, Daniele Iodice</i></p> <p><i>Silvia Mantovani</i></p> <p><i>Stefania Proli</i></p> <p><i>Michele Talia</i></p> <p><i>Elisa Bertagnini, Michele Morbidoni</i></p> <p><i>Eleonora Giovane di Girasole</i> <i>Luca Barbarossa</i></p>	<p><b>Some new questions in the planning research</b> The edge of the housing problem. Reality informal in Milan, Bologna, Florence. Intervention strategies Towards a landscaping-urbanism: simple rules for a complex game Participation and urban identity</p> <p><b>The resistible rise of architectural ideology in planning agenda</b> Il Cairo: urban and traditional social structures as a resource for development Re-planning suburbia and housing policy Small ports and new planning regulations</p>
Methods and tools		

## Some new questions in the planning research

*Michele Talia*

In its first edition the Franco Tinti Prize, that it has been established by his wife and Tecnicoop with the aim to promote among the new generations the research activity on the dynamics of urban system and spatial planning in the Emilia-Romagna region, has contributed to submit to the attention of planners and scholars the papers of four young researchers. Even though the diversity of their starting points, such researches are joined by a not common sensibility for the most recent changes in the Italian public policies.

Elisa Grandi and Daniele Iodice remember us for instance that also in the traditional field of the housing policies it is by now in existence a progressive movement from a sectorial approach to a more integrated one. In this way a fundamental role is carried out by the applied research, than besides to promote an integrated evaluation of the convergent effects which different actions can produce, if concentrated in a same territorial context, it receives in many cases the further task to make so that thus disparate measures come perceived like the articulations of a same strategy.

On the contrary Silvia Mantovani develops a stimulant synthesis between urban planning and landscape design, where landscaping is introduced like the model of a new style of planning. Thanks to this innovative paradigm the main attributes which characterize every specific territory can be recomposed in a complex game of successive deepening, in which many actors, with different world's representation and related interests, are invited to exhibit a peculiar 'ability to learn' that it replaces to the objective of the forecast that one of the adaptation.

Passing for last to Stefania Proli, it convene to stop itself on a particularly meaningful passage of her contribution, in which the description of some important features of the contemporary city (the increasing of empty spaces in the suburbs, the weakness of the infrastructure supply, the different distribution and structure of city functions, etc.) constitutes the essential reference to argue that a new collaborative method involving interests and citizens could prevent 'market failures' activating business initiatives and consolidating new processes of social integration.

Jointly considered, these contributions can help us to answer to some question marks whose solution has been sent back for along time.

Besides the topics that we have tried to recall, other issues, like the developing of future forecasting techniques, or the search of reliable principles in legitimizing the priorities upon which public budgets would be built, can be finally faced. In the light of these attainments it is possible to assume a large range of possible applications, that they comprise the analysis of urban dyna-

mic with the aim to model the growth process, the sharpening of the scenery management, the evolution of simulation' methods with which implementing a new democratic approach to engage whole populations in visioning exercises that identify the full range of issues facing a city. Of course a thus ambitious 'research agenda' cannot make less than to assign meaningful opportunities (and responsibilities) to a new generation of researchers, to which the Franco Tinti Prize (and the Prize Inu for thesis of doctorate and bachelor in planning, that it is reached up to now the second edition) it will try to give voice in the next few years also.

## The edge of the housing problem. Reality informal in Milan, Bologna, Florence. Intervention strategies

Elisa Grandi, Daniele Iodice

In the last years the illegal dwellings issue has bounced back, especially due to news and public debates about safety and legality in urban areas. Hence from the debate on the housing problem between institutions and public opinion, the project aims to analyse the evolution of illegal settlements and to understand the dimensions and potentials of the whole phenomena, as this can be the starting point of changing and reconstructing the urban texture.

In some cities in particular controversial debates took place because of a large presence of unconventional settlements and hardly criticized policy. Beginning from these observations, in the first part the analysis focused on three case studies: Bologna, Firenze and Milano. The data has been collected through different means: newspapers, reportage, periodicals, pictures, through local surveys, through meetings with Ngo's, local governments and associations (for example: Naga in Milano, Piazza Grande and Sokos in Bologna, Fondazione Michelucci in Firenze).

A common feature has been observed among the three cases: a continuous and rapid nuclearization of the settlements. In fact City councils based their policy generally on the principles of legality and safety demolishing completely the existing informal settlements. Unfortunately this solution enhanced and worsens the phenomena: the more the settlement is demolished the most it scatters inhabitants on areas hindering institutions in localization, management and prevention. Even Ngo's have several problems in helping the inhabitants of the settlements and monitoring those situations in the urban area.

The settlements' inhabitants are for the large part immigrants, especially Rumanians, Roms and Africans (most of them from sub-Sahara regions). Right now italians citizen are a minority but the statistical data about the home loans, the entries for social housing and Ngo's reports revealed that this number could increase in the future. For that reason, the research focuses its attention on the settlements' inhabitants as well as on people exposed to the risk of homelessness in general and tries to identify common problematic issues and correspondent reaction-strategies, each one characterized by a different degree of complexity and a specific process-timing. A preference for participatory solutions has been applied, proposing not single self-construction and self-rehabilitation events, but trying to formulate development programmes for that new urban texture. Participation not only reduces the building costs, but also increases the responsibility and the sense of belonging to the new context. Furthermore participatory processes could be

an opportunity to develop innovative housing solutions, mirroring the change in the real estate demand, and to valorise coping capacities.

Through these proposals the research aims to understand and face homelessness beyond the definition of 'lack of a house'. In fact as we can read in several reports by Feantsa Ethos (European typology on homelessness and housing exclusion) is important to underline the necessity of approaching this problem as 'a process' in a person's life and not just as a single event. A new interpretation of this issue could lead to a better understanding of the phenomena and a more efficient housing policy. The causes of the phenomena are different and very complex: the increasing dwellings price, the house transformed as financial goods, the un-synchronization between economic cycle and real estate cycle, the increased and changed house-market demand (connected to immigration and new forms of poverty), the lack of social housing policy and the social housing estate's decrease.

Because of the complexity of the phenomena, the reaction have to be an integrated answer that works on different fields and on the several aspects of the urban and housing context.

The analysis evolves into two housing projects: an intervention in an existing settlement in Milano and in a public building occupancy in Firenze. However these two projects intend to be above all an example for the application of several integrated strategies, following the analysis of a specific context.

## Towards a landscaping-urbanism: simple rules for a complex game

*Silvia Mantovani*

The discovery of complexity, the study of chaotic systems have revealed the existence of a different logic that frightens us and sweeps away many of our certainties, but which perhaps is worth examining.

In fact, after overcoming the initial panic, scientists have begun to glimpse the existence of a hidden order in chaos, which does not appear when examined with the lens of classical science, but which can be revealed only with a different approach from that used by linear science.

In other words, in complex systems there is a set of different rules, capable of describing the chaotic nature of reality; even if they are not adequate for predicting future trends with certainty: rules that define what has been called the 'paradigm of complexity'.

For some time now cities have also been defined by many as complex systems, and in the last few decades there have been multiple attempts to use the paradigm of complexity for determining new patterns of urban spatial organization. Many of these attempts have been able to describe past trends and hypothesize the future development of urban expansion, in the attempt to find new measures, new reassuring formulas for establishing future certainties. Instead, perhaps the wealth offered us by chaos lies elsewhere; in emphasizing a new way of dealing with the knowledge of complex systems, abandoning the deterministic method, not only its instruments, but also, and above all, the mental attitude, the cultural approach.

The existing complexity is to be welcomed, even in the urban environment, developing its potential, reconsidering the relationship between order and disorder, between man and nature, and learning from the hard sciences to recognize that the distance from the equilibrium is not only disorder and chaos, but also self-organization, evolution and participation.

Thus the challenge is to use the suggestions made by the 'rules of chaos', to find other rules for a kind of planning able to guide order without becoming dry, finding methods that accept and give value to disorder also, as an essential component of reality, without simplistically trying to deny it or hide it.

### *The rules of the game*

Once the premises highlighted by new science have been accepted (the impossibility of total knowledge and objectivity, the contradiction of predictions, the opportunity of disorder, the fertility of moments of crisis, the role of chance), the central crux of planning is that of trying to find open rules that guide the action and at the same time push towards the realization, participation of all the players and, finally, promote creativity and change, the continuous surpassing of the confines of theory and disciplinary practice. Rules not synonymous with regulari-

ty, as they have often been in the past, but with the plurality of possible alternatives, certainly not sufficient, but necessary for starting a new game, capable of provoking a useful debate from which new and different rules will be able to arise in a continuous process, in an endless game, as the planning game must be. Therefore simple rules, with complex resonance, which act as guides and at the same time as the object of planning within a continuing evolving process that pushes to overcome them, in an incessant dialectic revision of the acquired results and certainties.

**Multiple unit.** Towards a landscaping-urbanism. Everything is landscape, landscape is everyone. We have to build a 'third planning', not only urban nor only landscape, but a 'landscaping urbanism', which puts the city and the landscape on the same level, proposing city planning that makes the landscape, through the hologrammatic inclusion of all the components and all the players in the game.

**Open circularity.** From vicious circles to evolutionary spirals. The urban organism is an open system with a dynamic balance. We have to promote an open, evolutionary planning, instead of a deterministic, prescriptive one. We also have to replace monitoring tools, with a feedback strategy, that continuously tries to adapt the plan to reality.

**Evolutionary sequence.** Planning space and time. Evolution is not only the achievement of balance, but also the way towards following levels of order. The plan should be not an unchanging map, but an ipertext where all the participants can confront each other and decide together.

**Recurring coherence.** Fractality of landscape dimension. After reductionism, beyond holism. Landscape should be the zero grade, the simple rule that recurs at every level, the inner coherence valid for every planning action: for park design as well as for urban and territorial planning.

**Adaptive specificity.** The rule as particular case of the application. We should create not only against rules, but also in favour ones, preferring finalistic rules to normative ones. The aim is to hit the mark, without limit the way you hit it.

**Fuzzy identity.** From realistic to real. Rationalist planning often confused models and useful simplifications with reality. Instead we have to plan fuzzy spaces, without clear edges and unambiguous functions. This way we will be able to understand better the uncertainty of present reality, and we will avoid excluding people and functions not planned.

**Active welcome.** Organizing uncertainty. Now it is not time for tolerance or inclusion: now it is time for welcome. We shouldn't only tolerate or assimilate the difference or the unexpected: we have to exalt it, improving its singularity. Emphasizing the element of crisis, instead of fighting it, we can also develop its potential of innovation.

**Responsible tolerance.** Let everyone play. We can fight

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140/09

the chaos, surrender to it, or reorganize ourselves. Traditionally the urban planning tries to contrast everything that denies the balance that it looks for.

Instead we should learn from people's spontaneous solutions, from informal spaces, from creative disarray, instead of refusing it or hiding it.

## Participation and urban identity

*Stefania Prolì*

A regenerative project for the ex macello area in Rimini, through the experience of Emilia-Romagna's Contratti di quartiere. If we look at the programme Contratti di quartiere, participation appears as a crucial moment for the design forming process. Engaging inhabitants to conceive and define decisions is a means to assert the importance of ethic and social dimension into urban planning field. At the same time we know that public participation consist of long and tough process, so it's seems understandable to wonder: 'What's the add value', 'Is the outcome of a participatory process better than others', 'Can't I face the express needs by using traditional tools', or instead 'Can Contratti di quartiere participatory approach enter incisively planning processes that involve public domain and become a central component of urban design practices?'

These considerations started the thesis off: a methodological analysis on planning theory reflected on a case study represented by the ex macello (former slaughterhouse) area in Rimini. From the Contratto di quartiere investigation till the case study, the entire work has been formed as an autonomous exploration on theory and urban design project, both of them essential tools for developing the final proposal. The first part has focused on the way Emilia-Romagna Region managed the programme Contratti di quartiere and the way some of their contents, especially topics like experimentation, sociality and participation, played a part into regional planning policies. The second part is committed to the design process definition, aimed at the allocation of a new central area, located in the ex Macello site, for both the neighbourhood and the Rimini region.

To build an ad hoc participatory process (a process that has the strength to engage citizens without losing the important chance to begin a developing process for regenerating the city) has been the main objective of the design project. In fact, public participation run perfectly just if it can, at the same time, enhance social capital and be an important tool to let the planner understand the entire area deeply. Therefore, the first step has been stakeholder mapping, in order to collect several values and proposal to include into the project. Then, making use of on site inspections, city plans investigations, and other urban planning techniques, a general view of the neighbourhood has taken form: a marginal city area, hosting several dismissed places as distinctive areas or buildings that have been important in the past for the grows of the ex Macello area, but that need to assume a new role and meaning within the city of Rimini.

Furthermore, approaching a masterplan for the project area, a detailed group of actions have been designed. Actions have been conceived inside a wider strategy that wants to reconsider the relationship between the

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140/09

neighbourhood and the renewal project. All the strategies have been thought in order to obtain a development process that can be shaped following an 'urban acupuncture approach', as a means to let the city reactive and to facilitate a spontaneous regenerative procedure. So, as the main objective, it has been tried to confer on this area a new urban frame, to achieve by re-thinking about dismissed areas and public spaces (via Dario Campana and all around dismissed buildings). Moreover, strategies want to be mindful of public space system, in order to establish a 'net structure', a meticulous network of connections for taking public life back into the neighbourhood. The main network has to be built by the citizens who, moving and acting into the city, give to the net a big meaning in term of social cohesion and participation to public life. If we think the territory as a result of the interaction between nature and culture, neighbourhood inhabitants will assume the role of main actors in the developing process.

All the actions have been thought as an inclusive proposal that has the strength to undertake stakeholders values and to understand new possible chances to improve the quality of life in Rimini. For this reasons, design proposals have been figured out as 'open solutions', as provisional results that have been framed under a more general and wider design strategy.

Assuming that, the necessary conditions to a regenerative project based on participation and urban identity topics have been observed: participation as a means to assert a sense of belonging to a place; identity in order to found out project guide lines, thanks to the relationship that the common knowledge create between past and future. According to that, Contratti di quartiere are an important tool for trying to obtain some effective answers. The thesis has attempted to verify these answers, figuring Contratti di quartiere's potential on a concrete case study (the ex Macello area, in Rimini) that needed citizen participation and a new urban identity as a fundamental tool for framing the appropriate Answer for the neighbourhood and for the city itself.

## The resistible rise of architectural ideology in planning agenda

*Michele Talia*

The publishing of 2008 INU Prize outcomes offers a meaningful test of the research activities in which the new generations of scholars are actually engaged. The selected contributions testify a remarkable cultural brilliance, and the inclination to combine the theoretical exactitude with the tendency to inquire on the possible solutions to the critical points which any peculiar investigation brings to light.

Regarding the paper of Eleonora Giovane di Girasole the refuse of an automatic association between peripheral context and marginality seems to foreshadow an extensive urban renewal in dilapidated areas, and suggests the elaboration of "Guidelines of an urban renewal program concerning public housing and local development".

In the event of Luca Barbarossa it should be underlined the necessity to exceed the improvised strategy with which the harbour systems are governed through the discretized optimization and network strenghtening as in the coastal fringes, as in the inner areas. In addition to a razionalization requirement, this proposal tries to associate the performances guaranteed from the harbour logistics to a phisical plan, mostly oriented toward the development of urban areas with which revitalize the most deprived urban contexts.

As far as the Bertagnini and Morbidoni paper is concerned, the urban outbreak that Cairo has experienced since the half of the past century emphasized the role that in such framework can be assigned to a preservation public policy with the purpose to assure as well as the protection of the old city structure, how much the improvement of the local economic base. We moreover can assume that this productive asset could represent an effective protection against the more destructive impact of the globalization.

Lasting this thecnical emphasis in planning process, there is even the danger of a further weakening in the research ability, given not only the contraction of the public and private funding, but also the inferiority complex that seems to denote the attitude of many italian planners when they compete with the specialist in urban design. It is more likely that this defensive attitude can constitute an outstanding feature of the academic milieu for along time, but the transition from the conventional meaning of urban planning to the more comprehensive notion of territorial governance is probably destined to become a very strong innovative factor. Once completed such process, it is likely not only the request of a greater cultural autonomy, but also a renewed confidence in the ability of planning knowledge to support new interdisciplinary proposals and more demanding research programs.

## II Cairo: urban and traditional social structures as a resource for development

Elisa Bertagnini, Michele Morbidoni

The thesis is a study on the metropolitan area of Cairo conducted through cartographic and bibliographical analysis and social-territorial surveys; it shows, inside the impressive urban and demographic expansion, the complex relationships between historical-traditional origins of the form of the Arab-Islamic city and conformation of the areas interested by phenomena of informal installation.

The conclusions identify, at the base of the spontaneous housing expressions, urban and rural traditional social values, and constitute a contribution in the discussion on peripheries, marginalization, slums in Developing Countries, placing side by side, as support to the approach of conservation and improvement, to the practical appeals a theoretical support that sets in the foreground the role of the citizens communities in the formation and the management of city and suburban spaces.

The research is inserted in the actual discussion opened by the Millennium declaration of the UN (2000), that puts among the Millennium development goals the improvement of lives of slums dwellers.

The presentation of the results through an interactive multimedia, by virtually reproducing the study process, makes evident this relationships also for a non-technical public and allows an immediate understanding of the complex territorial reality.

### *Objectives*

The theme is suggested by the evidence that the importation of exogenous economic-cultural models injures the integrity and the conservation of consolidated urban structures with high historical value; Cairo is exemplary. The investigation is based on the following concept: the urban environment, its ways of use and evolutionary processes are expressions of a given social form; vice versa the urban environment determines behaviors and social changes. These considerations led to the following questions: which are the social-urban structures, permanent in the metropolis' complexity, that made the historical city? Can be they exploited as resources for a new, participated and aware city development model and for conservation of the cultural heritage?

The answer to this questions needed an investigation aimed to the comparison among historical districts and spontaneous expressions: a research of traditional social-urban structures to define the historical determining factors belonging to the material and immaterial heritage that remain in the actual metropolis. As constants of the social-urban pattern, they can be posed at the base of historical urban heritage safeguard strategies and of development project for the informal areas.

### *Methodologies*

Performed during a six months stay in Cairo, the investigation concerns: analysis of the historical-urban evolutions; classification of the main types of urban pattern in the metropolis; selection of six study-areas representing different types of urban pattern exemplifying the urban composition; identification of the traditional urban and social structures in the historical city; definition of keywords useful to investigate and to compare the six study-areas; search, through the keywords, of the identified structures in the spontaneous and informal urban expressions, to verify their value as constants in the social-urban organization.

### *Results*

The traditional urban pattern corruption implicates the disappearance of some correlated habits, not replaced by a new system of features.

Today the metropolis satisfies only the demands of a minority, while some features identifying the traditional city are reaffirming themselves as spontaneous answers to the unsatisfied necessities, by modifying morphologically the spaces of planned neighborhoods, not suitable because designed for an extraneous living way. Also some urban functions are spontaneously managed applying to ancient customs.

So, around the official city, a self-managed new one grew; here lives those people for which normalcy is privilege, where social and cultural identity increases.

The transfer of western planning models excludes the spontaneous pushes and the local affairs from the space production, producing planned places unsuitable to the real necessities and neighborhoods that, penalized by emergency and illegality, they don't reach an acceptable housing quality.

On the contrary, it would be desirable to have an integration between governmental managerial abilities and natural organization of traditional social structure, inspired to those realities that valorise the local communities' abilities.

## Re-planning suburbia and housing policy

*Eleonora Giovene di Girasole*

The analysis of the latest years have described the suburbs according to the principles of the geographical and social distance, of the marginalization, of the incompleteness of the urban fabric, still less of the lack of quality. It is maybe useful to wonder whether these categories are still effective, whether they can, as in the past, represent the suburbs of the present Italian cities, or overcoming the commonplaces, whether a new image of the suburb comes out, as an area not always marginal, area of new centralities (embryonic or manifest) and above all area of new identities (Bellicini, 2001) and relations.

Starting by the hypothesis that our suburbs cannot be considered only as places to set against historic city any longer, characterized by incoherence, by absence, by segregation, and by a varied architectural-town planning language, but also as places with physical and social resources to exploit, it seems necessary to implement routes of upgrading. To this aim it is essential to find solutions suitable to the complexity of the places, to work either on the quality of the places and on the quality of the relations.

Today, from a physical point of view, the cities are composed, for the most part, of suburbs that are 30/40 years old. This is the age of the "physiological decline" of the used technologies, and for this reason they need many interventions to adapt the standards to the changed qualitative pretensions of the new generations.

Living discomfort reveals itself through the market incapacity of not satisfying with the needs of the weaker users (even because of the progressive dismantling of public and national insurance real estate), and with the qualitative demand of contemporary people.

The living discomfort doesn't emerge (only) like an absolute quantitative lack of lodgings, but like a performance inadequacy of the existing living estate, considered with reference to the renewed structure of people and their needs, both at building level and at environmental, territorial and services level.

Recently, in Europe, and in particular in Italy, several projects of upgrading are interesting for developing innovative and integrative solutions for areas characterized by a strong physical, social and economical decay. The main goal can be obtained by carrying out a kind of remodelling of the existing buildings, where the housing project is considered as an occasion to adjust the suburban quarters to the qualitative standard required nowadays by society; on the other hand, it can be achieved by a system of consistent works, which lies in the redesign of buildings, the definitions of new infrastructures and services and the enhancement of the old ones, the integration of the complexity of the internal relationships with the surrounding fabric of the city, and finally the involvement of the people.

In Italy, housing difficulties belong to citizens with low incomes or to disadvantaged people: policies in favor of houses have not been able to point out innovative and integrated systems and instruments able to generate a housing supply in differentiated rents, that could be a proper answer to, besides the social demand, even the part of demand coming from who, even if not considered poor, can't afford free market rents, even when these are planned.

In the 90es very little has been done, institutionally, to solve problems linked to the great housing discomfort and still now upgrading instruments are not specifically interested in the problem. Lately, experiences of research, carried out in Italy and in Europe, by committees, associations, co-operatives of solidarity field, started from 'the bottom' to solve access to housing problems, can be considered interesting and, for some aspects, in the forefront. The action fields of these organizations range from housing integration to supporting the purchase of a lodging, to the involvement, the restoration. It is so possible to recuperate, on the one hand, a massive under-utilized estate, that often is in bad conditions, and on the other hand, to address this part of recuperated estate to a social housing demand.

The paper will try to define a methodological analysis that compares a top-down approach, related to some recent interventions of renovation in Italy and Europe, that developed integrated and innovative solutions in particularly problematic districts, with a bottom-up approach, that investigates the initiatives with which the No Profit companies faced the problem of integration, of renovation and access to a house of quality.

At the same time, by analysing the recovery projects taking into account of solutions directed to improve the urban life quality, the paper explores the role of an immaterial upgrading and of a material upgrading, and their relationship.

Combining the two approaches, it will be possible to define a proposal for an integrated renovation of suburbs, realizing shared interventions of good quality, where building, infrastructural, town-planning, financial, and management aspects are related and linked to the actions for the living discomfort reduction and for the right to a lodging of quality.



## Small ports and new planning regulations

*Luca Barbarossa*

The complexity of synergic relationship between infrastructural systems and urban planning can also be significantly uncoupled in the logic of planning and management of coastal areas, particularly in port systems, historically characterized by conflictive relationships between ports and urban systems due to the planning and management of coastal and port areas.

Planning tools have often proved inadequate in setting up development programs in areas that are conditioned by infrastructural processes managed with tools and methods different from urban planning methods. Therefore taking into consideration the complexity of the relationship between port infrastructures, waterfront lay-outs and urban planning, it is essential that an integrated interpretative of port city systems be introduced in order to determine appropriate planning tools for urban and land redevelopment, capable of rectifying the existing fractures between port and city.

Small ports are particularly interesting, in terms of case studies, due to the planning dynamics, more similar to those met in urban planning, in which conflict between local authorities should be inexistent and the objectives to be maximized should, in theory, coincide. However, in absence of adequate knowledge of port dynamics, the potential economic impact, risks to emerge as an element of disruption inducing distorted effects, greater in small ports than those in large ports. In small ports, on the contrary, the risk of total disuse of port infrastructure assets is run, in addition to negative impacts on the environment and landscape and the inability to utilize the coastal areas for alternative and increased added value uses. In numerous cases unproductive small ports continue to offload fixed costs onto the local community. This phenomenon is even less acceptable if one considers that in most cases small ports continue to manage the port through new infrastructure systems and development plans intended for new types of sea traffic. This occurs in consequence to a distorted self-promotion of small ports in accord with local authorities which continue to perceive the port as a possible source of economic growth for the community.

The self-referential normative approach which regulates ports is accentuated on one hand by the guidelines for port planning regulations, not always congruent with urban and land planning tools, and on the other hand by the verification of the efficiency of the port planning regulations of which management and implementation procedures impose an institutional debate between local and port authorities, often characterized by unclear guidelines.

A case study of a number of small Sicilian ports, conducted by means of a comparative study of port and surrounding urban area development plans and an analysis

of port facilities and type of traffic, demonstrates beyond rhetorical proclamations, a situation of uncertainty and contradiction. What emerged in the majority of cases was the inability and indifference in urban planning to look at the port-city interface renovation from a synergic and compatible point of view. Port planning regulations, in most cases are depicted as simple lists of public works, aimed at reinforcing the port, in consequence to analytical studies on port traffic and the level of infrastructure which often don't correspond with reality.

What is still lacking are indications that define the relationship between ports and the various aspects of urban systems. At a regional level, the plans should mainly consider aspect of infrastructural growth, endeavour to set up effective policies of integration with urban planning and introduce coordination procedures between the various ports through choices that consent neighbouring ports to reciprocally reinforce themselves, making maximum use of the respective specificity. At a local level, it is necessary to enhance the role of the city council in the implementation and development of port planning regulations so as to avoid conflict of interests.

It is therefore necessary to deal with the functioning of urban planning and infrastructural growth also by means of legislative amendments, taking into consideration that port planning regulations are often in contrast with urban planning tools. In the case of small ports such regulation amendments would be particularly constructive, impeding unrealistic development planning schemes that often over-estimate the realistic potential of the port, consenting broader margins to evaluate alternative hypothesis, in some cases as drastic as the divestment of port facilities. New urban planning regulations in Sicily, have provided a number of indications to modify coastal area and port system management regulation tools and to organize integrated plans. At a regional level, integrated port planning regulations could be incorporated in strategic regional planning tools to then be carried out at an urban level through the application of city development plans or better still, detailed plans.

In conformity with detailed plan guidelines, port planning schemes could be carried out, not only by city council and port authorities, but also by private companies directly involved in port facilities. Detailed plans that specify the potential utilization of the coastal areas, that identify the operative areas and infrastructure to be improved as well as classifying the different types of sea traffic. It is therefore necessary to overcome a rhetorical approach in planning and in development projects and to consider moreover alternative planning and management formats that consent improved integration between urban and port planning.

Determining innovative planning and management tools for port systems can contribute to reinstating a proper urban role to small ports. For this reason, defining innovative infrastructural policies, in accordance with traditional planning policies, constitutes a fundamental step towards a new vision in port management.