



## Urbanistica n. 130

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The plan is not enough

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## Strategies, rules and decisions

*Federico Oliva*

The experience of Romanina obtained an universal consent: implementation modalities about urban project, international competition, relationship between urban transformation and mass mobility, environmental care represent the good elements characterizing this experience. However the full success depends on the decisional system of Italian politics.

Metropolitan strategy, based on the choice of 'urban and metropolitan centralities', the more important choice of new Rome Masterplan, is clearly explained in Marcelloni's article that however highlights the conflict between an open metropolitan vision towards environmental and infrastructural systems and a containment of settlement growth. This contrast is due more to an ideological behaviour than to a real assent to such vision.

In spite of this limit due to lack of politics, new Masterplan strategy seems right and innovative. It's right because the polycentric solution and the consequent general decentralization seems to be the only realistic solution. It's innovative because there are only few Italian experiences that debate the role of central city and aim to other development perspectives.

Innovation of competition is well described by Rossi and Gabrielli: the selection of the last three projects corresponds too three different modalities about centrality subject and, at the end, the winner solution grants the greatest integration and territorial permeability, but also necessary flexibility during the time. Salgado agrees with this idea and, in his interview, he explains as an outwardly rigid structure,

characterized by a regular grid based on two orthogonal central axes ('Roman'), showed itself the most flexible tool. He illustrates the difference between a great architecture project and an urban project; such ideas are taken up and studied in depth by Tsiomis.

Other two important essays concern preliminary studies and preliminary masterplan, that influenced the quality of selected projects. In fact, analysis about environmental system, arts and mobility system highlighted project potential for preliminary masterplan; while the environmental evaluation and participation are not so present in Italian experience.

The main lack of Roman experience consists in drawing up a PRG yet, a too rigid and statutory tool to face the present problems about transformation and urban redevelopment.

For this reason, local authority used PRG as a structural plan in many cases and it makes some derogation of existing rules, in order to grant the necessary flexibility and the concrete realization in advance to the final approval. As regards Romanina and the other centralities, PRG gives a defined volume quantity (almost 228,000 mq net areas, equally subdivided in private and public, that became almost 350,000 mq after citizen's objections to the plan) and it rules uses. Mix of uses is granted, as well as minimum public transfer equal to 50% of whole area. Some incentives were provided, in order to increase volume potential, but not until 500,000 mq, proposed by Salgado.

Plan quantity definition was discussed for long, because of the constant demand to reduce it from the majority, egged on by ideological ideas rather than real strategies. At the end,

ideology prevailed against studies and analysis, in particular about houses demand.

It's probably the increase of residential quantities was connected to the citizens' undertaking to realize some infrastructures, in particular the extension of underground, the construction of great road network, new station and a great interchange car park. All these reasons are sensible and politics should value public utility of action, from contribution towards construction of road network, to social building, to public utilities; and first of all it should value if project is consistent to strategy for a metropolitan balance.

Salgado's project contains fair values as regards territorial density, public parks and gardens, common spaces, public and private quantities. So, why does a right project has to be negotiated as regards quantities? Why does a dimensional not verified regulation has to stiffen an initial purpose? These questions bring tool and political decision process up for discussion again.

Political choices have to be coherent and free from any tactics, if we agree upon plan strategy of contrasting any territorial process without hierarchy and arrangement.

It's not easy to realize centralities, neither to construct a new mobility system with meagre public resources.

As regards tool, complex and difficult strategies need e new tool proposed and supported by town planning reform, that is structural plan. This plan is not statutory and only defines the great choices concerning the future structure of city and territory.