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Imaging Peripheries

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IMAGING PERIPHERIES

EDITED BY

Tobias Boos, Daniele Ietri, Eleonora Mastropietro

ESSAYS

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Monica Battistoni

Caterina Cameli

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EDITORIAL

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In the text of the call for paper we proposed for the *Imaging Peripheries* issue of *IMG Journal*, we started pointing out that “Peripheral territories are commonly believed to be the losers in the competition for people, services and resources and at the same time are persistently underrepresented in academic research and political discussion”. We also aimed at attracting submissions that would mainly focus on the theme of representing the peripheries, intended as those areas far from the major metropolitan areas that in the scientific literature and policymaking are generally qualified as ‘marginal’, ‘internal’, ‘inner’.

The authors who submitted to the call, multiplied the perspectives on the concept of peripherality, denying the scarce interest of research on the topic.

The contributions create a pattern of tense lines that pass from one text to another in variable geometries. The cross-references between one text and another concern theoretical reflections, methodological approaches or research and representation and forms of experimentation and planning, etc. The resonance between the various texts, although in a very varied panorama, invites us to reflect on the importance of putting into a network experiences of research and territorial practice, beyond logics linked to disciplinary and/or territorial affiliations. The articles collected in this special issue volume illustrate how diverse the nature of 'peripheral territories' is, since the peripheral, the marginalized, the unrepresented can also emerge in unexpected contexts when highlighted and mapped by the attentive researcher... Despite of their obvious differences, the 13 contributions share some common aspects. We would like to underline here only a few, considering this issue as a whole seen from a distant rather simplistic point of view.

Firstly, from our point of view as geographers we see two typologies of territories/places represented in the authors' texts: urban peripheries (i.e. areas that for their physical or functional localization are not part of the city center) and non-urban peripheries (i.e. small towns, less dense areas, also marginal areas, far from the centers of urbanization). Both of these territorial typologies, in most of the articles, share the aspect that the representations of their territory and their inhabitant's ways of live are strongly opposed to the features of the urban core.

Another interesting common feature is that the authors describe the peripheral areas under research as highly dynamic social and cultural spaces. The contributions show

for instance how marginalized places can provide a space for the re-definition of local identities. Other articles show that in peripheral areas social and economic transformation takes place and that the local communities of some inner areas show a high readiness to political and social participation. Thirdly, the approaches of the authors are in fact transformative rather than descriptive. Our fellow authors are performing and promoting research 'and' action, and one is tempted to say they perform research in action. This aspect we liked the most in reading and re-reading the articles: the peripheries here are rarely depicted in their being marginal or declining state of being but they are described as places promoting social interaction and change, and places of possibilities and freedom.

We hope this is and will be the case in many other 'peripheries' that are not included in this issue and that we are not even aware about.

IMG Journal chooses to present the articles in the issue following the alphabetical order of the authors. This is a straightforward way to solve the problem of sorting the contributions and is an interesting, albeit random, way of suggesting the readers how to approach the issue. In this short introduction we would like to offer a map or an itinerary through the essays. We of course perform this exercise with much caution, hoping to be able to grasp a point of view on each essay that the authors share. In presenting the contributions, we use a simple way to sort the case studies in this issue: we can in fact travel from Mediterranean to Alpine Italy, with a relevant stop in the large metropolitan area of Milan; and then move to Germany and France, in this case from the very south to the very north

of the 'Exhagon'; and finally, with a last group of articles, we discover case studies that are also geographically localized in north and south America. In this way, the articles are given a felicitous geographical itinerary, because it is very enriching to approach a subject from a comparative point of view. Let's start our journey. We begin in the Italian Mezzogiorno, where we are given two examples of non-urban 'peripheral' areas. Corradi and Santus take us to small villages and non-urban areas in Abruzzo. They address territories where peripherality is indeed not just a matter of being distant to a urban center, but rather means depopulation, loss of human capital, and the decline of the built environment and infrastructure. In Italy this complex of territorial conditions is defined and approached with the widely accepted concept of "aree interne" [internal areas]. This term itself is still controversial, of course, but it has become accepted in national and regional territorial planning because of its great political and pragmatical value. The term internal area is associated with a series of specific policy instruments aimed at providing a balanced distribution of basic service to the Italian population. These instruments are thus an important element in Italy's current regional cohesion policy (please refer to the paper by Vedoà in section 3, where the author presents this policy strategy that is being implemented in Italy). In fact, Corradi and Santus underline one of the main operational issues that researchers and practitioners face when working in peripheral territories: the lack of reliable data. Thus, collecting information, the data base, requires a large but necessary effort: an effort that, we must highlight this point, seems not to be common to every policy action we have been able to observe so far in the territories we study. This is not of course

the case for our fellow authors, who instead describe how they organized and ‘represented the territorial data’. They rely on geo-data available at the regional level, but also they were open to work on the field, meet the local actors, and listen to their understanding of their territory.

Travelling along the Adriatic coast towards North, Prinetti and Cameli propose a case study in the Marche and introduced the word “borghi” [villages] that is currently among the keywords everybody uses in Italy, referring to a large financial effort (circa one billion of euros!) intended to provide funds for regenerating (in the intentions of the decision makers) 250 “borghi” in the country (see cultura.gov.it/pnrr-borghi for further information). Prinetti and Cameli underline the trap behind the ‘imaginary of small peripheral towns exclusively as destinations for tourism’ – and the correlated rhetoric of some ‘authenticity’. They propose a different perspective to counterbalance this trend which is still a very relevant aspect of policies also considering the recurrence of the word ‘tourism’ in the results of the regeneration initiative we referred above. The authors examine the area of San Benedetto del Tronto where they give us great examples of both the tourism exploitation of many small towns and the consequent seasonality, which means in turn that the town is almost empty for most of the year, and the shrinking of the town tout court, as it is the case in territories where the population is constantly declining. They portray this decline by highlighting the high number of abandoned buildings, but they also pave the way for a political response through the involvement of educational institutions (the local university in particular), to foster “local, daily and stable dimensions of small towns and their territories”.

Gigliotti and Bassoli share some bibliographical references with Prinetti and Cameli: they all refer, among other things, to a 2020 book by Rem Koolhaas and to a 2018 book by the Canadian Center for Architecture. This suggests that the topics raised in this issue of the *IMG Journal* area to some extent circulating in the debate of the disciplines related with architecture. Gigliotti and Bassoli examine in their article, the concept of ‘exhibitory complex’, i.e. the exhibitions of architecture, that are to some extent anticipations of the forthcoming innovation in the field. The authors bring good news to our research topic as they argue that innovations in the latest years “take place just outside what for decades was recognized as an undisputed center: the city”. Prinetti and Cameli present a selection of Italian cases of architectural exhibitions: Belmonte Calabro which today is an almost abandoned “area interna” in Calabria, the residential ‘periphery’ of the medium sized Alpine city and the “post disaster rooftops” of Taranto a coastal city in Apulia. The Taranto case shows that the concept of peripherality is far wider than what we, as geographers, expected, and include the free spaces of rooftops where creativity and sociability can flourish in a city characterized by the central economic position of petrolchemical and heavy industry. All the exhibition activities carefully described by the authors have in common their temporary nature and the cases confirm one of the features of peripheries we identified before: they provide spaces for action, interaction and freedom, and they might thus represent territories for developing innovation. Among the technological innovations, as one could expect, the role of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) is one of the topics at the center of the discussion on peripheral

areas. It is first and foremost a priority for policies, given the importance of bridging the digital divide that still affects many areas far from the metropolitan centers. It is quite a common experience for those of us living in the non-urban areas to have not the availability of broadband internet. Unfortunately, for the peripheral territories, this is an indispensable infrastructure in order to take part in the widely acclaimed smart-working or distance-working environment of present day. But the digital divide was a disadvantage that businesses, professionals and citizens had to cope with well before the pandemic shock and its consequences. ICTs are not only a relevant mean of private and working communication but also of 'boosting tourism attractiveness'. This aspect is discussed by Vedoà, contributing to the Italian cases of this issue presenting territories from the Western Alps. This part of Northern Italy show both areas where tourism is developed up to being the prevalent (or sole) local industry and areas that instead have been slowly depopulating and/or declining, especially during the second part of the last century when the larger metropolitan areas of Torino, Milano and Genova operated as development poles attracting the population from the remote, poorly developed areas and at the same time providing the demand for tourism by urban residents. In the Alpine regions, tourism development did not necessary result in the modernization and expansion of infrastructure and did not foster the development of decent services of general interest for the resident population, such as medical care centers and schools. As a result, many of these areas are now considered as "aree interne", fragile territories featuring socio-economic decline. This should be a warning sign to the 'development' projects that still nowadays focus on tourism attractiveness,

despite the many cases showing the disadvantages and weaknesses of a territorial development based almost exclusively on the development of the tourist industry. The Italian Alps have a close functional relationship with the metropolitan poles that developed in the plain, the Pianura Padana, or Po valley: its eastern part shows quite a polycentric urban geography, while the western part is dominated by Torino and of course Milano. Given the strength of the urbanization in the city network, it is no surprise that these territories show an articulated, semi-continuous metropolitan area, with many peripheries. In our opinion the representation of these peripheral territories are depicted in an outstanding clear and illuminating way in the project *Padania Classics* run by Filippo Minelli which can be visited online (www.filippominelli.com/project/padania-classics). This project is dedicated to peripheries in the non-central parts of urban areas. Two articles in the presented issue focus on such inner urban peripheries on the example of the metropolitan area of Milan. Casonato and Vedoà work on landscape education in the south of Milan. The authors describe an education project which involved a large number of students from schools and universities working in urban peripheral areas in the peculiar context of Southern Milan, where urbanization is juxtaposed with agricultural land use. From our point of view the presented project contributes, among other things, to 'build non stereotyped and complex imaginaries and representations' of the periphery, which is a relevant step towards enabling more participation by the residents. In the second contribution that focuses on the metropolitan area of Milan, Lucarno and Lucarno articulate the concept of peripheral territory associating it with the social and economic

marginalization of immigrant populations and the physical degradation of buildings and infrastructures, the lack of public spaces and the general impoverishment of social cohesion. The contribution deals with the case of Baranzate, a municipality in the north metropolitan area of Milan, quite known for being the municipality with the highest percentage of immigrants on the total resident population in Italy. Beyond the demographic data the article considers the social and physical fragmentation of the municipal territory and uses the analysis of the landscape as a tool to identify and understand the crisis points and the potentialities of the territory. Following the author, a landscape is characterized by historical stratification revealing the development of the area in its reconstruction. Lucarno and Lucarno show that Baranzate, indeed, developed from being a former agricultural territory into a belt municipality that grew thanks to internal migrations and industrial development. Today, instead, the area is distinguished by a process of general deindustrialization, impoverishment and growth of poor migrant communities. The contribution highlights how this fragmentation leads to an image of Baranzate, also spread by the media, as a suburban ghetto. This prevailing 'image', despite several projects in place, is today an 'obstacle to development and redevelopment'. The challenge for local actors is to be able to change this image in order to transform Baranzate into a real multi-ethnic community which can provide the bases to prosper.

The last contribution presenting an Italian case takes us to Perugia, a medium sized city in central Italy. It is well known that archeological remains are localized in many places of the country and one is inclined to say that archeological sites are omnipresent throughout the whole country. Our imaginary

is fueled by the ruins and artefacts of past civilizations in the center of Italian cities of today or which are exposed in protected archeological districts. But Belardi, Battistoni and Sorignani introduce the case of an Etruscan necropolis as a part of a chaotic peripheral complex that includes infrastructures, prefabricated sheds, decaying residential buildings, etc. In the presented case the problem to be assessed by a regeneration project is not primarily the preservation of the archeological relics but rather the need to re-organize a periphery that apparently was transformed by the growth of the city, without taking part in it. The authors include the 'representations' of the transformative approach in their 'architectural project'. They remember us that peripheries with negative connotation of 'unsolved places' are frequently present in the urban structure and host every day's life of many residents. Thus the need for the projects to address the vulnerabilities and promote regeneration and social integration in territories that are the daily palimpsest for many individuals is an important object for academic research.

It's now time to continue our trip to other European and American countries and regions. On our way we have the opportunity to read the sole theoretical article in this issue adopting a theoretical point of view on the term 'periphery'. Michele Valentino discusses the concept of periphery, with the aim to identify some breaking points in the classical analysis of the relationship between center and periphery, particularly in relation to the current configuration of urban space. His discussion is then related to the problem of 'cartographic representation'. The act of mapping he says put in correspondence "two systems – the real one and the cartographic one". The author observes, that in the

cartographic representation we can find a close proximity between the concept of periphery with the one of the boundary. However, the definition and representation of boundaries seems today to be no longer adequate in relation to processes that redefine the concept of center-periphery or the spatial distribution of processes. For this reason, Valentino recalls examples of ethnographic urban maps, as an incentive to reflect on the modalities of representation of spatial processes, as well as, on a scientific level, as a cue to propose overcoming 'boundaries' between disciplines in a trans-disciplinary perspective.

Garland presents a contribution on the so-called Calais Jungle, an informal migrant camp, located on the periphery of Calais, in the area of Les Dunes. This informal settlement reached the attention from mass media at a national and international level, particularly during the most acute phase of the Syrian refugee emergency in 2015-2016. The article proposes an intermediate reflection, on a research project still in progress. The periphery is here approached according to a perspective that we could define multiscalar. The jungle is in fact located in an urban periphery, but at the same time it is situated at a margin point on the European border. Besides being a geographic periphery, the informal settlement is also a 'visible representation' of a margin point of European identity and culture. It condenses signs that directly recall the crisis of the European economic model, in which there is a border between migrants and residents, between rich and poor, between members of different cultures and, indeed, even within the camp between migrants of different countries of origin. The contribution connects these dynamics observed through a critical reading of (post)

colonial processes in the European context. The research is presented through an autoethnographic narrative, which features the process of the approach and encounter of the author with the case study context.

The concept of periphery as space of possibilities and freedom, to which we referred at the beginning of this introduction, is theoretically approached in the article by Van Lessen. After discussing what the label of periphery entails, the authors conclude: “regions that are labeled as peripheral suggest [...] less regulation by the center and, therefore, more freedom”. This situation of the peripheral areas is discussed in the study referring to the theoretical concept of play: the cases are selected in order to present peripheral regions that are used as playgrounds. The first example takes us in the south of France, where the Principauté de Aigues-Mortes stands as one of the many (400 to 600 according to the author) micronations around the world. Born as a sort of parody of the Principauté de Monaco, the presented micronation introduces itself as “l’improbable et rocambolesque micronation du sud de la France qui stimule la citoyenneté alternative et complémentaire”. As a matter of fact, side by side with this playful image, the initiative is an association organizing events and fostering the economic development of the local territory: the project promotes the image of the city, also improving the quality of life and the feeling of self-efficacy of the residents. Van Lessen then take us to eastern Germany; the Uckermark Kreis (Uckermark district) of the Land Brandenburg (State of Brandenburg). This is a typical rural and ‘shrinking’ region, affected by demographic decline and the lack of services of general interest. Moreover, also the image of the territory

is associated with wordings such as “outlying region”. Surprisingly, in the survey conducted by the authors, there is also an immigration trend into the Uckermark, mainly by people that previously lived in large cities such as the nearby Berlin. Most of this urban migrants moved into the countryside as a consequence of personal decisions which in many cases corresponded with the search for a ‘good life’; a life they considered meaningful and in which they can develop their capacities freely. For example “a middle-aged interviewee [...] explains that he considered emptiness something he could fill”. In both cases the concept of play is used to think outside normal academic ways and to view personal and social processes as dynamic and sometimes unpredictable for the researched and the researcher. However, the presented cases in this contribution differ on the level of the image and imaginary: the French case humorously refers to the ‘state’ and the monarchy, the German case refers to a romantic idea of rural life. In this issue three of the included studies refer to territories from South and North America, and we conclude this survey presenting them: they include also the keynote article opening the issue and closing this itinerary, as we propose it to the reader as the last of our journey. Among the many aspects of peripheries one should consider also the complex sub-urban areas in many metropolises of developing countries. Verniz studies the informal settlements of one of Rio de Janeiro’s favelas: in a context in which the lack of housing results in self-construction and thus in an urban development without planning. The author examined the spontaneous process of growth in the informal settlement Santa Marta and that in fact the development of the

settlement is not as ‘unplanned’ as one might suppose. Indeed, Verniz is able to describe the local formal ways in the decision making process lying behind the selection of location as well as the orientation and the shape of buildings. The study, based on empirical data collected in the area, generates a grammar-based computational model, that is then validated generating a ‘planned favela’ adjacent to the existing one. The presented contribution shows how the general approach of research-intervention/action that runs across almost every article in this issue of *IMG Journal* has the possibility of being implemented at different geographical scales; from nations up to the single building. ‘Representing territories, also small ones, on the map’ remains crucial: as seen before, for example, to point out the situation of unused buildings, or in the Santa Marta case to collect the proper data and validate the computational model.

A single specific building –a former carriage factory built in 1909 in Des Moines, Iowa– is the object of investigation and intervention of Goché. The author works in the post-industrial landscape using methodologies that include ‘exploratory drawing, photography and video’. These tools are used in the outlined survey of the building, in order to study history and context; the narratives developed are then used in order to design a possible project of regeneration. In the keynote essay, that opens the issue, is written by the economist Kresl who is a specialist in urban economy and policies, and has important experiences of fieldwork and comparative analysis. He opens his argumentation discussing the role of images and imaginaries in the relationship between urban centers and rural peripheries in the United States and how this relationship affects the

ability of conversation and communication in designing public policies. He evokes also the impact of the image of the city to the eyes of the visitor arriving from the countryside, both in the past or nowadays. The author uses examples and insights from the USA, also in relation to how policies were implemented while the leadership of the federal government was held by autocratic/populist forces. Indeed, we can find many comparable situations in other parts of the world, including Europe of course. Kresl identifies several areas of policy in which residents of both urban and rural territories, instead of being contraposed, have common interests: e.g. health care, schools, infrastructures, funding of small businesses, management of natural resources. The author calls for a pragmatic approach on policies, also by citizens of the peripheral regions and their representatives. In this context, the access to correct and balanced information seems crucial, also in order to interrupt the isolation in which many residents of the peripheries risk to live, as a consequence of the depopulation and more recently of the pandemic crisis.

From our point of view, also a balanced production of images and imaginary of marginalized areas and people beyond stereotypes is crucial, in order to recognize peripheries as complex and dynamic spaces that are more than the 'non-central'. Another essential issue for research in peripheral areas is to respect and support the ability of their residents to place themselves in the contemporary world. In our view the most relevant result of this issue is that all contributions propose representations of the peripheries as places of action and change, intended to be inhabited (designed, planned, etc.) and to take part of today's world in important ways.

PERIPHERAL REGIONS AND POLICY FORMATION

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KEYNOTE ESSAY 03/05

PERIPHERAL

POPULATION DENSITY

TACIT EXCHANGE OF KNOWLEDGE

CITY SIZE

NETWORK CITIES

Political discourse in many countries is significantly impacted by the existence of populations that live in urban centers and other populations that live in rural or peripheral places. Due to factors such as population density, economic activity, proximity to schools, retail and health facilities, attachment to religion, and access to diverse political opinions, people living in the peripheral areas tend to be relatively conservative and those in urban areas are relatively liberal. Thus we have two elements of the population that tend to live in silos, having little dialogue or even contact with the other. This results in a national political dialogue that is not at all productive or capable of generating policies that would benefit the population. In many countries of Europe and the Americas, the politically left and right parties or movements are, figuratively speaking, at war with each other.

In spite of this, an examination of the reality of many areas of public policy reveals that there are, in fact, many areas of public policy that are of benefit to both urban and periphery dwellers such as, education, access to health care, management of water and waterways, funding of small businesses and banks and local governments, and infrastructure. I have recently compiled a set of 40 such policies that could be adopted because they are of direct benefit to dwellers in both silos (Kresl, 2021). Recognition of this mutual benefit could advance the discussion of public policy and even lead to implementation of some of these policies. Those living on the periphery and in the inner city could engage in a dialogue that would be of benefit to both of these groups, and peripherality would no longer be identified with exclusion from a beneficial political discourse.

It is a rather general feature of public policy in democratic, or reasonably so, societies that the forces that articulate and implement policy with regard to virtually all aspects of society are developed by forces that are situated in, and responsive to the needs of, central places. These are the conurbations in which most of the nation's population and most of the other than resource-based economic activity is situated. Based on one or more very large cities, these are centers of wealth, power, influence, ambition and ideas that invariably dominate the surrounding area that is, in so many ways, subordinate to each of them. Large cities have been the dominant center of our societies for millennia. Some cities, such as Rome and Athens, were rather compact, while others, such as Angkor Wat and Chichen Itza, were very expansive cities that were relatively thinly populated but extended for tens of miles. These early cities were held together by a religious faith and structure, supported by sophisticated agriculture and other production; today's large cities are economic in their structure and function and it is this characteristic and its institutions—from banks to corporate offices to policy think tanks—that give them their key role, whether formal or informal, in policy formation. Many, of course, have histories of being imperial centers that have evolved into national political capitals. But others, such as Chicago, Barcelona, Frankfurt, Los Angeles and Sydney have been blessed with a locational or economic asset advantage that has given them prominence. Some, such as Minneapolis-St. Paul, and Dallas-Ft. Worth are part of more complex conurbations than that of a single city with smaller, secondary urban centers.

In opposition to these conurbations are the areas that are peripheral to them. We will have to resolve a set of questions if we are to understand them. First, what are these peripheral regions? What are their characteristics, their strengths and their weaknesses? Second, how do they relate to conurbations, and to other peripheral regions? Third, how are the peripheral region and its residents perceived by other peripheral regions and the conurbations? How does the peripheral

region, or rather its residents, perceive the others? Fourth, how can a peripheral region insinuate itself into the area of power and decision-making? Fifth, what does a peripheral region have to offer to central areas? Finally, are alliances important? What alliances can be formed, and how?

REPRESENTATION THROUGH IMAGES

Before we examine these important issues, it would be useful to consider some images of the relation between peripheral regions and their people and the centers of power. First, we will consider the perception of a center of power and authority in the mind of a resident of a peripheral region. Second, we will then propose images that depict the relationship between residents of the various constituencies of a political society such as the US, and then an image of a structure that comports to the relationships that exist in the urban area. The peripheral region exists both as an entity unto itself with its own objective characteristics, and as a human society that is defined in its relationship to the conurbation.

One can imagine peasants who live in a peripheral region approaching a great cathedral city, such as Salisbury or Chartres. As they get closer they see the tall spire that points upward and seems to point to the heavens and the god they presumably worship. In the cathedral, is a bishop with his ecclesiastical and lay authority and powers, and a small cohort of clergy. The cathedral owns extensive lands that generate a substantial income and wealth for it. This is as close as a resident of a peripheral region will get to power and to the process of policy formation. The peasant is humbled by this representation of power and authority and only occasionally rises above this passivity to challenge it.

The contemporary counterpart of this would be a resident of the Central Valley or the Sierra Nevada in California, approaching Los Angeles, as in Figure 2. Through the smog of the urban area one would be able to see the extensive col-



Figure 1 Salisbury Cathedral, seen from a distance. Retrieved June 15, 2020 from <<http://www.newforestexplorersguide.co.uk/days-out/a-little-farther-away/salisbury.html>>

lection of high rise buildings that house the economic institutions and actors, the decision-makers, and the wealth that are as beyond comprehension the peripheral dweller as was Salisbury centuries earlier. The mechanisms and functioning of the decision making processes in this contemporary center of power and policy decision making are part of another world. Unless this gap is breached, the two components of society will remain foreign to each other and little fruitful interaction is likely to take place.

The several barriers of comprehension that exist between residents of the conurbation and the peripheral regions make it difficult for them to have a fruitful conversation on public policy. Today some political actors have worked to exacerbate these differences and this incomprehension. Ann Applebaum has shown clearly how this incomprehension has been developed by autocratic leaders such as Victor Orbán in Hungary; Nigel Farage, Boris Johnson and the Brexiteers in the UK; and Donald Trump in the US. Each has followed the strategy of attacking the credibility of a free press, has eviscerated the legislature and has worked to make the court system into a house of lap-dogs (Applebaum, 2020).

In the United States, Trump has worked to create sharp divisions among the populace to the extent that the current depiction of the US electorate is that they are cossetted in separate, distinct and isolated groupings commonly referred to as silos. The image in Figure 3 depicts four such silos, each isolated from the others and completely unto itself. We can imagine the one on the left, isolated from the others, to represent the peripheral region; the other three could be three cities or perhaps three urban centers clustered in a single conurbation, but also isolated from, and probably competing with, each other. Or we could imagine the silo on the left is the electorate with the other three being Applebaum's press, legislature and judiciary, all tamed and incapable of independent action.

A contrasting image is afforded by the Petronas Towers, in Figure 4. These two towers located in one of the world's largest cities house individuals in separate companies, in



Figure 2 Los Angeles, from a distance. Retrieved June 10, 2020 from < <https://www.everypixel.com/image-3061468807607223793>>

separate occupations, and, of course, with separate lives. Nonetheless, in this urban structure there are two bridges that connect the two towers at floor 41, for visitors, and floor 42, for staff, and that facilitates contact, communication and even collaboration with individuals in the other tower. These towers function quite differently than do the four silos. On the third floor, connecting the two towers again, is an 850 seat concert hall below which is a 1.5 million square feet retail mall. On the ground level is a public garden with fountains. “These three facilities further emphasize that this is a public and cultural structure... the design, ornamentation and spaces linked this building explicitly to this city and to this country”. (Kresl & Ietri, 2017, p. 74) This is nothing at all like the silos that compartmentalize and isolate the conurbation and the periphery regions in the US.



Figure 3 Silos. Retrieved June 9, 2020 from < <https://www.cmswire.com/digital-marketing/how-silos-are-killing-your-omnichannel-strategy/>>

OBSERVATIONS *RE* PERIPHERAL REGIONS

Now we can turn to examination and analysis of the characteristics of peripheral regions, their relationship with conurbations, and their potentiality for economic actions that will work to their advantage.

Perhaps the most striking characteristic of peripheral regions is their low population density and the greater distances that must be traveled for necessities such as schooling, health care, air travel and centers of retail that characterize them in comparison to conurbations. Health care is the most pressing issue and this has been exacerbated by the economics of the contemporary model of provision of care in which private equity and other models based on high returns to investors rather than service to clients are becoming the rule. Large urban hospitals have been buying smaller rural hospitals, which they then close after a short period of time, forcing residents in peripheral areas to travel great distances for care. This is also happening in urban areas, especially in low income minority parts of the city, urban zones that are so deprived of modern technology and assets that they can properly be considered as urban peripheries. A case in point is that of the Hahnemann University Hospital in Philadelphia. Private equity investors see structures, such as hospitals, as real estate that has a higher market return as apartment housing or a retail center than it does as a hospital. When Hahnemann was shuttered, residents of North Philadelphia lost their accessible hospital and their access to health care was greatly diminished. After destroying Hahnemann, the investor returned to California and a new seven million dollar, eight thousand square foot house (Pomorski, 2021, p. 37). Interestingly enough, this issue puts peripheral regions in the same bag, so to speak, as inner city residents with regard to adequacy of health care, and with regard to their relationship to the high tech urban space. A policy that would be beneficial to both constituencies and that would bring them out of their silos into a collaborative initiative, would be construc-



Figure 4 The Petronas Towers, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Retrieved December 10, 2016 from: Andy Mitchell from <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Petronas_Panorama_II.jpg>

tion of scores or hundreds of health care clinics staffed by 3-5 medical professionals, throughout peripheral regions such as Maine, Eastern Oregon, Appalachia and the Great Plains, as well as the city centers of large cities such as Chicago, Philadelphia, Dallas and Atlanta, who could provide basic care to ‘walk ins’ and could also manage a telemedicine linkage with a major hospital anywhere in the country. There are many other such policy initiatives that could unite peripheral region residents with their counterparts in urban areas that could diminish the power of the current silo model.

In a just published book, *Public Policy in Contentious Times* (Kresl, 2021), I have examined the relevance of an extensive number of public policy initiatives relating to the economy, the environment, schooling, infrastructure, urban-rural issues, and Case and Deaton’s “Deaths of Despair” – drugs, alcohol and suicide (Case & Deaton, 2020). In these six policy areas I discerned there are 40 specific policy recommendations that would be relevant to, and supported by, both peripheral and urban, especially inner city, populations. In addition to health care, policies that would be beneficial to both silos include: pre-K and K-12 education; drinkable water whether availability in the West or in lead-free pipes in older towns and cities; investments in skill developments of young people; access to high speed internet; support for small businesses and small banks; support for small and general purpose air ports/fields; upgrading rail and bus service; more intelligent forest management; and transfers of funds to local governments for infrastructure improvements. Of the policies I have identified, 22 of them have been included the three policy initiatives proposed this year by President Biden – the American Rescue Plant Act, the American Jobs Plan and the American Family Plan. In spite of resentment, lack of respect and indifference felt by those who populate the various silos of our society, I have shown these policies to be potentially supported by these various constituencies.

The spatial distribution of the US population has significant impacts on the formation and adoption of public policy

in the political structures of the country. Throughout the US, the median density for Democrat districts is 1,197 per square mile, while it is 738 for independents, and just 585 for Republicans. Urban areas are predominantly Democratic, and rural or peripheral regions tend to be Republican. Similar patterns are found for per capita income and educational attainment, with peripheral regions being less wealthy and less well educated. It is also interesting that the median distance from a city of 100,000 population or more is 12 miles Democrats, 17 miles for Independents and 20 miles for Republicans. Hardly peripheral but these are median figures and with many Republicans situated in some high income suburbs, the rest of the members of this party can indeed be located in the periphery, quite distant from a conurbation; the figures remain indicative of the relation of each group to an urban center (Marist Poll, 2021). In a study of 50 democracies, Gethin, Martínez-Toledano and Piketty found that “rural zones are always more favorable to Conservatives. To the extent that they tend to be less developed than the cities, this cleavage has contributed historically to inhibiting class division” (Gethin et al., 2021, p. 21). Piketty has shown that between the end of WWII and 1990 better educated voters opted for the Republicans but that since 1990 these voters shifted to the Democrats. In recent years this has become true for voters who are financially better off, they too have shifted noticeably from Republican to Democratic (Piketty, 2021, p. 119). Thus, whether the indicator is wealth, income, education attained, distance from a city or population density, there is a clear separation of the political values and voting between peripheral regions and urban centers. In the analysis of the 2020 US presidential election done by Dan Kopf, the Democrat Joe Biden got only 30 per cent of the vote in counties with less than 100 people per square mile, but 55 per cent in counties with 2,000 per square mile. Population density is clearly a causal factor in the creation of the silos in American society.

Furthermore, I found that with many people living in close proximity the number of people one meets will be greater the more densely people are concentrated. There are more

acquaintanceships, subcultures develop and thrive, and progressive ideologies are given freer rein to develop and to flourish. This counters the traditionalism that is common in less dense populations in which religiosity and conservatism (and gun ownership) are stronger (Kresl, 2017).

According to Reeves,

In rural, less populated areas, residents are more likely to know one another and to talk with their neighbors. Those interpersonal relationships are highly influential and can create a social pressure to conform. There also is a lot of resentment on the part of rural residents toward urban communities. (Savat, 2020)

Conformity may work well in agricultural, that is peripheral, regions where technology and practice advance only slowly, but it inhibits the free interchange of ideas and the ‘tacit exchange of knowledge’ that sustains sectors of the economy in which technology and practice, by competitive necessity, advance rapidly.

Given the low population density in peripheral regions, settlements and their economies are necessarily rather small. Does this inhibit firms and communities in these regions from taking advantage of features that one finds in conurbations? That is, is there an advantage of size that these regions cannot achieve? Kotkin wrote that: “Increasingly, the key formula is not about achieving size, but efficiency” (Kotkin, 2014, p. 4). One way to achieve the equivalency of size in through, what Alonso, referred to as “borrowing size” (Alonso, 1974, p. 200). Borrowing size can enable the small peripheral economy to gain the advantages of being in a large conurbation: 1) by linking itself to an international airport by means of a small regional airport, 2) by offsetting lack of economies of agglomeration with lack of diseconomies such as congestion or crowding, 3) by using lower costs in the smaller economy to offset the cost of transporting components or raw materials of production from the larger location and 4) by using the virtual revolution in production that has been brought by telecommunication advances to enable workers hundreds of

miles distant to work together collaboratively. Many workers have discovered during the pandemic period that they like working from home, no matter how distant from the office it may be, and employers are discovering that workers can be as fully effective when work is being done in the worker's home. This is bringing a small revolution to the economic efficiency and competitiveness of producers in peripheral regions.

Much has been written about the movement of workers out of the high tech coastal cities, presumably into the interior of the country and even into the periphery. However, a report published by Brookings calls this into question. While it is true that 4.7 million workers have moved out of eight major coastal cities during the past year, less than 200,000 have moved into the Heartland and Mountain states – the periphery, and many of them moved to existing tech centers such as Madison, Wisconsin, Denver, Colorado, Nashville, Tennessee, and Boise, Idaho. The majority of moves were just to suburbs and other towns in close proximity to the pleasures of the big city (Muro et al., 2021).

This advance in technology means that producers and towns in the peripheral region can establish collaborative relationships with counterparts in other locations in the periphery, or elsewhere. Effective linkages between workers in many high technology areas of the economy are being established whether the workers are on the 10th and 20th floors of the same building or on different continents. The person on one end of the connection may not be aware of, or care about, the population or the population density where the person on the other end of the connection is working – it is simply irrelevant. The future economy will very likely bring exciting new opportunities for active engagement in the larger economy for producers in peripheral areas. Allen Scott speaks of a new state of affairs “where the city and the country seem to be set on a path of reconvergence toward one another”. He focuses on “non-metropolitan areas comprising rural expanses and associated networks of small towns that participate in the new cognitive-cultural economy” (Scott, 2012, pp. 15, 149). Creation

of “associated networks of small towns”, presumably in the peripheral regions, will enable them to form collaborative relationships that enable them to achieve efficient linkages and structures of production that make it possible for them to form production entities that are competitive in national and in international markets. This is clearly one way in which peripheral regions can become actors on the greater stage.

City size has always been a criterion of a successful city, but this has been under reconsideration in recent years. The question posed by one of the first writers on the subject of the “creative city”, Charles Landry, is

whether smaller places, especially those with industrial traditions such as producing coal, steel, manufactured goods or beer can be creative. In relative terms the answer is yes. While they cannot compete with global hubs there is a vast range of global niches and strengths to be captured. And indeed very large places often become dysfunctional and so reduce their creativity potential. (Landry, 2011, p. 524)

David Batten has studied “network cities”, and finds that key factors in the success of this structure include “conflicting forces of agglomeration and dispersion; geographical proximity and commuting time: local transport costs; diversity and complementarity of function; land prices; and access to quality green space” (Batten, 2011). That this structure can exist successfully in a peripheral region is indicated by one of his successful “functional cohesive web(s) of not-too-distant settlements” is that of New Mexico’s Technology Triangle, consisting of Albuquerque, Santa Fe and Los Alamos (Batten, 2011, p. 303). The Technology Triangle is about 500 miles from major cities – Phoenix and Denver, but has a history of research in aerospace and nuclear power. High speed internet and air travel have greatly reduced the isolation of city networks in peripheral regions.

Half of college/university graduates leave their birth state by the age of 30, whereas this is true for only 27 per cent of high school graduates and less than 17 per cent of high school

dropouts do (Moret, 2012, p. 157). Thus, the peripheral city or town has the challenge of retaining its educated youth, perhaps more than attracting talented workers from cities. Anderson, et al. suggest that a greater challenge for peripheral regions is that of creating a beneficial business climate. They should work to “strengthen their originality and authenticity rather than trying to become more global in their people climate, as they cannot compete in that playground with larger city regions”. They can make themselves attractive to skilled workers by focusing on their social relations and their local identity. But they do believe that peripheral regions can carve out a place for themselves in the competitive environment (Anderson et al., 2014, p. 133).

CONCLUSIONS

My objective in this paper was presentation of an analysis as to how peripheral regions in the US relate to the rest of the polity and the economy, and to then propose a model of analysis that will enable us to bridge the gap that separates relatively conservative residents in peripheral regions with the more liberal counterparts in conurbations. Each has been portrayed as being cosseted in a silo that provides an effective barrier to interaction with dwellers of the other silo or silos. In the context of the US, the division can also be seen as that of rural and urban, town and city, and Red state and Blue state, or as periphery and conurbation. In the current political condition of the US, bi-partisanship in Congress has broken down and the public has no mechanisms for imposing a rational resolution of political differences. One of the key factors has been the deterioration of news media, as more citizens retreat from newspapers that brought both liberal and conservative columnists and consensus views of current events. Private capital investors have purchased major city newspapers such as the Chicago Tribune and the Denver Post, among others, dismissed much of the editorial and reportorial staff in stra-

tegies that have brought the demise of historically important sources of balanced news and editorial comment. Individuals have retreated to their silos, of left and right, with little interaction, relying on their favored site to use algorithms to select for them what they should read and that shield them from news that would challenge their cossetted opinions.

We have noted that peripheral regions have tended in the US to be relatively, if not aggressively, conservative. Other features such as low population density and the resulting distances to schooling, health, retail and other features of modern life contribute to the shaping the identity and the economic potential of peripheral regions. Nonetheless, the analysis of this paper indicates that there are many areas of policy in which residents of peripheral regions and those of, among others, inner city districts have commonality in objective and in impact that will allow for development of inter-silo communication and the formation of policies that will benefit both communities. These include: health care, schooling, infrastructure, funding for small business/banks and local governments, and management of forests and waterways, among other things.

Much of the attachment to an individual silo is based on misinformation and ignorance. Peripheral regions have the most to benefit from a rational, dispassionate discussion of public policy. They deserve to be serviced by objective presentation and discussion of the major political issues of the day, as well as analysis of the costs and benefits of individual policies.

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EXHIBITING PLACES INSTALLATION PRACTICES AT THE MARGINS

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EPHEMERAL ARCHITECTURE

EXHIBITIONS

INSTALLATIONS

IMAGERY

PROVINCES

The paper illustrates how the experiments by some emerging architectural practices, adopting the tools of temporary setup, often not far from installation or exhibition design, claim a deeper sense of architecture, and identify marginal areas –distant from the centres of our cities as widely accredited attractive areas for tourism or leisure– as valuable reservoirs of resources, redefining their established patterns. Their interventions create an intermediate space, which instead of obsessively opposing centre and periphery, urban and rural, modernity and tradition, global and local, is able to instil a deviation, staging new images and opening up to a new imagery. In the ephemeral character of the presented projects lays

one of their more powerful strengths. They concentrate an enormous amount of energy in a certain place at a certain moment and this phenomenon has a big transformative potential. In this context, performances, installations and exhibitions can be understood as activist's tools making the appropriation of marginal areas as well as devices capable of strengthening community interactions. This paper is part of a broader analysis connected to a research project that starts from the assumption that architectural exhibitions today should be recognised as a mean oriented not only towards the documentation and presentation of architecture, but as a proper instrument for the production of architectural experiments.

The time seems to have come to 'turn the telescope' with which the environmental phenomenon has been observed so far. Up to now (starting from the last three centuries; it was different before) the optics have been focused towards the city –as a set of artefacts and circulation systems– the background, consisting of the countryside, the landscape, the natural environment, has continued to be observed in passing. Only recently, the observation of the background has become more attentive, but it remained a background and therefore blurred and of little significance. Now, driven by the consequences of modes of transformation that are antagonistic to the basic interests of the human beings and any living species, it becomes necessary to establish that 'the environment is everything' and that territory, landscape, countryside, urban peripheries, cities, historic town centres, buildings, squares etc. are individual cases of the environmental universe. (De Carlo, 1991, p. 152)¹

What do we mean, as architects, by periphery? And what do we mean by countryside? As stated in the call/manifesto for this issue, for a long time we have dismissed those places measuring 'their value only in relation to the city': an approach that, ironically, could be summed up as a *hicsunt leones* attitude. Nevertheless, during the last few years, a renewed awareness by the side of architects and urban planners in territories 'beyond the city' emerges, an interest that testifies their relevance also as far as it concerns the cultural production located within urban contexts.

Starting from the assumption that architectural exhibitions are today widely recognised as tools not only for documenting and presenting architecture, but a thing in themselves (Szacka, 2019) and a proper instrument for the production of architectural experiments (Colomina, 2008), we want to address the issues examined in this paper starting from examples that belong to the exhibitionary complex (Bennett, 1988) of architecture. Exhibitions and temporary installations respond to changes in current phenomena with more reactivity and promptness than architecture itself,

which deals with slower and longer timescales. In this sense, the analysis of exhibitions –of architecture exhibitions in this specific case– often enable us to detect in advance certain paradigm shifts and accelerations in the thematic evolution of the discourse on architecture. If in the exhibitions architecture has been treated for decades as a merely urban or metropolitan fact, in the last years, the ‘lens of the telescope’, according to Giancarlo De Carlo’s metaphor, seems to have been turned towards more marginal contexts, towards the peripheries to a certain extent.

In 2016, the 15th International Architecture Exhibition organised by La Biennale di Venezia, curated by Alejandro Aravena, was titled *Reporting from the Front* and made the value of ‘frontier’ places for architectural practice (Aravena, 2016) explicit. This position resonated in some of the exhibitions that were presented by the National Pavilions, such as *Arcipelago Italia* (Cucinella, 2018), or *Building a Future Countryside*, (Xiangning, 2018), which showed how some of the most innovating projects, paradoxically, take place just outside what for decades was recognized as an undisputed centre: the city.

In 2020, a solid institution as the Guggenheim Museum in New York opened *Countryside. The Future*, the eagerly awaited exhibition curated by AMO and Rem Koolhaas (Koolhaas & AMO, 2020), as the result of several years of research involving various scholars and universities around the world¹, while the Canadian Center for Architecture in Montréal promoted the research program *What About the Provinces*³, a series of essays, revised archival projects and video documentaries around the “posturban phenomenon” in Japan (Ota, 2019) and all over the world. *Countryside. The Future* examined the modern conception of leisure, the politics of large-scale planning, climate change, migration, human and non-human ecosystems, market-driven preservation, artificial and organic coexistence, and other forms of radical intervention that are altering landscapes across the world according to the well-known systemic and globalist approach emblematic for AMO, the think tank of the Office for Metropolitan (!) Architecture

(AMO). Cynically and provocatively, the rural, remote, and wild territories are collectively identified as “countryside”, or “the 98% of the Earth’s surface not occupied by cities”, an “ignored realm” “largely off (our) radar” (Koolhaas & AMO, 2020). On the other hand, the initiative promoted by the CCA “looks at places beyond the metropolis: small and medium-size towns, little cities, remote villages, [...] places that we cannot simply reduce to non-urban” and where “our crises – political, social, economic, environmental– are magnified” (CCA, 2019).

“Province –states the introduction to the research– it is also where experimentation is supposed to be more free. We head out there for new kinds of architecture and community, and a better life (or at least its illusion)” (CCA, 2019). In the narrative proposed by the CCA’s programme, the gaze is rather focused to local contexts, to the possibilities offered to architecture by the escape from the globalist contexts and processes mentioned in *Countryside. The Future*.

Thanks to this season of exhibitions, among other things, the identity of the countryside as a land of traditions, backwardness, and ‘nature’, whatever this term implies, is being questioned. The countryside seems rather to be a new ambiguous and ambivalent utopia, in the double sense assigned by Thomas More’s first distinction to the word (Goodey, 1970; Agostini, 2015). On the one hand, the abstract character of the countryside provided by the Guggenheim show seems refer to a *utopia*, to something outside the defined and pre-established realm (from *ou-tòpos* = non-place); on the other hand, the quite real, concrete and specific character with which the outskirts, island and villages of *What about the Provinces* are described, seems address the idea of *utopia* as a more proper and righter place (from *eu-tòpos* = good place). Even the notion of *periphery* (from *peri-pherein* = around the circle, or in other words around the city), works by negative, defining places as ‘outside of’, avoiding any more qualitative or specific attributes.

Eventually, in order to show the issues listed above in an exhibition context, also a new need for representation arises.

Fig. 1 Orizzontale, La Rivoluzione delle Seppie, *Wonder Living Rooms, Crossings* 2018, Belmonte Calabro (CS). Courtesy Orizzontale.



The places 'outside of' are shifted to the centre of the narratives, in tight relation to the information flow of cultural institutions, typically belonging to the city. At the same time, and in an interesting reverse and complementary movement, the countryside and the provinces enter the exhibition space. Displaying practices land in peripheral geographies. Due to their intrinsic nature, installation practices activate a process of showing, and, in so doing, they act as centres of observation for the new territories.

While an approach driven by architecture and urban planning struggles to break out of urban-centric logics (and how could it, being urban-ism?) (Dematteis 2009; Balducci, 2020), installation, staging and set-up architecture, operating on an in-between field, offer a direct and daring engagement with more landscape-based notions such as image and imagery. With the tools of temporary measures, often not far from exhibition and set design, the architects claim a deeper sense of architecture, and identify marginal areas as valuable reservoirs of resources, redefining their established image.

In her essay *The Posturban Phenomenon*, the curatorial text accompanying the above mentioned CCA's series of documentary on rural Japan, Kayoko Ota describes the experiments carried out by several architects in remote islands or marginal

Fig. 2 . Campomarzio, *Bolzanism Museum*, 2019, Bolzano.
Photo credit: Valentina Casalini,
Courtesy Bolzanism Museum.



locations in Japan, seen as spaces of freedom, in contrast to the capitalist logic that dominates urban centres. Elsewhere in the Japanese archipelago, Kazuyo Sejima commutes to the tiny island of Inujima to carry out a long-term, participatory planning process focused on the landscape⁴, Toyo Ito proposes the collaborative construction of a Home for All in post tsunami fragile conditions⁵, and Atelier Bow-Wow allocates a woodworking shop, in synergy with local economies⁶.

The telescope, as suggested by De Carlo, has been turned. On a different scale and putting in a dialectic relation not dichotomies as city and countryside, but rather different parts of the urban fabric as central and peripheral areas, we identified some Italian examples of architecture exhibition or mediation that seem to be consistent with the issues described above. Also in the following examples—as previously described for the international references—the narrative of the outskirts is shifted to the centre, and places traditionally neglected and perceived as peripheral (meant in a negative sense) are put in a completely new light and exposed to discovery and surprise. They are design and curatorial practices related to architecture exhibitions that prove their intrinsic ability to become powerful tools in marginal places, to activate new relationships and processes, and to imprint a new image, like an unexpected layer, over an established imagery.

A process of village revitalization has been underway for several years in Belmonte Calabro (Cosenza), under the coordination by *La Rivoluzione delle Seppie*⁷. A series of abandoned historic buildings have been recovered in a pact between the municipality and a series of workshops have been held in collaboration with the architectural firm Orizzontale, the association Le Seppie and London Metropolitan University. From October 2020, the students of a whole course at the university moved to Belmonte, or Belmondo (Beautifulworld), as the village has been renamed during the initiative. Engaged in distance teaching, as required by the pandemic emergency, a new proximity to an unexplored world has been found, which proved to be unexpectedly rich in resources. It is important to mention here that Belmondo's founding act was the construction of a chair, a prototype soon multiplied and transformed into a large number of light urban furniture pieces as a result of the collaboration between a local blacksmith, some English, and Roman students and various migrant communities: the chair represents here an occupying, founding, yet mobile, principle. Subsequently, in random order, further actions have come, ephemeral yet capable of taking roots: the construction of a floating raft to recover a position facing the sea, the design of a shared lunch along the streets of the village, the construction of some light devices in the surrounding landscape, and festivals, discussions, workshops and finally followed the acquisition and the progressive restoration of a common house, where one of the British students decided to deeply establish his roots and interweave them with the ones of the other more or less transitory inhabitants. Also in this case the perception of the peripherality of an almost abandoned village in the south of Italy has been radically converted. Interventions aimed at re-thinking and re-vitalising the urban fabric in order to re-habit the village again—under completely renewed conditions— are put in the centre of the narration and the act of exhibiting oscillates within a twofold value: to show the possibilities of the re-conversion through the activation of the visitors who are addressed by the show itself.

Fig. 3 Post Disaster Rooftops, *EPO2 A new abnormal – A common world*. Lecture by Paolo Patelli, 2019. Courtesy Post Disaster



On the other end of the Italian peninsula, in Bolzano, a small piece of architecture self-built by Campomarzio with a group of students from the Free University of Bozen-Bolzano, is the symbolic landmark of a new –even if tiny– cultural institution: the Bolzanism Museum. It stands isolated in the centre of a neighbourhood built by the fascist regime at the end of the thirties, nowadays a peripheral district in the perception of Bolzano’s citizen. As result of a collaboration between the architect’s firm, the local Theatre Cristallo and the cultural enterprise Cooperativa 19, a peculiar museum was opened in 2017 as which aim is to show the very neighbourhood to which it belongs. From here, the public can explore the architecture of Bolzano’s West-end through direct testimony of its protagonists –inhabitants or designers– as well as the context in which it was conceived. During the visits of the open-air museum, conceived as a sort of theatrical performance, the social utopias of which the built realm often remain the only mute testimony⁸ are brought to light. The performative guided tour in the working-class neighbourhood offers inhabitants and visitors a lens through which to reinterpret familiar everyday places in an augmented version of themselves. It represents an opportunity to re-signify the traces of an uncomfortable past and interpret through a *curating* lens the stratification of histories and episodes that

came after the fascist dictatorship and are worth being read in order to fully understand the present. Back to the South of Italy, in Taranto, the architecture and art collective *Post Disaster* invited scholars, designers, performers and artists to contribute to a collective investigation on the fabric of an industrial city that embodies the disparities inherent with the western contemporary world. Here the transmission of contents inherent to the built realm traditionally presented through static architecture exhibitions becomes interactive and performative. *Post Disaster Rooftops* are collective performances aiming to de-centralize the production and sharing of knowledge, which is usually absorbed by the territories that benefit economic and cultural advantages⁹. They happen on the city roofs, places on the margin of a house if this is read in section, often neglected spaces where the building meets the sky. Roofs are understood here as non-conventional spaces that are free from the main hegemonic forms of organization of life and capital. Although they are urban spaces, the rooftops are not subject to the traditional spatial regulations, allowing a wide freedom of action.

The three above mentioned architectural interventions are presented in this paper as Italian approaches to architecture exhibition consistent with the approach indicated by OMA, the CCA and Alejandro Aravena in the first lines. They are probably temporary, certainly incomplete in the functional aspects –those that conventionally distinguish architecture from art– offer new points of observation, that can be understood as new starting points for tracing a map: ephemeral and yet foundational acts. Due to its performative agency, exhibition practices possess indeed, beyond other meanings, the capability of literally reshape the imagery related to a certain place and influencing the behaviour of its actors. In the ephemeral character of the projects mentioned above lays one of their more powerful strengths. They concentrate an enormous amount of energy in a certain place at a certain moment and this phenomenon has a big transformative potential. In this context, performances, installations and

exhibitions can be understood as activist's tools making the appropriation of derelict buildings or marginal areas as well as devices capable of strengthening community interactions.

In marginal, 'peripheral' territories, just when the lack of certainties and landmarks would seem to be diametrically opposed to the anguish produced by the metropolitan "overflow" (Augé, 2003) a similar need emerges: the creation of an intermediate space, which instead of obsessively opposing centre and periphery, urban and rural, modernity and tradition, global and local, deliberately chooses to instil a deviation, in a direction contrary to the distinction, which is placed in the middle: staging new images and opening up to a new imagery that will enable us to look at the contemporary city from a complete new point of view, the one far-sightedly indicated by Giancarlo De Carlo in this fragment written in 1995:

So what interests me about the Contemporary City? I am interested in its energy, which I feel is intensive tense and creative even if it is disordered, even if it is in some cases pathological. I am interested in the disorder because I suspect (and hope) that this entails a higher form of order which rhythms and cadences are arcane, and therefore it seems to be disorder: because we have not managed yet to understand its complex correspondences. I am interested in bad taste because it is not institutional; it is indeed a salutary position insurgent against the problem of aesthetics, which is so manipulated and adulterated that it mostly becomes an instrument of cultural terrorism. I am interested in the continuous change. I am interested in the singularity of the architectural forms that proliferate in the Contemporary City, because they are unpredictable, manifold, pungent, prone to stratification. I am interested in the possibility of disengaging from the stupidity of conventional and official urban planning. I am interested in the fact that that there is no obvious correspondence between the use of the space and the quality of space. I am interested in illegal building; and not because it violates the law, but because to become actual it needs the human participation. (De Carlo, 1991, p. 161)¹⁰

NOTES

1 “Sembra venuto il momento di ‘girare il cannocchiale’ col quale è stato osservato il fenomeno ambientale finora. Sino a oggi (a partire dagli ultimi tre secoli; prima era diverso) l’ottica è stata puntata sulla città – come insieme di manufatti e sistemi di circolazione – e si è continuato a guardare di sfuggita allo sfondo, costituito dalla campagna, il paesaggio, l’ambiente naturale. Solo di recente, l’osservazione dello sfondo è diventata più attenta, ma sempre sfondo è rimasto e perciò sfuocato e scarsamente significativo. Ora spinti dalle conseguenze di modi di trasformazione antagonisti dei fondamentali interessi degli esseri umani e di qualsiasi specie vivente, diventa necessario stabilire che ‘l’ambiente è tutto’ e che territorio, paesaggio, campagna, periferie urbane, città, centro storici, edifici, piazze, strade ecc. sono casi particolari dell’universo ambientale. Questo significa sconvolgere le incastellature interpretative a senso unico per sostituirle con modi di ricerca più fluidi che possano arrivare a interpretazioni e proposizioni seguendo percorsi multidirezionali, itineranti, erratici, più aderenti alla complessità ambientale.” (De Carlo, 1991, p. 152)

2 The exhibition presented investigations by AMO, Koolhaas, with students at the Harvard Graduate School of Design; the Central Academy of Fine Arts, Beijing; Wageningen University, Netherlands; and the University of Nairobi.

3 The program *Islands and Villages*. a documentary series commissioned by CCA on the posturban phenomenon in rural Japan, as part of the CCA Issue *What about the Provinces*. Kayoko Ota is curator of CCA c/o Tokyo, the second in a series of temporary initiatives that are locally anchored in different cities worldwide. www.cca.qc.ca/en/articles/issues/26/what-about-the-provinces

4 See the video documentary *Inujima*. Kazuyo Sejima designs a new participatory landscape, produced by the CCA as part of the study *Islands and Villages*.

5 See the video documentary *Omishima*. Toyo Ito assumes the role of voluntary masterplanner produced by the CCA as part of the study *Islands and Villages*.

6 See the video documentary *Momonoura*. Atelier Bow-Wow renews a fishing village’s social and ecological cycles, produced by the CCA as part of the study *Islands and Villages*.

7 Further information can be found in the series of self-published publications INK36, which can be downloaded from larivoluzionedelleseppie.org/

8 In the words of the designers: “*Bolzanism* is thus, above all, a way of narrating places that are called ‘periphery’, stimulating a process of redefinition and identity re-appropriation which is historical and aesthetical and recovers the value of that neighbourhood while it generates a sort of ‘building ethnography’ that enables the working-class architecture of the built artefacts to speak and transforms them into identity key elements of the community that inhabits, transforms, and identifies with them. In this sense Bolzanism understands itself as an experimental project that mediates among the architectures, the places of Bolzano’s periphery and the people that inhabits them. A museum that, while making of the peculiar context of Bolzano’s periphery its own permanent exhibition, invites people to question the city, promotes the *wonder* as a principle that generates creativity,

culture and diversity, and brings to light the urgency of recovering a city project, an action perspective that –starting from a critical reading of the material heritage of the periphery– could be a platform to imagine an idea of the future”. See Teatro Cristallo, Cooperativa 19, Campomarzio, *Bolzanism Museum, Bolzano-Bozen*, 2020, in Turriz Babel, no. 123, 2021 (Forthcoming).

9 Gabriele Leo and Grazia Mappa (Plasticity Studio), Peppe Frisino, Gabriella Mastrangelo (2018), ‘Suggestion for Design. Post Disaster Rooftops’, *PAD. Pages on Design*, 15, 140-149.

10 “Cos’è dunque che mi interessa della Città Contemporanea? Mi interessa l’energia, che io sento intensa, tesa e creativa anche se disordinata, anche se in qualche caso patologica. Mi interessa il disordine perché ho il sospetto (e la speranza) che si tratti di una forma superiore di ordine i cui ritmi e la cui cadenze sono arcane, e perciò appare come disordine: perché non siamo ancora riusciti a capire le sue corrispondenze complesse. Mi interessa il cattivo gusto perché non è istituzionale; addirittura è una presa di posizione salutarmente rivoltosa nei confronti del problema dell’estetica, così manipolato ed adulterato e falsificato da essere il più delle volte strumento di terrorismo culturale. Mi interessa il cambiamento continuo, Mi interessa la singolarità delle forme architettoniche che proliferano nella Città Contemporanea, perché sono imprevedibili, molteplici, penetranti, inclini alla stratificazione. Mi interessa la possibilità di disincagliarsi dalla stupidità dell’urbanistica convenzionale e ufficiale. Mi interessa che non ci siano corrispondenze ovvie tra l’uso dello spazio e la qualità dello spazio. Mi interessa l’abusivismo, e non perché viola la legge, ma perché per diventare attuale richiede partecipazione umana.” (De Carlo, 1991, p. 161)

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PERUGIA, IPOGEO DEI VOLUMNI

FROM *GENIUS DISLOCI*
TO *GENIUS LOCI*
OF A PERIPHERALIZED
MONUMENT

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PERUGIA
IPOGEO DEI VOLUMNI
PERIPHERALIZED MONUMENT
GENIUS LOCI
URBAN RENEWAL

Can an inhomogeneous, fragmented, and incoherent peripheral place, in which archaeological remains, industrial settlements and territorial infrastructures coexist chaotically, become a place of identity of the city of our time? This contribution aims at recognize the *genius disloci* of the suburbs, considered no man's land, places without identity, but which are, inevitably, the daily theater of most people's lives. On the heels of a deep and sensitive cognitive activity, the potential of marginalized places have been investigated through the case study of Ponte San

Giovanni, the most complex neighborhood of the city of Perugia. The disorganization of the urban fabric betrays a precise lexical heritage, characterized by the presence of the archaeological park of the Etruscan necropolis of Palazzone and the *Ipogeo dei Volumni*. In this framework, the urban architecture project *Hortus line* is inserted, with the purpose of physically and culturally sewing up the peripheral monument with the inhabited district. It traces an iconic sign in the intricate local morphology able to evoke that *genius loci* unrevealed so far.

Working in the negative space of the recent city, in order to modify the uncertain and undifferentiated void that lies between the buildings in the environment of collective paths, is akin to construct the narrative structure of a story, taking care to avoid uniformity and repetition, to scan episodes, to tie up the thread of partial and separate dialogues. While drawing the empty space in plots of eloquent forms and events, the project of urban architecture suggests the trace of possible dialogues between multiple and dispersed fragments and prefigures the new intrigues that the urban place tells those who walk through it, cross it, live in it. (Giammarco & Isola, 1993, p. 61)

THE *GENIUS DISLOCI*

Can an inhomogeneous, fragmented, and incoherent peripheral place, in which archaeological remains—one of the most evocative necropolis of the Etruscan world— industrial settlements —a collection of prefabricated sheds close to decay—and territorial infrastructures—a state road, a highway viaduct, and a railroad line— coexist chaotically, become a place of identity for the city of our time? Perhaps yes, but on condition that, in the wake of a deeper and sensitive cognitive activity, the urban architectural project is able to recognize and therefore evoke the *genius disloci* that hovers above an evidently unsolved place, but which still contains the enzymes to transform environmental degradation in environmental quality. In spite of the negative connotation conferred on the idea of suburbs by many stereotypes and many cultural prejudices which, moreover, on closer inspection, express a temporal rather than a material condition. Because, while it is true that urban suburbs are considered no man's land, in which the absence of memory and identity is added to the loss of forms and relationships, producing cities that have been removed from the cultural

point of view, it is equally true that urban peripheries are absolutely present from a social point of view, because it is in them that, every day, the real life of most people takes place.

THE REMOVED CITY

The city is now revealed as a target out of reach, solved into a contrasting and random phenomenology that sees the co-presence of a plurality of equivalent narratives. (Purini, 2002, p. 107)

The cities end neither with the city walls nor with the ring roads but extend to the most marginal and rarefied areas of the territorial hinterland. It is no coincidence that the concept of periphery inevitably relates to the city both morphologically, in its etymological meaning of 'circumference, perimeter' borrowed from the comparison with the historical center, and ideologically, in the non-autonomous social matrix which owes its identity to the consolidated urban fabric (Secchi, 1991). To the point that all suburbs have a strong tendency not to remain suburbs.

It happens in the exemplary case of Ponte San Giovanni, the most populous and complex district of the city of Perugia –both from the sociological point of view and from the morphological point of view– (Lattaioli et al., 1990) where, especially in the eastern side, the non-cohesive building fabric produced by the coexistence of abandoned industrial and craft sheds, illegal deposits and landfills, improvised outbuildings and fences, betrays a precise lexical heritage (Belardi, 2000), counterpointed by the presence, along the Assisana road, of the archaeological site of the Etruscan necropolis of the Palazzone. And, with it, the presence of the *Ipogeo dei Volumni*: the mysterious Etruscan tomb, dated around the second half of the II century B.C., which since 1840 –the year of its accidental discovery– presides over the valley of the Tiber River and that, also by virtue of the sophisticated eclectic style wall shrine that protects it –built in 1867 on a

project by Guglielmo Calderini— has risen over time to a place of identity (Cenciaioli, 2011).

A role that the *Ipogeo dei Volumni* still plays, despite the progressive peripheralization determined over the last one hundred and fifty years by the construction of the main infrastructures imposed by the city growth needs: from the adjacent Foligno-Terontola railroad line —which includes a grade crossing and a railway tollbooth— to the overlying viaduct of the highway junction Perugia-Bettolle —marked by grandiloquent prefabricated reinforced concrete pylons— up to the facing state road 75bis —which denies the possibility of even a minimum pedestrian entrance widening.

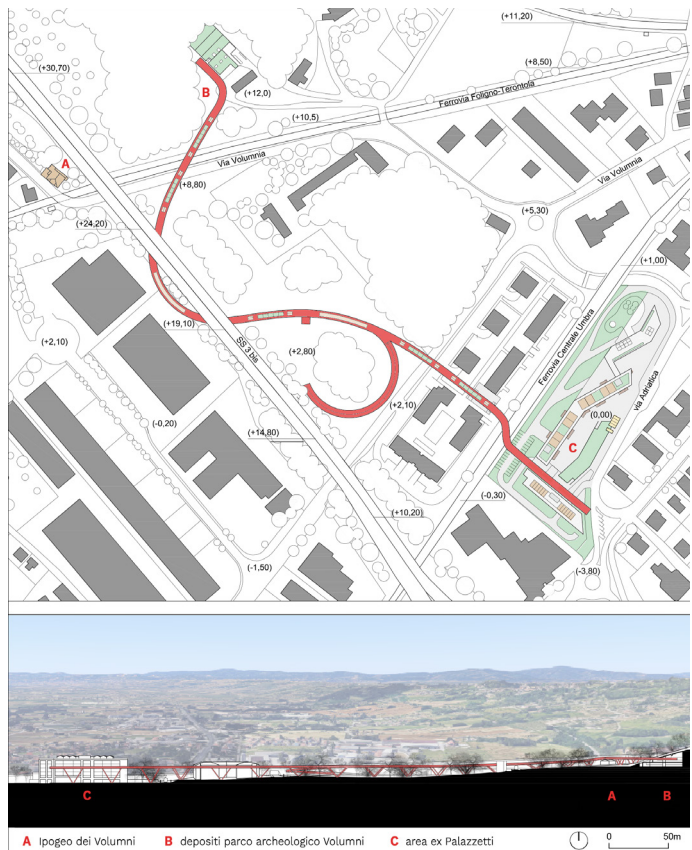
THE URBAN ARCHITECTURAL PROJECT *PS⁵G*

The complex and multiform nature of the place, where the *Ipogeo dei Volumni* looks suffocated, both from a functional and a figurative point of view, even if it underlies the seed of an intrinsic personality in the surrounding environment, is made up of a dusty fabric in which only a few mammoth industrial sheds emerge. It requires a ritual investigative process aimed not only at detecting its morphological characteristics, but also and, above all, at critically investigating the socio-cultural dimension underlying the concept of living the suburbs. Hence the reasons for the urban architectural project *PS⁵G*, promoted from the Municipality of Perugia in synergy with *ATER Umbria* and resulted winner of the national announcement *PINQuA* —National Innovative Housing Quality Program— aimed at reducing housing and settlement problems in peripheral contexts (Ministero delle Infrastrutture e dei Trasporti, 2021). An urban project that recomposes the eastern side of Ponte San Giovanni district with a concerted series of specific qualifying interventions that are inserted into the existing fabric as regenerating stem cells belonging to the same genetic heritage. In this context, the restoration project of

the abandoned –and degraded– residential complex called *ex-Palazzetti* stands out: a melancholic building complex abandoned to decay, consisting of four unfinished buildings (Cao & Romagni, 2016) and marked by five vulnerabilities concerning sustainability, sociality, functionality, liveability, and healthiness.

In particular, to the vulnerability in terms of sustainability, the project responds through the implementation of diffuse partial demolitions: it provides a preliminary rarefaction aimed at improving the general sanitary conditions by drastically reducing both the building density and the density of housing units and increasing the energy class. To the vulnerability in terms of sociality, the project responds through the introduction of a variety of outdoor collective

Fig. 1 Belardi, P, Battistoni, M., & Sorignani, C., *Hortus line* project (Perugia), plan and section, 2021.



spaces: it provides enhanced condominium services, large pedestrian areas, bike-sharing stations, but, above all, it attributes to an entire building the role of social condenser capable of hosting a mix of cultural and recreational activities promoting social and generational integration. To the vulnerability in terms of functionality, the project responds through the equipment of multifunctional spaces: it provides the inclusion of both conventional activities – craft or commercial– and innovative activities related to the consequences of the pandemic –private or condominium areas for smart working, fitness, and multi-sensory gardens– as well as it strengthens neighborhood educational functions in the form of a nursery school. To the vulnerability in terms of liveability, the project responds through the insertion of autonomous grafts, both through the viral addition of light superfetations in wooden carpentry and through the use of modular elements of recovery, able to ensure a multifaceted and variable image. To the vulnerability in terms of healthiness, the project responds through the dissemination of green surfaces: it elects the vegetation component as building material and declines both horizontally –ensuring a widespread system of small gardens, both at ground level and at roof level– and vertically –giving a communicative role to the building condenser and improving the environmental conditions of social activities set out therein.

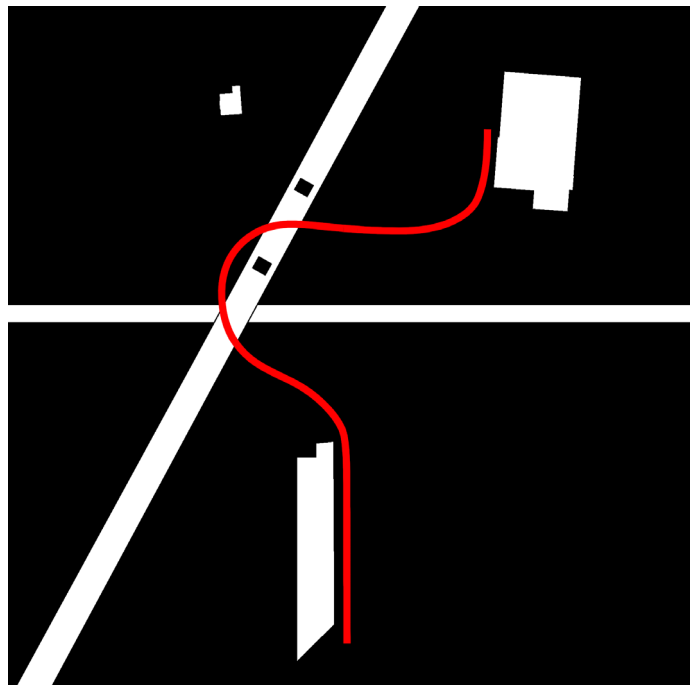
THE PROJECT OF THE *HORTUS LINE* INFRASTRUCTURE

It is precisely in the context of the urban architectural project *PS⁵G* where the architectural project of the hanging pedestrian route *Hortus line* is inserted (Figure 1). A new pedestrian infrastructure that, according with the most advanced contemporary trends (De Cesaris, 2004, 2012), aims at increasing the social impact induced by the project of recovery of the residential complex *ex-Palazzetti* reinforcing the identity relationship –now very labile–

between the district of Ponte San Giovanni and the Etruscan archaeological vestige (Figure 2). Furthermore, it is a pedestrian infrastructure that seeks to contaminate local tradition and global innovation, since, if on one side it takes up the scenography of some local historical urban features such as Via dell'Acquedotto in Perugia and Ponte delle Torri in Spoleto, on the other side it takes up the spectacularism of some contemporary international realizations such as the *High line* in New York and the *Camden highline* in London.

In fact, in architecture, the reinterpretation of pre-existing peripheral contexts has often been the ideological principle behind the requalification of marginal urban areas through contemporary projects that aim at regenerating the urban landscape while respecting the architectural heritage inherited from the past, regardless of its historical 'aura'. One of the main objectives of the project is the reconnection of public spaces and the network of bicycle and pedestrian paths and the creation of cultural and leisure centers. In

Fig. 2 Belardi, P., Battistoni, M., & Sorignani, C., *Hortus line* project (Perugia), concept, 2021.



this regard, it is enough to consider the *Polcevera Park and the Red Circle* designed by Stefano Boeri Architetti studio, which represents the testimony of a powerful tradition of port landmarks such as blast furnaces, cranes and overhead travelling cranes.

The intervention, declining from time to time in walkway, elevated square, ramp and corridor through the buildings, retraces the places closest to the tragedy consumed on August 14, 2018, reconnecting and enhancing the new system of botanical parks (Mussolini, 2019). Moreover, in the European panorama, the project *Tree Bridge* by Paul de Ruiter Architects is exemplary, a bridge conceived as a natural extension of the numerous green and wooded areas present in the Dutch city of Amstelveen. It arises above the existing freeway junction and allows the reconnection of the southern area with the historical center, guaranteeing pedestrian and bicycle permeability.

Taking up the threads of these precedents, the designed pedestrian viaduct –renamed *Hortus line* as it is marked by a row of vegetable gardens for the cultivation of typical agricultural ‘farm-to-table’ products– starts up from the

Fig. 3 Belardi, P., Battistoni, M., & Sorignani, C., junction between the social condenser building and the *Hortus line*, plan and section, 2021.

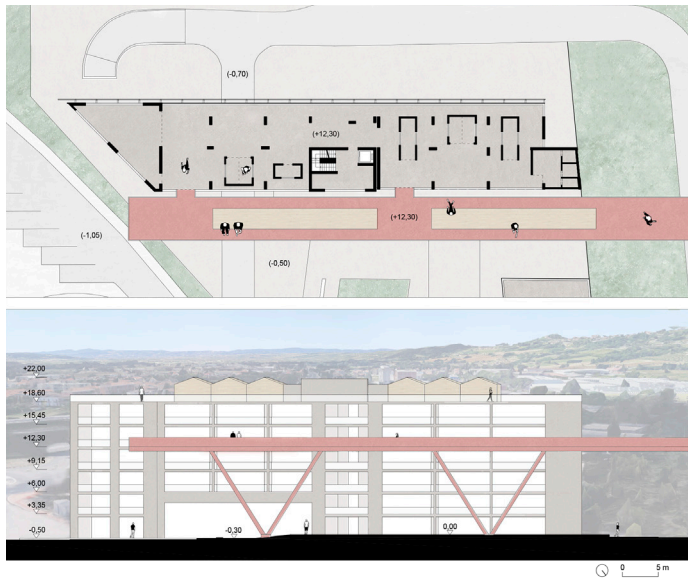
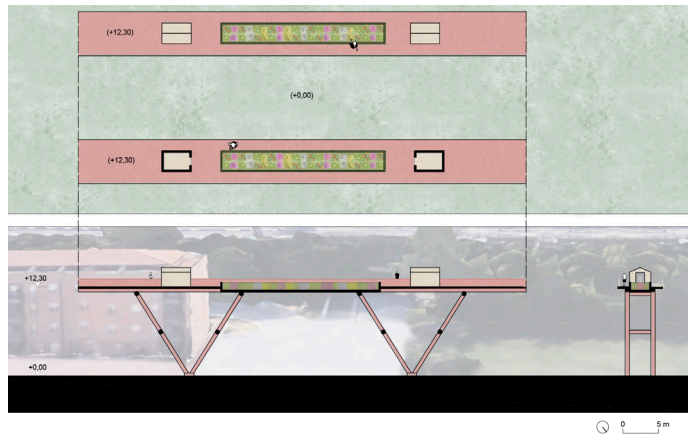


Fig. 4 Belardi, P., Battistoni, M., & Sorignani, C., detail of the *Hortus line* vegetables gardens, plan and section, 2021.



multi-storey building-square of the new residential complex of the former *Palazzetti* area (Figure 3).

In this site the headquarter of the laboratory branch of the *Ipogeo dei Volumni* is foreseen, that is dedicated to the experiential initiation in the archaeological disciplines of the students of the secondary schools of the territorial hinterland (Figure 4). Then the new viaduct overcomes the meanders of the existing road network, winds sinuously between the pylons of the highway viaduct and, after it has connected with the green area below (Bortolotti et al., 2013). Ultimately, sinking its roots into the new values of the landscape of

Fig. 5 Belardi, P., Battistoni, M., & Sorignani, C., junction between the *Ipogeo dei Volumni* deposits and the *Hortus line*, Plan and section, 2021.

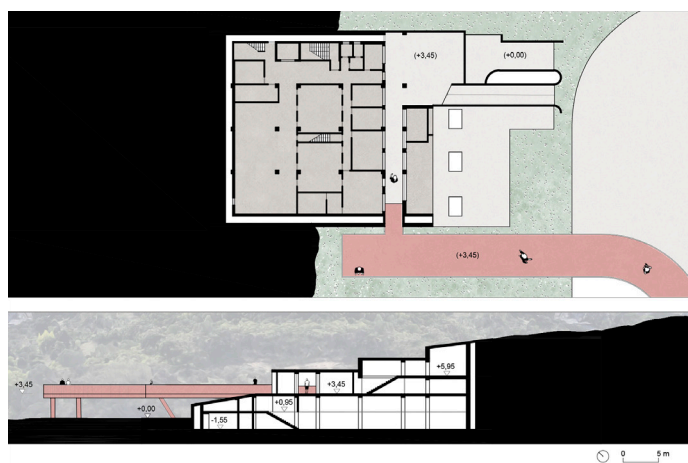
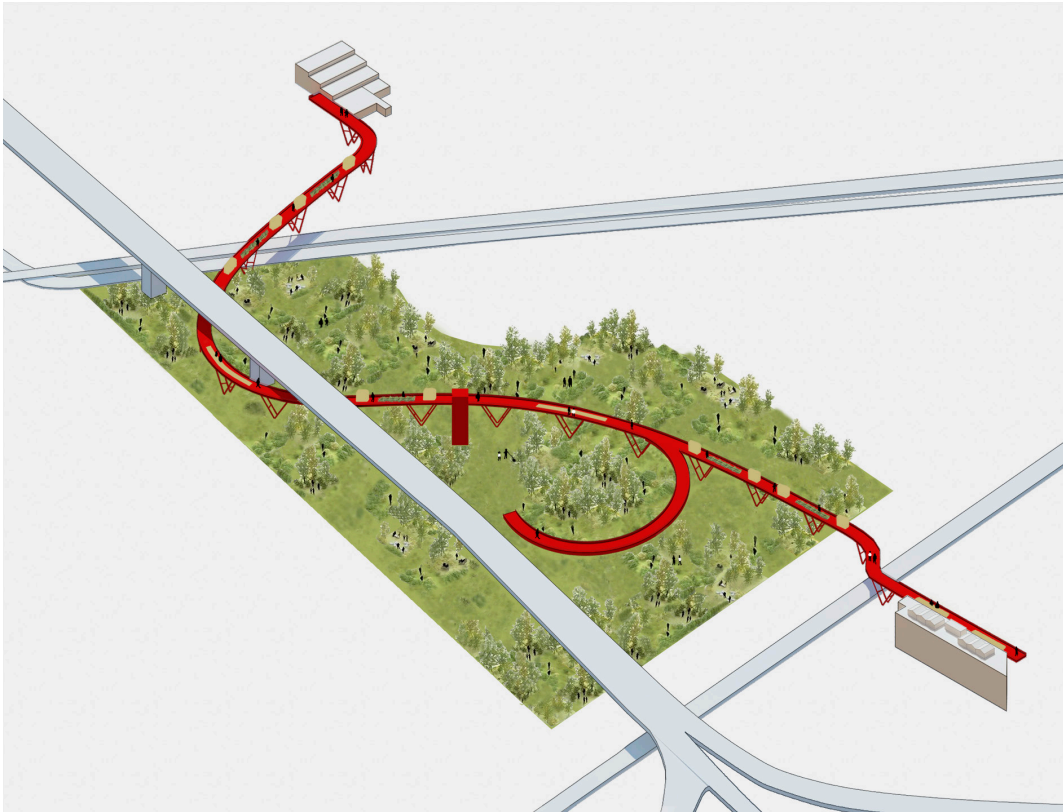


Fig. 6 Belardi, P., Battistoni, M., & Sorignani, C., *Hortus line* project (Perugia), axonometric projection, 2021.

infrastructure in Europe (Rocca, 2009) and inspired by François Signeur's project for the recovery of the space below the Frais-Vallon junction of the Marseille ring road, it wedges itself into the marginal residual void between the railway line and the viaduct of the freeway link and then lands inside the underground deposits of the archaeological park (Figure 5).



Combining cultivation and culture, the project mainly aims at punctually recomposing the chaotic accumulation of road infrastructures that peripheralizes the archaeological site organized around the *Ipogeo dei Volumni* through a zero-volume architecture capable of electing the *genius disloci* to *genius loci* (Figure 6).

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HERITAGE AND TOURISM EDUCATION IN FRAGILE LANDSCAPE ENHANCING THE IMAGE OF SUBURBIA

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HERITAGE EDUCATION

TOURISM EDUCATION

TERRITORIAL FRAGILITIES

EVERYDAY LANDSCAPES

SUBURBAN LANDSCAPE REPRESENTATION

Tourism is changing significantly and many of the changes are also affecting the field of landscape enhancement and cultural heritage education. There is a growing interest in sustainable tourism and projects involving local communities in the promotion of the less-known locations. Contemporarily, the digital transformation is deeply involved in these processes, as it broadens the possibility of accessing information that may interest a particular public focused on cultural, sustainable and community-based tourism offers.

This paper refers to a research project aimed to involve schools in a participatory processes of interpretation and enhancement of the everyday landscape inside an area basically unknown by tourists in an evolving touristic city. The first part focus-

es on the current links between heritage education and tourism education in consideration of the European policies about the landscape. The second part concisely illustrates the research project, and present an overview of the use of ICTs in the participatory processes of interpretation and enhancement of a suburban landscape. The third part describes a specific activity performed during the project and it focuses on the adopted methodology and the touristic interactive applications created. In the last part, the paper discusses, in the light of the project, the relationship between landscape and heritage education, tourism education and some important transformations that are taking place in the field of tourism. Finally, the authors propose some considerations on the field experience described.

HERITAGE AND TOURISM EDUCATION IN EVERYDAY LANDSCAPES

During the last decades, several contributions has deepened, at the European level, the debate on cultural heritage, and consequently on heritage education (Borgia et al., 2019; Castiglioni, 2012; Bortolotti et al., 2008; Branchesi, 2007). The Recommendation n. 5 of the Committee of Ministers to member states concerning heritage education (Council of Europe, 1998) states that “cultural heritage includes any material or non-material vestige of human endeavour and any trace of human activities in the natural environment”; and further: “heritage education means a teaching approach based on cultural heritage, incorporating active educational methods, cross-curricular approaches, a partnership between the fields of education and culture and employing the widest variety of modes of communication and expression”. The publication of the European Landscape Convention (ELC) in 2000 has then strengthened this approach by fostering the development of cultural heritage education actions in the everyday, and even in the fragile and degraded landscapes such as urban peripheries (Council of Europe, 2000). The Convention states that “landscape means an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors” (Council of Europe, 2000, art. 1). ELC has also extended the notion of landscape as it “applies to the entire territory of the Parties and covers natural, rural, urban and peri-urban areas” (Council of Europe, 2000, art. 1). Indeed, the document assigns a fundamental role to the population’s perception and interpretation of the landscape values and in the last decades it has given a relevant contribution to the collective acknowledgement of the cultural and social value of the everyday landscape thus to be part of the European policies.

The application of the Convention in educational contexts and to everyday or degraded landscapes presents some peculiarities. First, in such contexts more than elsewhere, it can be

difficult to create landscape knowledge and identify its cultural, historical, and social values; consequently, the collection of memories, interpretations and the inhabitants' subjective perceptions becomes paramount. Finally, the use of effective tools and methods of investigation and communication to involve stakeholders and local players become central.

A proper application of the ELC requires recognizing degraded or anonymous territories as landscapes, identifying their cultural and environmental values, and developing awareness on such values in citizens. This process implies the creation of new graphical, visual, and mental representations of the territory (Waterton & Watson, 2011). The ways in which peripheries are represented can indeed consolidate the existing patterns of the relationship between citizens and the town, but also change them. To improve this relationship, promoting a new perspective on fragile areas and stimulating the production of new representations then become a relevant activity, for young citizens in particular (Casonato et al., 2020). These new representations can influence and change the existing stereotyped image of suburbs by building richer and multifaceted vision of the everyday landscape. For these reasons, the application of the ELC encompasses involving non-experts in the landscape knowledge, embracing a participatory approach in enhancement, and pushing the active role of citizens (Council of Europe, 2008, 2012, 2017). In particular, schools can play a relevant role to improve among young citizens the perception of the everyday contexts, especially in suburban and/or degraded areas. This goal could be achieved with a heritage education focused on the everyday landscapes and aimed at transforming the young citizens into protagonists of the knowledge and enhancement of their places. The European debate has clarified that heritage and landscape education should not be considered as a further school subject but an educational approach *per se*. This implies not only education concerning heritage but also education 'through' heritage and 'for' heritage, which is, according to Copeland (Copeland, 2006), the base for the construction of the European citizen-

ship. The traditional cultural heritage study often celebrates national culture and history. Conversely, the importance of each 'individual past' can emerge by taking into account lesser-known landmarks, places, historical episodes and cultural facts (Copeland, 1998; Council of Europe, 1995).

Moreover, heritage/landscape education and tourism education, as we will see, can find interesting connections in didactic projects and help young citizens to build processes and products to promote their landscape, especially with the use of innovative technologies (Luigini, 2017). The advantages of these actions are potentially manifold: they build and spread knowledge about the landscape, they facilitate the interpretation processes and the collection of memories, they promote unknown or unusual tourist destinations, they provide schools with tools for technological updating useful for both heritage and tourism education, and finally they improve the periphery image.

PARTICIPATORY PRACTICES FOR COMMUNITY-BASED TOURISM IN UNUSUAL AREAS

A research project for heritage and tourism education

Scuola Attiva Risorse (ScAR), [School Activates Resources] is a Politecnico di Milano inter-disciplinary research project ended in 2021 (Bonfantini et al., 2019; Bertone et al., 2019; Casonato et al., 2021). Schools and cultural heritage were the centre of the project which were considered as propulsive engines for the enhancement of the territory and its cultural cohesion. The project operated on the peripheral areas of Milan and intended landscape as a system of values in constant evolution. The challenge was to engage students by assigning them a new role, from 'consumers' of the cultural heritage to protagonists of the local landscape discovery and promotion. The main goals of the project were:

- enhancing the local landscape as a source for the inter-generational and intercultural dialogue;

- boosting to young people citizenship, responsibility towards public spaces, and a higher sense of belonging to neighbourhoods;
- offering schools inclusive and innovative educational tools;
- promoting a conscious use of technologies in young students.

In order to strengthen the presence on the area and to improve the project, the research team involved several local partners from different fields. In particular ScAR gathered: artisans, private companies, associations, cultural institutions, an ecomuseum, the Municipality of Milan and two decentralization entities (Municipio 4 and 5), the regional education office, students of Politecnico di Milano, two technical laboratories and the internship program from the same institution, other national and international universities, and an international art foundation.

ScAR involved more than 750 students, from primary to high-schools, from seven Italian regions and with five Milanese schools developed pilot activities. In addition, more than 400 university students and interns participated in the project. School teachers and students were involved in more than 20 different activities aimed at knowing, interpreting and communicating the local landscape by using and combining traditional methods and innovative technologies. These activities were not limited to the class context but also to a real work environment with assignments and objectives to achieve. The assigned tasks pushed students to organize themselves, define the process workflow, cooperate, and share their skills.

An unusual landscapes for tourism. the Milan Southern Peripheries

The suburban area of Milan is a fragile context, with social and urban critical aspects especially concerning schools (Pacchi & Ranci, 2017). However, the territory is rich in natural and tangible and intangible cultural heritage. Especially in the last two hundred years, the surrounding territory had been the theatre of many relevant territorial, social, and economic

transformations that led the transition of Milan from the medieval walled town to a post-modern metropolis. In a few decades, these peripheral areas progressively lost their historical rural vocation, which shaped the cultural and physical landscape during centuries, in favor of the industrial push of the first years of the twentieth century. The historical hydrographic networks—irrigation canals and waterways for goods transportation— were adapted to the new industrial needs, and the rural system (i.e., the typical farmhouses networks of the Po Valley), disappeared or were incorporated inside the new urban fabrics. Later, the role of those industries and their facilities gradually decreased from the eighties and many productive sites were abandoned. Today, these peripheral areas are renewing the urban shape, and innovative districts are under construction or in planning.

Unlike the other suburbs in Milan, in the project area agriculture is still a relevant activity which coexists with historical and new popular neighborhoods. Furthermore, the former industrial blocks have been renovating in new smart districts by pushing partnerships between private companies and the local administrations. Fondazione Prada, an international art foundation and partner of the research project, was one of the first company that settled in this area its facilities and started in 2008 the renovation of the former industrial area along the southern border of the railway yard of Porta Romana.

The suburban cultural landscape is today a valuable and, at the same time, fragmented system. It is an interesting territory rich in historical landmarks, stories, and local communities that need to be properly enhanced and communicated (Rabbiosi, 2016).

Involving schools in the development of tourist products

During the project, participants (in this case from 12 to 19 years old) were invited to use and create a set of digital tools to document and develop interactive storytelling of their everyday landscape. In particular, ScAR accompanied schools in the development of four prototypes of interactive

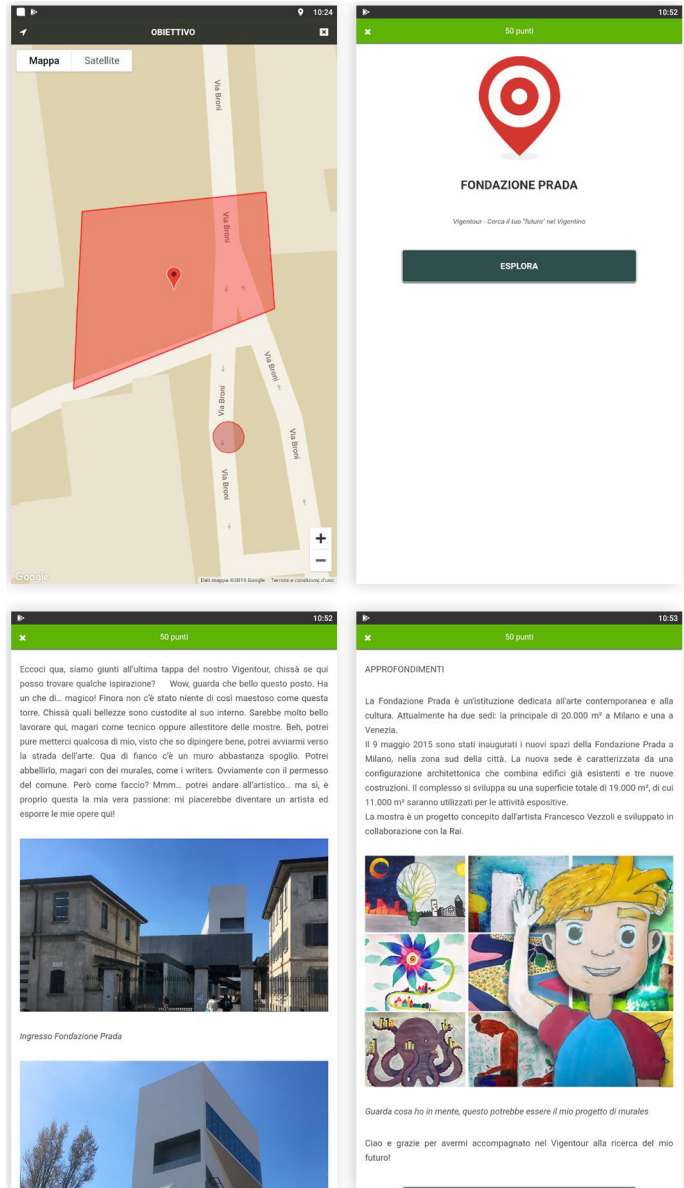
tourist products devoted to share the local knowledge and to promote the area in an innovative way and as a touristic destination (Sylaiou et. al., 2017; Xu et al., 2013; Ippoliti, 2011; Ott & Pozzi, 2011).

The first was the geoblog *Atlante Digitale delle Memorie* [Digital Atlas of Memories] developed in collaboration with MUMI Ecomuseo Sud Milano (Bertone G. et al, 2019), the eco-museum of the Southern Milan suburban area. The second was a set of serious games to discover the local landscape, mobile geocaching games for families based on a free app for the dissemination and storytelling of cultural heritage (Carli, 2017) (Figure 1). These applications make a step forward from the traditional serious game development by involving users, students from middle schools (12-13 years old), in the creation of games.¹ The third was the prototype of an interactive virtual tour (VR) of one of the historical neighborhoods of the area.² This prototype was developed with a free online tool that allows entry-level users to create immersive storytelling. The contents collected and produced by students during the project were adapted for the VR experience to create interactive immersive scenes (Yung & Khoo-Lattimore, 2019). The prototype finally aimed to test if the development of virtual and augmented reality tours could be included in the scholar programs, not only in tourism schools but also in other high-schools, to promote activities for cultural heritage education. The fourth digital product, a mobile interactive tourist guide, is the most interesting in this analysis context because it specifically links heritage and tourism education. For this reason, the didactic process that accompanied the application development is deepened in the next paragraph.

AN EDUCATIONAL PROJECT FOR HERITAGE TOURISM IN SUBURBS: FROM MENTAL MAPPING TO MOBILE GUIDES

The didactic project *Seguitemi, prego...* [Follow me, please...] was designed for a secondary school (from 16 to 19 years old

Fig. 1 Screenshots from the serious game developed by middle school students.



students) that provides two typologies of courses: one of a humanistic nature focused on the study of foreign languages [Liceo linguistico] and one of a technical nature, oriented to train the future tour operators [Istituto Tecnico per il Turismo].³

The activity was, in fact, intended to be part of the *Alternanza Scuola-Lavoro* program, the national program to approach high-school students to the professional world and to the responsibilities of adulthood.

The didactic process that was developed in 4 months focused on discovering the surrounding area of the school headquarters. It was based on experiential didactics and involved several phases: a propaedeutic training course for teachers on tools and methodologies; the activities co-designing with teachers and local stakeholders; the work with the students; the organization of events to share the results with citizens and the scientific community.

In collaboration with tutors and experts, participants elaborated a communication project of the cultural landscape of their suburbs addressed to their peers but also to the school community, the local citizens, and finally to the potential visitors. The process was conducted through the construction of an articulated sequence of analog and digital graphic works and interactive mobile communication devices. The following lines describe the experience and illustrates the articulation of the activities to open a discussion on the methodology.

Designing, training, and co-designing

As a first step, *ScAR* proposed to teachers an advanced course on the analysis and interpretation of the national and European guidelines on heritage education. The course deepened the debate on the didactic processes for cultural heritage studying and appreciation with a focus on fragile areas and everyday landscapes. Additionally, the course delivered an overview on the involvement of advanced technologies in schools and on the use of the storytelling and mapping applications used in the project. The main aims of this step were sharing the principle and objective of the ELC and other guidelines, and giving to teachers the theoretical and technical skills to develop the digital applications. Beyond the training, this step gave the opportunity to engage teachers in the didactic process and stimulate their proactive participation in the co-designing of the activities.

Digital tools and co-designing

To facilitate the activities co-design, the research team developed a set of documentation tools: a propeaedeutic dossier that offered an overview on the local tangible and intangible heritage, a general database with historical images and documents, and a web Geographic Information System (GIS) to map contents. This documentation step was enriched thanks to the collaboration of the university interns, who were charged with mapping the cultural heritage, and thanks to teachers, who knew the area and helped define and design the learning tours. Finally, the dossier and the interactive map were published on the ScAR project web site in order to give the teachers a starting tool set for their didactic activities.

Building the working team

The working group, defined during the co-design meetings with the teachers, included: a project manager expert in participatory cultural landscape enhancement processes, an expert in the use of ICTs for cultural heritage, a group of teachers from different fields (geography, science, art history, etc.) coordinated by a teacher with experience in educational tourism projects, and 22 high-school students between 16 and 19 years old. In some specific phases of the project, ScAR involved also: interns from Politecnico di Milano, volunteers from local cultural associations, the experts from MUMI Ecomuseo Sud Milano, and other cultural heritage professionals (Figure 2).

Mind maps of the school-home route

The didactic activities started with lectures aimed at stimulating curiosity about the techniques and the processes for cultural heritage investigation, and to generate a reflection on landscape. Students were helped to build a clearer and deeper idea of some key concepts as cultural heritage, landscape, cultural tourism, map, topographic map, topological map, and participatory map (Figure 3). In addition, during the meetings experts presented some hardware and

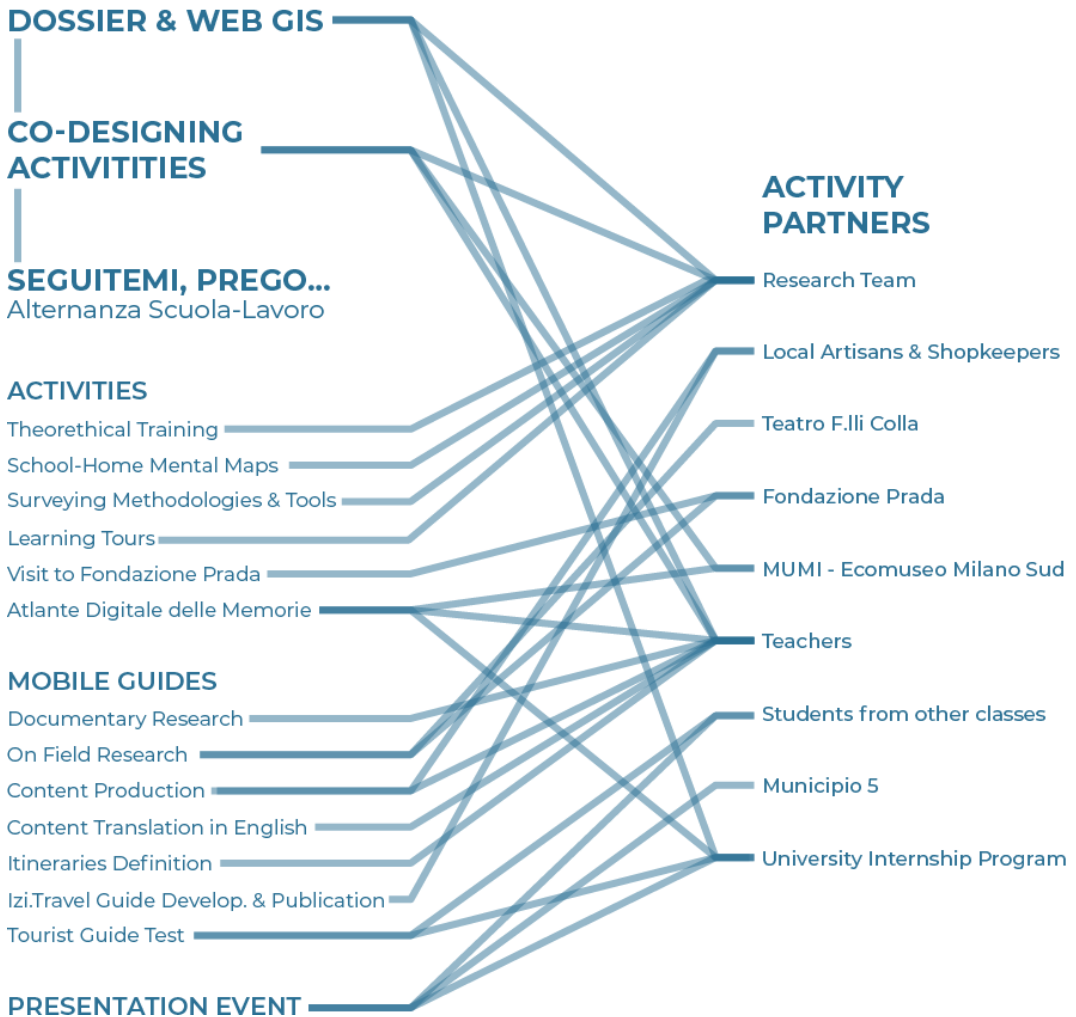


Fig. 2 Map of *Seguitemi, prego...* activity carried out by 22 high-school students. The scheme summarizes the designing process and the different actors involved.

software tools to improve the processes of knowledge and interpretation of the landscape (i.e., spherical cameras, surveying drones, VR/AR goggles, and applications for participatory digital mapping and frame comparison).

Students were also asked to create an active debate on the school neighborhood merits and criticalities, and to exchange their impressions, opinions, and personal observations. The result of these meetings were several collective and personal landscape representations, such as sketches,

Fig. 3 Two home-school route maps drawn by high-school students during the lectures on landscape and mapping.

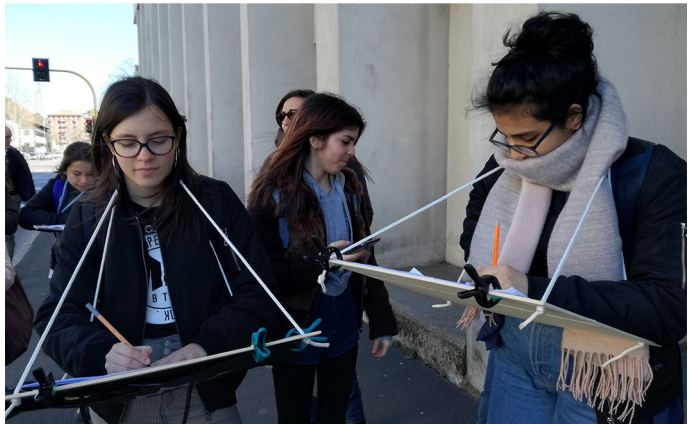


schemes, and mind maps of the home-to-school routes. Thanks to development and discussion of these representations, the process promoted a critical and collaborative observation of the area enriched with the student perspective on the landscape of their everyday life.

Discovering the area: interpretation and learning tours

In order to deepen the knowledge of the area and to give a new perspective on the local landscape, the research team developed two learning tours in collaboration with

Fig. 4 High-school students reading the map and identifying the buildings and the places touched by the learning tour.



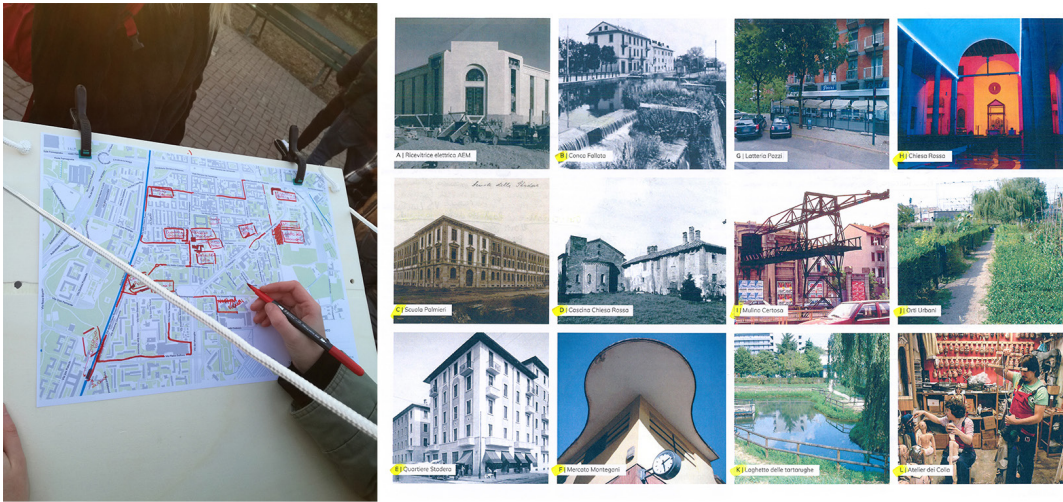


Fig. 5 The route drawn during the learning tour.

teachers. The itineraries drove students first to explore the immediate surroundings of the school and then gradually further afield until reaching an important urban landmark, the headquarters of Fondazione Prada, one of the project partners. Although located in a peripheral area, the Foundation's headquarters, designed by a famous architectural firm and hosting a permanent collection, temporary exhibitions and events, is a pole of attraction for the city's cultural life and international tourism. The itineraries traced a path through the neighborhoods that connects an ordinary suburban school building to a nerve of the city's tourist offer, and touches heterogeneous points of interest along the way. Some of these points are known at the urban scale or in specific cultural circuits, others touch places of cultural interest known only at the local level, others are instead places or buildings almost forgotten and often abandoned.

The research team accompanied students in these two routes and asked participants to trace the path on a map and place the point of interest visited and illustrated in a provided set of images (i.e., buildings, views, and public spaces) (Figures 4, 5). Finally, students were invited to report their impressions and reflections on the places touched by the tours (Figure 6). After this activity, students participat-

and head of communication, the director, the operators who move the puppets, and other workers involved in the puppets' creation and maintenance (Figure 8).

Communicating and sharing in a professional way

After the learning tours, the research team proposed to participants the development of two professional touristic guides of the area. In order to collect the contents for the guides, students performed documentary research in physical and online libraries and archives. Moreover, some participants deepened the researches with a professional on field investigations with visits and interviews to experts.

In a following step, students adapted the collected documents and media for a tourist communication by following specific indications (concerning for example the length of the texts and the construction of the captions). Finally, they translated all the text into English.

Defining the itineraries

According to the contents, students defined two touristic itineraries through the project area to promote its heritage and cultural values. The aim was the identification of routes that gives potential visitors the opportunity to discover unusual destinations rich in historical and cultural point of interests.

The routes touch known and less-known landmarks such as: historical stores, significant places for the daily life of the neighborhoods, public spaces, relevant architectures, the waterways system, the rural buildings, and urban gardens. Following the itinerary, the visitor can discover, for example, a mill hidden in the urban fabric, a historical hydraulic underground infrastructure, a contemporary art installation in a church from the 30s, and an old typography. The result is two consecutive itineraries that invites visitors to be immersed into the peripheral areas and experience it from the locals' perspective. As a matter of fact, the routes are now a bridge that brings visitors to an underrated land-

Fig. 7 Students visiting Fondazione Prada. The guide is presenting the maquette of the foundation buildings.

Fig. 8 A group of students interviewing the artisans of a puppets' theatre.



scape. Moreover, the presence of Fondazione Prada as a starting point allows to attract visitors and increase the mediatic exposure of the itineraries.

Developing advanced digital tools with students: the mobile tourist guides

Following the defined routes, participants finally developed the two mobile guides, using Izi.travel, an online and free

Fig. 9 A Student working on the Izi.travel backend to develop the mobile guides.

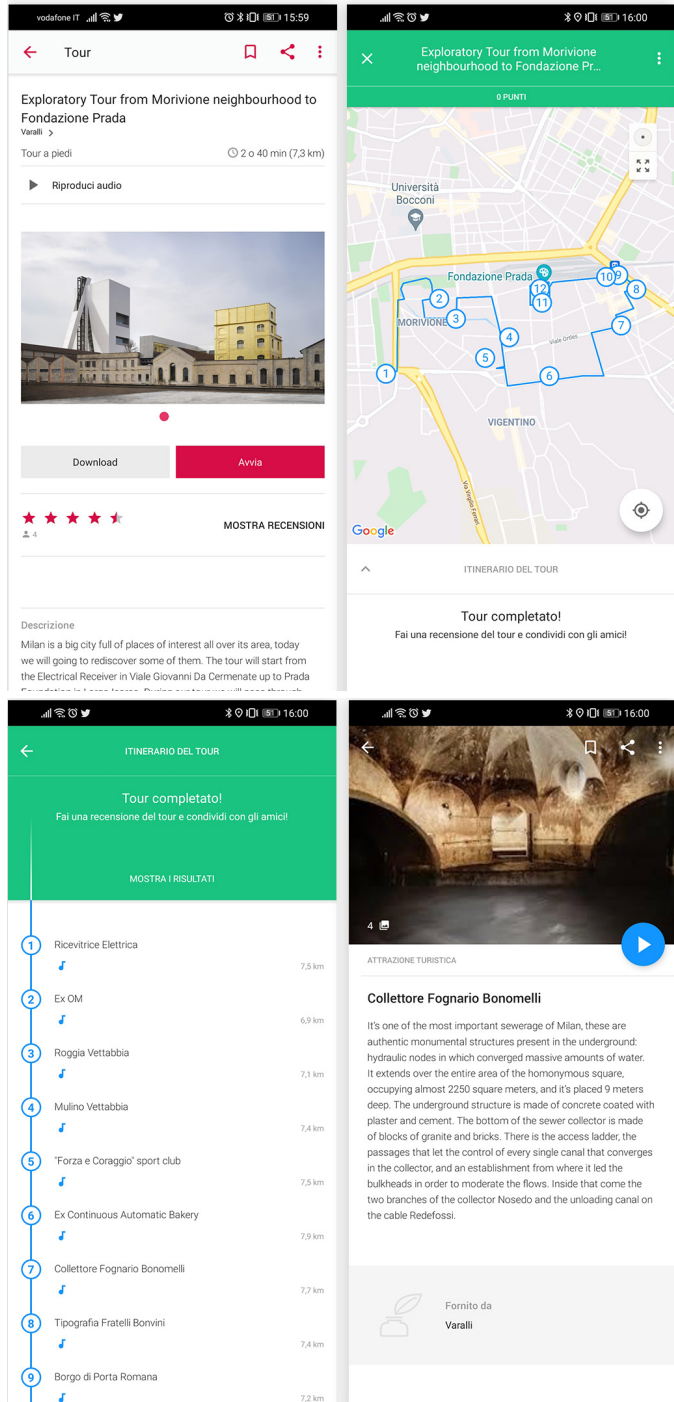


Content Management System (CMS) dedicated to the creation of professional interactive multimedia guides. The CMS offers to the authors the opportunity to easily manage the touristic routes and add any kind of content and media. After a propaedeutic training delivered by an expert of the research team, students designed the guide, traced the routes, and upload all the contents previously produced (Figures 9, 10).⁴

Sharing the experience

The ScAR project bet on peer education and for this reason often invited participants to share their results and opinions among them. In this direction, students shared on the social networks (Facebook and Instagram) their personal experiences. Moreover, students from different working groups and schools tested the different applications produced during ScAR. For example, the participants of *Seguitemi, prego...* tested the prototype of the virtual tour above mentioned, while university interns tested the mobile guides before the publication on the Izi.travel sharing platform and the communication campaign in other schools. Furthermore, the multimedia contents produced for the guides were shared with the university interns who uploaded them on the *Atlante Digitale delle Memorie*.

Fig.10 Screenshots from the mobile guides developed by high-school students.



At the end of the didactic project, participants organized a conclusive event in their school to share the process, the results, and the products developed. The event gathered other students, families, teachers, the head of the school, representatives from Municipio 5, and scholars from Politecnico di Milano. Students presented the activities performed, shared with the audience their personal observation and highlighted how the experience changed their perception on the project area. The presentation ended with a public event of an on-field test of the mobile guide.

Thanks to the Izi.travel analytics, the research team could gather information on the performances of the mobile guides. Since the publication on the Izi.travel platform in May 2019 to October 2021 the routes have been entirely played 253 times and the different touristic attractions in the itineraries have been visited more than 2200 times from an international audience. These data show that the project had an impact outside the didactic context in the spirit of the authentic learning methodology.

LANDSCAPE EDUCATION AND TOURISM TRANSFORMATION

Although focused on heritage and landscape education, ScAR also related to tourism education and touched important aspects of the transformations that are taking place in the field of tourism (MiBACT, 2016; Katsoni, 2015), such as: the change in tourist destinations, the emerging role of local communities, the role of digital transformation, and the necessity of a re-tool and re-design of tourism practices.

In conclusion, the project could represent a case study for the debate on tourism education, especially in the following topics.

Fostering untouched and even unusual destinations. The project built knowledge on lesser-known places and creates applications to promote unknown routes in urban

areas. It also fostered the development of sustainable practices in a city where tourism is growing rapidly. In this sense, the ScAR project offered methodological tools to encourage the diversification of destinations by involving young citizens.

Involving local communities. The project enhanced the role of local communities who are taking today a more prominent role in the development of tourism. ScAR as a participatory project involved locals in its didactic processes: students and their families, local shopkeepers, artisans, and common citizens.

Bringing innovation in tourism education. Although tourism education is traditionally delivered in high-schools and universities, the project also involved younger students in order to promote a sense of belonging to places and the active citizenship.

Promoting digital transformation in tourism education. The project encountered the challenges of digital transformation by developing interactive tourism promotion products in collaboration with teachers and students, including the very young ones, with important repercussions on the technological updating of schools. In addition, the project offered an experimental approach in the construction of virtual tourism (experiences in virtual reality).

Developing digital products for a real public in the aim of authentic learning. The project activities recalled realistic tasks and many of the project products were authentic, available for a real public.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The research ended with an impact evaluation that was mainly performed with teachers' reports, questionnaires and interviews (21 reports, 8 questionnaires, 7 interviews). The analysis of these documents highlighted some relevant aspects. First, the project encouraged the intercultural inclusion

in classes with a high percentage of first and second-generation immigrants, and strengthened the relationship between these new citizens and the neighborhood. Second, the use of ICTs and the development of applications stimulated the motivation and prompted a conscious use of technologies in young citizens. Third, students discovered that visiting their own city and neighborhoods as tourists could be exciting. In fact, during the first meetings students difficultly appreciated the presence of interesting places in the area but, after the didactic experience, they started to look at their landscape with watchful and critic eyes. Therefore, ScAR promoted a change in students' landscape representation of the peripheral landscape of their everyday lives.

In general, the research project highlights the central role representation can play in educational processes as the experiences were accompanied by the intensive use of representation tools and methodologies. The activities promoted by ScAR could be intended as a complex process of imagery development and sharing which combined gathered knowledge, readings, and interpretations for the landscape enhancement.

In conclusion, ScAR showed that schools can become a cultural hub to connect citizens, and local stakeholders to promote the hidden tangible and intangible heritage of peripheries. Hence, the experience offers a possible strategy to rediscover fragile areas based on a conscious representation practice.

NOTES

1 The game was developed in collaboration with GaiaSmart, a free app that provides several georeferenced game-routes in steps with quizzes in historic Italian towns targeted to young people and families (Carli, 2017). The games are available for free on the GaiaSmart sharing platform (<http://www.gaiasmart.com/>).

2 The application, named 'Experience tour of Quartiere Stadera', was created with Google Tour Creator and shared on the platform Google Expeditions. The two platform are today closed as the owner (Google) decided to end the project in June 2021.

- 3 The mentioned school is the Istituto di Istruzione Superiore C. Varalli in Milan.
- 4 The two routes are available at <https://izi.travel/en/f65d-exploratory-tour-from-morivione-neighbourhood-to-fondazione-prada/en> and <https://izi.travel/en/207f-exploratory-tour-from-chiesa-rossa-neighbourhood-to-morivione/en>

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**DRAWING
AS DESIGN ACT**
EXPRESSING
THE HIDDEN STRUCTURE
AND THE DESIGN
PERSPECTIVE
OF INNER PERIPHERY

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ESSAY 89/05

INNER AREAS

RESEARCH BY DESIGN

SOCIAL COOPERATIVES

NETWORKS

MATERIAL/IMMATERIAL

The contribution aims to present an ongoing research work with Confcooperative Abruzzo, about the definition of community design actions within the regional inner area. Moreover, it shows the necessity of a series of devices to report the complex stratification of these territories.

The paper traces the difficulties in describing through mapping these inner peripheries of the Italian central Apennino, pointing out the necessity of representing the complex, often subtle, dynamics and the physical asset of

the area. The study displays how understanding these problems and lacks could produce a possibility in which the critical representation of the territory can become a methodological project through an interscalar point of view, so working at different scales of analysis.

Finally, the illustration of some study drawings highlights how the territorial interpretation of inner territories could foresee design actions, recognizing the intrinsic structure of these areas, overlapping tangible and intangible networks.

INTRODUCTION

Where does a place begin? [...] Any place, any point can become a starting point (but also an arrival) to cross a land like this, centerless, which has experienced a constant repositioning, a sort of continuous recomposition and reframe of places. [my translation from italian¹] (Teti, 2014, p. 101)

The condition described above by Vittorio Teti highlights one of the many traits that characterize the inner area. It is urgent to understand how to describe trajectories, boundaries, and conditions for transmissibility of features in a perspective of regeneration. These words have evoked the urgency to understand how we, as architects, can map and represent territories in continuous change and dynamism that, at the same time, seem unchanged. Specifically, we wondered how to detect and communicate the often hidden trajectories that conceal economic, social, and environmental dynamics (Borghi, 2017), to detect the possibility of a renewed imaginary for inner areas (De Rossi, 2018).

Getting out of the arcadian vision of internal areas makes evident the dynamism that characterizes these places where scales, artefacts, and human action merge (Arminio, 2013). An overlap of material and immaterial factors, such as cultural heritage and community frames, defines a complex territorial structure that moves in between opportunities and risks (Corradi & Cozza, 2019), often difficult to interpret and represent. In addition to this, it is possible to frame a complexity regarding scale. The design phases, before the intervening, should consider the strong relationship between building, village, and territory define an essential transcalar perspective during the representation.

Transformations often occur on a small scale, on architectures and spaces, working independently from the local cultures that have given continuity to the systemic value of smaller centres for centuries. With the rediscovery of these, more and more local economies are being activated based on

the transformation of buildings into tourist facilities, crafts, small businesses, and leisure activities (Pazzagli, 2021). At the same time, the design of open spaces to define parking lots, or the reorganization of routes, needs territorial knowledge that can relate morphologies and networks (Corradi & Raffa, 2021). In the rebirth phase, there is a tendency not to read the vocation of the peculiar places, which are also the strengths of each new path of transformation (Marchetti et al., 2017).

This research has tried to find a way to represent the perimeters and abandoned settlements that bind to the change of scale by combining landscape, architecture, and barely perceptible actions. It identifies the design vocation within the inner periphery and interprets the territorial dimension with an architectural perspective. In this way, representing the inner periphery becomes an act of knowledge and design itself. Indeed the representation is assumed as an act aimed at

interpreting the complexity [...] observing and interpreting the changing world. Therefore, the development of descriptions, maps, and design atlases is recurrent. The atlases and mappings return or compare significant fragments of contemporary territories. [my translation from italian?] (Valente & Andreola, 2017, pp. 169, 170)

To better understand these issues and develop a deeper awareness of the design sensitivity necessary for approaching these territories, the contribution presents ongoing research born from the meeting with Confcooperative Abruzzo in the *Rete dei Borghi IN* experience in May 2019. This network establishes the union of community cooperatives, territorial cooperative enterprises, entrepreneurial subjects and associations, born from historical centers set mainly in inner areas and in the most fragile economies characterized by abandonment and depopulation. The synergy takes its cue from a process of reactivation of the internal areas that Confcooperative Abruzzo initiates through bottom-up actions in which the local communities are the protagonists. This research

considers an inner-area of the Abruzzo region, focusing on the relationship between four towns: Anversa degli Abruzzi, Corfinio, Fontecchio, and Navelli.

The research aims to structure and identify a methodology of representation that could help in making visible the vocation of the inner settlements and so to reconstruct community actions linked to social cooperatives, seen as connectors between the territory and local communities. Hence, identifying criteria for reading and representing actions in space was an essential first step in approaching the territory. They interpret it and understand the overlapping of material and immaterial assets to make them interact in the transformation processes of the territory, its activities, and its communities.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The final objective of the research was to define a representation method that can be elaborated through resources accessible to all, functional to the identification of descriptive models of places, and actions to be taken to be used in the process of valorization of places, starting from the recognition of identity elements. For this reason, it was necessary to know in depth the features of the inner periphery, looking for sources and different ways of drawing. The inner areas, also called inner peripheries (De Toni et al., 2020), present a lack of representation regarding a complete system of data, such as specific tourist data, qualitative archives of the built and often abandoned heritage. The specificities of the various villages and the territory that contains them, increasing the difficulty of interpretation and action; thus, understanding this lack, it is fundamental to define the act of drawing as a research tool (Tamburelli, 2020). By mapping these intricate territories, it is possible to frame the depth of these areas and relate the project to the local communities (Magnaghi, 2020). The research applied different techniques of investigation and documentation to

approach this study, starting from indirect analysis through cartographic documents (regional and municipal technical maps, natural parks' maps, etc.), GIS mapping systems (collecting layers regarding floods and fire risks, ground morphology, etc.), *Google Street View*, and *Google Maps*, to physical site inspection and photography, investigating the architectural and territorial scale. Moreover, a direct dialogue with local institutions, such as municipal offices, mayors, park authorities, local entrepreneurs and private institutions, was essential to address the lack of data. This direct investigation was done through a series of informal interviews especially with the president of Confcooperative Abruzzo, local municipal offices were engaged through specific questions in order to collect data regarding services and local needs, and meetings with the mayors helped in better define the representation perspective in order to implement the communicability of the research. In addition, the analysis of ISTAT data (regarding population census, age, information relating to availability of receptive places) was fundamental to understanding the analytical characteristics of the four villages at the centre of the research.

From this investigation, the paper highlights the need for several theoretical and technical devices and data collection to define a descriptive set that represents the complex network of tangible and intangible assets. Consequently, expressing the space of the inner areas through the definition of synthetic maps aims to draw the relationship between morphology and metabolism, finding the specific dynamism within the inner area. Finally, the theme of scale is considered by interpreting and drawing transcalar maps that hold together data, information and space, as a crucial architectural and territorial interpretation. The transcalar perspective is indeed assumed as a way to interpret the issues and potentialities of inner areas, where the drawing of synthetic maps could foresee a method of research by representation able also to envision the vocation of the different settlements.

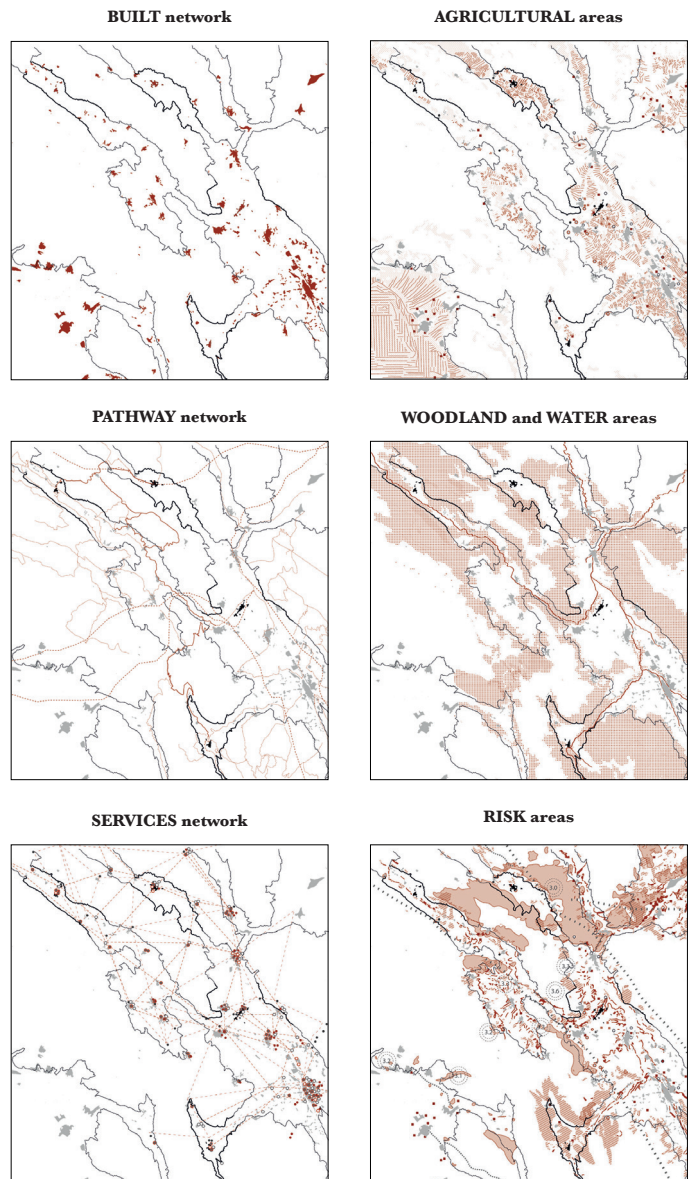
The complete research, of which only a part is presented here, produced 35 maps, developed through a transcalar study

logic that starts from the regional scale up to the analysis and recognition of 4 villages used as case studies. Alongside these, more than 60 interpretative diagrams, schemes and project drawings, have constituted a graphic set for a broader and deeper understanding of territorial data, as well as for their more in-depth communication. Therefore this article present only a part of the work done, to offer a glimpse of the methodological work, in which the representation was an element of interpretative analysis and a design perspective itself.

REPRESENTATION AS INTERPRETATION AND DESIGN ACTION

Before addressing the specificity of the research, it is essential to emphasize the spatial and ontological meaning of the concept of inner area (De Toni et al., 2020) that is exposed here. From a general point of view, these areas present an apparent problem of marginality, scarcity of local development policies, and low planning inputs. Specifically, the study focuses on the Central Apennines, in a fragile context where insufficient services and infrastructure overlap with a growing phenomenon of aging, depopulation and abandonment (Teti, 2014; De Rossi, 2018). In addition to these, other physical problems have a heavy impact on people's lives, affecting the design perspective of this territory, one of the most seismic and high fire risk areas in Italy. Moreover, climate change exacerbates other dangers, such as hydrogeological instability, which affects the risk of flooding for the built environment and, at the same time, drought for rural agricultural fields (Regione Abruzzo, 2021). All this is shaping new alarming threats that interfere with the conservation of the local ecosystem that characterizes the central Abruzzo Apennines. These characteristics are decisive in defining the research framework and identifying the set of problems of the specific territory that the survey sought to address and represent through maps. Thus, the idea of an

Fig. 1 Elaboration by the authors, *Territorial layers*, 2021, Digital drawing, 16x12, Elaboration from the dynamic atlas. The image shows the different territorial layers, representing the Borghi Minori Network between Anversa degli Abruzzi, Corfinio, Fontecchio and Navelli. The Built environment (top left corner), Traditional cropping infrastructure (bottom left corner); Slow infrastructure (top center), natural infrastructure (bottom center), tourism and essential services infrastructure (top right corner) and risk network (bottom right corner). The 6 maps aim to represent the stratification of themes to understand the spatial articulation and complexity.



asymmetrical territory (Tarpino, 2015) is evident in the inner periphery, where the concept refers to the imbalance of social, economic, and spatial relations. However, at the same time, inner areas show high potential, derived from the relationship

between architecture and landscape, in the tension between nature and human artifacts (Kipar, 2018), and the debate between local communities and the territorial network of villages. The need to represent this intricate and complex system led to the development of a study that used drawing as a research tool, thus using it to interpret the territory and also trying to use the visual language to communicate the design perspective to Confcooperative Abruzzo, the main stakeholder of this research. The first act of mapping aimed to clarify the layers that could define the main territorial, spatial, architectural characteristics and networks (Figure 1).

The investigation started from the verification of difficulty accessing sources often due to the lack of archives. For this reason, the first phase of the research identifies easy-to-find sources to make this type of investigation accessible to anyone. Then we proceeded to verify the appropriateness/correctness of the materials, especially the online sources, by cross-checking them with different databases. Starting from the information derived from the technical maps from the Geoportale of Abruzzo, it was necessary to compare the materials and information through the usage of aerophotogrammetry from *Google Maps* and *Google Earth*, in addition to images from *Google Street View* where possible, and make direct recognition with national and regional cartographies.

In addition, informal interviews with local actors (mayors, cooperatives representatives and members, and villages' citizens and entrepreneurs) was fundamental to understand the set of services present and active among the territory. Indeed, these data are often outdated and partially missing on the internet geographic information systems. The figure presented here is a synthesis prepared at the end of a broader analytical investigation that is part of the ongoing research. The individual strata are analyzed and presented with more specific and descriptive data.

In the next phase, were identified and mapped the following themes: the network of buildings, the network of

routes, the network of services, agricultural areas, with their production centers, forest and water areas, risk areas, natural and environmental systems. These are assumed as 'territorial layers' to be considered the basis of design thinking and represent the system of material and immaterial elements that make up the territory. These have been understood as a set of critical readings to be taken into account when approaching the region to plan design action at different scales. In addition, they constitute a set of morphological studies, where the various networks identify cornerstones for the built environment and daily life within the area.

The first two spatial layers investigate the diffusion of the built environment and the paths. Therefore they constitute the physical assets on which to act through spatial planning. The data obtained from the Geoportale d'Abruzzo, ISTAT database, and routes local maps showed the rarefied structure of the territory, on the other hand, the possibility of interaction between the various settlements.

As far as the architectural/building scale is concerned, a widespread problem when dealing with inland areas is the lack of survey of the consistency and quality of the building heritage. *Google Street View* has functioned as a partial tool of analysis to derive relatively up-to-date documentation and address this problem. However, especially in mountainous regions, this virtual tool is often unavailable. *Google's* cars using the Dodeca 2360 (the camera system used to make 360° images) is poorly suited for surveying the historical centers characterized by narrow streets and stairs. An example within this study was Anversa degli Abruzzi, where a stairs system structure the village's morphological asset, so it is inaccessible to cars in most of the country.

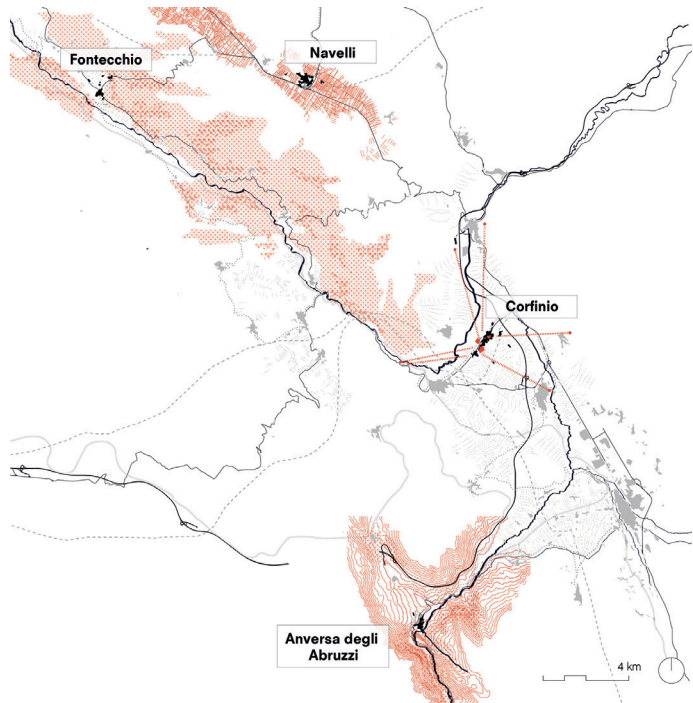
Regarding the community services network, the map represents the virtual connections that creates a relation between territorial nodes. It summarized the system composed of the health care structures, housing, educational facilities, and services for daily interaction such as gas stations, bank offices, etc. These services were considered as

the ones necessary to live and move, so essential for the inner metabolism of the area, thus configuring an heterogeneous set of services. Data were collected through the analysis of sources ISTAT 2018, Geographic Information System, and direct collaboration with local actors. Regarding this reading, it is relevant to note the concentration of services, as it clarifies the actual quality and quantity of the network.

The following layer represents agricultural, water, and wooded areas. They represent not only the landscape components of the territory, but also the essential reserve of drinking water and agricultural products for urban areas and relating cultural, natural, and socio-economic aspects and sustainability.

The analysis of the agricultural fabric, and the spread of forests, is a morphological interpretation that frames them as actors of the place. The representation has synthesized and redrawn aerial photographs and maps included in regional reports such as *ABRUZZO. Report on the state of the*

Fig. 2 Elaboration by the authors, *Territorial structure*, 2021, Digital drawing, 16x14, Elaboration from the dynamic atlas. Interpretation of the territorial structure, synthesis of morphologies and main characteristics of the studied settlements. Fontecchio is connected with the feature of the forest and the system of the Aterno river; Navelli can relate the agricultural vocation of the valley, where the representation shows the farm system; Corfinio could be the center of a series of heritage sites, spread around the settlement and in it; Anversa degli Abruzzi is a connection for the Riserva Naturale Regionale Gole del Sagittario.



environment 2018 of the regional agency for environmental protection, elaborating interpretive maps of the ecological structure about local centers and communities.

The last layer we considered concerns risks. According to data from CRESA (Regional Center for Economic and Social Studies and Research) and ISTAT, this territory has a high seismic risk, superimposed on other serious territorial fragilities related to the hydrological risk that has a tremendous social and economic impact.

Having identified the six territorial strata, we undertook a more in-depth study of the area, aiming to define a structure for this inner periphery (Figure 2), to interpret the specificity of each of the four villages analyzed. The territorial readings built the framework of work, helping in understanding the territorial issues that are present in the inner area. Working at the settlements scale, in this perspective, means to structure a project able to interact on one hand with these territorial layers, and on the other to be in relation with the local settlement's vocation.

To do this work, the dialogue with several people from the local municipalities and cooperatives, understanding the main characteristics of the area that gave identity and a kind of uniqueness to their villages, was helpful.

Once the territorial networks were identified and represented, the objective of the research focused on the detection of the vocations of the single villages, understanding the importance of a specification of their morphological characteristics related to the space and activities and in a method of representation that could embody those features.

In this reading, we tried to identify and trace the identity characters of the places and the communities living in them, linking them to space and use in a temporal projection.

For each of the villages, a specificity was identified to create an integrated system between centers.

Each of them reveals themselves as an interpretative key to developing common themes to identify culture, nature, agriculture, and services.

Subsequently, the research focused on the analysis of each of the four villages to understand and describe the development themes in which for each of them we highlighted what for simplification we indicate as a dualism: Corfinio-culture, Fontecchio-ecosystemic services, Navelli-agriculture, Anversa degli Abruzzi-nature. These dual elements combine to define a specificity for each settlement, on which to structure a project and reactivation perspective. This main 'vocation' is the result on one hand of discussions with local actors, listed within the methodology, on the other hand derived from the understanding of some identifiable peculiarities through the critical analysis of the territorial layers described above.

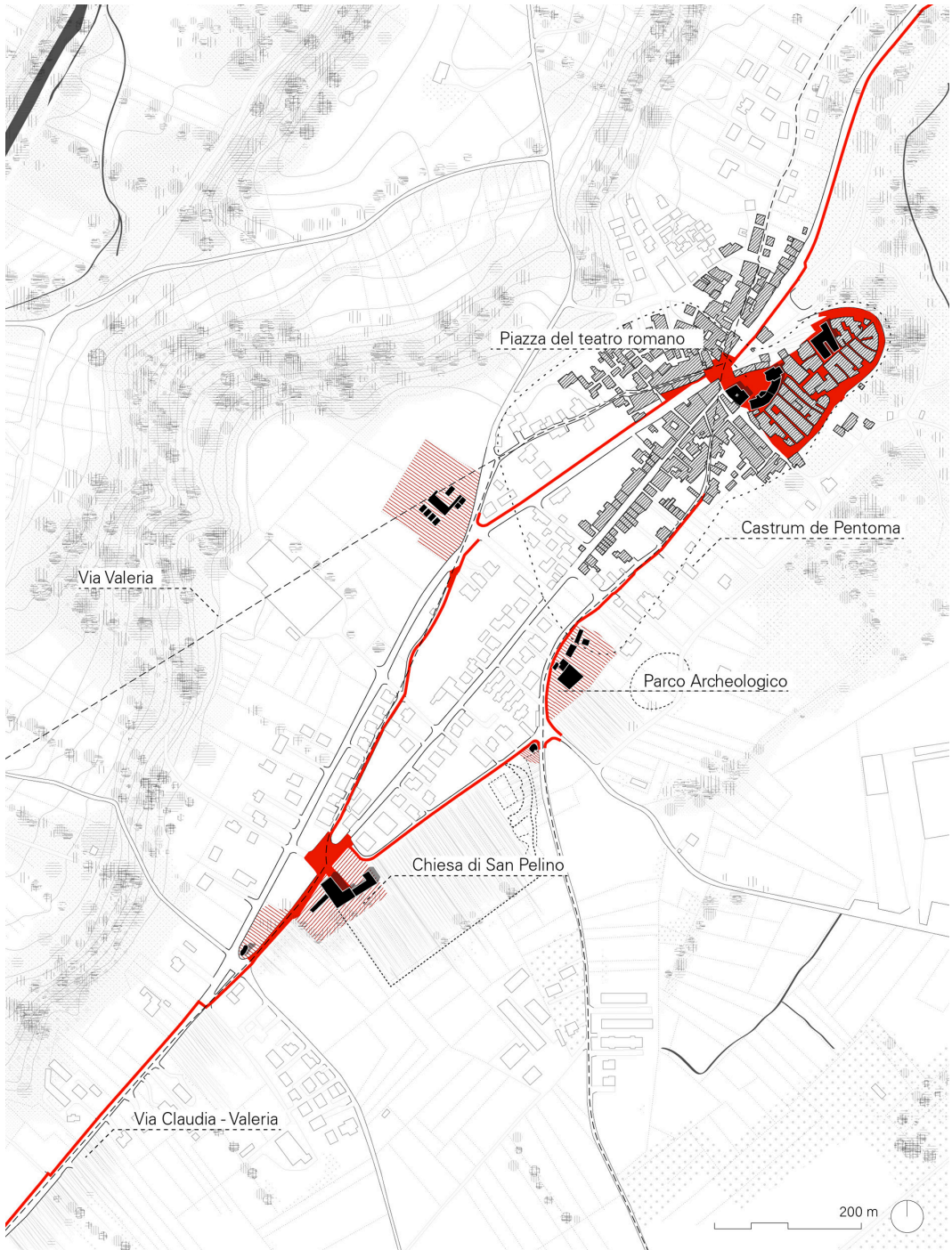
Dualism represents for each center the dominant but not exclusive character. The methodological project has the task of articulating all the characteristics of the individual project by entrusting the interpretative criteria to the specific features of each one.

To better clarify the methodology, we describe the case of Corfinio (Figure 3), as an example of the process adopted for each village.

At first, we recognized Corfinio's historical roots as the capital of the Lega Italica (Geraci & Marcone, 2017), with notable development in Roman times, still clearly and intelligibly preserved in its spatial *cardo-decumano* structure. In addition, the role of the ancient theatre is a fundamental morphological element in the evolution of the city that is still influencing the urban form. Outside the urban core, the thermal bath and the co-cathedral of San Pelino of the Romanesque diocese of Sulmona-Valva (1081-1124), gave Corfinio a territorial role and rank even in the Middle Ages.

Furthermore, the urban layout maintains a close relationship with the agricultural landscape. For this reason, both spatial organizations contribute to structuring the design perspective, which intends to act through the

Fig. 3 Elaboration by the authors, *Urban morphology of Corfinio: a design perspective*, 2021, Digital drawing, 16x22, Elaboration from the dynamic atlas. Structure of Corfinio settlement, highlighting (in red) the possibility for future areas where to focus for a renewed project, stressing the identity features of the place and its historical stratification.



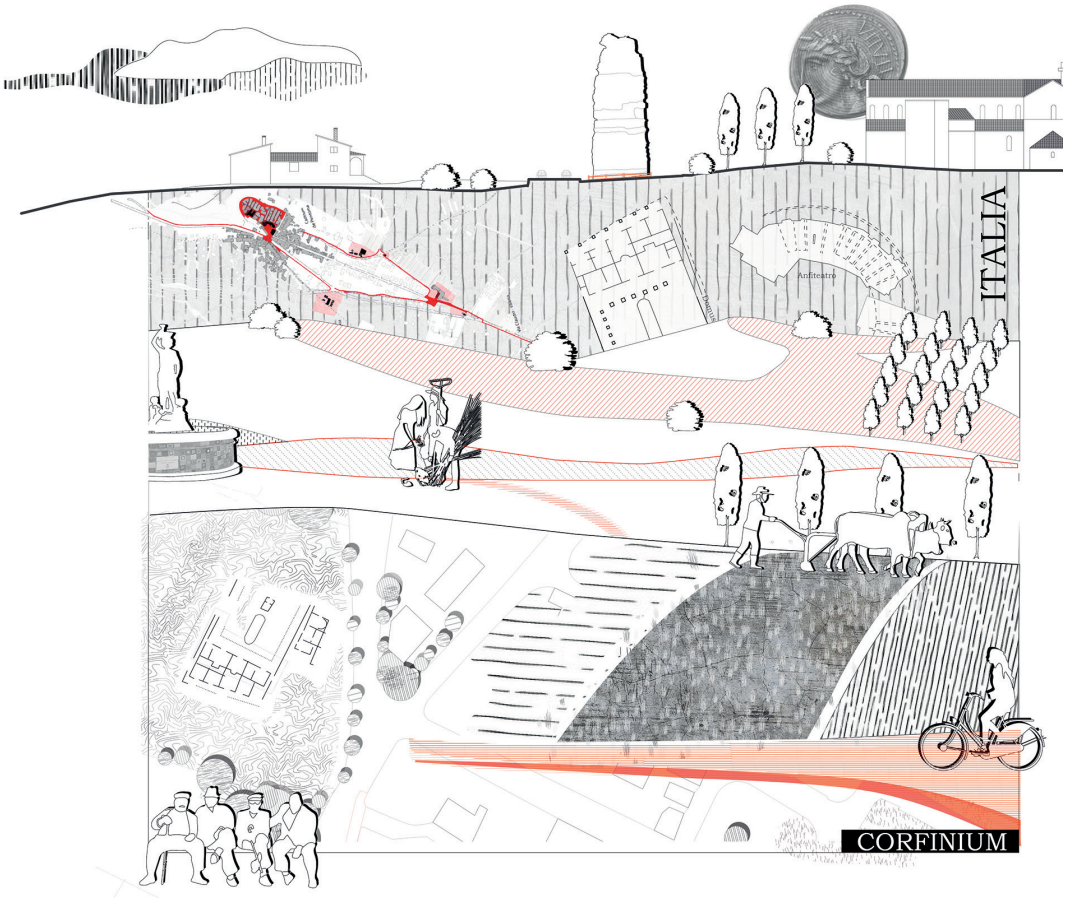


Fig. 4 Elaboration by the authors, *Visualize a possible design interaction*, 2021, Digital drawing, 16x14, Elaboration from the dynamic atlas. The visualization synthesizes the spatial and community network that could interact with a reactivation project for the village.

reinterpretation of these two elements: urban layout and territorial layout, combined with a series of activities and initiatives carried out by the local community and Cooperative.

These were first surveyed and reconnected at the various scales, thus identifying a recomposition strategy.

The urban and territorial cornerstones were then linked to the plots, drawing a framework to place the actions of physical, visual, and perceptive transformation, linking them to the actions underway by identifying and mapping urban and territorial functions.

The research used archive sources, historical maps, cartographies, digital resources, inspections, and a discussion with the inhabitants and the various actors during the Workshop *Rete dei Borghi IN* in May 2019.

Then a design visualization was elaborated, useful to represent the structural elements of the community of Corfinio and, at the same time, to describe a possible dialogue between spatial/physical elements and the immateriality of the community (Figure 4).

The aim was to have an understandable design that contains both landscapes, urban and architectural features, and, at the same time, includes the actions that take place in the space, easy to share with the local communities and actors.

The visualization does not show a single design response; instead, it makes more explicit the metabolism present in the perimeter of the inner areas related to Corfinio by identifying a series of boundaries or related areas within which to implement design actions.

MAPPING FRAGMENTS

The scarcity of organized data, surveys, maps at the urban and architectural scale, together with a system of fragmentary information gives an incomplete description of the inner area. Moreover, it highlights the need for a methodology that acquires 'ordinary' data and information from readily available tools (digital archives, direct contacts, internet, social platforms). Combined with the photographic survey activities that *Google's* applications offer and integrated with drone photo surveys or special geolocalized photographic survey campaigns of inaccessible places, thus recomposing fragments containing each internal area's genetic codes.

The choice to work with heterogeneous data is motivated by the will to make the description process easily

transferable and activatable through actions bottom-up and, therefore, harmonious with the spirit of communities and social cooperatives. This strategy implies the will to provide effective reading tools to increase awareness and knowledge of places and their potential. It also means taking a census of the inner areas' historical, architectural, natural, and environmental heritage. This collection, so knowledge, of elements is a tool and the basis for conscious choices. The elaboration, and analysis of these territories show a relationship between the different scales and networks that the representation should express. The rarefaction of settlements has required the delineation of specific areas, not necessarily determined by geographical boundaries but held together by a system of similar characteristics. So, the representation is not limited to identifying an area but defines a design perspective embodied in the territory. In a sense, unveiling "the hidden design intentionality" (Ravagnati, 2012, p. 18) of the territory in the direction Saverio Muratori had outlined.

The presented experience defines the construction of a critical and analytical setting to describe and find design possibilities for the specific inner periphery. At the same time, the research clarifies a set of problems and opportunities that are frequently present in similar areas and explains the potential of drawing as a design and research tool (Garner, 2008).

The research also revealed the crucial role that local communities can play. Indeed, they are the end-users of design proposals and the only method to overcome the lack of data within the inner periphery. Therefore, it is clear that a closer relationship between researchers and local municipalities could produce a deeper analysis and a correct representation of the inner area. Indeed, it could improve the identification of local peculiarities and the collection of the large dataset that is not yet available through GIS and internet databases.

REPRESENTATION AS ACT OF DESIGN

The research observations deepened how the representation of networks at different scales can highlight the characteristics of each settlement, starting from physical spatiality and considering local communities in their specific geography.

The representation of these maps points out the need for a humanistic approach (Teti, 2014; Arminio, 2013), capable of mixing data-driven research, interpreting data and morphological maps found in archives, with the design of local specificities. Moreover, through mapping and drawing, the potential of representation to reveal the inner periphery structure became evident. In this perspective, the sensitivity for a critical representation could be the first and authentic act of design. Moreover, the necessity for a transcalar perspective is a corestone in identifying the multi-scalar relation that we can detect to define the metabolism of these areas, but also to think about developments for the future.

Starting from the investigation of the territorial layers, the process of representation showed the need for a critical analysis that could embody the territorial characteristic and constitute a design expression.

Finally, considering the marginality and lack of information about the inner area, the process of drawing remains an essential step towards a deeper awareness of these realities. At the same time, it could offer common knowledge on the design potential that could be found in the inner structure of these territories.

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NOTES

- 1** The Italian text of the quotation is as follows: “Dove comincia un luogo? [...] Qualsiasi luogo, qualsiasi punto può diventare come punto di partenza (ma anche di arrivo) per attraversare una terra come questa, priva di centro, che ha conosciuto un costante riposizionamento, una sorta di ininterrotta ricomposizione e reimpaginazione dei luoghi” (Teti, 2014, p. 101).
- 2** The Italian text of the quotation is as follows: “interpretare la complessità [...] osservare e interpretare il mondo in mutamento. Perciò è ricorrente la messa a punto di descrizioni, di mappe, di atlanti progettuali. Gli atlanti e le mappature restituiscono o confrontano frammenti significativi dei territori contemporanei” (Valente & Andreola, 2017, pp. 169, 170).

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THE JUNGLE OF CALAIS

A PLACE OF RESISTANCE AND MONUMENTALITY

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MIGRATION

ART OF RESISTANCE

(POST)COLONIAL PRACTICES

ARTISTIC PRACTICES

ETHNOGRAPHY

The ongoing critical European border regimes are leading to the emergence of new official/unofficial refugee and migrant camps, which I understand, are an important aspect of the (post)colonial era. Of particular interest to this paper is reflecting upon past actions and motivations in my first experience in one of the biggest informal camps in Europe, 'The Jungle' in Calais, France. For this purpose, I question my artistic and pseudo ethnographic methodologies. Such as artistic intervention with an art action, participatory observation, and informal interviews, reflecting on how to research these 'peripheral' places. I will deal with my own experience in The Jungle with ethnographic and artistic considerations

and consider theories such as; the art of resistance and (post)colonial practices, which have helped guide my ongoing thoughts on 'monumentally'. I see The Jungle as a possible visual manifestation of ongoing problematics of the 'autonomy of migration' in a contemporary Western context. The particular interest of this text is the reflection on/ of different theoretical, ethnographic, and artistic materials from the research during my first encounter in The Jungle. The major focus is between 2015 and 2016 when the urban and social development of the area took place (and when my initial fieldwork took place). This text engages on layers of memory with aspects of personal experience and anthropological theory.

INTRODUCTION

The growing humanitarian crisis and the gaps in border laws worldwide, especially in European borders, have provided the grounds for developing migrant camps in cross-border zones. This paper aims to reflect on informal camps that have not been supported directly by government agents. Volunteers, NGOs, and neighbors are the direct aids in their social and urban development in peripheral spaces of the city. The first section of the paper covers my own experience of my first fieldwork with an ethnographic and artistic approach. This work particularly analyzes my first encounter as an artist in The Jungle camp in Calais, France. This first experience motivated me to inquire into social scientific theories such as the art of resistance, the 'autonomy of migration' (De Genova, 2017), and (post)colonialism (Stoler, 2008), which will be analyzed in the second section of this text. I am interested in challenging the art of resistance and (post) colonial approaches with the problematics of the border regime. These concepts guided me in my ongoing thoughts on 'monumentally', which will be analyzed in the last section of this text. I see The Jungle as a possible visual manifestation of ongoing problematics of the 'autonomy of migration' in a contemporary Western context.¹

ETHNOGRAPHIC AND ARTISTIC EXPERIENCE

From the mid-1990s to the end of 2016, the northern part of Les Dunes in Calais, France, was characterized by informal migrant urbanization. This place was commonly called *The Jungle*, an informal migrant camp. Through my research I realized that the name 'The Jungle' was given by the press and outsiders (in reference to the "chaotic" internal dynamics of the place) and not by the inhabitants themselves. In my previous research I found no information of a specific name given by the inhabitants themselves, only the answer given by the participants of

the local radio station that operated inside the camp between 2015-2016, Jungala Radio. The name Jungala means Jungle-NO in Arabic. Evoking the name 'The Jungle' as a racist and exotic description of the dehumanized reality of the camp.

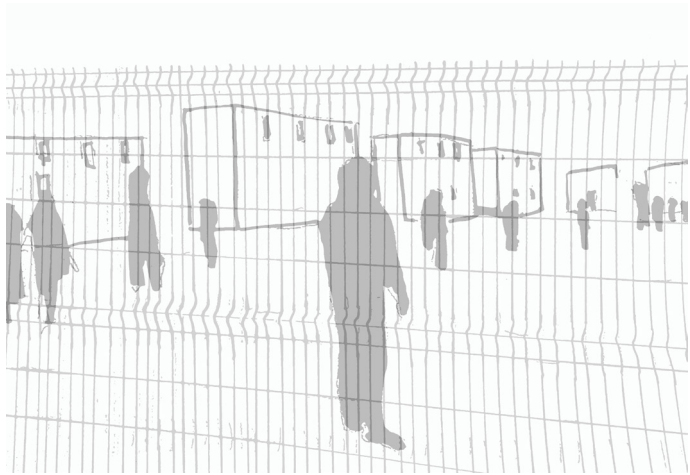
The Jungle was located on the periphery of Calais, in the area of Les Dunes. Calais is one of France's most important ports, which, across the Channel Strait of Dover, borders England. One of the most important economies in Calais is tourism. The city's infrastructure is adapted to the needs of the tourist, which contradicts the reality in The Jungle. The town has more than 20 years of migration history, coming mainly from Sudan, Darfur, Afghanistan, Syria, Iraq, Eritrea, and other crisis zones. This informal settlement is one of the oldest in the European Union. In 2015 and 2016 the camp gained global attention during the peak of the European border crisis, when the population of the camp exploded and French authorities began carrying out evictions. On 26 October 2016, French authorities announced that the camp had been cleared (Bau-mard, 2016). However, conversations with volunteers provide evidence that it still exists.

During the summer of 2016, the Camp was rapidly urbanizing and developing, with 'common buildings' beginning to appear, as described by Michel Agier in his book: *The Jungle: Calais's camps and migrants* (2018). Agier refers to these 'common' areas in terms of their communal/voluntary construction and distinguishes them with 'public services' since Calais municipality did not participate in the construction of these communal areas for the inhabitants. NGOs, volunteers and the inhabitants themselves were responsible for the construction of social facilities such as schools, churches, mosques, communal kitchens, libraries, art school, kindergarten, theater and a youth center (Agier, 2018). Parallel to the camp's rapid growth and development was a rise in media attention: newspapers, TV shows, radio shows, online documentaries, etc, which further accelerated the development of The Jungle. This area was gradually becoming a neighborhood and a small town on the periphery of Calais with global exposure: "This town began to

focus the attention of the whole world, which could well appreciate how it was both prophetic and catastrophic in character, marvelous and wretched, utopian and dystopian” (Agier, 2018, p. 71). At the same time, through my first encounter in the camp, I could perceive the development of a micro-economy. Restaurants with different cultural backgrounds started to flourish, creating a kind of internal market, which the inhabitants could benefit from. Mostly there was the exchange of goods as a means of payment for these small entrepreneurs. I was able to understand this kind of ‘exchange’ thanks to a specific situation of my experience in The Jungle. In one of the meetings I had with some residents, around a cup of tea, I shared chocolates and cigarettes on the table, they told me that those two goods were some of the most appreciated things to trade in the camp. They kept it for the next few days to exchange with their peers.

The attention from mass media at a national and international level consolidated the monumental character of The Jungle. In the peak of the 2015 border crisis, especially within the European Union, the monumental state (which I will explain in more detail in the discussion section) was an important factor in the following governmental and European Union actions, causing extreme consequences (demolitions, violence, human rights violations, human right violations, among others) in The Jungle’s history. Less than six months after the French government’s public proclamation of ‘tolerance’ towards migrants in Les Dunes zone, the then French Prime Minister, Manuel Valls, announced in September 2015 his desire to create a ‘tent camp’ on the same location of Les Dunes. This would end up being a container camp called the Centre d’Accueil Provisoire (temporary shelters, CAP). When I was first arriving in The Jungle in July 2016, I saw these white containers, as an installation from the 70s with an industrial architectural aesthetic². Each container provides sleeping space for approximately 12 people. The structures did not provide for the possibility of bringing or hanging things that reminded the dwellers of home, which is another one of the reasons that many migrants did not want to

Figure 1 Melanye Garland, *Field drawing, CAP containers, The Jungle, Calais, 2016.*



go live in the CAP. Of course, the first reason was when deciding to go and live there, one had to give their fingerprints and enter the EU data system, here 'luck was on the run' and there was almost no possibility of disappearing from the data identification system. The second reason was the fact that it is not possible to create your 'home', even for a temporary period. By prohibiting the display of personal objects (such as posters, photos, etc.), the French municipality was making a statement to remind everyone that Les Dunes is a temporary and transitory place. The duality found in the Les Dunes territory, between the CAP, its industrial, regulated containers and the organic The Jungle, visualizes the in-between space in which migrants found themselves living on a daily basis. The conflict between these two models; one, represents state power in the face of migration, with its industrial, structural, systematic, technological, capital, 'masculine' aspects. The other presents a self-organized, dynamic, flexible, adaptable, sociable, supportive, empowering, militant, 'feminine' reality. This confrontation brings me to think about the reality of destruction and construction that the inhabitants of The Jungle had to continuously deal with. Not only dealing with survival, but with the 'possibility' and (false sense of) hope of being able to cross the metal fences and enter the CAP system, therefore the France

state and EU system, in order to feel 'safe', like a 'citizen' and 'belonging to a European territory'.

The fieldwork to The Jungle was an arbitrary decision. Since the large-scale arrival of the Syrian community in Germany in 2015, artist communities started to organize cultural projects to help within the German government's refugee camps. Together with my art collective nomadicArt (see www.nomadicart.org), we realized that inside the camps in Berlin (which were set up in hotels, gyms, and empty schools), there were no workshops or artistic and therapeutic activities for families, especially for children, youth, and women. What struck us the most was that the program within the camps did not initially³ have a school or any form of education for the children and youth. Only basic needs were covered, like shelter, food, legal aid, among others. Therefore, with my artist colleagues, we started to schedule weekly workshops, which we adapted to the needs of the participants. We asked what they would like to do, and we worked arranging tutors and fundraising to buy materials. Here was the starting point for the *Connecting Stories* (see <https://www.melaniegarland.com/ART-WORKS/CONNECTING-STORIES-2>) workshop and the initial reflections on anthropology, which led me to The Jungle in July 2016.

Connecting Stories was a writing letter workshop in which the participants were children, youth, and adults. Depending on the day, families gathered around a table to write letters. Depending on the participants' motivation, the letters could be exchanged with other participants in other camps in Berlin (at that time, I was doing this workshop in three camps in close neighborhoods). The main idea was to provide a quiet space to write and, if possible, to share it with peers. Some writing suggestions were; writing to an unknown person, sharing experiences from the new place and the journey from their home country to Germany. There was a mixture of languages: Farsi, Arabic, German and English. Sometimes, I invited a translator friend when someone wanted to describe or read their letter. But it usually was a mixture of languages and sound, where the sound texture was more predominant than the meaning

of the words. Usually, at the end of the workshop, the participants would give me their letters (which were given, later on, to other participants in another emergency center). Then, I would give them back letters from other participants, which they would read immediately. Each participant knew that before I delivered their letter, I would scan it for later research use. I didn't know at the time what to do with the information collected in those letters, but I had an intuition that it was a kind of collective memory. A sort of migrant's memory archive, that was emerging thanks to this workshop (Garland, 2021).

During one of my last sessions in June 2016, a group of participants asked me if I would do this workshop or another one outside Germany (I was already looking at possibilities to volunteer in Europe and Asia). They shared with me about the situation in Calais and told me about The Jungle. If I went there I could deliver some letters from them anonymously (they knew there would be no specific receiver). Some of them had passed through before coming to Germany, leaving friends behind. Other ones believed that their relatives were trapped there, unable to cross to England. But they had no way of communicating with them; because of its undocumented nature, the digital media (*Whatsap, Facebook*) was not an ideal channel to communicate between migrants

Figure 2 Melanye Garland,
Connecting Stories exhibition,
LITE-HAUS Gallery Berlin, 2019.
©Dalida Kibir-LITE HAUS



Figure 3 Melanye Garland,
Connecting Stories exhibition,
LITE-HAUS Gallery Berlin, 2019.
©Dalida Kibir-LITE HAUS



in transit. *Connecting Stories* began to transform into a possible kind of 'concrete' communication, becoming a form of activism against the European border regime. Later on, *Connecting Stories* transformed into an art action, where the artistic artifact was the letter and the envelope. In my paper, *The Jungle de Calais: Entre Liminalidad, Espacio fronterizo y lugar de posibilidades* (2021), I describe in detail *Connecting Stories*, which I critical analyze my role as an artist and 'mail-woman'—questioning the ethics and power relations of the project through anthropology. In this article, I want to highlight how this art action, which had an intuitive and empirical nature, allowed me to experience the reality inside, reflecting later on, in the art of resistance and the (post)colonial actions of The Jungle's inhabitants.

To arrive at The Jungle, I had to take a local bus that left me a 45-minute walk to the camp entrance. The walk was in a straight line, and I passed through a deserted landscape, abandoned factory and saw graffiti with paintings, drawings, and texts on the walls, symbolizing solidarity with the inhabitants of The Jungle. Along the way, I noticed people (all young men) walking and sitting on the sidewalk, some of them waving at me. But in general, there was a silence that blended with the sea breeze. Arriving at the camp, I

found a human barrier of French police officers who gave me the feeling that they were waiting for something. They told me in French and then in broken English if I entered the camp; it was difficult that they were going to help me if any 'confrontation' occurred. Those sentences were the first ones where I began to understand the tension happening in the Les Dunes zone.

The first thing I saw was the camp map, which I immediately drew so that I could locate myself and understand how the settlement was structured. I already knew beforehand that the Jungle was also divided by communities and languages. Looking at the map, I could not find where the Syrian community was. Since that was my mission, to look for the Syrian community and deliver the letters (20 in total) that I had collected in Berlin and, if possible, receive some letters

Figure 4 Melanye Garland, *Field drawing, Copy of the Camp-map, The Jungle, Calais, 2016*



to take back. I asked some inhabitants and a volunteer of Irish origin who were at the entrance (since it was also the starting point of the main street where the restaurants and bars were). They all told me that the Syrian community was small (at that time), so they were close to the Kurdish and Afghani communities. By locating it on the map, I found it on the main street on the left side.

Walking along the main street, I could observe the infrastructure and architecture of the restaurants and bars, which at that moment were covered with a dark color. Getting closer to see the materiality of the venues (built with light materials, such as wood, plastic, and recyclable materials), I noticed that the surfaces were burnt. The smell of burning was also present, which by its intensity, I could guess that this had happened the day before or only a few days ago. Later, in the meeting with the Syrian leader (during the letters exchange⁴), he told me that there had been a confrontation with the French police the day before. He mentioned that this event was not isolated and had been going on for a couple of weeks. Looking back now, it could have been one of the first signs of the massive eviction in October 2016 (Garland, field notes fragments, 2016).

THE JUNGLE AS A RESISTANCE

The Jungle is often referred to as a 'state of exception' that produces 'bare life' (Agamben, 2005), a state of being outside the boundaries of city policy and planning, along with the degree of dehumanization and danger that these terms bring. Beyond that, The Jungle is a complex 'liminal place', in which the unstable zone between 'political' and 'bare' has produced states of biopower, resistance and abjection in and outside the camp.

It is a place where bodies, in all their clandestine 'out of placeness', nevertheless create, construct, and persevere in their attempt to survive, remain in place or stay on the

move. These are 'political subjects' who draw from the knotted symbolic resources of the past in their resistance to the contemporary border's regime of surveillance and control. (Sanyal, 2017, p. 14)

The visible traces of modern slavery and colonialism between the past and present, preserve the particularity of the Jungle and challenge the refugee's image as the silent 'bare life' (Sanyal, 2018). Through the Bodily Arts of Resistance (Sanyal, 2017) within The Jungle, a state of ephemeral monumentality (which I will explore in more detail in the last section) has been produced on an international scale. The massive media exposure, triggered not only by journalists and politicians but also by the open exposure of terror and dehumanization by the inhabitants and volunteers of The Jungle. It was one of the fundamental stages of resistance to border sophistication. The various strategies of resistance generated allowed a possible monumentality to be shown internationally, again putting the spotlight on the interaction between border regime, empowerment and political subjectivity of the present time.

The Jungle's diverse strategies of resistance to the European border regime on the part of its inhabitants, also has led to an internal mutilation of its own identity. The degree of 'communitas' and collective empowerment has created community, neighbourhood and sociability, but it has also led to the erasure of personal identity. The degree of monumentality of The Jungle and its massive international exposure was made possible by the communal state of 'unity'. It was no longer just migrants wandering around Calais and living in the streets, but rather 'The Jungle', a strong, fighting and organized community, which was creating 'culture' as an action of resistance against French and British governments. The empowerment and appropriation of the Les Dunes zone has brought (post)colonial attitudes (which I will address in more detail in the next section) but simultaneously has brought along the 'voluntary' eradication of self-identity, for defense against the European Union's border laws. I experienced an example of this during

my first fieldwork. At the time, I was so overwhelmed by the whole complex and dynamic context of The Jungle that I didn't have the awareness to understand what I was observing. I remember in one of the meetings with the Syrian community leaders, I noticed that two of them had the tops of all their fingers wrapped with medical bandages. It caught my attention but I thought it was a kitchen accident. Looking back now, I can understand that it was most probably the result of them attempting to erase their own fingerprints.

The undocumented habitants in The New Jungle have created biopolitical strategies to survive and resist surveillance and border control in Calais. By the eradication of fingerprints, is not only a resistance to the state and its politics of mobilization. From what I could identify in my own experience in the field, this is also a process of disappearance that generates a 'body-group', (post)colonial and 'communitas' (Turner et al., 1969) attitude that triggers a powerful resistance to fight for a safe place outside the legal framework of European refugee camps. The database that collects fingerprints and identifies people, in this case in the European zone, does not allow illegal entry to different EU borders. Applying for political asylum as a refugee does not depend only on which country he/she is seeking asylum, since once they are in the EU database, migrants will be forced to return to the first European country that they were identified as entering. This procedure does not allow for the migrant to choose the country they would like to seek asylum in. This is why the strategy of mutilating the fingerprints will allow this 'free' mobility and to be able to decide which country the migrant wants to end their journey. This decision on the part of the 'autonomy of migration' (De Genova, 2017) provides a window to new possibilities, which by 'disappearing' as an individual, can strengthen the group identity, becoming 'one' by creating a new communal identity. The Jungle is tangible proof of this art of resistance.

EU legislation dictates that no matter which country is first registered, it is the country to which asylum must be reques-

ted, preventing the person from claiming asylum in the country they wish to be in. The Dublin Regulation also dictates that migrants can and should be deported to the country from which the first fingerprint was made, stopping them from continuing to cross borders. It is also an 'option'⁵ to require that fingerprints can be removed from the EU database. In a conversation with a volunteer at The Jungle, she told me that there were many inhabitants of the camp who were waiting to find out if their fingerprints had disappeared from the system, so that they could ask for asylum in France or even in the UK and not be reported to the country they were first registered in, usually Turkey, Greece or Italy. A significant challenge becomes following the different elements of the procedure, since migrants do not have an internet access, email or a postal address, which is the usual communication system of the EU registration agency. Many carry out this process with the help from NGOs⁶. Hence, the removal and mutilation of fingerprints highlights complex discussions about disappearance and the right to it. Roberto Esposito's term "immunitary dispositif" describes how the current situation of identification policy creates a real and symbolic problematic of contemporary life. This immunitary disposition is "the coagulating point, both real and symbolic, of contemporary existence" (Esposito, 2011). The digital and technological incorporation in the human body with the process of identification through fingerprints, represents an official biopolitics of inscription. The mutilation and the almost amputation of the physical and digital identity becomes a product of the state violence and control (Sanyal, 2017).

The sophistication in borders of today⁷ is driving towards the obligation (right) to be seen, confronted with the 'right to disappear', on behalf of the 'autonomy of migration' and its eradication of fingerprints. In order not to have to belong to any state and territory, this process is a possible example of decolonization of migrant bodies that have been colonized by the contemporary border regime. The right to disappear, through mutilating practices in order to detach themselves from the database, proposes the reflection of the 'autonomy

of migration' and the priority of mobility over border control, demonstrating that the autonomy is still possible even if the borders have become more sophisticated. Migrants' strategies of burning documents, erasing fingerprints, among others, as described by Dimitris Papadopoulos and Vassilis Tsianos, are tactics to disappear and break the relationship between the human body and its identity by abandoning the human 'right'. At the same time, they are going beyond any further exclusion of representation, visibility, citizenship and human rights. Focusing on the art of resistance through innovative tactics, it challenges contemporary security and border control. The interplay between appearing and disappearing that underlies autonomous migration tactics makes the resistance sophisticated. However this gradual 'improvement' in both 'migration strategies' and 'border regime' has led to tragic and extreme conditions outside of the human rights framework. The deaths that the Mediterranean has witnessed are one of the consequences of this struggle to resist and defend the right of freedom's mobility and security.

We, the united people of the Jungle, Calais, respectfully decline the demands of the French Government with regards to reducing the size of The Jungle. We have decided to remain where we are and will peacefully resist the government's plans to destroy our homes. We plead with the french authorities and International Communities that you understand our situation and respect our fundamental human rights. (Manifesto from refugees, migrants and activists, when was the ultimatum for the Jungle south zone evacuation in 2015⁸).

THE JUNGLE AS A (POST)COLONIAL PRACTICES

Digging into The Jungle's past, not only from the tangible and direct past of the development process of the infrastructure and urbanization of the camp, but going beyond it, leading to an analysis of a colonialist past within the ge-

neology and ancestors of The Jungle's inhabitants. The landscape of The Jungle embraces temporal and visual qualities of a place dehumanized by excessive government violence as well as a liminal space of transformation, 'communitas', resistance, protest and 'space of appearance' (Hicks & Mallet, 2019). This is not only concentrated on the space and perimeter of the camp itself (zone les Dunes, Calais) since it is located on the border of the UK and consequently of the Schengen border. This duality of being inside and outside a European Union territory and Schengen, leads to different disputes of a remote past of a colonialist legacy, generating a possible monumental (post)colonialist image of The Jungle, going beyond its urban form and 'temporary event' within the dynamics of the contemporary border crisis. The Jungle is not only a new urban form of cosmopolitization as analyzed by Aiger (2018), due to its way of conviviality between different nationalities, cultures, religions, economic status (the socioeconomic past of each inhabitant) and inter-social positions (refugees/migrants/volunteers). It is possible to go further, understanding The Jungle and its environment as a cosmopolitical border settlement, by its geographical category of being located on the border between the continent (Europe) and the island (The UK). The Jungle is not only a cultural biopolitics and mobility, it also embraces the politics of geography and nature, its archeological borderline of being on the edge of geographical, natural, political, economic, cultural forms of contrast, among others (Hicks & Mallet, 2019). Considering the notion of archaeology, analyzing The Jungle only as a refugee camp, seeing it from a defined type of informal settlement risks losing the perspective of long-term juxtaposition between the several human experiences of displacement between the UK's border and the European continent. By defining The Jungle as a 'specific' form, it will not be possible to make the spatial parallels that this fringe embraces in the 'totality' of the present and past. Dan Hicks and Sarah Mallet write: "These juxtapositions proliferate: between colonial pasts and the

(post)colonial present, between shelter and dispossession, between the Global North and the Global South, and even, between Old and New Worlds” (Hicks & Mallet, 2019, p. 26).

When I first entered The Jungle and observed its precarious and dehumanizing conditions, I was extremely shocked to experience this reality within a European country like France. With my experiences inside shantytowns, ‘Tomas’ and ‘Favelas’⁹ in South America, I already had a bit more understanding of the material reality of the inhabitants in these fragile environments. Observing this similar and even more complex context¹⁰ in a European city inside the economic and political powers of the EU and the Schengen, it struck me how environmentally hostile what I was seeing was. The contrasts and parallels of contemporary realities between Europe and ‘the otherness’, triggered me to consider how “Western civilization’ grew in a two-way process simultaneously, creating a hybrid between the present and the past, perversely objecting to other growing realities, being less efficient, manufactured, savage, and so on.” (Hicks & Mallet, 2019). It is here that the reality of The Jungle (inside and out) embodies the ongoing problematic of colonialist legacies in contemporary Europe. The (post) colonial images and actions of resistance of the surviving bodies of the camp consistently point out the colonialist and imperial legacy of Western civilization. In The Jungle it is possible to witness first hand how

these ongoing (post)colonial survivors are experienced vividly by displaced people through the strange epoch into which they are forced: a technological Mesolithic, where, apart from the smartphone, there is no modern technology of shelter, of transport, of lighting, heating, or community based on sedentism. (Hicks & Mallet, 2019, p. 63)

Ann Laura Stoler embraces the term ‘(post)colonial’ to stress the long-term legacies of European colonialism rather than consigning them to history (Stoler, 2016) or understanding the colonial past as merely an anthropological and a merely historical matter. Stoler prefers the term

(post)colonial studies rather than post-colonialism, since (post)colonial, with the use of ‘parentheses’, emphasizes the continuous colonial ‘presence’, from its tangible/intangible form and thereby confirms that there are colonial ‘presents’ (Stoler, 2016), not only as a temporary legacy after a colonialist experience, but rather a permanent presence of the colonialist frame. The Jungle can be an example of this juxtaposition, since geographically speaking, it is located in the European context and on the border of two European powers with colonialist pasts. When looking at the historical legacy as analyzed by Hicks & Mallet, which points out the radical vision of Lucy Mayblin (2017);

Most of the asylum seekers in Great Britain come from regions that used to be part of the British Empire. More specifically, in Calais these former regions overwhelmingly comprise only four states: Afghanistan, Sudan, Southern Sudan and Eritrea (with some smaller but significant numbers of Somalis). (Hicks & Mallet, 2019, p. 68).

Refugee Rights Europe reports that in the 2015-2016 census of the Jungle population, between two-thirds and four-fifths of the total population comes mainly from five countries: Afghanistan, Sudan, Southern Sudan, Eritrea and, to a lesser extent, Somalia. A significant number of Syrian and Iraqi communities began to arrive in 2015-2016 and Iranians began to arrive late 2017¹¹.

Four of the five main countries that have been represented by nationals in Calais were former Protectorates or protected states of the British Empire: Afghanistan (Emirate of Afghanistan, 1879-1919), Sudan and Southern Sudan (Anglo-Egyptian Sudan 1899-1956) and Somalia (British Somaliland 1884-1960). And in the case of Eritrea, after half a century of Italian rule there was a significant period of British military rule. (Hicks & Mallet, 2019, p.69)

It is here that the constant confrontations, hostile violence and the increasingly aggressive sophistication of the border regime from the French and British authorities, can be considered as attitudes of a colonialist legacy, from a material/

immaterial and past/present perspectives. Confronting resistance and survival strategies of the 'autonomy of migration' and in this particular case, the communities of The Jungle with (post)colonialist attitudes, are seeking to resist hostile processes within the EU and Schengen border regulations.

REFLECTING ON

For this reason, as a result of my first experience and subsequent research on The Jungle, I began my theoretical/artistic reflections about the development of a possible monumental and international image of a 'peripheral' zone located on the fringe of Calais city. I am interested in focusing (and continuing to research) how (post)colonial practices, resistance, community and 'togetherness', in this specific geographical place, were produced, transformed, mutated and evolved of empowerment, resistance and a process of near territorial autonomy. Leading to a possible monumentality and ephemeral representation of the ongoing global resistance of the 'autonomy of migration' against the doctrines of 'border regime'.

Nora Sterinfeld in her curatorial text *Counter-monument and Para-monument* (2018) analyzes the perspective of monuments and monumentality in public space as an artistic and political action of not forgetting 'what happened'. Etymologically, the term monument contains words in Latin; emind, admonish, warn, foretell, making a direct relationship between the past and the future of an event. Giving a meaning and a sense to 'memory', through the process of remembering, not forgetting and not erasing the past of a historical event. Monuments appropriate a past and reinterpret it in the process, a process of healing what 'happened' and what 'was', without forgetting the event itself to record it for future generations (Sterinfeld, 2018). In the process, the monuments are not only for remembering, but can also be an activist and (post)colonial statement against the past/present state regime. The renowned artist

Olu Oguibe created an impressive artwork for *Documenta 14* (2017), *Monument to Strangers and Refugees*, which was installed on Königsplatz in Kassel in the form of a monolith. This monument had the biblical quotation 'I was a stranger and you took me in' written on it in four languages (German, English, Arabic and Turkish). The members of the Kassel municipality and the local citizens challenged this art sculpture. Kassel's AfD city council member Thomas Materner, discussed whether the obelisk would stay in the public space or not, as there were already complaints from citizens about the 'ideologically polarizing, disfigured art'. This is a contemporary example of the ongoing dispute over 'what' and 'how' to remember, and about how state policies and urban planning are the agents of deciding what can and should be remembered and monumentalized, and not necessarily the communities involved in 'the event' that they do not want to forget. That is why *The Jungle* provides an interesting perspective on the contemporary debates about what 'we should not forget' and 'who' are the actors of remembrance through monumentality. Activisms, resistances and (post)colonial experiences by the inhabitants of *The Jungle* in the face of the border regime doctrines have provided an externalization of the ongoing hostility in the area of Les Dunes. Providing a visualization and viralization of the current migration phenomena across Europe and beyond, these actions of visualization empowering, has led to the production of an external representation of the 'autonomy of migration' and has provided this possible ephemeral monumentality which should not be erased and forgotten. It is here that researchers involved in refugee studies, hybrid scholarly-activists, anthropologists, artists, and many others, play an important role in the process of not forgetting and remembering through empirical research, anthropological thinking and artistic practices/actions from a transdisciplinary perspective.

These pages of narrative, is the compilation of my ongoing searches and interests in relation to the possible 'monumentality' of *The Jungle of Calais*, is a continuing process, which will be transformed and mutated in the course of my PhD.

While traveling in 2022 for the second fieldwork, I will create other opportunities for data collection and interpretation, allowing the possibility of further exploration on (post)colonialism, monumentalism and contemporary regime borders.

NOTES

1 I thank my PhD supervisors (1st) Dr. Prof. Regina Römhild and (2nd) Dr. Prof. Bonaventure Ndikung, for the guidance and input in this text. I also thank my friend and colleague Julia Widdig for editing. A brief part of the ethnographic and artistic content of this article is inspired by my paper *The Jungle de Calais: Entre Liminalidad, Espacio fronterizo y lugar de posibilidades*. Post(s) Journal (2021). Spanish language.

2 As described by Agier; "125 containers, uniformly white, on one or two levels, were strictly aligned along two axes. These ran in a west-north-westerly direction, forming roads that attracted the coldest prevailing winds, even accelerity and orientation meant that the roads were in the shade for the greater part of the day and did not see the sun at all in the winter" (2018, p. 72).

3 At the end of 2016 the German government created a school aid program for 'integration' in local refugee centers.

4 See more details about the experiences with the letter exchange in Garland (2021).

5 Many migrants go through this process, but the system is extremely slow and often denied. For this reason, many migrants continue their journey, crossing illegally and hoping to find ways to stay in the final destination. That is why these informal camps within Europe, like The Jungle, are places of waiting, protection and resistance to also escape the laws of the EU database.

6 Social workers and volunteers have to go out and find the applicants in informal camps and on the streets to update them about the procedure.

7 Border control is no longer just physical, technological and digital; it has also been introduced into the biology of the body. The sophistication of the control in using carbon dioxide to detect human presence (heart palpitations) within transportation (cars, trucks) between borders and in the case of Calais, mainly in the Channel Tunnel zone, has generated a refinement in the mapping of the bodies by the state, producing a much more detailed database of migratory identification.

8 See figure-image by Maryisokariari in: <https://somethingaboutmary.co.uk/2016/01/15/CALAIS-JUNGLE-CAMP-MIGRANTS-EVICTED-FROM-MAKESHIFT-SHELTERS-PREPARE-FOR-BULLDOZERS/>

9 Refers to the same concept as shantytown, used mainly in South America. For example: Toma in the case of Chile and Favela in Brazil.

10 Its cosmopolitan quality, its location on a territorial fringe and the daily violence between authorities.

11 Due to the introduction of visa free travel for Iranians to Serbia.

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DEBAUCHERY & IMPIETY LITERARY PRESERVE

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ESSAY 91/05

ATMOSPHERE

CHIAROSCURO

LITERARY LORE

MATERIALITY

This preservation project investigates a post-industrial building and interior – originally constructed in 1909 as a carriage factory. As part of an ongoing dimensional survey of multiple post-industrial buildings and spaces, the author performs a literary lore in conjunction with an intensely modulated series of site engagements. It is a study that takes into account the situative and performative contexts in effort to preserve the material value, and even virtuosity, manifests in such spatial volumes. The objective of the project is to make visceral our intellectual comprehension of the relationships between self and the atmospheric nature of places and their histories.

Through diverse methodologies and an intense series of modulations, I have developed a highly individualized intellectual pursuit and, consequently, the ability to reconcile the role of the body as the locus of perception and spatial engagement in the interdisciplinary consideration of the post-industrial landscape as a constructed, cultural artifact. As an introduction to dealing with these issues of 'site', each effort involves a careful and multi-scalar examination of environmental phenomena and patterns of use and settlement, revealed and affected by the post-industrial architectural artifact. Active awareness in observation is a valuable tool for design.

INTRODUCTION

In the field of design, in which realization seems to employ decisions that derive from utility, and rejoin obligations of the world of aesthetics, the act of staging (a project) provides an intersession during which revelations particular to what constitutes an experience are formed. In this engagement, we enter into a dialogue with the humanity of place and, thus, are immersed in the visual and perceptual challenges of the inherited material evidence and, consequently, its cultural educe.

METHODS

Using site-adjusted installations as my primary mode of research and practice, I deploy an integrated and focused approach to both theoretical and practical questions pertaining to the nature and impact of materiality specific to the re-occupation of post-industrial spaces. My works provoke a temporal-spatial encounter that reconciles the simultaneous and complex nature of cerebral and corporeal experience. Each inquiry utilizes a range of domains including art, architecture and anthropology as a means of exploring not only what material cultivations can be, but also what they, in fact, do. Based on a series of modulated experimental actions (material modalities), each survey is driven by the nascent possibility of a persistent desire to intercourse with existing material surrounds pursuant a philosophical position that leverages perceptual notions of *chiaroscuro* – the disposition of light and dark. By extension, the conscious and unconscious, the seen and the unseen, focus and open awareness and the made and re-made are factors in the realm of understanding and producing space. It is a full-scale, three-dimensional methodology, concurrent with exploratory drawing, photography and videography that seeks to express the affects (immaterial harmonics) found latent in our post-industrial landscape.

Fig. 1 Peter P. Goché, *Debauchery & Impiety*, 2017, *Pitt Carriage Building* in Des Moines, Iowa. Photograph by Cameron Campbell.



Through diverse methodologies and an intense series of modulations, I have developed a highly individualized intellectual pursuit and, consequently, the ability to reconcile the role of the body as the locus of perception and spatial engagement in the interdisciplinary consideration of the post-industrial landscape as a constructed, cultural artifact. As an introduction to dealing with these issues of 'site', each effort involves a careful and multi-scalar examination of environmental phenomena and patterns of use and settlement, revealed and affected by the post-industrial architectural artifact. Active awareness in observation is a valuable tool for design. With this method, observations are not blindly documented, but rather are actively interpreted, through the filter of the human experience of space. In addition to simple, indirect quantitative analysis, the qualitative exploration and subsequent design of the built environment can be seen as a participatory and immersive endeavor, utilizing direct human experience as a cornerstone.

This research focuses on the process of surveying a vacant post-industrial building. This procedure, leading up to the execution of the rehabilitation of the facility, was conducted over the course of nine months. The site is the interior of a Des Moines warehouse built in 1909 located in the East Side Industrial, Warehousing, and Railroad Historic District.

The *Pitt Carriage Co. Building* made a locally significant contribution to Des Moines history as a rare-surviving carriage works factory building. It was constructed and operated under the leadership of Mabel Pitt – the only woman to own and lead a carriage manufacturing company in the United States¹.

Diffuse in structural order and lack of aperture, the space is unpredictable in its sensorial effects. The quality of its intricate component parts yields an elusive yet all-encompassing phenomena. The climatic conditions of this service-less facility offer a potent site for the creation of atmospheres and affects.

RESULTS

It is in this context the following literary lore, *Debauchery and Impiety*, was developed. It is a material recall entwined with characters, histories and narratives cloaked in an atmosphere of sensorial conditions engendered by a rigorous series of experimental projections and reflections.

Against the tapestry of clay and mortar, we'd enter history and situate ourselves within the belly of this corpse. Some months later, we find ourselves (consecrated occupants) against the tabernacle of pipework, flying wood joists and a ghost stair run. Within, we are immobilized by an incessant inaudible murmur. Aroused by the noxious aromas of our time, we are illuminated by sunlight emanating from a single overhead window as it passes through the array of burnt wood floor joists – the smell, no longer present. Escorted by a cortege of drays, we wade into the collective subconscious, and stand erect amongst an old repertoire of workaday industrial characters and stories and atmosphere. Off in the darkness beneath remnant wood floor, the communicant reads from her diary while our gaze is condemned to wander in search of Miss Mabel Pitt amidst derelict populations.

We crouch beside desperate sensations of longing which are equally acoustic, tactile and imaginative – engendering,

Fig. 2 Peter P. Goché, *Debauchery & Impiety*, 2017, *Pitt Carriage Building* in Des Moines, Iowa. Photograph by Cameron Campbell.



unfolding and participating in fantastical realities. Linger- ing, we ourselves comprise a deep and intimate relationship between patterns of occupation, activity and space. A kind of “combinatory index” , as Bernard Tschumi might suggest (1996), whereby we lay desperately still in effort to invoke and draw out the worlds of and between here and there.

Adjacent a confluence of sewage pipes, I perform my perceptual practice. Amidst a cloak of characters, we position, locate and situate one another. Circumscribed by deteriorated concrete foundation wall, we listen to the volunteer grasses grow and then fall dormant in the winter. The earth encrusted below rises to our nostrils without inhalation. A chromatic spectrum of warmth imbues my breasts. A series of wooden columns march above in soft story. We are derelict beings with saliva assembled at the backs of our throats. In still life, we wade a parallel course akin our impressionistic pasts. We are engulfed in an atmosphere of empty desolation formed in the oral cavity of the communicator.

To those who are not accustomed to it the inner beauty appears as ugliness because humanity in general inclines to the outer and knows nothing of the inner. *Concerning the Spiritual in Art* (Kandinskij, 1912/2000) – we ingest Was- sily Kandinsky and inebriate our naked midsection in the brightness of our boredom. Innerness bulges and tumbles

through the rafters above. Kerosene ignites and emulsifies with our cognition. We abandon utterly all material signifiers and harmonize in abstraction as laughter and toil ooze from her bones. By childish inclination a first encounter with any new phenomenon, he exercises immediately an impression on her soul. The dust accumulates, amasses, collects, gathers, hoards then disperses... as the workaday beneath cowers.

The fine hair of belonging drapes over our eyes foregrounded by the musty aroma of its interior. Some lonesome arrangement of satisfactory time and turmoil. My blood sinks below the earth and the ache rises with the sun as it appears through the east door. Blindly I fall to the ground and laugh with Mabel at my side. Peripheral habits ensue – a nervous twitch, clicking of my teeth, spasm, seizure and an insatiable itch at the crown of my head. In tongue, I speak to posterity. Each utterance reverberates off the masonry walls and impregnate the material ruins with antiquity and a voluminous blur. We drown in a marinade of material dereliction as desperate whispers by Herbert Morrison waft – “oh, the humanity! [...] I’m going to step inside, where I cannot see”² Ibis white, ivory lace, antique white, repose gray, accessible beige, reddened earth, canyon clay, cachet cream, ox-blood red, harvester, torchlight, lusty red iron ore.

This literary lore serves as a type of spatial projection and historical occupation. Each experimental visit provided a new episodic narrative to the survey. The story line, therefore, is intentionally not linear. It has become clear through such obscurations that history and its material leftover does not conform linearly to itself nor contemporary culture and its consequent atmospheric yield.

The following excerpt developed by the Peter P. Goché in coordination with Jennifer James (architectural historian) illuminates the history, context and execution of the rehabilitation of this facility: *Woman Will Head Automobile Shop*, in February 1911. The facility served as carriage factory and warehouse through 1934 at which time it was purchased by the Reichenbach family and served as an ostrich hatchery

Fig. 3 Peter P. Goché, *Debauchery & Impiety*, 2017, *Pitt Carriage Building* in Des Moines, Iowa. Photograph by Cameron Campbell.



until 1951. From 1951-1974, the facility served as warehouse for the *Feed Specialties Company*. The building has sat vacant since. The first floor and second floor each contain 5,280 square feet of space. Just as on the exterior, the interior is unadorned. The structure consists of structural brick walls over a concrete floor, interior structural wood and steel columns, an array of steel I beams, wood girders and remnant wood flooring. Almost all window openings had been filled with concrete masonry units.

The project's long-range impact on the structure is significant given the building has been completely code updated with new mechanical, electrical, plumbing, glazing and sprinkler systems to support more sustainable operational costs and the well-being of its occupancy. The entirety of the building has been rehabilitated to support mixed use tenancy for the coming century. All residential and commercial tenant spaces have been filled. Each of these occupancies contributes significantly to Des Moines' historic East Side Industrial, Warehousing, and Railroad Historic District and East Village neighborhood by preserving the street character by restoring the masonry edifice and reconstructing the carriage door and shop entrances along East 3rd Street.

The architectural effort was to retain the historic building envelope as well as its original window and carriage door openings. All modern CMU window infill and garage doors

were removed and replaced with new recessed mahogany wood storefronts, pedestrian doors, and non-operable carriage doors. New 2/2 wood double-hung windows were installed throughout with thermally-broken, wood-frame windows to replicate the original windows per photographic evidence sourced from *The Des Moines Register* and other vintage imagery from the area³.

A new roof and ceiling assembly was installed. Additionally, there was no level two flooring or ceiling – there was only wood joist. Our goal here was to replace a number of burnt joist from previous fire damage and add a new wood floor and gypsum board ceiling. Wood egress stairs were added on each end of the facility. The street stair was located and installed in the same run location as the original street stair.

CONCLUSION

The architectural effort was to maintain the authenticity and atmospheric quality of this particular space by maintaining it in all aspects. Our goal for the interior was to retain character-defining industrial features – concrete floors, masonry walls, soaring ceilings, and exposed structural steel and plaster wall surfaces. We installed a new steel structural shoring system to stabilize the already shifting upper story which leaned to the south. On west side, we created common restrooms which served a retail business at the rear and a restaurant in the front. The upper level was converted to a single entity office. The existing column line was left exposed and battered along which the new glazing system, offices, conference rooms and restrooms were located.

As architect and artist, the process of surveying vacant constructs tends, for me, to have much less to do with a capitalistic utility and more to do with an immersive occupation of the past. Each architectural conversion centers on the production of space and the articulation of time using an economy of means to satisfy contemporary needs specific to

human behavior, construction methodology and regulatory requirements while making present the materiality, and thereby, spatial disposition of its past. The nature of each site becomes contingent on what might be referred to as depth which is not a dimension as such but rather an embodiment of dimensional matter. It is here that the body is enveloped by space – intuitively perceiving the accumulation of surface and debris established by various past occupations. This set of material conditions are manifestations of discontinuity and difference that yield an atmospheric equilibrium that puts into motion and lays bare the most basic, vital, and dynamic evidence of a defunct industrial terrain.

NOTES

- 1 Jennifer James (Architectural Historian) and Peter P. Goché, *Pitt-Carriage History*, 2016.
- 2 From audio recording of American Radio Journalist Herbert Morrison on the Hindenburg Disaster (real footage), Broadcast, 1937.
- 3 Jennifer James (Architectural Historian) and Peter P. Goché, *Pitt-Carriage History*, 2016.

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STRATIFICATIONS OF THE IMMIGRATION LANDSCAPE

A CASE STUDY
ON THE OUTSKIRTS
OF MILAN

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ESSAY 92/05

BARANZATE
IMMIGRATION
LANDSCAPE

Baranzate is an autonomous municipality of about 12.000 inhabitants on the outskirts of Milan. During its history, since the political Unification of Italy, the town has gradually transformed from an agricultural village to an industrial center that, already after the First World War, began to attract flows of immigrants from the southern Italian regions. After the Second World War, its population grew considerably thanks to the increase in Italian immigration and – more recently– from abroad. With over a third of immigrants among its population, today Baranzate is the Italian municipality

–with more than 5,000 inhabitants– with the highest percentage of foreign people. Consequently, the town changed its original housing structure with the establishment of neighborhoods inhabited mainly by foreign citizens.

Is it possible to identify an immigration landscape and its visual characteristics that best describe the settlement dynamics? This paper tries to answer this question by means of images that can show the traces of housing processes and of the difficult paths towards a progressive integration of immigrants into the Italian society.

THE CASE STUDY: STATE OF THE ART AND SCIENTIFIC METHOD

Italy has always been a crossroads of migratory flows, favored by its climate and central position in the Mediterranean area that have facilitated accessibility. After the unification of the national State, and particularly in the last quarter of the 19th century, demographic pressure and scarcity of resources delayed economic development and triggered considerable emigration flows. Millions of Italians left their country from 1875 to the First World War (Commissariato Generale dell'Emigrazione, 1926). Since the first postwar period, the demographic policies of the fascist regime discouraged emigration, while the industrial development of the country generated internal movements, especially from the southern and the northeastern regions, directed towards the capital of the kingdom and the northwestern 'industrial triangle'. The flows started again after the Second World War until the end of the economic boom and then began to slow down. Nevertheless, their traces on the landscape in the destination regions were remarkable, particularly in the urban suburbs, which often developed in a disorderly way in order to provide housing to immigrants.

The literature about this topic is enormous: among the milestones of research on Italian emigration, we recall the numerous papers presented during the *XXVI Italian Geographic Congress* held in Genoa in 1992 (Cerreti, 1996). As regards Italian internal mobility, among the numerous researches published in the same years with historical retrospective purposes, we mention the one edited by Arru and Ramella (2003). Finally, a good work on contemporary movements is the one edited by Colucci and Gallo (2015). Since the 1980s, following the downsizing of industries in northern Italy, internal mobility drastically declined and a more consistent immigration phenomenon from abroad began, especially from non-EU countries. The expression 'non-EU countries' has been replaced in the last twenty years by 'countries with strong migratory

pressure', also including some countries that have recently joined the European Union, in particular those of Eastern Europe, such as Poland, Hungary, former Czechoslovakia, States of the former Yugoslav Federation, etc. (Blangiardo, 2012, p. 9).

Among the best-known studies in the geographical field, we mention the collection of essays edited by Bellencin Meneghel and Lombardi (2002). For over twenty years, ISMU Foundation carried out systematic and in-depth studies on immigration in Italy and every year publishes, in addition to monographic works, also the *Ventiseiesimo Rapporto sulle migrazioni 2020* (Fondazione ISMU, 2021): in 2020, it issued the 26th edition. In Lombardy, immigration from countries with strong migratory pressure was particularly intense: on 1 January 2021, they amounted to 1.142.606 people, 11.5% of the regional population (ISTAT, 2021). Furthermore, in the region there are some of the Italian municipalities—with a population of over 5.000 inhabitants—with the highest percentage of foreigners: at the top of the national ranking, we find Baranzate, in the province of Milan, where one resident out of three is a foreign citizen. Regarding the case study of Baranzate, ISMU published a monograph (Lucarno, 2011a) while short essays by the same author appeared in 2003 (pp. 264-275) and some updates in subsequent years (2013; 2018; 2019).

The town has been the subject of some national press articles: we mention Berberi and Bernasconi (2011) who deal with immigration from the point of view of the implications on the human landscape. A work by Sarcinelli (2011), concerning the Gypsy community settled in the territory, dealt with aspects of a geopolitical nature, while a doctoral dissertation on Human Geography studied the characteristics of Chinese immigrants (Gasperini, 2016). These are two field works of a certain value, as they concern particularly reserved ethnic groups who are not very willing to collaborate in socio-anthropological investigations. The local editions of national newspapers have also published many articles that highlight the most striking and original aspects of the integration

laboratory that the municipality, parishes and educational institutions have set up for the immigrant population. Among the most significant, we mention the articles by Fiori (2017) and Lambruschi (2011), which focus the attention on the most visible aspects of poverty shared by both the Italian and immigrant populations. However, the papers and monographs concerning the stratifications of urban development on the anthropic landscape of Baranzate are much less numerous than the research works concerning migratory dynamics. We mention the work by Montedoro (2012), notable for the urban regeneration projects of the town, and the monograph by Barazzetta (2015) about the Glass Church of Baranzate, one of the most significant ecclesial architectural achievements of the diocese of Milan, built between 1956 and 1957, testimony of the period of the greatest economic development of Baranzate (Figure 1). Finally, regarding the most recent results of the urban transformation place in the town, see the articles of Pignataro (2020) and “Baranzate: ex capannone trasformato in un hub di servizi sociali” (2021) which document the transformation of a former industrial warehouse into a hub for the provision of social services (Figure 2).

Fig. 1 The Glass Church of Baranzate (built in 1957).



The aim of this work is to investigate an original topic of immigration in this Lombard municipality, examining the traces of the various immigration waves on the urban landscape and comparing the current state of the art, which has rapidly evolved over the last five years, with the situation described in previous works. This process is evident in the comparison, also by means of images, of the forms of public and speculative housing built in the 1950s with the modern residential condominiums built to receive the population after the economic boom of the following decades. The geographic location of these different building models also follows a process of development of the urban area that is highlighted through the territorial stratification of the different settlement phases. Today the poorest and most problematic neighborhood is the one currently inhabited almost exclusively by foreign immigrants, the same one that, in the first decades after the end of the Second World War, hosted the immigration waves from southern Italy.

Is it possible to imagine that a similar social and settlement evolution could also affect the foreign population in the next decades? What socio-economic and urban

Fig. 2 In the 1950s, speculative housing built industrial warehouses alongside uninterrupted rows of buildings with no common areas. Today both have been renovated and the warehouse is a hub of social services.



planning interventions will have to start in order to achieve an effective process of integration and economic progress of immigrants? Finally, we want to identify the conditions that can increase the success of possible virtuous strategies of immigrants' integration and transformation of suburban ghettos into residential neighborhoods where the various ethnic groups live in peaceful and civil coexistence. The statistical data of the population of Baranzate were provided by the *Ufficio Anagrafe* of the municipality, updated as of 30 June 2021, while the information about the most recent municipal projects that have transformed the urban and social structure in the last five years have been obtained from direct interviews with local administrators in July 2021. On-site inspections for the acquisition of the iconographic material followed in the same month.

BARANZATE: HISTORICAL-GEOGRAPHICAL CONTEXT AND IMMIGRATION PROCESSES AFTER THE SECOND WORLD WAR

Baranzate is a town of 12.113 inhabitants in the province of Milan, close to the northwestern outskirts of the regional capital, of which it has now become a contiguous appendix¹. Its position, along the axis of the Varesina state road and near the motorway axes towards Turin and the northwestern lakes, has for a long time favored its accessibility and industrial vocation. In fact, in the second half of the 19th century, pharmaceutical, mechanical and chemical industries arose here and, during the 20th century, attracted strong immigration flows from other Italian regions. This fact caused the assimilation of the indigenous population—in 1936, the inhabitants were still only 851— and its cultural traditions. Migration flows accelerated after Second World War and led to a disorderly expansion of residential constructions, thanks to the lower price of building land compared to those in Milan. Building speculation erased almost all the pre-existing topographical and road references



Fig. 3 The oratory of *San Vincenzo* is the oldest building in the town.



Fig. 4 The Gorizia district, along a narrow street, was a disordered sequence of popular housing for Italian immigrants built after the Second World War.



Fig. 5 The Gorizia district, residential houses alternating with big speculative housing buildings.

of the 19th century town, of which only the 17th century church of *San Vincenzo* and some traditional Lombard rural houses survive (Figure 3). The old traces of the urban structure disappeared with the construction of a series of seven-eight-storey buildings in the so-called Gorizia district, around the homonymous street near the border of the municipality of Milan (Figure 4). The buildings were built without a planned urban project, in order to maximize the exploitation of the existing land, minimizing the size of courtyards, common areas and even streets, without parking and green areas. They are alternated with only a few pre-existing smaller residential houses, suffocated in a disordered and repulsive line of structures (Figure 5)².

Until the 1970s, the purchase of a house represented the main objective of the migration project for families coming from the depressed countryside of the southern and north-eastern regions of Italy. However, following a settlement pattern, common to many cities affected by strong immigration pressure (Lucarno, 1996), when the economic well-being and the social level increased, the next generation began to move north, in search of better housing solutions. Their next stop was the northern district of Baranzate, where single-family houses or more modern and valuable apartments, with larger common areas and better accessibility, were available. Here, they took over from families who had arrived twenty years earlier and, in turn, having improved their social position, moved even further away from the degraded suburbs of Milan, to neighboring municipalities, in search of even better homes. Therefore, as on a conveyor belt, the path of the immigrants started from the first accommodation point, the Gorizia district, moving northward in stages and the distance was proportional to the social progress achieved (Lucarno, 2011b, p. 25). Since the 1980s, with the same settlement pattern, increasing numbers of foreign immigrants replaced internal migratory flows. However, the population of the municipality, after exceeding 10.000 inhabitants, has somewhat stabilized, as the arrival of foreigners was balanced by Italians who

moved elsewhere. Via Gorizia thus became the axis of a multi-ethnic neighborhood, a first landing place for immigrants –often irregular– who crowded into homes where no Italians wanted to live anymore. Only after a few years they moved further north, as soon as their economic conditions improved, replaced by other immigrants and replacing Italians who were moving elsewhere. Today there are very few Italians living in the Gorizia district, only the poorest: now they are a small minority in an area that they no longer recognize as their own place of identity (Figure 6).

Fig. 6 Map of the urban area of Baranzate shows the housing location of Africans. Immigrants from other continents roughly follow the same distribution pattern (Lucarno, 2011a).



RECENT EVOLUTION OF AN IMMIGRATION HUB

Until 2004, Baranzate was part of the municipality of Bollate. Only in that year, it became an autonomous municipality with an area of only 2.78 square kilometers, largely urbanized, and a rather high demographic density -4.347 inhabitants per square kilometer. From 2010 to 2021 the total population increased by only 5.6%, becoming 12.086 inhabitants, but while the Italians



Fig. 7 Part of a 19th century Lombard rural courtyard house, renovated for residential purposes and incorporated into the urban structure of the town.



Fig. 8 Example of industrial architecture of the 20th century.



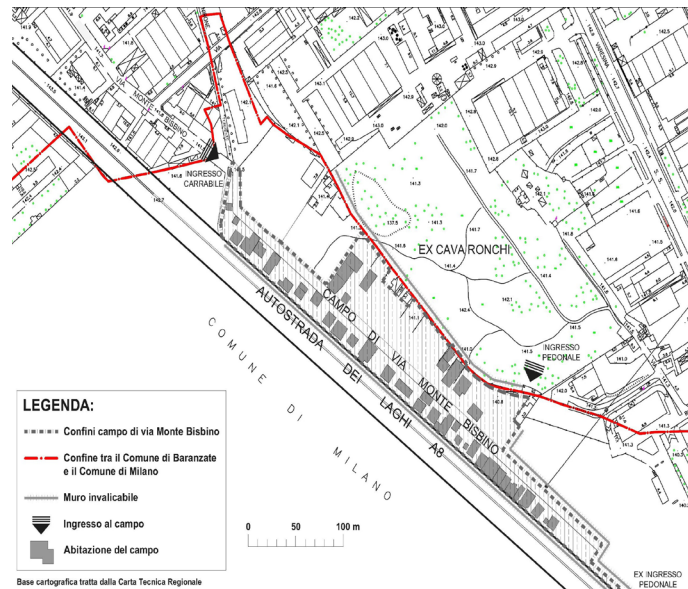
Fig. 9 An abandoned industrial site of the first half of the 20th century.

decreased by 6.0%, the current 4.075 foreigners increased by two-fifths, from 25.5% to 33.7% of the total, without counting unregistered people, whose consistency is not easily assessed. Like many other towns in the area around Milan, the urban structure shows a disorderly development, abandoned industrial areas, degraded housing units and is crossed by axes of great communication. Alongside the main roads, “non-places” have developed (Augé, 1996): they are shopping centers and large-scale distribution warehouses, equipped with large parking areas that have further increased the already high ratio of cemented surface in the territory.

As many towns without their own peculiar identity due to a continuous turnover of the immigrant population, in recent decades Baranzate has acquired the image of a problematic place, where the foreigners are affected by social problems that are difficult to solve: widespread poverty, housing emergencies, education, integration, petty crime, confinement in ghettos. In the last twenty years, the major signs of social marginalization have been the massive use of social assistance, the inability to cope with housing costs, and early school leaving. The municipality is too close to Milan to preserve the characteristics of an agricultural center. The building speculation has in fact almost eliminated any cultivable areas. However, the town is also not well integrated into the organization of the city, of which it only partially shares the public transport services. Without being a rural center anymore, Baranzate is not a real town, but a set of blocks with promiscuous activities, dependent on external managerial functions, without identity and even, sometimes, reciprocal interactions. The most obvious feature of the urban landscape is the progressive deterioration of the buildings. The lack of care by the owners derives also from the uncertainty of their rent when the tenants are insolvent. Nevertheless, the landscape also reveals the historical stratification of the different phases of urban development: the rural one of the 19th century (Figure 7), the industrial one of the 20th century (Figure 8), the building speculation of the second post-war period, the abandonment of industries in the last forty years (Figure 9).

As in a geological series, the various strata emerge in areas where the different stages of development have prevailed. These are often non-communicating neighborhoods or production areas, sometimes physically separated by missing or over-saturated infrastructural axes. The most striking example of the lack of integration between housing sites and different ethnic groups is the presence of the Kanjaria. They are a semi-nomadic group of varying consistency over the year, from about 100 to 300 units, settled since 1988 on the southwestern margins of the municipal territory, on an area of

Fig. 10 Map of the nomad camp before the partial demolition because of the construction of a motorway junction. It is located in the municipality of Milan, but the only access is from Baranzate.



about 2.5 hectares. They own the ground –an area once used as an industrial landfill– which they bought to allocate their caravans or to build makeshift homes there, after the Milan City Administration had introduced restrictions on the parking of nomadic caravans on the municipal territory. Over time, more and more buildings arose and, although they are all illegal, the authorities cannot demolish them without raising problems of relocation of the community, which also has many minors (Lucarno, 2003, 2018; Sarcinelli, 2011).



Fig. 11 Two-storey house in the nomad camp of Via Monte Bisbino.



Fig. 12 Wooden house in the nomad camp of Via Monte Bisbino.



Fig. 13 Eclectic-style house in the nomad camp of Via Monte Bisbino.

It is therefore a 'nomad camp' different from the common meaning as it is not authorized or assisted by public bodies, but a private property for all practical purposes (Figure 10). The ground is actually located within the municipality of Milan, from which it is however separated by architectural barriers – fences, motorway junctions. The only access is located on Via Monte Bisbino, in the municipality of Baranzate, so the territory can be considered as a municipal pene-exclave, accessible only after crossing the territory of a neighboring municipality (Robinson, 1959, p. 283). The inhabitants are often irregular immigrants, sometimes engaged in activities on the margins of the law, with conflicts with the population of Baranzate due to their difficulty in establishing cultural relationships and in adapting their life to the basic rules of civil coexistence. The precariousness of housing structures, without connections to urban services and regular energy supplies, is the consequence of their high temporary mobility to other locations—especially in France and the Balkan countries. The buildings, all single-storey or exceptionally two-storey houses (Figure 11), are often made up of messy shacks built in light materials, in some cases in masonry (Figure 12), with rather kitsch eclectic styles, also in the interior furnishings.

These 'villas' concretize, in the owners' imagination, the aspiration to an idealized status symbol, often conforming to styles conveyed by Hollywood images or by representations of fantastic places (Figure 13). They probably represent the synthesis of veiled aspirations to be rooted in the territory without giving up the traditional freedom of the nomadic culture and its transgressive side. The building of the neighboring *Expo 2015* site represented an important turning point in the life of part of this community. The construction of a motorway junction involved the expropriation of about half of their land and the demolition of part of the houses: the owners, with the compensation received, bought housing units in the Gorizia district, where they moved not without generate problems of coexistence and cultural incompatibility with immigrant communities already integrated into city life.

What remains of the nomadic district of Via Monte Bisbino today appears even more degraded, limited among abandoned industrial areas, motorway ramps that rise above the height of the roofs, illegal landfills and previous agricultural canals that, in case of floods, overflow the road access (Figure 14).

CURRENT URBAN MANAGEMENT POLICIES AND LANDSCAPE CONSEQUENCES

For over thirty years, Baranzate has represented a frontier of immigration in Italy, both for the percentage of foreigners and for the obstacles that arise along their way to integration. To solve these problems, the school, the municipality and the catholic church operated getting different results. For several years, educational institutions registered an increasing number of enrollments of foreign students: in 2017 the local *Istituto Comprensivo "Gianni Rodari"* recorded only 26% of Italian students –or of Italian origin– out of a total of about 800 students enrolled. The number of enrollments varies considerably during the school year due to frequent family transfers and the school management has not provided more recent data. The school is engaged in a difficult skill of teaching the basic Italian language, citizenship education and integration of various cultures. The municipality and the social services face a permanent emergency on the fronts of education, housing, linguistic and work integration, the fight against petty crime caused by poverty and unemployment. Religious institutions, in particular *Sant'Arialdo* parish, which has jurisdiction over the Gorizia district, materially assist the poor, regardless of their religion. In recent years, thanks to the contribution of the Bracco Foundation, it has also activated cooperatives and small startup enterprises to initiate immigrants, after a first period of assistance, to empower themselves and autonomously run businesses in order to become employers. Other parish initiatives are the establishment of counseling centers and the promotion

of collaborations among immigrant families to achieve emancipation, partially replacing social services (Lucarno, 2018, 2019).

However, a few years ago a breakthrough started in the management of social policies following the disposal and redevelopment of the *Expo 2015* area, located in the municipality of Rho but almost next to the town of Baranzate. At the conclusion of the international event, the problem arose about the reconversion of a 110 hectares area that could no longer return to its original agricultural vocation, nor be entirely destined for new exhibition purposes. The endowment of infrastructures and buildings and the high accessibility had already suggested possible projects – university campuses, research centers, academies, project centers in the fashion business– (Lodigiani, 2014; Russo, 2016) and a reception center for refugees, a hypothetical possibility that would have transformed the site into a new ghetto (Dazzi, 2016).

After years of political debate and the search for funds, some projects are starting, with the participation of local authorities and private partners, including international ones. The MIND –Milano Innovation District– project includes development plans for research and production innovation of the University of Milan –Center for medical studies– the Galeazzi Hospital –Human Technopole– and the *Fondazione Triulza* –Lab-Hub for Social Innovation and Sustainable Development. The sites under construction will attract several thousand researchers and students. Other companies, such as the multinational AstraZeneca, are acquiring areas to implement their activities in Italy. The municipality of Baranzate proposed itself as a stakeholder, too. In fact, new perspectives are opening up for the urban center, which could offer proximity residential homes: the site is located about a kilometer away and can be reached with ‘gentle mobility’ and the creation of a cycle path. However, in order to become a quality and high-value residential center, it is necessary to redevelop the neighborhoods, eradicating

the widespread perception of a 'ghetto-town' that is a consequence of a century of immigration. The municipality has faced this difficult task with several urban redevelopment projects aimed at integrating the foreign population.

Among the implemented or in progress urban planning projects we mention the creation of a public park –the so-called linear park– on the roof structure of the Rho-Monza motorway, the completion of a cycle path that crosses the town, reaching the former *Expo 2015* area with an overpass on the Varesina state road, the current separation barrier of the urban center, the restructuring of the school complexes and the environmental requalification of quarries and abandoned industrial areas. Social projects foresee the opening of a childcare center, with educational services for families with both working parents, and scholarships for foreign students who show interest in university or professional studies. The municipality is aiming also to the renovation of apartments for elderly people and students, including foreigners, who will attend the university centers in the former *Expo 2015*. Another project is the renovation of meeting spaces—the goal

Fig. 15 The building in Via Aquileia, 12, now inhabited only by immigrants.



is internationalization beyond the themes of integration of immigrants. With the words of the mayor of Baranzate, “our vision is to create a city of ideation and knowledge, where universities and businesses, research centers and residents can meet in public places, libraries and common co-working spaces to innovate together”³. Furthermore, the organization of the urban area has already registered the displacement of the local police headquarters to the Gorizia district, in order to guarantee the presence of the institutions in the most problematic area of the town. The recent inauguration of a new ecological platform limits the abandonment of bulky waste and the opening of new sports facilities, a kindergarten and a library has increased in the promotion of cultural events. The activation of public and private resources is going to redevelop the large condominium in Via Aquileia, 12, an immigration ghetto that has originated petty crime for years (Figure 15).

Finally, the municipality is finalizing a twinning agreement with the Chinese city of Xinmi, where, in the local area called New Milan, a textile district is active with

Fig. 16 The recently built residential condominium in the northern district of Baranzate are inhabited mainly by Italian people.



economic and cultural relations with the Chinese community of Milan; Baranzate thus intends to propose itself as one of the reference points for Chinese investments in Italy. With these interventions, the municipality is trying to radically change the urban landscape and get out of the stereotypes of a degraded ghetto. The current direct relationship between the quality of urban spaces and services and the quality of life of the inhabitants is evident: the worst quality spaces are mostly inhabited by foreigners, especially those of more recent immigration, and by a few Italians living under the level of poverty (Figure 16).

The previously mentioned interventions and the urban redevelopment projects that the municipality is carrying out are mainly aimed at rebalancing the accessibility to services and the quality of the urban landscape by reducing the differences between the neighborhoods. A more standardized urban landscape, even if characterized by evident architectural differences, and less dominated by the presence of immigration ghettos, can help to develop a unitary vision of a town that has until now been markedly divided into two parts: the first still predominantly Italian, the second poor and multicultural. The slow and gradual redistribution of the

Fig. 17 Non-places: the big suburban shopping centers of Baranzate.



richest foreign inhabitants in all the city districts contributes not only to accelerate their slow integration into the Italian national context, but also to amalgamate their culture with the native one. The ultimate goal is to ensure that the external aspects of multiculturalism, destined to survive for a long time, such as ethnic shops and restaurants, can emerge from entrepreneurial precariousness, improve their quality and represent in the future only a reason for commercial attraction. In this way, they will lose the repulsiveness they currently arouse towards the Italian population and will broaden their business prospects. Consequently, the Gorizia district, currently perceived only as a repulsive ghetto, could become a place where multi-ethnicity offers itself as an added value for commercial activities alongside those already existing at Baranzate, today heavily dominated by the presence of non-places consisting of large suburban shopping centers (Figure 17).

In order to transform Baranzate into a quality multi-ethnic place, linked to the future economic development of the metropolitan city of Milan, the municipality plans to promote a virtuous process of urban redevelopment by connecting the residential spaces of the town to future reuse of the former *Expo 2015* area and offering them to a new, more qualified migration. This is probably causing a change in the perception that inhabitants have about their place of residence. The turnover of both Italian and immigrant populations has slowed down, after the pandemic crisis that decreased the mobility. The Egyptians residents, taking advantage of the particularly low price of the apartments put up for auction due to the insolvency of the owners, are buying real estate units in the Gorizia district to rent them to families of neo-immigrant compatriots. This made Egyptians the largest foreign community in the municipality, with 622 people as of 1 January 2021. Evidence of the tendency towards stabilization of residence is also the growing number of naturalized Italians, not included among the evaluation of foreign residents. They immigrated several

years ago and have generally completed a significant path of integration into Italian society. There are two to four naturalizations every week, about 140-150 per year. Besides, the decor and street furniture are also improving thanks to greater attention to the environment and the intervention of private citizens: abandoned waste is decreasing, respect for common goods is improving and some more buildings appear renovated. Much remains to be done for the recovery of disused industrial areas, which will be a resource when they become shared public spaces. Baranzate is slowly transforming. It is no longer an immigration frontier, but a place where a progressive stabilization of the demographic structure is taking place, even if the problems of coexistence between Italians and foreigners will be resolved in a longer time. Poverty is fought by civil and religious institutions, but also by widespread voluntary work that gradually involves even foreigners willing to carry out their migratory project in this municipality.

CONCLUSIONS

When, at the beginning of this century, the first immigration investigations started in Baranzate, it was thought that the town would become a case study that would anticipate by twenty years what would happen in the Italian suburbs under strong immigration pressure. Researchers and administrators looked with concern at the model of the Lombard town, hit by flows of foreigners that seemed unstoppable, generating enormous social problems and an exodus of the Italian population. Today the efforts of public and religious institutions and of volunteering get the first results of a long process of integration that has just begun. The proximity of the former *Expo 2015* area has offered development opportunities capable of revitalizing the economy, offering jobs and encouraging the transformation of a landscape that has evolved without rules for too many

years. The next stage of the stratification process of the architectural, cultural, productive and immigrant elements will probably be the synthesis of all the previous. A suburb of Milan with a strong intercultural imprint will arise, equipped with services for the enjoyment of free time, such as ethnic restaurants and places of worship and meeting for non-EU groups from the metropolitan area. Once again this cultural laboratory could anticipate a possible social evolution of urban areas with strong immigration pressure and propose itself as a virtuous model of the progressive integration of ghettoized ethnic groups, till now relegated out of a nation that they never felt as their own.

NOTES

- 1** For more details on the morphological characteristics of the area and the historical origins of Baranzate, see Lucarno, 2011b, pp. 19-23.
- 2** Site inspection and interview at the Technical Office of the municipality of Baranzate.
- 3** The quoted text is from a direct interview with the mayor of Baranzate (May 2021).

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BORGHI

AGAINST A RETHORIC OF 'EXCELLENCE'

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ESSAY 93/05

COUNTRYSIDE

HISTORICAL CENTERS

ITALIAN INLAND AREAS

Can the countryside offer a real alternative to metropolitan life? Today, rural areas are often seen as places to 'save' through tourism and other discontinuous uses, but the era in which we live imposes a radical change of perspective: the pandemic has crumbled tourist economies and shown their fragility. The birth of a post-tourist society is particularly relevant in Italy, where entities such as the *borghi* are widespread: far and disconnected from the large urban centers, they are nevertheless the archetype to which metropolitan areas are now turning again. To put these reflections into practice, it is effective to study a representative case: the 'urban territory' around San Benedetto del Tronto (AP),

an ever-growing seaside tourist destination. The neighboring municipalities are nothing but dormitory districts, as evidenced by the new widespread urbanizations and the semi-abandoned historic centers of Acquaviva Picena, Monteprandone, and Monsampolo del Tronto. Among the still evident signs of the 2016 earthquake and houses for sale, the three medieval villages spend in hibernation the months that separate the tourist seasons, calling for alternative scenarios: in order not to remain crystallized as monuments to culture and traditions, it is necessary for them to aspire to be places of daily life, inserted in a network of biunivocal relations with other urban centers.

INTRODUCTION

The last few years have marked the return of the countryside in the architectural debate, reversing the tendencies characteristic of the second half of the 20th century. The multiplicity of essays, books, projects and theories recently published around this theme reveals how a dynamic and varied reflection is underway, whose extremes are exemplified by the book *Countryside: The Future* (2020) edited by Rem Koolhaas and the collection of essays *What About the Provinces* (June 2018) edited and curated by the *Canadian Center for Architecture* (CCA). In laying out their vision for the countryside, Koolhaas and the CCA diverge profoundly. *Countryside: the future* paints the countryside as the negative of the city, a desert environment to be colonized, as the texts *TRIC: Post Human Architecture and Great Plan for the Transformation of Nature* contained in the volume, clearly show.

On the contrary, the essays collected in the latter volume recognize the countryside's capacity to offer as well as to receive knowledge in a bidirectional exchange with the urban environment. In the essay *Post-urban phenomenon*, Kayoko Ota (2018) tells how in Japan the dialogue between countryside and city is increasingly useful to architects who combine their urban practice with participatory projects in rural environments. This duality allows designers to bring their knowledge to different environments while at the same time learning from these places ideas and concepts that can be translated into the densified environments of the city. The author of the essay identifies this mode of exchange as an equal dialogue between rural "smallness" and metropolitan "bigness" (Koolhaas, 1995), clarifying the meaning of the 'rediscovery' of the countryside in contemporary times: it is not a 'static' place of escape from the city, but an autonomous and dynamic reality.

This radical change of perspective towards the rural environment is highly necessary today: the pandemic has crumbled tourist economies and shown the fragility of being totally subjected to them. The birth of a post-tourist society is

Fig. 1 Seiichi Ohsawa, SANAA, *F-Art House*, 2010, Inujima Island, Japan.



particularly relevant in Italy, where entities such as the *borghi* are widespread: far and disconnected from the large urban centers, they are nevertheless the archetype to which metropolitan areas are now turning again (Cucinella, 2018). If, therefore, we can speak of a *countryside turn* (Koolhaas, 2020), the latter cannot mean a romantic ideal of rural life, but rather a space in which to experiment with new models of contemporary life.

CENTER-PERIPHERY: ROUND TRIP

After World War II, Italian cities were the scene of profound transformations, which generated a rich disciplinary debate on the ancient urban fabric. Alongside the upheaval of the territory caused by industrial growth, there are ruins and the aftermath of the war: these are the years of the ‘reconstruction’, which sees architecture as the result of the urgent needs expressed by reality. The modernist response to these needs, made up of mass constructions of alienating neighborhoods, found a reaction in the *Neo-realist* current, a new rational way of building that looked to the past –to traditional architecture and ‘*borgo* life’– as models to be reinterpreted’.

But the roots of this attitude date back to before the war: at the *Triennale* exposition of 1936, Giuseppe Pagano had brought

attention to *Rural Architecture*, praising its modesty and declaring it “formally very close to contemporary taste”. Speaking of “tradition of the new”, Pagano intended to exalt an architecture that, springing directly from the *situ*—that is, using the materials and techniques and responding to the specific needs and conditions that belong to it—always stays modern (Pagano & Daniel, 1936, p. 6).

With this unprecedented look at native tradition as ‘true modernity’, much of post-war Italian architectural culture chose not to follow imported movements, but to use principles rooted in local building modes. These instances are cardinal in the post-war debate on the rehabilitation of historic centers, which carries within itself all the complexity of the post-war reality. Between neorealism and residues of modernism, the forces move between two opposite poles: from the supporters of total preservation to the proponents of demolition. The problem of conservation arose from the questioning of the very role of the historical center in the modern city. The profound transformations that the industrial revolution brought to Italian cities inevitably upset many urban dynamics: the expansion of urbanization on a large scale, its diffusion throughout the territory (with the consequent downsizing of the cultivated countryside) and the new settlements became the main cause of the loss of inhabitants in the center of many Italian cities.

Rather eloquent in this sense is the case of Bologna, the object of studies and great transformations at the turn of the sixties and seventies. The photographs taken of the city by Paolo Monti² from 1968, show solitary and suspended urban spaces, “places waiting for transformations” (Emiliani, 1983, p. 35).

On an August morning, in the hours before the reopening of traffic, Monti notes the urban environments “restored to the silence and naturalness of their spaces, when the automobile did not exist”, as well as “the surprising rapidity with which people, and more than anyone else children and young people, took possession of those spaces, enjoying them immediately in the most varied ways” (Monti, 1970, p. 23). In this assignment,

Fig. 2 Giuseppe Pagano, *Rapporti di Volumi Puri nelle Candide Case a Terrazzo nel Golfo di Napoli e in una Masseria della Campagna di Taranto nella Regione del Mar Piccolo*. Source: Giuseppe, G. Daniel, G. (1936). *L'architettura Rurale*. Milano: Hoepli.



the photographer sees the possibility of constructing “an exemplary diaphragm between a strongly intuited past and a future image” (Emiliani, 1983, p. 47): his photography wants to become a revelation of the profound nature of these settlements, allowing for a conscious debate on the reasons for settlement and the causes of abandonment, and denouncing the loss of interest in places that still preserve the signs of a profound civilization and high-level cultural expressions.

The historical center simply does not exist anymore: there are banks instead of cafes, offices instead of housing. The space to be protected in order not to lose our historical and cultural identity today goes beyond the walls (which have already been demolished) and also includes the suburbs and the countryside, according to a global idea of territory (Cervellati, 2000, p. 12).

Today, the recent expansions constitute new centralities, devoid of any relationship of necessity with the original center, since they are depositaries of identity and culture. In any case, the fact that the center-periphery scheme has been replaced by a polycentric one, does not in any way mean that the overtaking of the historical city model. On the contrary, the principles that govern it are the same ones that are sought in the new expansions³.

To stop the anonymous expansion of the metropolitan area, it is necessary to re-delimit the territory into sectors, by means

of infrastructures which facilitate the formation of small-medium communities (Cervellati, 2000). It is not by dilating it, therefore, that the sick suburbs would be healed, but by delimiting it qualitatively – to the point of rediscovering atmospheres of the province in the collective identity. This still is the prevailing attitude today: in order to remedy the desperate enormity of endless conurbations, a more contained dimension is sought for a more acceptable life.

In the panorama just described, everything leads directly back to the historical centers: we have returned –after the modernist blackout– to look at the parameters of sustainability, sociality, identity, environmental quality that are exactly the aspects that characterize and structure our heritage.

At this point, wouldn't it be paradoxical to think of 'centralized' suburbs as the only model of contemporary life and at the same time stigmatize their archetypal reference to an 'outdated' reality? It seems rather clear that, in the current debate on the future of cities, the *borghi* and historical centers necessarily assume a central role in our country, offering themselves as valid models, suitable to the requirements of contemporary society and resistant to its possible mutations.

The gradual failure of policies aimed at bringing productive life back into historic centers goes hand in hand with a depopulation of the same, which –although overpopulated by tourists and big brand stores– are increasingly conceived by city dwellers as 'non-places' (Augé, 1992, p. 16) detached from living and working urbanity (Settis, 2014). A similar transition is taking place in recent years in all the historic centers of large European cities, which from directional spaces increasingly resemble 'theme parks' (Tozzi, 2020), convinced and convincing sellers of a presumed local 'real life'. The uncritical and impotent look with which the cannibalistic action of tourism is accepted by European local administrations leads the city to surrender to an 'American-style consumerism' (Boeri, S., et al., 2000) uninterested in dialoguing with the place and purely aimed at profit.

The root of the erroneous relationship between tourism and the city lies in the creation of two different channels for



Fig. 3 Paolo Monti, *Photographic Service*, 1970, Bologna, Italy.
Source: Civico Archivio Fotografico di Milano.

visitors and inhabitants: in the absence of the former, the daily dimension is abandoned. The city emptied of its inhabitants and dedicated to the mere reception of external visitors loses its status as an inhabited center and therefore its identity.

The city 'affected' by tourism is fragmented: center and periphery are divided not just physically, but by the different users they refer to. As the center becomes more and more inhospitable to the local inhabitants, they move to the periphery in search of the 'everyday dimension'. The removal of the inhabitants from the inland areas⁴, caused by the intensive capitalization of them, certainly produces an increase in wealth, but this cannot justify or compensate for their loss of identity.

The epicenter and manifestation of the exploitation of historical centers and the consequent loss of spirit is the city of Venice: By now, the city is dominated by a monoculture of tourism that exiles the natives and binds the survival of those who remain and of the city itself almost only to the desire to serve: nothing else does Venice seem capable of more than generating bed & breakfasts, restaurants and hotels, real estate agencies, selling "typical" products (from glass to masks), setting up fake Carnivals and giving itself, as a melancholic prettiest, an air of perpetual country party (Settis, 2014, p. 11).

The monoculture of tourism applied to Venice reveals its fallacy: a city conceived simply as a tourist destination and in this sense incapable of producing anything other than temporary attractions for visitors is not a place to live in, but simply to visit⁵.

This phenomenon shows in all the Italian *città d'arte*, in which tourist growth and depopulation reveal inversely proportional. This is the case of the *borghi*, where we observe the progressive replacement of houses with bed and breakfasts and seasonal businesses. The result of this tendency is a city intermittently switched, on and off according to the needs of external visitors. Small urban centers are devolved to tourism in return for renovations that crystallize their appearance—and make it sufficiently appealing—ignoring anything that goes beyond welcoming and entertaining.

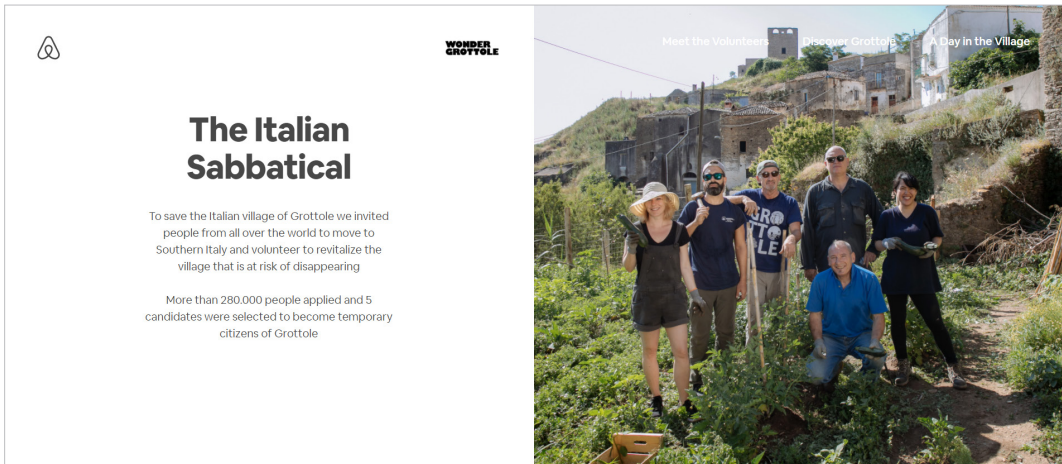


Fig. 4 Airbnb, *The Italian Sabbatical*, Grottole, Italy. Retrieved September, 13, 2021 from <<https://italiansabbatical.com/>>.

The architectural heritage alone, however, is not enough to make a city: productive, social and environmental identities must coexist. In the absence of any one of the three, a desertification occurs that the powerful means of tourism are unable to counteract. Resorts and 'diffused hotels', undoubtedly valid in their intention to maintain an architectural heritage otherwise destined to be lost, end up distorting the idea of the city. In fact, such strategies renounce one of the fundamental conditions for urban vitality, that is the diversity: traditionally conceived as land use mix, it is what ensures the city and its neighborhoods a vibrant economic and social life (Jacobs, 1961).

In the internal territories, the trap lies in convincing oneself that the future is already written and belongs to the large urban agglomerations; and that the rules, prepared by the ruling classes regardless of the places or made to measure for the urban areas, cannot be changed; that the maximum aspiration is subsidies and derogations. It lies in transforming one's own culture into a reservoir of nostalgia and stereotypes to entertain the "others". It lies in relying on local rentiers to ensure your survival. And then in feeling mortified by it (Barca, 2018, p. 272).

One falls into the trap⁶ by accepting that the only future for inland areas lies in representing the perfect places for

Fig. 5 Microclima, *Floating Cinema*, 2020, Venezia, Italy.
Source: Microclima Venezia.



an ‘escape from reality’, a ‘weekend relaxation’ package, a week in the summer to live an all-Italian dream.

Looking at the selection of *borghi* made within the *Arcipelago Italiazo* exhibition, on the occasion of the *XVI Biennale of Architecture* in Venice, a common trend emerges strongly, expressed by a recurring keyword: ‘excellence’. Recognizing that our heritage is an “enviable product” (Prestinzenza Puglisi, 2018, p. 116), an authentic mine of traditions and cultures, we choose to exalt them to the point of almost exasperating them. According to this logic, the strategy for relaunching the abandoned—or neglected—inland areas focuses on their ‘specialties’. We see new specialized villages appearing in an almost advertising format: to be visited to taste the original recipe of a certain dish, to observe a specific artisan practice, to be able to buy the best version of a product, and so on. It’s a shame that, often, the anxiety to specialize and identify these territories ends up leading to very similar results: between craft markets, chopping boards and street art, the village experience that is sold in this or that part of Italy is nothing more than a standard.

One falls into the trap by accepting that a city is reduced to its specialty in order to sell it better, convinced that it could have never, in any case, functioned as a true city:



Fig. 6 Smartbox, *I borghi più belli d'Italia*, 2018. Retrieved September, 13, 2021 from <<https://www.smartbox.com/it/nostri-smartbox/soggiorni/i-borghi-piu-belli-d-italia>>

dynamic, varied, complex and balanced. In this way, excellence becomes a rhetoric at the service of the same commercialization previously discussed: wanting to strongly open up the towns to outside visitors and consumers, it ends up enclosing them in a cage (that of the 'Italian experience'), reducing them to objects of consumption.

FROM ATTRACTION TO PERMANENCE

Countering this trend is possible, but to do so requires a radical change of perspective, capable of reordering priorities and restoring dignity to the place. Italian 'excellences' have the potential to be more than attractions, they can be conceived as services to the local community. Putting the local scale at the center of the discourse opens the door to new scenarios of life in the villages, scenarios in which they are chosen not only because they want to 'disconnect from the city', but because there are conditions, services and attractions to live and work there satisfactorily. The change would therefore start from conceiving these places not as negations of the city, but as representatives of an alternative model to the metropolitan one, equally functional and equally contemporary.

To the operation of 'embellishment' represented by the concept of excellence, the idea of 'specificity' can be opposed: a renewed look at the local scale, freed from the dominion of the tourist economy, rooted in and sensitive to the nature and uniqueness of the territory. The privileged dimension in this discourse becomes that of everyday life, the main recipients being the permanent inhabitants.

Far from being just a concept, the idea of 'specificity' also becomes a method, a way of designing, which can be applied at the different scales that this theme requires. In particular, it brings with it a specific urban planning approach that can be assimilated to that advocated by Giancarlo De Carlo and that offers, in opposition to the urban planning of norms, standards and axes, an original point of view:



Fig. 7 Airbnb, *Di Borgo in Borgo*, 2020. Retrieved September, 13, 2021 from <<https://news.airbnb.com/it/borghi-italiani/>>

After all, who doesn't know that I am against 'numerical' urbanism, which believes it solves everything in terms of indexes, density, quantity of services, width of streets, height of buildings, etc., and loses sight of the overall and specific form of the city, as a whole and in its parts? But I am also against 'monumental' urban planning that discusses forms only in abstract terms and, in its abstraction, fails to go beyond the squalor of elementary geometries (De Carlo, 1976, p. 152).

For De Carlo it is necessary to do urban planning starting from a deep understanding of the complexity of the city and the relationships between its parts. Only in this process of knowledge, which is referred to the specific case, is it possible to structure the project. Rejecting any absolute or aprioristic method, the only rules his urban planning uses are the 'relational' ones, which leave room for appreciation and therefore interpretation as cornerstones of the project.

URBAN TERRITORIES

In redesigning urban spaces through a new 'social' lens, we start to consider an expanded urbanity capable of encompassing highly heterogeneous environments, linked by socio-productive relationships that transcend traditional administrative boundaries. A new inclusive landscape emerges, or –as Mirko Zardini interpreted it in 1999– a 'hybrid landscape', in which urbanity, infrastructure and countryside are combined horizontally (Zardini, 1999).

Particularly in the Italian case, the increasingly strong polarization between the metropolis and inland areas makes it possible to introduce the polycentric model as an alternative to the large center, connecting small centers in a single system while respecting their specificity.

It is interesting to note that we are facing the opposite process to the one described by Cervellati in his strategy for the suburbs' healing: starting from a dramatically homologated territory, the author spoke of qualitatively delimiting, conferring identity and vocations in order to create polarities⁷ (Cervellati, 2000, p. 27); in this case, on the other hand, we are starting from small centers with a strong identity and clearly delimited (if not actually fortified), which need to be put into relation with each other in order to actually function as cities.

The possibility of creating 'urban territories' is particularly valid in counteracting the continuous migration towards the larger centers, offering an interconnected environment on a social and productive level and, for this reason, attractive not only to the elderly and tourists, but to the entire population. The idea of "metapoli" (Ascher, 1995) –diffused cities as opposed to centralized metropolises– becomes even more relevant today given the unprecedented attention paid to rural landscapes and the interest in considering them in the same way as urban landscapes, which have always been investigated to a greater extent. Putting together these two areas, considered for a long time as opposites

and clearly distinct, finally allows an inclusive planning, able to deal with the heterogeneity of the territory without flattening it but adapting to its declinations.

'PART-TIME CITIES': A CASE-STUDY

In order to concretize and deepen these reflections, we will proceed with the selection of a case-study considered representative: the territory around the coastal city of San Benedetto del Tronto, in the southern Marche region, an ever-growing seaside tourist destination. The vitality of the whole Piceno area has been almost totally absorbed by its most populous urban center, reducing the surrounding smaller cities to dormitory-districts.

This case is eloquent because it contains within itself some characteristics and dynamics peculiar to Italian tourist cities (seasonality), and those peculiar to inland areas and small towns (abandonment and emptying), and in particular to urban centers on the central Apennines (visible effects of the 2016 earthquake). In fact, the project work ultimately focuses on the small historical centers, 'satellites' of the city of San Benedetto: Acquaviva Picena, Montepandone and Monsampolo del Tronto. Studying these realities, it becomes clear that a radical change of perspective is needed, which conceives them as participants in a polycentric territory and inserted in a network of bidirectional relationships between them and with the larger urban center.

Acquaviva Picena (3 723 inhabitants⁸) rises on a hill that dominates the landscape of the Tronto valley, 359 meters above sea level and 7.5 kilometers away from the coast of San Benedetto. The municipality has a medieval *borgo* which makes it an attractive tourist destination from a cultural, archaeological and traditional point of view.

The second *borgo* is Montepandone (12 811 inhabitants⁹), located on a hill 266 meters above sea level and only

5 kilometers from the coast. The most populous zone of the city is the hamlet of Centobuchi, which develops along the Tronto Valley and owes its expansion to the presence of important industrial sites, mainly in the agri-food, mechanical and manufacturing sectors.

Proceeding towards the hinterland, the third city is Monsampolo del Tronto (4,525 inhabitants¹⁰), which is – like the nearby Montepandone and many of the towns along the Tronto valley (Lazzarini, 2015)– composed of two distinct nuclei: the first is the borgo, at 184 meters above sea level; the second is the new industrial expansion of Stella di Monsampolo, in the Tronto Valley.

Observing the historical sequences of urbanization, an 'L-shaped' development of the territory is evident, that is, linearly along the coast and, perpendicularly, along the river and the valley of the Tronto: it is in the latter that the areas of new expansion, residential and industrial, as well as the main services of the municipal territories inside San Benedetto are located: along the valley of the Tronto and the contiguous via Salaria, the hamlets Centobuchi (Montepandone) and Stella di Monsampolo (Monsampolo del Tronto) are located. Therefore, it is possible to identify two linear cities, the one along the Tronto river and the one generated by San Benedetto del Tronto's urban area, whose growth in the last years has been a real 'urban explosion'¹¹, until assuming the characteristics of diffuse cities, in which the settlements of population, activities and services are dispersed throughout the territory (Indovina et al., 2015).

This concentration of population towards the valley and the coast is concomitant with the emptying out of the more inland areas and their historic centers, in which very few of the services and functions necessary for city life remain. To date, most of the population residing within the three above-mentioned municipalities does not work in the same municipality in which they live and most of the jobs in the area are in San Benedetto del Tronto.



Fig. 8 Regione Marche, *Orthophotographical map 1988-1989: San Benedetto del Tronto and its territory, 1988, San Benedetto del Tronto, Italy.* Source: Archivio Regione Marche.

Although at different levels, all four municipalities considered in this analysis are “part-time cities” (Sordi & Dambrosio, 2019): in addition to being a determining factor in the intra-municipal movements of the local population (strongly tied to work and school calendars), seasonality allocates entire portions of the city to tourist reception, manifesting the totalizing role of this economy in this territory. Seasonal movements take place from the hinterland towards the Adriatic coast, finding in Porto d’Ascoli a true appendix of the nearby Ascoli Piceno, in the guise of a large district of second homes.

Fig. 9 Caterina Cameli and Iacopo Prinetti, *Coastal Piceno: a Territorial Framework*, 2020, San Benedetto del Tronto, Italy. Cameli, C. Prinetti, I. (2020). Source: *Borghì: Proposte Specifiche per Sistemi Locali* (Unpublished Master Thesis, Politecnico di Milano).

EDUCATING THE TERRITORY

In developing a strategy on a territorial scale, education has been identified as a key sector for the revitalization of villages and historic centers: in other words, if the urgent need is to counteract the depopulation of inland areas and the consequent migration to larger urban centers,

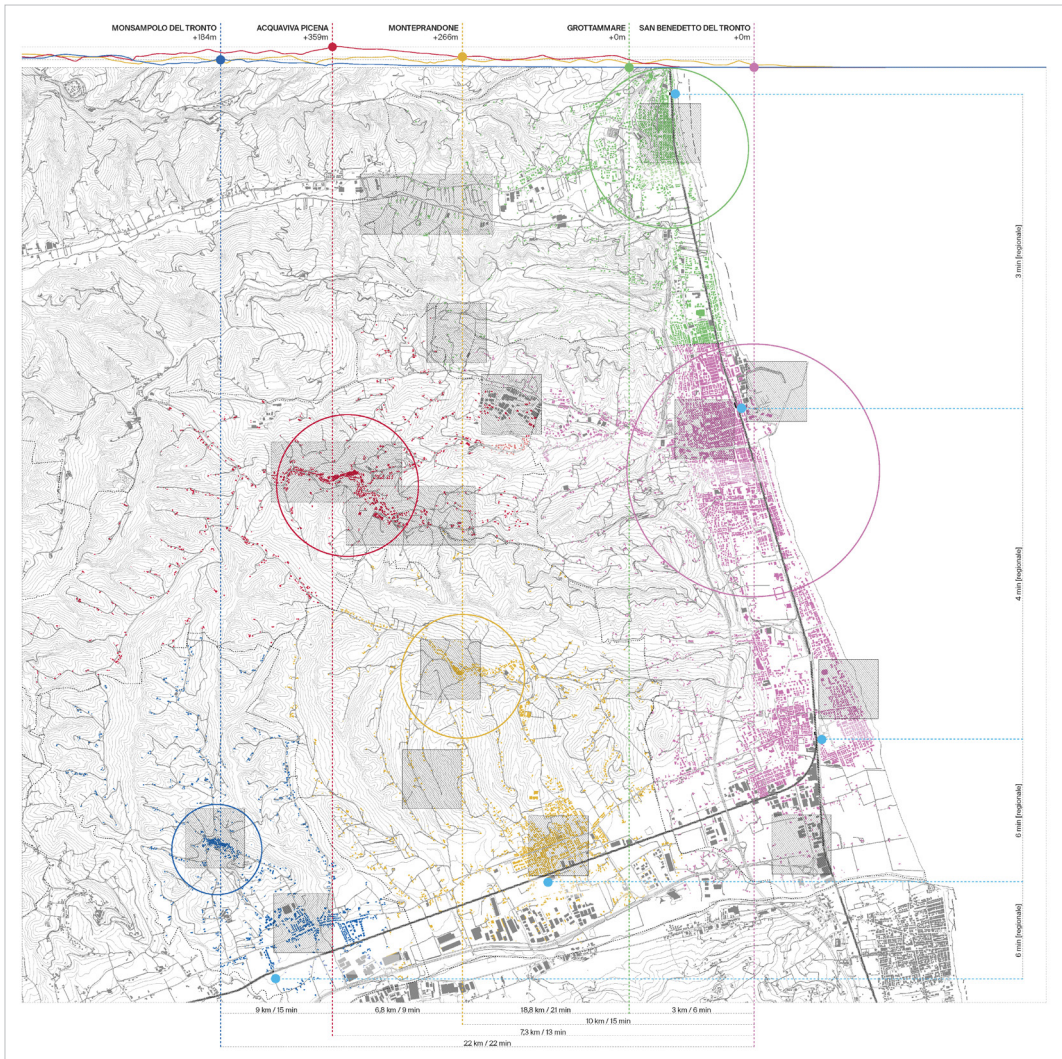


Fig.10 Caterina Cameli and Iacopo Prinetti, *Coastal Piceno: a Territorial Framework*, 2020, San Benedetto del Tronto, Italy. Cameli, C. Prinetti, I. (2020). Source: *Borghi: Proposte Specifiche per Sistemi Locali* (Unpublished Master Thesis, Politecnico di Milano).

the category to which one should immediately look is that of young people. In this sense, the relationship between school, university and territory is decisive.

The reflections developed up to now find concrete confirmation in many of the positions expressed by the Rector of the *Università Politecnica delle Marche* (UNIVPM), Prof. Gian Luca Gregori. Reference is made in particular to the themes



Fig. 11 Caterina Cameli, *Acquaviva Picena from Monsampolo del Tronto*, 2020, Monsampolo del Tronto, Italy. Source: Source: Cameli, C. Prinetti, I. (2020). *Borghì: Proposte Specifiche per Sistemi Locali* [Unpublished Master Thesis]. Politecnico di Milano.



Fig. 12 Iacopo Prinetti, *Acquaviva Picena*, 2020, Acquaviva Picena, Italy. Source: Source: Cameli, C. Prinetti, I. (2020). *Borghì: Proposte Specifiche per Sistemi Locali* [Unpublished Master Thesis]. Politecnico di Milano.



Fig. 13 Caterina Cameli, *Monteprandone from Acquaviva Picena*, 2020, Acquaviva Picena, Italy. Source: Source: Cameli, C. Prinetti, I. (2020). *Borghì: Proposte Specifiche per Sistemi Locali* [Unpublished Master Thesis]. Politecnico di Milano.



Fig. 14 Iacopo Prinetti, *Monteprandone*, 2020, Monteprandone, Italy. Source: Source: Cameli, C. Prinetti, I. (2020). *Borghì: Proposte Specifiche per Sistemi Locali* [Unpublished Master Thesis]. Politecnico di Milano.



Fig. 15 Caterina Cameli,
*Monsampolo del Tronto from
 Acquaviva Picena*, 2020, Acquaviva
 Picena, Italy. Source: Source:
 Cameli, C. Prinetti, I. (2020).
*Borghi: Proposte Specifiche per
 Sistemi Locali* [Unpublished Master
 Thesis]. Politecnico di Milano.



Fig. 16 Iacopo Prinetti,
Monsampolo del Tronto aerial view,
 2020, Monsampolo del Tronto,
 Italy. Source: Cameli, C. Prinetti, I.
 (2020). *Borghi: Proposte Specifiche
 per Sistemi Locali* [Unpublished
 Master Thesis]. Politecnico di Milano.



Fig. 17 Iacopo Prinetti, *Acquaviva
 Picena aerial view*, 2020, Acquaviva
 Picena, Italy. Source: Source:
 Cameli, C. Prinetti, I. (2020).
*Borghi: Proposte Specifiche per
 Sistemi Locali* [Unpublished Master
 Thesis]. Politecnico di Milano.



Fig. 18 Iacopo Prinetti,
Monteprandone aerial view, 2020,
 Acquaviva Picena, Italy. Source:
 Cameli, C. Prinetti, I. (2020).
*Borghi: Proposte Specifiche per
 Sistemi Locali* [Unpublished Master
 Thesis]. Politecnico di Milano.



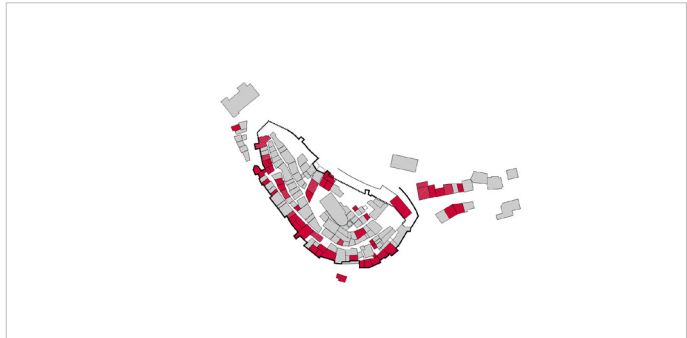
Fig. 19 Caterina Cameli and Iacopo Prinetti, *Acquaviva Picena*, housing abandonment in the city center (in red the completely abandoned buildings, in striped red the semi-abandoned buildings), Acquaviva Picena, Italy. Source: Cameli, C. Prinetti, I. (2020). *Borghi: Proposte Specifiche per Sistemi Locali* (Unpublished Master Thesis, Politecnico di Milano).



Fig. 20 Caterina Cameli and Iacopo Prinetti, *Monsampolo del Tronto*, housing abandonment in the city center (in red the completely abandoned buildings, in striped red the semi-abandoned buildings), Monsampolo del Tronto, Italy. Source: Cameli, C. Prinetti, I. (2020). *Borghi: Proposte Specifiche per Sistemi Locali* (Unpublished Master Thesis, Politecnico di Milano).



Fig. 21 Caterina Cameli and Iacopo Prinetti, *Monteprandone*, housing abandonment in the city center (in red the completely abandoned buildings, in striped red the semi-abandoned buildings), Monteprandone, Italy. Source: Cameli, C. Prinetti, I. (2020). *Borghi: Proposte Specifiche per Sistemi Locali* (Unpublished Master Thesis, Politecnico di Milano).



of *Research, Teaching and Third Mission* which characterize the Strategic Mandate Program of the newly elected Rector¹² (Gregori, 2019, pp. 19-23), which contain fundamental points of reflection in the elaboration of a territorial strategy. First and foremost, of interest, among all of them, is the plan to offer new courses in the region (and, where possible, in collaboration with other Universities), which testifies to a vision of the university as an added value for the territory (UNIVPM, 2020).



Fig. 22 Caterina Cameli, *Hibernation of the Borghi*, 2020, Montepreandone, Italy. Source: Cameli, C. Prinetti, I. (2020). *Borghi: Proposte Specifiche per Sistemi Locali* (Unpublished Master Thesis, Politecnico di Milano).



Fig. 23 Caterina Cameli, *Hibernation of the Borghi*, 2020, Monsampolo del Tronto, Italy. Source: Cameli, C. Prinetti, I. (2020). *Borghi: Proposte Specifiche per Sistemi Locali* (Unpublished Master Thesis, Politecnico di Milano).

This intention has already taken hold with the opening of four new degree courses in the city of Fermo, capital of the province of the same name, with the aim of a progressive decentralization and diffusion of the institution, which has its central and historical headquarters in Ancona.

For this reason, *UNIVPM* is defined as one of the potential actors within the strategy of relaunching the area considered. For this reason, it was relevant to obtain a direct confrontation with the direction of the university, which was obtained with a short interview touching upon the most relevant topics defining the relationship between education and the territory: the role of the educational system towards the phenomena of abandonment and emptying of the internal areas, the relationship with local businesses and the dialogue with high schools.

A: The resident population of the Marche region has been characterized over time by a constant process of aging, due to a decrease in births and increased longevity. In relation to this trend, we should also consider the phenomenon of abandonment of the youngest, which should be looked at with greater concern given the high unemployment rate, the worsening of job prospects due to the continuing economic crisis, exacerbated moreover by the effects of the COVID-19. The abandonment of young people represents an even more serious issue if we refer to the internal territories, and in particular to small towns, which have become increasingly less attractive (Temperini, 2021, p. 90).

Finding support in the intentions of the region's major University pole, it has been possible to develop in greater detail the strategic program for the area. The insertion of new educational poles acts on the network of existing relationships between urban centers, articulating it and opening up new perspectives for the territory. For this to happen, it is necessary to keep in mind the importance of dialogue between universities, educational institutions and businesses: this is the area in which one can act on the phenomenon



Fig. 24 Caterina Cameli, *Hibernation of the Borghi*, 2020, Monteprandone, Italy. Source: Cameli, C. Prinetti, I. (2020). *Borghi: Proposte Specifiche per Sistemi Locali* (Unpublished Master Thesis]. Politecnico di Milano).

of youth migration that emerged in the interview, with an intervention that addresses the local scale by inserting it into a wider network and with a long-term range of action.

The proposal of new educational centers derives not only from the importance of the functions and services present in the area, but also from an understanding of the specificity of the places in which it is inserted, that is, of the 'relational dynamics' that inhabit them, but also of their traditions. Starting from this last point, the proposal for the borough of Acquaviva Picena takes into consideration what is considered its culinary excellence: these are sweets that are exported to many supermarkets and grocery stores throughout the territory, known as *alchermess peaches* or *peschette di Acquaviva*. The original recipe for these sweets is a tradition that is being lost, it can be revived through a new educational pastry laboratory, affiliated with the Professional Hotelier Institute of San Benedetto del Tronto¹³. Inside this location are held training courses and school-to-work programs for the students of the institute, who are responsible for the management of an administration area. Acquaviva is also the village that is most easily reached from the historic center of San Benedetto del Tronto, and for this reason it is the most suitable for the insertion of a function that is lacking in the entire area: a new cinema, whose management, together with that of the food service activities attached to it, can be affiliated to the same program.

Part of the raw materials used in the laboratory of Acquaviva, come from farms in the vicinity, as well as from the third insertion: a new para-university agricultural school in Monsampolo del Tronto, supported by UNIVPM in collaboration with the *Agricultural Institute* of Ascoli Piceno, which is under the same presidency as the Hotelier Institute involved.

This function brings with it a new research center with an adjoining library center, which aspires to be the meeting point between the university institution and the high schools: in fact, the new study space, located in Monteprandone, can be used by all the students in the area.

Fig. 25 Caterina Cameli and Iacopo Prinetti, *Territorial analysis*, 2020, San Benedetto del Tronto, Italy. Source: Cameli, C. Prinetti, I. (2020). *Borghi: Proposte Specifiche per Sistemi Locali* (Unpublished Master Thesis, Politecnico di Milano).

CONCLUSIONS

The one proposed in this research wants to be a look of openness towards rural dimensions and small urbanity, interpreted as an opportunity for learning and experimentation rooted in the context. Rather than voids to be filled or negatives of the city, these are realities made up

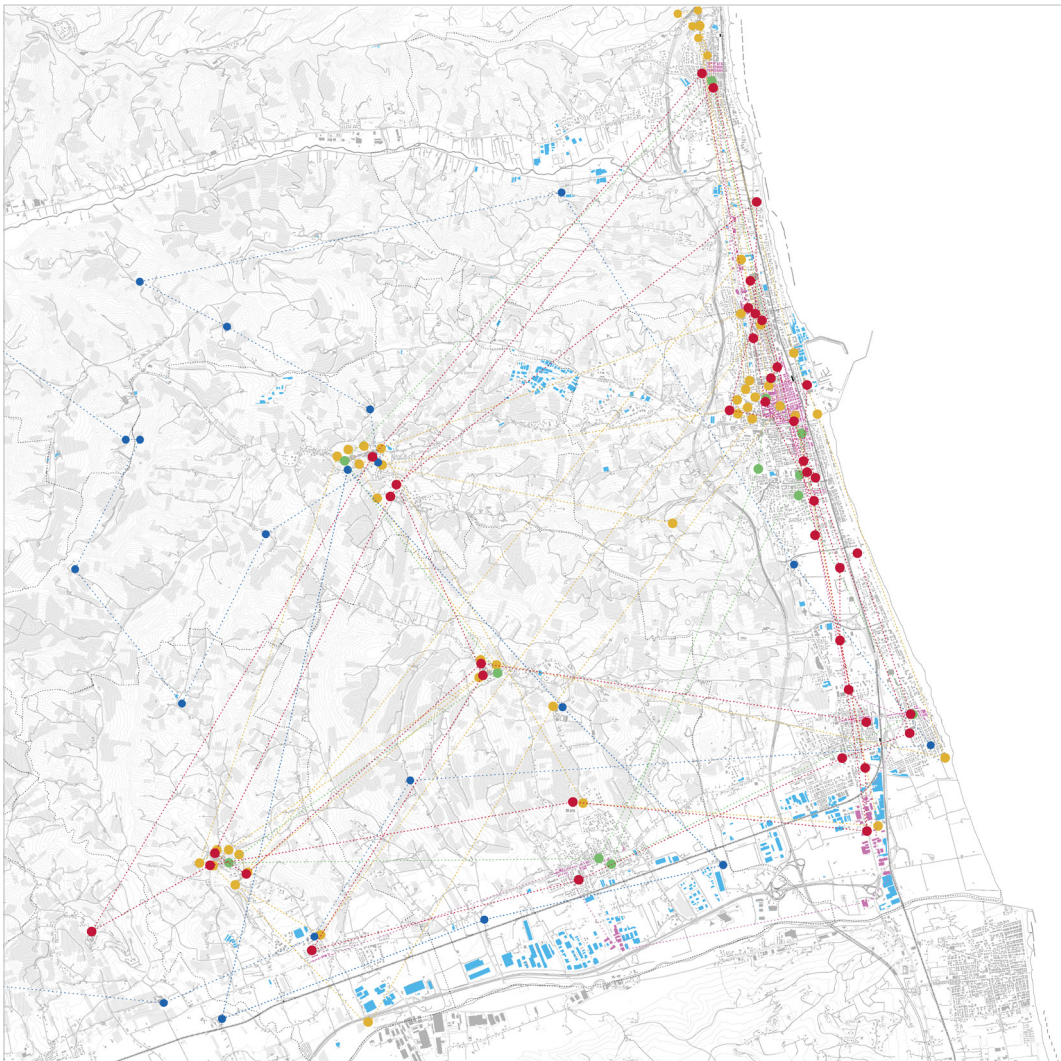
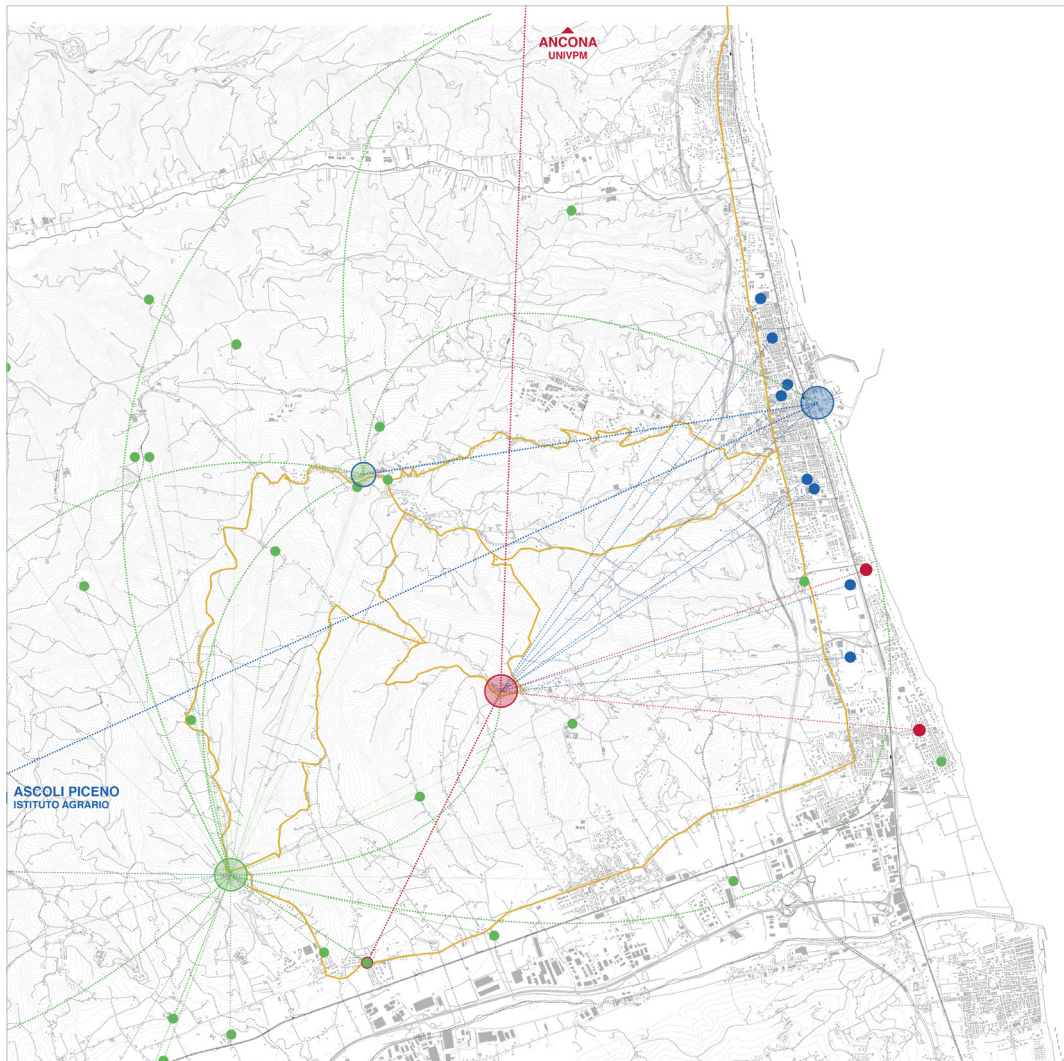


Fig. 26 Caterina Cameli and Iacopo Prinetti, *Territorial Strategy for a reconnection of borghi and cities*, 2020, San Benedetto del Tronto, Italy. Source: Cameli, C. Prinetti, I. (2020). *Borghi: Proposte Specifiche per Sistemi Locali* (Unpublished Master Thesis, Politecnico di Milano).

of specificities to be understood, admirable construction principles and particular dynamics, impossible to trace back to a single scheme or to solve with a theory.

The case of the Piceno coastal territory is one that includes dynamics and characteristics common to many areas of Italy, but this is not enough to elaborate a theory applicable to any similar case. The reflection on the role



of the educational system with which the strategy was developed, in fact, stemmed from a profound knowledge of the chosen territory, from a survey of its shortcomings and potential, as well as from the input received from the *UNI-VPM* university institution. In the light of these reflections, the work carried out intends to make visible the need to react consequently to the crisis of the tourist economy, drawing attention to the local, daily and 'stable' dimension of small towns and their territory, from which to learn sensibly and on which to intervene with a multi-scalar approach oriented towards the long term.

NOTES

1 A testimony of this point of view is *Movimento Studi per l'Architettura* (MSA), which advocates a strategy of common orientation derived from a realist vision of the country and therefore of reconstruction.

2 The photographic survey was carried out between 1968 and 1971, commissioned by the *Soprintendenza ai Beni Artistici e Storici of the Province of Bologna* and directed by Andrea Emiliani.

3 This thesis was already beginning to make its way into the world architectural and urban planning scene in the early 1960s, as evidenced by the revolutionary voice of Jane Jacobs on the other side of the Atlantic: in strong opposition to the development model of modern cities, the anthropologist called for the recovery of urban centers on a human scale, rediscovering the role of the street, the district, the block. With its characteristics of proximity, density, sociality, and heterogeneity of the built environment, the model of the European historical center is exactly what is re-affirmed, the only one capable of resisting the impact of time and cultural and social changes.

4 When we talk about 'removal of the population' we refer to the middle class that is pushed more and more towards the edges of the city to make room for richer clients and consequently for hotels and luxury residences, as usual in the processes of gentrification.

5 In this sense is emblematic the recent decision by the *Municipality of Venice* to keep closed, because of the pandemic, all museums until April 2021, considering the residents not interested in visiting them and declaring their use exclusively for tourism.

6 This image is reaffirmed by Rem Koolhaas with the term 'countrysiding', which indicates the preconception that these places are incapable of creating innovation and culture because they are inhabited by an ignorant and crude population. This attitude turns out to be harmful not only for external investors –potential bearers of new productivity in inland areas– but above all for the local population itself.

Often, in fact, the children of the internal areas grow up with the idea that nothing can take root in these 'hopeless' places, giving in to a prejudice that pushes the accelerator of depopulation and migration towards the large urban centers.

7 The author speaks of community polycentrism: "The historical center, in this context, is the archetypal reference of the territorial settlement, but it is not the only center –historical and/or ancient– of the urban area: by resonance, there are other centers, other places, which analogically express centrality, always referring to a history or to a 'structure' [...] able to facilitate the aggregation of the inhabitants and their sense of belonging to a community. This community polycentrism, based on places, becomes the antidote to the peripheral homologation, the city returns to be 'destroyer of the periphery', that is, of disorientation and alienation".

8 ISTAT, Resident population as of November 30, 2019.

9 ISTAT, Resident Population as of December 31, 2020.

10 ISTAT, Resident Population as of December 31, 2020.

11 Term used in reference to the research work, Indovina, F., Fregolent, L., & Savino, M. (2015). *L'esplosione della Città*, Bologna: Compositori.

12 Gregori, 2019. // Research: "The path already undertaken to strengthen the role of Research University of our University will be sustained". Teaching: "The University intends to promote the quality of teaching and improve the school-university transition, continuing to develop actions regarding the training offer, teaching methodologies, digital learning opportunities, continuing to ensure students a high level of qualification of teaching and knowledge transmitted. In addition, efforts will be made to move towards an expansion of teaching laboratories, also increasing support for library resources." Third Mission: "In this perspective, the experiences related to the creation of university spin-offs are also to be found [...]. As far as the Faculties of Economics, Engineering and the Departments of Life and Environmental Sciences and Agricultural, Food and Environmental Sciences are concerned, [...] the establishment of synergic relationships with private operators and research organizations [...] is significant".

13 As seen in the *territorial framework*.

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MAPPING PERIPHERIES

URBAN

ETHNOGRAPHIC MAPS

AS GRAPHIC TOOLS

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ESSAY 94/05

ETHNOGRAPHIC MAPS

PERIPHERIES

BORDER

LINE

FRAMEWORK

The crisis of the boundary line and the consequent determination of the peripheries from a geometric point of view entails a crisis in representing urban boundaries and thresholds, and therefore the peripheries themselves.

In this regard, the essay rereads some historical and recent ethnographic urban maps. Both from a graphic point of view and as artefacts and documents capable of visualising complex urban issues linked to the concept of peripheralization of fragile territories. This reinterpretation allows

us to highlight the role that these graphic artefacts have as interpretative documents of the peripheral realities of the city that open operational, epistemological and semantic perspectives in the field of graphic sciences.

The frames operated by the boundary drawing line of the urban periphery assume similar ontological meanings and epistemologies. Their re-discussion allows us to rethink their definition and operational role in the urban dimension and in the extension of the graphic tools of urban representation.

GEOMETRY IN RELATION TO CENTRE/PERIPHERY

In the field of descriptive geometry, and more generally in the graphic sciences (Cicalò, 2020), the line is identified as an essential element of representation. An abstract geometric entity that is difficult to identify in nature and tangible reality (Cardone, 2015). It serves to delineate the object to be represented. It becomes the expression of its limit (from the Latin *limes -mītis*) and its perimeter (from the Greek *περί* 'around' and *μέτρον* 'measure'). A perimeter that defines a homogeneous interior and a different exterior. On the one hand, the boundary brings with it the concept of the periphery, a word with which it shares the origin of the etymon and sanctions a progressive distance from the characteristics of homogeneity, continuity, and isotropy that the figure outlined assumes (Farinelli, 2003). On the other hand, as a threshold, the limit distinguishes two places, two territories, two areas but simultaneously communicates.

Probably, however, the term that best specifies the concept of the periphery is the one that identifies the confines in Latin *confīnium* (*cum* = together plus *finis* = limit, but also in the plural *finēs* = region, territory). The Greek philosopher and mathematician Euclid (4th century BC - 3rd century BC), in the first book of the *Elements*, in the thirteenth axiom, defines "A boundary [...] that which is the extremity of anything". Making the notion more precise, Aristotle establishes the extremity of a 'thing' as that first term beyond which nothing more of the 'thing' can be found and beyond which there is the whole 'thing'. Both thinkers' definition becomes quite intuitive and can be taken as the natural starting point for any investigation of the concept of boundary and, therefore, of the notions related to centre and periphery.

The notion of boundary plays a crucial role at any level of representation and organisation of the world around us. The intuitive distinction between *de dicto* confines—characterised by their dependence on human organisational action—and *de re* confines—such as natural geographical boundaries. One

thinks of a boundary whenever one refers to a specific entity as something separate from the rest that surrounds it (Varzi, 2005). It is precisely the concept of the *de dicto* border that has characterised the perception and management of the territory in society. As David Harvey recalls in his essay *La crisi della modernità* [The condition of postmodernity] (2010), territories have been mapped, surveyed, and analytically monitored from the Enlightenment onwards, especially for fiscal, governmental, and control purposes. Space previously 'boundless' (literally without borders), even if not infinite, is now delimited by administrative, bureaucratic and political boundaries. As Massimo Cacciari (2004) argues, every structure needs boundaries to exist. A place can only be inhabited where its formal completeness enters into relation with the globality of information, denying the uprooting from the spatial dimension that communication seems to impose.

In this perspective, the tragic and recent history of Berlin should not be forgotten. The city, born from the unification of two nuclei on opposite banks of the Spree river –Cölln and Berlin– in the 13th century, was separated by an artificial border erected in 1961. This original duplicity is an integral part of its identity, originating from an archipelago of fragments (Marotta, 2007). On the night of 21-22 December 1989, that wall, which defined a border and two geopolitical peripheries, was torn down, offering the culture of design the possibility of spatially investigating its complex text. The destruction of the bombings left peripheral voids that became new centralities again once the wall was torn down (Cirafici, 2020). One immediately understands how the theme of the centre and the periphery has been undermined by political action that has effectively separated the city's historical centralities.

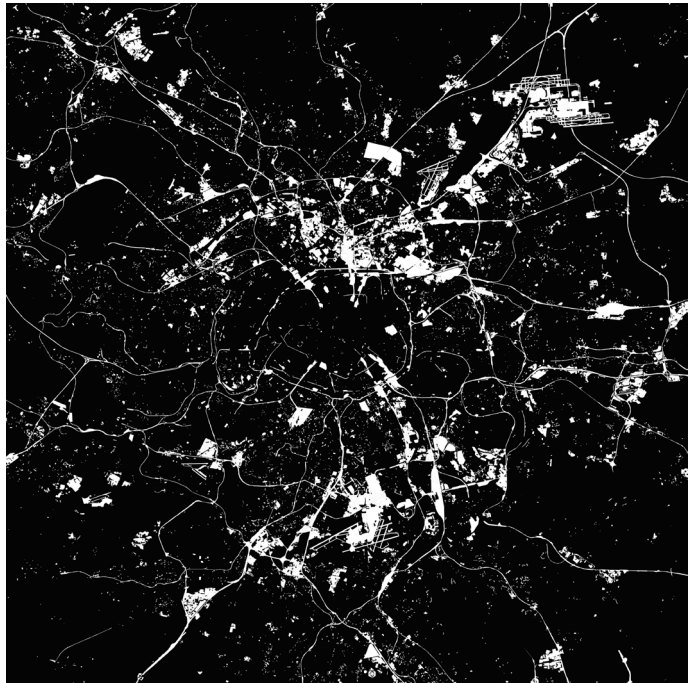
In fact, the principle of homogeneity and the related process of confinement is at the basis of the graphic realisation of maps, from territorial to urban ones. In mathematical and geometrical terms, we can say that mapping is the operation of correspondence between two systems –the real one and

the cartographic one— that allows assigning to the first a correspondence with the second one. A correspondence that often occurs through the graphic confinement of predominantly homogeneous areas. Confinement is implemented with clear lines that establish the homogeneity of a site and determine its periphery. This type of process is challenged in situations of mapping territorial and urban ethnographic realities. This modus operandi has characterised many processes of modernity. Through ‘mapping’, these processes have implemented on the city and the territory the principle of reduction that allows the complexity of the world to correspond to the synthesis of the map. Through mapping, the urban territory takes the form of a Euclidean extension, i.e. a surface that obeys the rules of continuity, homogeneity and isotropism (Farinelli, 2003).

At the same time, however, it is possible to say that the periphery, in the urban sense, is not a geometric and physical condition concerning the location of the parts. Today more than ever, as Mario Fumagalli states in his book *Il volto della città* [The face of the city]: “With the evolution of the city’s geography, suburbs are no longer identifiable based on the geometric concept of distance from the centre [...], as the last built fringe before the countryside”. Consequently, “there is a tendency to define them based on economic and social criteria” [my translation from Italian] (Fumagalli, 2011, p. 93).

In reality, as large urban and metropolitan realities demonstrate today, it is complicated to say where a city begins and ends. Unlike the concept of hierarchy, which is widely used in descriptive and analytical geometry, isotropy can be helpful to describe peripheral features beyond the simple spatial identification of distance from the centre. In this regard, isotropy presents itself as the organisational capacity of a body—in this case of the city—that gives rise to a given phenomenon in the same way in all directions (Secchi, 2013). This is ably illustrated by the map *Les propriétés de Lucifer* (Fig. 1) made by Bernardo Secchi and Paola Viganò for the *Grand Paris* project—promoted by French President Nicolas Sarkozy in 2008. The image high-

Fig. 1 Secchi, B., & Viganò, P. (2009), *Les propriétés de Lucifer* [Lucifer's properties]. In *Paris Métropole 2021, la construction d'une stratégie*, p. 4.



lights the limits of a Paris that identifies solely and exclusively with its Haussmannian centre. The map shows the boundaries of an image that fails to grasp the potential and opportunities offered by this vast territory, which the research reveals to be rich in significant and dispersed external locations.

In this organisation, the people who live in the places are involved, as a relationship of subordination is created between them, which is an expression of different social conditions. The concept of hierarchy is easily associated with the periphery, which presupposes a comparison between centrality and marginality and implies the definition of a system in which different parts are formed and developed. This hierarchy between the elements does not necessarily enclose a corresponding geometric organisation in the contemporary city: the centre and the periphery can be configured according to different spatialities, subverting their traditional spatial location. In this sense, the binary scheme's 'centre-periphery' relationship is deconstructed in its rigidity, favouring new perspectives.

REPRESENTING INVERSION THROUGH THE SINGULAR POINT OF VIEW

Historically, the idea of the periphery arose as a geographical counterpoint to a strong and recognised centrality. In particular, all European cities with a historical founding matrix find their identity in the oldest sediments of the historic core. This is the case of stratified cities, such as Naples, Rome, Paris, Vienna, Barcelona, etc., which have lost and found their identity in these dimensions. Intellectuals and artists have been lost and found in these dimensions, such as the philosopher Walter Benjamin, who described Naples as a “porous city” and identified the places of *passages* in historic Paris (Benjamin, 1980). Somehow, the historical city becomes recognised as a collective heritage that belongs to the inhabitants who live in it as to the people who occasionally pass through it. Unlike, the suburbs are born as marginal, homogeneous places as defined above. These places arise with specific functions in response to social, economic, and political problems. Obviously, a difference between these two types of reality is easily recognisable. Suppose the centrality of cities is recognised by all possible inhabitants. In that case, the periphery is identified only by those who live there. It is also true that the poet’s gaze can read universal values in these marginal places. Let us think of the vision that Pier Paolo Pasolini’s work offered in this direction. In the suburbs of the Roman suburbs, he found a sense of community, both rural and pre-industrial, a synthesis of a political dimension that was disappearing in Italy during the economic boom. At the same time, today, in the different peripheral sizes, we find an assortment of situations that belong to places other than the defined, and sometimes simplified and trivialised, homogeneity of urban centres. The plural dimension of the suburbs should be understood not from the formal point of view of geometry, town planning and architecture, but rather from the ethnic and social point of view. Their multiple richness allows them to disobey the overall homogeneity of the centre. Their cultural encroachment offers new possibili-

ties for social interaction, allowing the city to renew itself and nourish its centrality with new energies. We have already witnessed and continue to see gentrification processes that attract middle-class populations to what were historically peripheries. Clearly, where there are issues of the periphery with a modern matrix, this substitution of population, favouring the more affluent classes, is made more accessible. The richness offered by the sometimes conflicting diversity of the suburbs attracts new inhabitants to replace those who generated it.

It is possible to argue that the great challenge facing the future city is precisely investigating the places on the margins, the peripheral zones. Suppose a centre is a place of symbolic and commercial representation. In that case, the periphery becomes the terminal of complex and conflicting events that identify the new scenarios to which the city may be subjected in its entirety. From these arguments, the need to invert the point and angle of observation are evident (Petrillo, 2018). While in communication, the city is crystallised as a fundamentally reassuring place to find its roots. The periphery is an environment characterised by continuous and unpredictable actions and events that make such places ramifications and not roots.

The use of the graphic device of urban ethnographic maps makes it easy, albeit simplified, to read complexities that are only detectable in the complex environments of the suburbs. This geo-graphic device makes it possible to identify the city's multiple cultural centralities, overcoming the dichotomous and conventional concept of the centre and the periphery. As the periphery, observed from different perspectives, can become a catalyst for new centralities.

ETHNOGRAPHIC CARTOGRAPHY AS A QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHOD

In this regard, ethnographic maps as thematic maps, in which the represented size goes beyond the traditional geo-

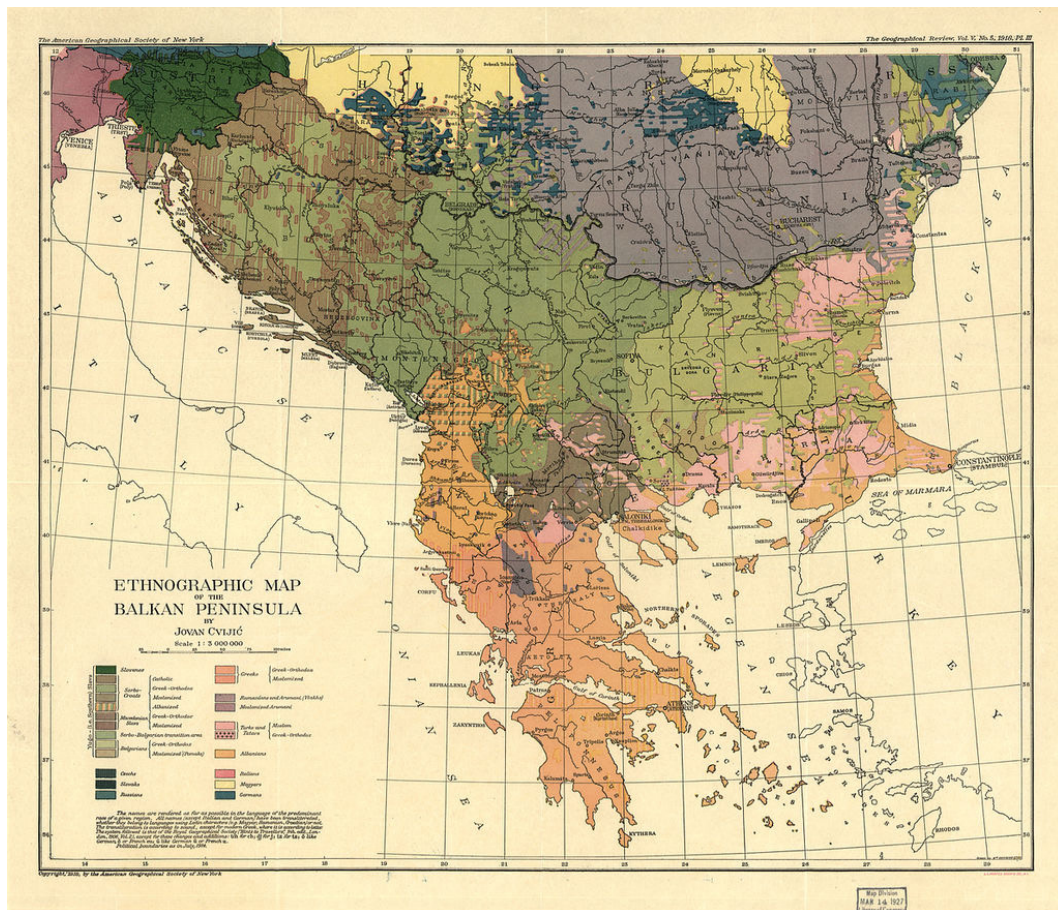
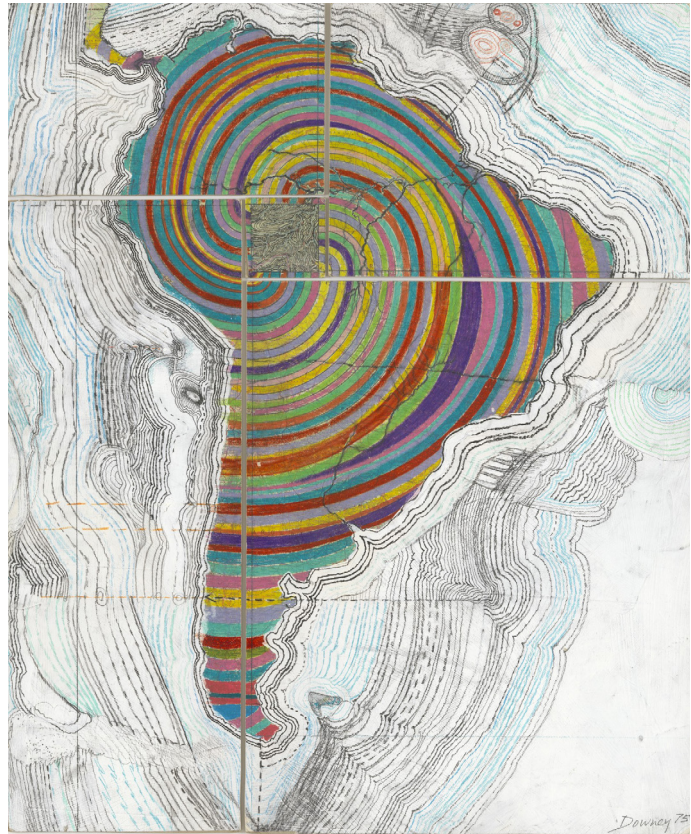


Fig. 2 Cvijić, J. (1918). *Ethnographic map of the Balkan Peninsula*. Retrieved September 21, 2021, from Library of Congress Geography and Map Division Washington <www.loc.gov>.

metric/geographic characteristics, reveal their usefulness in interpreting latent or ongoing dynamics.

A historical example of this is Jovan Cvijić’s famous map of 1918, which attempts to define the boundaries of the ethnic realities of the Balkans (Fig. 2). The most significant aspect that can be observed in this map is the representation of the borders. The periphery of the homogeneous ethnic areas does not allow for the use of a demarcation line. Still, it is necessary to resort to a representation realised through a graphic pattern that contemplates the inhomogeneity of the peripheries. On the one hand, there is a graphic contrivance that does not identify a boundary; on the other hand, a pe-

Fig. 3 Downey, J. (1975). *Map of America*. Retrieved September 21, 2021, from Moma <<https://www.moma.org/collection/works/164788>>.



ripheral border area is specified, which brings the possibility of conflict. This ethnographically based territorial representation played a crucial role in defining emerging Yugoslavia during the Paris Treaties (Kent, 2019). At the same time, this map had the anticipatory ability to identify the crisis areas in which the Yugoslav wars took place and which, with much difficulty, led to the definition of the borders of the new national realities.

This methodology, which utilises *de dicto* ‘confines’ lines, clearly defines ethnic homogeneities that are difficult to identify, has challenged various artists. Finally, and only in terms of time, we can mention the map by the Chilean artist Juan Downey, whose *Map of America* (Fig. 2) depicts South America in a whirlwind of colours with no national or geo-

graphical boundaries. The artist created a graphic work on the occasion of an on-the-road trip from New York through Central and South America.

Despite the criticisms that can be made of this practice, it is applied to studying the ethnic multiplicities that can be identified in the city. Therefore, in the same way, in the case of the mapping of large cities, the concept of the perimeter is challenged if one does not consider its physical dimension exclusively. The mapping of urban ethnographic realities makes it possible to reinterpret structures of peripheralisation that move away from the purely geometric and dichotomous dimension between centre and periphery. The removal of the static and geometric definition of its boundary entails the crisis of homogeneity and continuity.

The double map of 1894 *The Tenement-House Committee maps* (Fig. 4) appears emblematic. On the one hand, it shows the population density of Manhattan and, on the other hand, the presence of the variety of nationalities present in the city. In the first map, the scale of the pattern determines the density. The second, the variety of textures—which has graphic assonances with Sol LeWitt's work—highlights the ethnographic variety that is difficult to confine. The double cartographic and graphic register allows us to reinterpret the condition of peripherality and the multiple centralities in the same city. The maps, presented with their report on 17 January 1895, generated considerable public interest after publication in *Harper's Weekly*. They constituted an important milestone in using new forms of graphic representation and communication by the New York reformers. A detailed reading reveals an immediate, simultaneous view of two coinciding urban characteristics thanks to the original graphical instrument. On the one hand, the exceptionally high population density in one corner of Lower Manhattan and, on the other hand, the coincidence of an ethnographically rich heart related to the presence of migrants (Vaughan, 2018).

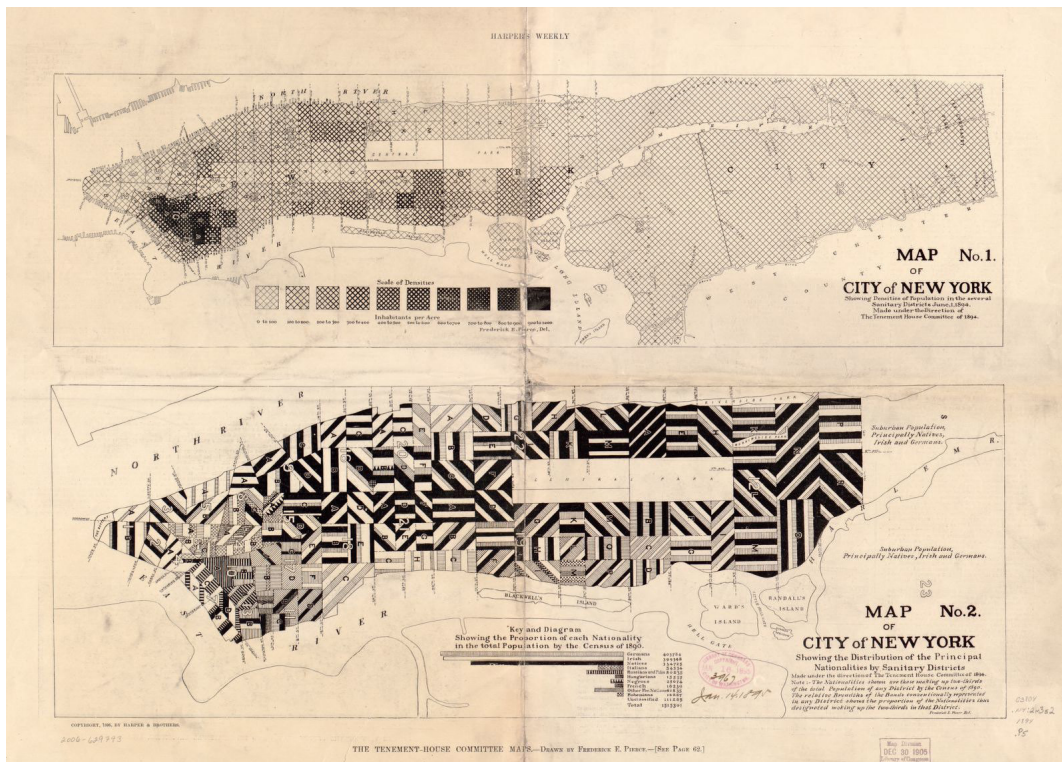


Fig. 4 Pierce, F. E. (1894) *The Tenement-House Committee maps*. [S.l.: Harper & Brothers] [Map]. Retrieved September 21, 2021, from the Library of Congress <<https://www.loc.gov/item/2006629793/>>.

Similarly, another ethnographic map of the city's West Side was produced in Chicago (Fig. 5). Although the map does not indicate the exact place of residence of the inhabitants, it shows the residents' nationality through coded colours. As can be seen from the observation of the graphic artefact, the sequence of coloured blocks indicates the occupation of the plots by nationality. The portions without fields, which make up most of the plots, designate English-speaking residents born in the United States. They are followed, in terms of numbers, by the European migrant ethnic groups: the Irish (green), the Bohemians (yellow), the Italians (blue), the Russians (red) and the Poles (red bands). The resulting image makes it easy to read the distribution of ethnic groups and their arrangement. It also shows a sort of aggregation of ethnic communities and the relative centralities created from these. At first glance, the map

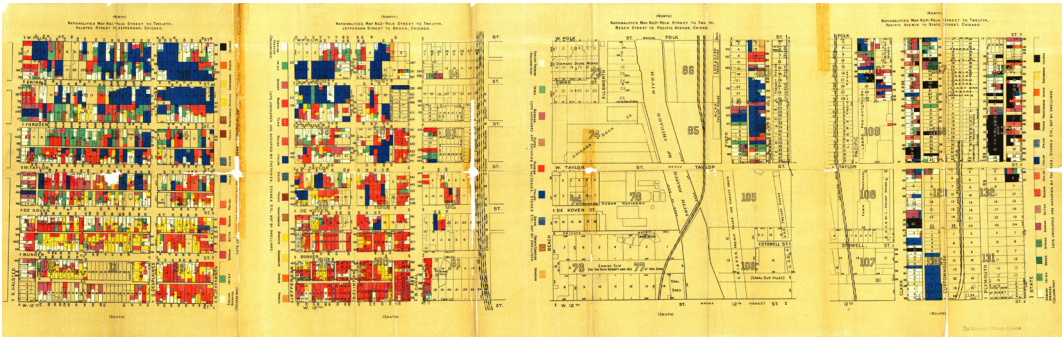


Fig. 5 Greeley, S. S. (1895). *Nationalities map no. 1[-4], Polk St. to Twelfth ... Chicago*. [New York: Thomas Y. Crowell & Co.] [Map] Retrieved September 21, 2021, from the University of Chicago Digital Preservation Collection <<http://pi.lib.uchicago.edu/1001/cat/bib/8602878>>.

of nationalities looks like a tapestry of colours indicating a mixture of equally distributed ethnic groups. But equally, on closer inspection, the map reveals how foreigners lived in distinct and separate enclaves. At the same time, however, this intermingling shows how the foreigners present in Chicago's Near West Side were more or less mixed with a tendency to drift into small national colonies. As we know, this area of the city, which in the 19th century was not really central and almost peripheral to the Loop, is today considered one of the most vital and culturally active parts of the city. A process that nowadays affects other parts of the city of Chicago. For example, the South Side – which from the 1840s until the Second World War saw the migration of European populations (Irish, Italians, Poles, Lithuanians and Yugoslavs). In recent years, the area has changed due to gentrification by wealthier people moving into the district from the centre. The conflictual relationship between these populations is perfectly described in John Wells' television series *Shameless*, which, in the US adaptation of the British series, sees the already complex relationships of the multi-ethnic community clash with the new rich populations. In all these examples, the careful use of textures, tones and shapes facilitate easy reading for the viewer. Investigation of these maps, while requiring precise decoding, allows an understanding of the graphic logic made visible by the skilful use of the dimensional and chromatic variables of the visual devices (Monmonier, 2015).

3 - L'INTELLIGENZA DELLE PERIFERIE

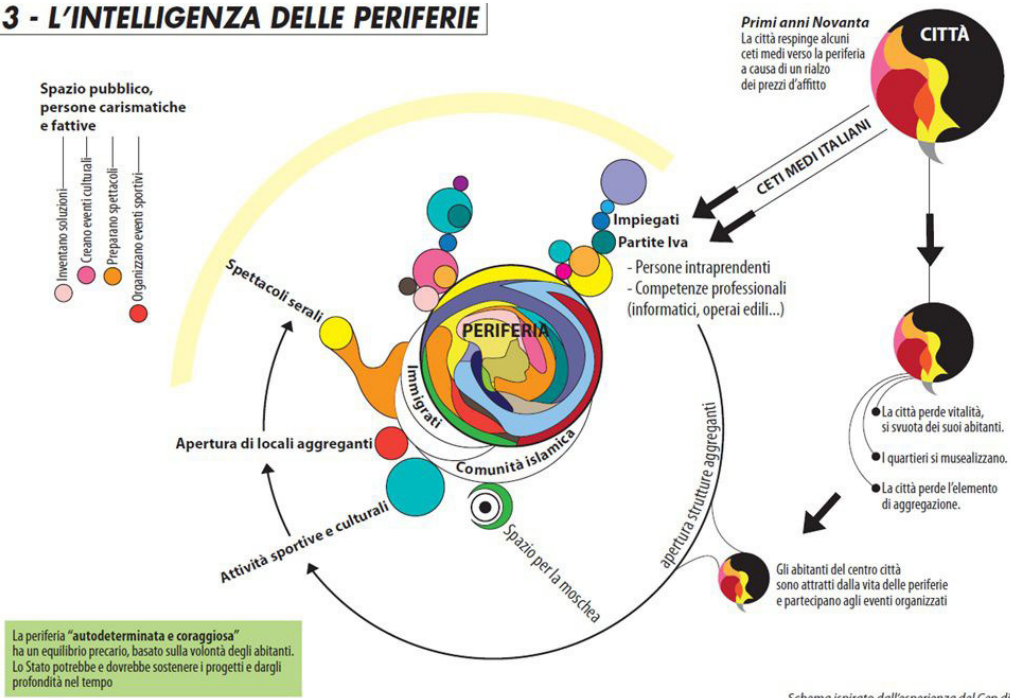


Fig. 6 Canali, L. (2016). *L'intelligenza delle periferie* [Intelligence of the peripheries]. Retrieved September 21, 2021, from *Limes Web* <<https://www.limesonline.com/lintelligenza-delle-periferie/91338>>.

Today, more than in the past, one of the most consolidated research techniques in urban anthropology is linked to ethnography, which with its holistic approach seeks to understand the dynamics that the inhabitants of a given urban context assume within their social and cultural apparatuses, with repercussions on the more purely spatial dimension of the city. The ethnographic analysis seeks to go beyond the purely quantitative reading of data and identify more qualitative approaches to determine an analytical observation of the spatial practices and everyday life of places.

As Daniel Modigliani states in the pages of *Limes*: "the term 'periphery' is so generic that it now retains only the original sense of a 'marginalised' place" [my translation from Italian²] (2016, p. 130). The author asserts that the suburbs, insofar as they are distant from economic centres and political decision-making power, become places that gen-

erate an “urban gradient” (p.135) precisely because communities without power live and survive within them. It is a population capable of exactly generating its ethnic diversity, innovative cultural phenomena, and subversive urban practices concerning established centres. Peripheral areas are increasingly becoming places where the survival strategies of vulnerable communities with solid international connections are formed. In this regard, the a-geographic map (Fig. 6) by Laura Canali published in the same issue of *Limes* is of considerable interest. The map graphically illustrates the inversion of polarity between centre and periphery in the emblematic case of the Cep di Prà in Genoa. Unlike the old centres that are emptied of activities and inhabitants in this neighbourhood and become a museum, a new public dimension is born from collective work and self-determination that feeds on the multi-ethnic populations that live there. In this case, unlike showed in previously maps, the graphic sign does not circumscribe places but illustrates the dynamics that are triggered between the centre and the outskirts of Genoa, highlighting in a visual and very intuitive way the link between the cultural and ethnographic wealth of the outskirts and the ferment that this generates.

Similarly, although with different modalities and purposes, the ethnographic maps of the *Urban Ethnography Lab* of the Humboldt-University of Berlin show the strong potential that these graphic devices have in reading urban dynamics about the forces between centre and periphery and to the dynamism of multi-ethnic peripheries. Through an interdisciplinary approach between architecture and urban anthropology, the practice of decoding the city through its mapping allows for the emergence of relevant questions regarding the multiple dimension of centralities. *Counter mappings* (Wood, 2012) highlight the visible purpose of maps to clarify for what purpose they were actually created and what information they might conceal, highlighting a remarkable effort to map against dominant power structures. The tools developed by



Fig. 7 Genz, C, 2017. (ON LEFT) *Ethnography in Urban Settings*. (ON RIGHT) *Fold-Up Mapping Booklet*. Retrieved September 21, 2021, from the Urban Ethnography Lab <<https://urban-ethnography.com/methods/mappings/>>.

the research group led by Carolin Genz (Humboldt-University of Berlin), Aylin Yildirim Tschoepe (Academy of Art and Design/ FHNW Basel) and Jessika Tremblay (University of Toronto), through collaboration with cartographic artists and architects, allow for the development and illumination of a new visual perspective in urban ethnography. Specifically, the *Fold-Up Mapping Booklet* (Fig. 7) helps collect urban ethnographic data in a creative and personal way to reach the scale of tangible visualisation of these data far from a mere quantitative dimension. The mapping that arises from the drawing of spatial observations generates maps, which, superimposed on different layers of transparent paper, make it possible to visualise the different social dynamics that unfold in urban space. A mapping technique requires the author of the map to be physically involved in the urban space and its social, cultural and political complexity.

The maps by Laura Canali and the *Urban Ethnography Lab* research group clearly show the role that graphic sciences and maps, in particular, play in decoding urban realities. Graphic maps that do not work on relying on the means of confinement, but on the contrary, provide for a ‘trespassing’ of the line and of disciplines. An undermining of the bound-

ary line and the consequent determination of peripheries from a geometric point of view implies a crisis in representing urban boundaries and thresholds, hence peripheries (Genz & Lucas-Drogan, 2018).

REVERSING THE CENTRE-PERIPHERY PRINCIPLE

As Rudolf Arnheim recalls in *Il potere del centro* [The power of the center: a study of composition in the visual arts]: “The frame makes its appearance when the work is no longer considered an integral part of the social setting, but a statement about that setting. When the work of art becomes a proposition, its changed reality status is expressed by its visible detachment – the frame – from the surroundings. Boris Uspensky relates the function of the frame to the phenomenon of estrangement” [my translation from Italian³] (2016, p. 66). suppose we transfer the theme to urban issues. In that case, it is possible to say that the process of delimitation of areas with operations like framing works of art leads to the separation of the different regions of the city. Historically, places in the city have never been separable. The contemporary situation leads to the estrangement of certain parts of the city and consequently determine processes of peripheralization. Not only that, analysing the pattern of the single area perimeter of the map and transliterating the concept of the Russian philosopher Uspensky, but the inhabitant of that specific periphery also turns out to be alienated from an idea of shared sociality. This estrangement determines a state of isolation of the subject within a view of the city.

At the same time, as Luisa Scalabroni (2008) states concerning the trespassing of the frame (fig. 8): “where the object frame helps perception to distinguish ontologically between the observer’s real space and the fictitious space of representation, the painted frame intervenes in this duality of spaces by variously relating the two spaces, sometimes transforming the ontological leap to which the pictorial imagination invites us into a continuous and unitary path-

Fig. 8 Pere Borrell del Caso, *Huyendo de la crítica* [Escaping criticism], 1874. Retrieved September 21, 2021, from the Collection Banco de España, Madrid <https://www.bde.es/bde/es/secciones/sobreelbanco/patrimonios/La_coleccion_de_pere-borrell-del-caso-huyendo-de-la-critica-733cb1315f21271.html>



way” [my translation from Italian⁴] (p. 12). In the same way, through cartographic elaborations, graphic sciences applied to anthropology and urban analysis have the role of overcoming the ontological boundary between real space and that of the observer/worker. The experiences illustrated above open up new transdisciplinary lines of research, far removed from purely quantitative readings, which cross urban analysis and the graphic sciences. If the painting frame is an object, a wall, that delimits a reality, so in the drawing of the map, the line becomes a delimiter of a homogeneous area extraneous to the context. Contrarily, the painted frame is the line drawn on the map in a blurred and indeterministic way, delimiting an edge area that is difficult to delimit.

NOTES

1 The Italian text of the quotation is as follows: “Con l’evolvere della geografia della città le periferie non sono più identificabili in base al concetto geometrico di distanza dal centro [...], come ultima frangia edificata prima della campagna”. Di conseguenza “si tende a definirle in base a criteri economici e sociali” (Fumagalli, 2011, p. 93).

2 The Italian text of the quotation is as follows: “il termine ‘periferia’ è talmente generico che mantiene ormai solo il senso originario di luogo ‘emarginato’” (2016, p. 130).

3 The Italian text of the quotation is as follows: “la cornice fa la sua apparizione quando l’opera pittorica non viene più considerata parte integrante dell’ambito sociale, bensì una sua asserzione. Il suo mutato stato di realtà viene espresso mediante il suo visibile distacco – la cornice – rispetto all’ambiente. Boris Uspensky mette in relazione la funzione della cornice con il fenomeno dell’estraniamento” (Arnheim, 2016, p. 66).

4 The Italian text of the quotation is as follows: “laddove la cornice oggetto aiuta la percezione nel distinguere ontologicamente lo spazio reale dell’osservatore da quello fittizio della rappresentazione, la cornice dipinta interviene su questa dualità di spazi mettendo variamente in relazione i due spazi, trasformando talvolta in un percorso continuo e unitario il salto ontologico cui l’immaginazione pittorica ci invita” (Scalabrioni, 2008, p. 66).

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PERIPHERIES PLAYGROUNDS OF SOCIETY

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ESSAY 95/05

PLAYGROUNDS

PERIPHERIES

UCKERMARK

AIGUES-MORTES

MICRONATIONS

Peripheries are playgrounds of society because they offer an opportunity for self-realization while designing and exploring something new. Thus, peripheries become places of social innovation, especially for people who are willing to take risks and try some-

thing new, even if they are ridiculed for it at first. They may assign less value to getting recognized by the social mainstream. Peripheries therefore offer niches to try out other ways of life and go off the beaten path, particularly when there is a need for real change.

INTRODUCTION: PERIPHERAL REGIONS AS PLAYGROUNDS

Peripheries are not marginal by nature. Society considers them as the opposite, or the other; they function as the counterpart to the center. Peripheries are connoted with shrinkage, disconnection, weakness, and emptiness on the one hand, and are romanticized on the other. The interaction of both sides of the coin offers opportunities for certain social groups who aim to create a difference.

This paper argues that peripheries can be seen as playgrounds of society. Especially due to the characteristics attributed to peripheries, such as emptiness, social and/or topographical seclusion and insularity, neglect, non-attention or even ignorance of the center, people can find the freedom and opportunity for self-expression, self-realization, and self-efficacy by creating something new and different.

Based on qualitative research, this paper tackles two ways of using this concept of playgrounds.

The first case study focuses on a micronation called Principality of Aigues-Mortes, where the heads of state use the playground in an area designated as periphery in Southern France to create an alternative citizenship by trying to make a difference to the existing social, cultural, and economic situation.

The second case study explains how urban in-migrants find a new and good life and private happiness in the German Uckermark, a region in Eastern Germany which is labeled as peripheral. They decided to live in this less populated area precisely because it is the antagonist of their previous life in German cities. By taking two peripheries as playgrounds into consideration, we will analyze how their qualities are used for play. Play can theoretically be understood as a starting point for social dynamics on four levels; from imitation and deconstruction to critical engagement and experimental experiences, and as a way to create an imaginative, better world.

THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The theoretical perspectives are based on theories of periphery and peripheralization as well as theories of play.

Peripheries and Peripherization

When tackling the theoretical perspective of periphery, it is necessary to focus on both the center and periphery, which are inextricably linked.

In the traditional literature on peripheries two characteristics of peripheral places are particularly relevant: accessibility and concentration (Beetz, 2008, p. 565). First, peripheries are characterized by poor accessibility. Schürmann and Talaat (2000, p. 6) called this a key criterion of positional peripherality because peripheries are remote in relation to the center and because of the lack of public transportation. Living in peripheral locations makes it more challenging to get to the center and peripheries are less frequently visited. This problem leads to the second aspect, concentration. Services such as education, medical care, or cultural offerings are concentrated in the center. Therefore, positional periphery extends into the realm of the social. Important social functions are assigned to the center, and economic and political decisions are made there. Likewise, the population is concentrated in the center. Both aspects can only be understood in relation to a center; consequently, the attribution peripheral only exists in contrast to central.

Keim's (2006) reflections on peripherization go beyond these somewhat static approaches. Peripheries are created through the interaction of institutions and social actors (Keim, 2006, p. 4). While the notion of periphery is still based on a positional and/or social situation, peripherization also considers functional, economic, and cultural dimensions. Peripherization describes the interaction of population decline, due to ageing and out-migration, with "a lack of integration in globalization of markets, cultures, and values" (Wirth et al., 2016, p. 63). Wirth et al. (2016, p. 63) also states that "peripherization is generally

considered a form of uneven spatial development, leading to fewer opportunities for people who live in peripheralized areas.” This relates to Komlosy (2006), who discusses the extent to which peripheries can be seen as colonies of the center. As Barlösius (2004, p. 86) notes: “The center determines the struggle for distribution and legitimacy.” Peripherization is controlled by social decision-making, definition, aspiration, and evaluation standards, which are developed in the centers and exist only in functions to the centers (Heintel, 1998). Subsequently, it should be clear that people in peripheralized areas do not have enough power to represent and enforce their interests against those of the center. On the side of the peripheralized areas, however, a negative self-image also contributes to the process of peripherization. At this point at the latest, it becomes clear that peripheralization must be understood as production of space, which takes place on the material level, the production of knowledge and meaning. This production process determines the relationship between periphery and center depending on the dominant mode of production, nowadays capitalism (Lefebvre, 1991). In this understanding the relationship between center and periphery can be changed (Wirth et al., 2016, p. 63) and is subject to social negotiation. As Fischer-Tahir and Naumann (2013, p.18) explain, “peripheralization refers to a spatially organized inequality of power relations and access to material and symbolic goods that constructs and perpetuates the precedence of the centres over areas that are marginalized”. They further argue that “the label ‘peripheral’ is predominantly attached to the rural areas and small and medium-sized towns or to space within large urban agglomerations that are marginalized in terms of income opportunities, housing, traffic structures, and access to educational, medical or other infrastructural facilities” (Fischer-Tahir & Naumann 2013, p. 19). These are exactly the characteristics that were explained at the beginning of this section as typical of peripheral locations.

Regions that are labeled as peripheral suggest on the other hand less regulation by the center and, therefore, more

freedom. In part, this situation creates a kind of pioneering atmosphere: “The players range from international energy corporations, investment funds for wind turbines and biogas plants, new forest owners, agribusinesses, gigantic livestock facilities, and genetic engineering test fields to Demeter farmers, conservationists, and castle-owning avant-gardists” (Beetz, 2008, p. 572). Peripherization can also produce freedom for individual developments, offering opportunities for experimentation and new ways of life, away from the dominant norms (Keim, 2006, p. 6). This could also be understood as a socially produced meaning of ‘peripheral regions’ – a space of play.

Play (ground)

The second theoretical perspective we will focus on is play. While much has been written about play in cultural history, sociology, and education for decades (Huizinga, 1966; Caillois, 1961; Sutton-Smith, 1978), little attention has been given to the term in the field of geography (notable exceptions are the works of Boos, 2016 and Woodyer, 2012). By focusing on play, we neither follow the utilitarian perspective that sees play as children’s work (Cross, 1997) necessary for their social, emotional, and cultural development, nor the non-instrumental perspective that regards play mainly as a waste of time (Caillois, 1961) and an opposite to work and seriousness (Woodyer, 2012). Instead, we understand play as a lifelong practice that is performed by people of all ages and fulfills certain societal and individual functions. The following characteristics of play are considered central to our analysis.

First, play is a mirror and refraction of society. It is an expression of the societal order (e.g., power, economic factors, aggression) and its disorder, of insecurity and a desire for change (Sutton-Smith, 1978, p. 85). In play, boundaries shift; existing rules and roles are imitated, adapted, or neglected. Consequently, play helps people become aware of social practices and relationships. When we play, our world becomes more comprehensible (Woodyer, 2012).

Secondly, play may be seen as a form of criticism, resistance, and subversion. Play offers a critical perspective by questioning existing boundaries, rules, and roles. “What human rigidity proposes as law, settled opinion, and fixed tradition, play undermines, transforms, and re-creates. Play is a manifold and subversive set of strategies, including trickery, parody, satire, and irony” (Schechner, 1992, p. 279). Another important aspect is that play is the antithesis of our world’s rational logic and thus a form of resistance (Aitken, 2001).

Thirdly, play can test and spark cultural change and social transformation. By questioning the practices and settings of social dis/order, thereby creating and moving new meanings, play is “a field of experimentation” (Adamowsky, 2000, p. 26) that makes social transformation possible. “It is an area ripe for rupture, sparks of insight and moments of invention, which present us with ways to be ‘different’. In Benjamin’s terms, it is through playing that a revolutionary consciousness and possibilities for more deliberate social transformation may emerge” (Woodyer, 2012, p. 322). Consequently, play is a phenomenon “whose manners and forms are essential impulses of culture. Play is not only a cultural mirror of its time but also an opportunity. Not only do we imitate, we model” (Adamowsky, 2000, p. 242).

Fourthly, play acts as an escape and bulwark of life where a more exciting world can be created. Play “is primarily a fortification against the disabilities of life. It transcends life’s distresses and boredoms and generally allows the individual or the group to substitute their own fun-filled theatrics for other representations of reality in a tacit attempt to feel that life is worth living” (Sutton-Smith, 2008, p. 116). Thus, play serves two purposes: leaving the difficulties of everyday life behind and shaping the world in such a way that it corresponds to one’s own desires (Adamowsky, 2000).

Following this understanding of play, this article considers playgrounds as places where societal questions are critically discussed and societal tensions can be released (Powell, 2009, p. 118 with reference to Huizinga, 1966).

Through the intensity of play and its ability to criticize, individuals may experience the “micro-power or ‘vitality’” (Malbon, 1999, p. 148) at playgrounds that leads to self-affirmation and self-validation (Woodyer, 2012).

EMPIRICAL EXAMPLES

Using the case studies of Aigues-Mortes in southern France and the Uckermark in eastern Germany, we will analyze two variants in which peripheralized regions are used as playground. It is important to emphasize in this context that this analysis aims to illustrate and explain different playgrounds in regions which are attributed as periphery; the presentation of the case studies does not intend to be a systematic comparison. For that reason we have chosen two very different case studies.

Principality of Aigues-Mortes: a playground for micronationalists

Micronations, also named Cryptarchies (Fuligni, 1997, p. 13) or Micropatrias (Moreau, 2014), are land-based or fictional self-declared nations proclaimed by individuals or groups, although they have very little chance of being recognized as independent by established macro-nations (MacKinnon, 2014, p. 105). Their number is difficult to estimate, but figures between 400 and 600 are usually quoted for the late 2000s (Fumey, 2002; Abbal, 2016; Lasserre, 2012). Micronations are mainly found in the countries of the Global North, most notably—but by no means exclusively—in North America, Australia, and Western Europe (Lasserre, 2012; Petermann, 2019). Within Western Europe, micronations surrounded by France have a special and active position: not only are numerous micronations located here, but the MicroFrancophonie, an organization that wants to federate French-speaking and Francophile micronations, was also founded in France.

To be able to grasp the general phenomenon of micronations scientifically, a total of around 130 interviews from

City	Inhabitants of Aigues-Mortes (2018) ¹	Distance in km to Paris by car (rounded) ²	Train hours to/from Paris (rounded) ³	Distance in km to Marseille (rounded) ²
Aigues-Mortes	8535	750	to: 5-6h from: 4-5h	140

Tab. 1
Selected characteristics
of Aigues-Mortes.

54 micronations around the world were conducted. For the analysis of the case study of the Principality of Aigues-Mortes (PAM) 14 interviews with 12 individuals are included, four women and eight men. The interviews were conducted mainly in 2020 and 2021 with the head of state and citizens of the Principality as well as shop owners of Aigues-Mortes. The interview length varied between 25 minutes (shop owners) and 3.5 hours. In addition, many conversations were held during participatory observation at micronational conferences and cultural events in Aigues-Mortes.

The PAM is located in the “typical provincial city” (PAM 1) of Aigues-Mortes (Table 1) in the so-called Petite Camargue, near the Camargue National Nature Reserve in the Grande Camargue.

The Grande Camargue has a population density of only 10 inhabitants/km²; the Communauté de Communes Terre de Camargue with its capital of Aigues-Mortes a density of about 100 inhabitants/km² (Insee, 2021a). Aigues-Mortes is characterized by a decline in younger population groups, while an increase in people aged 60 and older offsets that decline (Insee, 2021a). As already explained above, the label peripheral often is attached to such regions.

Due to the Mediterranean climate in southern France, its proximity to the sea, the fascinating natural landscape of the Rhône delta, and the pleasing character of the old town and its ramparts, Aigues-Mortes attracts tourists as well as second homeowners. In the Communauté de Communes Terre de Camargue, about 67% of properties are owned by second homeowners in 2018 (Insee, 2021a). The city can be divided into the tiny old town intra muros with a lot of restaurants and small shops, and the districts extra muros that “fall into the stereotype of the French suburban vil-

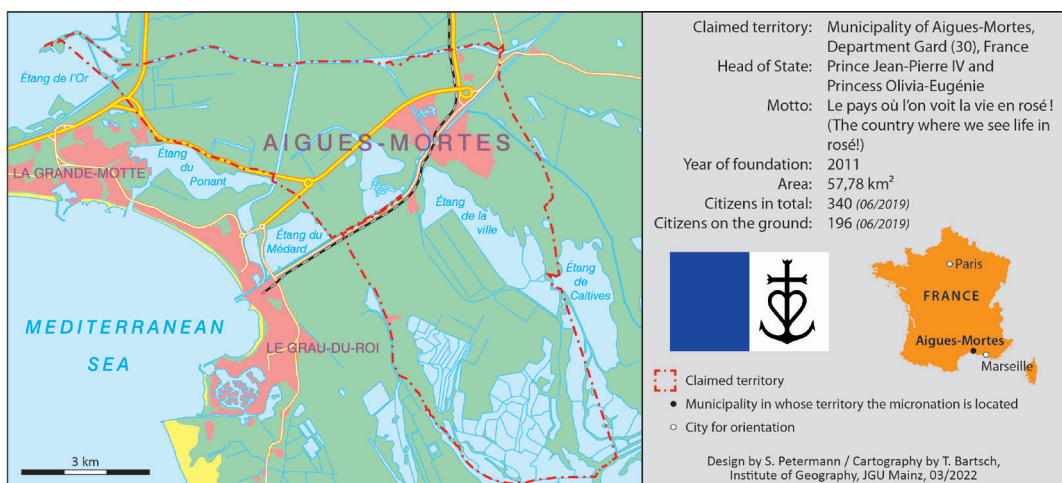
lage” (PAM 5). Inhabitants distinguish themselves between the “real Aigues-Mortais” (Ventres Bleus), whose families have lived in the city for generations (PAM 8), and the immigrants, who came to Aigues-Mortes for either work or retirement. While the Ventres Bleus are often described as narrow-minded and focused on the “tradition bouvine” (consisting of feasts, bulls, and horses) (PAM 1-4; 6-11), the newcomers are characterized as curious, open, creative, and full of drive (PAM 2, 9, 10). What they both have in common, however, is their love of Aigues-Mortes: “It is the most beautiful city in France. [...] In fact, it’s a city with a village soul” (PAM 11).

The PAM (figure 1) is based on human rights values like gender and race equality (PAM 2) and was founded by two second homeowners as a parody of the Principality of Monaco (PAM 1, 2, 3, 5, 9). Like almost all micronations, it possesses the classic political symbols of a nation, such as identity cards, coat of arms, flag, anthem, and maintains diplomatic relations with other micronations around the globe.

Legally run as an association, the principality opposes the lack of involvement of the population in the development and enlivenment of their city:

Because in Aigues-Mortes they tell you ‘I don’t want to take care of something that would interest the common

Fig. 1 Principality of Aigues-Mortes.



good. Because that's the job of the town hall or because I don't like the mayor or because whatever I do, France has 60 million people, whatever I do will never be noticed. (PAM1)

At the same time, many inhabitants complain that what happens in their life is the fault of the president or the mayor of the city that never do enough (PAM 1). Against this background, the concept of the micronation is to create an alternative citizenship that federates, values, and encourages the people of Aigues-Mortes through solidarity, friendship, and kindness "to pass on messages that are important, to do social acts" (PAM 2). Because even if it is a village, people are not federated [...], there's no interactivity between people. [...] The idea was to create value by working together [...]. We wanted to convey an idea, a value, that we are also actors of our destiny. (PAM3)

The founders see their micronation as a "laboratory" (PAM 3), a "social experiment" (PAM 1).

The micronation projects are mainly social, cultural, and economic. The Bal du Godet d'Or is inspired by the Rose Ball of Monaco. "There is a real frenzy for this ball because people want to live an evening with a beautiful dress, well made up, elegance. During this evening, everyone is dressed as if they were at court" (PAM 2).

During the presence of an international audience at the ball, the Prix de Constance is awarded to people who had made a significant contribution to the quality of life or the reputation of the city (PAM 2). In addition, the Festival International de Musique Classique d'Aigues-Mortes (FIMCAM) is held every year, as well as the Eurovision contest of small countries and in 2016 the Summit of the MicroFrancophonie. All these projects are "ludic events that are well rooted in the territory" (PAM5). The PAM has also developed projects to strengthen the local economy.

These include a fashion show with collections from stores in the city, the support of local shops and products, and above all, the implementation of a local currency (Le Flamant) as an officially recognized method

of payment in Aigues-Mortes. In general, humor is very important for the micronation as one can see in its official motto “The country where we see life in rosé!” and in the omnipresent slogan “It is necessary to do things seriously without taking oneself seriously.”

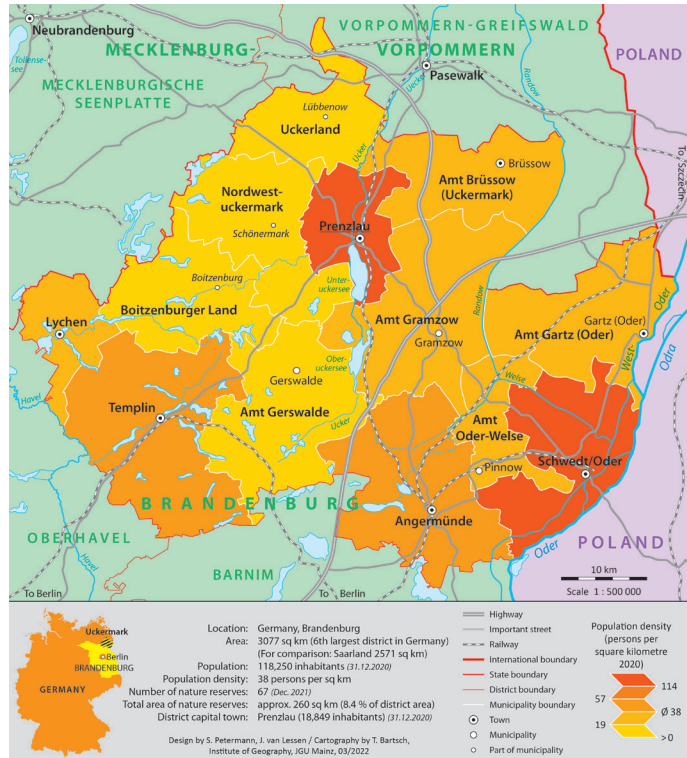
As a result, the projects and events primarily helped promote the city of Aigues-Mortes and increase the quality of life of its inhabitants. Secondly, they demonstrated to the citizens of the Principality the ability to do things that they had not previously thought they could do (PAM 3), leaving residents with a feeling of satisfaction and self-efficacy. The PAM became a source of pride, at least for their founders and citizens (PAM 1).

The German Uckermark – Playground for city weary people

In terms of area, the Uckermark is one of the largest counties in Germany, spanning 3050 km². At the same time, it is one of the most sparsely populated counties, in some areas less than 20 inhabitants/ km². The location at the northeastern edge of Germany (figure 2) and the lack of infrastructure in terms of public transportation and services like education and medical or social care make the Uckermark appear as a periphery. The significantly declining population of the district since the fall of the Berlin Wall is also an aspect of the process of peripheralization. The population of the Uckermark has been steadily declining since 1990. The negative natural population development accounts for about one third of the loss whereas out-migration covers about two thirds. Uckermark lost almost 50,000 inhabitants between 1990 and 2020 (Destatis, 2021). Buzzwords such as shrinkage, migration, aging, population decline, vacancy, and unemployment are frequently mentioned in the media. Inhabitants and outsiders alike use the term ‘outlying region’, thusly devaluing the region.

In this context, in-migration to this region initially appears to be a contradiction. To investigate the phenomenon of moving to a peripheralized region such as the Uckermark, 26 in-depth interviews varying in length between 30 minutes

Fig. 2 District Uckermark.



and 2 hours were conducted with newcomers in 13 different villages in the Uckermark. Qualitative data was collected during 5 field visits that took place from 2010 to 2012 in different seasons. In addition, observations made during field studies are included in this analysis. The age of the interviewees, 17 women and 9 men, ranged from early 30s to late 60s. All interviewees had previously lived in large German cities and spent most of their lives there. They did not decide to move to the Uckermark for professional reasons but to focus on other values in their lives. All in-migrants see the Uckermark as a space of opportunities (Rössel, 2014).

As explained in the theoretical consideration, regions which are labeled as peripheral can also be produced as a space of play. A middle-aged interviewee who moved to the Uckermark from a large German city explains that he considered emptiness something he could fill (IP 12). A young

family man, who also had previously lived only in large German cities, echoes that sentiment. He sees the Uckermark as an extreme out-migration area which everyone who has common sense leaves as quickly as possible, creating a vacuum that wants to be filled with something new (IP 2). The Uckermark is described by an in-migrant as a white spot, i.e., a functionless void (IP 8) in which he sees a good opportunity to produce his own free spaces (IP 8). Thus, the area offers possibilities for personal growth whereas there is relatively little room for self-fulfillment in the centers (IP 5).

Let's return here to the assumption that play is a way to engage with the logistics of society in a critical way. In the Uckermark, there are niches to escape a capitalist system, as one interviewee explains. Her previous life in big cities was all about commerce, but the Uckermark is more of a DIY community (IP 1). It is precisely the spatial remoteness that also allows in-migrants to connect to other aspects of life. "What mattered to me was togetherness, frugality, and a life of spiritual abundance, which is why I am grateful for this region, which has been spared from industry or highway networks," an interviewee explains (IP 23/2). Just like a play allows its players to experiment, moving into a peripheralized region offers the possibility of trying out other ways of life. For example, people who have moved in have been able to set up their own businesses with relatively modest financial means. Even if the sales market in the Uckermark is not as high due to low purchasing power, there are still suitable framework conditions, e.g., through favorable rent prices and the large amount of space available, making the decision to try something out easier (IP 12). As another interviewee stated, "It is a good idea to look for the activity that makes you feel really good and you can take the time to find this gift and thereby achieve satisfaction and experience a certain self-efficacy" (IP 22). The newcomers have initiated various projects. They revived extinct traditions in villages like the Schifferfest in Annenwalde (IP 8) and created new cultural events, such as the open studio day of the artist group umKunst (P 16), a singing circle, and a reading

circle. For their children, they founded a free school that offers an alternative educational concept (Zuckermark e. V.).

It is difficult to find employment in the Uckermark, so many venture into self-employment: “You only have a chance here if you have the guts or take the initiative to be self-employed” (IP 5). In addition to studios and workshops run by artists (IP 8, 15) and craftsmen (IP 1, 2, 24, 25, 16, 18, 13, 14), old handicraft techniques such as clay plaster are practiced again. Ecological building materials are also distributed because the newcomers are heavily engaged in the sustainable renovation of their homes. Due to the high vacancy rate in the region, it is also possible to buy a house with relatively little capital. The house can be designed according to your own ideas and values. Most home or business owners do the remodeling and renovation work themselves. Some newcomers are committed to using the regional currency Uckertaler, a barter system of time as currency, and thus distances itself from the monetary system. One interviewee explains that it is something like a business game for all the newcomers. They bring in their ideals and talents, but there are still far too few offers and far too few people to make the dream of meeting everyone’s needs a reality (IP 23/2). Self-efficacy, including food, is one of the main concerns of many new citizens (IP 6, 16, 1, 13, 20, 21). They find being self-sufficient an incredibly good feeling. People don’t have much money, but they have a forest and a garden. Thus, they see a completely different connection to life (IP 6).

However, some of those who have moved there wonder what life in the Uckermark will be like in old age, and whether they will then still be able to cope with the difficulties of the region, such as poor public transportation. Many are confident that innovative solutions can be found for this, too, such as multigenerational houses (IP 15), but some wonder if they will return to the centers when they need assistance in their old age (IP 3).

Those who have moved in also take a critical view of the functionalization of the periphery by the agricultural and

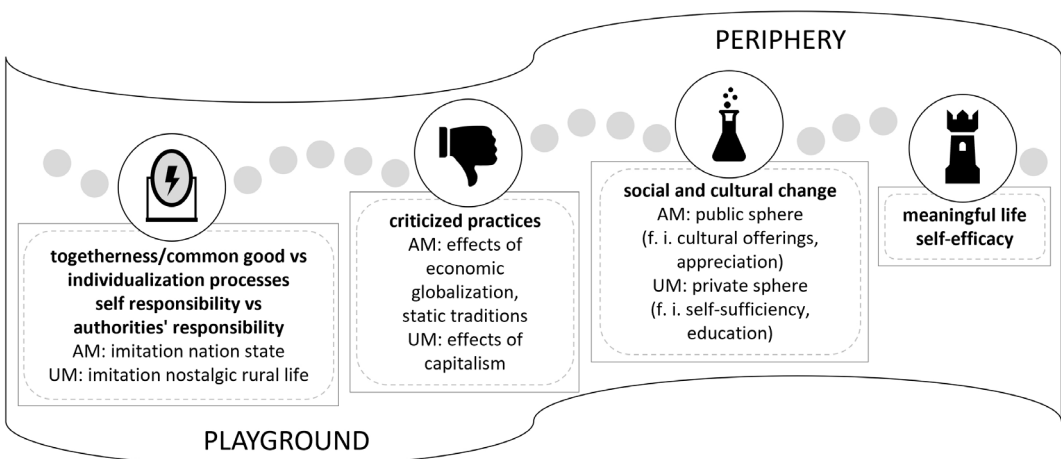
energy industries. The landscape is being changed by wind farms, biogas plants, and large fattening facilities. This use of the Uckermark by large corporations is difficult to reconcile with the values and ideas of those who have moved there. The world of large corporations and financial profit was, after all, precisely what many newcomers wanted to leave behind (IP 14).

DISCUSSION

In the context of social peripheralization, regions and their populations are produced as spaces which are negatively affected by a lower quality of life and fewer decision-making options. At the same time, they are considered free and less regulated. It is precisely this meaning of free space and emptiness that can be used creatively (for the interconnection of peripherality and creativity see f. i. Grabher, 2018). It is the origin of the idea that play in areas labeled as peripheral makes it possible to take new paths in society and to initiate and shape development processes.

As the case studies of the Uckermark and Aigues-Mortes show, these regions are affected by peripheralization processes, albeit with different focal points and effects.

Fig. 3 Aigues-Mortes and Uckermark as playgrounds.



Both the Uckermark and the Grande Camargue have very low population density. While the Uckermark has been continuously hampered by emigration and population decline, a large difference between summer and winter months is particularly noticeable in the Grande and Petite Camargue. The summer months are characterized by high numbers of tourists and numerous cultural events, while in the winter, the tourist infrastructure is scaled back, many second homes remain empty, and cultural life slows down.

When analyzing the case studies based on the four categories of play mentioned earlier, the following stands out (Figure 3).

In both Aigues-Mortes and the Uckermark, play is a mirror and refraction of society and expresses a desire for change. The respective stakeholders want to transform the individualization processes that exist in society and develop a togetherness based on the common good. This transformation also means not leaving it up to higher authorities to make political decisions but rather assuming one's own responsibility for shaping development processes and thus using the free spaces created by peripherization in a system-critical manner. Imitation and adaptation of existing structures and practices play a key role here. In the context of PAM, it is a matter of imitating the structures and practices of nation states and monarchies, which are humorously questioned and used in a modified way in the form of a parody. The newcomers to the Uckermark, on the other hand, refer to nostalgic-romanticized images of rural life by carrying out practices associated with it and reviving traditions that had been forgotten: old handicraft techniques are re-learned and used, and old, seasonal village festivals are celebrated.

In the process, boundaries, rules, and roles are also questioned, criticized, supplemented, or rethought during the play. In AM, for example, the Bouvine tradition is deliberately extended to include other festivities and cultural events. The heads of state in PAM want to supplement traditional practices in the conservative Camargue, and to question entrenched

thought structures and the festivities themselves through humorous forms of production, such as the staging of the prince and princess. In the Uckermark, on the other hand, criticism of the capitalist economic system is very prominent. The newcomers strive to see the role of money as less dominant and thus to escape the existing social system of rules and norms to some extent, for example when some inhabitants use a barter system of time as currency. Aigues-Mortes has also introduced its own currency system, which, however, remains rooted in capitalist thinking and in lieu of an alternative to money introduces a regional currency that is designed to oppose the effects of a globalized system of money and goods.

In addition to the already mentioned economic projects, the open spaces also offer an experimental field or laboratory for social and cultural change. In Aigues-Mortes, for example, large balls and concerts are organized during tourism's off-season. Those events expand the previously existing cultural offerings, have gained an excellent reputation, and attract international audiences. Of great importance is the appreciation of the people who are dedicated to Aigues-Mortes. They either receive awards in front of a large audience or are honored on an interpersonal level. In the Uckermark, on the other hand, experimentation takes place in the private sphere. Community, self-sufficiency, professional independence, and alternative educational opportunities are tried out and new artistic paths are taken.

The awareness of being able to change something and shape things is common to both case studies, allowing the protagonists in each case to perceive their own lives as meaningful and to develop self-efficacy. The free space in peripheralized places allows the protagonists to shape a world that is better for them, according to their own needs and desires. Thus, at least the main players in *Aigues-Mortes* and the *Uckermark* can either meaningfully supplement their previous everyday lives through their play, or they can even leave them behind entirely. Their play gives them meaning and confirmation and consolidates their lives.

CONCLUSION

We consider both places labeled as peripheries creating free space for play. In Aigues-Mortes and in the Uckermark region, play is a mirror of society that expresses the desire for change. However, the players imitate and adapt existing systems on different levels. While in Aigues-Mortes, a monarchy is depicted in the play, which humorously refers to the level of the nation state, the Uckermark adopts a nostalgic image of rural life, which in many respects is a romanticized idea of peasant life. Both case studies emphasize the critical level of play, which is used to rethink social processes and to think differently. In the Uckermark, the critical view refers to a large extent to the capitalist economic system, which the in-migrants want to escape to a certain degree. The PAM, on the other hand, tackles both the economic effects of globalization and conservative, entrenched thought structures, and does so in a very humorous way. The PAM experiments with classic elements of monarchies, such as balls and tributes, which they use to promote Aigues-Mortes and create cultural offerings even in the less touristy winter season. In the Uckermark, experimentation takes place more on the private level. The main reason is to close a gap in the educational and cultural offerings available to them in the peripherization process. In both AM and UM, play creates the awareness of being able to change and shape something, allowing players to pursue a deeper meaning of their own lives and to develop self-efficacy. In both cases, in-migrants are key figures in such development processes. They are willing to take a risk, invest money, and accept inconveniences. To fill their lives with meaning, they are prepared to accept difficulties and uncertainties and to give up what is familiar and secure. In this sense, we understand the Uckermark and Aigues-Mortes as a playground especially for in-migrants, where social issues can be critically discussed, social tensions can be resolved, and micro-power or 'vitality' can be experienced in the form of self-efficacy and sense-making. Furthermore, the presented playgrounds in areas labeled as periphery –that could be

also named “creative outposts” according to Brouder (2012)—produce interesting and relevant approaches to social change, which are now repeatedly picked up by the media (Baudet, 2021; Jouhar, 2018; Pohlers, 2018) and which in turn influence the production of space.

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**LANDSCAPE
NARRATION
AND DIGITIZATION
BETWEEN
PRESERVATION
AND REGENERATION
IN FRAGILE AREAS**
THE CASE
OF THE ITALIAN
WESTERN ALPS

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NON-OUTSTANDING CULTURAL LANDSCAPES

LANDSCAPE STORYTELLING

TERRITORIAL FRAGILITIES

FRAGILE LANDSCAPES

ICTS FOR LANDSCAPE

During the last decades, cultural heritage digitization processes have assumed a central role in documenting, communicating, and enhancing the cultural landscape. Beyond the development of catalogues, Cultural Heritage GIS, and web maps, administrations, associations, private companies, and spontaneous groups of citizens created innovative landscape narrations to promote their places. In the same direction, the Italian policy on peripheral areas, Strategia Nazionale per le Aree Interne (SNAI), recognize landscape as a latent common capital that, if prop-

erly managed, could play a relevant role in the reactivation and regeneration of marginal municipalities.

With a focus on the nine experimental areas identified by SNAI in the Western Alps, the study analyses the digitization processes and the landscape narrations available online. Moreover, the paper deepens the top-down and bottom-up approaches, the involvement of local stakeholders, the opportunities to attract external resources with the aim to learn the possible links between ICTs, tourism, and the regeneration of fragile landscapes.

THE FRAGILE LANDSCAPE OF THE ALPS

The Alps have been the scene of the history between Northern Europe and the Mediterranean territories. The position, the resources and even the protection they could offer have made the Alps a crossroads in which cultures, economies, and communities approached (Salsa, 2019; Del Planta & Detti, 2019; Mocarelli, 2017; Beattie, 2006). These relations had been shaping for centuries a rich landscape made of the tangible and intangible signs the human action has been fashioning on the natural environment. The Alps have been the providers of agricultural and material resources for low lands and urban areas that drove economic and social relationships. However, during the twentieth century, mountains had progressively lost their central role of providers. Industrialization and infrastructure development focused mainly on urban areas and valley floors which cause the marginalization of highlands and inner valleys (Tarpino, 2016). Once relevant, the economic and social connections between mountain and low lands gradually interrupted and triggered the progressive abandonment of historical activities. The lack of opportunities and the better living standards offered in urban areas pushed mountain populations to move towards the new economic centres with rates that, in many cases, are above 90% in 70 years (Del Planta & Detti, 2019).

Moreover, marginalization seems to impact on landscape physically. The gradual abandonment of the historical agricultural and forestal practices (i.e., forest management, the terraces and mountain pastures maintenance) had increased the hydrogeological hazard (Tarolli et al., 2019).

In this scenario, only a few alpine areas experienced different trends in migration mainly thanks to tourism. The appearance of leisure activities (i.e., ski, thermal and leisure resorts) seems to have mitigated, and in some cases even inverted, the negative population rates. Such activities created new economic and social opportunities for mountain areas and, at the same time, reshaped the local landscape. Howev-

er, the marginalization process is still visible, especially in the access to essential public services such as health, transport, and the education systems.

Moreover, the presence of tourism activities has brought to light new fragility aspects. The development of leisure and sport activities and facilities seems to impact on the local environmental, social, and economic capitals such as, overtourism, the lack of economic diversification—mainly directed to hospitality—and several environmental issues. (Chiodo & Salvatore, 2017).

As seen, the alpine landscapes show several fragility aspects that are beyond the territorial physical risks and vulnerabilities. In this direction, Chiffi and Curci propose the definition of ‘fragility’ from a holistic and uncertainty-related point of view that comprehends objects, people, and the economic, environmental and social systems (Chiffi & Curci, 2020). Furthermore, Infussi recognizes three possible declinations of fragility as: a ‘constitutive feature’; an ‘insurgent state’; and; the ‘interruption of an evolution process’ (Infussi, 2020). According to these notions, marginalization and abandonment—and the consequent erosion of the local communities—appear the most recognizable aspects that make alpine landscapes fragile. Abandonment and the gradual deterioration of the local economic, social and cultural capitals have been a slow insurgent state that occurred in decades but seems today a constitutive feature of alpine areas. Concerning touristic destinations, the massive presence of tourists, facilities and resorts can also be recognized as a fragility aspect that impacts the areas physically and the social and cultural values of the landscape.

With the notion of ‘landscape’, academic literature and policies agree to the cultural and social values landscape can convey. Carl Sauer provided the first notion that combines the term landscape with a cultural meaning: “The cultural landscape is fashioned from a natural landscape by a culture group. Culture is the agent, the natural area is the medium, the cultural landscape is the result” (Sauer, 1925, p. 309). Similarly, Eugenio Turri highlights the central role of citizens

in the experience of landscape, their role of actors and, at the same time, spectators in the theatre of the landscape (Turri, 2006; Turri, 2008). Widgren also deepens the notion by recognizing the citizens' perception. The author suggests landscape as the complex combination of the human relationships among the social capital, the natural environment, and the people's perception (Widgren, 2004). From this perspective, the landscape also obtains a social value, the subjective and the community perception.

Concerning the national and international policies and documents, the definition of cultural landscape seems to assume different points of view which influence the approaches of the application of the enhancement actions. Unesco defines 'cultural landscape' those landscapes that present "a diversity of manifestations of the interaction between humankind and its natural environment" (Unesco, 2012, p. 88) but the preservation and enhancements processes are focused on landscapes that express "outstanding universal value and of their representativity in terms of a clearly defined geo-cultural region and also for their capacity to illustrate the essential and distinct cultural elements of such regions" (Unesco, 2012, p. 89). Similarly, the Italian *Codice dei Beni Culturali e del Paesaggio* –the national regulation for cultural heritage and landscape– defines landscape as a homogenous part of the territory, which features are the results of the nature, the human history, or from the reciprocal interrelationships [my translation from italian]' (MiBACT, 2004, D.L. 24/2004 art. 131 c. 1); but, it appears to apply on 'outstanding' cultural landscape, beautiful panoramas considered as paintings and those points of views and belvederes, publically accessible, from which admire those beauties [my translation form Italian]² (MiBACT, 2004, D.L. 24/2004 art. 136 c. 1d). The two approaches seem to discern between 'outstanding' cultural landscapes, which deserve protection as monuments, and 'non-outstanding' cultural landscape which appear in a secondary position (Sodano, 2017; Salerno, 2018).

A different vision is instead provided by the European Landscape Convention (ELC) (Council of Europe, 2000), which highlights the central role of citizens and the experience of landscape, and extend the application over the entire territory. In fact, the Convention states: “Landscape means an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors” (Council of Europe, 2000, art. 1); and

This Convention applies to the entire territory of the Parties and covers natural, rural, urban and peri-urban areas. It includes land, inland water and marine areas. It concerns landscapes that might be considered outstanding as well as everyday or degraded landscapes. (Council of Europe 2000, art. 2)

Hence, the document focuses on the citizens’ perception; this principle allows to overcome the difference between the ‘outstanding’ and ‘non-outstanding’ landscapes. Moreover, ELC highlights the role citizens play in the management of the landscape. Point c. of article 1 suggests the ‘landscape quality objective’: “the meaning, for a specific landscape, the formulation by the competent public authorities of the aspirations of the public with regard to the landscape features of their surroundings” (Council of Europe, 2000, art. 1 c.).

According to the ELC principles appears the Italian *Carta Nazionale del Paesaggio* (MiBACT, 2018). The document suggests the same notion of landscape and applies its intents over the entire territory. Moreover, the document highlights landscape and its quality as a ‘public asset’, a common capital that can drive social empowerment and citizenship if adequately managed and enhanced³. From this perspective, landscape plays a protagonist role in the citizens’ everyday life. The quality of the landscape becomes a relevant objective for citizens, which includes the preservation and the development of active enhancement processes with the direct involvement of citizens and the attraction of local and external resources (Bonfantini, 2016; Settis, 2013).

In conclusion, the two documents, especially the ELC, seem to avoid the adjective 'cultural' before the term 'landscape'. They recognize and highlight landscape as the indissoluble relation between the place, the tangible and intangible heritage, and the citizens' perception (Priore, 2005, 2009).

ICTS FOR LANDSCAPE, BEYOND DIGITIZATION

In the same direction, the Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and the digitization processes should become part of the cultural landscape enhancement and foster participation. Especially at the local level, landscape digitization and communication seem able to push innovation in digital, organizational, and social practices (Borowiecki & Navarrete, 2017; Nogué I Font, 2016). They could actively promote the landscape of marginal areas as a strategic and public asset which can improve the local social, cultural, and economic capitals.

During the last two decades, digitization and ICTs for landscape have been performed mainly in two ways, with top-down and bottom-up approaches depending on the level of the actors involved. Administrations at the international, national, and regional levels have worked mainly in a top-down manner. These stakeholders have developed cultural heritage GIS (CHGIS), web maps, and catalogues to collect and document their heritage.

At the European level, Europeana (www.europeana.org) proposes an interactive, semantic, and linked open database of the union's cultural heritage. Museums, archives, libraries, and universities can digitize their collections according to the Europeana Data Model (EDM) and allows users, especially experts, to reach information and perform a semantic search in the catalogue (Doerr et al., 2010).

At the national and regional level, administrations developed mainly CHGIS and web maps to document the tangible and intangible landscape features. For example, the project His-

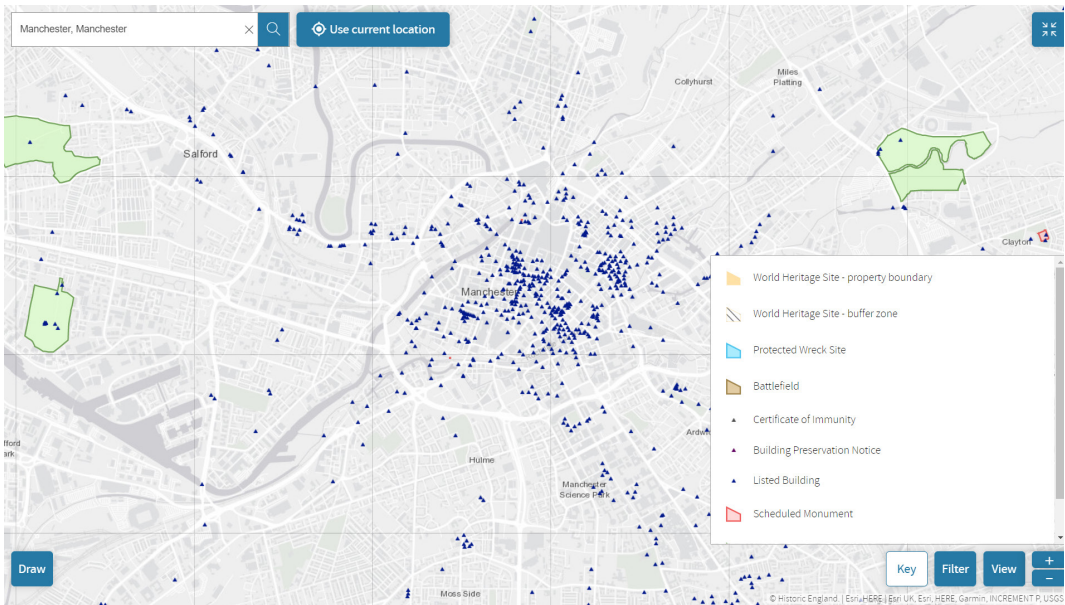


Fig. 1 The Cultural Heritage GIS of Historic England.

toric England (historicengland.org.uk) proposes a CHGIS with which users can explore the tangible and intangible heritage of the English landscape and gather detailed information. The map covers the national territory and involves local administrations and associations to increase the resolution of the census (Figure 1). Involving local entities gave, in fact, the opportunity to catalogue the local heritage that is difficult to discover from a national perspective (Marrison, 2016). In the same direction and with a touristic target, *Patrimoni Cultural de Catalunya* (patrimoni.gencat.cat)—developed by the *Generalitat de Catalunya*, the regional government of Catalonia, Spain—suggests a web map and interactive applications for the documentation of the regional heritage. Additionally, the platform gathers local cultural entities and associations and allows users to plan touristic routes and book events, activities, and museum tickets. The two examples are showing the opportunities to involve local stakeholders in the digitization processes, especially for the documentation. They offer to reach detailed information even on the peripheral cultural heritage, and, in the case of Catalonia, to connect the cultural heritage of marginal areas to wider tourism networks.

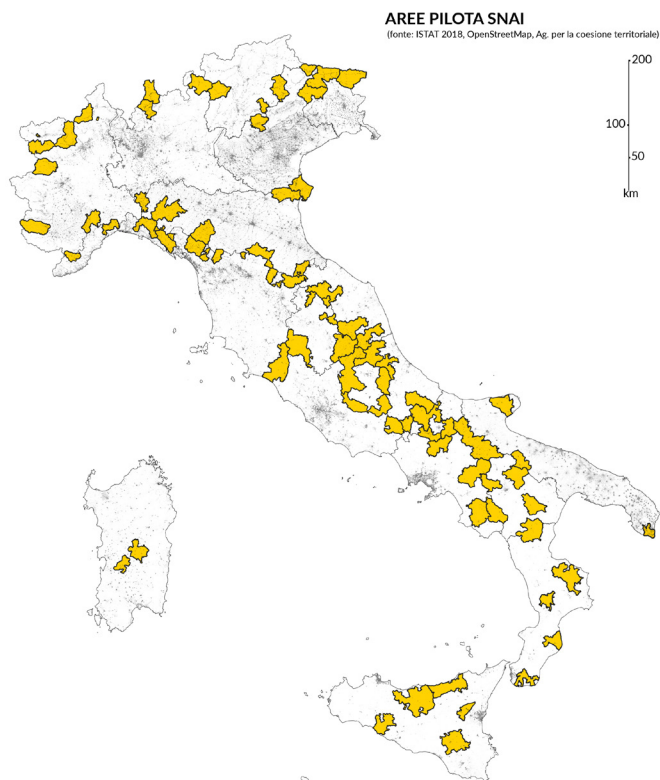
At the same time, local administrations, associations, private entities, and spontaneous groups of citizens have proposed different bottom-up approaches. Beyond digitizing local heritage, these stakeholders have organized projects and developed ICTs to enhance the local landscape with the direct involvement of citizens and institutions and attract external resources. Landscape observatories (Nogué I Font & Sala, 2008), Ecomuseums (Riva, 2017), and other entities have created digital and traditional initiatives in which the landscape enhancement assume the role of a strategic action that: on the one hand, preserve and document the local heritage from the citizens' perspective and, on the other, improve the social, cultural and even economic local capitals. These initiatives have developed interactive maps and applications to communicate and promote the local landscape and its features in innovative ways with the attraction of new visitors (Chiodo & Salvatore, 2017). Leisure, especially in its cultural and experiential forms, and digitization seem to be the foremost opportunity to improve the local capitals and cope with the abandonment of mountain areas.

STRATEGIA NAZIONALE PER LE AREE INTERNE,
AN OPPORTUNITY TO INNOVATE LANDSCAPE DIGITIZATION?

According to the notion of landscape as a 'public asset', and the involvement of tourism practices to reactivate marginal areas is *Strategia Nazionale per le Aree Interne*⁴ (SNAI) (DPS, 2013), the Italian policy for facing the marginalization and depopulation of the remote areas. The document considers landscape, the natural and cultural heritage, as an active player that, if properly enhanced, can reactivate, or at least mitigate, the abandonment of marginal municipalities.

SNAI defines marginality, and marginal areas, on the accessibility to the public services recognized as 'essential': the entire high school offer; at least one level 1 DEA

Fig. 2 Marco Vedoà, *The 72*
experimental areas identified by SNAI.



hospital, and; one 'Silver' railway station. Municipalities are then categorized according to the presence of these public services and the travel time citizens must spend to reach such facilities. With this parameter, the Italian municipalities are divided into: 'Service Provision Centers'; 'Belt Areas', with a travel time up to 20 minutes; 'Intermediate Areas', up to 40 minutes; 'Peripheral Areas', up to 75 minutes, and; 'Ultra-Peripheral Areas' with travel time above 75 minutes (Figure 2). For the Inner Areas (Intermediate, Peripheral, and Ultra-Peripheral Areas), the policy suggests two sets of actions. The first aims to create the preconditions for developing the local capitals today latent and even abandoned with the improvement and implementation of new services, especially in education,

digital and physical infrastructures, and health. The second instead focuses on development projects that aim at: the active protection of the territories and local communities; the valorization of the natural, cultural resources with sustainable tourism practices; the agri-food systems; the local renewable energy supply chain, and; the local know-how and handicrafts (DPS, 2013).

Additionally, the recent *Piano Nazionale di Ripresa e Resilienza* (PNRR) –the Italian program for the Next Generation EU funds– considers the landscape digitization and the sustainable tourism activities as a strategic action to regenerate marginal areas. The program funds in fact these practices with 0,5 billion € and 0,6 billion €, respectively, and aims to develop dedicated platforms and methodologies (Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri, 2021, p. 106).

In this scenario, ICTs and digitization assume a relevant role in the development processes thanks to innovative landscape storytelling that can promote and convey the value of the local heritage for citizens and potential visitors. Currently, many marginal municipalities, alone or associated, are working in this direction and academic literature is deepening the complexity of such practices (Macchi Janica & Palumbo 2019; Meini et al. 2017; Villa, 2017; Bonfantini, 2016). Local entities are creating web platforms and applications that drive the enhancement of the local tangible and intangible heritage mainly from a touristic perspective and with the direct involvement of local and external stakeholders (administrations, local businesses, agri-food producers, etc.). In the same direction, the pre-tourism experiences –the online tools for discovering the place before visiting, such as online booking services, AR/VR experiences, applications, web maps, and interactive tools– play a central role in the attraction of potential visitors and resources (Louw, 2017; Koo et al., 2016). Hence, the landscape representation seems crucial, especially for building a constructive link between cultural and experiential tourism practices and the reactivation of the marginal areas.

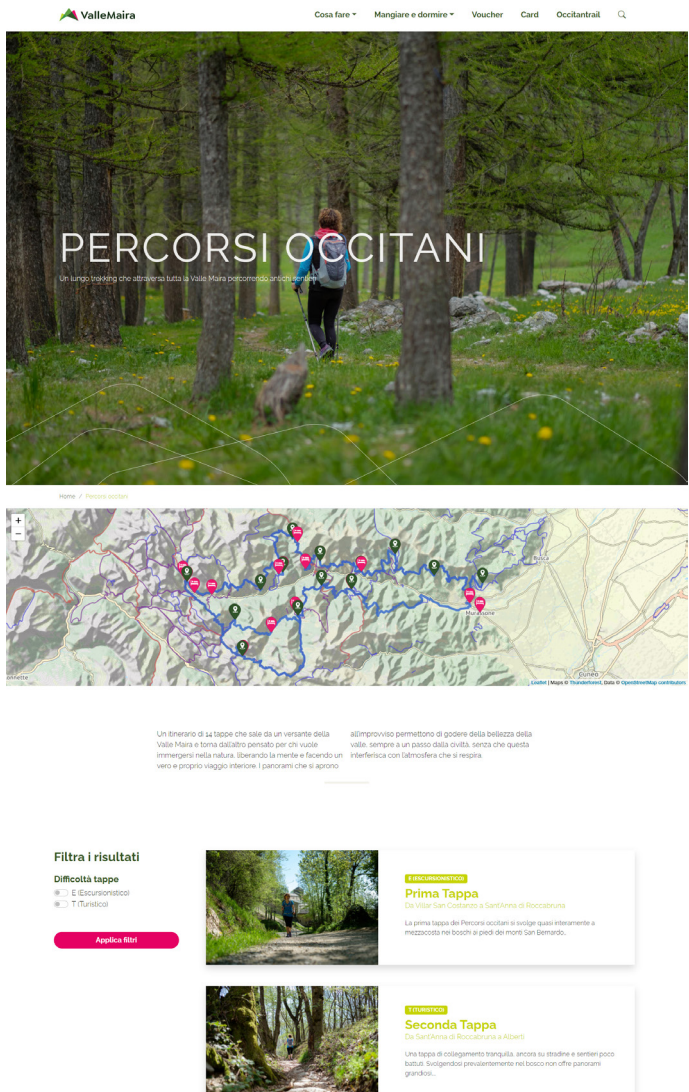
FRAGILE LANDSCAPE DIGITIZATION. THE CASE OF INNER AREAS IN WESTERN ALPS

In 2018, *Agenzia per la Coesione Territoriale* –the governmental agency for the implementation of SNAI– identified 72 experimental areas, groups of municipalities on which started the application of the two sets of actions. Within this framework, the nine pilot areas in the Western Alps offer an interesting case study to understand the current situation of landscape storytelling and digitization, and the possible impacts on local communities. In particular, the study analyzes the pilot areas in four regions: Alta Valle Arroscia in Liguria; Valli Maira e Grana, Valli di Lanzo and Val d'Ossola in Piedmont; Grand Paradis and Bassa Valle in Valle d'Aosta; Alto Lago di Como e Valli del Lario, Valchiavenna, and Alta Valtellina in Lombardy (Figure 2). The study analyses the pre-tourism experiences, how local citizens are involved, and how these representations of the landscape can link sustainable tourism practices and landscape digitization.

Concerning top-down initiatives, the four regional administrations, *Regione Lombardia*, *Piemonte*, *Liguria*, and *Valle d'Aosta*, developed official web tourism platforms developed by the regional agencies for touristic promotion, *Azienda di Promozione Turistica* (APT). Landscape features are digitized and categorized according to thematic routes and experiences. With these platforms, users can discover and gather information on landscape through thematic links, web maps, and documentation pages of the most relevant tangible and intangible features. Moreover, the platforms work as collectors on which local businesses can promote their activities and allow visitors to book events, museums and parks, and reserve the stay.

A further approach that seems a mix of top-down and bottom-up approaches is the one proposed by the Touristic Consortiums, *Consorti Turistici* (CT), which associate local administrations, businesses, and associations to develop tourist activities and to promote landscape actively and commonly. In the nine case studies, there are nine CTs that

Fig. 3 The Percorsi Occitani web platform www.vallemaira.org.



mainly gather small municipalities and local stakeholders. They propose web platforms with interactive applications to discover the local heritage and, in some cases, allows users to book services, visits, restaurants and stays. Another common feature is the development of thematic routes. CTs web platforms recommend thematic hiking and leisure itineraries that combine the natural environment, sports



Fig. 4 Percorsi Occitani available in Google Street View.

activities and the tangible and intangible heritage (i.e., the historical cattle paths, religious and pilgrimage paths, the fortification remains of World War I, the agri-food specialities, gastronomic itineraries, etc.). Moreover, the platforms seem to directly connect local activities and potential visitors by promoting events, local products, innovative services for tourists, and local guides.

Concerning the pre-tourism experiences and digitization, the websites offer innovative landscape storytelling organized in thematic categories allowing users to learn the available experiences and plan the visit. The digitization process includes narrations of the local intangible heritage such as traditions, folklore, historical businesses activities, and even local dishes recipes. The storytelling of the landscape is accompanied by video documentaries, interviews with local citizens, artisans, and farmers. CTs developed interactive maps, applications, and dedicated web pages to show the routes' characteristics, represent the tangible and intangible features of the landscape, and guide tourists during the visit. Furthermore, a common pre-tourism experience is the opportunity to explore live webcams that show the relevant touristic places of the area (i.e., mountain top, villages, ski resorts, and natural panoramas).

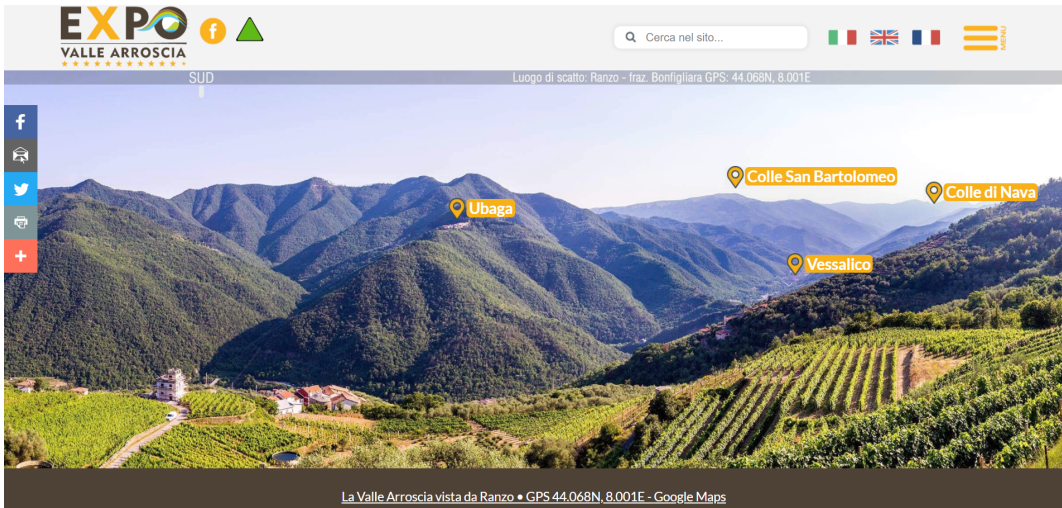


Fig. 5 The panoramic view in the Expo Valle Arroschia website.

An innovative digitization process is proposed by *Consorzio Turistico Valle Maira* (www.vallemaira.org), which involved several local associations and activities in promoting the Occitan culture of the valley. In 2019, one of these associations *Percorsi Occitani*, Occitan Paths, suggests a net of hiking trails to connect the tangible and intangible heritage of the Occitan culture (i.e., traditions, handicrafts, historic trails, and agricultural specialities and recipes). Several volunteers digitized the entire trails net (about 270 km) with 360° cameras in collaboration with Google to offer virtual reality tours (Giordano, 2020). Users can explore the trails and the stops on Google Maps through a virtual walk in StreetView (Figures 3, 4). A similar approach is provided by the CT of Valle Arroschia, *Expo Valle Arroschia* (www.expovallearroschia.it), which suggests 360° views of the area to learn the landscape and the possible locations to visit (Figure 5).

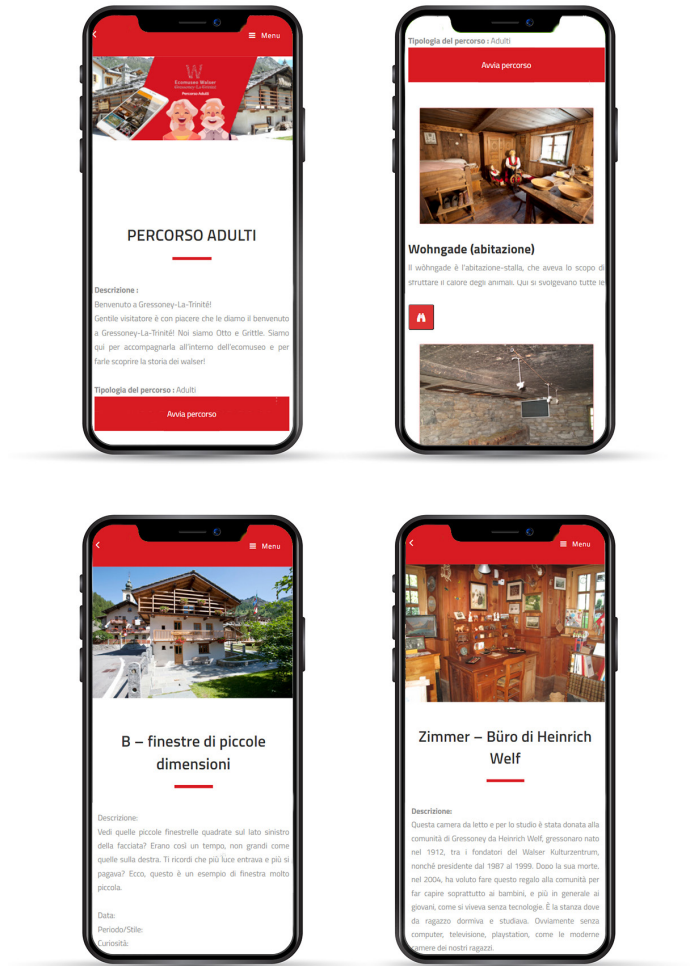
The bottom-up approach is mainly proposed within the study areas by ecomuseums and local associations devoted to cultural promotion. These initiatives developed several digitization projects to build landscape storytelling from the citizens' perspective. In particular, ecomuseums aim to enhance a specific place or a landscape feature with the direct involvement of locals. The main goal is to develop communi-

tarian collections where the landscape –the local natural, and tangible and intangible heritage– is the museum to discover through thematic routes, educational activities, and events. Today, these initiatives are recognized by the regional administrations which promote the digitization of ethnographic and historical features in the regional databases. Moreover, ecomuseums are part of national and international networks for sharing practices and promote the link between heritage, landscape and social promotion (Riva, 2017; Davis, 1999).

In the nine areas, the analysis has found eight ecomuseums that are already working not only to improve the local identity but also in a touristic promotion perspective. The landscape storytelling developed in collaboration with citizens and other local stakeholders (identifying routes, historical places, traditions, and events) is promoted as touristic activities for visitors looking for genuine experiences and a direct contact with the local heritage. In the same direction, landscape digitization is performed in two complementary ways: to preserve memories of the local history today at risk and propose pre-tourism experiences to possible visitors. Ecomuseums developed thematic catalogues and web maps to enhance and communicate the landscape with which users, visitors and citizens, can learn the local heritage.

The *Ecomuseo della Valvarrone* in the Alto Lago di Como e Valli del Lario area (www.ecomuseodellavalvarrone.it) developed a participatory mapping and storytelling of the local heritage, and proposes thematic hiking routes for visitors with which experience the landscape of the valley. In particular, visitors and locals can discover the World War I fortification remains and the historical stone mines through physical and online maps. A further example is *Ecomuseo dell'Alta Valle Maira*, which aims to enhance the historical agricultural specialities and the traditional craft of the anchovy traders. The ecomuseum is part of the network *Ecomusei del Gusto* (www.ecomuseidelgusto.it) that gathers four ecomuseums in southern Piedmont Alps devoted to the enhancement of the traditional agricultural products. The initiative proposes tourist packages to discover the agricultural specialities and connect local producers with visitors and other

Fig. 6 The mobile application of Ecomuseo Walser.



external actors. In the Bassa Valle d'Aosta area, *Ecomuseo Walser* (www.ecomuseowalser.com/) promotes the Walser tangible and intangible heritage of the valley with learning hiking routes and educational activities in collaboration with the local CT and the *Mont Mars* natural reserve. In partnership with the *Università della Valle d'Aosta* and an independent developer, the ecomuseum created a free mobile application to guide visitors during the experience and put them in contact with local businesses (i.e., restaurants, hotels, and producers) (Figure 6).

A further bottom-up approach found during the analysis is the spontaneous initiatives developed in the last years on social networks that gather people in participatory storytelling. Besides the official pages of the APTs, CTs, ecomuseums and associations, these spontaneous initiatives offer to experience landscape from locals' and visitors' the point of view and learn the history and the hidden landmarks of an area. Within the large number of these initiatives, the group *Val d'Ossola il Giardino delle Alpi* (www.facebook.com/groups/OSSOLA.GIARDINO.ALPI) is an interesting example. The Facebook group gathers more than 20.000 users who can post landscape narrations, images, and videos and promote the local traditions and products. In the same direction, the group *Valli del Gran Paradiso* (www.facebook.com/groups/449788035889792) offers users to share their experiences and promote their activities. With these 'Facebook Groups' involved, external users can share their experiences, news, and events, report negative and positive facts and interact with each other. The opportunity to interact and discuss the landscape could represent the starting point for creating active online and 'offline' communities devoted to enhancing the fragile landscape of marginal areas.

DISCUSSION

As seen, landscape digitization and storytelling has been performed with different approaches, bottom-up and top-down, and with the involvement of a large variety of stakeholders. Yet, the cases show some common aspects, mainly in the objectives and in the digitization processes. APTs, CTs, ecomuseums, associations, and spontaneous groups seem to recognize the holistic definition of landscape as the combination of natural, cultural and social capitals. In the same direction, the value of landscape as a 'public asset' that should be enhanced by and for citizens appears clear. The activities, the experiences and the landscape storytelling proposed by these entities mainly combine the natural and the cultural features of the places, and

push the involvement of the local and external stakeholders, including citizens. The aim of such activities appears also headed towards a participatory promotion of sustainable tourism practices and to drive positive impacts and innovations on the local economy, society, and environment.

In the same direction, ICTs and digitization –and the consequent pre-tourism experience– appear directed towards innovative representations of the landscape that is pushing the experimentation with digital tools. Besides defining routes and content production, the initiatives developed complex applications to build storytelling that can connect the locals' perception of landscape with users and convey the values cultural and natural heritage represent for them. The web maps, interactive catalogues, mobile applications, virtual reality experiences, and social groups propose a collective and participatory narration of the place that aims at the documentation and preservation of the local heritage and at the common enhancement through tourism.

The involvement of digital tools shows a further relevant aspect that these initiatives shares, especially in the CTs and the bottom-up approaches. The development of the tourist offers –and similarly the creations of web platforms and applications– requires skills, capitals, and funds that a single stakeholder can difficultly afford. This need seemed to push the creation of the consortiums and other typology of aggregations to gather and attract more resources. Administrations, associations, private companies, and citizens joined to improve the local capitals and enhance their everyday landscape.

Concerning the different approaches, the scale of the initiatives seems to impact landscape digitization. CTs, ecomuseums and other spontaneous bottom-up initiatives suggest landscape storytelling nearer to the citizens' perspective. At the same time, APTs seems to limit their action as collectors and promoters of activities. As seen, the involvement of local stakeholders allows more capillary landscape digitization and narration that communicate the value of the local history, traditions, and places. The pre-tourism experiences appear ad-

dressed in the same direction and to drive cultural and natural tourism practices and to tourists that look for genuine experiences. However, an active collaboration between bottom-up initiatives and administrations appears necessary to gather more resources and facilitate dialogue among stakeholders.

In this scenario, participatory digitization and the development of landscape storytelling play a relevant role in building a constructive link between tourism and local social, economic, and cultural capitals. Especially at the local level, this process seems to drive a reactivation of fragile landscape and push innovation in digitization and governance and social fields (i.e., new economies, businesses, organization form.).

CONCLUSIONS

As seen, the different approaches, from the international and regional catalogues and CHGIS to the spontaneous groups on the social networks, contribute together to preserve and enhance the landscape. CHGIS and other official catalogues suggest advanced tools for experts and scholars which can gather detailed information on the cultural heritage, but, at the same time, the active collaboration of locals seems limited. Similarly, APTs appear limited in the involvement of local actors and then in the representation of the landscape. Bottom-up approaches (CTs, ecomuseums and other spontaneous groups) offer a more direct connection between actors and visitors and local stakeholders. In these cases, the landscape storytelling appears more genuine and able to connect with local capitals and promote sustainable tourism practices. The approaches appear complementary and offer different ways to digitize and experience cultural landscape (Salerno, 2019). Moreover, the increase in visitors in marginal areas during the last years, which boosts during the Covid-19 pandemic (Gössling et al. 2020), may offer to experiment with innovative landscape storytelling, pre-tourism experiences and tourism initiatives.

In conclusion, landscape digitization appears able to reactivate latent capitals, attract external economic, skills, and social resources, and preserve fragile areas' tangible and intangible heritage (Borowiecki & Navarrete 2017). However, the digitization processes appear to have two main weaknesses. The first issue concerns the dispersion of data which are today divided into many catalogues and projects. The data production should follow standard guidelines and ontologies to build open and semantic databases (i.e., Europeana and Wikidata). This process may facilitate data collection, allows a more straightforward implementation in third-party applications, and help experts and scholars analyse and study. The second concerns the aim of the landscape storytelling, which seems mainly addressed to tourism practices and towards a rural and traditional image of the mountain. Different narrations focused on innovation may suggest new perspectives for alpine areas, and show new opportunities for the local economic, social and cultural capitals.

NOTES

- 1 "per paesaggio si intende una parte omogenea di territorio i cui caratteri derivano dalla natura, dalla storia umana o dalle reciproche interrelazioni" (MiBACT, 2004, D.L. 24/2004 art. 131 c. 1).
- 2 "le bellezze panoramiche considerate come quadri e così pure quei punti di vista o di belvedere, accessibili al pubblico, dai quali si goda lo spettacolo di quelle bellezze" (MiBACT, 2004, D.L. 24/2004 art. 136 c. 1d).
- 3 "Assumere la qualità del paesaggio come scenario strategico per lo sviluppo del Paese e promuovere la riqualificazione del paesaggio come strumento per il contrasto al degrado sociale e alla illegalità" (MiBACT, 2018, p. 13).
- 4 *Strategia Nazionale per le Aree Interne*, National Strategy for Internal Areas is the Italian policy for facing depopulation and socio-economic depression in remote areas.

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A COMPUTATIONAL STRATEGY TO PLAN HOUSING SETTLEMENTS THE CASE OF SANTA MARTA

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ESSAY 97/05

SHAPE GRAMMARS

GRAMMATICAL TRANSFORMATION

INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS

HOUSING SETTLEMENTS

HOUSING QUALITY ASSESSMENT

The world is becoming more urbanized and the exponential population growth places an enormous pressure in cities. This intense urbanization gives rise to innumerable urban problems, especially when stakeholders are not able to construct sufficient buildings and infrastructure. Informal settlements emerge in this context as a self-constructed solution for housing. This research presented, proposes a computational strategy to the planning of affordable housing settlements, based on the model of favelas, and developing rules to replicate their positive characteristics while avoiding their flaws. Santa Marta favela, an iconic informal settlement in

Rio de Janeiro, is the case study for this research. The research encompasses six steps: (1) data collection and modeling of the case study; (2) generating the grammar-based analytical computational model; (3) assessing the case study; (4) revising the analytical model to propose a synthetic computational model to generate favela-like settlements; and (5) validating the synthetic model. This paper focuses on steps four and five of the research by presenting the computational strategy developed to generate the synthetic grammar. This strategy contributes for the theory of shape grammars by extending the concept of grammatical transformations.

INTRODUCTION

More than half of the world's population live in urban areas (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2018). Many countries face challenges to meet the needs of their growing urban population and integrated policies are necessary to improve the life of both urban and rural dwellers (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2018). More than one billion people (or 24 percent of the world's urban population) live in informal settlements around the world (United Nations, 2020). Although informal settlements present numerous urban problems, they are one of the few solutions for the lack of housing and it has been shown that removing them is not a viable (nor civilized) solution (Skidmore, 2009).

This paper is part of a larger research that proposes a computational strategy to plan housing settlements that present the same morphologic features of informal settlements, while avoiding their flaws. The proposed strategy uses an established housing quality method to identify the physical characteristics that need improvement in an informal settlement, and uses shape grammars to change them, thereby enabling the planning of settlements with increased quality.

The research was divided in six main steps. The first step consisted in the data collection and modelling of an informal settlement selected as a case study. Physical, digital, and immersive models of Santa Marta, the selected favela, were generated using data collected from the settlement (Verniz et. al., 2016, 2018; Oprean et al., 2018, Verniz & Duarte, 2017). The second step was to generate an analytical model, a shape grammar (Stiny & Gips, 1972) that described and replicated the urban pattern identified in Santa Marta (Verniz & Duarte, 2020b). The third step was to evaluate Santa Marta, using a housing quality assessment method that included

urban spaces (Pedro, 1999a, 2001, 1999b). The fourth step was to revise the analytical model (from step two) using the assessment results (from step three), generating a synthetic model, also a shape grammar. The fifth step was to validate the synthetic model. Although this paper focuses on steps four and five, we briefly introduce steps two and three to facilitate understanding.

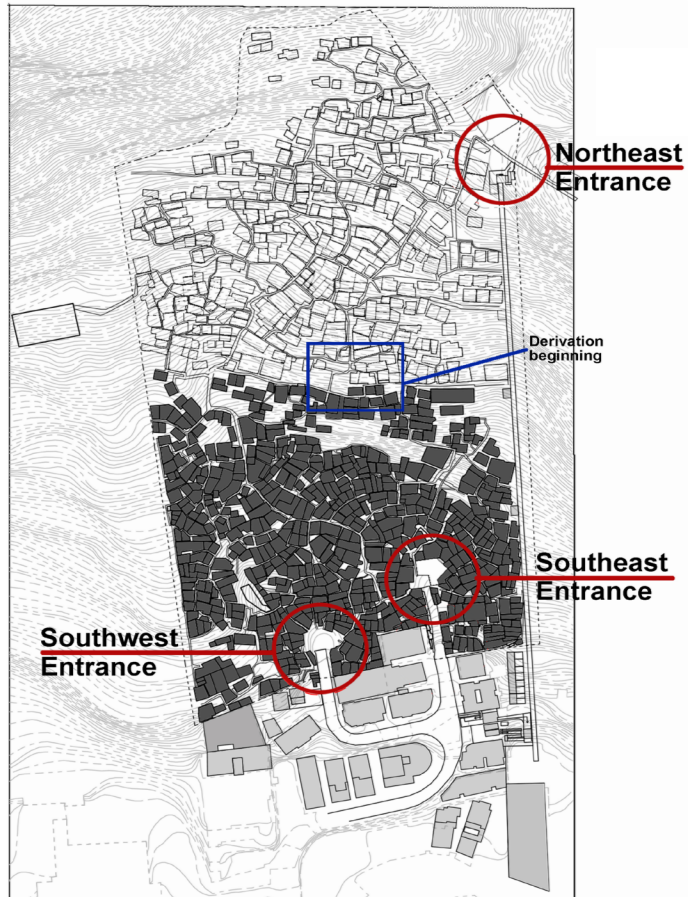
Shape grammars are algorithms that manipulate shapes to generate existent (analytic) or new (synthetic) designs, and they are especially useful for automated (computerized) processes. Shape grammars are composed by an initial shape used to start the generation process; a vocabulary of shapes that contains all the shapes manipulated in the process, including the initial shape and the final designs; and a set of rules, which determines how shapes are manipulated (Stiny & Gips, 1972). Labels (Stiny, 1980) and colors (Knight, 1989a) can also be part of the shape grammar to control the generation process, also called derivation.

This research expands on the work developed by Knight (1989b) on grammatical transformations, which are changes operated in shape grammars through the alteration, addition, or deletion of rules. Knight used grammatical transformations to describe the historic evolution one artistic style into another. Eloy and Duarte (2011, 2012, 2015) extended Knight's theory by proposing the concept of transformation grammar. They illustrated the concept with a grammar to transform dwellings from the 1940s through the 1960s into apartments that satisfied contemporary housing needs. Following a similar approach, Guerritore and Duarte (2018) proposed a transformation grammar to convert a particular type of office buildings into collective housing buildings. In this research, it is proposed the use of a grammatical transformation to convert the Santa Marta analytical grammar into a synthetic grammar to generate new settlements that share its qualities but not its flaws.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

As mentioned above, a select case study is used to inform the development of the proposed computational strategy. Santa Marta is an informal settlement located in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and it can be considered a paradigmatic example of favelas that emerge in prime areas of cities, on steep terrains, close to downtown neighborhoods. The steepness of the terrain makes the area unsuitable for urban speculation. Figure 1 shows a map of Santa Marta with the three main entrances to the settlement and the steep topography, where contour lines represent a one-meter increment in height.

Fig. 1 Verniz & Duarte (2020b), Santa Marta favela's plan.



The analytical shape grammar

The analytical shape grammar, called Santa Marta Urban Grammar, is a model that encodes the formal structure of Santa Marta and can be used to describe how the informal settlement process may have generated the urban fabric following the rules used by people in the construction of their own houses. The use of parametric rules is essential to encode informal settlements with such a wide range of variation in the shape of buildings and circulation spaces. The proposed grammar is a compound parametric grammar (Verniz & Duarte, 2020b) defined in the Cartesian product of algebras for street plans and elevations, namely, $(U_{12} \times (V_{02} \times V_{12} \times V_{22})) \times (U_{12} \times (V_{02} \times V_{12} \times V_{22}))$. Shapes in algebras U_{12} include lines that represent building footprints limits, contour lines, alleys, stairways, entrance stairs, and street elevations. Shapes in algebras V_{02} include labels (labelled points) that represent the end of pathways, the vertices of buildings, and the intersections between buildings and contour lines. Shapes in algebras V_{12} include labelled dashed line segments that represent contour lines and street axes. Shapes in algebras V_{22} include plane segments that represent buildable or built areas, stairways, entrance stairs, and elevations.

The settlement process of Santa Marta Favela was spontaneous, following the needs of its dwellers. Figure 2 shows a sequence of nine steps proposed to encode this spontaneous process. These steps reflect construction decisions made by the settlement's dwellers and are based on dependent and independent variables related with the four forces identified above. Each step addresses an aspect of the decision-making process that determines the location, orientation, and shape of buildings, which is directed to use the available resources in the most economical way. These decision aspects represent design variables and, with exception of the first step, are related with one or more rules.

The analytic model assigns labels to shapes, creating labelled points, lines, or planes, to assist in the derivation process that are deleted at the end. Three initial shapes

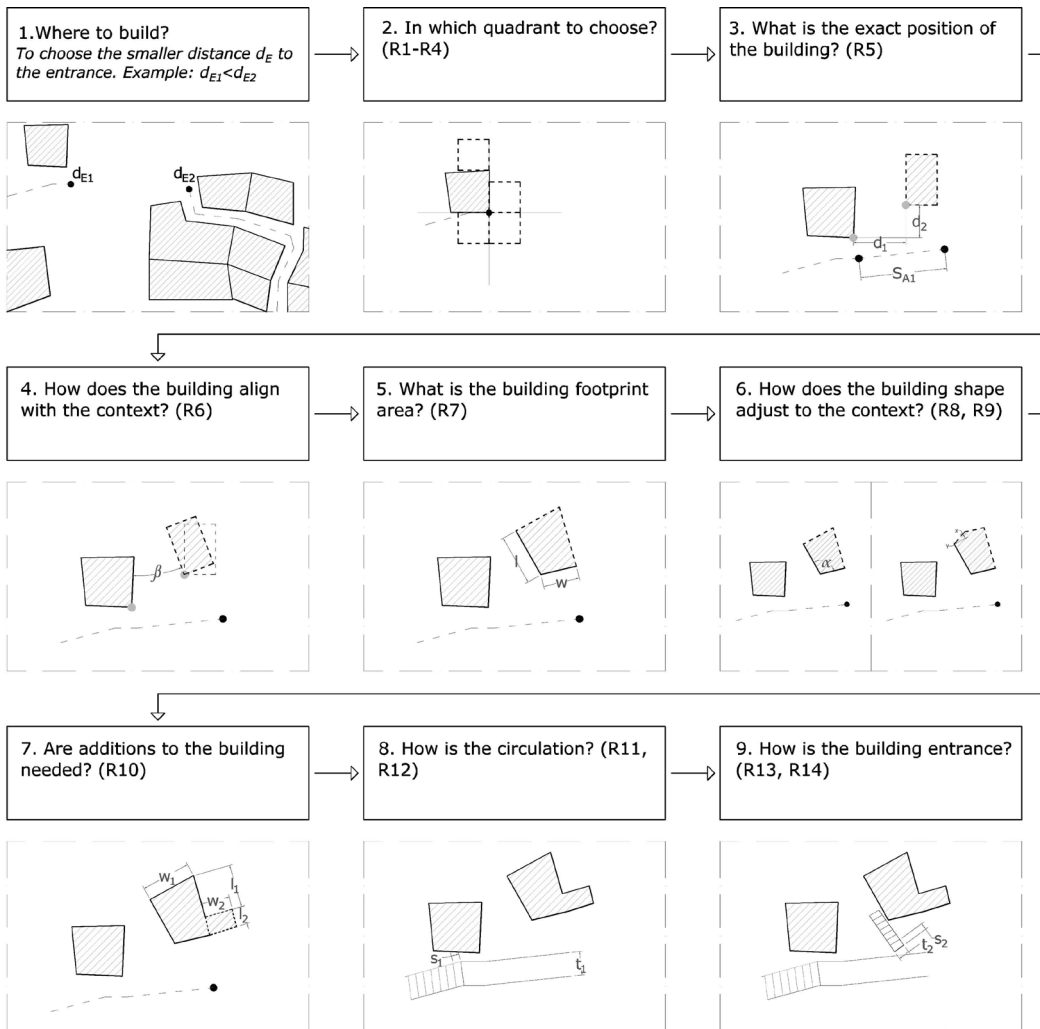
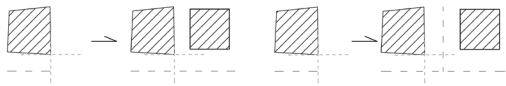


Fig. 2 Verniz & Duarte (2020b), Diagram showing how the grammar captures the rationale underlying the favela's settlement.

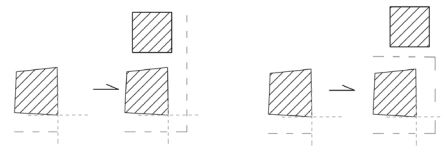
represent the three entrances to the settlement. Rules R1 to R10 are represented in the XY Cartesian plane and Rules R11 to R14 are represented both in the XY and XZ Cartesian planes. This shape grammar captures the bottom-up nature of the settlement process as designs are derived by sequentially adding shapes that represent buildings, which consequently defines pathways.

The rules are divided in two categories. The first is responsible for placing, aligning, and shaping buildings and it encompasses Rules 1 to 10. The second category encompasses Rules 11 to 14, and it is responsible for characterizing circulation. All detailed versions of the rules include plan and elevation views. We opted to develop

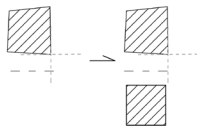
Rule 1. To place a building in the first quadrant
 a) Without adding a circulation way between buildings.
 b) Adding a circulation way between buildings.



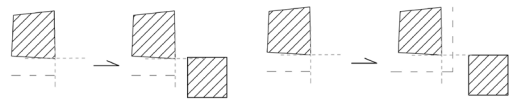
Rule 2. To place a building in the second quadrant
 a) Without adding a circulation way between buildings.
 b) Adding a circulation way between buildings.



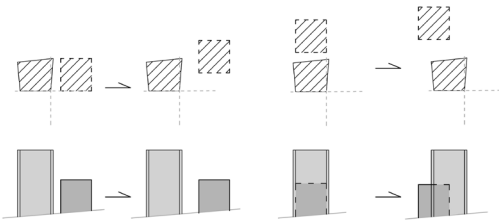
Rule 3. To place a building in the third quadrant.



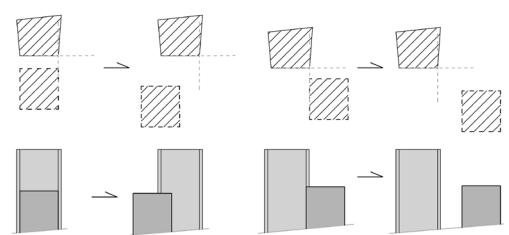
Rule 4. To place a building in the fourth quadrant.
 a) Without adding a circulation way between buildings.
 b) Adding a circulation way between buildings.



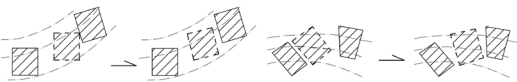
Rule 5. To define distances d_x and d_y .
 a) For the first quadrant.
 b) For the second quadrant.



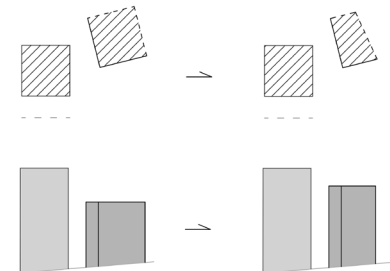
Rule 5. To define distances d_x and d_y .
 c) For the third quadrant.
 d) For the fourth quadrant.



Rule 6. To rotate the building.
 a) Considering the urban context.
 b) Considering the topographic context.



Rule 7. To attribute an area to the building.

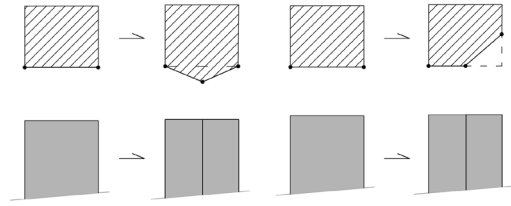


Rule 8. To adjust the building to the near context.

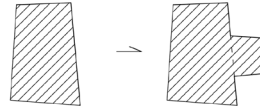


Rule 9. To add a vertex to the edge of a building.

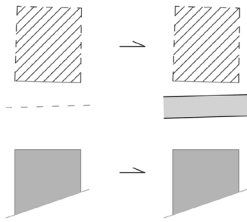
a) To move the added vertex b) To move an existing vertex.



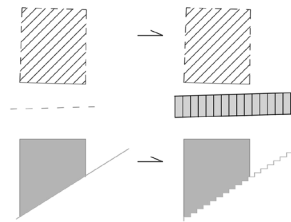
Rule 10. Adding an annex to a building.



Rule 11. To create a paved alley.

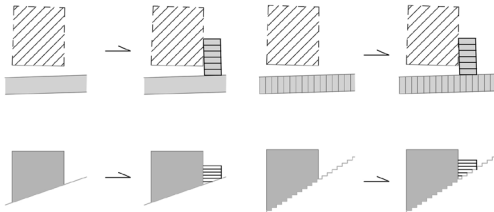


Rule 12. Creating a paved stairway.



Rule 13. To add an entrance stair at the side of a building.

a) When circulation is an alley. b). When circulation is a stairway.



Rule 12. Creating a paved stairway.

a) When circulation is an alley. b). When circulation is a stairway

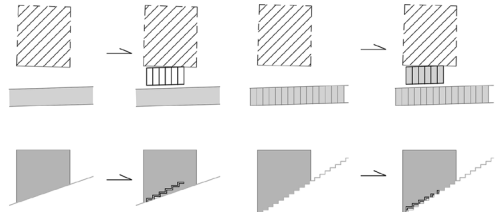


Fig. 3 Simplified rules of the analytic model.

the grammar rules using these two bidimensional planar views to facilitate their understanding. Figure 3 shows a simplified version of these rules.

Rules R1 to R4 are used to place a new building. They first create a Cartesian Plane where the X axis is aligned with the front facade of an existing building located at the end of a circulation segment, with the origin (0, 0) located at the vertex of the building closer to the end of the circulation. Then they select one of the four Cartesian quadrants to insert the new building, thereby defining the spatial relation between new and existing buildings. Rule 5

is then applied to move the new building by distances d_x and d_y on the cartesian plane. Rules R6 to R8 transform the new building, adjusting it with the immediate topographic and urban contexts. Rules R9 to R10 are applied to manipulate the building shape to further adjust it to the topographic, typological, or urban contexts. Rule R11 and Rule R12 create a paved circulation where an informal circulation has already been defined by existing buildings. Finally, Rule R13 and Rule R14 add an entrance stairway to the new building. A detailed version of the rules and the validation of the grammar are available in Verniz and Duarte (2020b).

Housing Quality Assessment of Santa Marta favela

An existing housing quality assessment method (QUARQ) was used to identify the aspects of Santa Marta that needed upgrading. This method was proposed by Pedro (1999a; 2001; 1999b) to evaluate the architectural quality of housing designs and settlements. The method operated on four scales: 'room', 'dwelling unit', 'building', and 'neighborhood'. Because this research is concerned with the urban scale, QUARQ was used to assess the quality of the settlement at the neighborhood scale. A computer implementation (that works in Microsoft Access environment) of the system was made available by Pedro (Pedro, 1999b), which greatly facilitated the application of QUARQ to Santa Marta.

The method considers three levels of quality: 'minimum', 'recommended', and 'optimum'. In the 'minimum' level (ranging from 0.51 to 1.50) it is assumed that the neighborhood satisfies the basic daily needs of residents. In the 'recommended' level (ranging from 1.51 to 2.50) the neighborhood has a better performance, allowing different uses and the eventual use of the spaces by people with disability. In the 'optimum' level (ranging from 2.51 to 3.0) the neighborhood has a performance that fully satisfies the daily needs of the residents and the permanent use of spaces by people with disability. Scores equal or lower than 0.50 are considered unsatisfactory.

According to the method, the criteria considered in the evaluation of Santa Marta at the neighborhood scale were ‘articulation’, ‘personalization’, ‘pleasantness’, ‘safety’, and ‘spatial adequacy’. A detailed evaluation of Santa Marta favela can be found at Verniz (2020).

Table 1 shows Santa Marta evaluation results, where in all the main evaluation criteria reached at least the minimum score. The criteria that scored the lowest in the assessment of Santa Marta were addressed in the development of the synthetic shape grammar presented in this paper, namely, articulation, pleasantness, and spatial adequacy.

Tab. 1 Results of the evaluation of Santa Marta.

Criteria	Result	Quality Level
Articulation	1.25	Minimum
Personalization	2.87	Optimum
Pleasantness	1.20	Minimum
Safety	1.51	Recommended
Spatial Adequacy	0.94	Minimum

The QUARQ method also provides a report on which physical attributes need improvement. Regarding adequacy, results showed that the settlement lacked a proper and safe circulation network. The physical characteristics that were addressed regarding this criterion were related to the improvement of the general conditions of the circulation network, including pathways, ramps, and stairways. Regarding pleasantness, results showed that settlement lacked shaded areas and waste management, as buildings were placed giving priority to topographic features over insolation or car accessibility. The physical characteristics that were addressed in this criterion were related to the inclusion of shaded opened areas and waste management measures. Regarding spatial adequacy, the settlement lacked proper urban furniture in open areas. The physical characteristics that were addressed in this criterion included better detailing of buildings, leisure areas, and commerce.

From the report output by QUARQ, we extracted a set of ten recommendations (Verniz & Duarte, 2020a) to improve the physical characteristics negatively impacting the articulation, pleasantness, and spatial adequacy criteria. These recommendations were:

1. To protect with handrail pathways that presented potential risks for pedestrians;
2. To establish a minimum circulation width that complied with accessibility standards;
3. To establish proper dimensioning parameters for stairways;
4. To set a maximum inclination for ramps in open areas;
5. To provide more shading in open areas;
6. To provide bins in open areas and to improve the waste collection system;
7. To establish a minimum building area to accommodate at least one dwelling unit per floor;
8. To provide adequate leisure areas, properly equipped with urban furniture that is suitable for children, teenager, and adults/seniors;
9. To provide adequate areas for commerce;
10. To provide proper urban furniture, including benches, light poles, and bins in open areas.

The synthetic shape grammar

The synthetic shape grammar, called Planned Favela Urban Grammar, was inferred based on the set of recommendations listed in the previous section. These recommendations were used to guide the changes made to the analytical shape grammar. Figure 4 shows a sequence of 12 steps in the application of rules according to the transformed shape grammar. Each step is represented by a question that corresponds to an aspect of the decision-making process that determines the location, orientation, and shape of buildings in the urban fabric.

Like the analytical grammar, the synthetic grammar is a compound grammar defined in the Cartesian product of

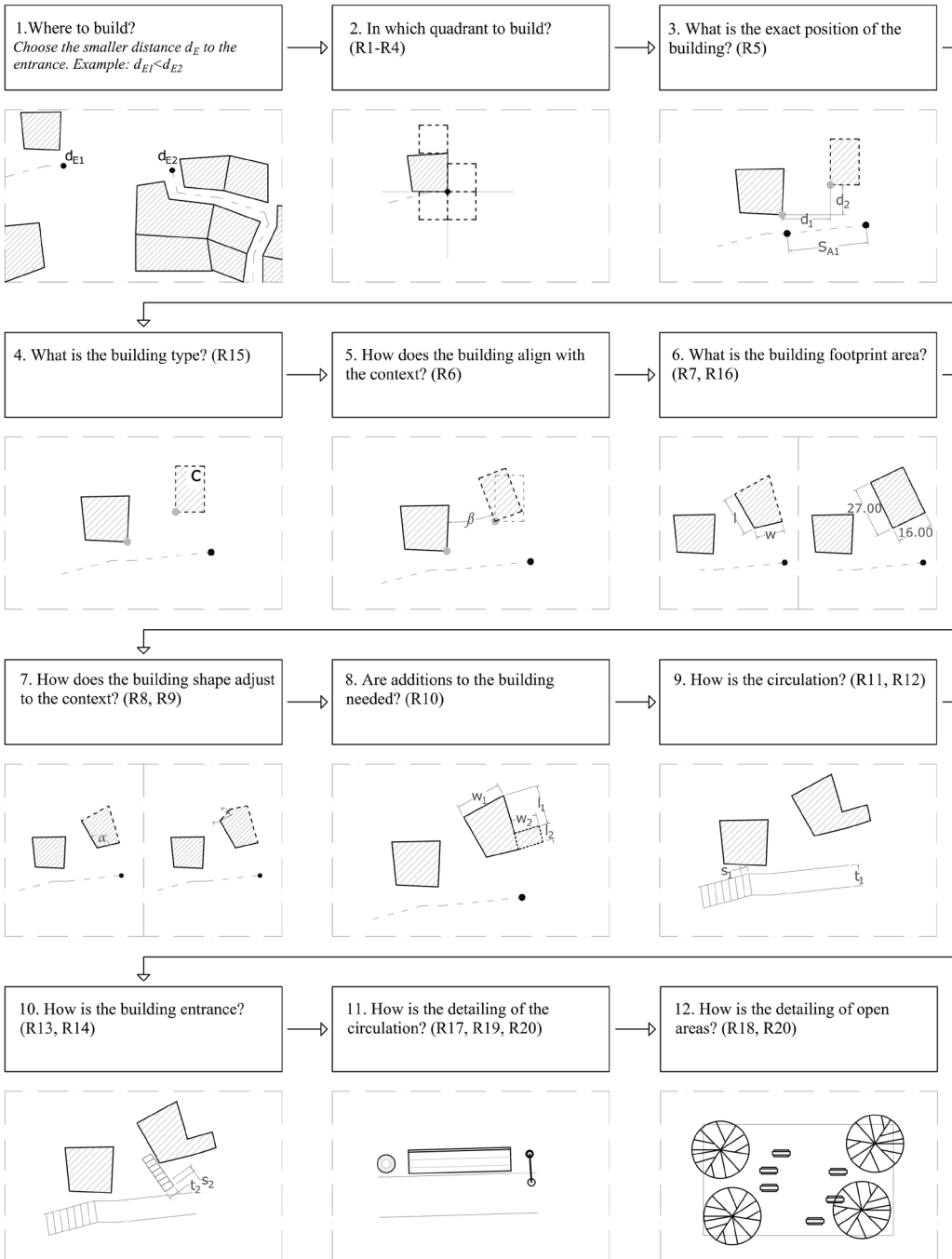


Fig. 4 Process showing the rationale behind the application of rules. Source: the authors.

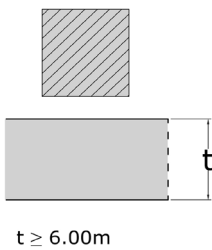


Fig. 5 Initial shape. Source: the authors.

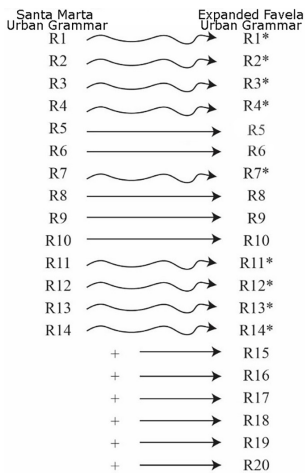


Fig. 6 Comparison between analytical model rules (on the left) and synthetic model rules (right). Source: the authors.

the algebras for both plans and street elevations: $(U_{12} \times (V_{02} \times V_{12} \times V_{22})) \times (U_{12} \times (V_{02} \times V_{12} \times V_{22}))$. Shapes in algebras U_{12} include lines to represent building footprints limits, contour lines, alleys, stairways, entrance stairs, street elevations, and handrails. Shapes in algebras V_{02} include labelled points to represent the end of pathways, the vertices of buildings, and the intersections between buildings and contour lines. Shapes in algebras V_{12} include labelled dashed line segments to distinguish contour lines and to represent street axes. Shapes in algebras V_{22} include plane segments, to represent buildable or built areas, stairways, entrance stairs, and elevations. Differences in colors (in dots, lines, and hatches) are also considered a kind of labels. These labels are used to assist in the derivation process and are deleted at the end of the derivation process.

Figure 5 shows the initial shape for the Planned Favela Urban Grammar. The initial shape is the end of an existing local street. The dimension ‘t’ refers to the street width. In Brazil, regulations for street dimensioning are a municipal jurisdiction, so street width may vary from one county to the other.

The synthetic shape grammar has a set of 20 rules. The first fourteen rules were imported from the analytical shape grammar and kept with changed or unchanged parameters. The last six rules were added to include physical features that were missing in Santa Marta and that were identified with the QUARQ method. Figure 6 shows a comparison between rules from the two grammars. Rules are named using the symbolic expression ‘R_n’ and rules that have the same name in both grammars are equivalent. Wavy arrows represent rules that have been changed, straight arrows represent rules that have been kept unchanged, and straight arrows with a plus sign to their left represent rules that have been added.

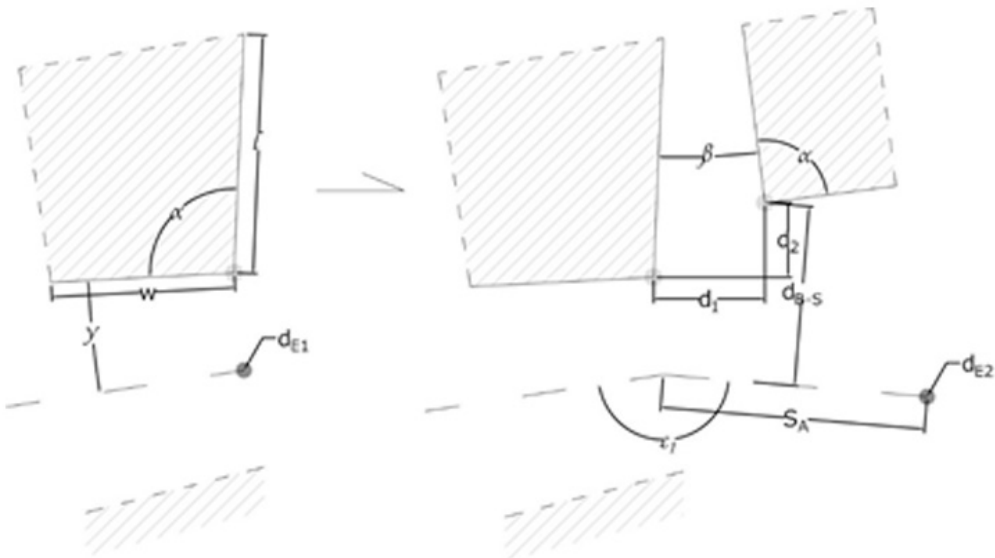
The rules are divided into three categories: the first category encompasses Rules R1 to R10 and Rule R15 and it is responsible for placing, dimensioning, shaping, aligning, and defining the use of buildings; the second category

encompasses Rules R11 to R14, R17, and R19 and it is responsible for placing, characterizing, and detailing circulation; and the third category encompasses Rules R15, R16, R18, and R20 and it is responsible for placing and detailing open spaces.

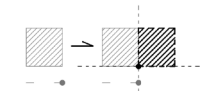
Rules R1 to R4 place a new building. They create a Cartesian Plane where the X axis is aligned with the front facade of an existing building located at the end of a circulation section, with the origin (0, 0) located at the vertex of the building closer to the end of the circulation. Each of these rules places a new building in one of the four quadrants defined on the Cartesian Plane, thereby defining the spatial relation between new and existing buildings. Rules R6 to R8 transform the new building, adjusting it with the immediate topographic and urban contexts.

The variables associated with the first set of rules are similar to those in the analytical model and are identified in Figure 7. Angles in the figure are identified with lowercase Greek letters as follows: 'α' is the internal angle of the building; 'β' is the angle between the existing and the new buildings; 'γ' is the angle between the front limit of the building and the axis of the circulation; 'ε' is the angle

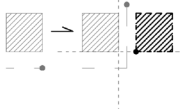
Fig. 7 Variables associated with rules R1 to R8.



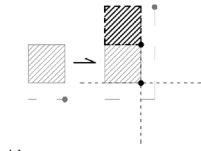
Rule 1. To place a building in the first quadrant.
a)



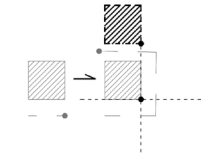
b)



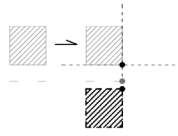
Rule 2. To place a building in the second quadrant.
a)



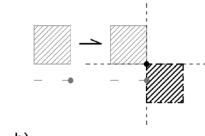
b)



Rule 3. To place a building in the third quadrant.
a)



Rule 4. To place a building in the fourth quadrant.
a)



b)

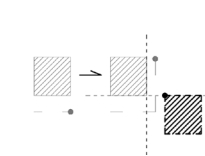


Fig. 8 Simplified rules R1 to R4: “place a new building”.

between the existing and the new circulation segments. Dimensions are represented by lowercase Latin letters as follows: ‘w’ is the width and ‘l’ is the length of the building; and ‘d’ is the distance between buildings. Additionally, other dimensions are also represented by Latin letters (both uppercase and lowercase): ‘ d_{B-S} ’ is the perpendicular distance between the corner of the building and the circulation axis; ‘ d_E ’ is the distance between the building and the entrance to the settlement from the formal city; and ‘ S_A ’ is the length of the new circulation segment.

Rules R1 to R4 place a new building in different ways (Figure 8). The two small-dashed lines represent the X and Y axes of a Cartesian Plane with origin (0, 0) at the outer corner of an existing building located at the current limit of the settlement. The gray large-dashed line represents the axis of an existing circulation. Dark dots are labels that represent the positioning of the new building and light dots represent the end of the circulation pathway. Light-gray polygons with a diagonal hatch represent existing buildings and dark-grey polygons represent the new buildings being placed.

Rules R1 to R4 in the synthetic model are very similar to those in the analytical one. Changes were made on the parameter ‘ d_{B-Sn} ’, which indicates the distance between the corner of a new building and the circulation axis. The minimum ‘ d_{B-Sn} ’ was previously 0.25 m and this value was

Rule 1. To place a building in the first quadrant.

a. Without adding a circulation way between buildings.

b. Adding a circulation way between buildings.

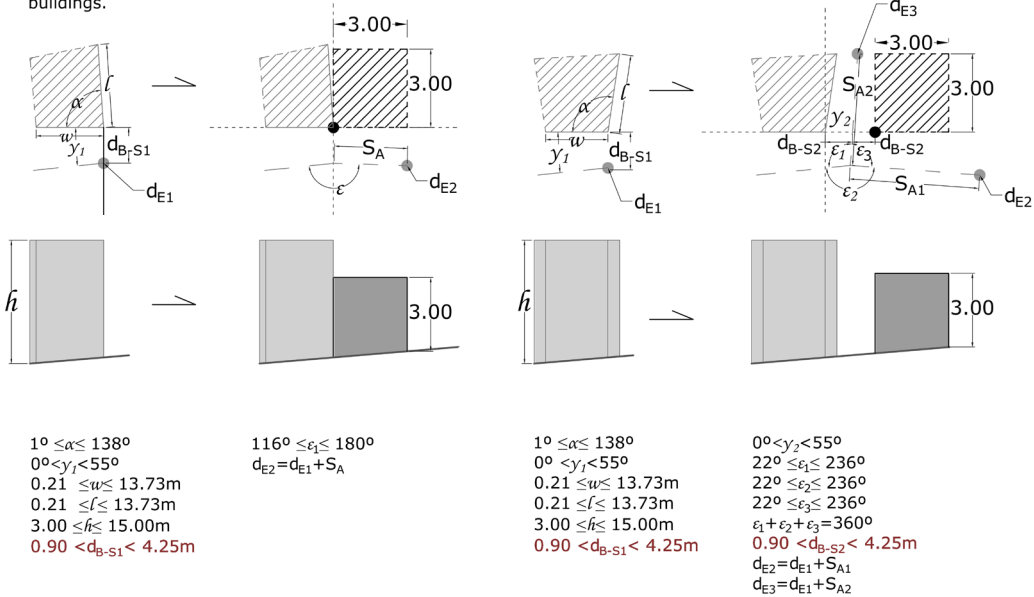


Fig. 9 Rules R1 a and b: placing a new building in the first quadrant.

inferred based on the survey of Santa Marta. The national standard NBR 9050 (Conselho de Arquitetura e Urbanismo do Brasil, 2015) states that an accessible circulation way must have a minimum width of 1.20 meters (enough to fit two wheelchairs side by side), free from any obstacle. We considered an additional 0.60 m for the placement of urban furnishing or vegetation. The final minimum value of 'd_{B-Sn}' is 0.90 m, with a minimum width of 1.80 meters between buildings. The changed parameter is shown in red and it improves the articulation assessment criterion.

Figure 9 shows a detailed version of Rule R1 (a and b). This rule inserts a new building in the first quadrant of the Cartesian plane. Changed parameters are shown in red.

Variation a of the rule inserts a new building in the first quadrant at the side of an existing building. The left side of the rule shows an existing building represented by a 4-sided polygon, the circulation axis is represented by a dashed-grey line and the end of the circulation by a dark-grey label.

Although the existing building can take the shape of a n -sided polygon (with $4 \leq n \leq 11$) and, therefore, there should be a sub-variation of the rule for each building configuration, representation is restricted to 4-sided polygons in rules R1 to R4, as well as in all the remaining rules. On the right side of the rule, a Cartesian plane is inserted at the corner of the existing building, with the X axis aligned with the side of the building. At this point, the building doesn't have a definite configuration, being represented as a generic square, which is inserted at the origin of the cartesian system, labelled with a black dot. The circulation is then extended with a new segment whose length is equal to the width of the new building.

Variation b of the rule inserts a new building in the first quadrant at the side of an existing building but adding a circulation way between them. The representation on the left side of the rule is the same as in the first variation. On the right side of the rule, a new Cartesian system is inserted, with the new building placed along the X axis with a label at its corner $(x, 0)$. Between the existent and the new buildings, a new circulation section is placed in a different direction. The circulation in front of the existing building is also extended as in the first variation.

Figure 10 shows detailed versions of Rules R2 (a and b). This rule inserts a new building in the second quadrant of the Cartesian plane. Changed parameters are emphasized in red.

Variation a of the rule inserts a new building in the second quadrant, at the back of an existing one and adds a new circulation segment in a new direction. The representation on the left side of the rule is the same as in Rule R1. On the right side of the rule, a new Cartesian plane is inserted, the new building is placed along the Y axis with a label at its corner $(0, y)$, and the circulation is extended, thereby creating a new circulation segment in a new direction.

Variation b of the rule inserts a new building in the second quadrant of the Cartesian plan, in front of an existing building and adds two new circulation segments. The representation

Rule 2. To place a building in the second quadrant.

a. Without adding a circulation way between buildings.

b. Adding a circulation way between buildings.

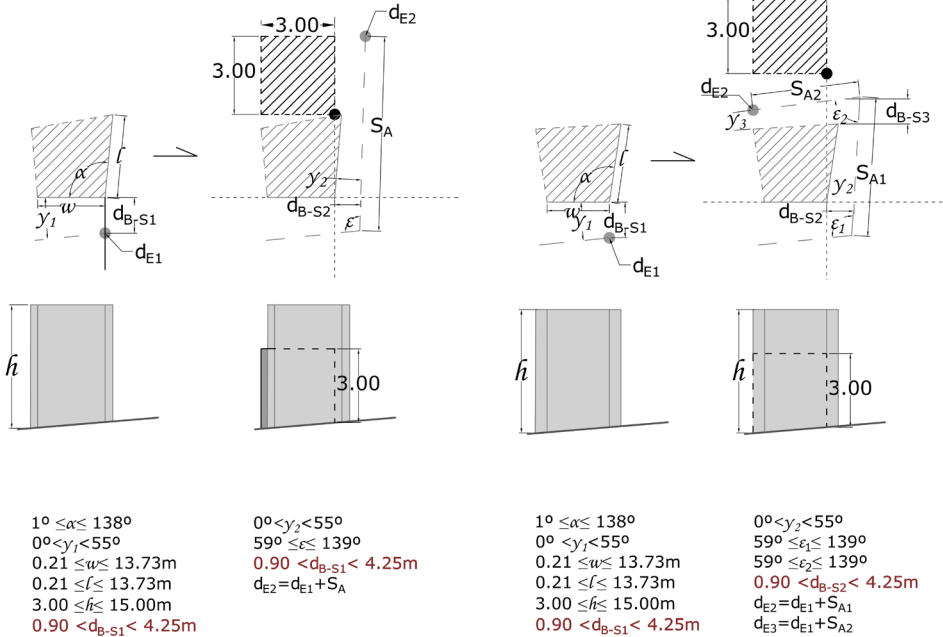


Fig. 10 Rule R2 a and b: placing a new building in the second quadrant.

on the left side of the rule is the same as in Rule R1. On the right side of the rule, a new Cartesian plane is inserted, the new building is placed at the back of the existing one, and two new circulation segments are placed around the existing building.

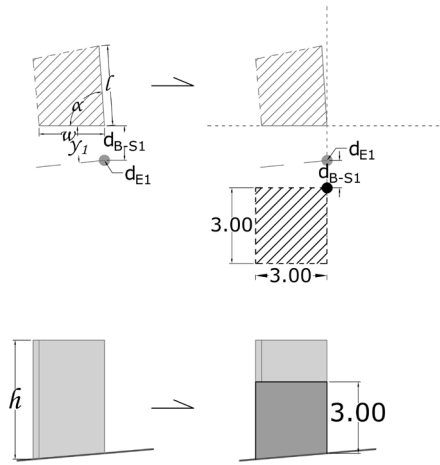
Figure 11 shows a detailed version of Rule R3. This rule inserts a new building in the third quadrant, in front of the existing building. The changed parameter is shown in red.

The representation on the left side of the rule is the same as in Rule R1. On the right side of the rule, a new Cartesian plane is inserted, and the new building is placed along the Y axis with a label at its corner (0, -y). Circulation is not extended in this case.

Figure 12 shows the detailed versions of Rule R4 (a and b). This rule inserts a new building in the fourth quadrant. Changed parameters are denoted in red.

Fig. 11 Rule R3: placing a new building in the third quadrant.

Rule 3. To place a building in the third quadrant.



$$\begin{aligned}
 &1^\circ \leq \alpha \leq 138^\circ \\
 &0^\circ < \gamma_1 < 55^\circ \\
 &0.21 \leq w \leq 13.73\text{m} \\
 &0.21 \leq l \leq 13.73\text{m}
 \end{aligned}$$

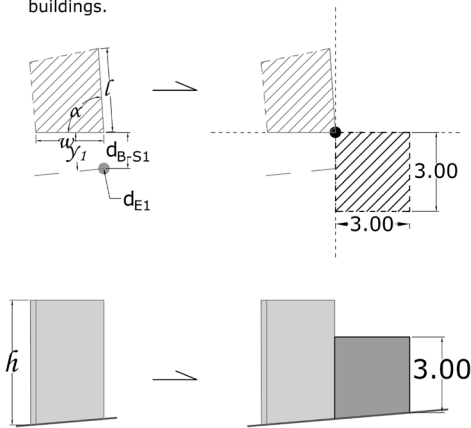
$$0.90 < d_{B-S1} < 8.50\text{m}$$

Fig. 12 Rule R4 a and b: placing a building in the fourth quadrant.

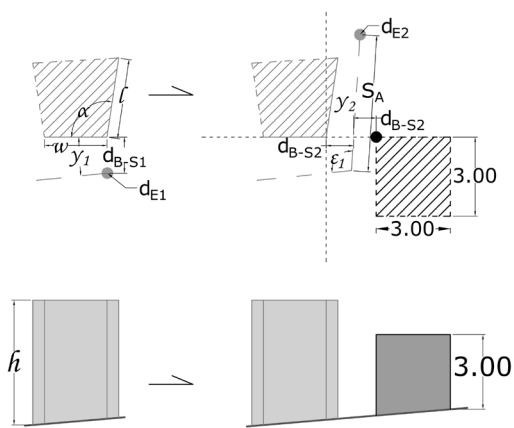
Rule 4. To place a building in the fourth quadrant.

a. Without adding a circulation way between buildings.

b. Adding a circulation way between buildings.



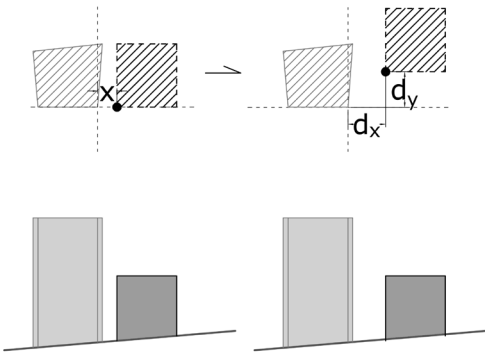
$$\begin{aligned}
 &1^\circ \leq \alpha \leq 138^\circ \\
 &0^\circ < \gamma_1 < 55^\circ \\
 &0.21 \leq w \leq 13.73\text{m} \\
 &0.21 \leq l \leq 13.73\text{m} \\
 &3.00 \leq h \leq 15.00\text{m} \\
 &0.90 < d_{B-S1} < 4.25\text{m}
 \end{aligned}$$



$$\begin{aligned}
 &1^\circ \leq \alpha \leq 138^\circ \\
 &0^\circ < \gamma_1 < 55^\circ \\
 &0.21 \leq w \leq 13.73\text{m} \\
 &0.21 \leq l \leq 13.73\text{m} \\
 &3.00 \leq h \leq 15.00\text{m} \\
 &0.90 < d_{B-S1} < 4.25\text{m}
 \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned}
 &0^\circ < \gamma_2 < 55^\circ \\
 &59^\circ \leq \epsilon_1 \leq 139^\circ \\
 &\epsilon_1 + \epsilon_2 + \epsilon_3 = 360^\circ \\
 &0.90 < d_{B-S2} < 4.25\text{m} \\
 &d_{E2} = d_{E1} + S_A
 \end{aligned}$$

Rule 5. To define distances d_x and d_y .
 a. For the first quadrant.

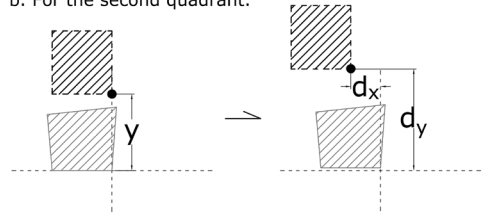


$$0.00 \leq x \leq 8.50\text{m}$$

$$0.00 < d_x < 16.90\text{m}$$

$$-8.20 < d_y < 9.68\text{m}$$

b. For the second quadrant.

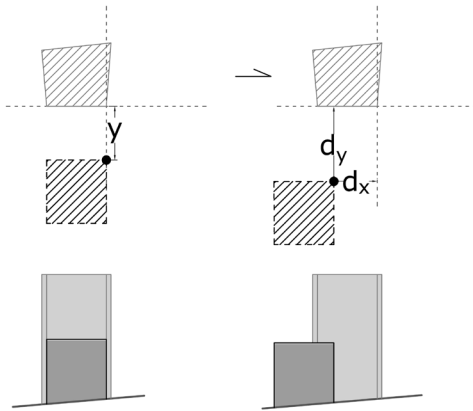


$$0.21 \leq y \leq 22.23\text{m}$$

$$-3.56 < d_x < 5.00\text{m}$$

$$0.00 < d_y < 23.41\text{m}$$

c. For the third quadrant.

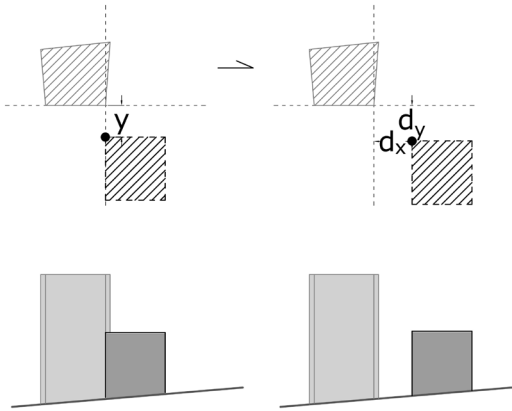


$$-8.50 \leq y \leq 0.00\text{m}$$

$$-3.56 < d_x < 0.00\text{m}$$

$$-9.68 < d_y < 0.00\text{m}$$

d. For the fourth quadrant.



$$-8.50 \leq y \leq 0.00\text{m}$$

$$0.00 < d_x < 3.56\text{m}$$

$$-9.68 < d_y < 0.00\text{m}$$

Fig. 13 Rules R5 a and b: defining the distance of the new building to the existing one.

Variation a of the rule inserts a new building in the fourth quadrant in front of a circulation segment. The left side of the rule is the same as in rule R1. On the right side of the rule, a new Cartesian plane is inserted, and the new building is placed at the end of the existing circulation, creating a dead end.

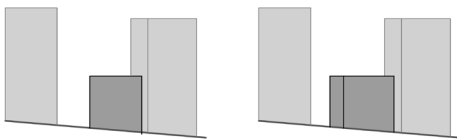
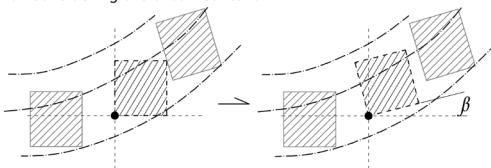
Variation b of the rule inserts a new building in the fourth quadrant, in front of a circulation section, extending it. The left side of the rule is the same as in Rule R1. On the right side of the rule, a new Cartesian plane is inserted, and the new building is placed in front of the circulation, which is extended in a different direction.

Figure 13 shows the detailed versions of Rule R5 (a, b, c and d). There are no changes to Rule R5. After determining where to place the new building, the next step is to adjust its position. Variations a to d of Rule R5, one for each placement quadrant, determine the right positioning of the corner of the new building, labeled with a dark dot.

Figure 14 shows detailed versions of Rule R6 (a and b). There are no changes to Rule R6. The next step is to align the new building with the near context. Rules R6a and b rotate the building according to (a) the urban context and (b) the topography. In rule R6b, the dashed-dot line represents the medium of the contour lines that intersect the building. This medium contour line intersects the building at two different points, from which is traced a straight line that forms the angle 'δ' with the edge of the building and is used to control the alignment of the building. Please note that the contour lines shown in Figure 14 are merely exemplary

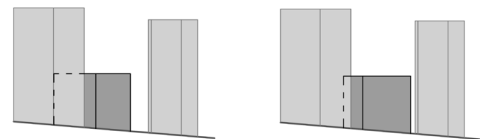
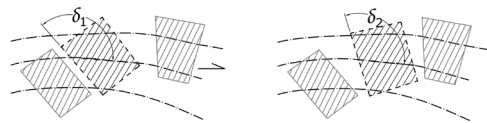
Fig. 14 Rules R6 a and b: rotating the building to adjust it to the context.

Rule 6. To rotate the building.
a. Considering the urban context.



$$0^\circ \leq \beta < 35^\circ$$

b. Considering the topographic context.



$$22.5^\circ < \delta_1 < 67.5^\circ \vee 112.5^\circ < \delta_1 < 157.5^\circ$$

$$67.5^\circ < \delta_2 < 112.5^\circ$$

as their exact configuration in the derivation process depends on the exact context.

Figure 15 shows a detailed version of Rule R7. The changed parameter ('w*l') is denoted in red. Changes the Rule R7 are related with the minimum area of a single-family dwelling, determined by Pedro (1999a) as 32 square meters. The goal of this change was to improve spatial adequacy.

This rule defines the width 'w', length 'l', and height 'h' of the new building. Until this point, new buildings

Fig. 15 Rule R7: defining the area of the building.

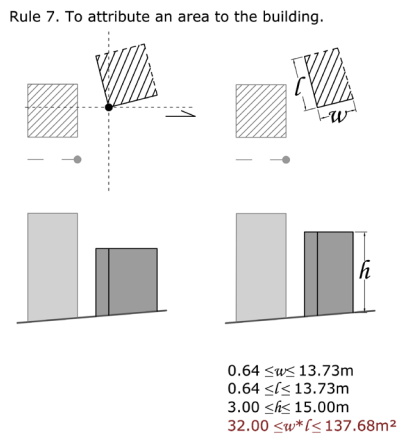
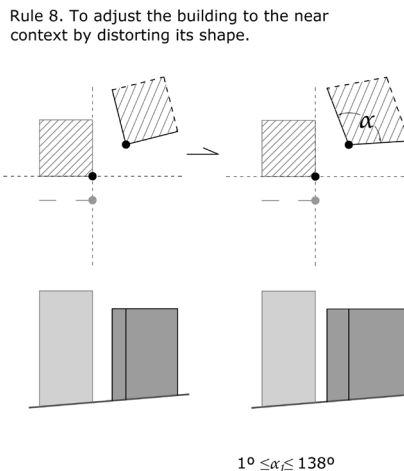


Fig. 16 Rule R7: defining the area of the building.



are represented by a dashed line because the size of its polygonal shapes have not been determined yet. The size of the building footprint can be selected from an interval that was previously defined after the analysis of Santa Marta.

Rules R8 to R10 manipulate the building shape to further adjust it to the topographic, typological or urban contexts.

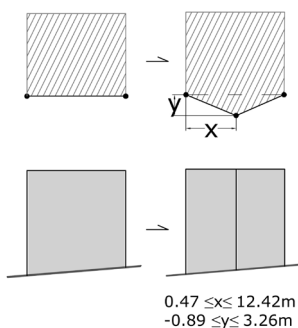
Figure 16 shows a detailed version of Rule R8. There are no changes to Rule R8. When this rule is applied, the polygon that represents the building is still a rectangular shape. This rule then distorts this rectangle turning it into a quadrilateral with the same area, whose angle at the origin is ' α '. In favelas, the polygons that represent the footprint of self-constructed houses rarely present right angles, as the residents adjust their houses to the contour lines or to the urban context to maximize the footprint area.

Figure 17 shows the detailed version of Rule R9 (*a* and *b*). There are no changes to Rule R9. This rule introduces a new vertex on an edge of the building. The other edges of the building's footprint are represented with dashed-lines and the vertices with black dots. This rule can be applied to meet typological, programmatic requirements, or to further adjust the building to topographic or urban constraints, consequently increasing or decreasing its area.

Fig. 17 Rules R9 *a* and *b*: adding a vertex on the edge of a building.

Rule 9. To add a vertex.

a. Modifying the new vertex.



b. Modifying an existing vertex.

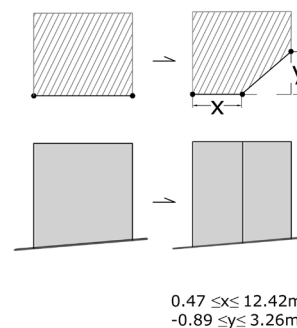


Fig. 18 Rule R10: adding an annex to a building.

Rule 10. To add an extra space to a building.

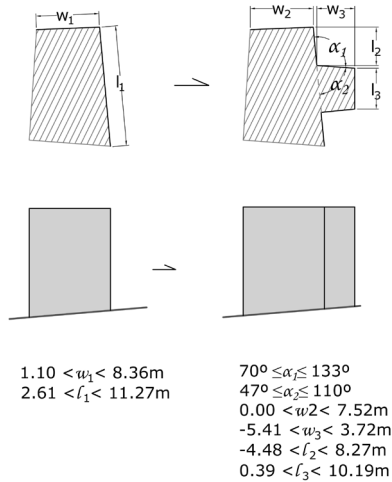
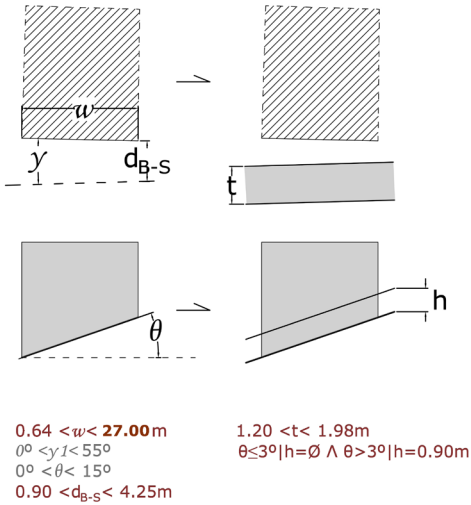


Figure 18 shows the detailed version of Rule R10. There are no changes to Rule R10. This rule adds an annex to the side of a building. Variables for this rule include the width and length of the building and the annex, as well as the angles between their edges.

Rules R11, R12, R13, and R14 have changes on the following parameters: 'w', which represents the front facade of a building; 'dB-Sn', which represents the distance between the corner of a building footprint and the axis of the circulation; 't', which represents the width of the circulation pathway; 's', which represents the tread of a stairway; and 'r', which represents the rise of the stairway. All these parameters had previous limits that were based on the existing urban context of Santa Marta. The change in 'w' is a result from the addition of rule R16 that specifies a new maximum limit for the parameter, from 13.73 m to 27.00 m. The change in 'dB-Sn' was introduced with rules R1 to R4 and reflect the new minimum width for an accessible circulation and the inclusion of urban furnishing and vegetation, and it is present in Rules R11 and R12.

Rule 11. To build an alley.



Rule 12. To build a stairway.

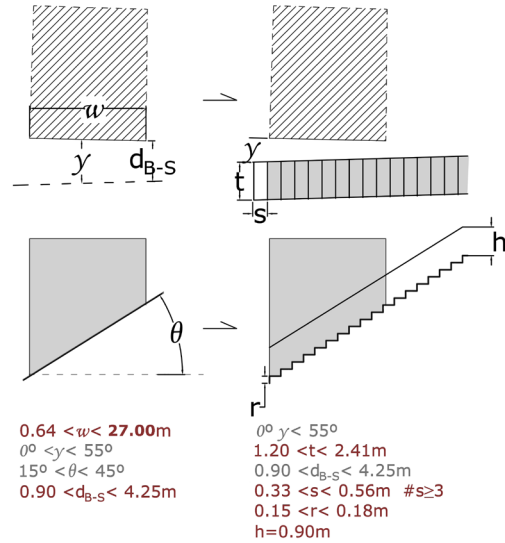


Fig. 19 Rule R11: creating a paved alley (left) and Rule R12: creating a stairway (right).

Changes in 's' and 'r' are related with the specification of stairways that are consistent in terms of dimensions, and the requirement of a minimum of three rungs together in a stairway (Pedro 1999a). Additionally, a new parameter is introduced. With the inclusion of handrails in ramps and stairways it was necessary to include the height 'h' of the handrail, which is 0.90 m (Pedro 1999a). The goal of these changes was to improve the articulation and accessibility assessment criteria.

Figure 19 shows detailed versions of Rule R11 and Rule R12. Changed parameters are shown in red. Rule R11 and R1 create a paved circulation where an informal circulation has already been defined by existing buildings. Rule R11 creates a flat or an inclined alley when the inclination angle is between 0° and 3° or between 3° and 15°, respectively. Rule R12 creates a stairway when the inclination angle is bigger than 15°. Variables for these rules include the angle 'θ' of the slope, the width 'w' of the building; the angle 'γ' between the building facade and the circulation axis; the distance d_{B-S} between the corner of the building and the circulation

Rule 13. To add an entrance stair at the side of the building.

a. When circulation is an alley.

b. When circulation is a stairway.

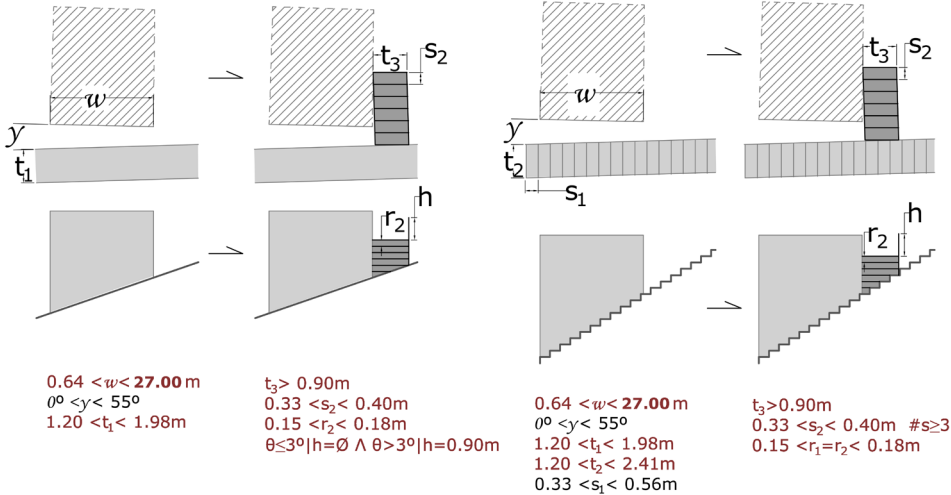


Fig. 20 Rules R13 *a* and *b*: adding an entrance stairway at the side of the building.

axis; the width 't' of the circulation; and the run 's'; the rise 'r' of the stairway; and the height 'h' of the handrail.

Figure 20 shows the detailed version of Rule R13 (*a* and *b*). Changed parameters are denoted in red. This rule adds an entrance stairway at the side of the building. The elevation viewpoint shows how the stairway can relate to the circulation, depending on its inclination. Variables for these rules include the width 'w' of the building; the angle 'γ' between the building facade and the circulation; the width 't' of the circulation; and the run 's' and the rise 'r' of the stairs. Additionally, the parameter 'h' indicates the height of the handrail.

Figure 21 shows the detailed version of Rule R14 (*a* and *b*). Changed parameters are shown in red. This rule adds an entrance stairway at the front of the building. The elevation viewpoint shows how the stairway can relate to the circulation, depending on its inclination. Variables for these rules include the width 'w' of the building; the angle 'γ' between the building facade and the circulation; the width 't' of the circulation;

Rule 14. To add an entrance stair at the front of the building.

a. When circulation is an alley.

b. When circulation is a stairway.

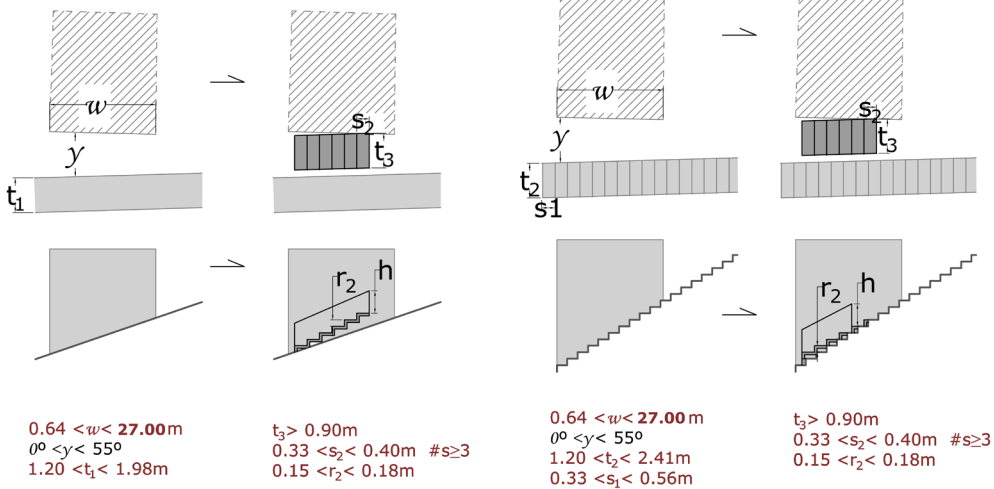


Fig. 21 Rules R14 a and b: adding an entrance stairway at the front of the building.

and the run 's' and the rise 'r' of the stairs. Additionally, the parameter 'h' indicates the height of the handrail.

Rules R15 to R20 are new rules proposed for synthetic. Figure 22 shows Rule R15. This new rule places commercial buildings in the urban fabric, during the derivation process. Label c indicates 'commerce'. This new rule allows the planned placement of commerce buildings, strategically positioned in the settlement to improve the spatial adequacy assessment criterion.

Figure 23 shows Rule R16. This new rule transforms a new building into an open area for leisure. The fixed dimensions are equivalent to a multi-sport field, but the actual detailing of the area will determine its use. On the right side of the image there are two examples of further detailing of the open area. This new rule allows the placement of open areas for leisure of

Fig. 22 Rule R15: defining the building type.

a. Residential

b. Commerce

c. Open area

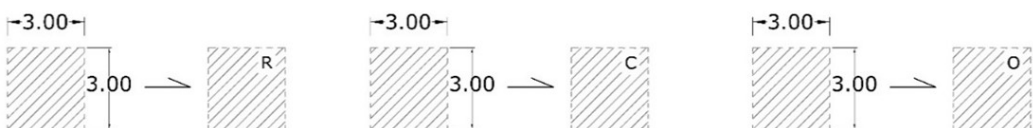
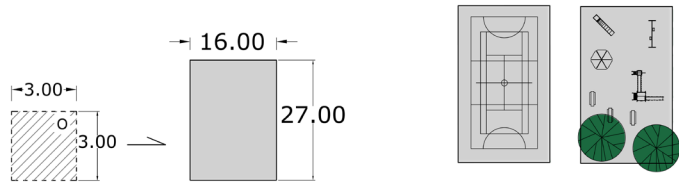


Fig. 23 Rule R16 (left): placing leisure areas on open areas. Example of leisure areas (right).

Rule 16. To place leisure or open areas.



different resident age groups. This new rule is related with the improvement of the spatial adequacy assessment criterion.

Figure 24 shows Rule R17. This new rule places urban furnishing alongside the circulation network. The placement of trash bins helps to improve pleasantness and the positioning of benches and streetlights help to improve spatial adequacy.

Figure 25 shows Rule R18. This new rule places urban furniture in an open area, helping to improve pleasantness and spatial adequacy.

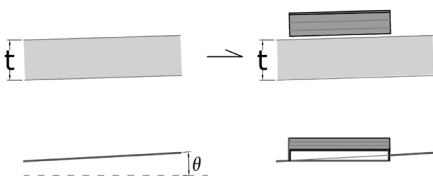
Figure 26 shows Rule R19. This new rule places trash collectors along circulation pathways. These trash collectors are destined to receive the trash from the public bins and from residents, helping to improve pleasantness.

Figure 27 shows a detailed version of Rule R20. This new rule places a tree along the circulation (version a) or in an open area (version b), helping to improve pleasantness.

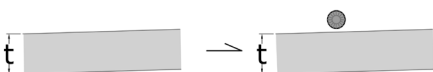
Fig. 24 Rule R17 a to c. To place urban furnishing alongside the circulation.

Rule 17. To place urban furnishing alongside the circulation.

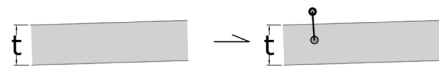
a. To place a bench.



c. To place a trash bin.



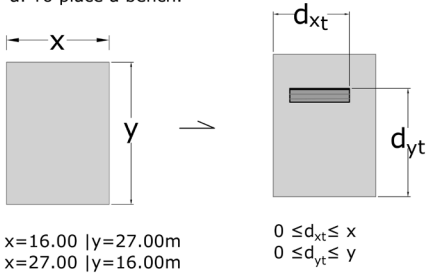
b. To place a street light.



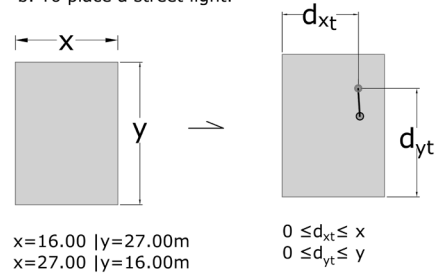
$1.20 < t < 1.98\text{m}$

Rule 18. To place urban furnishing in open areas.

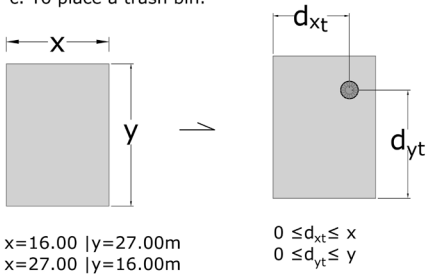
a. To place a bench.



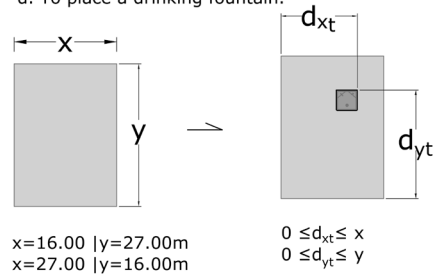
b. To place a street light.



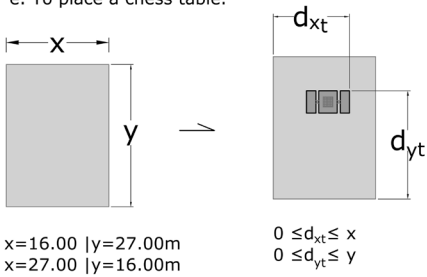
c. To place a trash bin.



d. To place a drinking fountain.



e. To place a chess table.



f. To place a picnic table.

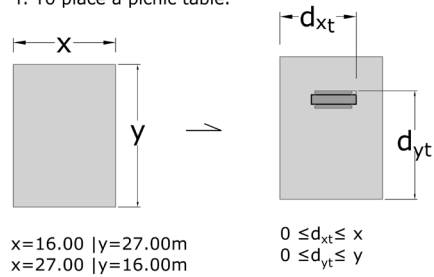
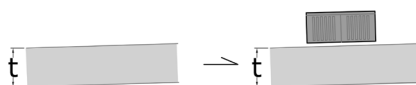


Fig. 25 Rule R18 a to f: placing urban furnishings in open areas.

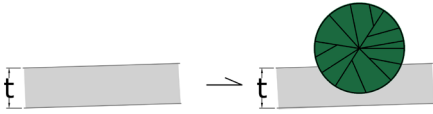
Rule 19. To place trash collectors.

Fig. 26 Rule R19: placing trash collectors along the circulation.



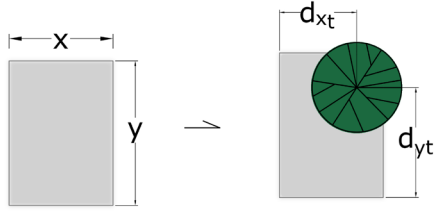
Rule 20. To place a tree.

a. Alongside the circulation.



$$1.20 < t < 1.98\text{m}$$

b. In an open area.



$$\begin{aligned} x &= 16.00 \mid y = 27.00\text{m} \\ x &= 27.00 \mid y = 16.00\text{m} \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} 0 &\leq d_{xt} \leq x \\ 0 &\leq d_{yt} \leq y \end{aligned}$$

Fig. 27 Rule R20 *a* and *b*: placing a tree.

Fig. 28 Map of Santa Marta favela.



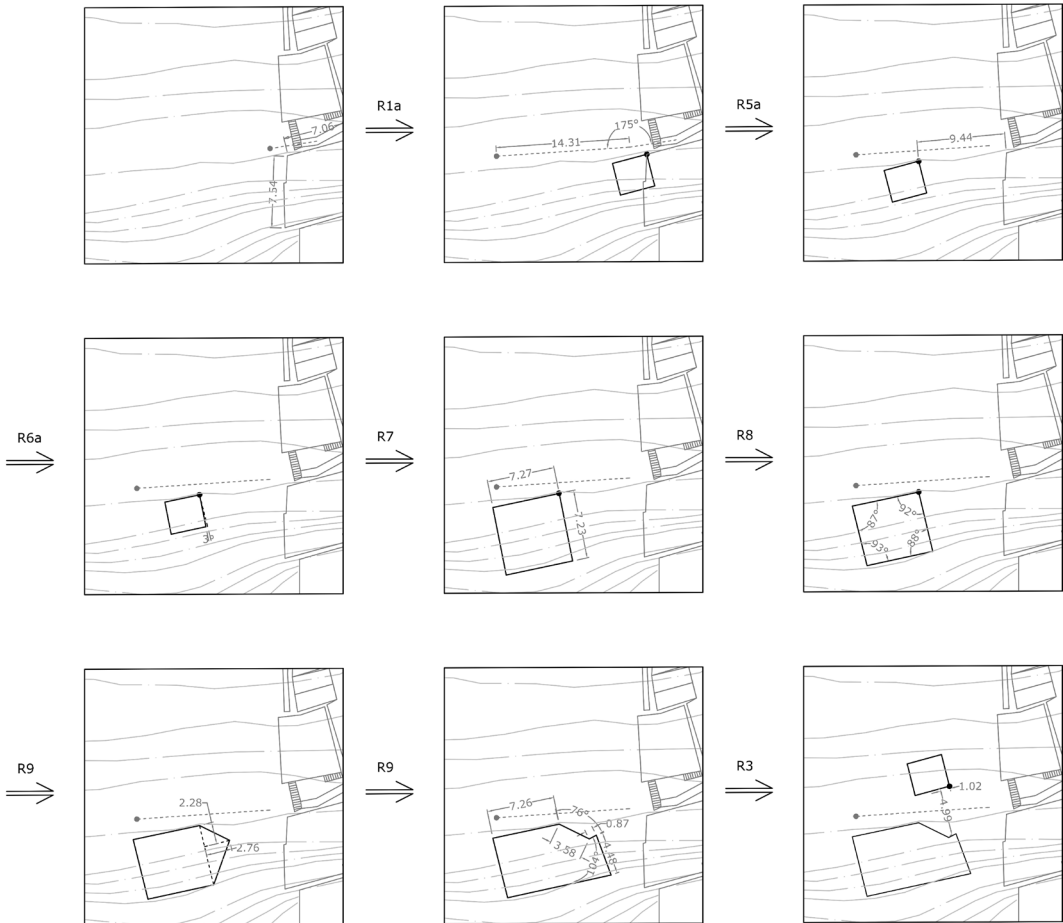


Fig. 29 The first nine steps in the derivation of the planned favela area.

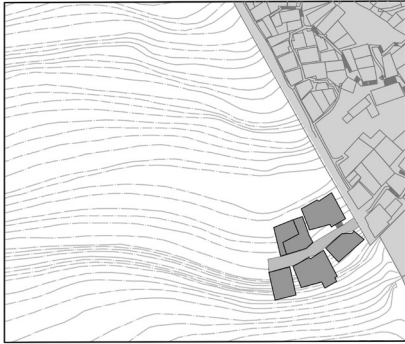
Fig. 30 Simplified derivation of the planned favela area.

VALIDATION

The synthetic model, called ‘Planned Favela Urban Grammar’ was proposed based on the assessment of Santa Marta favela, performed by applying the QUARQ housing quality assessment method at the neighborhood scale. The validation of this grammar encompasses generating a small neighborhood next to Santa Marta favela (a planned favela) using the grammar and assessing it with QUARQ. By comparing the results of both assessments (of Santa Marta

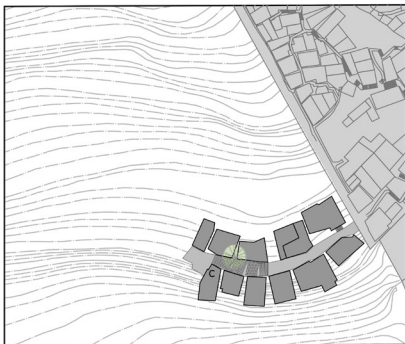


⇒
R1a(2) R3
R5a(2)
R6a(2) R6b
R7(3) R8(3)
R10 (5)
R11(3) R14a
R17a R17b



⇒
R1a R3(2)
R17c R5a
R6a(3)
R7(3) R8(3)
R9 R10(2)
R11(2)

⇒
R1a(2) R3
R5a(2)
R6a(3)
R7(3) R8(3)
R9(2) R10
R12(2)
R17b R17c

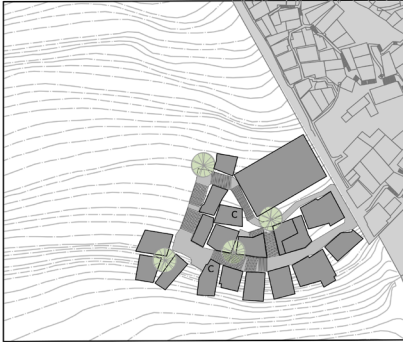


⇒
R1a(2) R3
R5a (2)
R6a(3)
R7(3) R8(3)
R9(3) R10
R12 R11
R17a R17b
R19 R20a

⇒
R1a R3
R4a R5a
R5d R6a(3)
R7(3) R8(3)
R9(3) R11
R17a R17b
R19 R20a



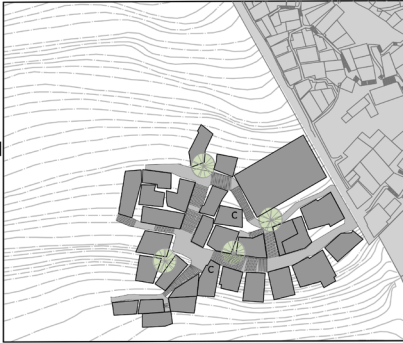
- ⇒
- R1a R2b
 - R3 R4a
 - R5a R5b
 - R5d R6a(3)
 - R7(3) R8(3)
 - R9 R10
 - R11(12)
 - R12(6) R15
 - R16
 - R20a(2)
 - R17a(3)
 - R17b(6)
 - R17c(4)
 - R18a(3)
 - R18c(2)
 - R18d(3)
 - R19



- ⇒
- R1a(2) R1b
 - R2a(2) R3
 - R5a(3)
 - R5b(2) R5c
 - R6a(6) R7(6)
 - R8(6) R9(2)
 - R10(5)
 - R11(3)
 - R12(2)
 - R13a
 - R17a(2)
 - R17b(2)
 - R17c(2)



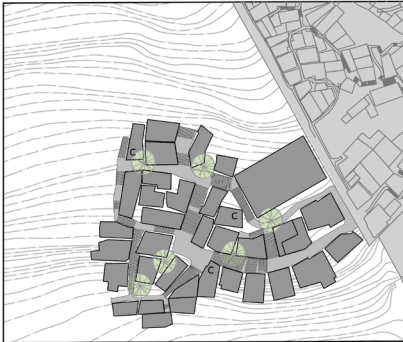
- ⇒
- R1a R2a
 - R3(2) R4a
 - R5a R5b
 - R5c (2) R5d
 - R6a(5)
 - R7(5) R8(5)
 - R9 R11(4)
 - R12(2)
 - R17a
 - R17b(2)
 - R17c(2)



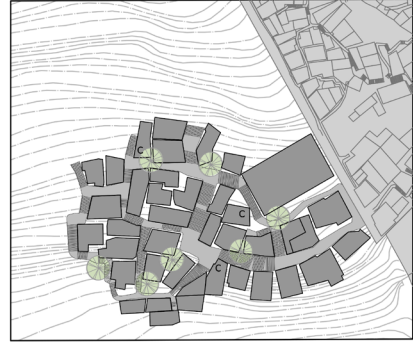
- ⇒
- R1a(2) R3
 - R5a(2) R5c
 - R6a(3) R7(3)
 - R8(3) R9(2)
 - R10(3)
 - R12(2)
 - R17b(2)
 - R17c(2)
 - R20a



- ⇒
- R1a R2a
 - R2b R5a
 - R5b R6a(3)
 - R7(3) R8(3)
 - R9 R11(5)
 - R12(5)
 - R17a
 - R17b(3)
 - R17c(3)
 - R19 R20a



- ⇒
- R1a R2a R3
 - R4b R5a
 - R5b R5c
 - R5d R6a(4)
 - R7(4) R8(4)
 - R9 R10(3)
 - R11(5)
 - R12(7) R13a
 - R17a
 - R17b(7)
 - R17c(4) R19



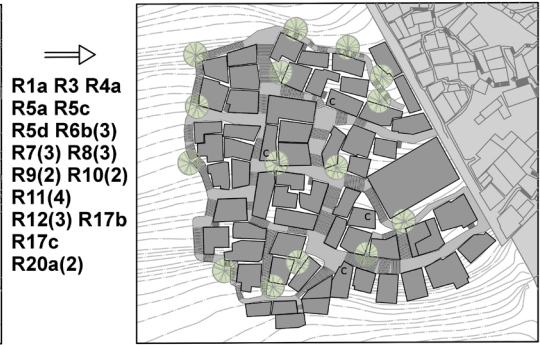
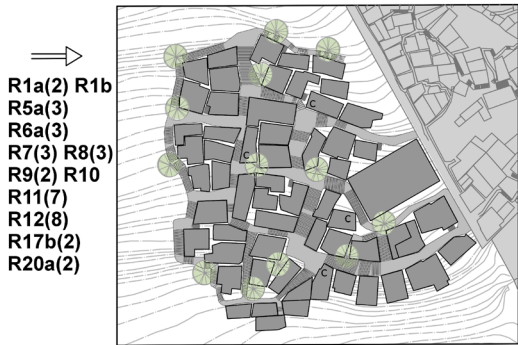
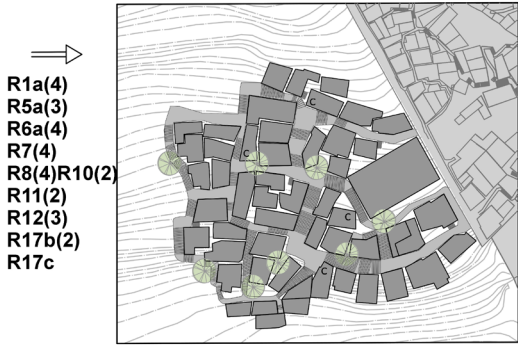
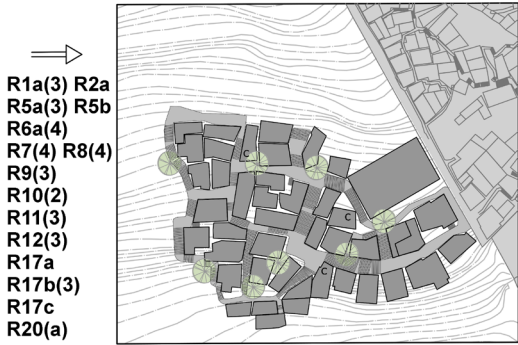


Fig. 31 *Planned favela.*

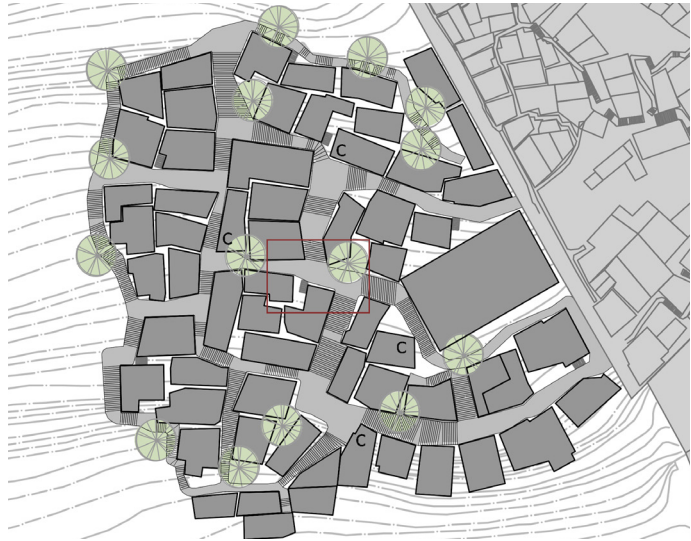
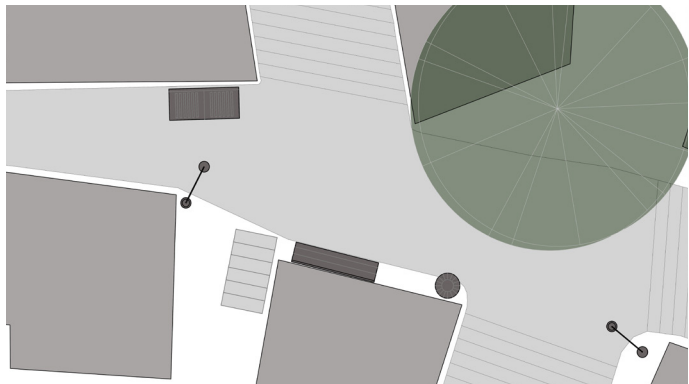


Fig. 32 Detailed image from the *Planned favela.*



favela and of the planned favela) it is possible to identify the impact of the proposed changes on the quality of the generated urban environment.

The planned favela area generated using the Planned Favela Urban Grammar was located at the side of Santa Marta. Figure 28 shows the map of Santa Marta and on the lower left side of the image, a black rectangle shows the location of the planned favela area.

A zoom in on the first set of nine steps is shown in Figure 29 as a way of illustration.

Targeted Criteria	Santa Marta		Planned favela area		Difference (%)
	Result	Quality Level	Result	Quality Level	
Articulation	1.25	Minimum +	2.13	Recommended +	+70
Pleasantness	1.20	Minimum +	2.11	Recommended+	+76
Spatial Adequacy	0.94	Minimum -	1.93	Recommended -	+105
Other Criteria	Santa Marta		Planned favela area		Difference (%)
	Result	Quality Level	Result	Quality Level	
Personalization	2.87	Optimum -	3.00	Optimum	+4
Safety	1.51	Recommended -	3.00	Optimum	+99

Tab. 2 Comparison between the housing quality assessment of Santa Marta and the *planned favela* area.

Figure 30 shows the simplified derivation of the whole planned favela area.

Figure 31 shows the final result of the derivation. The planned favela area has 62 buildings and occupies a total area of 7478 m². The rectangle in red corresponds to the area shown in detail in Figure 32. In the detail is visible the urban furniture placed along the circulation.

Table 2 compares the differences in the results of the assessment of Santa Marta and the planned favela area. The QUARQ housing quality assessment method is a holistic method and changes in the design of the environment influence the score in more than one criterion. Consequently, the changes proposed in the Planned Favela Urban Grammar also altered the scores of other criteria that had not been targeted for improvement, namely, safety and personalization.

DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The goal of this research was to define a computational strategy to plan housing settlements that are based on the morphologic example of informal settlements but offer a better built environment, with increased housing quality. The goal was to create a methodological tool that could

generate settlements that mimic the visually appealing and spatially complex spontaneous built scenario but allowed to distinguish early in the planning process commerce, residential, and open areas that included green features and urban furnishing.

This paper proposes a general computational strategy that can be applied to different urban contexts in the planning of housing settlements. Although the strategy is general, this paper focuses on a specific case, the favela of Santa Marta, an informal settlement in the southern region of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Shape grammars were used to decode and encode the urban attributes of Santa Marta into an analytic grammar; a housing evaluation method was used as tool to identify the physical characteristics of the settlement that needed improvement; and grammatical transformations were used to change the analytic grammar into a synthetic grammar with the capability to generate settlements that are spatially complex and yet possessed improved quality standards.

This work expands the application of grammatical transformations theorized by Knight (1989). The changes performed on Santa Marta Urban Grammar generated the Planned Favela Urban Grammar and they derived from the 10 recommendations output by the QUARQ evaluation method. Additionally, Brazilian normative policies on accessibility in urban spaces – NBR 9050 (ABNT, 2015) provided the minimum standards for dimensioning the circulation network. The assessment of a new settlement area design generated by the Planned Favela Urban Grammar confirmed the improvement in the quality standards of the designed urban environment, thereby validating the proposed computational strategy. These results are promising and they represent a step towards new planning strategies that may lead to settlements that have the spatial qualities valued in informal settlements, are still affordable as they follow similar topography-sensitive principles, and yet possess improved quality standards.

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NOTES

1 There are several terms that can be used almost interchangeably to name informal settlements and one of the most used is *slums*. These places are multidimensional by nature and many times heavily defined by cultural constrains. We opt to use *favela* in this research due to the location of the case study. For a thorough definition of *slum* see United Nations Human Settlements Programme (2003).

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