

THE CITY BUILT IN ELEMENTARY PARTS: AN ALTERNATIVE TO *DELIRIUM* OF POST-METROPOLIS

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Abstract

*Starting from Italy and from the book *Manifesto del Nuovo Realismo* (2012) by the philosopher Maurizio Ferraris, a new paradigm was created: a critical return to “strong thought” opposite to the previous post-modern paradigm. What about Architecture? The paper studies the reflection developed through a series of conferences and exhibitions, held over last three years, inviting architects and philosophers – Italian and foreign – to think over “Architecture and Realism”. Starting from an initial assessment of these initiatives, the need to improve tie of our discipline – Architecture – with reality emerged; a reality that we have to properly understand with the aim – remembering Lukács – of building «a real and adequate space, able to visually evoke adequacy» and, in this way, counteracting the senselessness of contemporary architecture as ‘reductio ad imaginem’ and the amorphous growth of globalized post-metropolis. As the authors believe that circularity between Theory and Practice exists in Architecture, some projects at the urban scale are given to clarify theoretical affirmations in the text.*

Keywords: *new realism; architecture of the city; architecture and philosophy; contemporary city*

INTRODUCTION

Architecture, city, reality are three words – central in the reasoning of this essay – that are apparently not subject to interpretation, nevertheless it is useful to try to define them, from a specific and explicit point of view.

Architecture is, as in Gregotti’s definition, a *practice of art* with the ultimate aim of the construction of spaces for human habitation: an inhabiting intended not in individual sense but collectively. Architecture establishes a circular process with society, through the architect: society requires architecture and accepts (or rejects) the answers. In this, Architecture is equidistant from both pure art and mere technique; it exists to answer to collective rather than to individual requirements and to build real and adequate spaces for people; in this sense it does not develop through subsequent overruns but through progressive accumulation. The *city* is the concrete evidence of this; it is the place where all our history becomes the critical and living scenery that occurs in order that architecture may be an expression of its time but also of dialectic continuity with the past. A city that should always be, for the architects, a *reality* of forms, measures, materials, colours. From this disciplinary point of view – recalling its autonomy – the project is responsible for the knowledge of reality – of forms, measures, materials and colours – for its critical interpretation and positive modification. On the other hand, if Architecture is unavoidably linked to reality, there is Philosophy: a field of study able to ask more than answer. Nevertheless, Architecture and Philosophy have had frequent opportunities to meet, with different results and today we are reasoning about the relationship between *New Realism* and *Architecture of the City*.

There is an image that is representative of this relationship: the *Scuola di Atene* by Raffaello Sanzio. The main character of this fresco is Philosophy through philosophers but there is a co-character: Architecture here represented by the architectural space, probably the unrealized project for St. Peter's Basilica in Rome by Donato Bramante. In the fresco both disciplines are in symbiosis: if Philosophy is the intellectual activity of world and life understanding, Architecture has the difficult task of reify it – and all other human activities – turning it into spaces in the city and buildings where man, as a collective and not individual entity, may still be able to live, represent and recognize himself.

This essay aims to define the “state-of-art” of the debate of “New Realism” inaugurated by the philosopher Ferraris's book *Manifesto del Nuovo Realismo* (2012). Moreover, the text defines a theoretical position that a certain number of architects propose in opposition to an idea of Architecture that has lost the relationship with reality. This position is linked to the Theory elaborated within the Italian architectural debate of the sixties and the seventies of the twentieth century and wants to re-actualize it, focusing on the city as place where the History has settled and where Tradition – that is the living part of the history – represents itself.



Figure 1. *Scuola di Atene*, fresco by Raffaello Sanzio, Musei Vaticani, Rome, 1509-1511

CITY, BIG-CITY, METROPOLIS, POST-METROPOLIS, CONTEMPORARY NO-CITY: ARCHITECTURAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL CONCEPTS

The transition from the big city (still definable) to the metropolis (immeasurable and for this reason unknowable) is similar to the passage in philosophy from the ‘modern’ condition to postmodern. The *Grand récit* (Lyotard, 1979) of tradition are abandoned and the metropolis intentionally renounces order (*cósmos*) and pursues disorder (*caós*). The metropolis – in Cacciari's theory (Cacciari, 2004) – from *pólis* becomes *urbs* or rather *civitas augescens* (*sine ullo limite*): the *pólis* was based on the *ghénos*, on the community, and contained the idea of *péras*, limit/boundary, of *nomos* as ‘rule’. In opposition, *urbs* is defined by its administrative laws and, in this way, contains the possibility of an endless growth (*a-péiron*); it *de-lira* (exceeds its limits), comes out of the furrow, of the *lira* (the fence that enclosed the city) that is the sacral ‘limit’

at the city gates.

The philosopher Maurizio Ferraris confirming this interpretation states: «the postmodern aesthetics is [exactly] aesthetics of metropolis» (Ferraris, 1983). In some ways the 'modern' philosophical constructions (Heidegger-Benjamin-Weber) were still linked to an idea of *pólis* where the relationship between 'artificial interior' and surrounding 'external nature' was clear. The city-*pólis* (culture) – according to Ferraris – is opposite to nature (*chora*) that surrounds and delineates it; it is a circumscribed, definable and recognizable place, a "isolated artifice" in a natural territory as in the *Allegoria ed Effetti del Buono e del Cattivo Governo* by Ambrogio Lorenzetti.



Figure 2. *Allegoria ed Effetti del Buono e del Cattivo Governo*, fresco by Ambrogio Lorenzetti, Palazzo Pubblico, Siena, 1338-1339

Conversely, in the late modern age, metropolis is not simply an extension of the city. The metropolis does not oppose itself to the natural exterior but radically abolishes any references to Nature [as the Enlightenment stated], to origin [founded/foundation, *Grund*]; it states the triumph of Culture, of entities, of technologies and Technique such as 'desire of power'; it refers [– in the Being oblivion –] simply to itself, is comprehensive and boundless without gaps» (Ferraris, 1983). The metropolis/megalopolis – even if descending from *mèter-pólis* – has no longer the sense of a 'generated' city by a mother-city but is free from the specific characteristics of the territories that it invades and, as in Heidegger, is 'building' without 'dwelling' and thus without 'thinking'. The metropolis, well described by Derrida (Ferraris, 2010) and Deleuze, connects with and interlinks to – but is never in relationship with – other metropoli that, sooner or later, is going to reach with its 'agglutinative growth'. As Ferraris adds: it is difficult to understand the complexity of Culture [if it has not already become *Halbbildung* (Adorno, 1959)] when the Nature as a reference disappeared (Ferraris, 1983); in this way, the city is reduced to an event, to performance. In the metropolis of sprawl the necessary relationship between houses/work places/public spaces is replaced by a relationship between individual (villas) or collective (condominiums) houses and places no longer for humans but for consumers (hypermarkets, shopping malls etc.). Today the globalized metropolis has lost its identifiable places and is a sum of 'impermeable enclosures'; its centres of public and collective representation are lost in the sprawl of public spaces (Monestiroli, 1994) that are always the same at all latitudes. All contemporary metropoli have everywhere becomes a 'non-places' (Augè, 1992). The contemporary non-city is a confused deposit of individualism, congestion, and indiscriminate soil consumption and 'envy of the centre' (Stellario d'Angiolini, 2004). The 'urban sprawl' is the hypostasis of repetition and becomes, renouncing to critical differences between beings and entities, a mere representation, aesthetics of simulacrum (Baudrillard, 1980). The rampant explosion of the contemporary megalopoli – e.g. in the Far East or South America – causes urban experiences based on 'distracted' movement, bigness and immensurability: a nomadic post-city where «nothing is worth remembering» but only fast consumption up to Koolhaas' *Junkspace*. In the unlimited sprawling space there is no possibility of recognition. It is not the

'urban-rural diffused city' evoked by Agostino Renna in the book *L'illusione e i cristalli* (Renna, 1980) where there was an important relationship between land design, its rules and signs, its skilful use and precise utilization: the contemporary city is only undifferentiated *continuum* of sensitive experiences, of extravagancy and sensorial aggression without materiality where everything overflows into virtual images (Maldonado, 1992). In this framework the individual (*mònade*) prevails over the community. In order to solve and overcome this de-realized condition the 'weak' answers by Baudrillard (1980) or Vattimo (Vattimo-Rovatti, 1987) that echo the 'cheerful wandering' by Tafuri (Tafuri, 1986) are not enough: a wandering around big outlets in an absolute, physical and physiological disorientation.

NEW PARADIGM IN PHILOSOPHY: NEW REALISM

The latest debate on New-realism in the philosophical field could today be a point of reference for a new paradigm in architecture: a critical return to "strong thought" opposed to the previous post-modern paradigm (Bauman, 2011) and able to counteract the senselessness of contemporary architecture as *reductio ad imaginem* and the amorphous growth of globalized post-metropolis. Unlike Nietzsche's assertion «there are no facts, only interpretations», New-realism states that *real objects* are different from *social objects*: the facts exist and mankind must deal with them (Ferraris, 2012); reality is a social entity and always controllable; the truth is not a useless notion. Starting with the critique of the post-modern idea and its outcome, New-realism proposes a reality as an unalterable fact and intends to defeat the media populism of our age and to find a positive answer to the crisis, not only economic but also that of values.



Figure 3. *Architecture and Realism* (Left) Conference in Naples (Right) Conference in Turin

Regarding current condition of architecture and its effects on the concrete and physical transformation of cities and territory, the theme of the relationship with reality is relevant. In 2012 and 2013, a group of young teachers and researchers organized a series of conferences and exhibitions, inviting architects and philosophers – Italian and foreign – to consider “Architecture and Realism”.

Starting with an initial assessment of these initiatives (Malcovati, Visconti, Caja, Capozzi, Fusco, 2013) (Malcovati, Suriano, Caja, 2013), the need to improve tie of our discipline – architecture – with reality emerged; a reality that we have to properly understand with the aim – remembering Lukács – of building «a real and adequate space, able to visually evoke adequacy» (Lukács, 1970). The research of adequacy (vs. acceptance), correspondence and suitability of forms can produce again the social utility of our work, not moving from an uncritical acknowledgment of the *status quo* (Gregotti, 2008), but from the conviction that a progressive transformation/modification of our unfortunate condition is possible. Following this new idea, Architecture is no longer the production of marketable goods and cannot virtualize itself under the pressure of an incessant production of *idola*, where the representation of community values is hampered by an overcrowded and unconscious homogenization, where the individual prevails over the collective and this “city without citizenship” is reduced to an indistinct agglomeration without identity. Through a new relationship with reality, it is possible to reflect on the practice of our work and the “reality” of architecture, to think critically about the positive instances that architecture – as a constitutive part of our physical, social and economic reality – contains for the transformation of cities and the territories in which we live. Therefore, realism in architecture should be a remind to the civic responsibility of a project, related to its concrete effects on the physical and material transformation that it produces. Overcoming the static relativism of these years, the mistrust and rejection of any possible objective foundations and returning to the “things themselves”, the basic rules and its permanent tradition, Architecture could once again be able to determine and influence, as few other human activities, our dwelling in terms of *longue durée*.

In this relationship to philosophical realism, there is no idea of subordination of Architecture to Philosophy but rather – opening to comparison and new possible reflections and progress – a re-appropriation, from the point of view of an autonomous architectural reflection, of an ancient, inbuilt and unavoidable critical relationship with reality: architecture is a discipline that has the responsibility/purpose of environmental modification but it cannot be simply “reflective”; it must be “forming”, each time updated in its essential values and civic contents.

CONCLUSIONS

What about Architecture? Is it possible a “translation” of the *New Realism* as paradigm of theoretical thought in an architectural paradigm? What kind of concrete way of designing buildings and cities is possible to relate to this paradigm?

New Paradigm in Architecture: the City Built in Elementary Parts

Referring to an “idea of city” means ultimately discussing the ‘form’ of the settlement, the general order of urban construction. In other words, this means reflecting on the underlying structure, the notions of urban fabric, main or recurring elements and on the theme of the overall configuration of the city. Throughout human history, every age has expressed and built its idea of city through solid principles that describe its features of universality and intelligibility. Despite this generality, the possible declensions and applications were highly varied. Each city establishes a particular relationship with places, with ‘inertias of reality’; in every city, while a general idea is rationally expressed, there is a feature of individuality connected with physical reality and influences of the places which it builds every time. In any case, cities and the underlying ideas (*eidós*) are, as Lévi-Strauss states, «human construction par excellence»: the most complex and full of values.

What is the possible idea and form of the contemporary city? Can we accept the idea of a city without form as representative of our age? A rational, responsible and realistic approach should only oppose the current “loss of form” (Calvino, 1975), of fundament, this delirium/metastasis that is eroding and consuming our territory, deleting its structures, identities and renouncing to its possible reformulation and rationalization. Following a new, architectural realism, fragments alluding to a ‘possible order’ are still identifiable even if it is not possible to define, in the contemporary age, an overall *forma Urbis*. It is probably possible to once again start with the effort of re-funding of the Modern Movement – as Monestiroli said in the essay *L’arte di costruire la città* (Monestiroli, 1994) – that remains an ‘unfinished project’ (Habermas, 1980). We can look at the American experience of Hilberseimer and Mies in Lafayette Park in Detroit, to the *Qvartal* (urban sectors) by May in URSS, the Plan of Chandigarh by Le Corbusier and some projects for residential units by Adalberto Libera (e.g. *Quartiere INCIS* in Rome): theoretical models and examples – not a *panacea* – from which we can start to find, in the contemporary city, ‘parts of city’ where a ‘conscious society’ can still identify itself. These ‘parts’ could represent a compliant and repeatable unit of the city, based on a mix of different residential typologies, open spaces and collective buildings. It is then possible to combine and iterate the units through different procedures of urban composition: repetition/variation, overturning/symmetry. However, this is not an undifferentiated or isotropic repetition: it is governed by intervals produced by nature-voids for public facilities, in a relationship figure/background where the emptiness prevails on the built spaces in the general construction of the territory. The location of ‘new centralities’ – along the most important infrastructural systems – can represent the recognizable ‘breaks’ in the controlled repetition of residence. Therefore, a ‘polycentric city’ (Monestiroli, 1995), a territorial construction where the context and the reference is again Nature (Monestiroli, 2002), where construction of ‘elementary parts’ (Aymonino, 1975) is related to a whole (*Hòlos*) or, at least, aspires to compose an ‘intelligible mosaic’ where all the unavoidable ‘constraints’ are always critically interpreted (Adorno, 1959 and 1979). A city able to interpret the geographical and morphological singularities and the new multi-scale dimensions of the “city-region”; a ‘balanced’ city where the different parts are not only in material and/or immaterial connections (*links*) but in formal and syntactic relationship (*ratio*) (Rossi, 1960-1961) where the ‘void between the objects’ is once again a ‘topological field’ in relation to distance – an open space that is an orderly structure to be revealed and interpreted each time – where the buildings ‘happen’, where the controlled metrics, the dimensions, the problems and the general complexity change. A ‘desirable’ city where the confused ‘forest’ becomes ‘a clearing’, able to refer to a collective construction of the «fixed scene for human life» (Rossi, 1966), a place once again to know and explain the world. Only in this way we can again find, in the modern city, the forgotten civic values and those «silent and spacious, wide-range places for reflection, places with long high galleries to shelter from the bad weather or from too much sun, where the noise of carriages and barkers cannot enter and where the finest sense of education would even prohibit the priest from praying aloud: buildings and public gardens that can express the sublimity of meditation and being alone» (Nietzsche, 1882).

From Theory to Practice: Projects for Contemporary Cities

Some project experiences at an urban scale are useful to clarify our theoretical affirmations. The following projects, at different scales and in different geographical contexts, show the same point of view on the construction of the contemporary city that, according to what is mentioned above as *new realism* and *architecture of the city*, believes in a concrete chance of the positive transformation and improvement of urban realities.

The first case study concerns research activity coordinated by Federica Visconti and Renato Capozzi in the Department of Architecture on the revamp of the residential, ‘modern’ districts of the twentieth century – particularly in the Naples metropolitan area – and involves researchers

belonging to different academic areas: Urban Planning and Law, Technology, Architectural Design, Structure, History.

The main idea of the research is that the special peri-central location of the districts under investigation could represent a significant opportunity for urban, environmental and social redevelopment not only for themselves but for the larger surrounding areas littered with spontaneous and low quality private construction, abandoned industrial areas, infrastructural systems often built in a haphazard way in relation to the layout and the values of adjoining areas. The projects intend to recognize the morphological value of the districts in the first half of the twentieth century as a strategic point: they represent recognizable finite urban parts. Moreover, they have an undoubted architectural quality in the buildings designed by Masters of Italian Rationalism which referred to the 'idea of open city' produced by the Modern Movement based on a renewed relationship with nature: a city where the design of open spaces and green areas contributes to define the general structure of the urban fabric. On account of the above, these districts today can be an important resource and an opportunity to rebalance formally, socially and environmentally the contemporary city. Obviously, this positive assessment cannot ignore the many problems that characterize these districts: the social and functional mono-use, the lack of facilities, poor maintenance of open spaces, extensive process of privatization as well as modest economic and social dynamics and difficulties in fundraising. The projects aims to structure, by upgrading the recognizable potentialities, a systematic set of actions to solve the current contradictions and enhance the formal and morphological values and the quality of life in these districts that are today only partially expressed. From the point of view of the Architecture of the City (morphological approach), the relevant character of these districts is, on one hand, the clearness of the urban fabric and their 'right dimension', together with the existing contiguous urban parts and the historical routes leading from the city centre, and, on the other hand, consequently, the offered opportunity to assume them as starting points in a process of redefinition and rationalization of the surrounding areas that today are without any clear design. These districts are very different from the public residential buildings of the Sixties-Eighties: mega-structures (e.g. the famous *Vele of Scampia* in the northern periphery of Naples) unable to evoke the city due to their scale, the volume in terms of inhabitants and buildings and the scattering of open spaces and thus *terrain vague* without measurement or character. The points of reference are rather the districts built at the beginning of the twentieth century in Europe by the Masters of the Modern Movement: in some cases projects of revamping were recently carried out (*Cité Frugès* in Pessac by Le Corbusier and the *Kiefhoek* in Rotterdam by Jacobus Johannes Pieter Oud, both restored in the last decades of the past century) with significant results in terms of safeguard and improvement.

Returning to the Neapolitan case, in the eastern periphery of the city *Rione Luzzatti* – built in 1914-29 and today squeezed between the Central Station area and the Business District – shows a urban structure based on the repetition of the squared block and a central block intended for school facilities to serve the district. The project of a new block by Luigi Cosenza (1946-47) is an important lesson that combines modern standards for social housing (well designed orientation and mix of different typologies) and rules of urban design (the confirmation of the morphological choice of the courtyard).

The urban arrangement – even if it has a clear general design – introduced some relevant weaknesses, from a typological and morphological point of view: the decay of the buildings, the over-density, the indifference to the hygiene and to their right exposure, the lack of public spaces and facilities. The *Rione*, originally separated from the consolidated city, has been, over the years, gradually surrounded by public residential districts and, moreover, by the Business District that, while following the same alignments derived from the City Plans of 1939 and 1946, enlarged and amplified the scale of the buildings and roads. The research hypothesis moves from the observation of these systems that conflict with the neighbouring urban parts and suggests, on

one hand, the rationalization of the blocks (with the demolition of the buildings inside the courtyards) and, on the other hand, the identification of a compliant measure for the project able to build a new urban centrality, eco-oriented and suitable for defining the entire form of urban area.

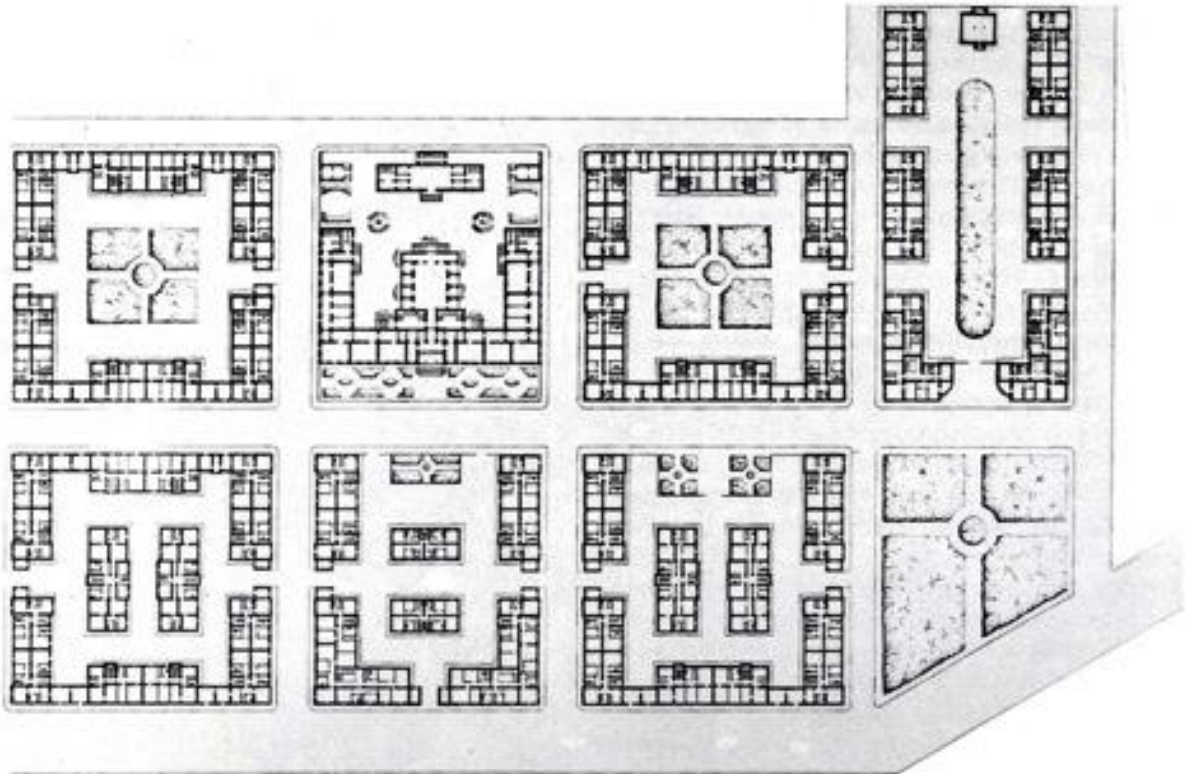


Figure 4. Rione Luzzatti in Naples. Project by ing. Primicerio, 1914-1925

This hypothesis takes the form of a 'complex unit', an elementary part able, because of its role and figure, to summarize and measure the whole *Rione*. The unit – complex from morphological and functional (houses, facilities, tertiary and commercial spaces) point of view – forms a new arrangement, adhering to the urban-rural system of the seventeenth century with the aim and the ambition of bringing again to the area the partitions of the fields and the water channels system that were so important in the past.

In this way it is possible to reproduce nature on this site as a wider frame of reference for the contemporary city. The use of vegetation and water is a way to recreate the memory of this place and its origin as a natural area outside the consolidated city but also a way of feeling current needs in term of sustainability: in fact, the soil, the ground where the buildings are placed, is now almost completely permeable and able to reduce the "heat island" effect. The new morphological part exceeds the size of existing block and defines a new scale in the *Rione*: new and old elements – the courtyard block, the church as a monument, the new residential and collective buildings – become a new structure and take on a new meaning, building a new centrality able to compete on an urban and territorial scale in the whole eastern area of the city.

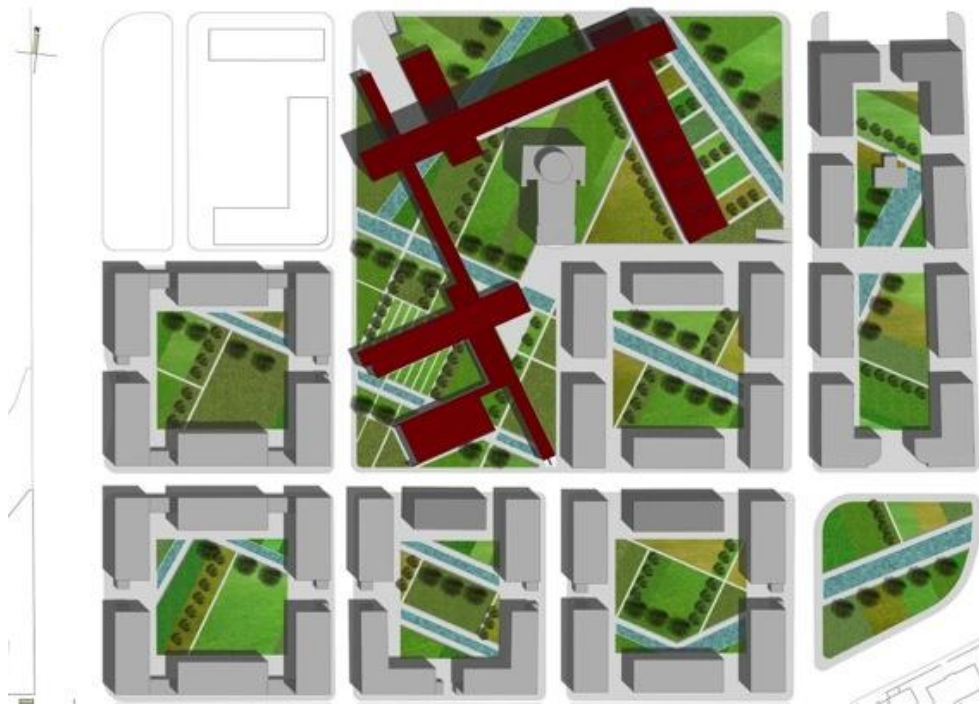


Figure 5. Project for Rione Luzzatti. Design by Vincenzo Liguori e Vincenzo Quiriti.
Supervisors: Federica Visconti and Renato Capozzi

Once again in the eastern periphery of Naples, the project for three public buildings in Barra becomes a chance to create a wider plan of redevelopment of a social housing district, built after the Second World War by Luigi Cosenza, Carlo Coen and Francesco Della Sala. The original rationalist project was set up, as a potentially repeatable urban sector, on a central spine made up of public buildings and surrounded by residential areas.



Figure 6. Districts in Barra (Naples). General Plan by L. Cosenza, F. Della Sala, C. Coen, 1946- 1947

A typological mix and a significant relationship between buildings and green areas were able to contribute to the urban fabric definition and characterized the district. But the facilities were not built and an excessive urbanization, starting from the seventies of the twentieth century, obliterated the green areas in the district and the agricultural areas adjoined. Moreover, the privatization of the collective spaces has today left the district without the qualities originally present in the idea by the architects. Starting with the original urban design but at the same time interpreting current condition, the project aims to redefine the district as a defined 'urban part' where a green *parterre*, mostly permeable, becomes the unifying element of the urban fabric and the public buildings – a school, a library and a market – define a system of relation to distance assuming, in this way, the role of primary elements in the social housing district.



Figure 7. Project for districts in Barra (Naples). Design by Francesca Addario.
Supervisors: Federica Visconti and Renato Capozzi

Consequently, the district as a whole becomes a place where open spaces (nature) and buildings (culture) can dialogue and where the trees, the meadows and the pedestrian paths define the structure of the urban design. Finally, the project, acting on the confirmation of some elements of the original project – among them, in particular the central axis – working on the boundary definition that become the places of the public buildings and assuming a general plan for green areas and paths for the entire district, reconfigures the area as a recognizable ‘urban part’ where the relationships between residential buildings, public facilities, landscaping and public spaces are once again evident: a place where people can still feel at home.



Figure 8. Green areas and urban fabric for Barra (Naples). Study of the original project, present condition and project by Francesca Addario. Supervisors: Federica Visconti and Renato Capozzi

The second case study is a project proposed by Adelina Picone (team leader) for the Competition for an urban plan of a residential compound in Marcianise (Italy). The case study regards a new sustainable district in the territory of Roman *centuriatio*.

The district assumes the measure of the *centuriatio* (Roman land division) between Capua, Caserta and Marcianise and proposes a similar structure to the historical centre of the agricultural village. In this way, the project, with particular attention to the use of renewable energy, is intimately linked with the illustrious constructive and typological tradition of the courtyard house as basic elements of urban construction. The idea is that a sustainable city cannot be designed without reference to the history and identity of territory to be settled: it must interpret in a contemporary way, appropriate to the needs of life and living, the values and basic characteristics of the historical city, establishing and perpetuating the thread of continuity with the territory and environment to which it belongs. The project has its *incipit* and reason for its main choices in the study of the founding principles of the urban fabric in the city of Marcianise. From the study of *centuriatio*, in a part of the *Ager Campanus*, it underlines the relationships between the territorial and the urban scale, identifying the dimension of the project-area as a *centuria*.



Figure 9. Competition for an urban plan of a residential compound in Marcianise (Italy).
Design by Adelina Picone (team leader)

From the study of the area, the analysis identified the spatial and morphological characteristics that are derived from the plan. From the redrawing of the section of the main streets of the urban centre, it was clear that the invariant is represented by the presence of the continuous curtain and the almost constant ratio between the width of the street and the height of the buildings. This highlights the need to investigate the relationship between urban morphology and building typology: forms and measures of the blocks and prevalent building types where the courtyard, originally rural, is a characteristic of identity.

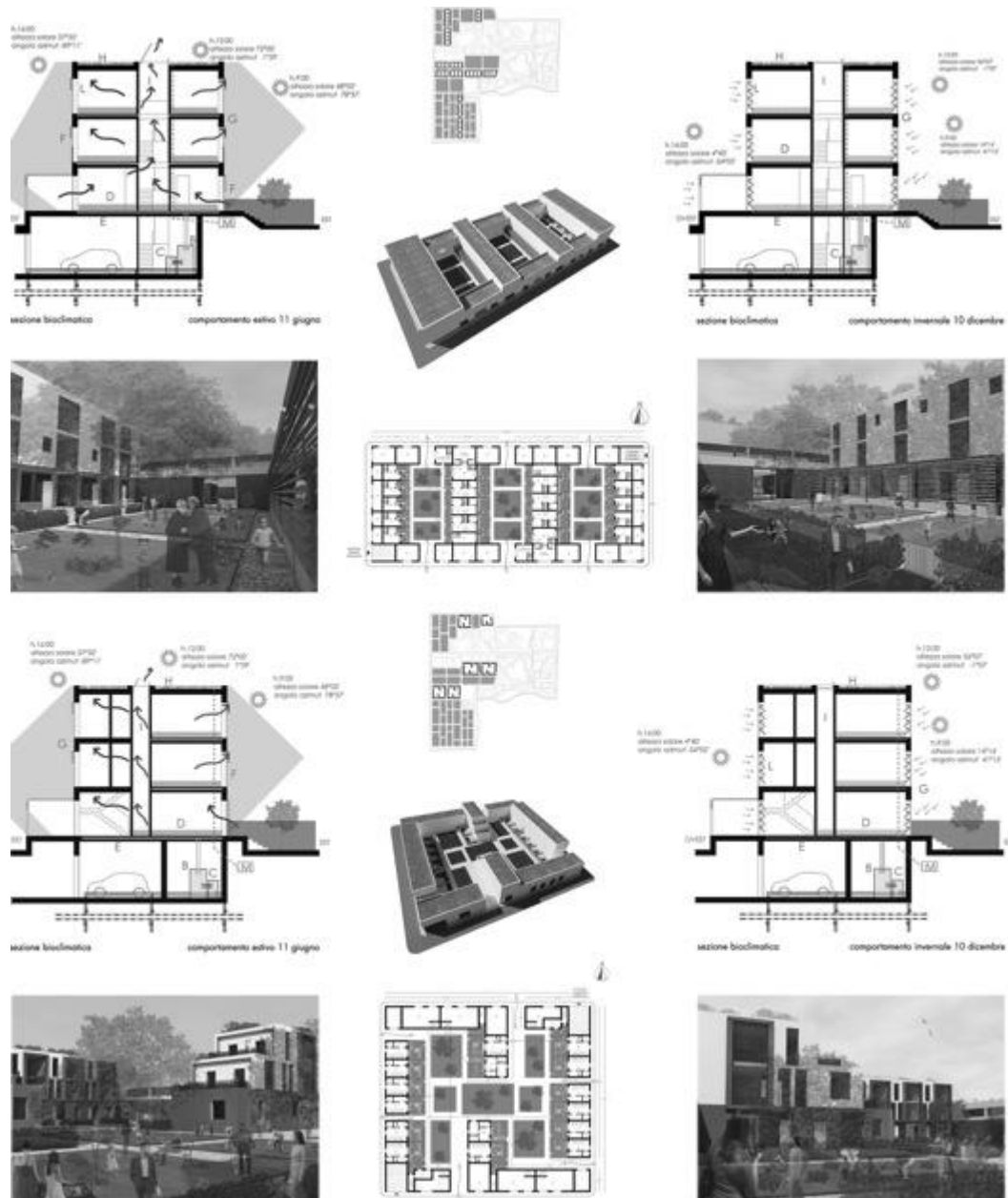


Figure 10. Competition for an urban plan of a residential compound in Marcanise (Italy).
Design by Adelina Picone (team leader)

The design choices are in line with the architectural and urban principles of the primeval city centre of Marcianise, and in particular:

- the new district is enclosed by *cardini* and *decumani* of a *centuria* and the urban fabric is structured on an orthogonal grid that re-proposes the dimension of the historical centre of Marcianise and the traces of the agricultural division of fields;
- the streets accurately maintain the characteristics and spatial relationships with the historical city: the alignment of the facades, the continuous curtain and the conservation of the metric relation between street width and building height;
- the main open spaces and the public buildings are placed along the major *decumanus* that is a pedestrian path able to give an order to the whole urban fabric. The positioning of the squares is, as in the historical city, on a tangent to the axis;
- the single family house is the basic unit in the choice of the residential typologies.

The most common typologies all have open spaces and green areas, a continuous curtain along the street, more than one floor and architectural features designed in relationship with climate/form and energy strategies/formal and spatial needs; the typologies are: terraced houses on gothic blocks, terraced houses assembled in wide courtyards, terraced houses assembled in small courtyards, special flats (for the disabled, the elderly and young couples). The energy and environmental strategies in the project are, therefore, completely integrated with the morphological and typological choices and regard: the use of renewable energy (solar, geothermal, wind energy, biomass power plant), the definition of waste and water cycles, the use of bio-architecture. Thus, the new city, on one hand, finds its foundational features in the historic city (tradition) and, on the other hand, faces the contemporary age with a typological mix and an energy strategy (innovation).

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