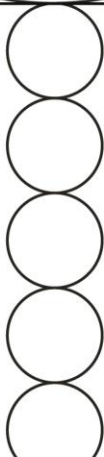
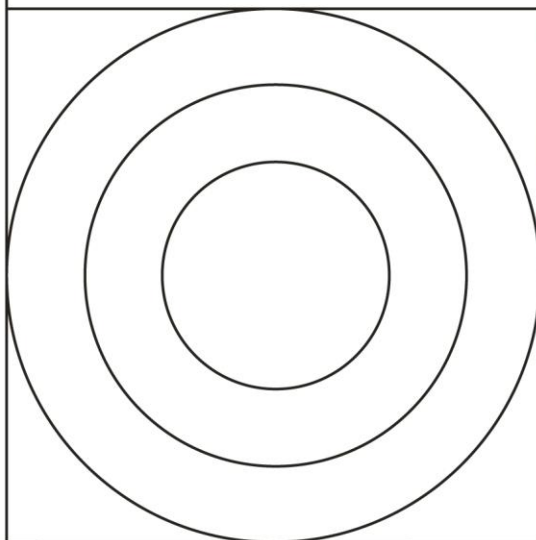
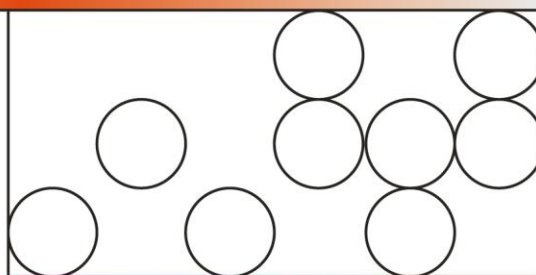
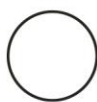


[In]tangible



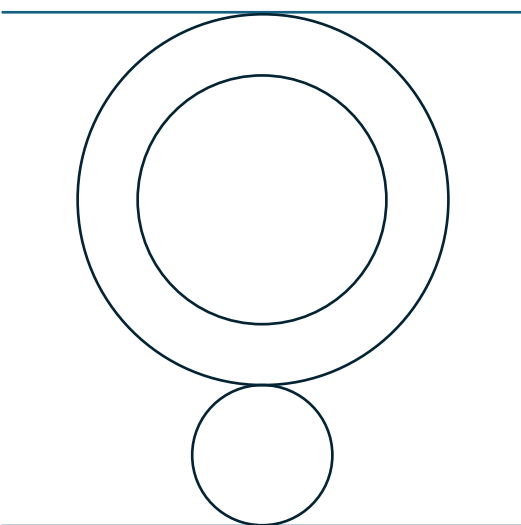
Conference
proceedings



Edited by

XXXVIII PhD Cycle in
Architecture and
Design Cultures

Alma Mater Studiorum
University of Bologna



© Alma Mater Studiorum – Università di Bologna, 2026

Editor:

Department of Architecture

Viale del Risorgimento, 2, 40136 Bologna BO

Edited by:

XXXVIII PhD Cycle in Architecture and Design Cultures -

Alma Mater Studiorum University of Bologna

Cover image © Università di Bologna

ISBN: 9788854972421

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.6092/unibo/amsacta/9087>

This work is distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons
Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0

International License (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0).

A copy of the license is available at

<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>



Scientific Committee

The Scientific Committee is composed of the members of the Academic Board of the Doctoral Programme in Architecture and Design Cultures, Department of Architecture, Alma Mater Studiorum University of Bologna.

Organising Committee

XXXVIII PhD Cycle in Architecture and Design Cultures: Giacomo Astolfi, Benedetta Cavalieri, Peiru Chen, Chiara Ciambellotti, Simona Colitti, Alessandra D'Ovidio, Federico Foschi, Elena Girelli, Alberto Grassetti, Margo Lengua, Francesco Lipparini, Ramona Loffredo, Veronica Pasini, Leo Piraccini, Diego Pucci, Francesco Selmi, Lorenzo Stefanini, Mattia Sullini, Lei Sun, Mahdijeh Tabatabaei, Maria Cristina Tommasino, Virginia Vignali.

Edited by

XXXVIII PhD Cycle in Architecture and Design Cultures - Alma Mater Studiorum University of Bologna

[In]tangible

TABLE OF CONTENTS

[In]tangible interactions **7**

Artificial Intelligence, Design Cultures, and the Future of Digital Practice	10
Driving behavioural change: the role of data visualisation in optimising dormitory energy strategies	19
Mapping Industrial Intangible Heritage: a Design-Based Approach	31
Designing the future of Public Services: Digital Twins for Inclusive and Accessible Experiences through Service Design	42
Tangible Interfaces for Intangible Experiences: the Role of the UX Specialist in the Software Development Team	51
Towards an Equal, Sustainable and Aware Multi-level Mobility	63
In/active. The Role of Design in the Creation and Transmission of Collective Memory	72
Heritage Landscapes – Interactions and Transition	82

[In]tangible projects **95**

A catalog in the shape of a map. Piranesi's and the Campus Martius	99
The possible Milan of Giuseppe de Finetti	109
Exploring the Seasteading Hypothesis: A Floating Utopia for the Techno-Solutionist age?	129
An interdisciplinary model for the next nature-based city	141

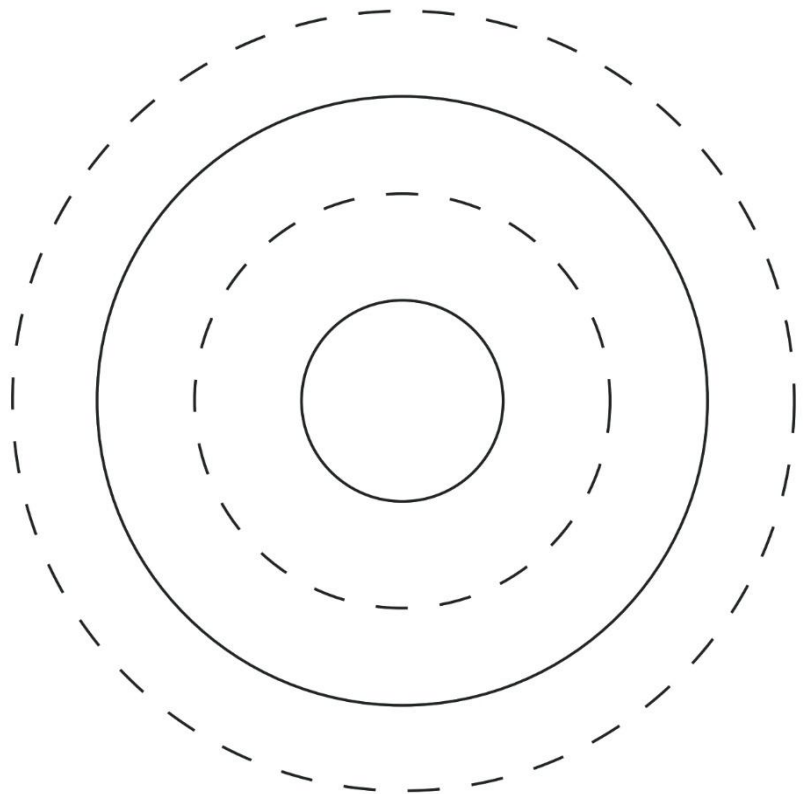
[In]tangible connections

152

From public space to consumer space, or vice versa? Re-semanticizing places through design	158
The Unfinished as Commons: material conditions for a deeper democracy	168
Assessment and Optimization of the Layout of Community Elderly Care Facilities from the Perspective of Health Equity	181
Inclusive Urban Space Design through Nature-Based Solutions: Reflections and Insights	192
Conceptualizing a Data-Driven Platform for Public Space Revitalization: Integrating Tangible and Intangible Elements	202
Regeneration and Optimization of Public Open Spaces, strengthening Tangible and Intangible Connections through Dynamic Strategies	213
Promoting local ecologies. Collective practices of symbiotic design	223
The Intangible Architectural Design Agency: Navigating the Tangible Construction Process of Public Space in Rural China. The Case Study of Zhaoshan Village	235
Cooperatives and community maps: local development strategies for territorial enhancement	246



[In]tangible projects



[In]tangible projects

In contemporary cities, the boundaries between tangible and intangible, visible and invisible, physical and abstract are increasingly blurred, creating a continuum of interactions between individuals, society, and urban space. [In]tangible proposes a research framework that embraces this grey zone, where architecture operates both as a tool for interpreting current dynamics and as a catalyst for transformation.

Specifically, [In]tangible projects highlights how unbuilt or theoretical architectural proposals have contributed to the evolution of the architectural and urban discourse, influencing real environments despite remaining unconstructed. In this perspective, representation and drawing become critical tools for envisioning alternative scenarios, understanding transformations, and reclaiming the role of architecture as a form of knowledge capable of critiquing and reshaping the spaces where we live.

Taken together, the four contributions by Traeger and Delli Ponti, Skerl, Lucchi, and Veronese all articulate a shared concern with the role of architectural and urban design that operate beyond immediate materialization, yet actively shape spatial, political, and environmental realities. While approaching different scales, contexts, methods, and disciplinary fields, the papers explore how unrealized projects continue to inform the contemporary design discourse and act as catalysts for reimagining the city. They interrogate the tension between the intangible and the tangible, though they do so from markedly different positions. Rather than treating unbuilt or speculative projects as autonomous exercises, the contributions emphasize their embeddedness within existing territorial, cultural, institutional, and ecological

frameworks. In this sense, intangibility is not opposed to reality, instead it becomes a mode of engaging it critically.

In their contribution *Exploring the Seasteading Hypothesis: a Floating utopia for the Techno-solutionist age?*, Isabella Traeger and Alessandro Delli Ponti identify water as the generative matrix of a speculative field oriented toward alternative futures, complex imaginaries, as well as utopian and dystopian scenarios. Within this perspective, the sea operates as “a seemingly frictionless and bountiful medium”, capable of hosting experimental forms of thought and design. Water and its qualities thus become both tangible and intangible tools capable of informing the project, enabling the exploration of alternative modes of urbanization in response to the contemporary condition of polycrisis.

Traeger and Delli Ponti focus on the Seasteading movement as a specific evolution of marine utopianism. They frame it as the convergence of anarchic secessionist ideologies and floating-city models, configuring in offshore micro-realities strongly shaped by techno-solutionist imaginaries. At the same time, they echo the legacy of both Japanese Metabolist experiments of the 1970s as well as anarcho-secessionist practices, albeit in a significantly transformed and often distorted form.

According to the authors, under the rhetoric of “alternative realities”, the Seasteading experiments reproduce an extractivist logic in which the marine environment is reduced to a new surface for urbanization. This process unfolds through highly selective and fragmented operations of spatial and social parcelization where access is limited, and economic costs are prohibitive. The sea is thus conceived

through a functionalist lens, as a territory to be colonized to evade the crises of the contemporary world. Rather than addressing these conditions, the project displaces them elsewhere. Even more urban-oriented proposals, such as those advanced by BIG and OCEANIX, remain embedded in a similar narrative. They promote a form of escapism from land-based civilization which implicitly normalizes a condition of permanent catastrophe on land. Habitability is confined to isolated and supposedly secure enclaves, surrounded by an inhospitable outside.

The work of Traeger and Delli Ponti therefore invites a critical reassessment of how architecture engages with both water and the state of contemporary crisis. It calls for models of coexistence that move beyond escapist and extractive paradigms. Such models should confront the realities of the present more directly, while critically reworking the lessons of past speculative and experimental visions.

As Francesco Lucchi observes in his contribution *The Possible Milan of Giuseppe De Finetti*, De Finetti's work offers a concrete way of reflecting both the tangible and intangible dimensions of urban space. His projects reveal a deliberate relationship with the built environment, guided by a clear intention: the construction and transformation of the city. Many of his proposals engage directly with existing parts of Milan, demonstrating an active dialogue with the consolidated urban fabric and exploring how renovation and transformation can become tools for rethinking the city.

Thanks to Lucchi's original analyses and drawings, this attitude is visible in several of his transformation schemes, from the redesign of Fontana and Beccaria squares to the proposal La strada Lombarda, where classical compositional logic meets the functional requirements of the contemporary city. De Finetti's proposal

reimagines an existing urban block by introducing a new east–west train line beneath it and reorganizing the public space above through a system of streets, courtyards, and squares. The project reflects his recurring strategy of reconnecting Milan through direct, linear routes that pass through the city's core, diverging from administrative plans when necessary to restore urban continuity. While the overall

composition remains modern in intent, specific collective spaces incorporate explicit references to classical architecture, demonstrating how historical forms are used as tools to articulate a contemporary urban vision.

As Lucchi observes, the project for the Arena Civica and its surroundings reveals De Finetti's attempt to bind architecture and public space to infrastructural systems, constructing a connective tissue between the historical city and its future development. De Finetti envisions this project as an opportunity to address what he considers as an unresolved area of the city, using the renovation of the stadium as a catalyst for broader urban reform. The stadium becomes a pretext for reimagining the surrounding district, introducing a larger urban reorganization centered on new public spaces. Taken as a whole, these proposals outline an urban vision where theoretical speculation becomes an operative tool, offering design strategies that negotiate between historical continuity and modern urban needs.

According to Ursula Skerl's *Imaginations: Public Good is Uberarchitecture*, utopias have often operated within an intangible dimension, suspended between project and vision, generating lasting and tangible effects despite remaining unbuilt. Such proposals have addressed the city as a global system, challenging conventional distinctions between public and private, natural and artificial, local and global. Within these experiences, architecture emerges as a critical

instrument able to act on the conditions of space possibility rather than on its immediate formal outcome. The intangibility of the project thus becomes an operative condition through which the invisible structures governing territory – often preceding and shaping any material transformation – are rendered visible. Building on this legacy, Skerl's contribution examines a series of projects that engage the theme of large-scale urban visions through a universalist ambition, while confronting the concrete constraints that have historically limited their implementation. These projects envision planetary cities, continuous infrastructures, and new forms of collective life. In doing so, they reveal the megastructures produced by legal and administrative frameworks that organize space and determine the development and fate of territories. Through the mapping of infrastructures, land, and regimes of access, a latent territorial continuity comes into view, grounded in spaces oriented toward common use and withdrawn from the logic of property. Utopia is thus reconfigured as an intangible yet situated project, capable of both operating from within existing structures and transforming control instruments into tools for imagining new forms of shared spaces. Starting from the utopian proposals for the urban countryside developed by the French landscape architect Pierre Donadieu, and from a critical analysis of selected theoretical, methodological, and design-related elements, Emma Veronese's contribution *An Interdisciplinary Model for the Next Nature-based City* explores the possibility of outlining an intervention model capable of integrating theoretical and applied dimensions, thereby linking the tangible and intangible aspects of the urban and design realm. The overarching aim is to stimulate a dialogue on potential future scenarios for urban projects within a context increasingly shaped by profound ecological and social crises. In particular,

the paper focuses on the growing frequency and intensity of hydrogeological instability affecting the European territory, with reference to the recent flood events and landslides. The contribution adopts a deliberately interdisciplinary perspective, integrating insights from urban planning, landscape architecture, geography, environmental sciences, and social sciences, based on the assumption that the complexity of these phenomena cannot be adequately addressed through sectorial approaches. Within this framework, the agro-urban landscape is interpreted as a strategic infrastructure capable of reorganizing the relationship between the natural environment and the settlement system, placing soil and its permeability at the core of climate change mitigation policies and resource management strategies, particularly regarding water. The paper draws on the comparative analysis of significant case studies, including the Continuous Productive Urban Landscape model, to assess the transferability and adaptability of the proposed theoretical principles to real-world contexts. Through the comparison of utopian visions, design practices, and concrete territorial conditions, the research provides operational insights for a sustainable reorganization of the European landscape, capable of responding to current environmental emergencies while simultaneously promoting new forms of balance between city, countryside, and society. The four contributions gathered in this section investigate the intersection between intangible practices related to architectural and urban design – such as theoretical frameworks, cultural narratives, and methodological approaches – and their capacity to structure, mediate, and inform material transformations of space. Rather than treating abstraction and speculation as autonomous domains, the papers examine how these practices are received, negotiated, and translated into

operative frameworks that shape spatial strategies, design processes, and territorial transformations. By analyzing this interplay between immaterial constructs and their material outcomes, the four contributions emphasize the project's role as a form of knowledge capable of acting on the conditions of spatial production. In this

perspective, [In]tangible projects foster a deeper understanding of the mechanisms through which urban and architectural theory is operationalized, ultimately contributing to the development of more informed, responsive, and context-sensitive approaches to contemporary challenges.

Reference

Aureli P. V. (2016) *Il progetto dell'autonomia. Politica e architettura dentro e contro il capitalismo*. Macerata: Quodlibet.

Mosco, P. V., & Triassi, C. (2017). *Viceversa-Attualità dell'utopia* (1–6). LetteraVentidue.

Schurk, H. (2020). *The Potential of Abstraction. The Drawing in Landscape Design and Urbanism*, OASE, (107), 56–59.

Tafuri, M. (1973). *Progetto e utopia*. Bari: Laterza.

Van Schaik M., Macel O. (ed.) (2005). *Exit Utopia: Architectural provocations 1956-76*. Munich: Prestel.

Vidler, A. (2000). *Diagrams of Utopia*. DAIDALOS, (74), 6-13.

An interdisciplinary model for the next nature-based city

EMMA VERONESE
University of Bologna

ABSTRACT

Climate change and the increase in frequency and intensity of catastrophic environmental phenomena closely related to it are problems we must begin to deal with. The design of the city represents a field where it is essential to intervene. However, the starting point for a successful action can only be a utopian project.

Considering the relevance of the current emergency, this contribution investigates the possibility of outlining a theoretical and practical intervention model. This will be developed from Pierre Donadieu's utopian proposal for the urban countryside and designed by drawing on knowledge from different disciplinary fields to respond to the urgent requirements of today's city.

Certainly, the city is now at the centre of all social, environmental, architectural, and economic considerations, but it is essential to revise its conventional paradigm by recognising the urban organism within the natural environment along with everything else connected to it.

Through the critical analysis of some integrative theoretical, methodological, and design components of the French architect's utopia, this paper aims to enhance the dialogue on potential future urban scenarios.

CLIMATE CHANGE | URBAN COUNTRYSIDE | AGROECOLOGY | INTERDISCIPLINARY MODEL

1. Introduction

It is undeniable that the unsustainable and uncontrolled development of cities is one of the main causes of the worsening environmental disasters, most notably climate change and all its consequences. In this regard, numerous experts from international observation programs, such as the European Copernicus project¹, are publishing worrying scientific data.

Therefore, the authorities seem to be mobilising, urged by the worrying future scenarios and the escalating frequency and intensity of disastrous events, often related to hydrogeological and meteorological issues or, more generally, to water management.

It is pertinent to mention - by way of example but not exhaustively - the recent flooding phenomena and landslide movements that strained Emilia-Romagna in May 2023,² as well as the destructive flood that affected Spain and caused irreversible harm to part of the Valencian Community's land in October 2024³.

This contribution aims to overcome the division between theoretical frameworks and practical applications in urban development by synthesising insights from various disciplines such as urban planning, architecture, sociology, economics, and environmental studies. By integrating diverse perspectives and methodologies, we can develop a comprehensive intervention model that not only addresses the immediate challenges posed by unsustainable urbanization but also promotes sustainable growth for future generations. Although acknowledging that this concerning climate situation is a global phenomenon, we have decided to focus on the geographical area of Europe to define a scope of application with at least comparable economic, social, and cultural characteristics. Additionally, according to Lewis Mumford⁴, the urban organism is the space in which the greatest social, economic and territorial problems emerge. However, as several current urban planners suggest, this necessary transition must be approached optimistically and constructively, trying not to be enchanted by the mirage of an absolute good, but pursuing a relative one (Granata 2019, p. 116). To achieve this, while an admirable, visionary and creative utopia like Pierre Donadieu's does not claim to be accomplished, but it is useful as a driving force to start foreshadowing a better future scenario.

2. Materials and Methods

¹ Official website: <https://www.copernicus.eu/en>

² A divulgative but complete reportage in terms of data and photographic documentation can be found in the book: Raggini, A. (2023) // *tesoro sommerso: storie tra fango e speranza nell'alluvione del 16-17 maggio 2023 in Emilia-Romagna*. Modena: Artestampa.

³ At the time of writing this text, the damage has not yet been quantified, but several local Spanish newspapers have published videos and articles presenting the gravity of the situation. To mention one: Levante El Mercantil Valenciano, official website: <https://www.levante-emv.com/>

⁴ Mumford, L. (1985) *The City in History*, Vol. 3 *From the Court to the City invisible*. Milan: Bompiani.

Reflecting on Donadieu's well-known utopian and desirable urban countryside model as a starting point, the topic of discussion is how to enforce it for research and practical purposes in the current situation.

With an innovative stance on city planning, this architect offers a unique solution that combines social and environmental factors. He presents a vision where urban development is not hindered by green belts but is instead rooted in agricultural spaces, considering peri-urban landscape as an urbanisation tool capable of sustainably organising the city.

An important initial consideration should be that a single-discipline solution is no longer feasible. The complexity of the treatment and the need to necessarily consider the individual connections between the various parts of the overall system do not allow it (Secchi 2015).

To make this model more tangible, three different components will be explained below. It would at least be desirable to develop these in greater depth to comprehensively define the founding characteristics of a prototype intervention project. These are:

1. The theoretical component for supporting the base knowledge required to outline the model.
2. The methodological component to understand the best ways of investigating the territory, defining a site-specific model.
3. The project-comparative component, presenting one or more cases of application of similar territorial interventions.

2.1 Theoretical component

Although Pierre Donadieu's thoughts are extensively treated both by other intellectuals and reviewed by himself several times⁵, additional points can be highlighted.

Firstly, the necessary rebalancing of the natural and anthropic landscape demands a new mindset focused on designs that acknowledge the site's malleability. The imposition of a technocratic power is not a solution that seems to be able to respond to the complexity of the situation by itself: this issue is so relevant that even a public figure like Pope Francis spoke clearly about this in 2015⁶. He highlighted the need to resort to a model of social ecology, attentive to the whole ecosystem as a system of relations between the different living and non-living elements.

A similar concept is expressed in both the writings and projects of Gilles Clément and especially in the emblematic case of the "Jardin en mouvement" (Clément 1990).

Clément's work represents, by way of simplification, a re-evaluation of the 'friche' and its ecological-landscape potential. From this premise, he explains the metamorphosis of the project as a certain

⁵ To explore this issue further, see for example: Donadieu, P. (2012). *Paesaggio agriurbano un'utopia realista?* Modena: Consorzio per il festivalfilosofia; Benyoucef, A. et al. (2009). *Paysage et projet de territoire: théories, méthodes, exemples. Des bilans français aux projets maghrébins. Projets de paysage*. <https://doi.org/10.4000/paysage.28450>

⁶ Papa Francesco (2015). *Laudato Si*. Milano: Edizioni Paoline.

number of human-controlled actions - just to ensure safety, in cases such as the Parc André Citroën in Paris - and heavily related to the natural course of events.

We cannot think of applying such a paradigm to a mobile infrastructure or architecture. However, by incorporating this principle into future planning, we can consider again natural and man-made landscapes as interconnected and interdependent as they existed in the past.

This approach should always be supported by specific knowledge of natural laws so that they become tools for ecological design. In case of a huge emergency, such as in water management, being able to propose solutions that retain it within a given environment seems to be more significant than ever.

Delving into these issues, it emerged that several recent studies have identified permeable soil as one of the most important resources for climate change mitigation (Pileri 2022, p. 30). This topic is extensively dealt with by Professor Paolo Pileri⁷, whose education has consisted of “soil protection engineering and land use planning”. It corresponds to current environmental engineering. In particular, he studies the conformation of the soil, the causes and consequences of its uncontrolled use. In a sometimes-emphatic form, he gives us an undeniable truth: the less you work, move, and change the soil, the better it is for the ecosystem.

If construction is indeed necessary, it must be done by seriously assessing its environmental impact and resorting to preventive ecological compensation measures⁸, which establish a new balance in the environment that has been affected.

It is well known that caring for the soil was one of man's priorities in ancient times before he found other forms of livelihood. However, the intensive forms of agriculture developed following the Industrial Revolution have changed the organisation of the land and impoverished the lands. This is why there has recently been talk of the so-called circular agroecology⁹. It is a transdisciplinary and complex concept that intends to deal with the issues of food security, biodiversity reduction and the establishment of sustainable food systems. The idea of circular agroecology surfaced due to this newfound awareness, promoting a range of practices aimed at minimising permeable soil consumption and fostering diverse polycultures to enhance biodiversity.

The emergence of organisations - especially at the European level - for the protection of food and agriculture, such as the FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations),¹⁰ certainly demonstrates a growing awareness of the importance of this issue. Indeed, even in recent academic

⁷ Another remarkable work of Paolo Pileri are the volumes: Pileri, P. (2024). *Dalla parte del suolo. L'ecosistema invisibile*. Milano: Laterza; Granata, E., Pileri, P. (2012). *Amor Loci. Suolo, ambiente, cultura civile*. Milano: Raffaello Cortina Editore.

⁸ On this topic, consult the book: Pileri, P. (2007) *Compensazione ecologica preventiva. Metodi, strumenti e casi*. Roma: Carrocci

⁹ Gentili A., Zampetti G. (ed.) (2021). *Agroecologia circolare. Dal campo alla tavola. Coltivare biodiversità e innovazione*. Milano: Legambiente; Ambiente.

¹⁰ Established in 1945 and whose role is becoming increasingly significant within the most important global discussions, official website: <https://www.fao.org/home/en/>

literature¹¹, the difficulty and necessity of integrating the agricultural system with the actual urban organism are underlined.

As the well-known Professor Sébastien Marot reminds us in his work and reiterates in his latest book published in 2024¹², reviewing the relationship between architecture and agriculture seems to be a necessary condition to establish the next scenarios of the future city.

Human responsibility in overcoming global phenomena defined in the scientific world as 'planetary limits' is undeniable. However, even if it may seem impossible to completely reverse the planetary damage, it is still possible to mitigate the issue in the long run for future generations.

2.2 Methodological component

Concerning the explanatory potency of Donadieu's utopian vision and the theories that have been advanced to complement it, it is equally crucial to delve into a significant methodological aspect.

To obtain a credible interdisciplinary model for the future city, it is also necessary to define a schematic protocol of investigation. In summary, it is a matter of identifying several survey practices - or favourable combinations of them - that will make the subsequent planning and design phase easier. It is also imperative to understand the real problems and potentialities of the local context.

A similar approach to the project had already been envisaged in Italy by the IBC (Institute for Artistic, Cultural and Natural Heritage) in Emilia-Romagna. The method they proposed involved the critical analysis of cartography, supported by dedicated photographic campaigns and on-site experiences to verify the real status of places.

This idea was pursued by the Italian geographer Lucio Gambi - a staunch supporter and member of the IBC group - whose considerable contribution, also social and political, to the picture of Italy's transformation is well known.

A work of systematic explanation and definition of correct methods of investigation, followed by subsequent application to a practical case, was also done by geographer Eugenio Turri. He is an important scholar of anthropological changes in the territory and their effects on the landscape over a long period. The basis of his didactic intention towards individuals responsible for overseeing, constructing, or dwelling in a certain territory lies in his background. (Turri 2002, pp. 7-9).

Furthermore, Turri underlines the importance of a survey that is supported by historical and recent photographic documentation and their comparison. This is a practice shared by both the Italian and French schools of landscape architects and architects, which have initiated several collaborative projects, including public ones¹³.

¹¹ Zaffi, L., & D'Ostuni, M. (2020). Città metaboliche del futuro. Fra agricoltura e architettura. *AGATHÓN –International Journal of Architecture, Art and Design*, 08, 82–93.

¹² Marot, S. (2024) *Prendre la clef des champs. Agriculture et architecture*. Marseille: Wildproject.

¹³ For example, the photographic and artistic mission carried out between 1984-1988 by the Délégation à l'aménagement du territoire et à l'action régionale (DATAR) to represent the state of French territory is well known.

The last element to be included in this research approach is the anticipation of potential future scenarios. This brings us back to the central core of this paper, which is that a utopian representation is one of the fundamental steps towards achieving certain urban, socio-economic and cultural objectives. A design exercise widely employed by the famous Secchi-Viganò research and design group is trying to understand the reactions in the macrosystem of certain proposed choices.

It is not guaranteed that forecasting a scenario will generate complete endorsement for a specific current. This is demonstrated by Arturo Lanzani examining seven different scenarios for the Italian landscape (Lanzani 2003). He theorises that pursuing purely ideal plots is impractical, advocating instead for hybridized solutions to overcome inherent weaknesses.

2.3 Project-comparative component

A final detail to note about the methodological component is the importance of acquiring one or more project-comparative case studies. This separation allows for a more in-depth analysis of the specific case study, providing a detailed examination of the factors at play and the outcomes observed. Additionally, by explicitly stating the reasons for including a comparative case study, we can justify our methodology and demonstrate the value of this approach in enhancing the overall research findings.

Considering similar practical cases is necessary at some point in the project development process. It can become a reference from which to understand the results to be achieved and those to be avoided.

A model of considerable relevance, as it is aligned with the features enumerated above, is the blueprint for the “Continuous Productive Urban Landscape”, developed by the English architectural firm Bohn & Viljoen¹⁴.

Originally proposed as a theory, it was subsequently used to handle specific spatial scenarios within the Greater London Area (GLA), including the famous Thames Gateway, in which some feasibility studies were made for the future expansion of the area in question.

There are many points in common between Donadieu's utopia and this case. The English architects group proposes a continuous system of permeable areas to produce food for the local community. This new urban design closely aligns with the system, positioning it as the primary organizer of both natural and man-made surroundings.

Their aim is achieved by particularly insisting on two fundamental aspects that are only marginally covered by the French architect. The first is the impossibility to remove the existing urban fabric, but it is necessary to carve out space for such interventions in the interstitial landscape voids, or in certain areas to be re-planned anyway. The second practical aspect concerns the importance of

¹⁴ For further information on their work, see the official website: <https://bohnandviljoen.co.uk/>

providing for the reclamation of the land where intervention is to take place, whose magnitude is certainly underestimated.

In addition to this, the founding themes of the project that are identified are food security, the benefits of social growth associated with it, and the use of nature-based methods such as permaculture to achieve ecosystem-friendly results.

It seems appropriate to point out that this continuous urban farming system must be supported and monitored by local authorities.

The benefits of this case study lie in the fact that it presents several adaptive solutions that can be easily extrapolated and reported elsewhere.

3. Discussion and conclusions

The utopian blueprint outlined throughout the aforementioned different components is certainly complex, but not unrealizable.

Its interdisciplinary approach - appropriately premised at the beginning of the contribution - has also been proved in the essay. The explored model is composed of parts defined by architects such as Pierre Donadieu, landscape-biologists such as Gilles Clement, but also geographers such as Lucio Gambi or Eugenio Turri. It is also proposed to employ cartographic, bibliographic and photographic sources on the same level of relevance, and in this aim can be found one of the innovative concepts of the model presented. A properly researched photograph of the territory can tell the micro-history of a transformation better than any other source.

Only through the use of multiple methods it is possible to fully understand the current European agro-urban context and intervene appropriately. After this first phase, the idea emerged to reorganise the landscape starting from the natural-agricultural part and assuring the increase of permeable parts and the use of nature-based systems - both for water management and for other natural resources - reviewing the present natural-anthropic balance. To this purpose, soil has appeared as an endangered tangible/intangible resource on which to operate. As early as 1986¹⁵, Bernardo Secchi warned of the risk of not giving the soil project sufficient importance.

The serious planetary problem we deal with is proving difficult to solve. However, there is a twofold way forward: on one hand, working with municipalities to integrate methods of studying and designing the land as presented more in management plans than in urban planning. On the other hand, we can make the population more aware of what is happening, including intangible issues, in their local area and in the city.

Going back to the theme of the congress, the positive side of the utopia is that it imposes a propulsive critical confrontation with the present and its history (Secchi 2005, p. 65).

¹⁵ Secchi, B. (1986). Progetto di suolo. Casabella, 520–521, 19–25.

It seems, therefore, even more fundamental for the present moment of environmental and social difficulty, to begin from a critical analysis of the current environment, through utopia, identifying what the priority problems are and optimistically trying to solve them.

References

- Clement G. (1990). *Le jardin en mouvement*. Paris: Editions Sens & Tonka.
- Donadieu P., Mininni M. (ed.) (2006). *Campagne urbane: una nuova proposta di paesaggio della città*. Roma: Donzelli.
- Donadieu P. (1999). Può l'agricoltura diventare paesistica? *Lotus International*, (101), 60-71.
- FAO (2023) *Agrifood solutions to climate change – FAO's work on the climate crisis*. Rome. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cc8055en>
- Gambi L. (2008). *La cognizione del paesaggio: scritti di Lucio Gambi sull'Emilia-Romagna e dintorni*. Bologna: Bononia University Press.
- Gentili A., Zampetti G. (ed.) (2021). *Agroecologia circolare. Dal campo alla tavola. Coltivare biodiversità e innovazione*. Milano: Legambiente; Ambiente.
- Granata, E. (2019). *Biodiversity: città aperte, creative e sostenibili che cambiano il mondo*. Firenze: Giunti Editore.
- Lanzani, A. (2003). *I paesaggi italiani*. Roma: Meltemi.
- Pileri, P. (2022). *L'intelligenza del suolo: piccolo atlante per salvare dal cemento l'ecosistema più fragile*. Milano: Altraeconomia.
- Secchi B. (2005). *La città del ventesimo secolo*. Roma: GLF Editori Laterza.
- Secchi, B. (1986). Progetto di suolo. *Casabella*, 520–521, 19–25.
- Turri E. (2002). *La conoscenza del territorio: metodologia per un'analisi storico-geografica*. Venezia: Marsilio.
- Viljoen, A., & Bohn, K. (2009). Continuous Productive Urban Landscape (CPUL): Essential Infrastructure and Edible Ornament. *Open House International*, 34(2), 50–60. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ohi-02-2009-b0006>