THE MATTER OF FUTURE HERITAGE

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CPCL SERIES PHD

The Matter of Future Heritage

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(20**20)**
vol.**1**

S.02

Event-Age: generating creative heritage through urban events

Urban Events; Design Cultures; CCI; Social Innovation; Creative Heritage.

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Since the Renaissance, the great events of the city's history have offered the opportunity for artists, men and women of letters and rulers to represent, describe and govern the city[1], each according to their own sphere. The foundation of all this human activity lies in its two-fold capacity for projection, that is, in being able to translate reality synthetically into a particular language, as well as knowing how to invent and stage imaginary futures. Design, in its role as the enabler and mediator of knowledge and creativity, is both the basis and the process of planning visions that anticipate the future and new identities.[2] Additionally, it gathers up and identifies the feeble signals of a future that can already be found in the present[3]. This contribution presents a literature survey on actions, practices and process for urban recycling and reactivation, assuming urban events and the concept of creative heritage as strategies to cultivate future identities of the city. In the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018, the paper examines the state of the art on this

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1 Michael Baxandall, *Pittura ed esperienze sociali nell'Italia del Quattrocento.* (Torino: Einaudi, 2001)

2 Flaviano Celaschi, *Non industrial design. Contributi al discorso progettuale*. (Milano: luca sossella, 2016)

3 Elena Formia, *Storie di futuri e design*. (Santarcangelo di Romagna (RN): Maggioli, 2017)

phenomenon through the analysis of some case-histories, comparing the hybrid range of practices and processes, overall temporary uses and events, set by a wide range of formal and informal actors. The intention is "to forge connections between cultural heritage as things and spaces on the one hand, and as ideas and people on the other" as stated in the *Creative Heritage*'s manifesto.[4]

Sunset of globalization and new conditions of existence of the city and cultural heritage

In the last two decades, the processes of globalization have undermined territories, national identities and local communities because they have escaped the control of all of them.

The processes of globalization intervened selectively, projecting some selected places – with their subjects and objects[5]– in global networks, actually abstracting them from their territory.

What are today the side-effects of the crisis in our cities, also induced by this process of de-territorialisation, and what are the solutions to be experimented?

Besides the effects of a political nature – reduced top down administrative capacity to govern the processes of urban reactivation, the high availability of public and private under used

4   Jörg Schröder, Maurizio Carta, Sarah Hartmann, *Creative Heritage*. (Berlin: Jovis Verlag, 2018)

5   Nicola Marzot, "Il diritto all'architettura come ricerca paziente. Forme del dissenso, pratiche di rivendicazione dello spazio e potere del progetto", in Olmo, Carlo (a cura di), *Rights. ARDETH*, n°4, Torino, Rosemberg & Sellier, Spring 2019, pp. 83-108. ISSN: 2532-6457.

heritage, the emergency of stopping the abandonment of sites that are no longer productive, migrations – we must consider the effects of identitary nature.[6]

The crisis of global finance is in fact generated by those who have no longer been able to support globalization, embodying its expectations, and who were the first to trigger an inverse and return process, from the global-ideal city to the real-present city. In the newly emerging condition, the demand of citizens to be an active part in the management of the city, considered as a common good, is always increasing. In the last decade, the conscious participation of citizens has been manifested above all into temporary practices and thematic events with the aim of redesigning small portions of the city's identities, enhancing cultural heritage, local roots and experimenting with new jobs.[7] These experiments have become prototypes of scalable, sustainable, high-widespread projects and have become the test bench for innovative methodologies and different design-driven processes of rehabilitation of the contemporary city.[8]

Fifty years after the most futuristic, ideal and science-fiction event ever happened –the moon landing– we have finally approached the year 2019. Not by chance, 2019 was advocated by the Ridley Scott's movie *Blade Runner* as a time where communities would be invited to leave the planet Earth to live in the "off-worlds colonies." In the present reality, it is worth starting from the cultural "recolonization" of our "many worlds on Earth" through creative practices and temporary events.

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6   Carola Hein, "Creative Practices. Bridging temporal, spatial, and disciplinary gaps", *European journal of creative practices in cities and landscapes,* no. 0 (2018): 1-5.

7   Peter Bishop and Lesley Williams. *The Temporary City*. (London, New York: Routledge, 2012).

8   Gianfrate, Valentina, Boeri, Andrea, Celaschi, Flaviano, Longo, Danila and Vai, Elena. "Design e tecnologia applicate al contesto urbano". *MD Journal*, no. 5 (2018): 186-195.

Temporary events as an opportunity to experience body, contents, containers

Both the territories not involved in global finance and those overturned by globalization, because of the crisis, have had to be re-invented. To that purpose, we look at the creatives, their movements of employment and self-management, already antic-ipated during the crisis of the Nineties, which saw in the aban-doned spaces of the city, ephemeral places in which creativity could be expressed through experiments of a temporary nature.[9]

Historicization of these experiences has come to us thanks to the happening of events [from Lat. *eventus -us*, der. to have hap-pen, to succeed] that were fundamental in the process of chang-ing the identity of those same places. For this reason, I justify my interest in deepening the role of the event in its ability to anticipate new identities, to intercept the continuous and latent mutations of the city that constantly changes.

In recent years, the literature on the processes of material and immaterial transformation of the cities has been substantially distinguished in operational manuals that synthesize bottom-up experiences of gradual re-appropriation – characterized usually by temporary uses of abandoned spaces – and in methodolog-ical essays that indicate the specialization strategies necessary to complete the transformation, often as the result of academic research and funded projects.

It is complex to frame the contemporary phenomenon, but, through the case histories collected in the operational manuals and those observed in their making, it is useful to delineate it through the constant elements that emerge:

- the temporary and original use of spaces in the city, through the occurrence of temporary events;

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9   Alinovi, Francesca. Arte di frontiera. New York Graffiti. (Milano: Mazzotta, 1984).

- the experimental use of city spaces through bottom up participation;

- the reuse of the city, through an unprecedented interaction between people, contents, places.

Tracing these constants makes it possible to categorize the processes that are activated during the events by naming them in relation to their potential growing impact on time, material and immaterial reality:

- processes of temporary reactivation of spaces, destined to have a minimal impact in the long term;

- processes of cogeneration of content, destined to have a great impact in the long term (such as design weeks);

- regeneration processes through the reuse of brownfield sites, the "recycling" of spaces, whose character is variously defined as "informal", "stratified", "in transition", "non-authorial".[10] "flexible" that are able to design and affirm new uses and therefore new identities.

The experience described in the *Manual for the temporary reuse of abandoned spaces in Italy*[11] combines both aspects of field experimentation and academic project, conducted by Temporiuso. net association, which has developed a tool kit by applying design processes and methods to the regeneration of underutilized assets in the post-industrial and post-global suburbs of Milan. In the interview with Stefano Boeri, reference is made to the publication *The European city of the 21st century: lessons in urban history* in which he describes how, in 2001, people were already maturing an awareness about the end of a system of spaces built in the Nineteenth century, which had progressively lost their function, not only those relating to industrial areas, but also spaces for exchange and care, such as large general markets and hospitals.

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10   Pippo Ciorra and Sara Marini (Eds.). *Re-cycle: strategie per l'architettura, la città e il pianeta.* (Milano: Electa, 2011).

11   Inti, Isabella, Cantaluppi, Giulia, Persichino, Matteo. *Temporiuso. Manuale per il riuso temporaneo di spazi in abbandono in Italia.* Milano: Altra Economia, 2014.

In the same year, it was published the book *Mutations*[12] by Rem Koolhaas within which the contribution on territorial transformations of the same Boeri was related to the USE project (Uncertain States of Europe) carried on by the research collective *Multiplicity*. Stefano Boeri tried to address one of the issues inherited from the transition to the new millennium, linked to the uncertainty of the future, on how to regenerate cities by reusing large gaps, also in light of the growing awareness that the number of inhabitants the metropolis would have grown to expect to 2015 the presence of 33 megalopolis of which 27 located in the less developed countries (Global Urban Observatory).[13]

The crisis of globalization has fortunately held back this growth of megalopolis, but it has not limited the growth of widespread empty spaces in all cities, not just European ones.

In the book *Riusiamo l'Italia*[14] listing more than 120 best practices, also published on the homonymous online site, Giovanni Campagnoli confirms the trend of temporary reuse as the first strategy carried out by young cultural start-ups and associations to revitalize "unconventional spaces" through a mixed public-private investment, aiming their transformation into creative spaces, for social and cultural impacts.

The value of reuse, declined in its counterpart "recycling", has received its consecration in the exhibition *Recycle. Strategies for architecture, the city and the planet*[15] curated by Pippo Ciorra and Sara Marini at the MAXXI museum in Rome. Accompanying the Miur Prin 2010-11 funding, the research has expanded and has involved ten architectural departments of Italian universities

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12   Stefano Boeri and Multiplicity, Rem Koolhaas and Harvard Design School Project on the City, Sanford Kwinter and Daniela Fabricius, Hans Ulrich Obrist, Nadia Tazi. Mutations. Barcelona: Actar, 2001.

13   Boeri, Stefano (Ed.). *Multiplicity USE: Uncertain States of Europe*. Milan: Skira, 2003.

14   Giovanni Campagnoli. *Riusiamo l'Italia. Da spazi vuoti a start-up culturali e sociali*. (Milano: Il Sole 24 Ore, 2014).

15   Ciorra, Pippo and Marini, Sara (Eds.). *Re-cycle: strategie per l'architettura, la città e il pianeta*. Milano: Electa, 2011.

that have developed analyses which explore the theme in the various urban planning disciplines, of architecture and law. The proposals to reinvent the city were summarized in the *Re-cycle Manifesto* by Mosè Ricci and published in the Agenda *Re-cycle*.[16] Given the enormous work of research, comparison and publications, the limit of this project is, from my point of view, to consider Recycle an agenda that must be delivered to politics. The whole project is already a political, economic and social agenda without mediations and could be immediately implemented. The hope is that creatives and designers turn it into reality: the radical nature of recycling lies in fact in the immediacy of its creative action as experimentation of new relationships. In the experiences mapped, the experimental phase is in the hands of the creatives who, through self-organized processes, look for new spaces to recreate new relationships and new identities.

Creativity, applied to design-driven processes staged during events, becomes therefore a continuous exploration tool of the city and a means for verifying the hypothesis of reactivating spaces through events,[17] looking for temporary, small-scale solutions, hopefully shared.[18]

The event, intended as an opportunity for encounter and unexpected interaction between people and places, is by its nature transformative of places, it is experimental in its ability to test new technical and technological discoveries, it is performative for the involvement of users, it is generative of new processes of relationship and it is a means of social innovation.[19]

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16   Enrico Fontanari and Giuseppe Piperata. *Agenda RE-CYCLE*. (Bologna: il Mulino, 2017).

17   Charles Landry. *The Creative City: A Toolkit for Urban Innovators*. London and Sterling, VA: Routledge, 2012.

18   Cristina Bianchetti. *Territori della condivisione. Una nuova città.* (Macerata: Quodlibet, 2014).

19   Elena Vai. (Ed.). *Cultura, creatività, industria. Culture del progetto e innovazione di sistema in Emilia-Romagna*. Milano: luca sossella, 2017.

Creative heritage as strategy to cultivate future identities of the city

Are there specific spaces that allow the staging of experimental and creative forms of operation?

These experimentation forms are expressed above all in activities of unreleased co-belonging between those who experiment and the places that are no longer used in the city and are in a state of abandonment and decay. Creatives are looking for new places and freed spaces are looking for new content. The relationship that is established is original and open, in which the subjects acquire new identities and the objects new vocations.

In the contemporary city the concept of "open-city" is already in crisis, closely connected to the effects of de-territorialization of European towns, to the loss of the link between city, community and its territory. The open-city concept had become a conscious object of attention from the end of 2009 with the Architecture Biennial in Rotterdam.[20] In the initial phase of the global financial crisis, there was not yet awareness of the open-city concept, but we lived passively, indeed we suffered the new phenomenon that was not yet recognized as an open city, but that had common outcomes in different cities, such as the accumulation of vacant buildings and abandoned areas, especially in peripheral areas but not only.

This loss of "material" connection, related to the processes of globalization, has produced "virtual" contaminations, hybridizations, open-source creations, creative commons databases in terms of cultural productions, but it has also destabilized the symbolic link between cities, citizens, heritage and territory. In the last decade, the progressive participation of citizens in the imagination of the city and its cultural and relational heritage is the most efficient way to make the continuous mutation of cities

20   Tim Rieniets, Jennifer Siegler and Kees Christiaanse. *Open City: Designing Coexistence*. Amsterdam:Uitgeverij SUN, 2009.

sustainable.[21] The reverse bottom-up process that is emerging is justified by the overcoming of the paradigm of the contemporary immaterial—the city of flows, of the computerized and informatic multilayers[22]—through social street movements that use the technology and the social networks but encourage collaboration and the real encounter of the neighborhood communities of the city, through the civic crowdfunding and the renewed need for participation, after the virtual immersion that social media have granted. Nevertheless the digital revolution, through mobile applications, has exalted every sort of service to the citizen (low-cost flights, private car transport services, e-shops for any kind of goods) and has changed the everyday experiences of the city.

In less than a decade, the phenomenon of Ryanair or Airbnb have had a great impact in the mutation of large, medium to small cities in Europe that have become "postcard city", confirming the anticipatory reading made by Richard Ingersoll (2004) of the risks cultural and social services of global tourism. It is therefore urgent to reflect on the cross-eyed vision of the world that we are progressively adopting, driven by a need for localized and real relationship on one hand and the temptation offered on a world scale of possible and unlimited social but virtual relations on the other.

Following the success of Airbnb, the affirmation of a more conscious use of digital platforms—to promote the real "diving" within the city and make them rediscover through their creative practices and identifying spaces—is found in temporary experiences such as *Open House London*, which uses the web only as a vehicle to promote his format. Born at the beginning of the Nineties of the last century by the collective called Open-City, the model of temporary opening of public and private buildings, characterized by architectural value, has been adopted by more than

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21 Consiglio D'Europa. (2005). Convenzione quadro del Consiglio d'Europa sul valore del patrimonio culturale per la società. Retrieved from https://www.coe.int/it/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/treaty/199. Accessed on: February, 2019.

22 Carlo Ratti and Matthew Claudel. *La città di domani. Come le reti stanno cambiando il futuro urbano*, (Torino: Einaudi, 2017).

35 cities in the world. A two-day format of guided tours, in which training, tourism and territorial marketing are integrated values. Over the decades, the selected openings of the architects' studios, internationally called Open Studios, have multiplied over this model, through itinerant events in different cities, organized and promoted by professional associations, which have contributed to the promotion of architects in years of deep crisis of the profession. Over the years, the temporary Open House format, thanks to the confirmation of the success of attendance by professionals and visitors (*Open House London* attracts more than 250,000 people), has been recognized by administrators as an excellent strategy for the enhancement of architectural heritage of entire districts transformed into creative districts. This process is similar to what happen during the Design Weeks—organized in hundreds of cities spread over the four continents, despite the "official" World Design Week network counted in 2018 the accession of just 21 cities—with the consequent reactivation of areas involved in the temporary event, which implies also social and economic impacts in the continuous development of the cities.

In all these cases, the "digital twin experience"—offered by the online site devoted to the promotion of the events—extends over time the experience, creating however a gap within the real experience in the city, which has to be always mediated by the body as authentic relationship with others. The body becomes thus the limit that globalization, extended reality and the immersive city want to overcome. Today, however, the limit, the real and the body come into play as authentic values, as the basis of relationships in living in cities. And the event is the phenomenon in which the limit as temporary, the real as experimentation, and the body, in its relationship with the spaces and contents, manifest themselves creatively, drawing future traces of new identities.[23]

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23   Flaviano Celaschi, Elena Formia and Elena Vai. *La città mutante come materializzazione dei futuri: sfide ed etiche*. p 28-35. *Urban tracks*, no. 28. 2018: 28-35.

Conclusions

The cultural heritage of the cities is continually transformed in relation to the storytelling of the relationship between citizens, spaces and contents updated in those spaces. The actors who are most consciously involved in the transformation of material and cultural heritage, generally belong to the creative sector. However, when we talk about cultural and creative industries we are not bound by a specific field and we meet many disciplines according to cross-fertilization processes: art investigates new technologies, technologies look at communication, communication looks at design, design looks at architecture, architecture looks at culture, culture at politics, politics at society, society is inspired by cultural heritage, and the circle is completed to start new trajectories. Today design driven processes fall into principles, methods, and rules that are recognized in society as a whole. This awareness of the discipline of design, the bearer of methodologies that extend from within the industrial processes to all disciplines, has become pervasive in the circular society. The reasoning is none other than the rediscovery of how civilizations have always been formed. Design culture—critically putting itself in discussion, offering and staging through an anatomy of its objects and its principles and methods of work—helps to understand how to revolutionize the next life cycles of cities. Today cultural events are celebrated in their phenomenal quality and in their ability to experiment, to communicate and to define new creative and social assets,[24] which are necessary to generate future identities and are efficient ways to make the continuous change of cities sustainable.

24   Montalto, Valentina, Jorge Tacao Moura, Carlos, Langedijk, Sven, Saisana, Michaela. The Cultural and Creative Cities Monitor. 2017. Retrieved from https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/publication/eur-scientific-and-technical-research-reports/cultural-and-creative-cities-monitor-2017-edition. Accessed on: February 19th, 2019.

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