4th ISUFitaly International Conference | Bari, 26-28 september 2018

READING BUILT SPACES

Cities in the making and future urban form

edited by
Paolo Carlotti
Loredana Ficarelli
Matteo Ieva

Politecnico di Bari

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International Seminar on Urban Form
Italian Network
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Contacts
Phone: +396 49919133
Fax: +396 49919240

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Loredana Ficarelli
Matteo Ieva

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Cities in the making and future urban form

Presentation

The city is an "organism in the making", an entity in constant transformation, not a complex of immutable elements. The city represents the entire human experiential field of the world, considered as expression of a "fundamental movement of existence" in its completeness and historicity, expressed by the formative structure of tissues and building types, by the urban hierarchies, by the relations with the territory, by the social relations, and by the values and criticalities.
The conference's aim is to propose a dialectical comparison between scholars of Architecture, Urban Planning, Urban History, Restoration, Geography, on the theme of urban morphology with an interpretative perspective based on the concept of "operating history". Search for a multidisciplinary syncretism that eludes single analyzing techniques and aims to the complete reconstruction of the urban phenomenology in its totality and concrete essence, through the study of the changing and inflexible condition of 'fluidity' hinged on the world's events. An integrated thought based on the critical concept of 'making' that constitutes, phase by phase, the signifying element of each present, explained through the relationship between the before and the after: that is the research perspective of 'being' that announces the notion of transformational process.
Therefore, the projection in the future of the urban form is the central theme of the conference that proposes to stimulate the reflection on the issues as: recovery (not only of the historical city), re-use of existing urban spaces, regeneration, ex novo design in peripheral and peri-urban areas and natural spaces. All that, without neglecting the issue of sustainability, not considered with the strabismus of those who surrender to the "technique" pre-domain.

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B.1 Urban form between architecture and landscape
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The Right to architecture seen as "diligent research". Form of dissent, reclaiming space practices and the power of the project

Nicola Marzot

DA Dipartimento di Architettura, Università di Ferrara, Via Quartieri 8, 44100, Ferrara, Italy
TU Delft University, Department of Architecture and the Built Environment, Julianalaan 134, 2628BL, Delft, The Netherlands
[1]mrzncl@unife.it

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In the field of architectural and urban design, Modernity shows off itself as the liberation of rationality from the prejudices and limitations of history. As an immediate consequence, the existing city was banned and the new one was raised through an act of abstraction with a clear political significance (Marzot, 2014). Furthermore, Modernity claimed being not the result of emerging new conventions but as the natural answer to the rediscovery of a logic inherent to all human beings since ever, propelled by the industrial capitalism, considered its own more objective interpreter. This position started being questioned from post-modernity onward, by arguing the supposedly universal rationality was nothing more than a language, as such equivalent to all possible languages (Rossi, 1966). As a consequence, architectural and urban design started reflecting upon the new condition of modernity as the effect of a crisis resulting from the subversion of its socio-economic premises. In the emerging perspective, the Heritage of Modernity equals that of any other precedents (Monestiroli, 2004) and appears as the new goal. This paper aims at investigating the effect of this strategic shift both in the design practice (Ungers, 1978) and theory (Caniggia and Maffei, 2017). Different positions are compared by selecting texts and projects. The purpose is twofold: to consider the relation between urban morphology and building typology as the foundation of the new design strategies and to emphasize the emergence of a meta-linguistic approach to architecture. Globalization and its crisis seems to have opened a new perspective, where the project appears not anymore as a discipline but as the unpredictable premises of any possible science.

1. PROLOGUE THE HUMAN CRISIS

1.1 Man is outdated

According to Umberto Galimberti, who is considered one of the most articulate interpreters of the contemporary era, we have for several decades been the involuntary protagonists of the apparently unstoppable crisis of the concept of man. In support of a paradoxical, and in some ways disconcerting thesis, the author repeatedly invokes the argument of technique, captured in its progressive egress from the horizon of reference of classical-humanistic thought (Galimberti, 1999). In this perspective, technique no longer appears as an instrument through which the living body - or the *lieb*, clearly distinct from the *korpen* as a "conditioned" body (Husserl, 2002)- emancipates itself from its programmatic condition of structural inadequacy with respect to nature, in which it is involuntarily "thrown", but now presents itself as the very "environment" in which man is provocatively "called" to act. Paraphrasing Gunter Anders, one of Heidegger's most prolific and intellectually restless pupils, it follows that "man is outdated" (Anders, 2002). In fact, from an original "civil servant of the species", as Schopenhauer himself had already predicted (Schopenhauer, 2002), he has, without his knowledge, become a "civil servant of the technique". Galimberti, following a long tradition of thinking initiated by Anna Harendt (Harendt, 1964), who finds one of her most illustrious followers in Giorgio Agamben (Agamben, 1996), maintains that it was the organisation of concentration camps, in its perverse dynamics and dramatic rituals, that decreed the irreversible end of the Anthropocene (Caffo, 2017).

In all honesty, this is the completion of a project intentionally pursued by the bourgeois culture, launched in the aftermath of the Enlightenment revolution, which was very clearly explained in the above-mentioned terms, with the primary objective of expelling the "Other" from the very idea of modern society, through its progressive colonisation. It is not by chance that the premise of the phenomenon, which Agamben defines as a disconcerting "being outside from within" (Agamben, 1995), is found in the particular historical conditions that, demonising the social role of religions, considered as the source of superstition and obscurantism that Reason must do away with without reservation, will lead Nietzsche to prophetically affirm, in a statement that sounds unusually provocative still today, that "God is dead" (Nietzsche, 1977).

1.2 The colonisation of the "Other"

However, it is up to Carl Schmitt, considered the most eminent international law scholar and theoretician who appeared in the "short" century, to have grasped the basic premise of "modern thinking" in the colonisation process of the *New Lands* (Schmitt, 1991). The conquest of the Americas, to Schmitt, is not only the premise of a socio-economic-political revolution, but even more an unprecedented reversal of the paradigms of thinking, which becomes progressively modern through the affirmation of the colonisation process as a working practice of the nascent modern State form. The overcoming of the Pillars of Hercules, symbolically evoked by the *Plus Ultra* motto, which stands out on the heraldic coat of arms of the royal house of Castile, which promoted it materially and claimed its historical supremacy, evokes a crucial phase in the European civilisation process, of which the adventure narrated in the *Odyssey* is still the unsurpassed archetype today. This project reveals, in Schmitt's interpretation, the most devastating provocation addressed to Western culture by Modernity itself, indirectly called to account for its choices and its work. In fact, in that surpassing, which is reflected on both the factual and mental level, the overcoming of the "Nomos" manifests itself for the first time, well beyond the fascinating claims of the Myth. Although the term, etymologically speaking, expresses the concept of "pasture", that is, of an instrumentally bent nature, with the maximum economy of means, to the primordial needs of anthropic living, the indissoluble link between architecture and law can be found in it. In fact, for Schmitt, the "Nomos" expresses the archetypal power that, through the original subdivision of the soil, on which it inscribes its own implicit order, literally becomes space on the indefinite terrestrial surface, circumscribing its own action and establishing the law as a mnestic trace of its pro-

cess and an "attempt", sought by trial and error, of which it becomes an explicit "sign" (Pareyson, 1988). In this way, in itself necessarily conflictual, the conventional meaning of space and law takes on importance, and the responsibilities connected with the reciprocal implications become binding for all those who recognise its validity[1]. The centrality of the concept, which implies the pre-eminence of the body, in the sense of the aforementioned *lieb*, as a system of measurement and development of values, is destabilised for the first time by reaching the New Lands, without it yet recognising a form of explicit intent. In fact, in overcoming the proverbial Pillars of Hercules, Schmitt saw the sudden reversal of trend in the millennial process of anthropisation, no longer in favour of the land, and its conquest, but prospectively facing the sea, increasingly the object of a desire impossible to capture, despite the continuous attempts promoted in its favour, destined to prove itself as a convincing metaphor of Kant's "infinite evil" (Schmitt, 2002). Cacciari himself, who has critically re-read Schmitt's thoughts in the context of a more general update of so-called political theology, recognises in the process of de-territorialisation implicit in the dismissal from the "Nomos" - although he has historically postponed its affirmation with respect to its first manifestations (as we shall shortly argue) - a reversal of the trend that sanctions the apparently irreversible divorce between space and law (Cacciari, 2004). Therefore, the conquest of the sea, initiated by the unexpected reaching of the Caribbean coasts, completely randomly, coincides in fact with the progressive resolution and dissolution of all the symbolic ties that have come to define the sense of community within the tradition of thought consolidated in the Old Continent, with respect to which the New one offers itself as the "Other", in which all forms of political, cultural, economic and social dissent, in search of a promise of absolute freedom, soon will be provocatively called to "precipitate", initiating a rite destined to repeat itself, from generation to generation, without apparent suspension. Even more so, the conquest of the sea decrees the progressive discharge, destined to become a real farewell, from the structuring link between space and law, made possible by the performative-conformative-normative presence of the *lieb*. Tafuri, although not directly referring to the unsurpassed and still very topical lessons of the German jurist, is first to argue in disciplinary terms the impact on architecture of that reversed perspective. Reflecting on the culture of the Urban Plan in America, the Roman historian saw it as the completion of a process of problematic splitting, not only on a purely political level, between the State and the Market (Tafuri, 1973). The former, in fact, becomes the place where the expression of a purely formal democracy takes shape, willing to guarantee the latter an autonomy, never granted to the third state in its "continental" development phase, provided that the new entrepreneurship acts in exclusively economic terms and does not aspire to claim roles of institutional representation[2]. It is, indirectly, the delegitimisation of the aforementioned triangulation in which, quoting Pareyson, the "doing", while doing, progressively meets its own rules, acquiring consciousness and translating into a "know-how" that claims the role of representation of the former. In this way, architecture is bound to lose its original autonomy and significance. Forced to operate within a false horizon of reference and freedom, which in fact does not allow it to be translated into an indissoluble link between space and law - in this sense prejudicially obliged by that same law, embodied in the Plan, which is the operative expression of the Enlightenment "logos", which precedes it and conditions its course - architecture helplessly witnesses its loss of role and corresponding civil responsibility, becoming the "bachelor machine" of that same corporate culture. The return flow of Eclecticism from the New Continent, where it fully expresses the perspective of the multiculturalism of the early settlers, to the Old one, in which it is reduced to historicist rhetoric, is a phenomenon that is mostly unexplored, or a potentially very fertile field of research, which allows to document the effects generated by the loss of the space-law link within a discipline now resigned to become a nostalgic meta-narrative of an illustrious, by now remote past. If the logic of the "list", launched by the *Encyclopédie*, is confirmed as overcoming that organically organised and hierarchical knowledge, which the *Ancien Régime* elects as its own foundation, strategically used by the Enlightenment's

1 As a spatialised law, the *nomos* precedes its established representation, the *logos*.

2 In this sense, Tafuri's position is resolutely pessimistic with respect to the nature of the constitutional pact underwritten by the American people, in the enthusiastic terms in which Anna Harendt refers to it (Harendt, 2017).

maîtres à penser in order to promote the delegitimisation of its own political antagonist, the architectural catalogue, initiated by the abstract logic of the *Précis* by J.N.L. Durand (Durand, 1802), of which the eclectic drift is the inevitable conclusion, is the necessary complement. Technique, for the first time in the history of the West, divorces itself from reason, translating into a simple valueless resource, freed from any conventional implication, and from the power system it embodies, in order to make itself absolutely available to a combinatorial logic that, claiming a pre-eminence of both time and space, acts as a universal presumption[3]. In reality, we are witnessing a dangerous precedent, which anticipates in problematic terms the issues that Galimberti ascribes to Modernity in the broad sense. In fact, what is clearly presented as a legitimate political choice, in contrast to that made by the *Ancien Régime*, is in fact presented as the "natural" and "inevitable" outcome of a process of liberation from a millenary historical prejudice, which would have forgotten Reason as an indisputable source of Absolute Truth (Guénon, 2014). The "urban forest" predicted by Abbot Laugier, as a visionary expression of bourgeois living, significantly destined to be included after the model of Corbusier's *Ville Radieuse*, thus becomes the operating metaphor of a return to nature, not to be understood as a mere *viaticum*, but as the ultimate destination. The exodus from pre-revolutionary "sovereign captivity", in this way, does not imply a "promised land". On closer inspection, the way in which modern thought insists on identifying, in purely logical terms, industrial and natural processes, reproduces the same ideological premise elaborated by philosophers. The colonisation of the "Other" has thus been definitively accomplished.

1.3 Post- and Hyper-Modernity

940 It follows that what is Modern presents itself as a "crisis project" (Biraghi, 2005), no longer understood in terms of the messianic premise of a new world, but identified as a world itself, which man, by now reduced to a "dimension", seems condemned to inhabit, performing on the urban scene, in spite of himself, the paradoxical condition of a "Chained Prometheus". It should therefore come as no surprise to us how the reflection on "living", started between the two wars in the short 20th century and destined to last uninterruptedly until today, even through different interpretations and continuous contamination between knowledge, expresses a form of obvious dissent towards the aporias of Modern thinking. Similarly, it is not surprising how the "presence of the past", paraphrasing the title of the first Venice International Architecture Biennial Exhibition of 1980, with which it is customary to introduce, at least in historiographical terms, post-modern architecture, is an extreme, out of time attempt to recompose that which has been shattered (Cellini, D'Amato, De Bonis and Farina, 1980). In this sense, it is no coincidence that, despite the diversity of approaches, which cannot be reduced to a uniquely determined position, the common denominator of the proposals turns out to be a critical reinterpretation of the relationship between Urban Morphology and Building typology. Such a disciplinary approach, confirmed in explicit antagonism to the pervasive power of Urbanism - the legitimate heir of Enlightenment Rationality - at least from the late 1950s, thanks to Saverio Muratori's pioneering studies, has nonetheless by now exhausted the original provocative thrust (Muratori, 1959/60). It is no longer about that unprecedented reflection on the city's life cycles, with the aim of bringing out the aporias of International Rationalism, whose assumed universality is manifested through the necessity of the Plan, but about its compromising outcome. If by now "the king is naked" and Rationalism, in its various meanings, reveals an inescapable conventional character - even in the absence of a process of legitimation that justifies it as such - thus reducing itself to language, like the others - its overcoming is celebrated, following a problematic shortcut, through the kaleidoscopic multiplication, and the implicit equivalence, of languages and methods, deprived of historical contextualisation and levelled on the "eternal present". The misunderstanding produces

3 In this way architecture is reduced to a simple production, whose value is limited to the producing (the combined logic of the compositional method, or the *Parti*) and to the product (the whole as a result of the composition, or the *Ensemble*). The technique acts as a simple *a priori* datum, deprived by now of any conventional meaning.

devastating results: instead of leading to the overcoming of the logic of the Plan as such, the criticism of rationalism only leads to the proliferation of codes that the Plan allows for as its possible interpretations, which will be all the more important, the greater the degree of freedom that is rhetorically pursued. Overseas culture becomes the dominant model. The business market is simply replaced by the language market; material work/goods are replaced by intellectual work/goods. To inhabit the "Other", in this perspective, simply implies the choice of the code that is considered more suitable to one's own needs and to the relative *mise*-en-*scène*. In such a scenario, there is only one voice of clear dissent. In a masterly essay, *Delirious New York*, Rem Koolhaas tells the story of the epic clash between Architecture and Plan that took place in the American metropolis between the end of the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth century and the skilful stratagem[4] through which the former claims to have power over the latter (Koolhaas, 1978). In fact, by pushing the use of the options that come with the new materials and technological patents to the extreme, corporate culture is progressively able to free itself from the cogency of the Plan, reduced to a temporary construction site, progressively voided of any form of legitimacy, within which to experiment with a new prototype, which slowly reveals itself as a retroactive manifesto through which the relationship between urban morphology and building typology can find an unexpected relevance: the hybrid building[5]. In this perspective, *Bigness* is increasingly defined as a Promethean thrust, pragmatically projected in search of itself, finally freed from the improvident chains of universal rationality embodied in the *Grid*, through which architecture aspires to identify with the city (Koolhaas, 1995). The "delirium", as Cacciari recalls, refers to the overcoming of the implicit limit of the Plan as a minimum instrument of containment of entrepreneurial anarchy and, at the same time, expresses the possibility that architecture can once again incarnate that limit, shaping a legitimisation process, from which that same Plan, in the modern meaning of the term, is missing. Thus, it becomes a reference in which to inscribe and circumscribe the idea of a clearly post-modern community (Cacciari, 2004). Koolhaas's young hopes would soon be thwarted by events destined to promote forms of exasperated cynicism with respect to the expectations that have matured. In fact, during the same years in which the Dutch scholar wrote his own essay, capitalism began to transform, from industrial to financial (Sassen, 1997). By overcoming the equivalence between currency and availability of gold reserves, and the progressive liberalisation of the credit instrument, it not only definitively removes the very concept of limit from Western culture, decreeing its uselessness for the purpose of an understanding of the present time, but it also leads to extreme consequences for the de-territorialisation and de-reification process already initiated by Modern thinking. The globalisation processes succeed in destabilising national borders, decreeing the progressive dissolution of state sovereignty and of the relevant institutions, in fact voided of any form of legitimacy, introducing an unprecedented number of resources to the international markets and allowing potential citizens/consumers to discover the option of freeing themselves from the relative socio-economic conditioning of which they must bear the burden. Persuasion is promoted through extraordinarily facilitated and apparently unreserved access to credit. The provocative call of the "money god" feeds a new lifestyle, which is widely generalised and clearly beyond individual possibilities, nonetheless disrespectful of a prudential correspondence between wealth produced through one's own work and the level of debt contracted, thus contributing to exacerbating the collective deficit and leading to an asymptotic identification between desires and possibilities. In the face of a silent minority that, by culture and tradition, resists the seductive power of the "sirens" of the so-called creative finance, the majority becomes angry, unaware of the fact that the condition of promised freedom is actually based on the "chains" of debt. The system is so perverse that, in order to free oneself from a condition of financial distress, one is often forced to resort to further forms of exposure, thus fuelling an endless spiral without means of escape. When money becomes a commodity in itself, what was presented as a tool to reach the "promised land" translates into an end and often, the end of every possible imagined world, confirming the compulsion to repeat the heterogenesis of ends in "Modern Thinking". Thus, the initial

4 This is, without a doubt, an effective update of the Trojan horse.

5 In this way, the pre-eminence of technology, understood as *praxis*, over its normalisation for productive purposes, in the form of *poiesis*, finds full expression in modern times.

euphoria, associated with the condition of freeing oneself from the narrowness of the previous life, whose circumscribed horizon of reference inhibits the very possibility of seeing "beyond" and "differently", is soon replaced by a condition of widespread panic, generated by the fear of not being able to honour the contracted debts. Life, dreamed of in this way, can quickly degenerate into a nightmare from which it is difficult to wake up. Once again, the colonisation of *elsewhere* is expressed through the imposition to inhabit that which is not habitable: the exterminated field of vagueness, uncertainty and multi-voiced rationality. Once again the words with which Carl Schmitt, in the conquest of the heavens, after that of the seas, had already glimpsed at the last phase of dissolution of the *Nomos* and the loss of significance of the concept of space in the construction of the rules of civil coexistence in modern times, sound prophetic (Schmitt, 2015). The acceleration induced by the globalisation processes, in fact, leads to measuring everything in terms of time. Whilst distances are now defined in hours and minutes, and no longer in kilometres and metres, the technique that governs ultramodern time is Logistics, the successor to Urban Planning, which proves to be outdated, as it claims the management of the processes of transformation of space. Similarly, the instruments available to the former to manage time are the infrastructures for the mobility of goods, material and immaterial, people and resources, increasingly organised in an intermodal logic, while the latter still involves settlement models in their interscalar variability (FIG. 1). Living in the present means being citizens of an "ecumenopolis" founded on the unlimited possibility of moving within a surface that tends to be neutral, taking advantage of all the possibilities that arise there, with respect to which the value of architecture and the city is increasingly reduced to the sole function of facilitated access to the theoretically unlimited possibilities of the network, of which they define the strategic nodes (Marzot, 2018).

1.4 The Post-human Condition

In spite of the current extensive literature on the reasons that have led to the financial capitalism crisis, in the aftermath of the collapse of sub-prime mortgages in the international market, basically sought within the relative structural complexity, supported by sophisticated algorithms that have escaped the control of those in charge, the eminently political meaning of the impact has been completely underestimated. After all, it involved the foreseeable consequences of a defective process, slow yet relentless, surreptitiously initiated ahead of time, which robbed financial capitalism of the necessary support by those who had decreed its global success: the citizens/consumers of the globalised world. In this perspective, the distressing landscape of ruins resulting from the phenomenon of the abandonment of disused areas and buildings, well beyond the prefigured horizon through disposal processes during the post-industrial phase, expresses an unprecedented "form of dissent" by a new proletariat that has become aware of itself through a "negative dialectic", that is, by avoiding the growing indebtedness and the unbearable psychological and material burden as a form of contractualised government action, in the present time, of perverse complicity between national governments and international financial dynamics. It is therefore an unprecedented crisis, in that it is not generated by the capitalist system itself and its allies, which can be interpreted in terms of the master/slave dialectic of Hegelian memory, although it has been reversed in a mirror image of its original formulation. The latter, in fact, realising that the richness of the former derives from the latter's work, deliberately removes the latter from the system of reciprocal implications and conveniences, on which mutual recognition is based - made possible by syntheses - making it available for a new adventure of the spirit, unfolding through an unprecedented test/antithesis relationship. If then, as in this case, the Lord has no face but that of an impersonal system - represented by financial entrepreneurship alien to the territorial dynamics, prejudicially recognised by the State, through governmental action, and legitimised subsequently by the complicity of the Slave, who gave in to his flattery of happiness and life prospects in a better world - the manifested dissent acts retroactively as a form of dismissed power compared to that falsely established, encouraged by the additional disenchantment with respect to the latter. The progressive dissolution of the financial world, reduced to a *Great Space* without internal boundaries (Schmitt, 2015), leads to a profound change in the role of architecture. In fact, the globalised world presents itself as a

simple hypothesis among the many possible ones, recklessly endorsed by a democracy that has by now degenerated into a "governmental" form, disrespectful of the demands emerging from the territory, imposed with the complicity of the States, in a desperate attempt to survive the current delegitimisation, favouring relations of power that are explicitly extraterritorial whilst explicitly becoming their instrument. Whilst the wicked pact between financial and administrative power inevitably promoted a generic architecture, at most legitimised by the cult of personality imposed by the star system, its unstoppable deterioration has been reducing constructions to sheer quantitative data.

2. DIALOGUE. TO FREE ONESELF FROM THE INDETERMINATE

2.1 The identification process

Although it may seem paradoxical, *xenophilia* is the necessary, albeit not sufficient, premise for every process of identification and mutual recognition (Simondon, 2001). In fact, through the progressive openness towards the "Other" we free ourselves from any form of prejudice, through which our "social-historical" being is expressed, on whose implicit conditioning our "individual" being depends[6]. The liberating function of this opening, however, is nothing more than the simple premise of the process mentioned, the tool/phase through which identification and recognition can take place (Marchesini, 2016). Tending to the "Other" does therefore not mean identifying with and in the "Other" - and even less "colonising" it - but relating to in a relationship of mutual involvement; through it and, in so doing, accepting to challenge oneself completely. This is the original, and radically adventurous, meaning of any dialogical relationship in Western thinking, the success of which we can never take for granted. The structure of dialogue, as Plato teaches us, is never between individuals who are already in a position to understand themselves, or who can assume "communicability" (Agamben, 1996), but between subjects who work together to create the conditions so that it is possible to reach an agreement, ending up constituting its occurrence medium. Dialogue, in this sense, is a process of construction of meaning that presumes an asymmetrical relationship, that goes beyond any form of conventionality, in order to re-found its premises[7]. As we have tried to argue, the "original sin" of Modernity, as a "crisis project", is not, therefore, that of having artfully provoked the escape from an existing value system - which constitutes, in itself, the necessary scope of every crisis- but of not having created the conditions to replace the existing ones with new values. It is not by chance that this is Nietzsche's thesis when he speaks of Nihilism as the incurable evil that afflicts his time (Nietzsche, 1975). This happened simply because that liberation from existing conditioning, necessary but not sufficient to pursue new horizons of meaning, from a simple means has been translated into an end, decreeing the conclusion of an entire way of thinking based on its instrumentality[8]. The absolute freedom that potentially derives from it, and that can, as such, literally terrify, only allows one form of conditioning, to prevent the onset of dangerous anarchist drifts: the government of Reason. The presupposition of its existence, as for Man, is the unexpected on which Modernity is based. The result is the aporia that Modernity itself has tried in vain to remedy by extending the scientific method beyond the confines of the natural world, effectively initiating the development of the so-called social sciences, and thus removing the

6 In spite of Rationalism, in its various forms, according to which the "I" would constitute the foundation of every form of collective thinking, Realism maintains, through the disciplinary contribution of Social Ontology, that the individual dimension must presuppose a condition of mutual recognition as its principle of legitimisation, which precedes it temporally and structurally, represented by the pre-eminence of the "we" (Caffo, 2017). The weakness of the rationalist position, in this sense, would consist in exasperating the conventional nature of social reality, traceable to the form of the "pact" undersigned between the parties, finding an illustrious and completely instrumental precedent in natural law. In addition, the thesis of the non-existence of a reality other than that organised by the community of human beings would be implicitly confirmed, summed up in Nietzsche's peremptory affirmation, according to which "there are no facts only interpretations".

7 In the structure of the Platonic Dialogues it is Socrates who is always tasked with taking the discussion beyond the horizon of mutual understanding of participants, provoking an unprecedented reflection in both form and content, whose hidden *entelékheia* is to build a new common ground, i.e., an understanding at a higher level, not contemplated before the beginning of the confrontation.

8 It is a form of "heterogenesis of ends", as advocated by Giambattista Vico.

central problem of the political foundation, and of the relative legitimacy, of both terms. In fact, if the original task of politics is to ask oneself what man should be, by recording and circumscribing his role within a horizon of "social-historical" meaning and reference, in dynamic transformation (which constitutes his destiny, of which only man himself can claim paternity subsequently), the removal of the relative concept - as the result of a discussion that is constantly renewed over time, giving to this term the sense of History - is equivalent to reducing politics to the mere public administration, through the State, of private interests in a condition of perennial mutual conflict and competition, within the Market. This justifies, therefore, the attribution of "formal" to American democracy on the part of Manfredo Tafuri. Even more so the cogency of the Plan is explained, the instrumental expression of the Universal Reason, which constitutes the necessary embankment to the inevitable entropy generated by the continuous movement of molecular entrepreneurship[9]. New York's architectural "delirium", with respect to the abstractly containing function of the Grid, therefore stands for the intentionally provocative attitude of a movement, an expression of civil society that, through the instrumental function of technology, prometheically freed from administrative chains, becomes aware of itself, to the point of showing the option - without nonetheless claiming it - of a new way of understanding political practice through the construction of space. This, in fact, is the extreme meaning of the Retroactive Manifesto.

2.2 Resistance of the Urban Plan

Whilst the Plan, since its modern origin, exercises an eminently "containing" function of bourgeois exuberance, conventionally assumed as "absolute", which is freed from any form of historical prejudice, contemporary financial capitalism acts on the market as a propellant able to profoundly alter the initial molecular configuration of the enterprise, in favour of scaled variations, and of a critical mass, which act potentially in support of the process of claiming a (political) role, on the part of entrepreneurship, which has remained mostly latent, in the unconscious state, in the fore-running formulations experimented in the New Continent[10]. This has led to the delegitimisation of the sovereignty of nation-states, but at the same time has strengthened their instrumental function to the benefit of capitalism itself. Through the conformative role of the Plan, in fact, the States have guaranteed, at the different levels of territorial management, the "documentality" (Ferraris, 2009) nature of financial capitalism, thus confirming the paradox of "nominal" legitimisation in the absence of "real" legitimisation, which can only be derived from the territory and its internal dynamics, even when determined by the necessary reaction to external urging. This further reaffirms, at the same time as the new global proletariat explicitly "disobeyed" the imposition of the credit law - blatantly defusing the expectations of its promoters, plunging them into an unfathomable abyss - the need to delegitimise the instrument that capitalism itself has intentionally implemented in order to pursue its own logic (Marzot, 2016). This happened above all because the Plan continues to exercise the above-mentioned "documentary" function[11] in a totally hypothetical manner, i.e., without the conditions that can justify its expectations, or even by basing them on totally falsifiable premises. The plan's resistance should not surprise us. Social reality, especially in the interpretation given to it by analytical pragmatism (Searle, 1996), does nothing but express relations of power. The delegitimisation of the Plan, therefore, would imply the failure of those relationships that, through its "documentality", have been established. The Plan, therefore, today is positioned as a *katekon*, that is a "power that holds back" (Cacciari, 2012) the ongoing defective action and its ability to dissolve the symbolic

9 In this way, one can understand how the double public/private and State/Market dichotomy, to which the so-called formal democracy is simplistically reduced, is based on the opposition between Leviathan and the Multitude and goes into crisis mode when the latter, organised on the basis of oligopolistic cartels, takes on an unprecedented critical mass, beginning to claim political and government roles, the expression of civil society, as has increasingly happened since the 1980s, according to a trend that is still confirmed today.

10 This possibility is not made explicit in Koolhaas' study.

11 It is a representative delegation of interests expressed by the territory, with which the action of government must comply, in order to guarantee a correspondence between the "effects" produced and the legitimacy of the relative founding conditions. It follows that replacing the latter with hetero-directed factors inevitably produces the distortions that we are witnessing in the present time.

bonds on which social reality has been founded since the 1980s. Once the founding law of financial capitalism has been delegitimised from within, it becomes indispensable to distrust all the instruments it has used. This does not mean rejecting the Plan *tout court*, but every form of "documentality", i.e., the established representation of a social reality that becomes falsifiable because it does not correspond to the power relationships emerging within a territory, and based on them.

3. EPILOGUE: THE IDENTITY PROJECT

3.1 Recycling and urban regeneration

The culture of recycling, well beyond the limited horizon of meaning that has always provided its technological interpretation, has the strength to overcome the aporias of the Plan, or rather its inability to represent the relationships of power existing within the territory, if not even falsifying them, providing relative contradictions with full spatial evidence. This is possible simply because this culture is expressed through the very claim of the abandoned and/or underused sites in the city, in the process of being transformed, regardless of the hypotheses of enhancement suggested by the Plan.[12]. These spaces, made available by the crisis of the financial system and the collapse of the social reality based on it, have no real value, in social terms, except that nominally attributed to them by the Plan, with the aim of guaranteeing those budgetary values on which the entire credit system is based. Within this world, now clearly virtual, reactivating unused spaces through experimental practices has a precise political meaning. In fact, it implies the possibility that a new *Nomos*, based on a renewed "significant" separation from the earth, might emerge on the horizon, which would experimentally distinguish its parts and redefine the roles of man and the reciprocal relations of what is similar within new community forms (FIG.2). In this sense, it would be a Copernican revolution of the spirit with respect to the Modern way of thinking. Instead of hypothetically presuming the existence of rationality, and of man as its vehicle[13], without being able in this way to account for either one, rationality to which to preliminarily conform the organisation of Nature - and of the body - designated to carry its significant traces as if it were a neutral, basically indifferent support, it should be better to experiment with the simple possibility of existence, starting again from the interaction between body and environment. Phenomenology and Existentialism had already paved the way for the overcoming of recognised Rationalism, basing their own arguments on the spatial value of "coming to light". This lesson can be rehabilitated today, on condition that the event and the "occurrence" are not recognised as the ultimate form of the liberation of desire and imagination, degenerating into dangerous drifts of which we have been aware since the crisis of the 1970s. On the contrary, they must become the premises, through the comparison of the relative outcomes, for the political reformulation of new forms of conventionality of choices, on which to base social reality, through unprecedented processes of self-limitation. Only by giving back to architecture the dignity and by empowering the design, can it be understood as its legitimate representation, to which the construction of social reality can be traced, as a guarantee of the correspondence between premises and effects, avoiding the distortions that we are still witnessing today. This is, moreover, the accomplished meaning of Autonomy: to establish their own law through a process of self-determination.

3.2 The Right to Architecture

The constructivist misunderstanding on which the "falsifiability" of social reality is based, which has found its legitimising framework in modern Scientism and its last promoter in the financialised world, is derived from not recognising another reality outside of the socially constructed one. As it has been widely argued by New Realism (Ferraris, 2012), this depends on having artfully confused Ontology and Gnoseology, identifying the thing in itself with what

12 It is the same strategy described by Koolhaas, although it is exercised on a different scale.

13 These two premises are the operative assumption for every form of "falsifiability" of the social reality of which, paradoxically, the scientific method is proud (Popper, 2012).

we know about the thing itself. In this way the constructivists are precluded from knowing what they are looking for, i.e., social reality, because they prejudicially assume its foundation, i.e., man. The right to architecture, in this sense, means recognising that man is never "the one who is given", whose existence is presumed, but "the one who can be found" through diligent and continuous research, admitting the possibility of failure. This research is Architecture and claiming its right means not only recognising the political substance of man and the relations of reciprocity that he establishes with his fellow human beings within a community, but admitting that this cannot happen outside the claim of a space to inhabit and that this claim can only be tentative, proceeding by trial and error, with respect to a condition of structural eccentricity and inadequacy vis-à-vis the world, be it natural or cultural, in which we are thrown. In addition, it means admitting that Architecture, as a path towards truth, always precedes the project, which constitutes its "document", or the subsequent legitimisation, founding its social reality.[14]. The confirmation that we are not equipped to face the challenges that the world itself throws at us can be found, not by chance, in the need to be educated. Without such education we would live in a state of continuous disorientation and we would not be able to survive the resulting trauma. For this reason, one cannot inhabit what is indistinct, as the condemnation of what is Modern would have it. We can only live in what is separate, and hence limited, because the search for man and his identity is made by emancipating oneself from the infinite, from the undetermined and from the indistinct. The revaluation of architecture and its historical role consists precisely in the ability to free oneself from any law other than the law established by architecture itself in describing the path of cognitive self-limitation with respect to an endless horizon of possibilities, which constantly provokes us, pushing us towards a bottomless abyss, wrapped in the coils of a disorienting vertigo. If desire is at the same time "the possibility of being and not being" (Agamben and Deleuze, 2011) - or the *dynamis* of antiquity - architecture measures the critical distance that separates us from this state, impossible to inhabit, through that specific form of activity - or *energheia* - that is never separated from its own purpose and relevant effects. It is therefore a matter of understanding architecture as *praxis* (Harendt, 2017), distinguishing it from production understood as *poiesis*, i.e., a hierarchically ordered sequence of distinct operations aimed at pursuing a pre-established objective, and firmly claiming this right[15]. The ways and times of separation measure its quality as the ability to build a clearly defined space to live in, defining at the same time a specific and corresponding idea of man and community within which the former can find himself through defined relationships with his fellow human beings. In the knowledge that what was once found is not a given forever, but can be lost and called into question endless times (Simondon, 2001).

14 This is an important clarification with respect to the misunderstandings generated by an ambiguous definition of "documentality", as a form of power that establishes the social reality based on writing and not on the political decision that legitimises it, while preceding it. In this sense, affirming the pre-eminence of architecture over design means basing the value of convention on experience and its immanent nature, without which any subsequent narration and/or representation is inevitably "falsifiable", distorting its effects.

15 In order for *poiesis* to literally put social reality into practice, it must be founded on praxis, in fact representing it through a project, which constitutes the conventionally predetermined purpose, on the basis of historical belief, namely *doxa* (Marzot, 2017).

Figure 1. Since 1994, the Channel Tunnel Railway Link was conceived to give shape to a trans-European vision, capable of connecting France to England. The project confirms the delegitimisation of Urban Planning and the Plan through logistics and infrastructures. Controlling accessibility and flows implies governing territories, regardless of their vocations.

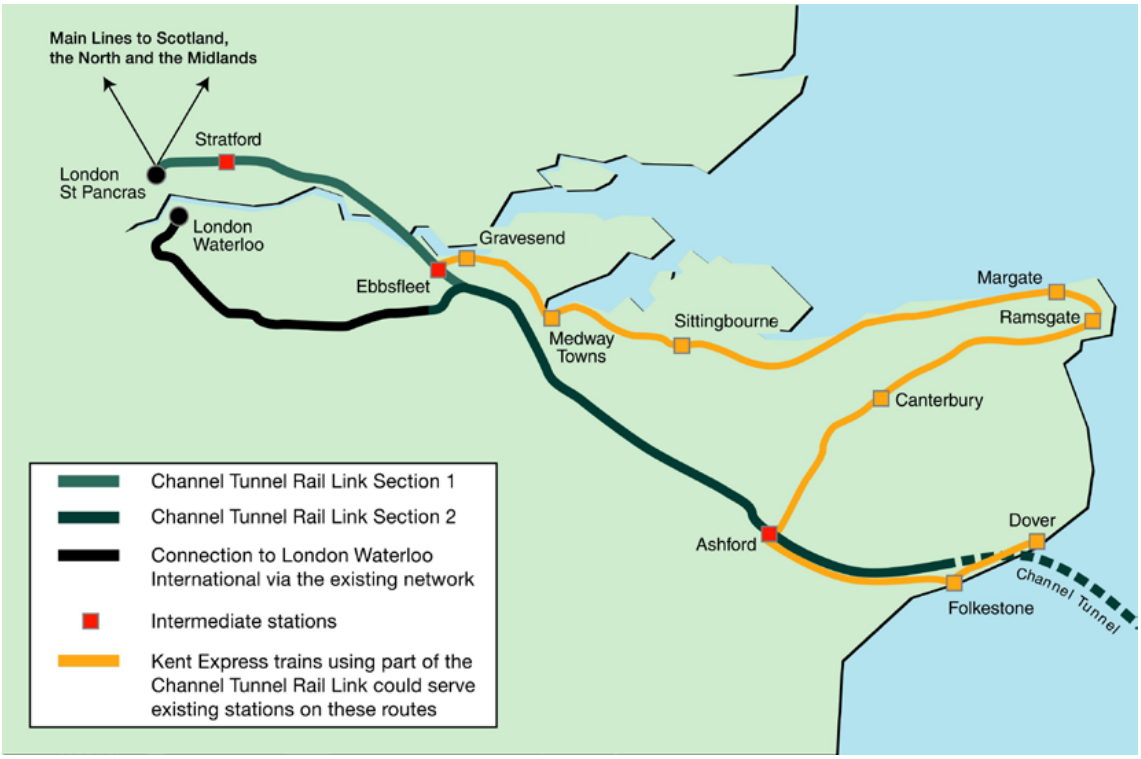

Figure 2. Former cargo terminal Ravone, Bologna. The internal perspective of an abandoned warehouse effectively expresses its potential to achieve fresh results. Due to the financial crisis, the development of the entire area has never begun, condemning the properties to fall into a provocative landscape of ruins. Heedless of the lack of surrounding conditions, in 2015 the Municipal Operative Plan legitimised the destiny of the sector to become a high-density urban district. The reactivation of spaces with temporary uses, affirming the experimental function of architecture as a practice, could contribute to prefiguring alternative scenarios, conforming them to the city's actual needs and suggesting prospects that the logic of the Plan is not structurally able to conceive. Despite this, the advantages of politics resist, confirming the alliance with the laws of finance and revealing themselves unconcerned with the change taking place.

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