

REVERSED ARCHEOLOGY

edited by PierAntonio Val

GINZBURG 2015-2020

International Network of Research and Teaching

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REVERSED ARCHEOLOGY

GINZBURG 2015-2020

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The International Network of Research and Teaching - INReTe wants to be a platform for critical dialogue, for ordering and comparing didactic and research experiences. It aims to offer an open space for reasoning where stimulate the interconnections and the comparison between different knowledge and skills on the project.

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Reversed Archeology

Ginzburg 2015-2020

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International

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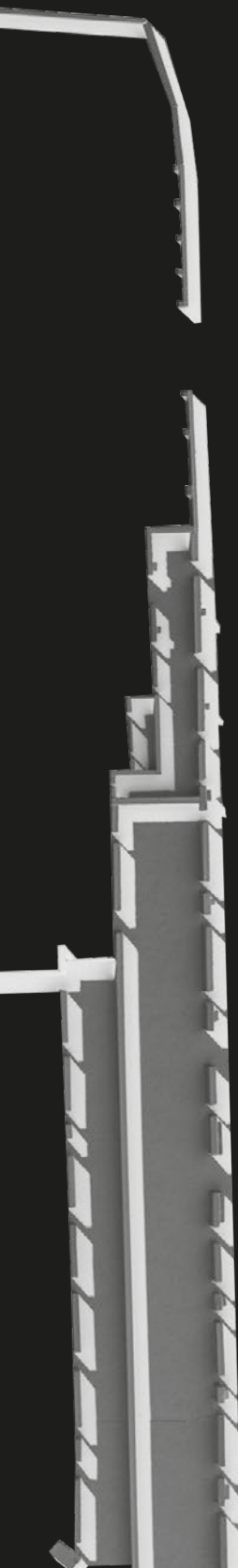
and the participation of



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ESSAYS

A Reversed Archeology

Ginzburg 15-20, the Metamorphosis of the Present
and the Pietas Latina

PierAntonio Val

“La forme d’une ville change plus vite, hélas! que le cœur d’un mortel”
Charles Pierre Baudelaire, *Le Cygne, Les Fleurs du mal*, 1857

One spring evening in 2015, I was having dinner with Hervé Dubois on the terrace of the hotel restaurant inside the Unité d’Habitation in Marseille. Professor Dubois had invited me to the School of Architecture in Marseille to hold a lecture and participate in a thesis jury, in the final year of the bachelor’s degree, where he was teaching. The purpose of the dinner was to discuss, *a posteriori*, the day’s work: the topics of the course, the quality of the students’ work, my lecture and the new projects that I had illustrated in the morning. The intent was to compare our mutual experiences and studies on the project, to discuss more generally the research and teaching methods of our two respective universities. There is nothing more normal between two professors and architects who share the passion and stubbornness necessary to hold together the difficult¹ complexity of the profession of “the architect-professor”.

In the pleasantness of the sunset with a view of the Mediterranean sea, however, the discussion took a turn that was no different, just more comprehensive. In fact, the dialogue was enriched by some considerations that had emerged from the observation of the environment. It all started with the restaurant menu. The dishes on the list seemed to evoke the atmosphere of a Michelin starred restaurant, as did the wine list. Wines like the Sauternes, certainly not inexpensive, were also displayed on the shelves of the grocery store on the “rue-corridor” inside the Unité. While walking along the “rue-corridor” waiting for dinner, I had been pleasurably surprised to see several people coming and going with glasses and snacks from various doors held open between the various lodgings, in proximity to each other. The intense coming and going took place in the custom of the residents sharing the collective rite of the evening aperitif. In those moments, the corridor looked like a crowded pedestrian street teeming with joyous relationships. In the same way at the same time, many people were jogging and exercising on the roof garden and/or chatting while watching the sunset.

¹ Nicola Emery, “L’architettura difficile, Filosofia del costruire” (The Difficult architecture, Philosophy of construction), Marinotti, Milano, 2007.

It seemed to me that inside the building there was a concrete expression of those objectives of functional and social integration, and more generally that role of “social condenser”, that the building was to have assumed to give substance to some of the aims and founding myths of the architecture of the modern era. These myths were the reasons for the form of the Unité.

There were many reasons why the Unité d’Habitation, therefore, looked different to how I remembered it. This where the discussion with Hervé Dubois during dinner began.

The perceived diversity within the Unité was certainly also due to the restoration work that had taken place in those years. Marseille had become the European Capital of Culture in 2013. The restoration of the Unité was partly related to this. In fact, it fell within the overall urban regeneration of many areas of the city of Marseille, all realised for that occasion.

However, it was not only the restoration that marked the change. Life itself inside the building appeared to have changed. The change seemed more structural and due to the settlement of various social classes or simply to the succession of new generations inside the Unité. They were younger social classes, significantly different on an economic and cultural level to most of those who had settled there originally after the war, when the Unité was built. The original tenants had long shown evident difficulties in metabolising the multiple innovative concepts expressed by the Le Corbusier building. These frictions had generated problems in the social context and had contributed not only to undermining the housing model at its very foundations, but also consequently had resulted in a progressive setting aside of this model, as part of the international debate on the architectural discipline, particularly in the final decades of the twentieth century. The new people that now inhabited the Unité, on the other hand, seemed to have integrated more fully with the building and to have understood the housing opportunities underlying it, in a general change of the times. The collective characteristics of the building, the scaled dimension, the population density, the compact and dynamic dimensions of the dwellings, the various functional additions and the use of the roof itself, seemed better suited to the present and to the most recent changes to housing requirements, not only regarding one’s personal life, but

also in terms of collective social sustainability and, more generally, environmental sustainability, despite having been designed by Le Corbusier more than sixty years earlier.

Metamorphosis of living

All of this posed some questions. Is it possible to believe that what was foreshadowed by Le Corbusier, and more generally by the modern movement, due to its ideological and avant-garde character, could now become a reality, thanks to its intrinsic projective intentionality and future-oriented nature? Is it possible to think that the “train of history”, in its non-linear and discontinuous way of proceeding, has only now rendered concrete and necessary what the avant-garde architects of the modern age had hypothesised already in the 1920s? Why is this happening now? Why only now are we witnessing a profound change in the paradigms of living in line with what Le Corbusier had foreshadowed? Does what was designed at that time, now seem concretely appropriate in its entirety or are there evident excesses and differences in the actual realisation of the housing demand, compared to what was hypothesised back then? How many and what are these differences today? I am underlining the time gap of one hundred years because the Unité d’Habitation is, in many ways, the child of a broader and more articulated cultural climate whose initial relationships and affinities, for example, were with the studies and projects on collective housing that emerged in the group of Russian avant-garde architects, at least in the aspects related to its concept of housing.

The Unité belongs to that line of thought (already defined by F. Choay as “progressive”)² that in the 1920s had relations with some of the figures of Russian constructivism, such as Moisej Ginzburg³, Ignatij Malinis and in a different way with the “minister-architect” Nikolaj Miljutin or the economist Stanislav Strumilin⁴. More generally, it can be found in the systematic typological

2 Françoise Choay, “L’urbanisme, utopies et réalités. Une anthologie”, Paris, Editions du Seuil, 1965.

3 Moisej Ginzburg, “Style and Epoch”, MIT Press, Boston, 1983, preface by Kenneth Frampton.

4 Guido Canella and Maurizio Meriggi (edited by G. Canella), “Sa Sovremennaja Arckhitektura 1926-1930”, Dedalo, Bari, 2007.

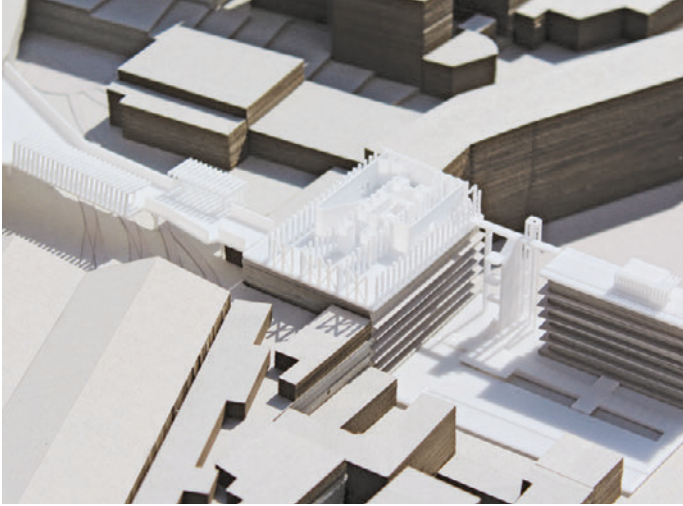
research on housing of those years and in the desire to pursue a difficult, but necessary, “scientific” and functional rationality of living. Particularly the early part of the 20th century was an incredible laboratory of experimentation and research, in which the design of the space was accompanied by a collective social vision and the attempt to instil a strong sense of community and citizenship in the inhabitants that could build useful components of a better future. All this seems to have dissolved, especially on the subject matter level, particularly in the years between the present century and the previous one.

Now, perhaps, we should ask ourselves some questions in the light of the transformations taking place and the evident changes of the field. Would it perhaps be helpful now to reconstruct such a research approach with regard to living, in a critical and fresh way, questioning the present and history? Should this approach to research today be limited to pursuing, in a critical way, what is necessary, in the plurality of contextual conditions, as it relates to the immediate future? Or should it try to outline and prefigure new forms of living in a projective form towards a future expressed over the long term?

There are many signs that indicate the need to focus our interests on the forms of living and concern both the typological aspects, related to the individual accommodation, and the methods related to aggregative forms of housing, both the environmental and settlement aspects, and the constructive and economic aspects concerning living.

Changed habits and lifestyles are today crucial to responding to the crisis of resources, the climate-environmental challenge and the technological-information challenge that modifies relationships, ways of living and the world of work itself. Today, this framework must also include the challenge of healthcare. In recent months, the global pandemic caused by COVID-19 has also made healthcare a crucial issue in redefining lifestyles and forms of living.

These extraordinary conditions also oblige us to reflect on the present situation and the future that awaits us. The theme of foreshadowing possible post-COVID housing scenarios will be dealt with by the research of architects and urban planners in coming years. I hope it will do so by more broadly integrating a



2. Project maquette of the new connection system of the Tour Albert in Paris. Student: Irene Gottardo.

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more general prefiguration of sustainable housing scenarios for our ecosystem.

Healthcare issues, however, are not new. The relationship between cities, wellness, individual and social health are topics that run through the founding principles at the root of the modern age. Tuberculosis, phthisis, rickets, etc., were some of the diseases that needed to be fought against even in the early 1900s. In general, healthy living was one of the key issues in urban planning and in architecture with the glimmers of modernity. The relationships between architecture and social health are not just an issue of the modern age. Going back in time, analysing, for example, the paradigmatic transformations of the architecture of the Counter-Reformation and/or the more specific reform of Borromean architecture in Lombardy, it would be interesting to take a closer look at the possible influences, relationships and polarities that were created in the respective architectural essays by the two Milanese architects (Pellegrino Tibaldi and Francesco Maria Richini) in relation to the two respective plagues that struck Milan. Interestingly, both essays were written during the two plagues.

The pandemic today is a further demonstration of how changes in the environment always reverberate in the practise of architecture, and above all it highlights how all this is happening today in an increasingly accelerated and global way. Precisely in order to cope with this accelerated transformation, we should not simply go along with contemporaneity. Even the current pandemic is teaching us to deal with the changing reality in a rational way and to read the present with a necessary critical distance.

When dealing with an architectural project it would be wise to remember (paraphrasing Marc Augé) that “contemporaneity is not to be reduced to passing events. Being contemporary means we need the past and the future”.

Confrontation with time is another of the important and fascinating issues that every architecture always brings into play. All this is even more important today precisely because of the speed with which transformations are happening. Time must be understood in all its multi-faceted aspects, both the past and the recent past, and the near future and the future understood as a future projection over the long term. In the same way, we should be aware

that the arts from the beginning of the 20th century have been intensely occupied with time, no longer cyclical nor linear, and its relationship with space, in connection with scientific and philosophical reflection.

Notwithstanding COVID-19, a composite, problematic and extremely transformed picture has emerged from reality, but above all an accelerated continuous change, where the signs of the progressive change in the demand for housing resonate in the architectural field in an evident and complex way, and range from government and community policies⁵ to design processes and also involving the world of construction. Within this challenging field of forces, these days the architectural project must provide coherent responses that have a civil role and significance.

International network

The contextual framework and these objectives define the direction of the study and research of the international group of professors who gradually wanted to come together here to share their thoughts and experiences and to discuss with each other on a didactic level. The network was formed already in 2013, before that dinner on the terrace of the Unité, with the intention of building an international exchange, bringing together research and education. The mission of the group was only stated in a more clear way on the terrace of the Unité.

Since 2013, every educational workshop of each university has shared and discussed these themes with their students, and also the respective areas of experimentation, in the various and subsequent academic years. Themes concerning the regeneration of the existing housing stock in line with the transformation and reinterpretation of new forms of living have become the common shared object of the practical exercises of the various courses of the architecture departments that have joined the network. In the universities where each of us taught, we tried to build opportunities and moments of reflection aimed at initiating an active and

⁵ In recent months, the need to launch a new “Green New Deal” has re-emerged more insistently in European policies, to respond essentially to the economic crisis, but also due to the pressure of young people led by Greta Thunberg and not only as a result of the today's pandemic crisis. These policies necessarily involve the theme of living in all its facets.



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constructive dialogue on the methods and tools of teaching architecture. This book is the second moment of reflection on these issues⁶ but equally, exhibitions of the group's activity have been set up in various European universities.

Architecture is a heteronomous discipline, the main reasons for which are found in the hybridisation and cross-fertilisation of knowledge. The School is necessarily a place of learning, experimentation and verification of the most advanced techniques and tools of a discipline. For this reason, it must necessarily open up its cultural and educational project to a critical discussion, in a logic of the continuous enrichment of horizons and within a vision that must be absolutely international these days.

The international network was able to become a reality from the beginning thanks to the use of IT tools. Skype, Google Suite, Teams, WhatsApp, etc., were the technical support for communications, for the remote collaborative reviews between the various schools, and were also the means for “uploading everyone’s work to a common online platform”, to give everyone access to it. During the workshops, the students of the various universities involved were able to see the gradual progress of the work of all their colleagues from the other schools. In the same way, the platform provided them with the opportunity to compare their work with that of all the others and communicate directly, both individually and as a group. All this has been happening for over eight years, long before “distance learning” became a widespread constraint in recent months (due to COVID-19). We considered the huge innovative potential of web-based communication tools as an opportunity to articulate, improve and integrate the quality of “in-person” lectures and workshops (a teaching method that must always consider as indispensable), and to intensify these forms of traditional work and research. Overall, more than a dozen professors have been involved in the network over the years. However, the number of those who have been indirectly involved is significantly higher. The network could concretely expand further in Europe and also overseas, as has happened in part and is still

3. The relationship and distance between the new and the old in the project for the regeneration of the Caserma Pepe in Venice. Students: Edoardo Daidone, Nicola Salvador, Dinozhan Erinekcı, Antonello Zanotti.

⁶ A little more than a year after the dinner at the Unitè, in November 2016, the first book entitled “Regeneration of the recent past, international researching & teaching experience” was published.

happening. Gradually the shared experience has built up a common cultural orientation. The collective work within the network has made it possible to focus on the themes, objectives and parameters and at the same time to set out a comprehensive identity of the group that we are trying to summarise.

Changing the present

“Changing the recent past” is the title of the first book, which illustrates the previous round of didactic experiences and the related theoretical considerations. That volume is a sort of zero edition of the INReTe (International Network of Research and Teaching) series. Urban redevelopment and the regeneration of the architecture of the more recent past have been and will be, in fact, something we will look at more closely. Today, the building sector demand always tends to address disciplinary issues from the *ex novo* construction to the transformation of the existing building. Now, this issue has been subject of international interest, not only in Europe, but also in the those nations that traditionally have been resistant to conservation, such as the United States of America, China, South America and developing nations etc. There are numerous factors that measure this shift of interest: the ecological aspects; the need to not consume new soil; the problem of the necessary transformation and renewal of the huge and significant architectural heritage, in particular from the second post-war period in Europe, a heritage that today no longer conforms to the new housing requirements. We are facing not only an ideological transformation but also a structural one. The same legislative framework in the various countries and the economic situation of the crisis of resources have, for years now, been guiding the architectural project and urban and territorial planning in this direction, by means of specific and concrete policies. For some time now, all this has required a significant metamorphosis of traditional reference models and a challenge for a recalibration of the paradigms of architectural design. All the areas and projects drawn up for various areas of Europe and presented in this volume address these issues. The subject of the modification of the recent past is, in fact, a fundamental issue because it poses the problems of realignment within the architectural discipline

itself. Today, in fact, we need to ask ourselves more and more whether an architectural language exists or is being created that governs construction on, in and between the built just as in the years of the avant-garde there were a series of languages of the new. The need and will to build on the built articulate and guide the interest in the history of the discipline in its continuity and articulates the idea of a project as a virtuous system of relationships: as a system endowed with meaning and with “a relational truth”. The relationships in their entirety, therefore, employ as a foundation a continuous operational-critical attitude towards the forms and techniques that must be continually reinterpreted and updated. While the designing process is in the foreground not only as a positive consequence or as a background that cannot be amended, but also as a process, where the transformation takes place in a sort of continuous motion (of oscillation) between arbitrary design choices and resistance due to the need for contextualisation.

The didactic experiences presented here were the occasion for a diligent discussion and collective research on these issues. The Seville projects for Avenida de la Barzola, the projects in Annecy for “l’Opération Balleydier”, like those in Italy for the regeneration of the Zoppas-Zanuzzi industrial area in Conegliano, were the pretext for educational experimentation and applied research. In the same way, the projects most tied to the dimension of a single architectural complex were, such as the regeneration of the Tour Albert in Paris, the redevelopment of the Caserma Pepe in Venice or the redevelopment of the areas close to the preserved parts of the Monastery de San Isidoro del Campo in Santiponce, on the outer edges of the periphery of Seville.

Open project and Pietas Latina

Basically, all the projects found themselves faced with the need to give shape, with reconversion interventions, to a population density and to a process of stratification on the existent. The theme of understanding the project as an addition emerged in all the projects. Similarly, they are confronted with a conceptual polarity, closely interrelated with the temporality of the project itself. There emerged a clear requirement to adapt an architectural lan-



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4. Dynamic masterplan that illustrates the transformation process of the park-vineyard for the industrial area in Conegliano, a common basis for all students of the course.

guage that dialogues, both with regard to the pre-existing building to be modified and with the surrounding conditions, with the place in its diversity and entirety. Above all, it was shown that it was essential to construct a complete and resistant language that similarly maintained within it (within its own linguistic structure) certain values open to a further possible transformation. The aim today is to use the project to construct a “dialogue language not only in action, but in potential” with the progression of the change: with the near future. This openness of the project and its language, I believe, is the only way that architecture can endure in the long term and respond to the needs of the present and to the demand for the transformation of the near past and future. All the themes and projects illustrated here seek to give an answer to these questions and intend to pursue such an “open and dialogical language”.

The theme of the exercise of the regeneration of the industrial area of Conegliano, for example, explores the construction of a transformative process rather than the pursuit of a form. The rules determined by the foundation construction grid of the original industrial buildings become the same rules used to design the new vineyard-park. They are also the same rules that mark (under the vineyards) the parking areas serving the new territorial intermodal role to which the entire area has been earmarked. That existing grid of the original foundations becomes the structural and morphological outline for prefiguring a progressive new future housing density open to various different possible uses, always within the area, to be implemented in a probable more expanded future. The new building fabric integrates with the “vineyard-park”, guaranteeing enduring quality and the preservation of an icon, built using advanced and sustainable specific construction strategies and morphological choices.

The relatively more recent issue of the regeneration of the building stock brings up another question regarding the method. Regenerating the recent past means placing two apparently opposing actions in a dialectical relationship, preserving and modifying. This establishes a close relationship between restoration and architectural design at the educational level. Restoration provides analysis procedures and methodologies for adopting and identi-

ifying the values of the existing architecture, guiding choices that establish a unique balance between the values of the historical memory and the values of the present. For restoration, working on relatively recent constructions also means working on the edge, where the traditional canons of conservation have not yet taken root. For such a significant recent pre-existing project, it is necessary to act in a tentative manner, each time testing the meaning and reasons for the protection measures.

In terms of architectural design, other issues arise. Dealing with the modification of the recent past means considering the architectural project as the formulation of a judgement about the existing structure. Judgement becomes the place within which the various disciplines find areas of dialectical relationship and specific reasoning. In this way, the project takes on multiple significances. It is both a solution and a cognitive tool of reality at the service of the community. It is a fundamental hermeneutic tool for understanding a place, and the architectural project is the measure of the quality of the possible transformation. This judgement of the relevant recent past, however, cannot be exempt from practicing within it a fluctuation between a rational analytical evaluation and the desire to have an attitude towards the context that expands the conservation margins of the existing architecture. This is because, from our point of view, these days the recent past is the increasingly necessary palimpsest on which to layer the project, the new. This is necessary in order not to break that dialogical continuity with what preceded us. It is appropriate because every break in that dialogical continuity is becomes a part of its history, intertwining arbitrariness and contextuality. For this reason, we must ensure that today's accelerated transformation process does not destroy the indispensable interface between arbitrariness and contextuality. For all these reasons, we think it is necessary to have a critical-rational, specific and profound attitude towards the recent past, but mediated by a viewpoint that we could define as indulgent, a viewpoint that we could say is filtered through what the ancient Romans called *Pietas* (compassion). Through this "*Latin Pietas*", it is possible to construct a dialogical attitude to enhance the urban peripheries of our cities, and at the same time testify to their "weak history" through its transformation project. Only through such a "Virgilian"



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4. Project for the regeneration of the Seville arsenal. Master degree thesis "Seville: las reales atarazanas. Regeneration of an interrupted project for the city's arsenal". Student: Federica Cattaruzza.

criticism, “wisely compassionate and indulgent”, is it possible to envision a possible transformation of the minor architecture of the second half of the last century. A contextual condition that is significant in most areas of the world, and where the reasoning for its protection is fragile. It is this wise and compassionate criticism that can allow us to prefigure and layer a transformation and renewal on reality without making the testimony of what produced this reality disappear, its founding context – without eliminating the differences – without having the architecture fall into the danger of the standardisation of a new international style.

In all areas of the students’ work, we sought to experience the virtues of such a profound and equally indulgently selective viewpoint with regard to the context through these projects. It is the same viewpoint that I use and refine through my personal design research. It is exciting personal research that I am sharing with my colleagues of this publication and that I am testifying to here also briefly in the form of a manifesto that I have been continuously updating over the years.

Equally, in Annecy, in Seville, in Conegliano, in Santiponce, as in Paris, the various projects illustrated intend to pursue the exercise of such a critical, attentive, profound, sensitive and equally selective viewpoint, through the interpretation and development of the various contexts and their reciprocal specificities.

Ginzburg 2015-2020

A further polarity of our educational and research work is based on the conviction that now more than ever we need to connect studies on the regeneration of the existing architecture and the rapid change in the demand for housing, with attention to an equally rapid transformation of construction strategies and technologies. The dialectical relationship between construction and figuration is one of the crucial points on which “the revolution of the modern age” is rooted. Today, we must also root our work in the awareness (as architects and as teachers) that the ways of constructing have changed profoundly.

As I have said many times, in the centuries-old tradition of architecture the way of cutting and laying stone or building a wall has changed much less quickly than the way of constructing forms. In

the modern era, however, the relationship is reversed and presently this is absolutely much more exaggerated and accelerated than what happened in the first half of the last century.

Today, it is absolutely appropriate to maintain a constant dialogue with the mechanisms of production and with the external economic and institutional protagonists to build a critical engagement with innovative construction processes. First of all, however, it is essential to deal critically (within university institutions) with the continuous and kaleidoscopic modification of the durability of the material that construction technologies offer the project nowadays. For example, just look at how many materials new technologies can provide. Alternatively, let us imagine which construction scenarios can be opened up with the use of 3D printing when extended to the construction of the entire building or large parts of it.

Overall, the construction industry looks very different today, reconverted after the economic crisis in that it has been successful in finding new areas for rationality, productivity and market opportunities. A further reconversion will probably open up after the current global crisis due to the current pandemic and to a more attentive and sustainable use of resources. The critical discussion with the accelerated metamorphosis of the durability of the material and the building production must be made with the awareness that reflecting on technology has always been a central theme of modernity from Max Weber to Emanuele Severino. For this reason, we think it is necessary to strengthen a renewed tension towards an ever-new sensibility regarding construction. Our educational research has focused on this.

For these reasons, already on the terrace of the Unité d'Habitation in Marseille, in order to outline the future programme it seemed right that our work sought a dialectical tension with what Russian constructivism had put in place at the time, not due to the stylistic aspects, but in relation to the studies on housing, on the "collective house", today's co-housing. This would all be integrated with critical attention to material and construction aspects, in the hope that our group could establish a sort of avant-garde position, and that this position would be pursued without ideology. For these reasons, we had already decided to call the work of

6. Studio Architetti Associati Ricci Val. Regeneration and expansion of the Don Milani elementary school, Ponte della Priula, Susegana, Treviso, built in 2019. Photo by: Arcangelo Piaì.



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our group, in a rather instinctive way, “Ginzburg 2015-2020” and above all the five-year joint research programme presented here.

Architect-professor

A final objective substantiates the reason for our international group of educational and research comparison. In recent years, the profession of the architect has been shattered into a thousand streams and numerous professional figures, in part due to market conditions (both construction and cultural), in part due to the regulatory and procedural context (national, but above all global), and in part due to the transformation of the project construction mechanisms and the architectural structure itself. All this makes it increasingly more difficult and elitist to practise architecture, in contrast with a growing demand for architectural quality that is widespread and in demand, both for the single building as well as for the city and the countryside. A similar division is reverberating more and more these days in almost all universities, and not only in Europe. In each school, many new different and specific studies relating to architecture have gradually emerged. We think this is right. The academic environment must be sensitive to the world of which it is a part. For the university not to be sensitive to changes in the environment in which it operates is, in our opinion, one of the first forms of betrayal of its cultural and above all civil reasons that justify its very existence.

There is an increasing number of university professors throughout the world who teach a specific and ancient subject such as architectural design, however, that out of conviction or perhaps much more often for status, tend to separate the teaching of the material from the exercise and experimentation of the practise of architecture itself. There are many complex reasons for this and they originate both within the institution and also on the outside, unfortunately. Today, fewer and fewer architects speak about, reflect upon and write about what they design. We think this is due to a structural situation of the profession, both of the architect and of the professor. We believe it can be attributed to a particular generational condition (the generation to which we belong), which tends to separate not only those who teach from those who practise, but also those who write, from those who work

PRACTICE THE LATIN "PIETAS"

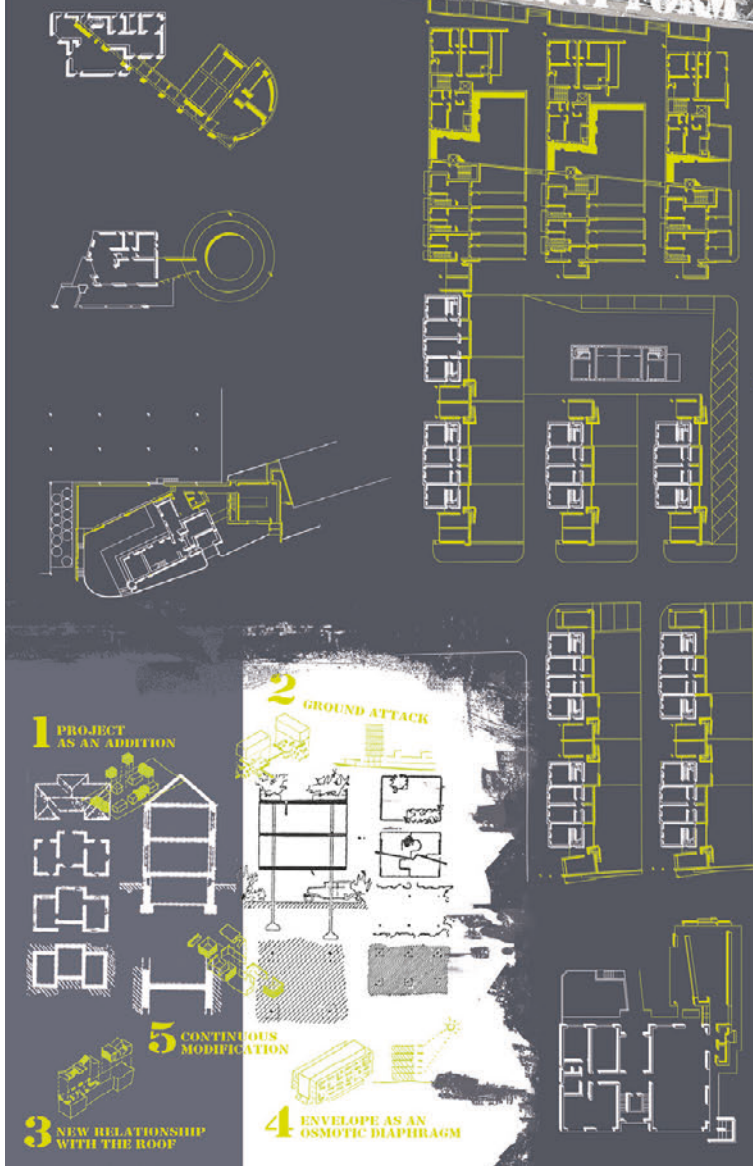


1. *Metamorphosis of paradigms for a possible transformation of the recent past*, P.A. Val, 2019.

The manifesto was initially drafted for an academic research on the regeneration of the low-cost residence in the province of Venice in 2016. But it is constituted as an "unfinished, open form". Over time, it has gradually undergone a continuous series of additions and modifications. Consequently it has appeared on several successive academic occasions. The latest version was prepared for the OCIAM International Comparison of Ideas "Fragile Landscape" and exhibited in Piacenza and Milan in 2019.

The image uses the reproduction of an oil painting by Giorgio Ortora exhibited at the Venice Architecture Biennale in 2011, entitled "Palazzine Romane". The canvas shows a ragged landscape, made up of buildings that make up the skyline of a slightly decomposed city. On the image, some phrases are placed like stamps on a postcard to be sent. These are some key words that summarize the issues that the present expresses with regard to the architectural project, in particular to the transformation of the recent past.

Below a series of plants at the ground level, of my completed projects, emerge. They are projects for the expansion and regeneration of areas and buildings of the present, designed with a technique similar to how archaeological plants are drawn. On the left below, Le Corbusier's 5-point manifesto emerges with superimposed the metamorphosis of the themes of building on built.



DIALOGUING
ARCHITECTURE

NEW TECHNIQUES
NEW "TOOLS"

REVERSED ARCHEOLOGY

TOPOS · TYPE
TIME · TECTONICS

ORDERING
PRINCIPLE

TECTONIC
PRINCIPLE

PROJECT AS
CONTINUOUS
TRANSFORMATION

ARCHITECTURAL
CODE OPEN TO
CONTINUOUS
STRATIFICATIONS

FORM · BUILDING · MAINTENANCE



as architects. We, on the other hand, think that this separation is an impoverishment with respect to all conditions and viewpoints. The university must support an attitude, or rather an individual and collective temperament, that holds together the practise of architecture and its teaching. Not only that, it is equally important to constantly take a critical view of everything *a posteriori* of both experiences, with an attitude that I would define as theorising. Temperament is theorising and not theoretical in that the processing of the thought occurs in close relation to “field work”, to experience. Therefore, where the action of abstraction is given in a coherent way, only in the “resistant universe” within the reality of contexts and practise, bringing together the teaching experience and the design/construction experience, skills and knowledge. Many schools of architecture and many professors who have taught there have been exemplary in this respect, from V. Gregotti to C. Aymonino and A. Rossi, G. De Carlo, etc., at the Luav, as in Europe: O. Boigas, R. Moneo, O.M. Ungers, H. Ciriani. Just to mention a few professors and from a relatively recent past. The list is very long and has always involved the schools of architecture especially in Italy and Europe. Likewise, we could list a very large part of the essays of the tradition of the history of architecture.

Our international network was also created out of these convictions and for these purposes. Alongside each professor, we have added a picture of one of their works, to indicate something about their specialisation.

A reversed archeology

Also in the spring of 2015, I was invited by Sara De Giles and José Morales to give a lecture at the Seville University of Architecture. On that occasion, I needed a title for my lecture. Discussing with them, as always via Skype, we decided that the title would be “Design as reversed archeology”. There were many reasons for the title. I wanted the title to indicate a design process that is not opposed to the existing, but is layered on it. I also intended it to explain that the design should seek the interpretation and development of the context in which it exists, constructing relationships of belonging and continuity with history with its form. This relationship dialogues with the pre-existent and is constituted start-

ing from a position of weakness precisely because the possibilities for the transformation of the project are almost always less than the desire for change and the possibility itself of modification that the reality is able to request. The reason for the title was also linked to the phrase by A. Perret “architecture is that which makes beautiful ruins” and everything involves the tension with respect to the phrase itself and its author⁷ and to the contradictory relationship with another phrase of M. Augé⁸. Consequently, the title alluded to the contradictory and dialectical implications that architecture now faces with time. “A reversed archeology” can also derive from the fact that I try to give a lot of importance to the predisposition of the ground layout and I tend to draw them with a technique similar to the way archaeological plans are drawn.

For all of these reasons, it seemed right to use the same title also for this essay and above all for the entire publication.

The essay by S. Giles and P. Morales evokes the difficult hermeneutics of design, which can be practised by bringing together the complex and contradictory relationship between space and time, through architecture. Even the educational projects for the regeneration of the recent past seek to engage, in the present, with the kaleidoscopic articulated temporalities of the architectural project. The projects for Venice or for Conegliano (to mention only the Italian projects, but not only) involve research for analysing the different, but finite potentialities of the space, which can be realised through architecture, as H. Dubois writes in his essay. However, they also want to be researches for verifying the margins and the possibilities for projecting these virtuous spatial possibilities of the places through time. The projects are also an attempt to verify the opportunities for preserving these qualities and potentials of the places, in the long term, for their concrete duration and testimony to the past and present with regard to a possible, sustainable and lasting future.

7 Marcel Zahar, “D’une doctrine d’architecture: Auguste Perret”, Vincent, Freal & Cie, Paris, 1959.

8 “Future history will no longer produce ruins. It does not have the time for them” Marc Augé. See also my essay “Per una razionalità dialogante: nuove temporalità, un arco voltaico tra Parigi e Venezia” in Donato Severo, PierAntonio Val, “Temporalités et régénération de la ville historique: l’Arsenal de Venise”, Anteferma, Conegliano, 2020.

For more than 8 years, long before distance learning became a widespread constraint in recent months, for COVID-19, an international group of professors, from various European universities, has gradually wanted to put “online” the study to share thoughts and experience, using IT tools for e-learning.

The network was formed with the intention of building a low-cost international comparison, supplementary to traditional teaching. It was born to cross research and teaching, the themes and the respective experimentation places, in different and subsequent academic years. The network brings together more than a dozen professors from various universities, not only in Europe. While the number of those who have been indirectly involved is higher. This book is the second moment of reflection. The titles and subtitles in the form of slogans in the index of the book build a taxonomy: Metamorphosis of living, International network, Changing the present, Open project, Pietas Latina, Ginzburg 2015-2020, Architect-professor, A reversed archeology, The space explains the times, Potential spaces.

They define the field of interest and the reasons that gave birth to the international group.

Everything happens in the common belief that the architectural project is not only a solution for a place, but is also an analytical tool, to describe the context. It is an effective reflective hermeneutic tool of itself, to be examined, however, only if it is critically confronted with the metamorphosis of civil reality, with the world, with which it must necessarily dialogue in order to modify.

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