

# “Are we ready for the transition?”

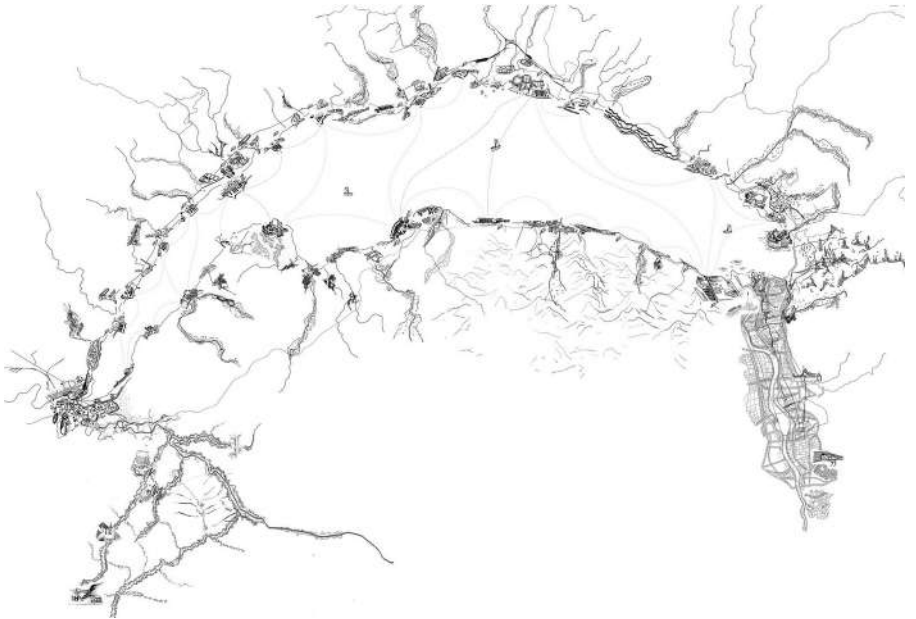
By connecting the two themes, Baukultur – the culture of the built environment – and the emerging culture of the Transition – mainly based on adaptation and mitigation strategies –, a technical shift, an epistemological one and an ethical one are inevitable. At all scales: from architecture to urban and territorial design. Such a shift is a construction and design practices reform.

Position

Paola Viganò



**“Are we ready for the transition?”**  
**Baukultur and the emerging culture of a social**  
**and ecological transition: Gazes, values, projects**  
Paola Viganò



**Towards a Leman-Alpine Metropolis. Urban Design and Urban Theory, Studio BA5&6, Spring semester 2017, SAR-EPFL. Prof. Paola Viganò, Roberto Segal, Marine Durand – students: Leslie Faisan, Josefine Wolf, Vianney Huart, Tania Versteegh, Déreck Rauzduel, Roxane Unterberger, Christophe Dindault, Ismaël Camara N’Faly**

The passage from the current consolidated, modern, or traditional way to build the city to a different ecological, economic, and cultural context (what we call – operating a strong simplification – the “transition”) highlights unprecedented tensions and potential conflicts. They emerge when ecological and socio-political dimensions (resource depletion, energy scarcity, growing social inequalities) are considered to their full extent. This is the hypothesis on which we have worked,<sup>1</sup> taking urbanization, i.e., the process of constructing the urban in the loose and extended forms of present time, as its starting point.

In fact, by connecting the two themes, *Baukultur* – the culture of the built environment – and the emerging culture of the transition – mainly based on adaptation and mitigation strategies – a *technical shift*, an *epistemological* one and an *ethical* one are inevitable. At all scales: from architecture to urban and territorial design. Such a shift is a construction and design practice reform (Material Cultures, 2022) and cannot be faced from a technical perspective solely; it engenders value shifts contained in the “ecological and social transition” idea itself. As Edgar Morin stated, such a transition is not “from a non-ecologized society to the same ecologized society,” but “in fact, it is the complex metamorphosis from one type of society to another.”<sup>2</sup>

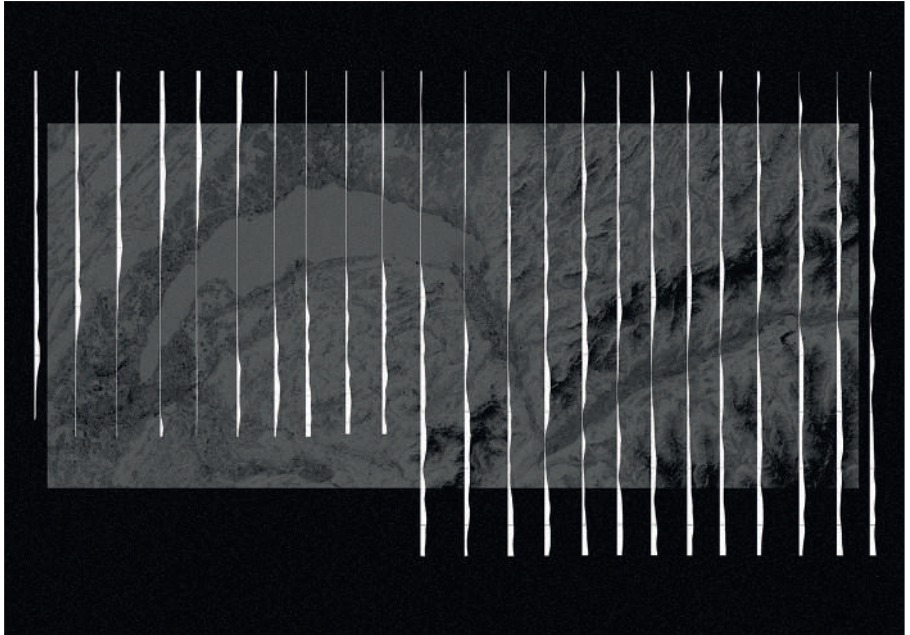
*The city as a renewable resource: antefact.* There was a theoretical vacuum when I started to reflect about the relation among architecture, urban and territorial design, the rarefaction of resources, and CO2 emission reduction. This vacuum is today much less imposing thanks to a generous literature and design experiences that has meanwhile emerged. However, a theory acting as a provisional frame for unknown trajectories has still to be refined.

An initial conceptual triad for *the city as a renewable resource* hypothesis connects a dense set of themes: life cycle, embodied energy, and inclusion. We recycle what has a *life cycle*, parts of cities, objects, and urban materials. Re-cycling is the opening of new social, material, ecological, and programmatic *cycles*. The *embodied energy* is part of any transformation; the concept has its roots in the 1970s energy crisis and has today grown into an influential research perspective. *Inclusion* refers to the social and power dynamics at work when life cycles conclude and renewal takes place often engendering the opposite, i.e., expulsion and gentrification dynamics. (Jacobs, 1961) New “geographies of exclusion” are the negative output of many regeneration projects, which leave out populations and operate not only a spatial restructuring, but social displacement. Architecture and urbanism of *inclusion* consider any regeneration process as an occasion to redistribute resources, accessibility, reinforce social mix and isotropic conditions at all scales. These concepts were formed through research

- 1 The path crosses several academic (Laboratory of Urbanism, Habitat Research Center at EPFL) and professional contexts.
- 2 Jean-François Dortier and Louisa Yousfi. *Edgar Morin, L'aventure d'une pensée*. Auxerre, Editions Sciences Humaines, 2020 (translated by the author).

and professional projects, as the investigation of “urban porosity”<sup>3</sup> in Antwerp, or merging soil regeneration and city re-foundation in the Courrouze urban project.<sup>4</sup>

“Life cycles,” “embodied energy,” and “inclusion” was the triad at the basis of “the city as a renewable resource” research (Viganò, 2012), influencing and supporting design and teaching experiences, while absorbing and developing the larger debate established since then. This two-decades-long itinerary includes in the text the work carried out with students along alpine valleys and lakeshores in a variety of urban configurations. The conceptual triad is expanded to deepen the initial hypothesis.



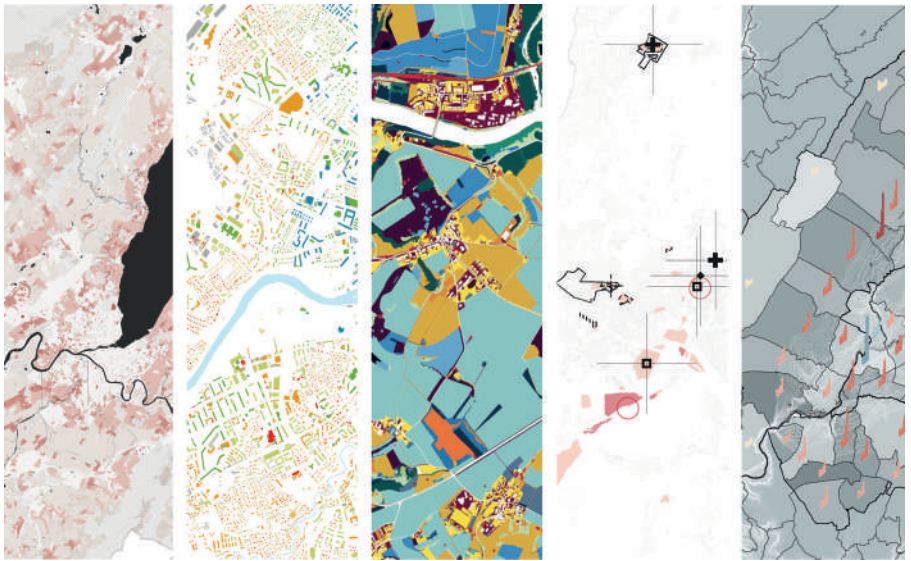
**Territorial sections. Towards a Leman-Alpine Metropolis. Urban Design and Urban Theory, Studio BA5&6, Spring semester 2017, SAR-EPFL. Prof. Paola Viganò, Roberto Segal, Marine Durand – students: Leslie Faisan, Josefine Wolf, Vianney Huart, Tania Versteegh, Déreck Rauzduel, Roxane Unterberger, Christophe Dindault, Ismaël Camara N’Faly**

3 On the occasion of the Antwerp Structuur Plan, 2003-2006, see Secchi & Viganò, 2009.  
4 La Courrouze is a large urban project (a *Zac, zone d’aménagement concerté*) on former industrial and military land in Rennes (Secchi & Viganò, Dard, AMCO, 2003-2014; StudioPaolaViganò, Dard, ORA, 2015-ongoing).

Cities and industrial systems are material and stratified conglomerations with embedded socio-political and technological constructions. The valorization of embodied energy together with the traditional energy goals and strategies (reducing consumption, integrating renewable energy production, recycling energy) was the clue to imagining an extensive and diffuse regeneration project at the metropolitan scale. The *100% Recycle* scenario and vision we developed for Greater Paris in 2009 relied on the hypothesis that reuse, reconditioning, and recycling could be the main transformative operations of cities and territories for future needs without further urbanization. (Secchi, Viganò, 2011) No more extension, but a careful reading of the possibilities contained in the existing fabric and urbanized land. This is why our inadequate understanding of the material production of space requires “deep” and “close” readings, *ideographies* at different scales. Such an approach resonates with the later EU “No net land take by 2050” strategy” (2011), a series of recommendations reinforced by the “Soil Strategy for 2030,” as part of the Road Map for Resource-Efficient Europe that confirmed this vision.

In the aftermath of the 2007–2009 economic crisis, extended field work in the central Veneto region revealed the amount of underused space left behind. Describing what had changed – recording, offering crucial insight about the adaptation of the family based small-medium enterprises to globalization<sup>5</sup> – was the first research step. A few years later, in the construction of a vision for Great Geneva (Habitat Research Center, EPFL, 2018–2020), we investigated the transformation of the region’s economy through the modification of its productive space and the possibility of its evolution towards a part of city. The scenario developed for Great Geneva was inspired by the idea of “longer-life products” and the shift towards repair and reconditioning developed by Walter Stahel in the 1970s, with the consequential need of maintaining decentralized workshops and the valorization of manpower. (Stahel, 1976) This scenario informs a design research on new hybrid landscapes for work, agriculture, energy production, and living based on reading and reinterpreting the existing potential. Again, reuse and reconditioning guide the process.

5 Cecilia Furlan, *Worn Out Landscapes: Mapping wasteland in the Charleroi and Veneto Central territories*, PhD Thesis, IUAV-KU Leuven, 2017.



**Cross-border Transition atlas for the Great Geneva. Transition as idiography (details). From food self-sufficiency, matter and energy metabolism, soil quality and spatial living conditions, transformation of production sites, to synergy between economic activities and the city. In "Du sol et du travail : la transition, un nouveau projet biopolitique", 2018-2021 ; Habitat Research Center – EPFL: P. Viganò (director of research); L. Pattaroni, V. Kaufmann, C. Fivet; R. Sega, M. Barcellona Corte, Q. Zhang, T. Pietropolli; with P. Boivin (HEPIA), W. Stahel (Product Life Institute), J. Normand (B-Lab), O. Crevoisier (Université de Neuchâtel)**

An original map of the Canton of Geneva shows that the highest carbon footprint coincides with the modern periphery of the city,<sup>6</sup> already altering the traditional appreciation of old and recent urban fabrics in favor, in this case, of the latter and its “capable buildings” and flexible spaces to rethink the city.



**Eco-socio-spatial prototypes for the Great Geneva: starting the process.** In “Du sol et du travail : la transition, un nouveau projet biopolitique”, 2018-2021; Habitat Research Center – EPFL: P. Viganò (director of research); L. Pattaroni, V. Kaufmann, C. Fivet; R. Sega, M. Barcellona Corte, Q. Zhang, T. Pietropolli; with P. Boivin (HEPIA), W. Stahel (Product Life Institute), J. Normand (B-Lab), O. Crevoisier (Université de Neuchâtel)

*Material conditions.* An important tradition developed in Italy since the 1950s already proposed a complex reading of space, connecting material production and social imbrications.<sup>7</sup> In the analysis of the urban consistency of the old center of Pesaro, Carlo Aymonino and the Gruppo di Architettura worked on the structural evolution of old centers where symbol, collective, and material values coexisted with demographic, societal, economic transformation.<sup>8</sup> Following a Marxist approach, the focus was on the “material conditions of production,” which questions *how an object is, in what state it reaches us*, in order to understand its gradual alteration. (Caniggia, Maffei, 1979) The reading of stratification distinguishes what can last, what might be adapted, or what can guide the transformation.

The strong interest in socio-political and economic aspects moves parallelly to the understanding of how an object materially is, through which social, economic and technological cycles it went through. Alteration can make the built space unrecognizable, make it lose its role, up to and including making it disappear and freeing up space for new uses and possibilities. The city map created on that occasion was a sum of cadaster properties including the

6 The map was created by Corentin Fivet and his Structural Exploration Lab, EPFL, 2019.

7 The fundamental one being, of course, the reading of the Venetian tissue created by Saverio Muratori (1960) and his students. See also: Viganò 2021.

8 Carlo Aymonino, Costantino Dardi, Gianni Fabbri, Raffaele Panella, Gianugo Polesello, Luciano Semerani, *Piano Particolareggiato per il centro storico di Pesaro, Relazione illustrativa*, Pesaro, 1974.

ground floor of the buildings at the 1:500 scale for the whole center of Pesaro. It is one of the few existing efforts to connect an overall plan and vision to the built structure, including public and private spaces, inside and outside the building walls, developing a “critical survey” (Doglioni, 1980) of the entire tissue.

Contemporary extended urbanization is today the testing ground for developing such a critical survey and deep reading: the reuse and reconditioning of the city territory, intersecting opening and closing economic cycles, dismantling and recycling existing materials in creative activities of urban mining, redefining the urban and landscape aesthetic and the codes ruling it.

In the ecological and social transition, the exploration of the material conditions of space production is as crucial as ever to give consistency to the hypothesis of the “city as a renewable resource.” The richness of these operations invests energy consumption, embodied energy, energy recycle issues, and potential renewable energy production.<sup>9</sup>



**The beginning of the end. Secondary valleys, Val Ferret. Urban Design and Urban Theory, Studio ALPS MA2, Spring semester 2014, SAR-EPFL. Prof. Paola Viganò, Marine Durand, Roberto Segal – students: Anne-Charlotte Astrup Chavaux, Timoté Benjamin Mopty, Chen Zhao**

9 Through comparative research carried out for the French Ministry of Culture in the two cases of Paris and the central Veneto region and in a series of international workshops (*Energie et recyclage*, Ignis Mutat Res, P. Viganò coord., 2013).

*Palimpsest and Unintentional Monument.* With a focus on material conditions and stratification, the palimpsest metaphor resurfaces. It reveals the “repetitive” and “immobile” history of the *longue durée*, which continues to operate even in the middle of destructive events. It is the slow, diffuse process of taking care (of animals, soils, water, agriculture, risks, inhabitability).

If the territorial palimpsest reports a *structure* of signs, it is that defined by the *longue durée*. Durer is lasting, “constructing the long-term starting from the present,” because the passage between the two takes place in the present. (Caye, 2020) This view reads territorial rationalities, logics and behaviors, natural and artificial; their role in accompanying and guiding events, or representing the total crises of an era, culture, or economy, when their almost-permanent presence begins to fragment and risks disappearing.

The attention to rationalities and rationalizations, to human and non-human logics, reveals both dimensions of time: the history of events and the *longue durée*. Casual relations and confused remains of histories form the surface of the palimpsest. Here design can take on an important role producing relational and connective actions on the existing landscape, unveiling levels of memories, eventually conflictual, about recent and older pasts. Design is a tool to inject glimpses of sense, developing common frames to actual nonsensical urban collision, valorizing Riegl’s *Unintentional Monument*. (Riegl, 1903)

The palimpsest metaphor denies the foundation of design solely as an activity that produces novelties and originality. Its project always works with previous structures and traces, whatever their substance; it reorganizes them as an expression of common languages and techniques, which requires refined reading and sophisticated knowledge, mastering the Baukultur of different ages. Literary critic Jean Genette used the palimpsest metaphor to interpret Proust’s *La Recherche*, merging high and low literature. (Genette, 1966, 1982) Like Proust’s work, design increasingly acts as a *second-degree* interpretative and imaginative construction starting with the pervasive, often invisible, *stratum* of what is already there.



**An urban fabric to be developed: the mixed-use areas of the Chablais. Urban Design and Urban Theory, Studio BA5&6, Spring semester 2016, SAR-EPFL. Prof. Paola Viganò, Roberto Segal, Roberto Segal, Marine Durand – students: Lorenzini Sébastien, Beuret Timothé, Rapi Basile, Kieffer Coline, Eugenia Galvan, Wendy Tokuoka**

*Embodied energy* has only recently grown into an influential perspective, although this concept is rooted in the 1970s debate on the aggressive renewal imposed on the American City and the need to develop a protective and conservationist approach to the existing urban structure. The concept of embodied energy expanded parallelly to the emerging awareness of the ecological crisis and “the limits to Growth.” (1972) It expresses an understanding of urban and architectural stratification and reinforces heritage definition. Its valorization involves reconditioning instead of dismantling or substituting, reuse instead of erasure, and value redistribution.

Lasting (*durer*) implies a selection procedure, a process that transforms the existing *envelope* (*Umwelt*) described by Jean-Christophe Bailly<sup>10</sup> into a collective *patrimony*. (Caye, 2020) By substituting the economic concept of capital with “collective heritage” and “patrimony,” work and labor become noble and fundamental maintenance activities. All societal effort should then be primarily concentrated on them, including the productive system and its possible reorientation. It is a fundamental value shift and a crucial passage in imagining a radical adaptation of the existing urban condition.

The consequences on designers’ work are enormous and already generate contradictory and ambiguous approaches. In this situation, design can help establish a field in which the transition project can be negotiated and envisaged as a common path, unfolding the complexity of the relationship between places (ecological and material constructions) and people (bodies and horizons of expectation). Design brings out possibilities and anchors choices in the concreteness of a territory accepting the unavoidable coexistence of a plurality of world visions.

From the perspective of a designer, the evolution of value systems displaces the research focus from the pure epistemological level of knowledge construction to an ontological one where the foundation of our choices are rediscussed: what are we designing and for what purposes.

In the case of Great Geneva, for example, the exploration of “territorial inhabitability” tackles dependencies and conflictual visions. The idea of a “Metropolis of villages” considers the value of the pre-existing decentralized settlements traditionally excluded by institutional planning documents, concentrated on the denser part of the metropolis. A “public transport network to reconstitute” highlights the loss of connectivity and the need to conceive a common socio-ecological mesh at the territorial and metropolitan scale. A “potentially self-sustaining region” illustrates the evolution of agri-

10 Bailly (2023) borrows the term introduced by Jakob von Uexküll at the beginning of the twentieth century, representing the environment of an organism, or the “semiotic world of organism. It includes all the meaningful aspects of the world for a particular organism.” (Kull, 1998) Jean-Christophe Bailly returns to this topic in his contribution: “L’architecture au-delà du projet”, *Le Visiteur*, no. 28, April 2023.

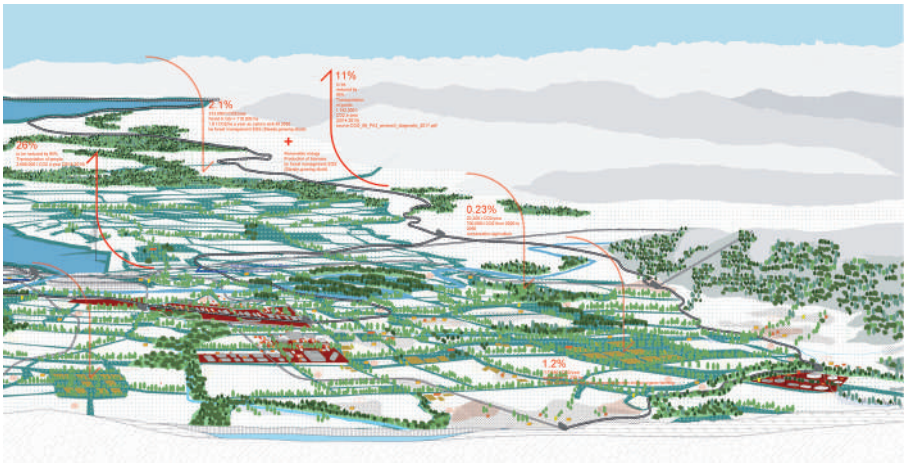
culture towards conservative and ecological models and the hidden role of “urban soil” in adapting the city to the new climates, while “decentralized forms of circular economies” envisage their more robust development to reduce the actual gap between Geneva and the other side of the Swiss border, with the transformation of mono-functional areas in urban space. In this vision, the mechanical expertise of the Arve valley (turn-bar industry) could be enhanced, and production spaces revisited into a node of metropolitan reconditioning, a “territorial workshop.” The image of the workshop acts as a lever for the reuse of buildings and existing hybrid rural-industrial plots, with the drastic reduction in current pollution levels, a mix of agriculture and housing and local services. A “No waste city” along the Arve Valley is then imagined as part of a transition to circular



**Pays-Paysages of Great Geneva: the Arve Valley.** In “Du sol et du travail : la transition, un nouveau projet biopolitique”, 2018-2021; Habitat Research Center – EPFL: P. Viganò (director of research); L. Pattaroni, V. Kaufmann, C. Fivet; R. Sega, M. Barcellona Corte, Q. Zhang, T. Pietropoli; with P. Boivin (HEPIA), W. Stahel (Product Life Institute), J. Normand (B-Lab), O. Crevoisier (Université de Neuchâtel). Model realized by the students of the Design Studio Viganò, BA5-6\_2018/2019 (EPFL), Prof. P. Viganò, R. Sega, M. Durand, E. Llevat

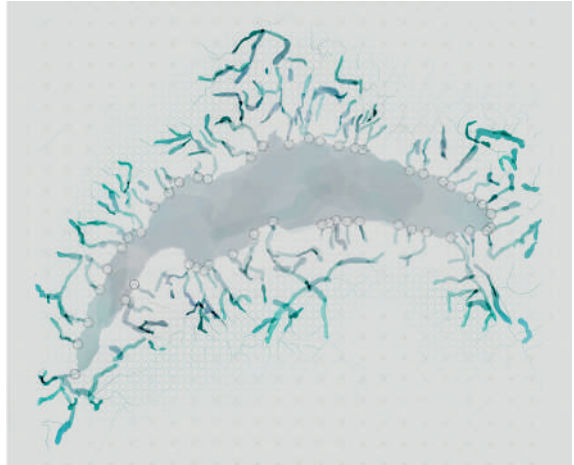


Arve Valley: No Waste City. In "Du sol et du travail : la transition, un nouveau projet biopolitique", 2018-2021; Habitat Research Center – EPFL. Projet realized with A. A. Incutti, G. Jeanrenaud, S. Omar, Design studio MA2\_2019, EPFL prof. P. Viganò, T. Pietropoli, Q. Zhang



**Great Geneva 2050, metabolic section.** In "Du sol et du travail : la transition, un nouveau projet biopolitique", 2018-2021; Habitat Research Center – EPFL: P. Viganò (director of research); L. Pattaroni, V. Kaufmann, C. Fivet; R. Sega, M. Barcelloni Corte, Q. Zhang, T. Pietropolli; with P. Boivin (HEPIA), W. Stahel (Product Life Institute), J. Normand (B-Lab), O. Crevoisier (Université de Neuchâtel)

Our vision of a CO<sub>2</sub>-neutral Great Geneva unfolds over time, placing ambitions, strategies, and actions within a “chronology” of a possible transition that relies on weak social and ecological infrastructures, not only on the traditional development drivers. Projects consistent with the variety of urban forms of Great Geneva are possible; eco-socio-spatial prototypes are an opportunity to rethink its inhabitability; a territorial balance and the reinforcement of horizontal relations beyond centers and peripheries reorient the design.



**Leman-Alpine Metropolis: Affluents. Urban Design and Urban Theory,** Studio BA5&6, Fall semester 2016, SAR-EPFL. Prof. Paola Viganò, Roberto Sega, Antoine Vialle, SAR-EPFL – students: Faisan Leslie, Wolf Josefina, Huart Vianney, Versteegh Tania, Rauzduel Déreck, Unterberger Roxane, Dindault Christophe, Camara N’Faly Ismaéli

A composite, incremental, and collective project can be the output of these efforts and contribute to a dialogue among actors, institutions, putting strong and weak “subjects” around the same decision table. A concrete case of the Horizontal Metropolis research and vision.<sup>11</sup>

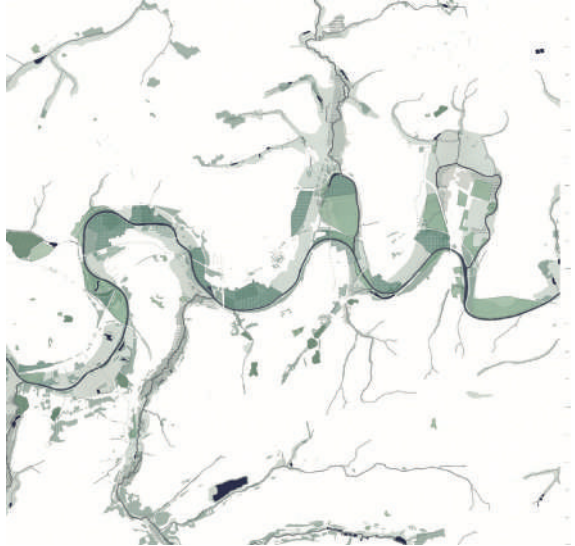
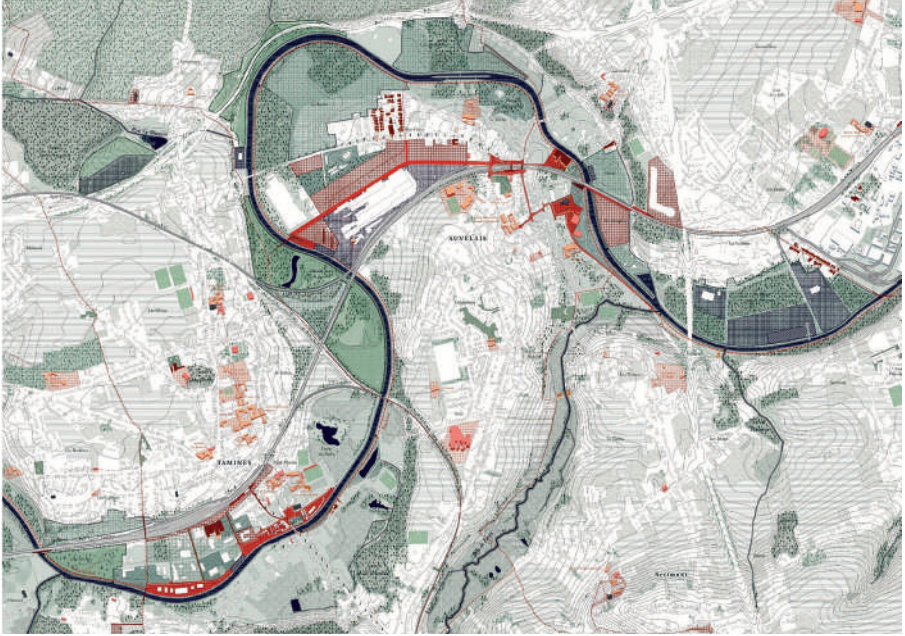
### Inclusion

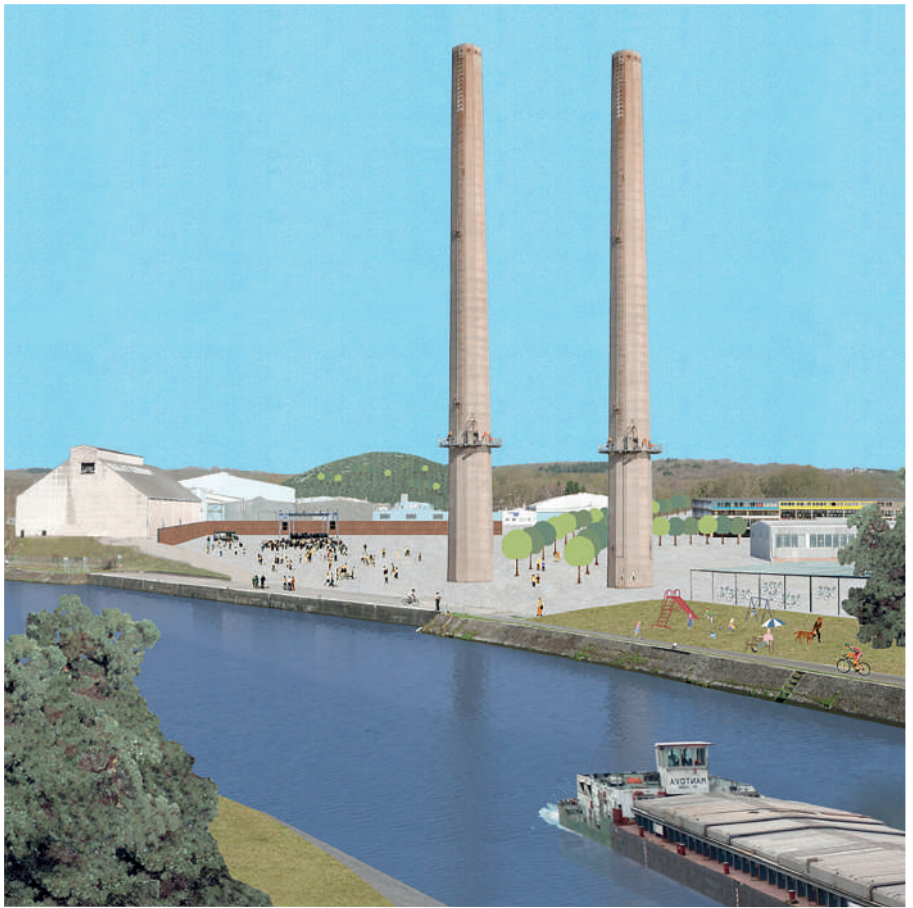
Any opening and closing of economic, biological, or social cycles produces unexpected consequences, including those driven by the ecological/green transition leading to further divarication in society, deepening the social divide, environmental and spatial injustice (Shokry et al. 2022). Inclusivity, in fact, considers socio-economic exclusion and unjust access to urban and environmental qualities and resources as a three-dimensional nexus (Wende, Nijhuis, Mensing-de Jong, Humann, 2020). From the classic social science perspective on urban justice and the right to the city (Lefebvre, Harvey, Feinstein...), to the rise of political ecology (Swyngedouw, Kaika, Gandy...), the debate turns more recently to the old relationship between environmental benefits (new parks and green infrastructure, for example) and gentrification. (Connolly, Anguelovski, Pearsall...) Space contributes to inclusion or exclusion. (Secchi, 2013)

In the Wallonian context, a declined industrial region, the *Pays noir*, the black furrow of Europe, a new “pact” between society and territory is developing into a series of new images for its future. In the case of a vision for La Louvière 2050, “ville parc de Vallonie” (for its landscape richness), a territory of “civic constellations” (diffuse urbanity as an important plinth for community organization), and “a lucid machine” (a space of multiple social and resilient economies) can work in the re-activation of the existing human and spatial “sleeping capital” (Ferragina, 2013). In other close European regions, all marked by the conclusion of the coal extraction cycle, important territorial projects have used the image of the park as an engine for economic development, reinterpreting the traditional industrial areas and infrastructure to counterbalance the still prevalent economic discourse (in the Nord-Pas-de Calais or in Flemish Limburg, for example). Together with the “civic constellations” and the “lucid machine,” the “park” image defines a matrix for spatial development based on the recognition of the plurality of on-site actors, patrimony, and heritage. New relationships among the different territorial layers can be envisaged, covering circular, horizontal, and alternative development paths. The “projet de ville” is then the output of an ecological, socio-economic, and spatial development dialogue that deals with the awareness of marginality and weakness of territorial as well as economic and social structures. (Viganò, 2020) Making them “subjects” is an important ethical repositioning of design,

11 Led at the Laboratory of Urbanism, EPFL and at IUAV. See: Viganò, Cavalieri, Barcellona Corte 2018; Cavalieri, Viganò, 2020; Barcellona Corte, Viganò, *The Horizontal Metropolis. The Anthology*, 2022.

which values every single situation and condition and works to reduce hierarchies and dependence. A project of “inclusion” extends to the territory itself, *included* among the fundamental agents of the transition: a territory *subject*, individual and agent. No peripheries, suburbs, or outskirts, no marginal, dependent, servant territories, but equally livable urban rural situations.

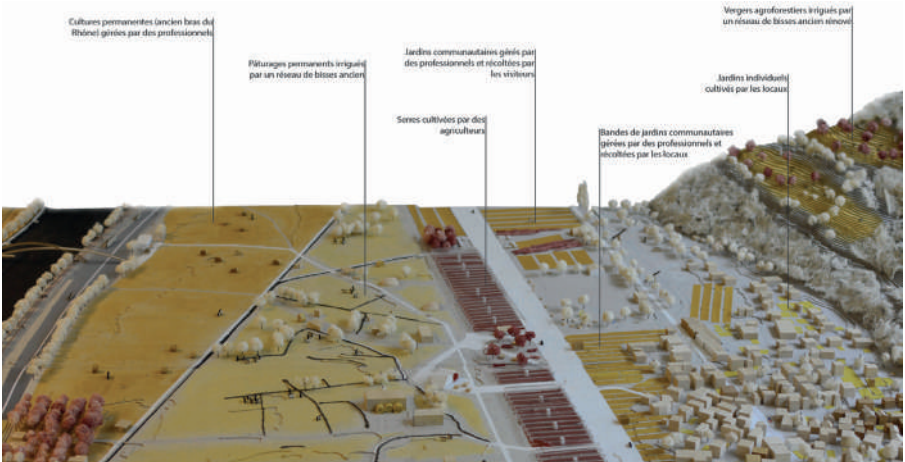




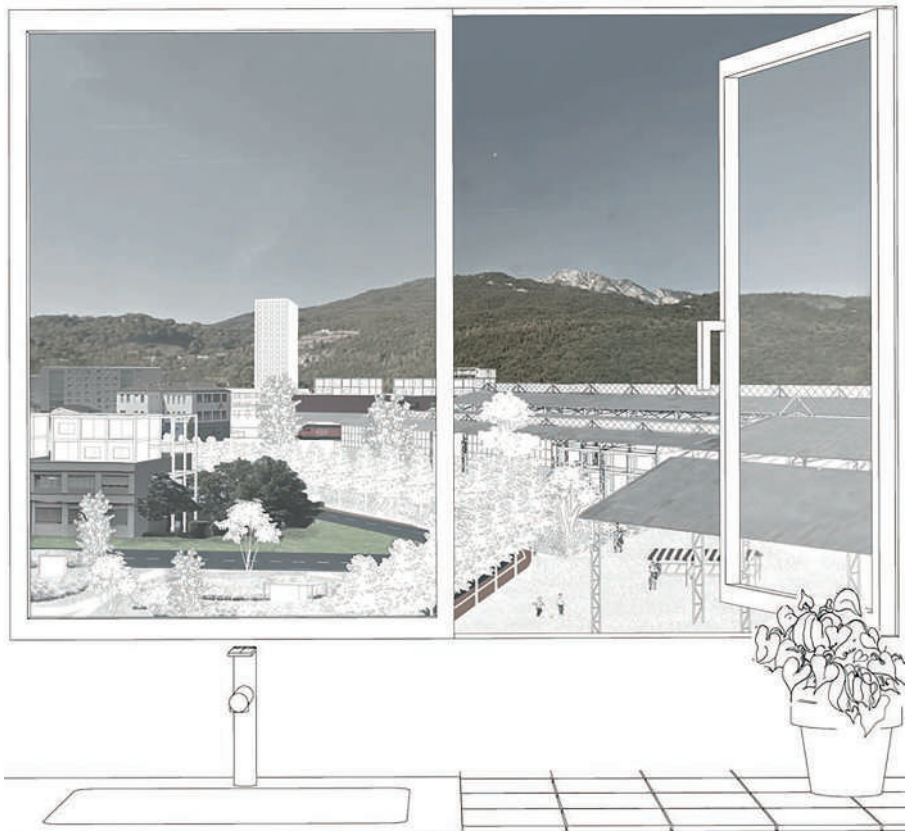
**The Sambre park. b. Sambreville, a city of 50,000 inhabitants: extended centralities, diffuse centralities, micro-centralities. c. The city of the Sambre: opening up new life cycles. Val de Sambre, Territorial project in Sambreville and integrated redeployment plan for the Val de Sambre (municipalities of Sambreville and Jemeppe-sur-Sambre), StudioPaolaViganò with Idea Consult (2017-2018)**



**A city park in Wallonia. b. A city with a civic constellation. c. An agile city with multiple, resilient economies. La Louvière: City project and Vision 2050. StudioPaolaViganò with IDEA Consult and ICEED. Elaboration of the City Project for La Louvière (2018-2021)**



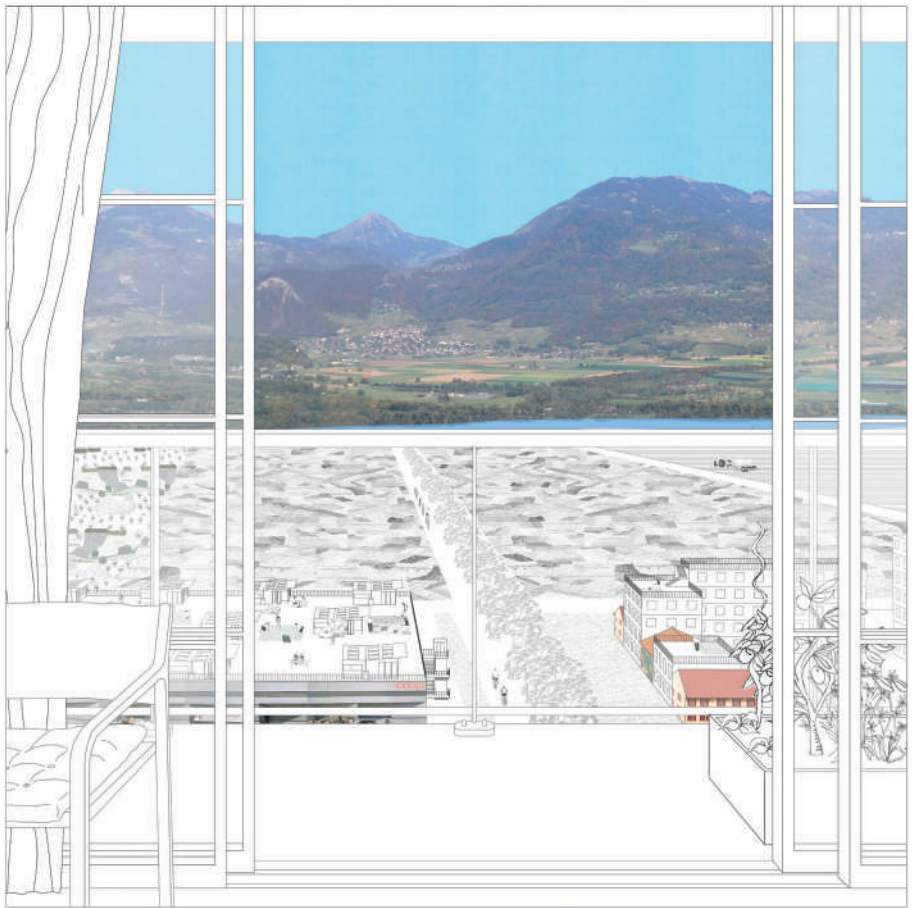
**Optimising the type of farming according to the soil. Rethinking the alpine city-territory. Urban Design and Urban Theory, Studio BA5&6 ALPS, 2014-2015, Prof. Paola Viganò – students: M. Boily, C. Cattin, F. Chase, T. Choun, L. Donnet, K. Epiney, C. Frankhauser, E. Julien, J. Salamin, P.A. Terrier, D. Youssef. Now in Cavalieri, C., Viganò, P. (eds) (2020). The Horizontal Metropolis. A Radical Project. Zurich: Park Books**



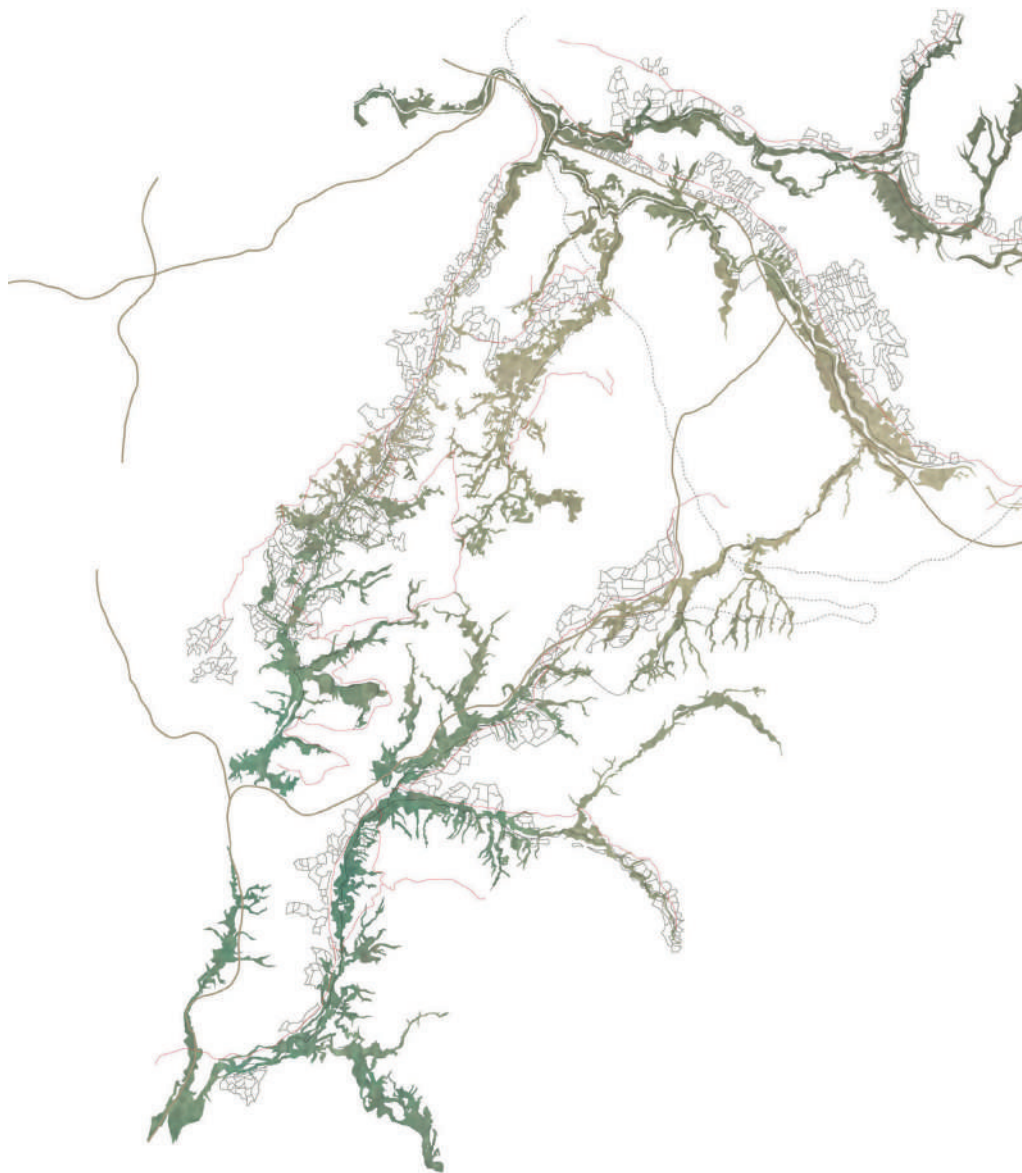
**Monthey - Living in the Rhône Park. Agro-urbanity along the Stockalper. Urban Design and Urban Theory, Studio BA5&6, Fall semester 2017, SAR-EPFL. Prof. Paola Viganò, Roberto Segal, Antoine Vialle – students: Brogini Federico, Benavides Diego, Gautier Christophe, Herri Noé, Lopicorey Matthieu, Waller Noé**



**Adaptation, Transformation, Densification of a mixed-use platform in the Chablais. Agro-urbanity along the Stockalper. Urban Design and Urban Theory, Studio BA5&6, Fall semester 2017, SAR-EPFL. Prof. Paola Viganò, Roberto Segal, Antoine Vialle – students: Broggin Federico, Benavides Diego, Gautier Christophe, Herri Noé, Lopicorey Matthieu, Waller Noé**

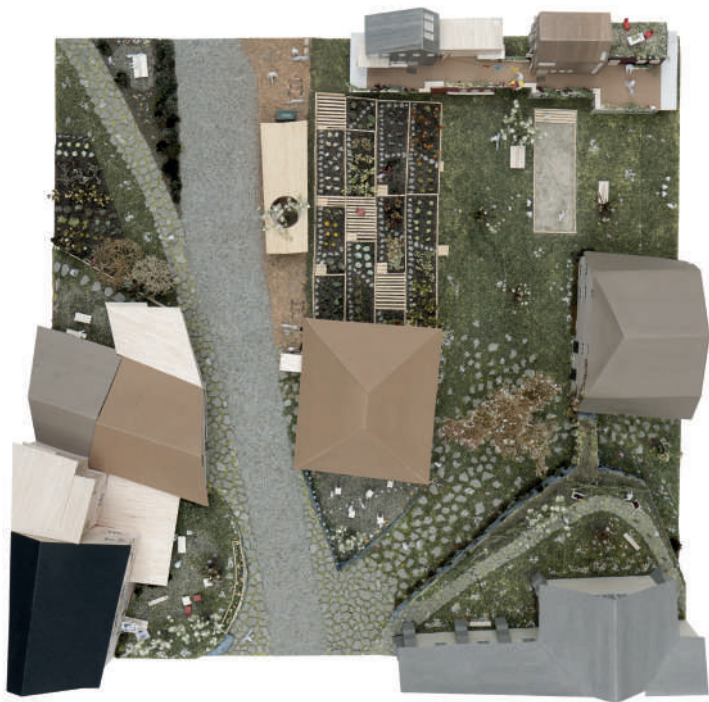


**A room with a view, Chablais. Agro-urbanity along the Stockalper. Urban Design and Urban Theory, Studio BA5&6, Fall semester 2017, SAR-EPFL. Prof. Paola Viganò, Roberto Segal, Antoine Vialle – students: Brogini Federico, Benavides Diego, Gautier Christophe, Herli Noé, Lopicorey Matthieu, Waller Noé**





**The Vaison valley in 2050: weak structures. Re-road: The Vaison valley. Urban Design and Urban Theory, Studio BA5&6, Spring semester 2018, SAR-EPFL. Prof. Paola Viganò, Roberto Segal, Antoine Vialle – students: Jennifer Kessler, Joanne Hélène Nussbaum, Justine Marie Estoppey, Valeria Molinari, Leonie Charlotte Wagner, Zoe Köbrunner**



[b]



[c]



[d]



[ a ] Model of the centre of La Muraz in 2050. [ b ] Sequence of the project, from the view over the Valley to an extension, via the new park, its bowls pitch, the communal vegetable garden and the mobility point. [ c ] Mobility point with bus stop, fountain, bicycle parking spaces and facilities for recharging the batteries of bicycles and electric cars. [ d ] Wooden extension to an existing building while preserving the promenade leading to the rest of the village upstream. [ e ] Communal kitchen garden laid out in the topography of the site, near the mobility point and the redesigned departmental road. [ f ] A building erected on a former car park, overlooking the new village park, with a public ground floor and outdoor walkway. [ g ] Artisanal brewery housed in an old residential building with a terrace set down the street, at the interface with the town hall square. [ h ] The church esplanade and its new vines overlooking the brand new village square and its public programmes. [ i ] Timber elevation of an existing building, levelling the site to provide a public terrace and creating a cultural café. [ j ] Bike workshop in an old house directly on the main road, a new destination for cyclists. [ k ] The town hall placette with its large tree and new vegetation, a former area completely covered in asphalt. Re-road: The Viaison valley. Urban Design and Urban Theory, Studio BA5&6, Spring semester 2018, SAR-EPFL. Prof. Paola Viganò, Roberto Segal, Antoine Vialle – students: Jennifer Kessler, Joanne Hélène Nussbaum, Justine Marie Estoppey, Valeria Molinari, Leonie Charlotte Wagner, Zoe Köbrunner.

## Conclusions

At the center of the work carried out with students in different contexts are the consequences that a revised value system, a new gaze, and an urbanism of inclusion can produce on the way we design. The transition engages new life cycles and an intense “reparative project.”<sup>12</sup> Urbanism matured in the modern era, oriented towards transformation and growth, through the destruction of cultures and living and non-living systems. The rhetorical question in the title “Are we ready for the transition?” highlights the need for a fundamental design shift, which is particularly urgent today. The transformation of our tools, view, and value system is just as important as adapting to climate change. We must rethink the idea of design itself and the meaning of what a project is and can do.

12 Extending the hypothesis of constructive repair formulated by Táiwò, Olúf’mi, O. (2022).