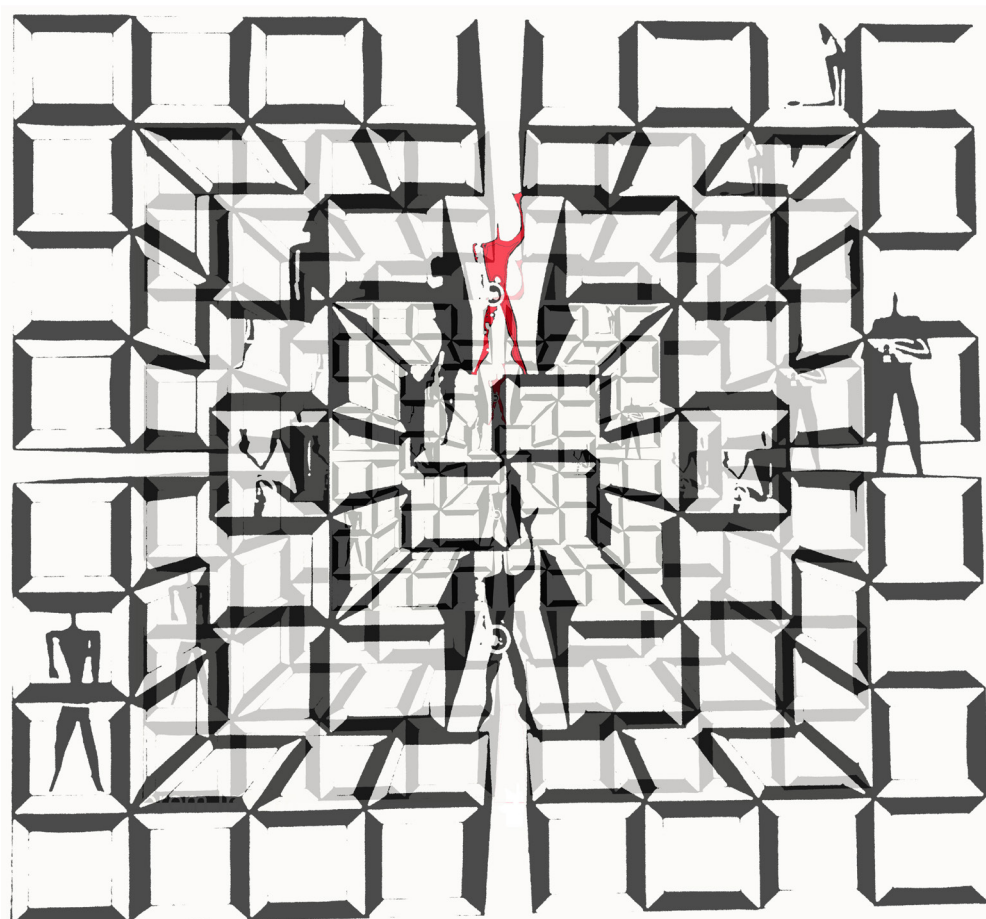


De_Sign Environment Landscape City_2020

Atti

a cura di Giulia Pellegrini



Atti

De_Sign Environment Landscape City/Di_Segnare Ambiente Paesaggio Città

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Maps from public space to relational space

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Abstract

In the last 30 years the contemporary city has experienced fundamental changes associated with technological evolution and the digital/informational revolution.

The approach to a new conception of public space synthesizes this paradigm shift towards a new, more complex condition -multiple and multilevel- of the city.

From the traditional public space we have moved to a new relational space.

From the ancient representative dimension (figurative or evocative) to an interactive dimension. From one-dimensional drawing to a multidimensional conception. From the ancient vocation of public space as a fund for action to a new vocation of relational space as a virtual interface, active device and activator.

The growing development of new information technologies brings us exponentially closer to a reality recorded in a precise and immediate way, opening an immense repertoire of possibilities in the field of the combination of materiality, sociality and spatiality and information (tional)ity, from a more efficient, responsible, convivial and qualitative mutual collaboration (in and with urban landscapes).

Abstract

Negli ultimi 30 anni la città contemporanea ha sperimentato cambiamenti fondamentali associati all'evoluzione tecnologica e la rivoluzione digitale/informazionale.

L'approccio ad una nuova concezione dello spazio pubblico sintetizza questo cambiamento di paradigmi verso una nuova condizione più complessa –multipla e multilivello– della città.

Dello spazio pubblico tradizionale siamo passati a un nuovo spazio relazionale.

Dell'antica dimensione rappresentativa (figurativa o evocativa) a una dimensione interattiva. Dal disegno unidimensionale a una concezione multidimensionale. Dell'antica vocazione dello spazio pubblico come un fondo per l'azione ad una nuova vocazione dello spazio relazionale come virtuale interface, dispositivo attivo e attivatore.

Il crescente sviluppo delle nuove tecnologie dell'informazione ci avvicina esponenzialmente a una realtà registrata in modo preciso e immediato, aprendo un immenso repertorio di possibilità nel campo della combinazione tra materialità, socialità e spazialità e informa(tional)ità, da una collaborazione reciproca (in e con i paesaggi urbani) più efficiente, responsabile, conviviale e qualitativa.

Operative Landscapes

The Metapolis Dictionary of Advanced Architecture (Gausa-Guallart-Muller-Morales-Porras-Soriano, Actar Publishers 2003) provides a cryptic definition of the term Operative Landscapes:

Landscapes, operative : See 'lands 1: land-links', 'lands 2: land-arch' and 'lands 3: lands-in-lands'.¹

The terms land-links, land-arch and lands-in-lands defined a new territorial and urban multi-scalar conception of the landscape: hybrid, natural, and artificial, surpassing an attachment to the old notion of “gardening architecture.”

The adjectival of the notion of “landscape” with the voice “operative” proposed a new vision for the traditional idea of the landscape, assimilating it to the concept of a “system”: an operative system was conceived not only as an eco-structure, but also as an infra-structure, an intra-structure, a trans-structure and a processing urban-territorial “info-structure.”

While the garden landscapes of the early twentieth century were designed as “pseudo-natures,” the Terrains Vagues of the late twentieth century were conceived of as latent voids or plots, announcing a vocation as “city” or “urban places” (more than “augian non-places”).² By comparison, the new operational landscapes of the late 1990s and 2000s sought to formulate new hybrid devices (urban-natural, geographical-territorial, social-environmental, dilated and dense, topological and topographic, etc.).

This new vocation of the landscape as an urban-territorial active agent was born alongside the pioneering digital revolution, and an understanding of the dynamic and uncertain dendritic geometries and patterns that conformed the cities themselves, including their “full-void-linked”, occupational, interlaced and diffused structures.

The landscape as a new operational device was not yet the old residue of an essential and substantive full, but a new conjugative actor able to give a new type of elastic, cross-linkable and infiltrated order, reconfigurable and recyclable, reactive or reversible, in a city that had manifested its growing and fractal condition as a complex “system of systems,” contingent and chaotic (in the most scientific sense of the term); multiple, heterogeneous, and undetermined.

The landscape, interpreted in an activist way, could become the real “building” of the new city: the structuring system of a possible multi-level order, more flexible and weighted, and no longer the “extra” possibility of the old planning.

The landscape was then, an open order capable of “meshing,” relating and redirecting the casual, irregular and wild developments of current urban structures, generating more versatile—and non-imposing—relationship systems in resonance with the metropolitan dynamics themselves; their diffuse evolutions would tend to generate interstices, residual lands, border spaces or large omission reserves operating “in negative” and in implicit and subjacent matrix networks. That possibility, of course, had been favored by the transfer of a generation obsessed by the relationship between architecture and city (the city as a stable scenario, the result of the building) to another more sensitized by a new hybrid contract with a hybrid nature (artificial, functional, cross-bread or wild, rather than domestic and bucolic).

New dynamics between architecture, urbanism and landscape conformed a strange mixed vocabulary in

¹See M. Gausa, V. Guallart, W. Muller, J. Morales, F. Porras, F. Soriano, *The Metapolis Dictionary of Advanced Architecture*, Actar Publishers, New York-Barcelona, 2003

²With “augian” we are using a neologism from the Non-Places of Marc Augé. See M. Augé, *Non-Places: An Introduction to Anthropology of Supermodernity*, Le Seuil, Paris, 1992

which the action on the place would start from a new type of a-typologic contract between old taxonomic and divided categories, no longer continuing to create – as Le Corbusier signified – “beautiful volumes under the light” but rather, “ambiguous fields under the sky.”

Operational landscapes; relational enclaves capable of generating their own energy; informed fields within other reinforced fields (fig.1).

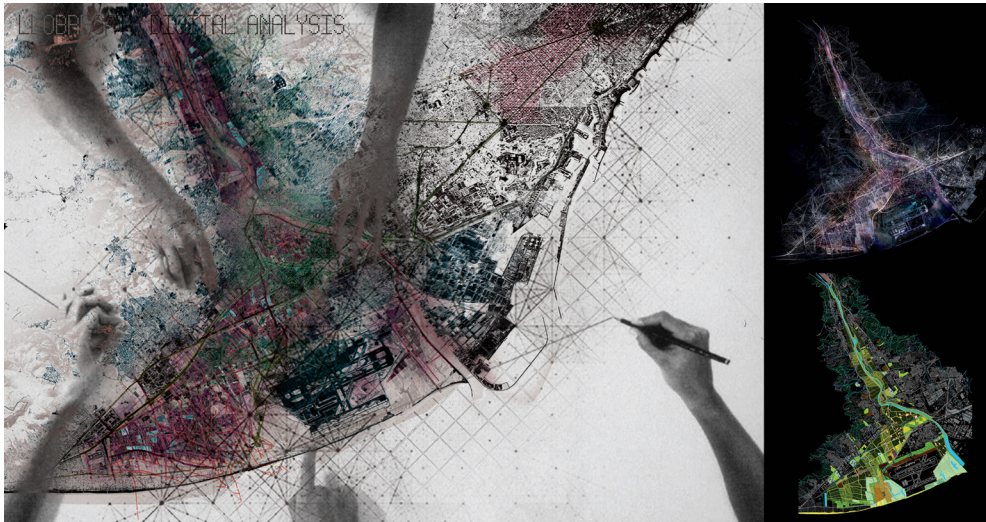


Fig. 1 Barcelona, Parc Agrari del Baix Llobregat, at Smart Agro-Parc: Mapping new territorial and informational strategies (Gausa+Raveau Arquitectura - Gic-Lab, 2014, F.Ciccone, I.Meta, V. Fonnesu, V. Croci, E. Torea, A. Calabró, colls.). Activations of physical structures and thematic networks

From public space to digital space

Today, in the time of globalization, the way of representing public space is changing, or rather the potential of approaching these spaces is changing. New tools and new technologies make it possible to map and process data of people flows and more intangible or material data, such as weather events, urban mobility data, intangible data of users' expenditure. With all these data today it is possible to read differently the habits and customs of city dwellers and try to transfer them into a new vision of the space people live in. However, it is not always possible to transform this data into something directly connected to a space, we are not in conditions or spatial projects where data can automatically become a form or function as in the early nineties it started to happen with some architectural and spatial projects. These data are now much more complex, they work on very different layers, they talk about a multitude of information and even if we could select them we would have many layers of interpretation.

The digital age we live in is putting available a huge amount of data that we can use to improve the resilience of our cities and territories. The Big Data are in fact becoming a dominant theme, not only in the business world, but at every level of social organization, and in particular in the pursuit of environmental sustainability of cities of the future. The knowledge made available by processing big data, if properly used, will make us more responsive to change and able to adapt more quickly to the opportunities and pitfalls of the complex multi-experiential space in which we orient ourselves (fig2).

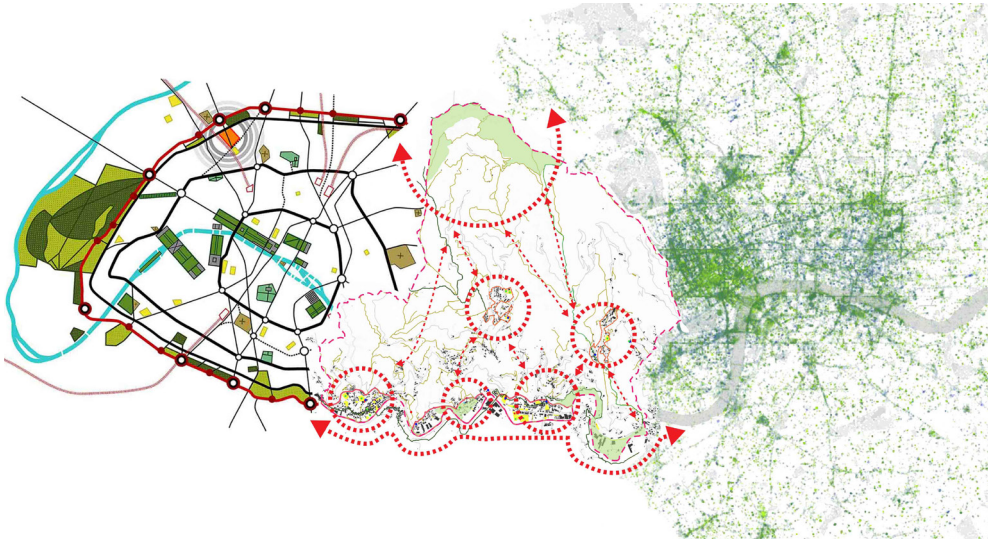


Fig.2 From map to maps a digital collage (Gausa+Raveau Arquitectura: Paris, périphérique(s), Go-Up: Moconesi PUC, Twitter: London data map)

The open data generated by social networks and platforms not only allowed a bottom-up urban planning, but also allowed to give voice to complex and interdisciplinary phenomena, such as migration phenomena. In this case, the social networks, healing the loss of a physical and emotional bond with their country of origin, have allowed the generation of millions of dates, while offering institutions and local governments the opportunity to closely understand the problems of an interdisciplinary, changing and complex phenomenon. Open data have offered answers and solutions, generating a new concept of “home” and “daily life”, have changed the geography of movements within the city, with the consequent birth of new traces and urban geographies. This is how social networks shorten distances: between citizens, and between them and the administration. This is a radical change of scenery: the citizen, from recipient and consumer of services, has become a co-designer of services, dialoguing more and more directly with the administration. For this reason, the observation of the psychological relationships and reactions of the community through the study of social networks is increasingly a marker for the purposes of community participation in the redesign of an urban space and context. By increasing transparency and the involvement of all stakeholders in public life, the potential of this tool as a symbol of democracy is thus confirmed.

The Network becomes the new urban agora, symbol of the nascent Open-source Urbanism. Through open data it is possible to co-design services with and for citizens, improving the quality of life of individuals and communities; observing the social dynamics of the physical, emotional and virtual tissues of urban space, promoting continuous interaction between permanent and temporary inhabitants, deepening the connections, discontinuities, relationships and syntaxes that are created within the city. The study of open data fosters the involvement and conscious growth of the community which, by developing public value through the regeneration of spaces and social regeneration, makes its way between regional policies in a fully active way by communicating to local bodies the identification of key issues to be addressed.

In the city of data the risk is to pass from a physical and relational space to a digital space.

From public space to relational space

One of the most celebrated clichés of recent Barcelona urban planning - and, at the same time, one of the most limited in its approach - has indeed been that of the treatment of public space.

If the definition of Barcelona's public space was to be based for many years on the subtle recreation of the old historical paradigms (the Piazza Italiana, the Rambla, the Boulevard, the Garden, etc.), it was to be based on the treatment of the public space.) as a typological and figurative, aesthetic and aesthetical vision of a civic space, conceived between the micro-monumental (a fixed and stabilised space, meticulously finished, by "compositively" designed) today this Platonic recreation of an idealised space, often supported by a hard design, The fact that the building is closed - that is to say, in an image that evokes the pseudo-Mediterranean plate - has ended up suffering, for the most part, from the effects of time and vandalism associated, often, with the limited capacity to ensure a vital, expressive, stimulating and pleasant scenario, open to active interaction with the users.

All the controversy - already somewhat distant in time - of the hard squares and the famous recovery of the "Mediterranean" space (recreated, in the case of Barcelona, through the protagonism of an essentially "paved" floor and the lyrical design of an atmosphere halfway between the scale of the domestic "living room" and the evocation of the "solid plate", of strong neo-traditional connotations) would lead to the systematic elimination - generally justified in terms of cleaning and maintenance factors, if not simple aesthetic "purity" - of any hint of gardening, flowerbeds or plantations that are not always of a good formal quality.

Today, however, new landscape and environmental formulations are required, as well as new spatial concepts that go beyond a form or design, correctly neat and elegant but finished in themselves, to entrust the idea of the collective to more open approaches, sensitive to change and interaction: generators of energy and activity.

In which the manipulation of the floor itself is combined with a new playful and experiential functionality. More than domestic rooms, it is about conceiving active landscapes. Multi-programmatic.

Generators of life and activity capable of combining direct, flexible, imaginative plastic expression with the decisive integration of facilities, whether stable or temporary, for leisure, shared sport, small cultural activities, associations and, in short, the projection of the citizen. But also sensitive to the capture of passive energies and their local reintegration in the form of lighting, irrigation, etc.

From the old public space we have to move to the relational space.

An active space that is representative; soft - yes, decidedly soft, that is to say, green, spongy, sensory, expressive, more than austere "hard"; not only conceived by "contemplation" and "representation" but for collective enjoyment and recreation.

That is, for authentic social exchange.

We must avoid the cliché that Barcelona does not like green.

From a hyper-constructed city we have to move on to a renaturalised city in terms of landscape; re-arranged, re-spaced and collectively vital.

Both from the conception of this possible green scheme for the city and the Eixample, and from the rethinking of contemporary public space and its definition as a new relational space, we have sought to work on the proposals presented here.

The present study is intended as a corollary to some of the works aimed at deepening and completing some of the intuitions and/or arguments set out above, especially in the fields of conception and design of new spaces for coexistence associated with the generation (and/or regeneration) of new eco-efficient urban environments: the decisive importance of criteria linked to sustainability in the fields of planning,

construction and building and in those of the culture of a new information society and, therefore, of intelligent interaction with the environment - and between people - forces us to rethink, in effect, many of the traditional urban and town-planning parameters, notably with regard to the relationship between roads and conviviality, mobility and spatiality.

Several recent experiences and researches have shown this willingness to promote new models of coexistence and new qualitative and environmental proposals at different scales aimed at influencing the fields of urban planning and building and the conception of new/old spaces of relationship and activity beyond the traditional disciplinary inertias.

These initiatives have promoted a wide range of reference material, for study, debate and reflection in relation to issues of growing methodological importance.

In the area of a new urban eco-conception, the study *Cap a un Habitatge Sostenible* (CADS, Generalitat de Catalunya, 2009-2011) recently proposed several measures among which it is worth highlighting, in reference to the work that concerns us here:

- In the area of mobility and viability: to favour integrated mobility models based on weighted parameters of accessibility, proximity and urban (inter)connectivity, supporting collective transport and its intermodality, reorganising and limiting (without collapsing) the use of the car in the city centre and recovering spaces for life, recreation and relations, foreseeing the intentional conception of green networks, pedestrian networks and/or the generation of specific circuits of urban and/or landscape quality.

- In the field of the relationship with the environment, the context and the landscape: to favour processes of qualitative interaction / integration, favouring correct equations between built spaces and free spaces (empty and full, volumetries and surfaces), integrating landscape architecture into planning, proposing parameters of synergy with the environment (stairs, visual rhythms, textures, etc.) incorporating possible pre-existing assets (heritage, landscape, anthropological, archaeological, historical, sensory, etc.).

- In the area of social interaction and citizen participation: to ensure an adequate social dimension so that the urban project is socially experienced (and valued) based on the creation of collective spaces of relationship, coexistence and mixicity, favouring programmatic, social and functional mixicity, combining residential spaces with productive and leisure spaces, proposing new facilities for social and cultural meetings as well as the creation of new networks of public spaces with an active and relational vocation (sports, leisure, educational, etc.). Encouraging a new generation of playful spaces for children and adults, integrated into a landscape and global concept of public space, promoting eco-efficient solutions in material and constructive designs, at all levels.

The theme of the relational or convivial city raises, then, that transfer of the old public space, representative or univocal, to the current relational space, more multifaceted, interactive and ambivalent. The analysis of this transfer is basic today to facilitate the generation of new eco-environments not only proposed from normative or technological tools but, mainly, from the conjugation of a new type of scenarios of social, landscaping and environmental interaction but, also, cultural and creative (fig 3)



Fig.3 Barcelona Eixample-New Multistring Green Centrality. (Gausa + Raveau actarquitectura, Gic-Lab, 2011), basic mesh of limited traffic and recovery of the green central rope strip, detail of the strategic map and the model (MAXXI Rome- 2011)

Performing Systems

Today, at the beginning of the 21st century, the combination INTERACTION + INFORMATION is assumed as the great space-cultural revolution of our new era. For many of the new actors implicated in these dilated processes of research, what was happening during the transfer of centuries was the pioneer explosion of a new “operational logic,” definitely innovative in its own idea of order, form, geometry and materialization or organization. A relational logic associated with the assumption of the complexity, the transversality, and the capacity for interaction between dynamic conditions and evolutionary processes, are called to create intersections, encounters, hybridizations, mixtures and interchanges³ not as mere “compositional” episodes, but as adaptable and strategic-tactical systemic “devices” destined to combine, from simultaneous global dynamics and local information⁴.

If the strength of the iconic event-element would continue to still be present in the urban cultures of the beginning of the century, in the most symptomatic research this eventual condition was combined with a clear vocation of multi-scalar transfers and interactions between places, times, programs, users, activities and spaces, aimed at generating relational environments rather than simple design objects⁵.

In the twenty years after the first pioneering insights of the 1990s, the first decades of the new century have experimented the exponential development of new technologies, opening up a new era of ever more ubiquitous and increased capabilities. The emergence of the digital and informational universe of networked exchanges, parametric conceptions, digital and differential fabrications, environmental sensorizations and online applications coincide with the appearance of new generations of actors more familiar with the premises of a new space-time-information logic⁶.

³See F. Asher, *Métapoles ou l’Avenir des villes*, Odile Jacob, Paris, 1995

⁴See M.Gausa, *Open-Espacio-Tiempo-Información*, Actar Publishers, New York-Barcelona, 2010

⁵See chapters 4, 5, 6 and 9 M.Gausa, *Open-Espacio-Tiempo-Información*, Actar Publishers, New York-Barcelona, 2010.

⁶See M.Gausa, *City Sense: Territorializing Information* in “V.V.A.A.: City Sense, 4th Advanced Architecture Contest”, Actar – IAAC, Barcelona, 2015

In the second decade of the 21st century, the first multi-scalar (and a-scalar) complex and transferring operations combined with a new type of more reactive and responsive, synergic and empathic (“natural” and spontaneous) approach capable to combine not only “sense and sensitivity”, but, also “sensorization” and “sensibilization.”

In the exploration of this new advanced logic of information and interaction, the pioneering architecture of simultaneity has given way to the architecture of instantaneity: an architecture of direct responses, of the moment rather than of the “monument” (the object-event) that seems to want to combine a new “common logic” (active and activist, optimized or simply positive) generated, on the whole, beyond the “exceptional.”

We are talking about an architecture correlated with a new sociocultural eco-mediation, in which the natural and technological, sophisticated and spontaneous are conjugated, combining (beyond aesthetic prejudices or stylistic filters) the optimization of the “simply necessary” with a responsive and responsible vocation, without linguistic claims or conventional aesthetic strains.

Many of the most innovative and “common” architectures that occur today tend to make prevail the efficient management of information (in all senses, data, indicators, programs, conditions) and its immediate optimized “formulation/resolution/translation” in possible efficient and synthesized scenarios (more spontaneous or more sophisticated, more “parametric” or more “filio-ethic”). The appearance of a new type of social-environmental sensitivity and direct action linked to an architecture of the immediate, the instantaneous, the impostergable (unpostponed), connected to the force de frappe of the active and the activist, is marking the interest of new generations, involved with this performative and collective sensibility (and the lesson of the Latin American and Hispanic experiences - from Madrid to Quito, from Caracas to Medellín – are, in this sense, absolutely explicit and decisive).

Boarding approaches generated by “performative devices,” (strategic deployments or “tactic guerrillas”, without rhetoric or spectacular gestures, but with a strong sense of commitment and of engagement) these dynamics provide solutions with imagination, fantasy and intensity; proposals generated beyond typological standards or conventions.

The exploration of a new positive mediation (synergistic) to define our habitats, as well as a new sensitive interaction (empathic or eco-empathic) to deal with increasingly social complex scenarios, marks many of the essays produced today, in a time associated with global deficit situations related to conflicts and multiple threats linked to critical geopolitical (and geo-economic) oscillations. These are also, of course, related to climate changes that have devastating effects on the most vulnerable populations (risks, environmental problems, housing deficits, pollution, ghettoization, increase of poverty thresholds, etc.)⁸.

New formulations in/with a milieu and in/with a reality not only distributed but also augmented in its own capacities of co(II/nn)ective hyper-connection and sensorization, capable to combine social and technological conditions, through more performing systems (and/or landscapes) oriented to favor augmented an enjoying dynamic relations between citizens and environments, settlements and statements.

This direct, precise, dynamic and “instantaneous” urban-answering (where the old systemic definition of the fixed “element” gives often way to a new epistemic condition of a real-time “moment”) continues to call, today, to the abilities of design but, above all, to the search of new shared informational/convivial processes, encouraging – incontestably – land-system-spaces definitely associated with the assumption of a new eco-medium and a new eco-mediation; spaces destined to exponentially expand this potential of exchange between conditions and situations, information(s) and sollicitations, in the form of different

formats, trajectories and variable contexts.

The increasing development of the new information technologies brings us exponentially closer to a reality recorded in a precise and immediate way, opening up an immense repertoire of possibilities in the field of the combination between materiality, sociality and spatiality and informa(tion)lity, from a mutual collaboration (in and with the urban landscapes) that is more efficient, responsible, convivial and qualitative.

Hence, the concept of interaction (of a positive exchange between environment, society and information) gains importance in relation to a more sustainable new development, not only as an ethical and socio-economic responsibility but also as a coherent consequence of these cultural-informational/relational revolution, today in course⁹.

⁹See A. Barricco, *The Game*, Einaudi, Torino, 2018

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La VI Conferenza Internazionale sul Disegno, *De_Sign Environment Landscape City_Genova 2020* tratta di: Rilievo e Rappresentazione dell'Architettura e dell'Ambiente; Il Disegno per il paesaggio; Disegni per il Progetto: tracce - visioni e pre-visioni; I margini i segni della memoria e la città in progress; Cultura visiva e comunicazione dall'idea al progetto; Le emergenze architettoniche; Il colore e l'ambiente; Percezione e identità territoriale; Patrimonio iconografico culturale paesaggistico: arte, letteratura e ricadute progettuali; Segni e Disegni per il Design e Rappresentazione avanzata. Federico Babina, architetto e graphic designer presenta ARCHIVISION, e Eduardo Carazo Lefort, Docente dell'Università di Valladolid e Targa d'Oro dell'Unione Italiana Disegno la Lectio Magistralis.

The VI International Conference on Drawing, De_Sign Environment Landscape City_Genoa 2020, deals with: Survey and Representation of Architecture and the Environment; Drawing for the landscape; De-signs for the Project: traces-vision and previews; Margins, signs of memory and the city in progress; Visual culture and communication from idea to project; Architectural emergencies; The color and the environment; Perception and territorial identity; Landscape cultural iconographic heritage: art, literature and design implications; Signs and Drawings for Design and Advanced Representation. Federico Babina, architect and graphic designer presents ARCHIVISION, and Professor Eduardo Carazo Lefort-University of Valladolid and Gold Plate of the Italian Design Union presents his Lectio Magistralis.

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