



Index
and english translation
of the articles

	<i>Paolo Avarello</i>	The time of the urban project
Problems, policies and research	<i>edited by Massimo Bricocoli, Lina Scavuzzo</i> <i>Massimo Bricocoli, Lina Scavuzzo</i> <i>Wolfgang Foerster</i> <i>Massimo Bricocoli</i> <i>Lina Scavuzzo</i> <i>Lina Scavuzzo</i> <i>Lina Scavuzzo</i> <i>Lina Scavuzzo</i>	Social housing projects and policies in Vienna Introduction Housing policies in Vienna: continuity in innovation and perspectives Places and policies. Social housing under observation Innovative housing projects: theme and places Frauen-Werk-Stadt. From women to women: a project to daily living AutoFreien Mustersiedlung. The car-free housing settlements The residential complex Alte Busgarage and redevelopment of the station Nordbahnhof
	<i>Agatino Rizzo</i>	Border cities in the Baltic sea
Projects and implementation	<i>edited by Paolo Colarossi, Antonio Pietro Latini</i> <i>Stefano Garano</i> <i>Carlo Gasparini</i> <i>Antonio Pietro Latini</i> <i>Mosè Ricci</i> <i>Elio Piroddi</i>	The liveable city and urban design Urban planning and quality New stories in the contemporary city Principles of urban design Beyond the 'progetto urbano'? Urban design, from and architecture
Profiles and practices	<i>Paola Briata</i>	Beyond safety: urban policies and immigration in Turin
	<i>Ilario Abate Daga, Andrea Ballocca, Paolo Foietta</i> <i>Lucio Giecillo</i>	The soil exploitation in the Province of Turin Suburbia year zero? Subprime mortgage crisis and metropolitan development in the U.S.
Methods and tools	<i>Francesco Domenico Moccia</i>	City planning in climate change times
	<i>Michele Talia</i> <i>Elisa Grandi, Daniele Iodice</i> <i>Silvia Mantovani</i> <i>Stefania Proli</i> <i>Michele Talia</i> <i>Elisa Bertagnini, Michele Morbidoni</i> <i>Eleonora Giovane di Girasole</i> <i>Luca Barbarossa</i>	Some new questions in the planning research The edge of the housing problem. Reality informal in Milan, Bologna, Florence. Intervention strategies Towards a landscaping-urbanism: simple rules for a complex game Participation and urban identity The resistible rise of architectural ideology in planning agenda Il Cairo: urban and traditional social structures as a resource for development Re-planning suburbia and housing policy Small ports and new planning regulations

The time of the urban project

Paolo Avarello

In recent years the term 'urban project' has rapidly spread and become popular also in Italy, with its content of suggestions, but also with no few misinterpretations. So that the same object, at least in theory referred or alluded to by this term, is at times interpreted as a mere 'instrument', more or less 'innovative', for implementing plans; at times as a system of rules that give (attempt to give) 'form' to the quantities of the plan; again, as in some way a 'substitute' of the plans or, more radically, as a 'city project'.

We should keep our attention on possible 'case studies', coming to us from other countries, and in particular from other parts of Europe, from which we have indeed already loaned a number of models, experimenting on the so-called 'complex programmes', launched on several occasions and with diverse variants from the Nineties onwards.

Even a superficial glance at the case studies, in fact, evidences that the urban project is necessarily a process, rather than a single act, and even less a 'project act', or the conception of a solution to a given problem with given resources. A process, however, is lasting in time, and often changes in time, to adapt to the circumstances, if for nothing else, and perhaps, in the best circumstances, it can even produce additional resources.

The urban project as a process of transformation of a more or less sizeable part of a city. The dimensions are not necessarily considerable, but must be sufficient to trigger a process: renewal, rehabilitation or replacement of one or more buildings does not necessarily constitute an urban project, if the operation ends with these.

The transformation of part of a city, in any case, or a part that is already a city, and which is transformed into a different part (better and more liveable, it is hoped) of that city.

In a part of a city that already exists and is consolidated, buildings in fact already exist, perhaps old ones, abandoned or in the process of being abandoned, and 'present inhabitants' already exist, with the corresponding split-up ownership, urban uses of space already exist, and, at times, spaces where former uses have been relinquished. The urban project must take this complexity into account from many different standpoints. From the technical standpoint, naturally: what to transform, what to demolish, what to build, what (it may be worthwhile) to recuperate, etc. From the standpoint of times and work: what first, what afterwards; what is easier, what is more difficult; what the times for carrying out the project are and how to keep the machine for carrying it out in operation perhaps for many years. From the economic standpoint: what resources, and how many of them, to be used in the project and how to distribute them over the various phases; but also what functions and what combinations

of functions, for what market, in order to produce the mix of typical activities indispensable for 'making a city' (and above all for living in it). And further, from the social standpoint.

'Making a city' is clearly not at all a trivial matter. And this complexity necessarily requires prolonged times. And here the hasty, suggestive use of the term 'project' really risks being deceptive.

Just imagine a project whose basic object is that of transforming part of a city, necessarily fully coming to grips with the complexity of an urban situation. And lengthy times mean also multiplying the uncertainties. And then the corresponding necessity of continuous adaptations. In substance, from the conceptual and thus the project point of view, the 'question' of the urban project is played out between the following different requirements, often at odds with each other:

- a definition *ex ante* sufficient to understand, and to be understood – by the administration, by the investors and if possible by the citizens concerned, and by public opinion – what it is all about, what spaces, functions and opportunities there will be, and what advantages could emerge from carrying out the project;

- but, at the same time, a definition that is not so rigid that it will prejudice the possibility of responding to contingent events with the necessary adaptations, rapidly enough not to cause significant delays in the transformation process.

A project that is thus far from the design of the architect, whose possible creativity also leaves the space necessary, but far removed, also, from the rigidity of the urban planning to which we are accustomed – especially in Italy.