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Paolo Avarello

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*edited by Manuela Ricci
Valeria Di Palma
Laura Forgione
Giulia Rota*

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*edited by Francesco Gastaldi
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Agostino Di Lorenzo

In the context of European policies, the issue of landscape building in the contemporary city is a very 'hot' topic. Landscape is used in this sense to mean the territories forging a link between the inhabitants and the environment where they live. It plays a key role in ensuring social well being and a better living context from the standpoint of a sustainable habitat. The fundamental issue on which this reflection is based is the relationships, within the city, between built-up spaces and peri-urban or urban agricultural spaces. It is from this standpoint that the city must accept the responsibility of safeguarding the countryside so as to save the natural values inherent to agricultural activities and to allow the citizens to regain a feeling of belonging to a community.

The territorial project of the hills of Naples metropolitan park is an example of progress in this direction

The hills of Naples metropolitan park. The park extends for 2.215 hectares to the north-west of the city, covering more than one fifth of the entire municipal territory. It extends from the slopes of the Camaldoli hill, lying beside the valleys of Pisani and Pianura, up to the Selva di Chiaiano wood and the Vallone di San Rocco valley. At some points it reaches into the old centre, and in fact these points now act as gates opening onto the protected area. The elements characterizing the landscape of the park include: the rural farmlands and smaller old town centres; the wood, where deciduous chestnuts mostly grow; the quarries, situated

inside the perimeter of the park, dating back to when stone mining was one of the main activities in the Campania region. Many of these quarries are now disused. In short, eight territorial areas have been identified within the park, largely coinciding with the territorial ambits dealt with in the 'Piano regolatore generale' of the city of Naples, i.e.: Conca dei Pisani, Bosco dei Camaldoli, Masserie di Chiaiano, Selva di Chiaiano, Scudillo, Vallone San Rocco, S. Maria ai Monti, Collina di S. Martino.

The Park project

The scenario to be attributed added value by the Park project is inserted in a wider context of safeguards and added value planning, promoted by the urban planning policies of the Campania Region for the unclaimed regional areas, regardless of whether they are agricultural, fallow or wooded. Reversing the urban planning approach, this starts from the preexisting environment, the park areas, and considers the built-up areas present in the park area as potentially able to redefine, by means of an executive urban plan, the borders of the districts they currently border, and that can be transformed into buffer areas, turning them into the gates of entry to the park. The park will be the prime mover of the process of urban reclaiming of the buildings inside the area and, more generally, of the districts where they stand. Among its various functions, the park will be a meeting-point between the different sites and elements, aiming to establish a balance between private activities and the new goals inherent to the very presence of the park.

New participatory approaches to defining the park management plan

Having instituted the Sportello informativo e partecipativo (Sip) (Information and participation desk) the park is inserted in the context of the Agenda 21 Locale, activated since 2002 for the city of Naples. This promotes the active involvement and direct responsibility of the citizens for the area. The Forum, the laboratory of Agenda 21, provides a concrete opportunity to set up a successful relationship between the real instances of the citizens and of the administration, helping the municipality, the Regional and the Provincial administrations to define the scenarios in the area. The outcome of this action will be a package of guidelines (action plan) that will serve to guarantee the correct application of the park management plan. In addition, and ensuring the greatest possible involvement of the territorial communities, starting from the schools, the desk will draw up the 'Statute of the hills of Naples municipal park' (Landscape statute), applying and conforming to the European landscape agreement. The communicative activities that have already been successfully instituted in these first years of activity include the notable program of guided tours, events and laboratories denominated 'May in the Park' organized in the context of the May Monuments program, as well as the international poetry exhibition 'Napolipoesia nel Parco'.

The Park laboratory 'open' to environmental sustainability

Facilities like the 'Casa del Parco', a centre of excellence for environmental education in the Parco dei Camaldoli,

together with the network of multifunctional farming companies, the naturalist footpaths and the itineraries of historical architectural interest, will make the Hills of Naples Park a true 'open-air laboratory', welcoming citizens of all ages, even from outside Naples, to study the principles of environmental sustainability and landscape education.

"Mettila a frutto le tue idee!!" (let your ideas bear fruit!!): the participatory laboratory for the area of the Selva di Chiaiano

Action set up for the area of the Selva di Chiaiano, in collaboration with the Naples municipality in the context of the Extramet project, on the occasion of the III edition of the National competition on participatory and communicative planning Inu, Wwf, Anci and Upi. The competition focuses on drawing up a statute of ssites, indispensable as a means of gaining a knowledge of the localities (Local identity), and drawing up guidelines to restore the existing footpaths and reclaim the access points, Tirone and Cesinelle or Belvedere delle Cave, from the town of Chiaiano. The Park territorial laboratory 'Let your ideas bear fruit!', that was active from february to may 2006, also operated by experimenting an innovative technique for involving the community in reflections on the Landscape theme, i.e. the Village design statement, a method that has already been successfully applied in hundreds of British villages and was adapted to suit our own territorial context. The activities conducted up to now have given strong impulse to the work of involving and sensitising the territorial community, and above all the state school pupils in the zone, and their families. The concrete results of this participatory

work phase, conducted in harmony with the planning studies participating in the competition, consist of the Atlas of local identity, the first step taken towards drawing up a statute of sites.