critic|all

I International Conference
on Architectural Design & Criticism
Madrid 12·14 June 2014

ACTAS DIGITALES

DIGITAL PROCEEDINGS

DIRECCIÓN

Federico Soriano

COORDINACIÓN GENERAL
GENERAL COORDINATION

Silvia Colmenares

COMITÉ ORGANIZADOR
ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

Luis Maldonado [Miembro de Honor]

Nicolás Maruri
Rafael Pina
Fernando Casqueiro
José Antonio Ruiz Esquiroz
Esperanza Campaña
Gustavo Rojas
Sálvora Feliz
Esteban Salcedo
Elena Romero

Luis Bretón·Tomasso Campioti·Antonio Hernández [alumnos MPAA]

REVISIÓN ORTOTIPOGRÁFICA
ORTHOTYPOGRAPHICAL REVIEW

Gustavo Rojas
Esperanza Campaña
José Antonio Ruiz Esquiroz

COMITÉ CIENTÍFICO
SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

Antonio Miranda [PRESIDENTE]

Almudena Ribot
Antonio González Capitel
David Archilla
Emilia Hernández Pezzi
Federio Soriano
Fernando Casqueiro
Françoise Fromonot
Horacio Torrent
Javier Frechilla
Joan Ockman
José Pérez de Lama
Juan Miguel Hernández de León
Manuel Gausa
María Teresa Muñoz
Nicolás Maruri
Paloma Gil
Paula V. Álvarez
Rafael Pina

Desde el tema hacia las armaduras temáticas
El proyecto arquitectónico entre pragmatismo y utopia

Miano, Pasquale[1]; Aquilar, Giorgia[2]
1. University of Naples Federico II, Department of Architecture, Naples, Italy, pasmiano@unina.it
2. University of Naples Federico II, Department of Architecture, Naples, Italy, giorgia_aquilar@yahoo.it

Resumen
Esta intervención surge del deseo de ilustrar una posición en el campo del diseño urbano y arquitectónico, que pueda ir más allá de la experiencia individual, pero, precisamente pasando a través de la experiencia individual, pueda lidiar con las condiciones impuestas por la actual situación histórica, suponiendo de manera parcial algunos aspectos generales. El alcance es el trabajo proyectivo en el que inevitablemente cada proyecto se configura como el resultado de un único proceso cognitivo, por lo que se vuelve inútil y engañoso cualquier intento de generalización. Sin embargo, los proyectos no provienen sólo de una reflexión aislada, sino se enfrentan a los problemas planteados por la situación actual, en referencia de alguna manera a temas reconocibles, en relación con los cuales se han desarrollado soluciones. A partir del concepto de tema se desarrolla una reflexión, que tiende a leer este instrumentos del proyecto en términos nuevos y con referencia a las condiciones actuales: teniendo en cuenta las limitaciones relacionadas con el sesgo y la especificidad del punto de vista individual, es posible hablar de una "pluralidad de temas", que tienen sentido en su parcela y que encuentran, en el juntarse de situaciones contingentes, las principales líneas esenciales del proyecto, lo que resulta en un acercamiento del proyecto arquitectónico a las teorías del pragmatismo y en particular al neo-pragmatismo. A través de una mutación empírica, de carácter pragmática, se configura la transición desde el concepto tema hacia la idea de "armadura temática", en el sentido de "respuesta" de pragmatismo utópico: no se desea construir una teoría real y propia, sino más bien ilustrar un método proyectual, en el que tema y estrategia están insseparablemente unidos. El armadura temática es arraigada a la situación contextual, pero la intervención proyectual participa en una construcción utópica, recuperando en parte la voluntad colectiva. A través de una síntesis de una serie de métodos de aplicación de la idea de armadura temática, es posible hacer referencia a algunas acciones reconocibles – conexiones, inmisiones, superposiciones – pero también menos específicamente relacionadas a la acción, como las "transiciones" y las "topografías", en las cuales está determinado una interacción entre contenidos individuales y generales, en un contexto de pragmatismo utópico.
Palabras clave: Armadura temática, Estrategias de proyectos, Procedimientos de construcción del proyecto.

From the Theme to the Thematic Armours
The Project of Architecture between Pragmatism and Utopia

Abstract
This research is intended to illustrate a position in the field of urban and architectural design, apt to overcome the individual experience, but which can deal with the conditions imposed by the current historical situation, exactly crossing the personal experience and partially gaining some aspects of generality. The scope of the study is the design work in which each project is unavoidably configured as the result of a single process of knowledge, so that any attempt of generalization results as useless and also misleading. Yet, the projects do not arise exclusively from an isolated reflection, but they face the problems posed by the current situation, in some way referring to recognizable themes, in relation to which the solutions have been developed. Right from the concept of "theme" it has been possible to elaborate an inquiry, which tends to reread this tool for the setting of projects in new terms and referring to contemporary conditions: taking into account all the limits related to the partiality of the individual point of view, it is possible to introduce the idea of a "multiplicity of themes", which gain sense in their interweaving and find the essential design lines within the set of contingent situations, determining the approaching of the architectural project towards the theories of pragmatism and above all neopragmatism. Through an empirical passage, pragmatic in its character, the transition from the concept of "theme" to the idea of "thematic armour" may be attempted, meant as a response of utopian pragmatism: the intention does not aim at constructing a real theory, but rather at illustrating a design method, in which theory and practice come very close. The thematic armour is thus deeply rooted in the contextual situation, but the design intervention participates in a utopian construction, partially regaining a collective will. In the attempt to synthetically identify the modalities of application of the idea of thematic armour, it is possible to refer to some recognizable actions – junctions, intrusions, superimpositions – but even some concepts less specifically linked to the action, as the discourse of "transitions" and "topographies", in which the interweaving between individual and general instances takes place, in a perspective of utopian pragmatism.
Key words: Thematic Armature, Design Strategies, Procedures for the Constitution of the Project.

Mechanisms for the "Construction" of the Project, between Pragmatism and Utopia.
This research is intended to illustrate a position in the field of urban and architectural design, apt to overcome the personal individual experience, but which – at the same time – can deal with the conditions imposed by the current historical situation, exactly crossing the individual experience and partially gaining some aspects of generality.
The scope of the study is the design work in which each project is unavoidably configured as the result of a single process of knowledge, so that any attempt of generalization results as useless and – in certain respects - also misleading. Yet, the projects – drawn up in a fairly wide time span – do not arise exclusively from an isolated and personal reflection, but they face the problems posed by the current situation, in some way referring to recognizable themes, in relation to which the solutions have been developed. Right from the concept of "theme" it has been possible to elaborate an inquiry, which tends to reread this tool for the setting of projects in new terms and referring to contemporary conditions, with all the limitations related to the partiality and the specificity of the individual point of observation.

1. Theme and Multiplicity of Themes.
On the contents of the term "theme", it is possible to suppose some preliminary remarks. Several years ago, Antonio Monestiroli – in "The architecture of reality" – defined the theme of architecture as *"the mediator between architecture and reality. The theme comes from external reality: the house, the theater, the museum...those themes belong to the city and the city relies them on architects so that they would put their meaning into practice"*[1]. He added: *"the theme of architecture is not given by the one who carries it out, but by a community as a whole. The architect's task is to develop it in the best way possible. As for architecture, we can say that the concrete and direct link with reality and with the community is established by a theme of architecture"*[2]. Elio Vittorini well specified a further aspect of peculiarity of the concept of theme in relation to the community: *"you never accomplish a work from A to Z, but you are given a preformed material, a collective experience already conscious of itself, as to transform it, in order to make it revelatory, namely accomplished art, but not felt as extraneous, recognized or rejected by the society to which it is returned"*[3]. Yet, nowadays this condition of belonging is very hard to achieve, as we are witnessing the lost of strength and sense of the idea that a project is the expression of a collective will and the unveiling of a collective reason.
An effort to synthesize an aspect – which should deserve a much wider deepening study – can lead to affirm that today there are many collective wills and many conflicts that are entwined into a project, so that a theme no longer exists as isolated, rather we can define it as a "multiplicity of themes", gaining sense in their interweaving. The scenario in which this plurality of themes acquires its meaning is the deeply fragmented and incomplete contemporary city, the city in extension that seems to connect everything, but is actually built by basically isolated elements, as the result of individual and contingent interests.
On the one hand, it can be noticed the loss of sense of the consolidated themes of architecture, but – on the other hand – in the city, it is very difficult to overcome the logics of the single intervention, although it is evident that it has become completely meaningless and it is almost never the expression of a collective will.
In the city in extension – for example – it makes no sense to reason on the project of a school – meant in its own isolation - but it certainly gains more value to reflect about the transformation of portions of the territory, resulting also from the inclusion of a school. Yet the contradiction stands in the fact – especially in the Italian reality – that it is often barely possible to build up a school and it is very difficult to complete it. This way, another object adds up to what already exists, solving a major problem, but not triggering any transformative dynamics into the context.
In this situation it is evident that the progress of a reflection on the "theme" can be sought after by strongly bringing into play the context: a changing environment, that scarcely can be analyzed through systematic structures, whose structured and completed knowledge is difficult to reach.
Designing a school definitely means to investigate the structuring contents of the theme, the recognition of some worthwhile aspects, the "hard core" that leads us closer to the concept of tradition. But this awareness should not be construed as the only determining factor: rather as a component of a broader discourse of interpretation/transformation of a context (Fig. 1).

Fig. 1

In the suburbs of Naples, the Spiniello District of Acerra is a new neighborhood, built up quickly and with substantial approximations, on whose edges – towards the countryside – it was planned to construct a new school campus. After developing various experimentations, our design team reached the idea of realizing a campus which would not mark an exception with respect to the surrounding building fabric.
Three great bands – positioned parallel to the fragmented housing of the Spinello District – characterize the campus: each one hosts one school level and some facilities. The centrality of the context results to be emphasized, so breaking up an abstract and feeble idea of centrality.
Nevertheless, this situation - that involves the occupation of a new ground for new uses - is probably a condition of exceptionality. Several years ago, Rem Koolhaas affirmed: *"restore, reassemble, revamp, renovate, revise, recover, redesign, return – the Parthenon marbles – redo, respect, rent: verbs that start with re- produce Junkspace"*[4]. Surely the situation described by Koolhaas still represents the prevailing condition, involving even seemingly distant realities and involving further topics.
The project for the Tourist Park of Punta Corona in Agerola (Fig. 2) focuses on the aspects dealt in this frame, in the definition of an observation point toward a fascinating landscape to be reconfigured through the project. The territory of Punta Corona is not a naturalistic reserve in its pure state, yet – on the contrary – it is an area in which different uses have been pursued – in a precarious and incomplete way – by altering, through multiple restricted interventions, a landscape with an absolutely original character, in which different layers are distinct and recognizable. Starting from these considerations regarding the design work, the landscape has been reinterpreted as the result of a research on the characters that distinguish it, on the modes for the artificialisation of natural elements: terracings, paths, "ager". Quoting the words of Iñaki Ábalos - about his design work – who states: *"The major point, on which Rorty insisted and on which we have tried to focus is not what elements are used, but which ones are re-contextualized"*[5], we can thus affirm – about the project for Agerola – that recontextualization and approach to nature develop in parallel motion and effectively constitute the project.

Fig. 2

2. Architectural Design and the Theories of Pragmatism.
Coming back then to a more general discourse, it can be affirmed that the project – in the most varied circumstances – is measured with a set of "contingent situations", determining the essential design lines. This aspect effectively determines the approaching of the architectural project towards the theories of pragmatism and above all Rorty's neopragmatism[6], which tends to overcome the traditional criticism of pragmatism as empiricism and tries to establish a sort of "pluralist empiricism", characterized by accepting alternative explanations of phenomena, due to the determinism implied in the relation between theory and data. The terms "contingency, irony and solidarity" are the three key words introduced by Rorty to illustrate a basic attitude, already several times associated to recent positions in the field of architecture, with respect to the construction of the project: the necessity to establish a comparison with the exigent circumstances – in the absence of disciplinary apparatus universally valid – without claiming to assert rigid and relentless beliefs that moreover may vary over time and situations, but fighting seriously to solve the real problems of people. Going back to the considerations about contexts and contextual situations, referring to Donald Davidson and by shifting the discourse he advanced about language[7] to the field of architecture, it may be furthermore added that the knowledge (the project) of a contingent situation depends partly on external circumstances (the thematic contents consolidated into the discipline, for example) and partly on the relations that the situation establishes with other recognizable elements which may be related to it (namely the context, of which it is possible to recognize some essential aspects). Surely this construction holds several unknowns, in which it is possible to consider different alternatives. This approach, which aims at exploring options, encourages critical exchanges between theoretical and pragmatic aspects, leading the two levels significantly close to each other: criticism becomes – in this sense – an interpretive field both in concrete contexts and theory at the same time. Rorty writes: *"As I see it, the attempt to make philosophy useful to the arts is ok if philosophy is used as a source of inspiration but dubious if it is used as a source of instruction … I like Eisenman's houses and Derrida's philosophy, but I have trouble seeing the former as an application of the latter – more trouble than either Eisenman or Derrida do"*[8]. In this regard, Christian Bundegaard affirms: *"this quote conveniently hints at the central questions here, both in terms of the relationship of pragmatism to philosophy, and the relationship between architectural theory and practice"*[9].

3. Utopic Pragmatism.

A further element of interweaving is determined by making a reflection starting from the considerations advanced many years ago by Ernesto Nathan Rogers in his "Utopia of Reality", urging his students to go beyond the restrictions of everyday life[10]. To reason in terms of the utopia of reality is a means to clearly set the issue of innovation in architecture, but it can't be considered only within the limits of realism, as a consequential type. Innovation is the ability to respond to the unexpected, but it is also willingness to research, desire for innovation in the reading of what preexists[11].

Keeping on this reflection, it should be appropriate to quote Giancarlo De Carlo, as he affirms: *"the utopia – as it is commonly meant – is an impossible image because it derives from a complex alteration of the context, in the sense in which it does not take into account the variables that constitute the reality against which the new image counteracts. If one takes into account all the variables involved assuming that their relations may be different – because they effectively might be like so – then utopia is realistic"*[12].

Moreover, the strand of "Utopia of Reality", transposed to the present situation, can be faced also dealing with the considerations claimed by Yona Friedman about "Achievable Utopias", in which he combines the search for a democratic and manageable communitarian form with individual freedom[13]: a work in which pragmatism and utopia are inextricably linked. Then – mentioning Vittorio Gregotti – it can be argued that *"utopia – contrary to common belief – not only has the function of thinking about the possible-impossible, but it has also played a mediating role within the social sciences. Political arrangement and spatial arrangement, both urban and territorial"*[14]. He adds: *"it is evident that it can't exist any authentically creative design if a fragment of utopia does not enlighten its direction of research – just as a tension towards an alternative "need to be"; avoiding to establish a distance between the existing and the new possibility proposed by the concrete and direct presence of the work and – perhaps from further afield – by the ideal conditions of the new possibilities, imagined by the work itself"*[15]. The system of relations triggered by utopia can be translated – in other words – in the overriding necessity of a strategic component in the definition of the project, in which individual aspects and collective instances almost inseparably interweave.

According to this interpretation it can be argued that the current condition of the project is the utopian pragmatism, and in this framework it is possible to introduce the idea of "thematic armour", as a response of utopian pragmatism. The intention does not aim at constructing a real theory – as it may seem to be assumed in the reporting of the transition from the theme to the thematic armour – but rather at illustrating a design method, in which theory and practice come very close.

4. Thematic Armours.

The transition from the theme to the thematic armour is certainly empirical, pragmatic in its character, with many alternative paths.

The thematic armour is deeply rooted in the contextual situation – with which the architecture confuses and "contaminate" itself – but at the same time it contains a clear utopian component: the action – the design intervention – participates in a utopian construction, regaining in this optics – in a way extremely partial – a collective will.

In the thematic armour, theme and strategy are inseparably linked, and – as a matter of fact – starting from their first projects OMA use the term to illustrate situations.

In the mentioned project for the educational campus in Acerra, the solution adopted with the three wide bands is intended like an intrusion between the built environment and the countryside, with increased relevance for the community than a traditional school, a place of the city to be built from scratch, which pragmatically originates by the current context. In the project for the park in Agerola – previously cited – the proposed solution aims at determining some conditions for which the potentialities found in the area could lead to a reconfigured landscape. The tension towards the achievement of this objective is very important, but it should not be construed as the desire to build a completed process: the consolidation of a landscape as a park is the result of a long-term process, and the task of the project was to trigger this mechanism and to develop a part of a path.

At the same time – by shifting the plane of the reasoning – the thematic armour even arises from the necessity to construct a conceptual device, able to explain concisely the reasons for the project, but also – and this is a more strictly individual and personal aspect – to build a link between a project and the following one. Thus, the "armour" turns into a metaphor and the reference to "The Nonexistent Knight" of Italo Calvino becomes unavoidable, as well as that call for irony – previously quoted – referring to Rorty.

After this perspective, the thematic armour of a project involves – on the one hand – the contextualization, through which to establish a comparison with the reality, and – on the other hand – the definition of a position in a purposeful sense, a point of view and a strategy through which the problem can be addressed.

This procedural design approach foresees an overall construction of the issues, advancing through actions, guidelines and construction of scenarios. In a certain way, in the attempt to synthetically identify the modalities of application of the idea of thematic armour, it is possible to refer to some characterizing actions: junctions, intrusions, superimpositions. These recognizable actions – also repeatable to some extent – belong to a broader and evolving vocabulary and unfold themselves in very different ways according to different contextual situations. Within this set of actions, the interweaving between individual contents and general instances reveals its perspective of utopian pragmatism. Yet – at the basis of the argument on the thematic armours – even some concepts less specifically linked to the action may coexist, as the discourse of "transitions", which indicates the willingness to enhance a

particular condition of a certain space, up to encompass also some aspects related to the specificity of a place or a territory, such as the "topographies".

4.1 Superimpositions.

At this stage it is possible to present some examples. A first case concerns the projects for the Mining Museum at the Argentiera Washery in Sassari and the Mill-Garden at the Zolfara in Tufo, in Campania (Fig. 3). These "machine-buildings" – related to the mining assets – have had a parallel life, in a time span ranging from the late Nineteenth century to the Sixties: for many years the industrial activities have been completely interrupted and the structures totally abandoned.

The "first life" of these buildings – with all the events and profound or restricted transformations – has been unequivocally concluded since a long time.

In Argentiera, the naturalized ruins of the Washery are not isolated, but interact with altered and partially cemented pieces of nature (rocky ridges, esplanades). Between the naturalized remains and "estranged" natural elements, "rationalist architectures" of the laborer borough lie, which are also in some respects misplaced, but that reflect – for their particular setting – the morphological conditions of the area. The identity of the Argentiera is therefore unequivocally enclosed in the relation among mine, laborer borough and landscape, but it is also the result of the most recent failed attempts at transforming the area: these efforts of change rose with the goal to "snatch" small increments of volume or to realize some difficult connection with inadequate means, so contributing to the degradation of the area and leading to bulk adjustments, even on the most delicate and representative parts of the district. In Tufo, the photographic images of the derelict Mill-Garden – now part of the tourist itineraries of Irpinia – focus on the great building, at the slopes of a completely green hill, whose architectural characters appear as unitary, preserved and recognizable. Approaching to the building, it is possible to notice the presence of further blocks and spaces, which clarifies the articulation of the general composition of this productive complex. At the same time – from a closer perspective – the high level of degradation of the area is also perceived, to some extent further compounded by the new industrial settlements located downstream, as well as the looming danger of water infiltration from various points of the roofs, the subtractions in fixtures, machineries, furniture, and frequent fires.
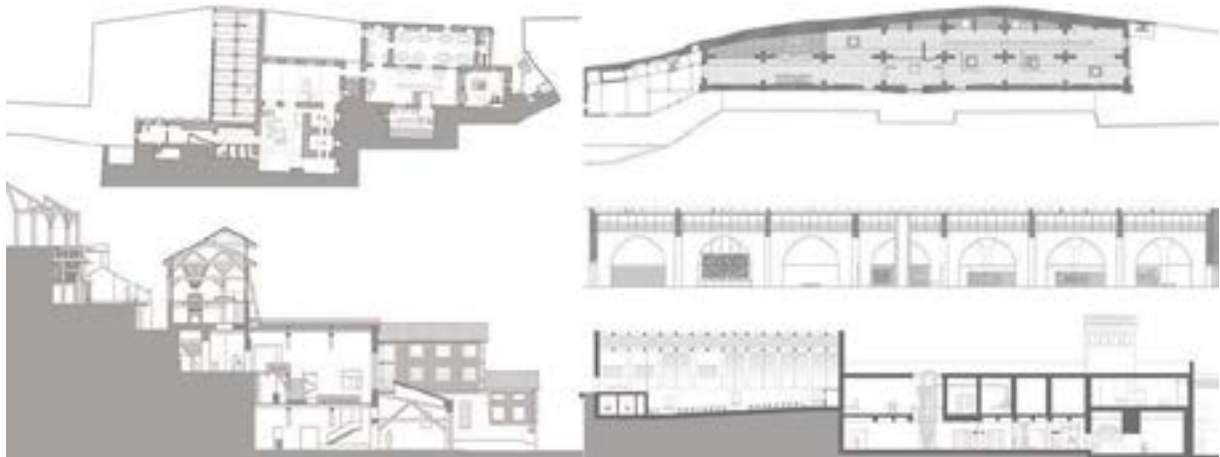

Fig. 3

The task of the project was therefore to blow a "second life" into these buildings and their contexts, defining a very interesting condition to reflect on innovation in architecture, in the terms previously recalled.

The new life of these machine-buildings – namely the architectural design of their second life – finds its origin in the pre-existing structure, but the triggered process does not act simply as restoration. It is not easy to define the complex kind of intervention in synthetic terms: surely it also concerns the introduction of new functions – while respecting the need of conservation – but also this aspect is definitely not enough to define the action to be taken. The major issue is focused on how to insufflate new life into these productive machines which do not work anymore, even if they well suited the practical purposes of their original construction and following development? Considering that through these machines – quoting a synthetic expression by Andrea Branzi – *"the city of the future realizes itself into the internal spaces of the contemporary city"*[16], how to attribute new functions to them?

In both cases, "the introduction of the new" represented, on the one hand, a framework – a new architecture which facilitated the reading of the previous one – but that also pursued the specific purpose of involving preexistent spaces in a new spatial organization. Not the past on one side and the present on the other, but – as Francesco Venezia argues – *"there is no authentic novelty without reference to the chain of efforts occurred in the past"*[17].

This process triggers a sort of "rewriting" of the former building, which follows a logics of "superimposition", aiming at defining a "multiple palimpsest". In this perspective, the pre-existing architecture can be re-read as a text on which new sentences – new systems – have been overlapped, so that the introduction of a new constitutive logics – different from the existing – results to be inevitable.

The former elements are not decontextualized, but are reinterpreted in the new architectural machine, which certainly shows its continuity with the previous one. However, to gain a total coherence – in general terms – is not possible, rather the main aim should be to underline some parts of the original

mechanism, which express – within the new conditions – a renewed capacity of functioning. The main design aim – not easy to achieve – is thus the internal coherence of the result. In this sense, the pre-existing pieces constitute the structural elements of the new composition – which does not assume a ultimate configuration – but should be open to new interpretations and new interventions.

In the specific design solutions developed for the two machine-buildings, the superimposed framework – reduced kept to a minimum – takes the form of a sequence, of a path which involves the remaining parts of the existing machine, properly reassembled.

In both cases, the aim is to induce a new interpretation of the space, or – in other words – to allow a possible double – or multiple – spatial configuration, starting from the precise idea that *"a project, today, should have the ability to update an old building, so that it can correspond effectively to our requests"*[18].

4.2 Transitions.

A second example concerns two further projects, which allow to investigate the role of marginal and fragmented spaces, through the cases of Palma Campania and Cava de' Tirreni (Fig. 4).

In the modern and contemporary events of expansion of the European city, a particular relevance is held by the territories of margin between the historic city and new urban settlements: this theme recurs in different ways and various situations, but keeps showing an extraordinary interest from the urban design point of view.

Therefore, this reflection involves marginal contexts, border areas, places of boundary within different realities which belong to diverse periods and various urban dimensions, but which – however – often assume a very strategic position, in reference to the urban parts which lap their margins. In fact, these "intermediate" spaces – belonging to the connective tissue of the city – derive their strategic value exactly thanks to the state of "ambiguity" that characterizes them.

Fig. 4

The architecture of those spaces is an architecture of connections, of physical and perceptual relations, able to include multiple levels and scales of intervention in a continuous process of "fertile" contamination.

Those connections work on a dual level: they are both continuous and intermittent, involving landscape elements even distant, introducing transformations that affect the character of places, and recovering identities which may appear confused, weak or denied in the present condition.

The deriving inter-scale relations gains and losses are linked to the simultaneous presence of two main processes: *"extension and retraction in the urban dimension"*[19], able to dissolve and decompose "what is already there", and then regroup the fragments back together in a whole which is unified and articulated at the same time. This dual action, related to the complementary processes of implosion/explosion – driven by a double centrifugal/centripetal charge – overcomes the boundaries of the intervention site involving parts which belong to a system of tangible and intangible references, which sometimes are concrete and in close proximity, while in different situations they appear as remote and virtual, "carrying" them in the inner spaces of each single building. As a counterpart, the dual force "exports" outside the new linkages introduced by the added parties, opening towards the city to incorporate whole urban portions in the transformation processes. The new urban transitional spaces may thus work as a tool to rebuild interrupted relations, restore the sense of lost or hidden centralities, and introduce a new awareness of the weight of the spatial factor in the definition of the public dimension of the contemporary city in transformation.

In the solution proposed for Palma Campania, from this interpretation of the site as an element of relation between different types of spaces and architectural contexts, the decision is derived to define the project as urban composition of distinguishable elements – endowed with formal autonomy – even if within a mechanism of close correlations, in which the specific design areas establish a very tight dialogue with the outer environment.

The variations of the elements – in direction and disposition – allow to establish new relations with the different urban situations located on the edge of the design-site, involving not only the ancient axial components related to Palazzo Compagna, but also diagonal paths towards the recently formed areas of Palma Campania.

Therefore, the intervention has been guided by some sort of "topological" approach, which finds its development in the constant interaction among the "strata" that meet and collide within this delicate portion of the territory, giving rise to a new complexity. In fact, in Palma Campania, the hybrid

dimension is sought through the contamination between the inside and the outside. That process takes place as an "architecture of the ground", a design of tectonic movements in which the boundary between territory and architectural artifact is fluid, dynamic, complex and deliberately ambiguous.

In the ground-building *"the work on the artificial landscape and that one on its inner space is no longer distinguishable"*[20]. Consequently, it is the modeling of the ground which builds the inner space. At the same time, it is the city itself that "flows" inside the sponge-tissues of those transitional spaces to define a continuous system that operates through the overlapping of smooth surfaces[21].

A similar procedure was adopted in the project for Cava de' Tirreni, in which the design has been analogously set to the identification of a transitional space as a place of multiple topographies. San Francesco Square is currently one of the most significant and emblematic places for the relevance of its historical architectures and for the importance of its characteristic urban relationships, despite the marginal position it holds, within a fragmented and discontinuous urban context. Indeed the square, due to the current use of spaces – mainly as a parking lot – together with the low quantitative level of accommodations and materials, requires an overall reconfiguration intervention. The manifold involved aspects range from history to urban position, from the relations with the side scene and the site edges to those with a broader system of open spaces, from the perspective views at different scales to the morphological articulation of the intervention area. This complex of issues constitute the starting point for the setting of an recognizable and independent urban project – while being limited and concentrated in a specific area – which can be able to modify the existing urban relations, to affect on the overall organization, by recalibrating the "weights" and defining new balances between the historical parts and the new settlements. The consolidated elements of spatial recognizability of the current condition of the square - and of the gardens that surround it – have been shaped over a long period of time and have been keeping unchanged their role and their essential characters over time. Yet the configuration of the open space has never been stable. Nonetheless, some constants may be identified: the essentiality of the "plan-square" facing the Sanctuary, the "impressive churchyard", but also the articulation of the ramps that bridge the difference in height between the road and the level of the church of San Francesco.

In the project the square has been intended as part of a new system of urban connections – a static and dynamic space at the same time – able to relate the main architectural elements of the site with the landscape and its architectural and orographic landmarks. The new architectural configuration of the square contributes to establish new urban relationships, through the definition of a plane space with a detailed and controlled system of sloping spaces which develop around it – characterized by changes in direction – arranged through different elements positioned on the edges of the area. Thus the "plan-square" is meant as a stage where the sloping spaces act as glacis for great events, with the civil and religious scenery construed as the wings of a whole theatre stage.

4.3 Topographies.

Superimpositions and transitions constitute a range of prevalent actions also in the cases of archaeological sites, in which the involved areas represent an indispensable reference for the external urban parts, from the ancient elements – sanctuaries, necropolises, Villae rusticae – to the rural houses and production complexes of various ages, up to more substantial recent urbanizations.

These aspects are particularly clear in the case of the archaeological area of Paestum (Fig. 5), where the problem of knowledge occurs in terms of a "representation", able to explain what appears confused and indistinct. But this consideration also applies in the case of Pompeii, where along the northern ancient wall circuit, the articulation of the settlement overlappings makes the comprehension of the territorial and urban relations – historically established – very difficult. Then, the theme of the relations between major archaeological sites and territory sets up as a recurring issue, a big matter of reconstruction for "landscapes" of uncertain identity.

Fig. 5

In the case of the great archaeological sites – such as Paestum and the Campi Flegrei – *"the urban landscape – aggregation of splinters and fragments, whose nature seems impossible to be*

determined – should instead become a fabric in which the meanings of the 'facts' of the city are interweaved – and not simply overlapped – and the 'plot' of a story should be rebuilt, whose contingent sense – although infinite – can always be understandable[22]. In this perspective, the reconstruction of a fabric – meant as the set of material and infrastructural artifacts, constitutive of an ancient settlement – precisely corresponds to the essence and the role of archaeology, thus defined by Luigi Franciosini: *"skeletal synthesis of the architectural body, but also structure and material trace of time, introduction of the spatial form, unequivocally representing the complex of all the essential and fundamental elements of the constructive thought: territory, resource, ground, substance, tectonics, technique, meaning and shape"*[23]. On the other hand, still pursuing the development of the analogy between archaeology and "fabric", it can be noticed that just as several synthesis of the architectural body (and therefore several archaeologies) may be possible, so they are identifiable also diverse fabrics – meant as characteristic frames of a territory – emerging from time to time on the basis of simple studies.

In this perspective, it is possible to talk about topography as a thematic armour, in which the formal contents establish a continuous dialogue with the actions, reasoning on an intermediate space between the theme and the critical reading of the theme itself, which is able to get closer to the understanding of the contextual reality and – at the same time – to the overcoming of it through the project, or rather through the process of elaboration of the project itself.

In this regard, some of the content of the article: "Disciplinarity 2.0 - Architectural Topography between Criticality and Pragmatism" may be mentioned, in which Zoltán Bun argues: *"Topography is rather a symptom of the era than a proposed program, rather a question and not a classification: it does not urge steps 'towards a topographic architecture', but it is stepping slowly backwards by exploring the contemporary background and leitmotifs in order to look for the place of the discipline today"*[24]. Along the circuit of the walls of Paestum – in correspondence with Porta Giustizia (Justice Door) – different elements of diverse natures coexist, such as the archaeological remains of the complex of Santa Venere, the disused Cirio Factory, the landscape of the river.

In this place, it has been designed a *"project of relations within the strata placed above or below the campaign plan, able to establish strong dealings in the vertical section with the layers or sub-layers of the ground"*[25]. This passage clarifies the discourse on the topography and the identity between architecture and fabric, as the returning of some phases of the life of a place itself which becomes texture (namely the topography), "skeletal synthesis" of the territory of Paestum, which is involved once again – on multiple levels and several aspects – in transformative dynamics.

In the design for Paestum, the expositive components are defined – physically and perceptually – as connecting parts between the level of the factory and the layers of the archaeological excavations. The result is a thorough revision of the idea of "mounting", where architecture and topography coincide and converge in changing the pre- existing balances, through the unveiling of new urban concatenations.

Thus, the architectural elements are not the result of an independent structure, do not want to "add" themselves, rather they aim at putting together and differently arrange the parts to which they bind.

This way, all the different levels of the city appear present at the same time, so to create a gradual transition within the overlapped layers: from the "bottom" stratum of the excavations to the "top" level of the city walls. Crossing a few meters of the territory, it is possible to catch a simultaneous viewing of all the layers, establishing new connections within the wide or limited fragments, which were once completely separated. The archaeological pre-existences – incorporated into a new system of urban connections – become themselves a place of transition, able to mediate in the delicate relation between urban artifice and natural landscape.

Notes

1. MONESTIROLI, Antonio. *L'architettura della realtà*. CLUP, Milan, 1979, p.9. Original text in Italian, translated by the authors.
2. MONESTIROLI, Antonio. *Ibidem*. Original text in Italian, translated by the authors.
3. VITTORINI, Elio. *Diario in pubblico*. Milan, 1957. Quoted in: MONESTIROLI, Antonio. *L'architettura della realtà*. CLUP, Milan, 1979, p.9. Original text in Italian, translated by the authors.
4. KOOLHAAS, Rem. *Junkspace. Per un ripensamento radicale dello spazio urbano*. Quodlibet, Macerata, 2006, p.83.
5. ÁBALOS, Iñaki. *Between Pragmatism and Style. Conversation with Sandford Kwinter.* Held within the Seminar Coup de Dés. Debats d'Arquitectura: Habitatge, Espai Púbic, organized by the Fundació Mies van der Rohe. Barcelona, 22-23 october 2004. In "Domus", n.882, June 2005.
6. RORTY, Richard, *Consequences of Pragmatism*. University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1982.
7. DAVIDSON, Donald. *A Coherence Theory of Truth and Knowledge*. In MALACCHOWSKY, Alam R. Reading Rorty. Basul Blackwell, Cambridge (MA), 1990, p.128.
8. RORTY, Richard. *Remarks at MOMA*. Unpublished manuscript written for the Museum of Modern Art Symposium in New York City, 2000 Things in the Making: Contemporary Architecture and the Pragmatist Imagination, listed on Rorty's homepage: www.stanford.edu//moma.html [consulted in February, 2014].
9. BUNDEGAARD, Christian. *Pragmatism and Architectural Research.*
10. ROGERS, Ernesto Nathan. *L'utopia della realtà*. Leonardo Da Vinci, Bari, 1965.
11. MIANO, Pasquale. *Realismo e innovazione: un binomio possibile*. In CAJA, Michele, CAPOZZI, Renato, FUSCO, Gaetano, MALCOVATI, Silvia, VISCONTI, Federica (edited by). Architettura e realismo. Riflessioni sulla costruzione architettonica della realtà. Maggioli Editore, Santarcangelo di Romagna, 2013.
12. DE CARLO, Giancarlo. *L'architettura della partecipazione*. Edited by MARINI, Sara. Quodlibet, Macerata, 2013, p.60.
13. FRIEDMAN, Yona. *Utopies Réalisables*. L'Éclat, Paris, 2000 [original edition 1975].
14. GREGOTTI, Vittorio. *Diciassette lettere sull'architettura*, Laterza, Rome-Bari, 2000, p.45.
15. GREGOTTI, Vittorio. *Il sublime al tempo del contemporaneo*. Einaudi, Milan, 2013.
16. BRANZI, Andrea. *Modernità debole diffusa. Il mondo del progetto all'inizio del XXI secolo*. Skira, Milan, 2006, p.117.
17. VENEZIA, Francesco. *Nature. Doppio per riflesso*. D'ONOFRIO, Alessandro, FELCI, Claudia (edited by). Nature_01: Francesco Venezia. Mousse Publishing, Milan, 2011, p.22.

18. VENEZIA, Francesco. *Ibidem*.
19. BOERI, Stefano. *L'Anticittà*. Laterza, Rome-Bari, 2011, pp.71-72.
20. BOCCHI, Renato. *Spazi permeabili. Per un'architettura dell'incontro*. Text of the conference held at the Cultural Centre Candiani, Mestre, 12.12.2001. http://www.superluoghi.it/getFile.php?f=BOCCHI%5Bcopia1%5D.pdf&mime=application/pdf [consulted in February, 2014].
21. LYNN, Greg. *Folding in architecture*. In "AD Profile", n.102. Academy Editions, London, 1993, pp.8-15.
22. AYMONINO, Aldo, MOSCO, Valerio Paolo. *Spazi pubblici contemporanei. Architettura a volume zero*. Skira, Milan, 2006.
23. FRANCIOSINI, Luigi, MANIERI ELIA, Mario, SEGARRA LAGUNES, Maria Magdalena, *Archeologia e progetto. Tesi di laurea nella Facoltà di Architettura*. Università Roma Tre. Gangemi, Rome, 2002.
24. BUN, Zoltán. *Disciplinarity 2.0 – Architectural Topography between Criticality and Pragmatism*. In "Periodica Polytechnica Architecture", vol.42. 1. 2011.
25. BOCCHI, Renato. *La città-paesaggio*, in BONOMETTO, Vinicio, RUGGIERO, Maria Luisa (edited by). Finestre sul paesaggio. Gangemi, Rome, 2006.

Fig. 1. Project for the School Campus at the Spiniello District in Acerra, Naples. Design team: Pasquale Miano (group leader), Eugenio Certosino, Patrizia Porritiello, Adriana Sbarra, Giorgia Aquilar, Giuseppe Ruocco. Source: original project drawings elaborated by the authors and the additional members of the design theme.
Fig. 2. Project for the Tourist Park of Punta Corona in Agerola, Naples. Design team: Pasquale Miano (group leader), Eugenio Certosino, Giuseppe Ruocco, Bruna Di Palma, Felice De Silva. Source: original project drawings elaborated by the authors and the additional members of the design theme.
Fig. 3. Left: project for the Mining Museum at the Argentiera Washery in Sassari. Design team: Pasquale Miano (group leader), Eugenio Certosino, Sandro Roggio, Luigi Gavini, Gianvito Passaghe, Domenico Rapuano. Right: project for the Mill-Garden at the Zolfara in Tufo (Avellino). Design team: Pasquale Miano (group leader), Eugenio Certosino, Domenico Rapuano, Francesco Polverino, Achille Renzullo. Source: original project drawings elaborated by the authors and the additional members of the design theme.
Fig. 4. Left: project for a square in the ex market and sporting field in Palma Campania. Design team: Pasquale Miano (group leader), Eugenio Certosino, Adriana Sbarra, Emilia Esposito, Raffaele Santella. Righ: project for the redesigning of San Francesco Square in Cava de' Tirreni (Salerno). Design team: Pasquale Miano (group leader), Eugenio Certosino, Giorgia Aquilar, Laura Chirichella. Source: original project drawings elaborated by the authors and the additional members of the design theme..
Fig. 5. Project for the archaeological area of Santa Venere in Paestum (Salerno). Design team: Pasquale Miano (group leader), Eugenio Certosino, Emilia Esposito, Marina di Iorio, Cecilia Perna, Anna Scotto di Tella, Patrizia Porritiello. Source: original project drawings elaborated by the authors and the additional members of the design theme.

References

ÁBALOS, Iňaki. *Between Pragmatism and Style. Conversation with Sandford Kwinter.* In "Domus", n.882, June 2005.
AYMONINO, Aldo, MOSCO, Valerio Paolo. *Spazi pubblici contemporanei. Architettura a volume zero*. Skira, Milan, 2006.
BOCCHI, Renato. *La città-paesaggio*, in BONOMETTO, Vinicio, RUGGIERO, Maria Luisa (edited by). Finestre sul paesaggio. Gangemi, Rome, 2006.
BOCCHI, Renato. *Spazi permeabili. Per un'architettura dell'incontro*.
http://www.superluoghi.it/getFile.php?f=BOCCHI%5Bcopia1%5D.pdf&mime=application/pdf [consulted in February, 2014].
BOERI, Stefano. *L'Anticittà*. Laterza, Rome-Bari, 2011.
BRANZI, Andrea. *Modernità debole diffusa. Il mondo del progetto all'inizio del XXI secolo*. Skira, Milan, 2006.
BUN, Zoltán. *Disciplinarity 2.0 – Architectural Topography between Criticality and Pragmatism*. In "Periodica Polytechnica Architecture", vol.42, 2011.
BUNDEGAARD, Christian. *Pragmatism and Architectural Research*.
http://rum1.aarch.dk/uploads/media/Christian_Bundegaard_Pragmatism_and_architectural_research.pdf [consulted in February, 2014].
DAVIDSON, Donald. *A Coherence Theory of Truth and Knowledge*. In MALACCHOWSKY, Alam R. Reading Rorty. Basul Blackwell, Cambridge (MA), 1990.
DE CARLO, Giancarlo. *L'architettura della partecipazione*. Edited by MARINI, Sara. Quodlibet, Macerata, 2013.
FRANCIOSINI, Luigi, MANIERI ELIA, Mario, SEGARRA LAGUNES, Maria Magdalena, *Archeologia e progetto. Tesi di laurea nella Facoltà di Architettura*. Università Roma Tre. Gangemi, Rome, 2002.
FRIEDMAN, Yona. *Utopies Réalisables.* L'Éclat, Paris, 2000 [original edition 1975].
GREGOTTI, Vittorio. *Il sublime al tempo del contemporaneo*. Einaudi, Milan, 2013. GREGOTTI, Vittorio. *Diciassette lettere sull'architettura*, Laterza, Rome-Bari, 2000.
KOOLHAAS, Rem. *Junkspace. Per un ripensamento radicale dello spazio urbano*. Quodlibet, Macerata, 2006.
LYNN, Greg. *Folding in architecture*. En "AD Profile", n.102. Academy Editions, London, 1993.
MIANO, Pasquale. *Realismo e innovazione: un binomio possibile*. In CAJA, Michele, CAPOZZI, Renato, FUSCO, Gaetano, MALCOVATI, Silvia, VISCONTI, Federica (edited by). Architettura e realismo. Riflessioni sulla costruzione architettonica della realtà. Maggioli Editore, Santarcangelo di Romagna, 2013. MONESTIROLI, Antonio. *L'architettura della realtà*. CLUP, Milan, 1979.
ROGERS, Ernesto Nathan. *L'utopia della realtà*. Leonardo Da Vinci, Bari, 1965.
RORTY, Richard, *Consequences of Pragmatism*. University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1982. RORTY, Richard. *Remarks at MOMA*. www.stanford.edu//moma.html [consulted in February, 2014].
VENEZIA, Francesco. *Nature. Doppio per riflesso*. D'ONOFRIO, Alessandro, FELCI, Claudia (edited by). Nature_01: Francesco Venezia. Mousse Publishing, Milan, 2011 VITTORINI, Elio. *Diario in pubblico*. Milan, 1957.

Biography

Pasquale Miano, architect, teaches Architectural and Urban Design at the Department of Architecture of the University of Naples "Federico II" since 2002 and is part of the Departmental Doctoral Committee of Urban Design and Planning since 2004. He lectures in the International Master of Science in "Design of Steel Structures" and in the School of Specialization in "Landscape and Architectural Heritage". He is the author of numerous publications on the themes or architecture and urban planning and diverse public works projects and endeavours. He is coordinator of various research projects and has received awards for his studies on

landscape and architecture, by converging teaching and research with the practice of design as a unique complex of indissoluble activities, as discussed in his latest monographies focused on the teaching-research relation (Vomero, Storkterrein and Other Places. Teaching as Research, Clean, Naples 2011), and on the practice-theory relation (Thematic Armours and Projects, Clean, Naples 2011).

Pasquale Miano, arquitecto, enseña Diseño Urbano y Arquitectónico en el Departamento de Arquitectura de la Universidad de Nápoles "Federico II" desde el año 2002 y forma parte de la Comisión de Doctorado Departamental de Diseño Urbano y Planificación desde 2004. Es Profesor en el Máster Internacional en "Diseño de Estructuras de Acero" y en la Escuela de Especialización en "Patrimonio Arquitectónico y Paisaje" de Nápoles. Es autor de numerosas publicaciones sobre los temas o la arquitectura y la planificación urbana y de varios proyectos de obras públicas. Es coordinador de diversos proyectos de investigación y ha recibido premios por sus estudios sobre el paisaje y la arquitectura, mediante la convergencia de la enseñanza y la investigación con la práctica del diseño como un complejo único de actividades indisolubles, como se comenta en sus últimas monografías centradas en la relación docencia-investigación (Vomero, Storkterrein y otros lugares. Enseñanza como investigación, Clean, Nápoles 2011), y sobre la relación práctica-teoría (Armaduras temáticas y proyectos, Clean, Nápoles 2011).

Giorgia Aquilar, arquitecto, es PhD en Diseño Urbano en el Departamento de Arquitectura de la Universidad de Nápoles "Federico II", donde obtuvo su M.Sc. y Master de segundo nivel en "Diseño de la ciudad histórica". Actualmente es Profesora Adjunta de Composición Arquitectónica en el Departamento de Ingeniería y profesor ayudante de Arquitectura y Diseño Urbano en el Departamento de Arquitectura desde 2009. Ella está involucrada en varios proyectos de investigación y publicaciones sobre la teoría y la práctica del diseño arquitectónico y urbano, cruzando a través del contexto nacional e internacional. En línea con su tesis doctoral, titulada La ciudad imperfecta. Arquitecturas para la subversión urbana (2013), su trabajo actual incluye la relación entre arquitecturas existentes y adiciones contemporáneas, través de la investigación y la experimentación en la aplicación de los principios evolutivos biológicos en la construcción de estrategias de diseño para diferentes contextos, desde la arqueología a paisaje, de la histórica tejidos a los asentamientos modernos.

Giorgia Aquilar, architect, is PhD in Urban Design at the Department of Architecture of the University of Naples "Federico II", where she earned her MSc and Master of II Level in "Design for the Historic City". She is currently Contract Lecturer of Architectural Composition at the Department of Engineering and has been Teaching Assistant of Architectural and Urban Design at the Department of Architecture since 2009. She is involved in various research projects and publications on architectural and urban design theory and practice, crossing through national and international context with the role of conference speaker of workshop tutor. In line with her PhD dissertation, entitled The Imperfect City. Architectures for Urban Subversion (2013), her current work includes the relation between architectural pre-existences and contemporary additions, reasoning and experimenting on the application of biological evolutive principles in the construction of design strategies for different contexts, from archaeology to landscape, from historic tissues to modern settlements.