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Re-imagine, Re-load, Re-cycle: New Urbanism for the City of Future

Metamorphosis is the new and powerful keyword in the actual age of crisis. We are not undergoing a mere – even though dramatic – passing situation, but we are living in a crisis which requires a metamorphosis of the ecological, cultural, economic, social and political systems to get out of it other than we were when entering it. The metamorphosis will have to be mainly urban, because we live in the Urban Age in which more than half the population live, work (and dream the future) in cities, dense or sprawled, capital or reticular, local or global (Burdett and Sudjic, eds., 2007). The city, as the predominant form of inhabiting, is invested with the "responsibility" of producing innovative, more sustainable, intelligent and creative life styles, able of generating the innovative propelling force which can make us emerge from the quagmire of decline.

The cities of the future – even more *creative, smart and green* – will have to be able to re-think of their own development and to reactivate their capitals (spatial, relational and human) guided by a town planning capable of acting in the age of metamorphosis to guarantee new forms of convergence between cultural, economic, environmental and social sustainability both through the adoption of new views of the future, and through the use of new paradigms but also through the quality of decisions and the effectiveness of projects. Cities act as powerful population attractors no longer from rural areas, but – even more in time of crisis – from other cities, thus generating a flow of "social capital" crossing them, able to feed their competitiveness, regeneration and quality provided that it is adequately transformed into resources for sustainability. Cities actually produce more than 50% of the global GDP, but they also consume 90% of resources, produce 80% of CO2 emissions and consume almost 80% of the national energy requirements of OECD Countries.

After the stage in which urban dynamism has been identified with the settlement of a creative class or with the localization of magnets capable of attracting over-local flows (often pushed by financial bubbles), the evolution of the concept is now necessary, by spotting out the real factors enabling identity, creativity and innovation to be turned from simple attractors of intellectual resources into generators of new economies, producers of new cities and suppliers of a better quality of life. In Europe the most dynamic cities are not the megalopolis, because the strong hubs of the World Cities (London, Paris and the ongoing Berlin) are

complemented by a network of 24 Second Level Cities (Amsterdam, Atene, Barcelona, Bruxelles, Dublin, Düsseldorf, Frankfurt am Main, Genève, Göteborg, Hamburg, Helsinki, Köln, København, Madrid, Manchester, Milano, München, Oslo, Roma, Stuttgart, Stockholm, Torino, Wien and Zürich) able not only of being the new driving forces for development, activating support policies to their attractiveness, but above all of playing an important international role in the production of social capital (Pricewaterhouse Coopers, 2006). These cities are capable of developing their attractiveness by activating new qualitative and quantitative factors of ecological, economic, infrastructural or relational character. Particularly in Italy, re-thinking urban policies and re-imagining urbanism requires not only new capacities to attract material and immaterial resources, but also the capability of reconciling competitive economic performances with the cohesive social ones, as well as new sensibility to landscape, new energy intelligences and renewed governance paradigms (Ricci, 2012).

Plan more with less

We are undergoing, often with dramatic consequences, a season characterized by the absence of public resources for investment and for policies stimulating economy: the so-called Zero Budget Age commits ourselves "to do more with less resources". In Europe, the scenario opened to local authorities – the Mediterranean ones in particular – requires a deep awareness of the need to zero the public budget for urban policies and start again from its re-composition through actions against decline and decay connected to development, but within a framework of innovation of decision-making processes, of permanent assessment of effects, of joint agreement on choices and co-planning of actions. We need to re-imagine the urban policies, because one of the first fields of innovation in public policies will have to be urban regeneration, provided that its criticalities are correctly diagnosed and its solutions are timely spotted out.

Mediterranean cities are today a complex system which does not work any longer, which does not reach the set results, which provides increasingly poor performances and in which the relations – both material and immaterial – between its parts are congested and ineffective. Particularly in Southern Europe, in spite of some success, urban regeneration policies have not produced results comparable to the ones produced in central and northern European Countries, owing to four recurrent pathologies with different symptomatic levels. The first pathology is *autism*, i.e. the withdrawal of the area chosen for regeneration into an introverted dimension aiming to solve critical issue in itself and committed to regenerate only the urban

cluster in which it acts, developing it and re-qualifying it, but without any will and capability of producing a real impact on the whole urban fabric and on the total quality of the city; these are actions not deprived of some rationality, but unable of relating one to another and eluding any contact which can positively contaminate their quality: hence a fringed city with regenerated parts within degraded or necrotic fabrics. The second pathology is *schizophrenia*, consisting of a constant change in approaches and policies produced by the will of decision-makers and policy-makers to come into line with the electoral whim or to pursue exogenous opportunities: flows of the tourist system, sources of European funding, taking the opportunity of global events or services ; the result is often a mix of uses and quality which, even when it is identified with iconic buildings or prestigious events, does not produce the necessary critical mass and the necessary long term vision which enable transformations to take roots; the multi-faceted character of the regeneration project does not permit to strengthen its identity and to make its effects long lasting. The third pathology is *sterility*, which is translated into low value added or the non-existent multiplier of investment that the urban regeneration projects produce, by not activating production systems, by not triggering a system of tax relief, by not changing the processes of global governance through the formation of mixed partnerships or development agencies; actions which do not bring about the formation of connective tissue between projects and contexts, between centres and margins, more similar to "urban pulsars", stars which shine emitting a huge quantity of energy but which prevent a system of planets from forming around them.

Finally, the last pathology – the most severe, diffused and chronic – is *drug addiction* from public resources, fed by the belief to be able to always experience a model of development "doped" by the existence of a debited national budget. Regeneration policies of districts, waterfronts or decommissioned areas have often been the outcome of a subprime town planning which has fed the consumption of spaces and resources rather than pursuing an effective sustainability based on re-cycling, on energy efficiency, on the permeability and integration of uses and on higher density.

It is clear that we are faced with "relational pathologies", deriving from a pseudo-interaction between dwelling and production, between buildings and public spaces, between hubs and networks, too often used as propaganda and marketing rather than as an effective vector of urban dynamism. And if pathologies are relational, it is on relational factors that we have to act to find solutions, aware also of the dramatic change in the socio-economic context in which the administrators of our cities find themselves in their actions.

Although the new global scenarios do show a powerful propelling capacity deriving from urban policies fed by creativity, culture and tourism, in the European regions which are lagging behind – above all in Italy – some local critical forces are acting, which in the present time of crisis turn into serious emergencies. Such critical forces can be summarized in "four zeros" which in their extreme synthesis are an effective representation of the topic. The first zero concerns the absence of structural public resources available in the budgets of local administrations for projects of urban regeneration, of recovery of decommissioned areas and of support to environmental re-qualification and of preservation of agricultural land (with respect to huge European or private resources already invested). The second zero concerns the actual multiplier of investment for quality projects of public buildings and spaces which is dramatically non-existent, ineffective or anaesthetized (with respect to a potential tripling of invested resources). The third zero concerns the missed use of tax incentives or of inducements by local administrations to pave the way to the participation of the private or to encourage settlements in rehabilitation areas rather than consuming new grounds (with respect to the opportunities deriving from a new urban-based local tax system). Finally, the fourth zero is the integrated profitability of the set of actions really produced by the upgrading of ecological and cultural resources (with respect to a broad set of production interrelations).

The scene shows a depressing zero sum which leads many administrators, planners and entrepreneurs to maintain that it is not possible to obtain from urban policies effects other than the ones whose pathologies we have denounced. To change the result of the cruel sum – Albert Einstein teaches us that "insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results" – we have to change our standpoint, renew processes and change paradigms. Only if we are able to make the above critical features interact in a different way shall we be able to change the result of their action: if the awareness of the scarce public resources guides us towards a greater involvement of the private capital, not helped by impossible co-funding, but by tax relief, less red tape or by accurate incentives or compensations in the framework of a new "land-based local tax system" oriented to rehabilitation rather than to new urbanization. Only if we reactivate the multiplier of development shall we be able to strengthen the drive belts between the different sectors involved in urban regeneration so that they can transmit the propulsive power of cities to development.

Urbanism in the era of creativity

The Mediterranean city is often a system producing an unsustainable waste of resources (financial, social, territorial) and a high consumption of energies (material and immaterial) with respect to the quality it generates. We are in a situation in which the emergency actions – often episodic and eroding further opportunities – are no longer effective. All the same, we realize that in the same cities their intrinsic qualities are still high (historic centres, coastal landscapes, peri-urban farms), values are intact (prestige and reputation, cultural background and sociability), talents are active (universities, research, cultural activities, brands) and relations are fluent and broad (ports, airports, infrastructural or digital connections). Then, the acceptance of decline and its management is not the only way, but we can and must commit ourselves to "re-load the urban operating system" to reactivate the city again. The new generation urban project will have to supply a new operating system to the city, re-combining territorial resources, economic flows and social capitals.

Few years ago, I pointed out the need for a new urban paradigm (Carta, 2007) which could lead from a view of urban policies based on the unlimited use of public resources aimed at stimulating the starting up of economies – which in turn would regenerate urban spaces – to urban policies which know how to "reactivate territorial capitals" (quality of the environment, culture, energy efficiency, sustainable mobility, landscape). Such urban policies could act as the propulsive power of new economic relations – also over-local – which can feed again the formation of the public resources necessary to re-compose the social state, smashed into pieces by the crisis and by a view eroding resources.

We have already argued that the urban century is not just only the domain of *hypercities*: we are witnessing the emerging of middleweight cities, open conurbations, and a network of *mesopolis*. Especially in Europe, the armature of "global cities" is being joined by second-tier cities Functional Areas) generating quality-based and culture-fed alternative visions – with respect to the megalopolis' pathologies. Creative cities are worthy of the name inasmuch as their paradigm takes a further evolutionary step – the third – to be capable of producing multiplication and regeneration effects on urban transformation.

The first generation creative city (the 1.0 from the avant-garde of the late Nineties until the mid-twenty-first century) attracted the creative class at global level, hence the improvement of accessibility, localization factors and attractors quality. Essentially, it focused on two elements, which encourage settlement – and when possible rooting – of creative people worldwide, driven by their contributions to the urban context (Landry, 2000). The second generation creative city (the 2.0 from the mid-twenty-first century until the first years of the

crisis) has been oriented to the endogenous generation of the cultural and creative industry. Its paradigm aims at making the most of the economy of scale and at encouraging businesses by focusing on education and research, on the social *milieu* and the incubation of innovative businesses. Therefore, it mainly concentrated on the factors making up the cultural or events clusters by (sometimes over-) enhancing their centralizing magnetic effect.

The paradigm of the third generation creative city became apparent during the crisis years (Carta, 2009). It aims at creating new urbanity by playing the role of anti-cyclic engine contrasting decline. While not seeking to escape the goals of attractiveness and generation of business activities, it is mainly oriented to rethink the city through the cultural matrix, focusing on location patterns, mobility, access to services and an open and networked development.

Today, more urgently and with more responsibility, the city has to orient its creativity towards the production of a new identity, of a renewed ecological and energy sustainability, of new knowledge economies but also of a new social geography. We ought to plan a new "eco-creative city", able of generating innovative solutions, of catalysing different cultures and of feeding sustainable economies. A real effort of creativity, first of all human and then able of involving morphologies, ecologies and economies. Our commitment in designing an eco-creative city challenges us to reconsider the whole scenario, to re-activate urban intelligence in order to produce new methodologies and forge new tools for an urban regeneration founded on our cultural and environmental background. The eco-creative city will be able to contribute to the re-activation of urban, territorial and landscape capitals, by stimulating a new urban intelligence based on the interaction of strategic axes: trans-scalar approach, balance between identity and innovation, value of the different functions, function of territorial commuting, effectiveness of multi-level governance, challenges of the green economy.

It is above all necessary to act on social capital, both in terms of improvement in the supply of skilled labour and assistance to local labour market towards the sectors of creative and innovative industries, and through a stronger connection to the educational and professional system, aiming to localize over-local "magnets" linked to research and development, to feeding talents and to attracting skills. Beyond current rhetoric, an important match will be played on *Smart Cities* only if, besides being technology infrastructures and competitiveness engines, they are capable of aggregating minds, of generating creativity and innovation environments, but above all, of creating communities. A smart city, actually, is not only a city adding technology and efficiency to its traditional form, but it is a city which

deeply innovates its development dynamics, which revises its settling model, which reconsiders its vital cycles and improves its "sensors" of transformation, demands of inhabitants and emergencies.

Several research works demonstrate that in Europe an eco-creative city project in Italy would result in an investment multiplier triggering a virtuous cycle of value generation and urban regeneration through:

- maintenance, securing and renovation of the public and private building heritage (more than 24 million people live in areas under seismic hazard, 6 million are facing hydrogeological risk);

- land consumption and waste reduction (energy consumption in residential buildings amounts to 20% of total consumption);

- restoration and regeneration of historical centres as key attractors, both at residential and touristic level, including facilities for new local or nomadic communities;

- regeneration of public spaces, urban green areas and neighbourhood facilities, thus fuelling the city's social capital;

- urban mobility and waste cycle rationalisation both in terms of flows and efficient management;

- implementation of digital infrastructures to improve management and inclusiveness, strengthening the network society.

Of, course, finding new urban policies is not sufficient, but a whole range of instruments will have to be used for their implementation. Among them it is very important to adopt a differential tax system for the new projects deriving from building maintenance and substitution or to provide for volume increases consistent with environmental requirements, energy saving, seismic and hydrogeological safety or to facilitate integrated solutions for the wastes cycle.

The Creative City 3.0 is actively contributing – not only out of a reaction with respect to the creativity mainstream – to rethinking the urban paradigm in order to reactivate the creative force of the city by promoting its cultural capitals (identity and talents), improving the processes of inter-urban and marketing communication, eventually strengthening forms and opportunities for institutional and informal cooperation. It aims to create urban metamorphosis.

Towards a Re-cycling Urbanism for metamorphosing cities

Planning more sustainable cities to generate intelligent communities requires new organizational models, design paradigms and planning tools able for reducing urban pressure, improving resilience and decreasing diseconomies. The need for reconsidering the working of urban ecosystems, their interactions with social systems and the role they play in supporting economy and welfare can find an effective response in the attention to the creative recovery of urban cycles and materials. In other words, it is necessary to re-cycle cities to experience an intelligent, sustainable and inclusive growth, both by using the potential of "city mines" – as the *Horizon 2020* EU strategy calls them – consisting of decommissioned or under-used areas, and acting on the innovation of life styles, behaviours and sustainable socioeconomic values, and above all on the ways to regulate, plan and control settlements.

The question does not only concern the re-use of materials, spaces, buildings or urban scraps, but the "renewal of cycles", i.e. the necessary regeneration – architectural, social and economic – of urban settlements through letting urban complexes, urban fabrics and infrastructural decommissioned, changing or functionally reduced networks in new life cycles. In the era of metamorphosis cities de-grow, shrink and become more densely populated: they produce urban "fragments", functional "chips" and development "scraps" which only through a re-cycling process can be again the components of new life cycles capable of generating renewed urban landscapes or be the triggers of interrupted cycles, or can still contribute to turn some now ineffective micro-cycles into a more powerful cycle (Marini, Santangelo, eds., 2013). Re-cycling generates new parts of the city founded on the creative re-use of derelict areas, on the innovation of decommissioned buildings, on the scrapping of downgraded parts or on the changed use of traditional settlement fabrics. The urban re-cycling has to concern the various disused or decommissioned materials: housing (the districts of degraded outskirts), production (de-industrializing areas), logistics (railways and ports), military (the great urban barracks), landscape (degraded landscapes or suburban rural areas to be rehabilitated).

Planning in the age of urban re-cycling means being at the same time guided by long term visions and by short term projects able of generating a town planning which can have effect on a new urban metabolism (Acebillo, 2012). Here are seven urban life cycles which can be used as meta-planning approaches for a city ready to re-activate itself:

a) **The resilience cycle** in which the flexibility of functions, the permeability of spaces and the adaptability of settlements are no longer conceptual and spatial problems, but have to be related to the whole social, economic and technological bulk which is today

part of the city construction, thus becoming themes/instruments/norms of the future city's project. In Copenhagen the project for the *Saint-Kjelds Climate Adaptation District* designed by the Tredje Natura firm is redesigning a district able of better managing the floods caused by climate changes producing a new urban form, particularly of public spaces: water is absorbed by permeable parks and squares both to ease the sewage system and to create new leisure time areas connected with water. Resilience, not only understood as capacity to adapt to urban changes and to the degenerative force of ground rent, but above all as element providing the necessary flexibility to connect, through urban policies, resources, actors, identity and tensions thus reactivating the functional productive chains and enliven the urban metabolism, too often frozen in an hyper-urban vision, which eventually turns out to be anti-urban. Planning resilient cities means more flexible urban policies to develop functional and management models capable of dealing with an increasingly unbalanced world where cities are subject to natural disasters, social unrest due to de-industrialization, impoverishment of the middle classes as well as population reduction and ageing.

b) **The identity cycle** capable of improving urban reputation through a better identification of inhabitants and users. The city, being again an "encyclopaedia" of the community, an opportunity for knowledge and education, commits town planners and architects to conceive new forms, places and relations which contain and connect local/global relational flows that the city produces with increasingly greater frequency, capacity and speed. A case in point are the strategies adopted in Marseille from the '90s through the initiative "Marseille Provence Metropole" and which reached their peak in the European Capital of Culture 2013, investing energies and resources in urban regeneration projects based on cultural infrastructure, on the localization of great attractors, on iconic urban projects targeted to redefine the city's reputation. From a symbol of economic and social malaise to a new creative driven urban identity.

c) **The knowledge cycle** able of acting on the democratization of urban communication, planning opportunities and designing places where the knowledge of the urban system is no longer a specialists' domain and becomes widespread knowledge, inter-subjective skill, becoming concrete material for the pact of communal life of urban populations and for the consequent development pact. In Paris, for example, *Centquatre* is an incubator of innovative firms set up in old stables restored in the XIXe arr., as a meeting point and creativity hub and housing a centre dealing with

work and job placement, with forum devoted to the young and to the over-50 who lost their jobs. *Centquatre* carries on an action plan with entrepreneurs, designers and researchers who work to promote "innovation in creation and creation of innovation" and to support new ideas, experimentation and the circulation of innovative projects, and the development of new firms.

d) **The participation cycle** capable of helping improve democracy and efficiency of plans and projects, promoting diffused environments of cognition/action more adequate to contemporary social and environmental needs. The renewed argumentative ethics of planning must become a vehicle for new interpersonal relations and an engine for mobilizing collective intelligence around the project of urban quality, also through the diffusion of urban centres which are less and less physical and institutional places and more and more *mobile, open* and *shared* places. The spreading of sensors, electronic networks and urban life apps is creating a proper urban cyber-physical space, consisting of the constant interaction between physical components and digital networks, tangible actions and intangible feedback. We are at the onset of a hybrid dimension between the digital and material world, where the Internet is invading the physical space by identifying it, making it attractive and setting it up for social uses, which are expected to gather the citizens in smart places connected to the network and providing services.

e) **The digital cycle**, increasingly more *cloud based*, requires a high synergy between central role of services, building structure and technological supply. The new urban fabrics deriving from re-use will have to be more and more permeated by digital behaviours which form and re-form between producer and consumer, open to the citizens' demands, perceptions and requirements of functionality and comfort, and enriching them with their requests of knowledge and experience, with their demand for democracy and responsibility. The Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya has realised an energy self-sufficient building in the *Campus Sant Cugat*: the LOW3 serves as a living lab for the local people, dedicated to the experimentation of bioclimatic systems and low cost low impact architecture, mainly oriented to raise public awareness regarding the rethinking of settlement patterns. We are here faced with the first forms of *open urbanism* for more sentient and dialogic cities (Sassen, 2011). Makers, fablabers, urban farmers, startuppers, smart citizens and co-workers are the new protagonists of the contemporary city, acting in the urban, political and social stage of the third industrial revolution, which we have just entered.

f) The polycentrism cycle committed to include new hubs of social aggregation into the urban framework which can help it fluidify, by using architectural places caught in their change and re-used for sociability opportunities as new "urban activators". The cities of the new "archipelago" economies and of social fluidity accelerate the affirmation of new values which can ease the production of new semantic cycles on the transforming or decommissioning areas able to direct change. Paris, Berlin and Amsterdam, continuing a well-established polycentric strategy, are planning an urban environment structured in competitiveness centres in the different development fields, under pledge of helping the new firms of the advanced service industry or of the urban manufacturing sector to re-vitalize the new urban hubs facilitating their localization in renewing areas.

g) The cycle of innovative opportunities and of the new urban trades which complement the traditional ones, re-vitalizing, changing and adapting them to the new demands. The city of opportunities will require more and more often not only the exercise of creativity, strategic vision, ecological project and innovative management, but also integrated projects, minute tactics accompanied by a constant assessment of the effects of choices and by the checking of performances. In Saint-Nazaire, Gilles Clément started the renewal of the old submarine base by inserting plants in the cracks of the walls: the *Jardin du Tiers Paysage* by colonizing the base's roof produces a captivating passable green grid connecting the new museum, educational and tourist facilities granted by the programme of urban regeneration.

We are in face of the start up of a Recycling Urbanism that means not only think, design and build a more sustainable city, but also more responsible and more creative, able to rethink models of urban community to reinvent settlement patterns and metabolism starting from the re-activation of dismissed urban capital, undergoing changes or crisis. A city that manages to redesign the way we move around, re-strengthening creative ties with the sensibility of environment and the richness of landscape, fuelling the establishment of urban settlement cultures, thus reactivating the vital organs of the city and its life cycles, but also to react to the looming decline.

The cities of the future, especially the middleweight Mediterranean cities – real antidote to the global megacities – will have to act within a new Capitalism 4.0, no longer as "a motionless set of financial organisation but an evolutionary system reinventing and strengthening itself through the crisis" (Kaletsky, 2010), capable of leading the settlement processes through a strong integration with ecological sustainability, town planning, land

use management, energy efficiency, with the design of morphologies without avoiding to generate value. The urban recycling areas will be the new and powerful "stem cells" of the future, able to release a strong creative potential to reactivate new life cycles. A recycling-based urban project contributes to reduce land consumption: not uncritically, but rather reactivating materials, spaces and abandoned infrastructure and reusing still viable resources thus creatively increasing their resilience, which is the ability to face the crisis, recover from a disaster (an earthquake, a hurricane, or increasingly a deep de-industrialization which affects the whole economic and social tissue) starting again from the beginning with a new vision and a renewed development model.

Reimagining urbanism

Re-imagining, re-loading and re-cycling cities, then, requires a rigorous action of political will, social responsibility and technical skills which should rely on a system of governance of urban transformations based on a new fivefold approach: vision, strategy, project, rules and community. A different way of thinking and a range of actions for new times, able of "re-imagining urbanism" (Carta, 2014). We must look again at our territory as a generative resource, not only as consumption space, drawing of the energy of the new participatory mass where the talent of the young, the knowledge workers and the economies of sustainability mix and burst out, thus producing a new territory that we have to learn how to explore, interpret, regulate and plan, shifting from the rhetoric of social cohesion to the need of facing the new forms of conflicts – social, cultural, ethnic, ecological, functional and more and more often economic – which in the city find their genesis and outbreak.

Re-imagining urbanism, therefore, does not propose itself as a new totem-word or a mantra, mention of which is enough to deliver results. On the contrary, it requires a rigorous exercise of resolve, responsibility and skills based on a good governance of the city – having to increasingly tackle both shrinking and metropolitanization - based on a new pentagram: vision, strategy, design, rules and community.

A different thought and a chain of actions for the changing times, able to re-imagining the urbanism and the regional and landscape planning. We shall go back to view the territory as a productive resource and not just a space of consumption, drawing on the energies of the new participatory magma, merging the issue of young people, knowledge workers and economies of sustainability to produce a new territory that we must learn to explore, interpret, settle and design with the ability to deal with new forms of conflicts –

social, cultural, ethnic, ecological, functional and, increasingly, economic – generating and erupting in the city (Mostafavi and Doherty, eds., 2010). We must include new *creative city* sensibilities and paradigms within town planning in order to enhance urban talents, *recycling urbanism* paradigms for the creative reuse of brownfield areas, *urban shrinkage* paradigms as land project beyond consumption and the *smartness* ones, thus renewing the water-energy-waste cycles and managing digital and mobility networks in a sustainable way. Furthermore, the paradigms of *post-carbon economy*, driver of innovation and investment multiplier, of *urban agriculture* as activator of new metabolisms and finally of *infrastructure retrofitting* as adequate intervention method on inefficient cities. From the edges of urban thinking – sometimes from its heresies – brand new topics should be the new heart of a significant urban project, once again (Otto-Zimmermann, ed., 2011).

Then metamorphosis is the proactive keyword of the new urbanism. We did catch a glimpse of the many signs and indications that showed us its way during the booming globalization years, but we have ignored them anaesthetically. Today, we are rather forced to perform it during the recession years of the crisis and the society of the future need to take action within a state of perturbation that is bound to last for long, profoundly changing us. Those who believe that sustainability only stems from the sharp reduction of consumption and waste and those who understand the territory as a new alliance between resources, societies and powers are playing a match about rethinking and, consequently, redesigning territories. Therefore, re-imagining urbanism is not merely a disciplinary or technical operation but becomes a fundamental chromosome for the metamorphosis to which we are called. Any smoothing technocratic anaesthesia is to be rejected, keeping in mind that business as usual is bound to return, with only a few adjustments, with some improvements and new items on the agenda. The destiny of cities shall change according on concept as quality, justice, harmony, environment and limits. Only through better urban policies, comprehensive strategies, appropriate assessments of sustainability, shared knowledge and public-private partnership will be able to produce the necessary resources for a new environmentally-friendly urban metabolism based on reduction of consumption, consolidation of the welfare state, encouragement of innovation, thus promoting creativity and intelligence, enhancing urban agriculture and recycling practices, management of climate change and energy efficiency in the cities of tomorrow.

The impact of the new ecological, technological and creative paradigms does not only affect our social actions in connection with the environment, but deeply impacts on the

frames of mind, on methods and instruments of branches of learning which supply the principles and instruments to govern and shape the environment in which we live: territorial planning, town planning and urban project. Each branch is accountable for constantly creating its own progress conditions and today we must understand that we have a unique opportunity to reconsider the epistemological nucleus of the branches of learning which lead together the city's evolution, to "change ourselves by changing the city", as Henri Lefebvre (1968) wrote.

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