

## The life-cycle of the city: a morphological perspective

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**Abstract.** *Over the last decade, we have been witnessing the progressive weakening of the so-called “Network City”, indented as the sheer embodiment of the globalization driving forces. This phenomenon mostly occurred because of the worldwide crisis of finance, which was the propellant of the mentioned urban model. It progressively delivered an increasing amount of waiting lands and building vacancies over the territory. Emptiness suddenly appeared as the most preeminent evidence of the market deficiency, replacing the well known “culture of congestion”. Recycling seems to be the immediate reaction to the building standstill and it is nowadays widely accepted as the most promising strategy to face the crisis of the city, especially within Europe. This statement brings us to deeply reflect on the city in the perspective of its life-cycle. In that respect it becomes fundamental to reconsider the forerunning contribution of Urban Morphology and Building Typology. In fact this discipline, since the second half of the '50 of the XX century, because of the necessity to reconstruct Europe after the Second World War, was pioneering the necessity to read the Form of the city beyond any ideological prejudice, superseding the Modern approach. As a consequence of this attitude, the city was even more intended as a “manufact” constantly transformed through the different historical epochs. This paper intends to offer a complete reflection on these premises to define appropriate operative devices in the contemporary condition to build a promising future for our cities.*

*Keywords: Globalization, Network City, Crisis, vacancies, recycle*

### The “Network city” and its crisis

Over the last decade we have been witnessing the effect over the territory of the worldwide crisis of finance, intended as the main propellant of the globalization processes. As an immediate consequence, one can remind the progressive weakening of the “Network city” (Marzot, 2006 i). This urban model was intended, since its inception, development and forerunning application, to take over the role of Planning in the management of the territorial transformation and to supersede it with urban and territorial marketing strategies. To achieve this purpose, finance was promoting massive investments in the field of

multimodal infrastructure to group existing cities into clusters, considered coherent to specific economic goals, according to a top-down strategy. This overarching process was developed at the expenses of national and local interests, almost completely disregarding the effects produced onto the already established communities.

Therefore, if the “Network City” was apparently unfolding an unlimited capacity to multiply opportunities, by increasing movements of people, goods, information and resources, it was pursuing its goals by being very selective and exclusive with respect to the existing framework. As a side effect of this overarching strategy, the dominant urban model

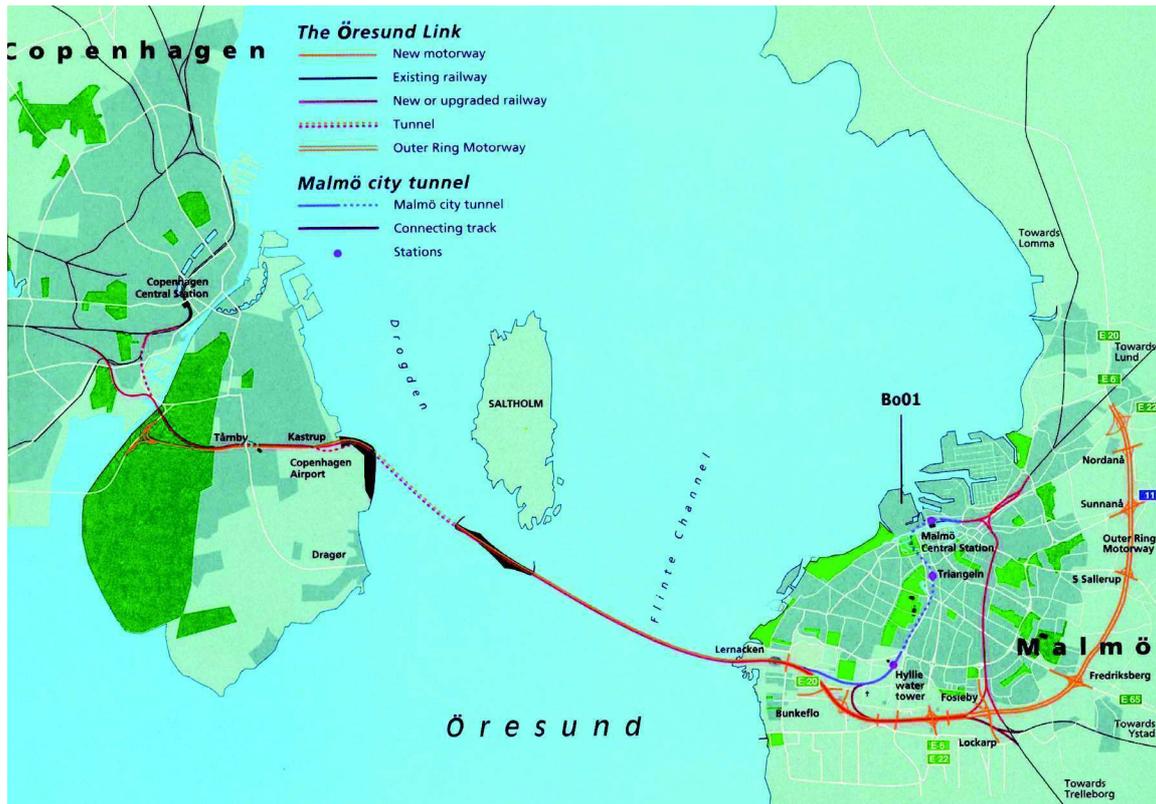


Figure 1.

(The Øresund Bridge autonomously generates the most important multimodal logistic hub of the entire North Sea, completely subverting the local dynamics from an out-of-control perspective, generating a transnational model to be experimented and tested. The Swedish compound of BO 01 in Malmö, on the opposite side of Copenhagen, is then delivered as an exclusive residential district conceived for a cosmopolitan custom. It appears neither part of the existing regions nor belonging to a new expected one, remaining suspended into a sort of “nihilistic” international nuance).

was producing as well an increasing amount of social, economic, political and cultural “residuals”. If transformations had been occurring systematically over the history, the specificity and the uniqueness of the mentioned phenomenon was that it was explicitly hetero-directed, or driven by forces external to local interests, inhibiting the possibility of the latter to reclaim a stance in guiding the process itself and its consequences. Globalization therefore, tacking a sort of technocratic command over the territories, explicitly acted performing an out-of-control process of systematic delegitimization of the local identities.

Not by chance, limiting our discussion to the European Institutions, they were considered unable to face the situation and, to some extent, even more blamed to accomplish the explicit interests of the international credit system.

The “Network City” model was therefore instrumental to promote a systematic process of territorial colonization, exploiting local resources, destabilizing existing power relations and promoting a condition of permanent state of thread (Figure 1). These premises justify an increasing demand of sustainability of the economic decisions, widespread all over the world in the last decade, and a progressive shift in cultural paradigms. If the “culture of congestion” (Koolhaas, 1978) was therefore considered the main intention pursued by globalization processes, nowadays the accent is on “reclaiming the residuals”, putting on the fore the territories and their unavoidable necessities.

**From the “culture of congestion” to the culture of recycle**

The “Network City”, by promoting infrastructural multimodality to organize existing cities according to economic clusters, was systematically excluding those parts of the territory, and the related subjects, which were not considered instrumental to its main purposes, dooming them to exist in a permanent peripheral state. The side effect of the “culture of congestion” was therefore the widespread abandonment of areas and buildings whose position was far away from the most prominent hubs of the newly established logistic routes. However we cannot underestimate the reclamation process which almost immediately happened in those areas. Being mostly secluded by the new centers, they were in fact witnessing the emergence of new enterprises and subjects related to very specific local conditions.

Simultaneously, post-industrial Brownfield close to strategic location of the “Network City” were progressively witnessing the effect of the territorial deconstruction and disconnection by suddenly exceeding contextual limitations, being targeted by considerable investments. By benefiting of the new urban phenomenon they were undergone to huge transformation project, becoming hybrid multi-functional complexes. However, the distinct character of the Hybrid is not the coexistence of a wide range of activity. This is just the side effect of a sudden “leap in scale” (Koolhaas, 1978), which explicitly acts as its main cause, occurring because of agents of change systematically acting from the outside, disregarding the already mentioned operating constraints (Marzot, 2006 ii, iii and iv).

The crisis of the “Network City” model therefore came to insist on an already existing intricate and compromised situation, additionally promoting an increasing delivery of waiting lands and vacant buildings, derived by frustrated expectations of investment and/or bankruptcy of newly established enterprises, especially affecting the “Great Distribution System”: business parks, leisure centers, industrial areas and logistic hubs. A new condition of “emptiness” started promoting the

idea of the city as a threatening “landscape of ruins”. This phenomenon was mostly provoking a twofold reaction. On one side it was leading to a self-satisfied romantic acceptance of the situation, intended as the “glorifying evidence” of the financial capitalism’s ultimate defeat, and then to be preserved as a permanent Monument of its aporias. On the other, it was promoting an increasing interest for the culture of “recycle”. Not by chance, this was leading to reevaluate recent precedents of this attitude, as the Japanese “Metabolism” (Koolhaas and Obrist, 2011) and the so-called “Dutch Structuralism” (Risselada and van den Heuvel, 2006), both operating in the field of Architecture. The former was considered a symbolic inheritance of the traditional urban landscape after its dissolution, because of the second world war, sublimated by the support of the building industry. The latter was explicitly assumed, not by chance during the same period, as the possibility to reconsider the legacy of Modernity (in particular its mission to provide a framework for future development) in the perspective of social accountability and collaboration, to partially counter the overwhelming power of technocratic bureaucracy in compliance with building industrialization processes. A third approach was progressively flourishing in Italy, thanks to an internationally successful exhibition, held at the MAXXI in Rome in 2011-12 (Ciorra and Marini, 2011). By collecting a considerable number of well known case study, ranging from territorial reclamation to architectural reuse, the emphasis was put on the possibility to regenerate the existing, forecasting the idea of grounding the inception of a new world on the critical inheritance of the previous one. The consensus manifested in favor of the proposal, and its later translation into an important research network, Re\_cycle Italy, still nowadays unfolding its fascination over the design practice and the theoretical reflection, confirms the increasing expectation from an even wider audience regarding the “culture of recycle” consequences on a political, economic, social and cultural level.

### **The life-cycle of the city: aporias of the Modernity and the contribution of Urban Analysis**

Not by chance the premises of the resurgence of interest on the phenomenon of the recycle have to be found into the so-called “parasite architecture” (Marini, 2012). It elicits the conviction that architecture could nurture itself from architectural precedents, intended both as material evidences of existing buildings and/or still living images and ideas regarding it. This is clearly a post-modern assessment, whose relevance, not by chance, was fiercely and systematically supported and widespread by Urban Morphology and Building Typology, starting from the '50 of the last century onward, to counter the Modern prejudice to derive architecture from scientifically accepted functional requirements, not being conditioned by the past (Marzot, 2002 and 2014).

Saverio Muratori has the indubitable merit to have been a pioneer in the field. By focusing on the urban history of Venice, viewed from an architectural perspective, he was witnessing, through a systematic survey campaign of its centre, developed in close collaboration with his students, the endless process of derivation of the city from a previously established form, by selecting its basic components through a critical transformation of its framework (Muratori, 1959/60). Later on, he got confirmation of this “derivative approach” by similarly working on Rome, finding additional archeological evidences and promoting the birth of a promising school which is still nowadays very fertile, at his fourth generation, on an international level (Muratori, 1963).

Carlo Aymonino, however paying respect to the leading role of Muratori in Urban Analysis, stresses the impossibility of reestablishing a derivative process of contemporary architecture from the past, if not into “ideal” terms. In fact, deeply investigating the transformation occurred in the field of urban design, emerging since the Bourgeois society onward, he recognizes the advent of the Plan and the dialectical relation between Architecture and Planning, as unavoidable changes that resist to Muratori’s claim (Aymonino and Brusatin and Fabbri and Lena and Lovero and Lucianetti and

Rossi, 1970). In addition he strongly supported the thesis according to which Modernity, since its inception, brought to the fore unexpected functional requirements asking for specific prototypes, not accepting anymore to adapt existing buildings to new purposes, as it happened before.

Aldo Rossi, a former pupil of Aymonino at the IUAV in Venice, was progressively developing an original stance, in order to find a possible common ground between the aforementioned positions. By analyzing the process of progressive “consumption” of existing “urban facts”, at the end of their own life-cycle, he was finding historical evidence of the existence of Architectural Form as what transcends any previously manifested functional requirement and/or conventional value. Once deprived of any possible conditioning factor, according to the author, Architecture is doomed to become a “primary element”, ultimately reduced to its basic internal logic arrangement (Figure 2). Rossi implicitly refers to it as “the Being of Architecture”, while its explicit metaphysical order, manifested through meaningful drawings, identifies with a rediscovered “Hyperuranion”, endlessly floating between a “not anymore” status and a “not yet” one. This assessment justifies the incredible international audience reached by Rossi’s position (Rossi, 1966). To some extent, it seemed possible to his followers to recap a critical stance with respect to Functionalism, simultaneously reevaluating the role of Rationalism both in the design theory and practice.

Among the many who supported and widespread Rossi’s intuition we can at least enumerate Peter Eisenman and Manfredo Tafuri. The former was strongly fascinated by the possibility to reduce architecture to its internal syntactical order, finding evidence of a “Transformational-Generative” grammar, derived from Noam Chomsky’s linguistic and intended as the deep structure upon which is grounded any existing language as well as the promise of any possible future (Eisenman, 2006). The latter was attracted by Rossi’s self-satisfaction for the “poetry of the fragment”, instrumental to a polemic position towards capitalism, supported by his strong belief in the role of Planning (Biraghi, 2013). However,

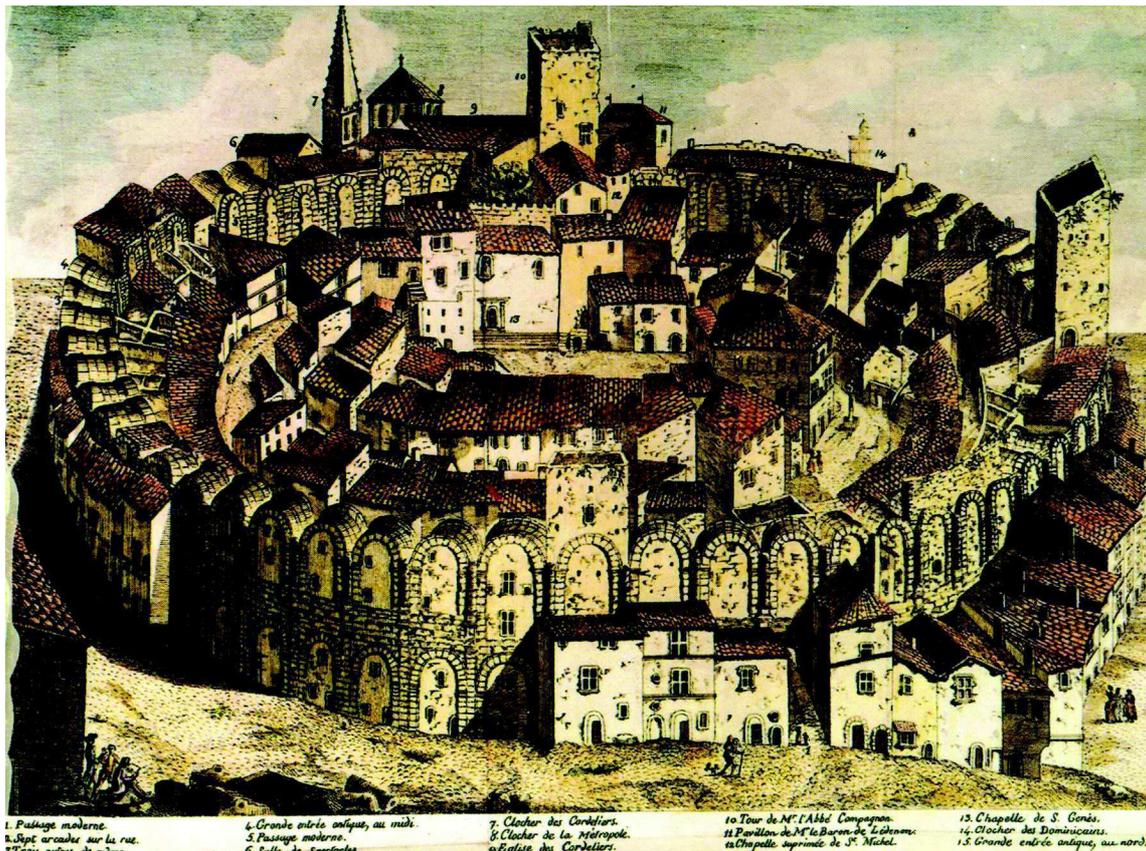


Figure 2.

(Engraving of Arles' roman amphitheatre after the Empire fall, XVIII century. Aldo Rossi finds archeological evidences of the survival of Form, calling it “primary element”, through the process of “consumption”, and successive abandonment, of already existing public monuments of the past. Assuming this metaphysical permanence, beyond historical epochs, as the grounding principle of the architectural practice, and naming it Composition, the latter becomes the “natural environment” into which architecture establishes its valuable horizon. As a consequence, neither the conventional value of architecture nor its functional necessity are questioned. The dualism between the idea and its materialization duplicates, in the disciplinary field of architecture, the Enlightenment’s dichotomy between rationality and its sheer application).

the Italian historian was also suspicious about the possibility, somehow evoked by Rossi’s drawings and design proposals, to ground into the newly established metaphysical order a new form of disciplinary status, intended as a reinterpretation of J.N.L. Durand’s Compositional Partì (Aureli, 2008)

Gianfranco Caniggia, a former pupil of Saverio Muratori, succeeded to accept the critical challenge launched by Aymonino’s sincere belief on the dialectical relation between Architecture and Planning, additionally superseding Rossi’s implicit accomplishment for an “Absolute Architecture”, by inheriting Saverio Muratori’s legacy regarding the idea of the derivative process of architecture from architecture. This result was achieved through

a tight sequence of interrelated concepts. To explain the condition into which architecture finds itself at the end of its life-cycle, he introduced the definition of “substratum”. The term describes architecture once loosed the functional requirements and the conventional value it originally embodied. As such, it presents itself as an indeterminate “matter”, available to transformation. To explain the process through which architecture is progressively transformed and made instrumental to new purposes he introduces the definition of the “building type”. It expresses the concept of “inhabiting” into specific conditions of space and time. It has a circular quality. In fact, with respect to an existing “substratum”, whether it is natural and/or artificial, it is “analytic a

posteriori”, since it results from a tentative process, made via trials and errors, of selection and combination of existing evidences, collected and arranged according to behavioral parameter. However, with respect to an already established framework, achieved through experimentation, it is also “synthetic a priori”, representing the way the inductive process is then translated into a deductive project, to be applied to transform a natural environment into an anthropic one (Caniggia and Maffei, 1979).

The effects unfolded by the type cross through multiple horizons, all responsible to set a specific historical epoch, which correspond to different levels of complexity: the architecture, the building, the city and the landscape. These horizons are literary co-centered and coherent to the human being’s achieved framework. This also implies they are doomed to change according to his position within the experimented world, shifting perspective accordingly.

The epistemic foundation of the aforementioned concepts is based on the relation between the body and the environment. While the former is meant to be a coherent unity and self-sufficiency between the “psychical” and the “physical”, the latter is intended to identify with the state of indeterminacy which preexists to the human being’s behavior. However the relation is not pre-determined by automatic reactions to external stimuli, as it happens to animals, which are guided by instincts. From this assessment one derives that the relation is “tentative”, or made via trials and errors, and then it orientates the specific modality of appearance of the anthropic process. The human being then emerges by comparing the different data deriving from repeated experiences, grouping them into “classes” and combining them according to mutual “correspondences”. In fact, through multiple exercises he progressively “inscribes” his brains, changing and empowering its networking capacity, achieving a consciousness of the relation between the behaviors and the obtained results, finally becoming a man.

Once he gets a very specific kind of awareness, he finally can use it to properly act with full responsibility, to conform the “indeterminate real” to a “determinate reality”.

The framework allowing this specific way of acting is called “type”. It then implicitly encompasses the ensemble of all the singular experiences, made through praxis and theory, translated into their conceptualization, which identifies a representation of the former. This is extracted from the real and then abstracted from it, constituting the base of the language, necessary to obtain a consensus among the different subjects belonging to the same community. This procedure defines the “common” upon which is grounded politics, from whom derives a shared logic, economics, ethics and esthetics (Marzot, 2014).

### **From culture to nature. The great projects**

Interestingly, the previously mentioned relation between the body and the environment is the foundation of Modern Anthropology as well. Not by change the “processual typology” shares with this discipline its “structural” principles. In fact, what remains mostly implicit within the experimental practice becomes explicit within the corresponding body of knowledge. In between the two, what literary comes into existence is the capacity to conceptualize the singular experience, to define a language to share the experience, to exert politics to take common decisions on different subjects (Searle, 2009). The man appears therefore as the history of the process of adaptation of the body to the environment into which he operates.

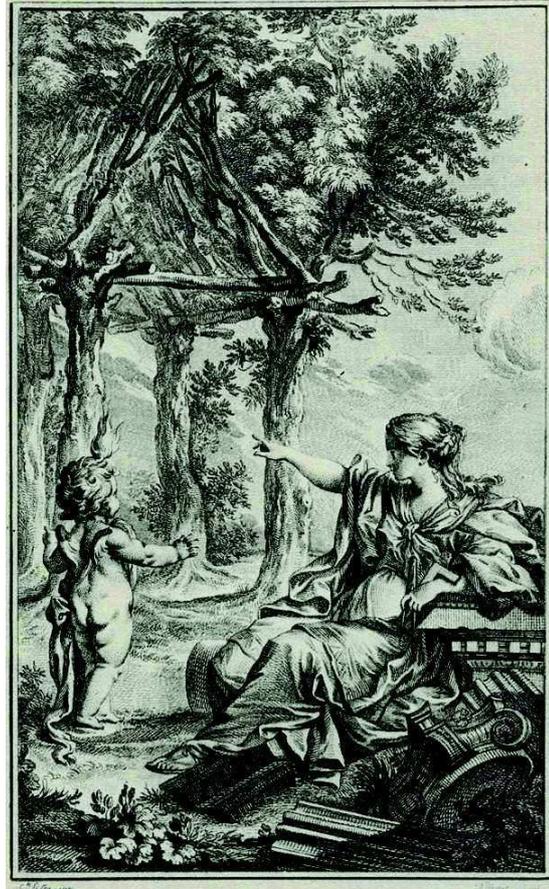
However, from Rousseau onward (Rousseau, 2004), the ambition of Modernity is to explicitly deprive the human being of any historical and conventional constrain. To demonstrate that the latter are nothing more than “incrustations”, unduly limiting the possibility of the former, the shared intention is to bring him to a newly rediscovered “state of nature”, where he can perform according to his unlimited capacities. Not surprisingly, the originating argument reformulates that used by the former Fathers of the Christianity to counter the domination of the Roman Empire, as the indictment of Paul elicited in the “Letter to the Romans” still reminds us (Paolo di Tarso, 2000).

In such a way, Modernity apparently

recognizes the grounding role of the relation between the body and the environment. However, the relation is brought to a paradoxical position. In fact, once the environment is reduced to the natural one, removing the cultural, the human being is unprecedentedly assumed as “centered” with respect to the nature, defined as his newly institutionalized unlimited horizon. The combination of these two arguments causes an anthropological “short circuit”. The human being is not anymore a goal, as previously warned by Kant in his Ethics (Kant, 1991), and later confirmed by Hegel in his Phenomenology of the Spirit (Hegel, 2000). On the contrary he is intended as a “given” prerequisite, whose Destiny is to reveal what was already “placed” at the beginning of the process- Rationality- as the principle upon which every phenomenon is implicitly grounded (Figure 3). Paradoxically, it seems that Modernity cannot afford to let the man loses himself anymore. Not having anymore the chance to experience the unlimited, relying on senses, being condemned to just think it, the above mentioned presumption is verified by men following the scientific method as main instrument of investigation, formulating hypotheses, inventing new models of interpretation, producing new techniques to apply them into the real, evaluating the results and temporarily assuming them as law, if confirmed by the newly constructed reality (Calvino, 1972).

Faith and Mathematics seem to develop the same prejudice. In fact, what the Christianity considers a Dogma instrumental to refund a society previously instituted on inequality, Modernity aims at transforming into its legitimating principle, making explicit its ambitions with an unprecedented Manifesto: “The Crisis as a Project” (Biraghi, 2013). Schopenhauer is the first to recognize it, defining the human being “official of the species” (Schopenhauer 2009), followed by Nietzsche (Nietzsche, 1972) who reevaluates the Dionysiac background of any conscious life.

The bourgeois society coherently institutionalizes the Plan as the dogmatic representation of the above mentioned implicit rationality, which provide a framework to



**Figure 3.**

(“Essais sur l’architecture”, Laugier’s book frontispiece, second edition, 1755. The allegory of Architecture. The picture has a twofold level of ambiguity to discuss. The former consists in what the definition of allegory implies. In fact its etymology ( the Greek terms  $\alpha\lambda\lambda\omicron\varsigma$  and  $\alpha\gamma\omicron\rho\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\omega$  ) refers to a discussion into public about that condition of “otherness” which precedes the definition of “publicness” itself. The latter refers to the iconographic and iconological perspective through which we look at the content of the representation, which implicitly questions the legitimacy of its rational meaning. The image describes a woman, Architecture, holding with her left hand a compass and a square ruler. She is sitting on a landscape of ruins, evidences of the architectural order, metaphor of its past conventional identity. She is pointing with the right hand the primitive hut, assumed as the natural goal towards which should be focusing the Genius, or the dynamic energy of any kind of regeneration process, metaphor of the Enlightenment’s search for creativity. The manifestation of the “daimon” is allegorically invited to reveal what was already “placed” at the beginning of the process, i.e. Rationality, as the principle upon which every phenomenon is implicitly grounded. Because of Modernity, the Project is replaced by the Destiny, and the human being is doomed to please it)

develop the human actions and conditions his way of behaving. The man's duty is then to operate within the newly established horizon, revealing its unlimited Bigness (Koolhaas, 1995) and absoluteness (Aureli, 2011). Therefore the architectural practice asymptotically aims at confirming the growth's prejudicial prevision of the Plan, inaugurating the unceasing season of *Le Grand Travaux*.

### **From nature to culture. The small practices**

The impossibility to fulfill the prevision of the Plan is established by the Plan's configuration and provision of soil. Its horizon cannot be achieved. Its identity is necessarily "out of scale": if not it would imply the human being's capacity to claim and control it, which is not acceptable at all, because this would lead to contradict the grounding principle institutionalized by Modernity itself, identifying the Rational with the Sacred to manage what is literary "out of reach" of the human being. The objective is systematically frustrated and inevitably leads all the mentioned hypotheses to be accumulated within a real and metaphorical "graveyard of the broken dreams". In fact being Modern, since the very beginning, implies not to be conditioned by precedents, to physically and psychologically remove the past (Marzot, 2013), especially the self-produced one.

Nevertheless any crisis generates debris. Modernity simply hides them or dedicates to them a new species of monuments, in the form of landfill. The life-cycle of the city is substituted by its linear progress. The recent crisis of Globalization is an explicit standstill to the idea of a never-ending expansion of control capacity, claimed by an all-encompassing Infrastructural Technique, over an ever increasing extension of earth, systematically transformed into soil, which is assumed as the product of the former rational transformation. A growing amount of "residuals", ranging from waiting soil provisions to vacant building, is therefore potentially offered as a second-hand land to re-colonize for the sake of the community, experiencing the new dramatic condition (Oswalt and Overmeyer and Misselwitz, 2013).

This seems to be an opportunity to carefully collect. However this implies to previously free it from that constrain system which is still embedded into the ground, marking the earth with invisible but still resisting and powerful limitations, institutionalized by the Plan (Schmitt, 1991). This seems to be the unique "war of civilization" worthy to be fought nowadays.

### **Conclusion**

The culture of the re-cycle is apparently meant to be the correct answer to the current crisis of the city and its architecture. However we should not simply consider that culture neither a new ideology, extending its legacy beyond the specific necessity resulting from the current situation, nor the sheer expression of an actualized *Zeitgeist*, limiting its role to face the main issues prompted by the crisis itself. On a broader perspective, the recycle fully challenges the modern way of living, dwelling and thinking, literary projecting ourselves towards a post-modern society.

Not by chance, over the last decade we have been discussing about the so-called "circular society" (Bonomi and Della Puppa and Masiero, 2016) as the necessity to get rid of the linear one, supported and promoted for at least a century by the modern economy of production. Notwithstanding it seems evident the necessity to ground the "coming into existence" of the emerging society on the critical transformation of the existing one, the ontological implication of the mentioned metabolic process are still vague and unclear.

Some outstanding precedents can highlight our gait. At least we have to mention Georg Simmel (Simmel, 2006) and Martin Heidegger (Heidegger, 2002). The sociologist argued about the necessity to get rid of the dichotomy between the nature and the landscape, considering the former as a state of indeterminacy and displacement from which the human being has to emancipate himself to survive within an evident unhomely condition, being aware of the fact that every definition and delimitation is doomed to come back to that originating "estrangement", because of the



Figure 4.

“Campo Marzio dell’Antica Roma”, 1762. Giovan Battista Piranesi pushes to its extreme an imagined process of dissolution of the Roman heritage, transforming the field into a congested “landscape of ruins”, into which coexist fragments resembling well known buildings with fictional ones, blurring into an “uncanny” atmosphere. Architecture, reduced to particles suspended into a limitless time, awaits for a possible claim In such a way, what was initially perceivable as a self-sufficient social reality, suddenly leaves room to a virtual condition potentially supporting new experimental approaches, progressively appearing in between the residue’s interstices.)

endless flow of birth and destruction of things. The philosopher heavily criticizes the modern interpretation of nature as a simple resource to exploit and the implicit reduction of its “being” to the instrumentality of its “entity”.

In both cases it is manifested the intention to

put into discussion the idea of a metaphysical truth which exists independently from the fluctuating relation between the human being and the environment into which he operates, and the necessity to define the Truth as the never-ending emergence from a condition of

latency, made possible by constantly evoking it through the mentioned relation. The recycle is literary what makes possible that emergence. As such, it is a circular process witnessing the “continuous discontinuity” between matter and material, subject and object, grounded on the necessity of the mutual implication. But the relation is doomed to change in accordance with the specific phase of the recycling process.

Regarding this aspect, the typological process is the expression of the recycle process in a morphological perspective. Not by chance, the typological process describes the never-ending transformation of an operative concept of “inhabiting” at the different scales, or levels of complexity. The crisis of this concept, which is distinguishing an historical epoch from the one that precedes and the one that may follow, expresses the crisis of an entire system of knowledge and the necessity of reestablishing it. The re-institution of the system is not the restoration of an existing one, but the creation of the new one. This is the deep significance of the so-called *Restauratio Urbis*.

Its coming into existence therefore requires an experimental phase using what already exists, and proceeding according to a tentative way, via trials and errors. The experimental phase is therefore assumed as the “uncanny” of architecture, since what emerges from the relation between the human being and its environment is to some extent familiar and estranger to him, belonging to the unconscious dimension of what has been removed by the crisis but progressively reemerged because of the desire to emancipate from the crisis itself. What has been removed by the crisis is nothing but the limits, in terms of values and functional requirements, deconstructed because of the decadence of the type concept.

To reestablish new limits then asks for a systematic reflection about what results from the experimental phase. This justifies why it is not possible to distinguish the praxis (what we do) from the theory (what we know about what we do): in fact by doing we stimulate our capacity to observe what we are doing, increasing the possibility of translating the practice into a new system of knowledge. The emerging data are then classified to be comparable, in order to discuss the different yield of the results. The

discussion is nothing more than the emergence of the political phase, reflecting the necessity to take decisions about the available solutions. Through the discussion it is literary enhanced the sense of the “common” as the possibility to emancipate from a singular experience of the relation between the body and the environment, entering into the collective one. But this phase requires a shift in perspective. A leap is needed from the expression of a relation to its representation.

The representation is therefore nothing but a project, establishing what is considered valuable among the members of the emerging community. This project is the type. What was previously experienced by singular subjects, and then conceptualized to be discussed among them, is ultimately translated into a Form. The power of the Form derives from the fact that, from that moment onward, any action within the community will be conformed to that Form and that form is then responsible of the activation of a social reality, embodying a new historical epoch. In such a way we witness the smooth transition from common responsibility to the individual one. While the former derives by representing the taken decision, the latter comes from its application. This is the deep sense of the so called *Storia Operante* (Muratori, 1959/60). By consciously applying the type concept, anyone becomes part of an instituted social reality of which he was a former instituting member by taking part to its discussion, based on the uniqueness of the singular experimentation.

The common requires the singular, but also imply a process of progressive delimitation of what is possible, for the sake of a societal living. Without this limitation we endlessly experiment possibilities not exceeding the singularity of the phenomenon. This is why phenomenology cannot explain the coming into existence of the type and consequently of the society. This requires an abstraction exercised on the uniqueness of the experience, however extracted from it, and both these aspects ask for rational decisions. Not by chance the logos, upon which the rational is based, is literary the “discourse about what manifests itself”. It requires a mediation. The mediator is the capacity to conceptualize, to keep a distance,

which means to translate an experience made through the real body into a metaphorical body of knowledge.

Since Plato onward, our system of knowledge was based on the refusal of the body, unduly considered a resistance to the possibility to achieve an objective knowledge about the world. He than was developing a system where concepts were substituted by ideas. While the former were subject to experience, being extracted and then abstracted from it, as we have demonstrated through the combination of phenomenological and rational arguments, the latter were grounded on metaphysical premises, deprived of any reference to existing limitation, considered prejudicial. To make it possible Plato was obliged to deconstruct the previously assessed way of thinking, doming it to is ultimate crisis (Platone, 2011).

Once again Urban Morphology already describes this process by explaining what happens to architecture at the conclusion of its life-cycle. It is progressively translated into a ruin, a brutal fact deprived of the Form it was carrying on to consciously represent a social-historical investiture, witnessed by the type. It substantially remains a logic deprived of its *raison d'être*, ultimately resulting into a mute ensemble. The collection of all the residues, deriving from the type's fall into crisis, whatever is its motivation, is endlessly enriched by all the experimented solutions literary "removed" at the end of the political discussion necessary to give birth to the type itself. The aforementioned collection assumes the configuration of a "collage" (Figure 4), suspended between a world which is not anymore and a not yet one, while its interstices allow for the "substance of hopeful things" (Persico, 1945). The recycle process implies that we accept the challenge of the whole procedure. Forgetting it would imply to betray its principles. In fact, the recycle claims for and endless change of phase of the architecture, grounding on it the possibility of the architecture existence and significance.

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