The regional and urban planning must be for citizens, otherwise it is useless

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Abstract
The modern urban planning, from Athens Charter onwards, has as its main function the improvement of living conditions of the inhabitants. The organization of the territory and cities are the space where this occurs. The choices of politics guide the transformations of both the territory and of the city. After about 35 years of policies based on so-called economic liberalization, which began with the advent of the Prime Minister Thatcher in Great Britain, the results are a growing economic and spatial disparities. The city should be the result, space, of the "civitas" shared by *cum-cives*. Governed by politics, that is, by the art of managing the polis – which, though maintaining an ideal, mythical charm – is however built by the citizens (Cacciari, 1991) with their many demands, passed from being "undifferentiated" to multiple individual requests, related to their culture and in the social world in which they live. With a phenomenological attitude, it should be noted that peripheral areas and historic centers have become, in most cases, poor quality places of life. Democracy is expression of the desires and needs of the inhabitants and the modern town planning has the task of representing these situations and the conflicts The paper explains this situation and proposes hypotheses of policies/tools of action. Considering that if planners and planners do not take position and will continue to accept that the market is to guide the spatial transformations, their role will become useless and the right revolts will be left in the hands of the various populisms.

1. Why this situation of the citizens?

Financial activities always more and more globalized and uncontrolled have resulted very heavy, socially and spatially, outcomes. This is the opposite of that required by the economist of Harvard (Boston) D. Rodrik (2011), namely "a smart globalization", and whose defects are highlighted by the researchers as Pikettì (2014); as well as by critics as the anthropologist, geographer, David Harvey, of which see the book (2012) *Il capitalismo contro il diritto alla città. Neoliberalismo, urbanizzazione, resistenze* (Capitalism against the right to the city. Neoliberalism, Urbanization, Resistances), umpteenth paper on the unjust current social and urban dynamics. Risk that already in *La Città virtuale. Trasformazioni urbane e nuove tecnologie dell'informazion*e (The Virtual City. Urban transformations and new information technologies, Aragona, 1993a) feared talking about the situation in the Netherlands, the USA, Japan and Italy.

The economic liberalization increasingly is becoming finance, finance that is ruling the urban transformations as Tocci recalls in 2009, that already in 1985 Pier Luigi Crosta anticipated in the text *The social production of the plan* (*La produzione sociale del piano*)[1]. These have manifested themselves in two main types of consequences for the territory and the city. The first concerns the social and identity aspects of the historic settlements. The dynamics of gentrification - a term created by the sociologist Ruth Glass in 1964 regarding London: it indicates the set of urbanistic and social-cultural changes of an urban area, traditionally popular or inhabited by the working class, resulting from the purchase and/or lease of real estate by wealthier population ("gentry"

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[1] Result of the homonymous international conference held in Bologna between planners, sociologists and economists in 1984 organized by P. L. Crosta.

originally referred to the English minor nobility then to the bourgeoisie) – have grown and have become common practice in the transformation of the most prestigious parts of the city. This process creates many Disneylands where the real soul of the place disappears and only the facade remains. Paradoxically, they become "not-places" similar to those described by Marc Augé in *Disneyland e altri non luoghi* (Disneyland and other not-places). Venice is its best-known example, but Moscow, Rome and other cities are following the same road. The consequence is to have less and less original residents and more luxurious second homes for foreigners or for high income groups. And perhaps it is not even necessary to mention the European Landscape Convention (2000) to highlight how this destroys the landscape: for Italy, the "Country of the 100 bell towers" this is a very serious damage.

The second consequence of the political / economic choices, said before, consists in the low urban quality of the outskirts of cities. Peripheries that grow not only for the reasons mentioned above but also for the choices that born at national and/or European level. An emblematic example is Urban Agenda, proposed by the EU, which urges the polarization on major urban centers but damages the rest of the territory, and also it aims to trigger, precisely, the gentrification mechanisms mentioned. Instead, to aim to a more equitable and sustainable structure of the territories the correct title should be Territorial Agenda.

In addition there are externalities that must be considered when proposing territorial and urban policies. That is, the growth of the centres after a threshold creates diseconomies in the services and transport sector, also various types of pollution grow.

Finally, if it is true that the city can become more productive who has benefits from this? The distribution of wealth in the city, but not only, more and more is showing a growing gap between the few who earn much and the many who earn little.

The social and political revolts of these years, in the towns and territories, are to testify all that, ie how these policies are wrong. And the urban planning, the land use planning, are social sciences as is the economy, which have confirms of the correctness of the choices only through a mode: the verification whether the targets have been achieved or not. Objectives that are to be measured in terms of (social) effectiveness: and the (technical) efficiency must be tool of the former.

Giovanni Gennari in *Semiologia della città* (*Semiology of the City*)in 1995 speaks of pedagogy of the city and Lynch suggested how to make it "readable". That means what sense the urban space could/had to have for its inhabitants, citizens or visitors were. Unfortunately, in he recent decdes this sharable view of the built urban space has been replaced by the logic of the "city user", that is, of the inhabitant as a "consumer" rather than a citizen. All this reveals, clearly, the city's fundamental passage from as Utopia (Platone, Thomas More), The City of the Sun (Campanella), The City Falansterio (Fourier) to the city as "output" of the industrial activity (Tafuri): before as production place, then more and more as a product (Harvey, 1993). It is not the city of Baudelaire's *flâneur* (after Benjamin), it has become the capital city of financial capital denying the right to the city itself (Harvey, 2012).

We need to build two paths, one refers to the medium and long period, the other is for the short. They must be consistent with each other, and integrated both for the issues that the times. However they must have the same gol: bettering the quality of life of the citizens and of local community.

While it is indispensable to propose truly different scenarios, so interpreting the term greek crisis, *κρίσις*, as an opportunity for change at the same time, it is necessary to change as much as possible "here" and "now" living conditions, improving urban quality. There is not more, at least under the formal appearance, the "prince" who decides how to get both the results. It is in the relationship between democratically elected institutions and the electorate – that is, in the

government of the territory – that has to be found answers to what rightly de Seta has identified since 1996 as crisis of urban civilization[2].

The changes of scenario must have some strongholds as starting points. Zero consumption of new soil, an element that must be explain/motivate to the citizens and to act on the existing to modify its various unsustainable aspects both materially (energy, water, etc.) and socially. In town planning essential is to stop certain options. First of all, stop the malls in the suburbs and stop the changes of destinations in the historic centers. Neighborhood stores, essentials for everyday life are crushed (dumping) by unfair competition from shopping malls. Town planning and urban management, in the "urban policies" – a term that needs to be relaunched and significantly – the Cities must load on these places the negative externalities that create environmentally and socially. They were born with the economic explanation of the "consumer benefit", i.e. the lower prices of the products, but have devastating at macro-territorial scale effects. They form an emblematic example of how politics – both national and local (this significantly "pusher" by what decided by the first)) – has left the step to the economy, microeconomics, without, or unwilling to have, the awareness of the various consequences of such choice. Situation that in other European countries such as France or Germany is not so "liberalized" in the expansion and location of such centres of commerce..

But citizens are aware of these situations by paying them with a further reduction in the quality of life. Although this happens in a contradictory way and often not informed and aware. The growing number of citizens, the elderly who have become the majority, realize that they have more and more difficulties to meet their daily needs[3].It is a similar situation occurring in the historic centres of the main cities that are subject to the disappearance of traditional shops, book store, etc. So not only many essential services are disappearing but also, as a matter of fact, the town is losing its soul.

The consequences of entrusting to the market in such a large and radical way the fate of the city are becoming so evident in these years since the triggered changes are of "macro" type. These effects were foreseeable: all this was well illustrated in 1984 by P.L. Crosta in text *La produzione sociale del piano* (The social production of the plan)[4]. During the same years, it was 1989, Peter Hall, on the journal of the Association of the American Planners, underlines how in that country there is a distance between the theory of planning and the "practice" of it: the latter driven by the real estate sector and indifferent to all values except the economic/financial ones[5]

So even a city like Rome, after defending its historic centre, gives way to processes of gentrification. Emblematic is the case of one of the oldest book shop in the centre, next to the ancient Campo dei Fiori and Navona Square, becomes a sports shoes shop. A similar story of the Rizzoli book shop of the early '900 in Manhattan, NY. It was forced to move from the original place to another location (Fig.1).

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[2] Because the many appeared, relevant, new elements, there has been in 2010 a second edition of the book *La città europea. Origini, sviluppo e crisi della civiltà urbana in età moderna e contemporane* (The European city. Origins, development and crises of urban civilization in modern and contemporary times).

[3] All this in a picture of elongation of life expectancy, but it strongly characterized by a drastic fall in birth rate and generalized impoverishment (ISTAT, 2017)

[4] In the "Introduction" of the same Crosta, in the contribute "Social Structure and Land Use" by Form, in *Urban Planning in America: A sociological analysis* written by Gans, there were drawn the future scenarios of Italy – on the experience of other countries such as the USA – if the territories and the towns were opened to the market and introduced instruments such as the so-called Complex programs or perhaps their wrong use.

[5] Useful other information can be found in the 1988 text *City of Tomorrow: An Intellectual History of Urban Planning and Development in the XXth Century lso by* P. Hall.

Figure 1 New York, The ancient site of the Rizzoli book shop (left) and the new one (right)
(Source, left, http://slapoesiaelospirito.wordpress.com20140418the-most-beautiful-bookstore-in-new-york, right http://living.corriere.it/tendenze/extra/gallery/libreria-rizzoli-new-york-50560226189/feed/?type=small&i=2)

2. Attempts for better territories and cities, despite the economy

In Italy gentrification processes have been starting to take place about the mid-1990s. Since 1975, for almost a decade in the major Italian cities, local governments, for the first time "of left", begin to worry about the very low urban quality level of periphery and of people living in terrible conditions, often without a real house, but only a "baracca"[6]: in 1984 in Rome 800,000 inhabitants, one third of its total population at that time, were in this situation. So how has the current critical situation been created?

Despite all this, despite this fundamental contradiction in building the city, there have been reformist attempts to ask *why*, *for whom* and *how* to design. So in line with mentioned about Gennari earlier, in the '90s, some town planning researchers togheter with local institution, as the City Municipalities in Rome, created the "Laboratori di Quartiere" (Laboratories of District), and the "Piano Regolatore delle bambine e dei bambini" (Regulatory Plans of the children), and also Offices and Departments dedicated to the Quality. The Social Regulatory Plan, a new instrument, creates the conditions for linking the needs of the territory also in the health and social care. (Aragona, 2003). Rodotà (1992) at the beginning of the same decade emphasizes the fundamental role of information and knowledge as the basic elements of contemporary freedom, i.e. of the democracy. Cacciari (1991) highlights the *Hegelian civis* ie ... *the person who wants and can implement the polis ... the bourgeois will represent that civis who refuses to operate the dialectical process ... a socius who does not want to enter societas ... but the civis can consciously produce polis , Educating himself to become 'homo politicus'* (p.33), that is the possibility of change can start from the political actor who is the "citizen", the civis that builds civitas ... *the together of cum-cives[7]*.

But all this requires coherence between participatory practices and political choices. The beginning of the 90s saw a great momentum, the desire to be involved in the choices was strong. The election of mayors by the center-left parties was the result of this push. So just as in the second half of the 1970s, as said before, left-wing parties have won the election in all the major Italian cities, and they did the governments in these towns, as institutional representation of the masses that were living there, but often withouth home and/or services. Local institutions began to give operational responses to satisfy what, was at that time, called the "demand" of housing, schools, hospitals, transport, public green. To confront with the degradation of the peripheral areas, are set up the Departments for the upgrading of the suburbs (Assessorati alla Riqualificazione delle periferie). More and more Plans of social housing, and of Convention Construction are being implemented but the dialogue between local administration and citizens becomes increasingly weak. However, it seems unimportant because these years are those of the affirmation, with an emblematic expression, of "Milan to drink," marked by social rampantism

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[6] A sort of slum.
[7] Unlike from the polites, citizen who derives from the polis, whose birth is mythical.

and great increase of finance's power. It seems that for everyone there is a chance to enrich themselves materially, it seems that by competing, individually, each one can make it, and society as social body loses consistency. After all Italy's economic boom had two main engines, building and private cars: not by chance roads and motorways are multiplying and railway transport was increasingly being overlooked.[8]

So hundreds of thousands of homes are built, but remain empty[9]. Building Companies, then, bet on larger and vast investments, for them, "integrated": malls emerge also in Italy and expanded[10]. Politics is not capable or does not want nor to limit the localization of the malls or to oblige them to comply with agreements like, for example, the realization of the connecting infrastructures, or the payment of the financial charges due to the local authority. In many cases, also the Housing Cooperatives not only lose their original operational mediation function between social demand and the fulfilment of this – in agreement with local institutions –- also devoting themselves to financial activities but, above all, they lose their credibility fails to comply with the clauses and agreements[11].

Despite all this, the urban population continues to hope. And so around the middle of the first decade of 2000, citizens give confidence to governments as expression of political forces inspired by social values and public good. Indeed, an even wider concept then the "public good" is growing: the "common good"[12]. Institutional campaign is being promoted in Rome to involve the population of the various municipalities[13] in the identification of areas and properties considered significant and for preserve and/or restore spatial and social quality to the territory. Each of them carries out a Charter of Values (Fig.2), then synthesized in a document extended to the whole city. To redevelop the marginal areas - urbanized countryside as Emanuel defined in 1990 this type of areas - very relevant in city as Rome that are very extensive, the administration makes a "public call" for the assignment of four abandoned agricultural areas to cooperatives of young citizens: many participate and after some months there is the first assignment.
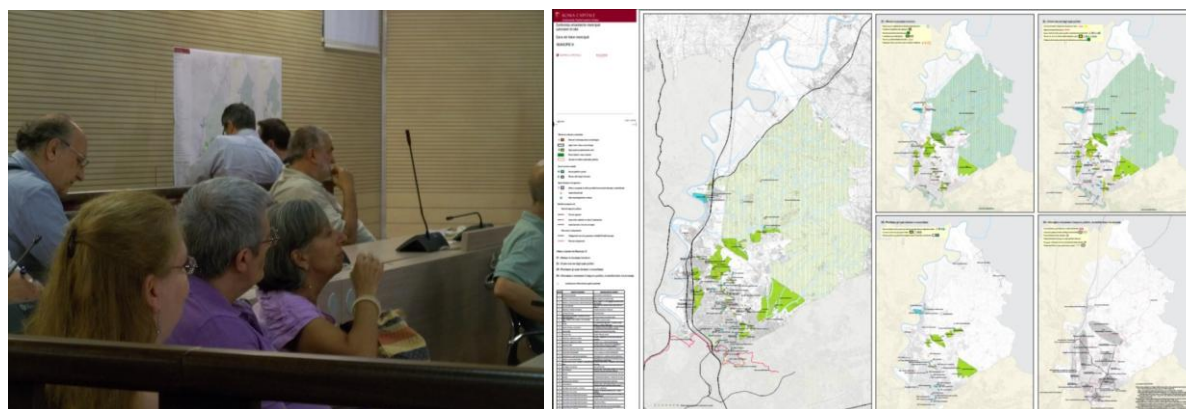

Figure 2 Rome, Municipio III, Works in progress (left) about The Chart of Values (right)
(Source: S. Aragona, left, Municipio III, right)

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[8] Until to arrive to the devastating "cut of the dry branches in the railways" with the Amato Government of 1992 that hit mainly the minor centers and the internal ones: a choice that had been evaluated negatively already in 1993 in the essay "Communication infrastructures, urban transformations and planning : Options of Territorial Models or Choices of Microeconomics? "Presented at the XIVth Conference of the Italian Association of Regional Sciences.

[9] The "Corriere della Sera" (2011), a newspaper of the middle class' thought, writes *"Rome, capital of the empty houses: 245,000 dwellings not used. 2011 Report by Legambiente, also another negative record, that of evictions carried out: 8,729 in 1 year"*

[10] Many large construction companies are in financial trouble, but often are also in the boards of the banks that finance their investments.

[11] So doing they create great difficulty to their members both as estate owners or renters.

[12] It is not casual that the option to maintain public water management won the referendum of 2011 in so large way.

[13] The town of Rome is composed by 15 "internal" Municipalities – cities with population going between the 131,000 inhabitants of the least populous (VIII, Appia Antica) and 307,000 of the most inhabited (VII, San Giovanni, Cinecittà) – and they are part of the larger metropolitan area called "Rome Capital"

In Turin, a city emblematic of a social vision of urban space, projects and projects for the upgrading of suburbs are many, but it is too late. While there is a well re-qualified the historical centre of a successful, well-managed city, the abandoned sites of the Olympic Games[14] and a big debt pose great problems and unresolved questions in the peripheral areas. In addition, the choices seem to be decentralized with respect to expectations that are no longer primarily about the "things" but about their management. Turin is a clear example of how a city can be competitive and attractive. But if most of the inhabitants does not see living conditions improved, it will not confirm its support to the local administration.

In Rome, after the election of 2013 a new local Govern was born, based on values giving priority to the public city. But in 2015, with an incomprehensible lack of respect for the popular vote which, above all in the suburbs, had expressed itself in the sense of change, the same Party of the Mayor makes him fall. This does not happen in a public debate in the City Council but through a normative gimmick of resignation of municipal councillors. So the Mayor has fallen without a real politic, democratic explanation, that can help the cum-cives to understand. Above all, this act goes against the "pedagogy of the city" mentioned above. It is an emblematic, negative example of how to discourage citizen participation and cooperation from the elect. Note that in many of the Municipalities of Rome, for the first time of the same political positions, a number of participatory processes and involvement of citizens were on going. This aspect is not secondary because participation and collaboration are also closely related to territorial and demographic dimensions, and the Municipality is the most suitable "meeting place".

Administrative continuity is particularly important for dealing with manifold issues, of which the environmental is one of the most important. A question that needs multi-scale and participatory co-operation. Local authority (Metropolitan City and/or Municipalities/Districts), Province (or large area), Region together with the people of the territories must find a shared path. In the present case there was a further great opportunity due to the fact that all the said Institutions, not only the ones of Rome, were of the same political location, an event that had never happened before.

This close relationship between citizen and institution is indispensable since there is no longer an undifferentiated "demand", but "consumption lumps" that is temporarily aggregated (CENSIS, 1993). The great technological possibilities have increased this individualization of demands. And all this with a systemic element of great importance linked to the mobility of work that is attacking, destroying, the relationship between this and the housing, the basis of the settlements models of the modern town planning..

Positive examples that a different path is possible even at the operating level come from the PRU, Program for the Urban Re-qualification. Giustino Imperatore in Rome. Here the City Council, together with the City Hall, managed to make a necessary replacement of ERP (Public social housing) buildings. After a first controversial phase, thanks to an intensive and fruitful dialogue with residents, the project was realized by building new safe and energy-efficient homes. The commitment of the population was very significant also in "abitarECOstruire" – living and building in an Ecological way – Design Contest promoted in 2008 by ANCAb (Association of inhabitants of the League of Cooperative) together with Legambiente (one of the most relevant Italian Environmental Association) in three Italian Municipalities, Pesaro, Foligno (PG) and Tricase (LE). All had have to be carried out according to the criteria of the ERP, in the latter Town between the various moments of preparation and formation of the population it was very important to underline the seminars held under the name of the CURA "... *i.e. a multiple meaning of maintenance, affection to the place and hospitality*" (Comune of Tricase, 2007: p.1),organized with various departments: the social, the town planning, the education, public works (Fig.3). The whole process had to be referred to a PIRP (Integrated Restructuring Program for Peripherals) tool created by the Region of Puglia dedicated to the quality of peripheral areas.

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[14] Topics that postpone to the debate on utility for the population of the big events.

Figure 3 Tricase (LE), Citizen Participation (right bottom) in Preliminary Choices for Requirements of the abitarECOstruire Design Contest

Source: Project of the group Aragona, Scatena et al.

To improve and revitalize a peripheral degraded area in north east Roma, Tor Bella Monaca, a group of town planner and landscape designers made a proposal. It was based on the valorisation of the local natural and cultural resources after having discussed, made interviews and questionnaires, with people of the place (Fig.4).

Simulation at Tor Bella Monaca Street, illustrated at the Biennial of Public Space 2015, shows that if citizens are involved, even in socially or spatially problematic areas, unexpected and

positive responses emerge, very different from common places often given by press organs or other subjects. The title of the project was *L'infra/struttura verde e paesaggi identitari: la sperimentazione a via di Tor Bella Monaca* ("Inter/Green Structure and Identity of Landscapes: the experimentation of Tor Bella Monaca") (Fig.5).

It also shows that even in the areas made by the "real estate speculation" (legal or not) it is possible to think a different scenario having the wellbeing of the citizen as objective and not the competitiveness between areas or people.
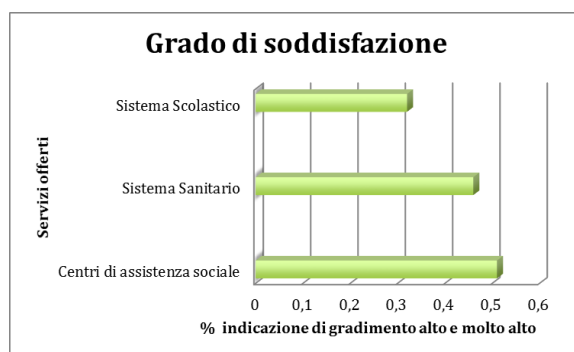

Figure 4 Rome, Tor Bella Monaca Experimentation, Satisfaction level by the questionnaires to the local population
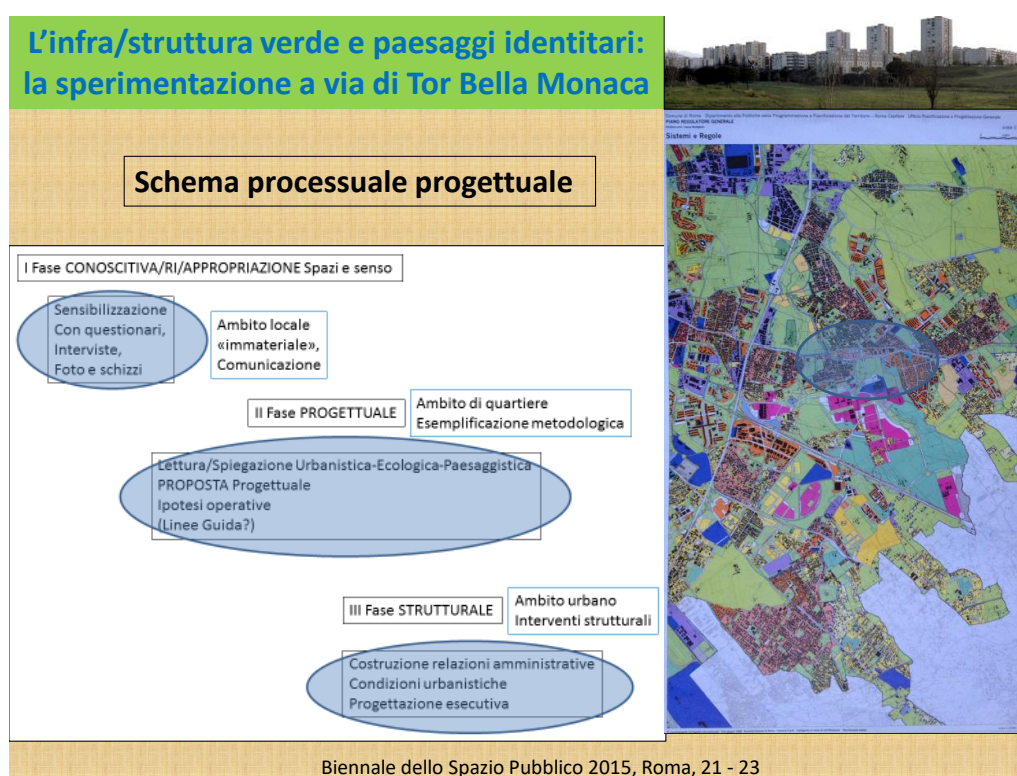Source: Tullio M. C,, Aragona et al..

Figure 5 Rome, Tor Bella Monaca Experimentation, Design scheme of the project *L'infra/struttura verde e paesaggi identitari: la sperimentazione a via di Tor Bella Monaca*
Source: Tullio M. C, Aragona et al..

All this means that towns are first of all place of life. They must seen in a broader view. The overall vision of the territory and city proposed since years consists in an eco integrated approach of the town planning[15].The basic elements of it have been among the cornerstones of the

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[15] It is the topic and the approach of the Organized Session, by S. Aragona, since 2011 at the annual Scientific Conference of the Italian Regional Association (AISRe). Ideas promoted by Doxiadis in the '50s creating the thought line of Eckisticks and McHarg with "Design with Nature" in 1969.

Opening report of the President INU - National Institute of Urban Planning - Silvia Viviani, at the XXIX INU Congress of Cagliari 2016 dedicated to a Country Project *(Progetto di Paese).*

3 Some conclusive suggestions for planning
After such a long period, the results are disruptive, the policy choices – actually the financialisation of everything – have created more and more economic and social inequality pushing the loss of meaning and identity of places. Neglect all this leads towards situations of which the Brexit is clear example, a signal: the outern territories and peripheral areas of the city are in revolt against policies that enrich few and impoverished more and more inhabitants.

The need of multi-scalarity in the choices, and of responsibilities, it is now evident. Urbanists and planners have to provide answers, articulated, operational and scenarios as not to leave the protest to populism against these social and space transformations.

As before said, we are in a passing period. The crisis of industrial society and its ways of formation, essentially based on the expansion, and the search of other social and formal structures. It should also be emphasized that, with a historical view of the transformations, and above all that these changes with the passage of time, with its stratification, can modify their significance. As illustrated, in these decades, new tools have been created to try to catch social changes and their relation with the space. However, we have a great opportunity to address differently the paths of the choices. As in the early 1970s, it was said in the opening, political choice has been in the sense of liberalization, now public action and town planning can make a "U" turn and, both, resume the guide of the transformation.[16].

Recalling the two moments and returning to the short/medium term, today is too early to give opinions on the recent projects and funding for the peripheries. If it is a real structural modification in making or transforming the city, or just a remedy for the many unresolved questions of urbanity demanded by the majority of the population, and therefore of voters who live in them. Ultimately, it should really re-establish the path that in 1980 the Dioguardi, a Bari construction company, inaugurated with the Citizens Participatory Laboratories in its projects. Essential is the information and dialogue with the citizens, an even more "reflective" town planner (Schön, 1993) who goes in each context.

It is fundamental that politics take on the responsibility of choosing: the ancient book shop Croce in the historic centre of Rome, in the second half of the 70s was defended, like so many other emblematic places of the past and culture of the city, thanks to some municipal deliberations, but not in the recent years, so it disappeared. It would be enough, for those who deal with the territory and its transformations, be driven by ethics as Settis recalled in 2014.

All said before is right, but when the social situation is characterized by organized crime that controls the territory, even have also participation and collaboration is particularly difficult to realize. This is again more difficult when together with this condition the cities are small and have a non-flourishing economy, as the case of many South Italy areas[17] and in particular of Calabria.

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[16] As Valeria Erba has underlined already in 1988 town planning and politics have economic effectiveness.

[17] From the Unity onwards, as phenomena such as emigration were not present and the level of industrial and technological development was no longer backward then other Italian and European States.

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