



9. Parc aux Angéliques © Guillaume Leuregans_31st May 2012.

10. Parc aux Angéliques © MDP_18th November 2018.

major landscape projects»¹. We have experienced this in France, in Europe, in the United States, and elsewhere in the world.

The “intermediate landscape of the northern edge” is one of the most structuring elements of the Paris-Saclay campus that we have been developing since 2009 in the south of Greater Paris. This emblematic project is a real laboratory for tackling these issues of spatial transition, which arise in a multitude of other contexts.

The development of this city-campus does not bring the new neighborhoods into direct contact with the agricultural areas of the *plateau*. A

vast intermediate space, comparable in size to the future built-up areas, is implemented over a length of approximately 7 kilometers. The fringe of the urban campus is no longer a simple line, a demarcation limit materializing the stabilization of the urban front facing the protected agricultural landscape. On the campus side, it gets thicker, richer, until it becomes the place where the reconciliation of two worlds that have been opposed for a long time can be realized: the city and the countryside. It is an urbanistic choice in favor of the invention of a new kind of public space.

This border is a composite landscape, a set of contiguous spatial entities, of different sizes, typologies, functions, and management modes. It is home to shared ecological services (wetlands, biodiversity management), technical and sports facilities, recreational spaces, gardens, orchards, meadows, nurseries, agricultural activities (market gardening) and land dedicated to agronomic research.

How can this transitional landscape be designed, which must be able to combine a wide variety of functions? How can we organize its development, management, and development, which are necessarily distributed among multiple actors and based on a variety of logics and economic models? These questions are among the most fascinating of the development project.

We realized that the “urban agriculture” model was not the only possible means. The combination of ecology and engineering is also proving to be very effective in the constitution of this intermediate landscape. There is indeed an economy linked to ecological engineering at the service of the city: management of water, soils, waste, implementation of compensatory ecological measures caused by the realization of new districts. A landscape can give physical coherence to these necessities. Only this double stake allows the realization of a public space that neither the campus, nor the agriculture would have authorized, nor financed.

Landscapes that Move

Mariavaleria Mininni

1. *Transition, an ecological concept*

The word *transizione* derives from the concept of transit, crossing. Transition refers to history and to human and social evolution, to the periods when new social forms were developed, along with new conceptions and cultural productions. Transition is also the spiritual restlessness that characterizes the phases of passage, where created are temporary forms of life, with a limited duration, that can also remain temporary, never consolidating. At times transition is the alteration of a condition of balance, in search of stability, or sudden modulation, which in music occurs between distant tonalities with no intermediate passages.

Hence, transition is a term that over time has taken on multiple semantic meanings, each one with its own scientific base, referring to influential metaphysics, accompanied by etyma that clarified the different meanings they assumed each time.

The word transition pertains to ecology because this discipline is based on the concept of change. It presupposes the study of the dynamism of the processes of living communities and the consequent adaptation of their living environment to new conditions. The interaction between biocenosis and biotope is what underlies the study of the structure, of the functions, and of the change in ecosystems, with all of the processes that are derived from this. The passage from one system to another never take place in a clear way because landscapes are shaped by taking on a sloping pattern, the ones where the processes of exchange are spatialized and produce margins. These margins are, in turn, ecosystems that remain in a continuous dimension of tension, located at the confluence of bordering ecosystems, of which they preserve some structures, but also produce their own. Borders, margins, ecotones are just some of the forms that derive from a permanent state of transition, and they are the most productive ambients in the world, where production is biodiversity, information, and specialization. They are the foci, estuaries, lagoons, clearings, an epiphany of interactions between time and space. Lagoons are the most productive habitats on the planet, with a balance that is always precarious and hence with

low resilience. Nevertheless, they are the ones were pearls are cultivated.

Today the term *ecological transition* has been adopted to indicate the need to leave many of the conceptions on which the previous ideas of development were based, in order to transit from one paradigm to another, in the hope of changing the ways of doing and thinking in the future.

How can urban discourse assume transition as disciplinary theoretical wedge to serve as an objective of its action? How can transition become the device of the project for the contemporary cities and territories?

The history of the transformation of territories via a privileged observatory like the landscape project can help us to read what was done in the past in terms of ecological transition, acting on space, on people, and on the patrimonialization of the forms of the relationship between man, nature, and culture seen in their symbolic representation.

2. *The ecological transition for urban planning*

Throughout its course urban planning has always pursued aims addressed to the promotion of a more elevated collective well-being, and greater social equality. Urban planning has been given the task of producing welfare policies with a distinctive trait intervening not on the production of revenue or the economic support of the person, but on the rebalancing of social conditions and contexts of life, providing houses and services that could improve the life of the more vulnerable social classes, building important low-income housing, schools, hospitals, etc., which can be distinguished in the urban fabric, because the idea was to give visibility to the role of public action in the city.

This situation slowly weakened over the years, losing that utopian and reformist nature of the discipline in the early years after the war, when the first urban planning regulations were being tried out. These were to guide Italian cities during the great reconstruction¹ so that the form of the city

1. Michel Desvigne, “New territories for public space”, in Françoise Fromont, ed., *Transforming landscapes, Michel Desvigne Paysagiste* (Basel: Birkhäuser, 2020), 108-109.

1. P. Di Biagi, (ed.), *La grande ricostruzione Il piano Ina-Casa e l'Italia degli anni cinquanta* (Rome: Donzelli).



1, 2. Ph. Michele Cera. Andria (BA).



could express the effort requested in the process of the country's modernization. The urban space was supposed to reveal the civil values with which the government participated in the improvement of the space and the conditions of people's lives. This loss of tension was prolonged in time, slowly, misaligning the demands of the answers that the city provided, eventually encouraging Neoliberalist attitudes that lead to the concentration of riches to the benefit of the stronger social groups and territories, widening instead of reducing the dif-

ferences.² There was no arrest of the spread of houses and unjustified land consumption along with other vital resources, of the loss of balance in the distribution of services and infrastructures, resulting in a more accentuated polarization between cities and the outskirts, of the accentuation of social inequalities, of the increased frequency

2. A. Coppola, M. Del Fabbro, A. Lanzani, G. Pessina, F. Zanfi, (eds.), *Ricomporre i divari. Politiche e progetti territoriali contro le disuguaglianze e per la transizione ecologica* (Bologna: Mulino).



3. Ph. Michele Cera. Molfetta (BA).

of environmental disasters due to climate change that found territories that were unprepared, devoid of maintenance or risk prevention.

The weakening of the institute of the plan and the absence of innovative forms of spatial planning could today be the opportunity for urban planning to assume the challenge of the no longer deferrable ecological transition and resume its original mission. It could thus become a factor in the orientation of practices aimed at pursuing greater socio-spatial balance, assuming the urban project as a new system used to regulate mechanisms of production and exchange, for the protection of the environment and the valorization of old and new processes of the patrimonialization of the material and cultural values of the territories and the landscape, singling out the physical space as an arena of confrontation between the various agents of the transformation.

The story of several experiences including territorial and landscape plans in which the ability of the landscape project to be a project of transition was experimented with can help us to read how urban planning has already worked inside the notion of landscape acting on the forms of space, on the quality of the life of people, identifying in the proj-

ect the manner to interpret the new processes of patrimonialization, the relationship between man, nature, and culture, and the symbolic representation of this relationship.

3. The transition for the urban project of the landscape. Action tests

The study of changes in settlement environments, of transformations in space and the territory, of political and economic process, as well as of the rhetorical forms within which transformation moves are aspects that underlie the construction of the reconnaissance picture of any process of spatial planning. There is a real knowledge that is produced for the purposes of the plan, which takes on a prefigurative character of the strategies and actions that the planning tool will want to adopt. Knowledge that foreshadows the choices that one will go and get, an implicit project that will slowly surface from the analyses pertinent to the themes that the project will take into account. The quality of the plans is mostly contained in the way in which the reading and interpretation of the processes under way were conducted. The reference to the comparison between analysis and project and that of the case history and treatment of the person who is ill may be banal but it is always effective.

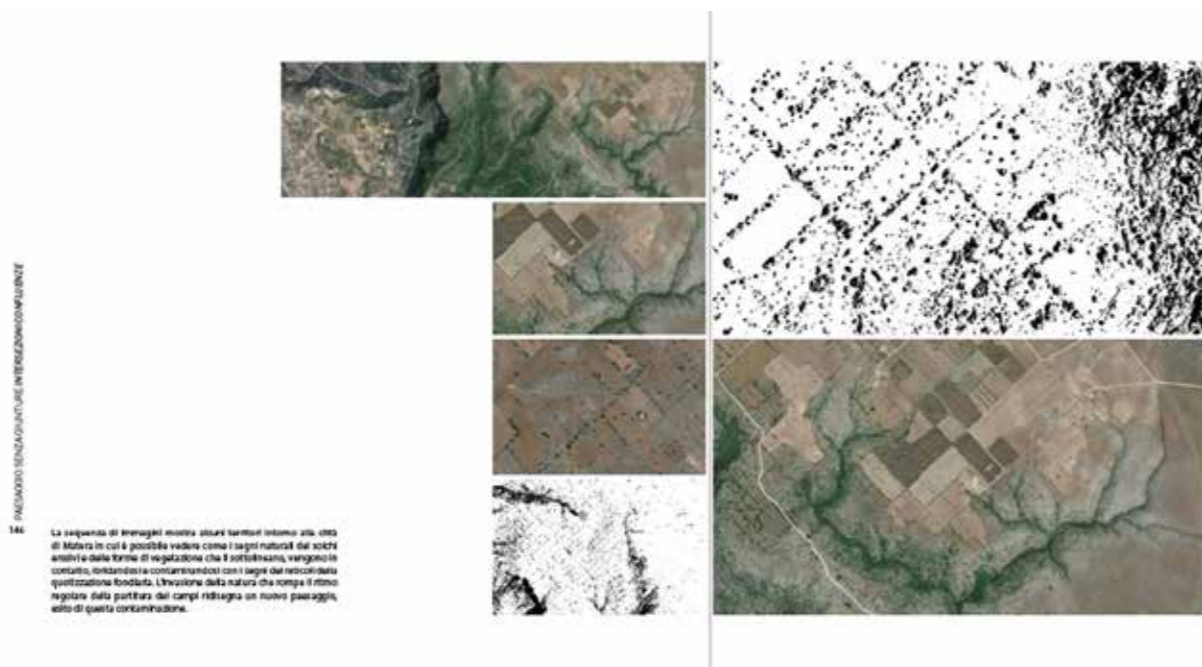
Some of these experiences, in which we have had the chance to participate, will have the task of illustrating the extent to which the ecological transition had already been a goal situated in the way of working in urban planning.

In the late 1990s, during a particularly fruitful moment in the experimentation of new planning instruments for the action tests,³ implemented by the negotiating opening and the territorial vision of the production of plans, the Territorial Coordination Plan Ptcp for the Province of Lecce was drafted, entrusted to Paola Viganò with the scientific consulting of Bernardo Secchi, along with a conspicuous group of specialized consultants.⁴

The plan envisioned for the territories of Salento Meridionale a *finibusterrae* without infrastructures, roads, airports, water systems, with parcelled and not particularly productive agriculture in vast areas of the territory, with multicentric urban **structures** to which were added all the figures of the habitational dispersion of European territo-

3. P. C. Palermo, (ed.) (2002), *Prove di innovazione della pianificazione strategica in Italia* (Milan: Franco Angeli).

4. Cf. P. Viganò (ed.), *Finibusterrae. Territori di una nuova modernità* (Milan: Electa).



ries, merging between towns, coastline densities, market roads, etc., which had risen up without suitable planning and not particularly infrastructured. At the same time in this territory there was a glimpse of the signs of a new modernity, which was worth analyzing in a reflexive manner, abandoning the precedent cognitive frames. The population practiced a form of dual residentiality, living everywhere, showing contemporary practices of expanded use of the territory, but expressed in a broken down manner, without other structuring except for that of the agricultural pattern and the **accessibility between farms**. The olive groves for as far as the eye can see were not much appreciated for oil production as compared with the ones in the northern Bari area, but their powerful trees, their trunks, and their monumental leaves made them fully-fledged forests. The small railway to the south-east, albeit slow and not connected to the national network, represented with its stations akin to Liberty-style villas, and with a route that traveled the backroads of the territory, a veritable train in the park, a narrative itinerary that crossed a land of many paradoxes, where it was pleasant to live, work, and have fun all the same. *Piccolo miracolo economico* (Small economic miracle)⁵ is how the dawning of a district form of production around towns where contextual knowledge and innovation produced wealth and labor was described. In this territory, the peninsula of a peninsula immersed in the Mediterranean, the wide-

5. C. Bianchetti (2001) "Piccolo miracolo economico nel Salento," in P. Viganò (ed.), *Finibusterrae*, op.cit.

spread nature⁶ thriving alongside the agriculture, with multiple high-biodiversity ambients, completed a picture of apparent scarcity of woods and vegetation. But the truth is that the natural forms were latent during the long periods of drought, *ephemeral meadows*, as they are defined scientifically, but ready to flourish again at every autumnal or spring rain, inundating with volatile colors and oils everything around it. This analysis triggered the proposal to imagine the Salento as a large park, not to turn it into a large protected area, but as a territory inside which any proposal must be situated in a project-related scenario with an ecological and environmental basis.

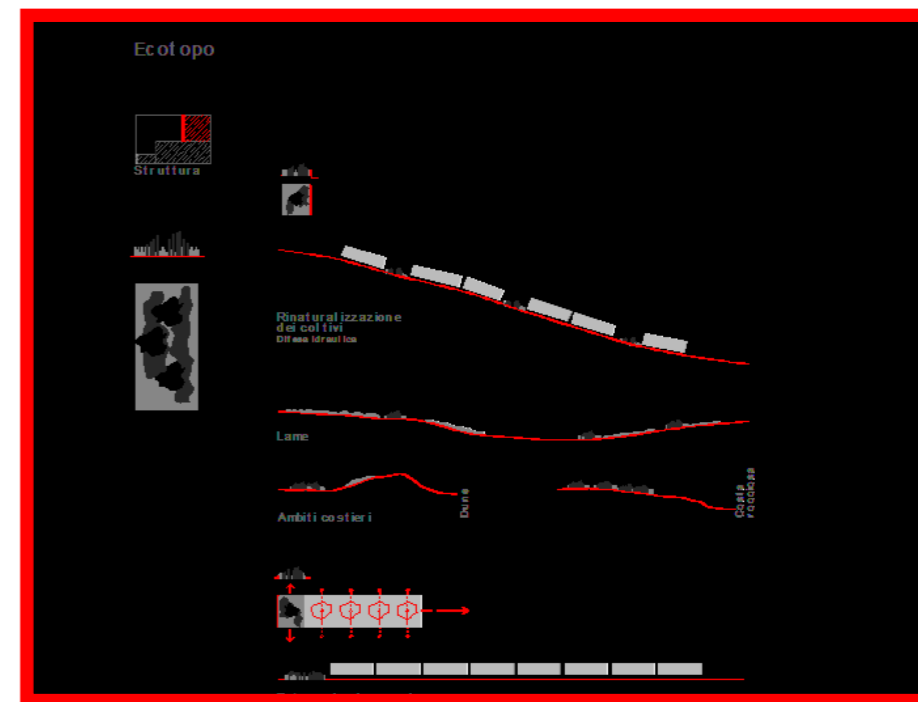
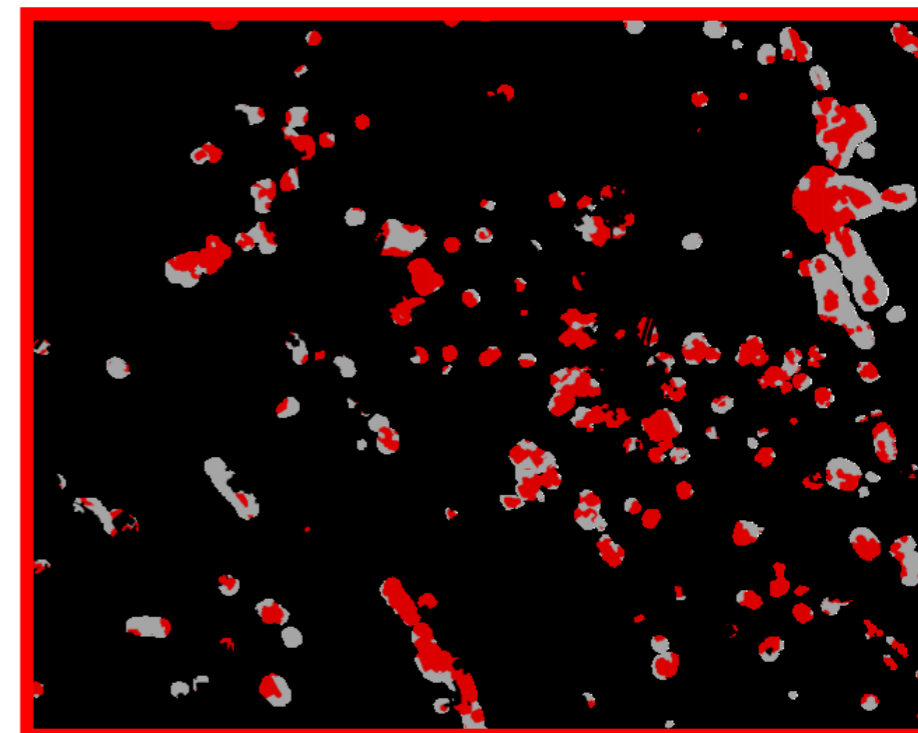
The second example concerns the construction of the scenario of the future of the landscapes of Puglia called *Patto Città.Campagna* (City-Countryside Pact) produced within the scope of the instruments honed by the regional territorial landscape plan PPTR Puglia. This instrument of the plan has tried to hone an active process of safeguards intervening with measures of accompaniment in the planning of peri-urban territories by proposing some planning strategies between the city and the countryside, placing them within a vision of agro-urban policies. The peri-urban is an authorless territory, the point of encounter between the marginality of the countryside that approaches the city meeting its peripheral parts. It is situated in those terrains burdened by destinations of use of the land that require volumes of ex-

6. M. Mininni, (2001) "Il progetto della naturalità diffusa," in P. Viganò (ed.), *Finibusterrae*, op.cit.

4. Scenario della naturalità da Mininni M. Il progetto della naturalità diffusa in P. Viganò (a cura di) *Finibusterrae. Territori della nuova naturalità*. Electa, 2001

5. Abachi della diffusione della naturalità. Sezione dell'ecotopo da Mininni M. Il progetto della naturalità diffusa in P. Viganò (a cura di) *Finibusterrae. Territori della nuova naturalità*. Electa, 2001

6. Dissoluzione della trama della riforma agraria: a mesh grid a landform in Mininni M *Matera Lucania 2017. Laboratorio di città paesaggio* Quodlibet 2017



pansion albeit without habitational requirements. The peri-urban takes the form of a peri-urban agricultural belt, a territory to be reattributed to agriculture and to the rural subjects that will take care of it; an agro-urban space to be implemented within agreements between the measures of the rural development plan and policies and the projects for urban regeneration to interpret creatively the potential for intersection and exchange between common materials, urban agriculture, urban forests, self-run suburban gardens, educational farms, etc.

The Landscape plan had the task of promoting landscape actions to face the multiple scales of the project, assuming local visions and those at an intermediate scale, dictated by the form of peri-urbanity to be attributed to the project, with its own components: dispersion, urban fringes, agricultural areas interstitial to the building, decentralized nuclei, figures of the contemporary territoriality furrowed by the major infrastructures that act on the land, each with its own goals. The challenge was to call attention to those territories produced by the overlapping of sectorial levels,

without coordination, a task that was assumed by the landscape plan, without further weighing on the other plans, but coordinating them by gathering the many demands for the landscape expressed by the territory, to be implemented inside the existing instrumentation, drawing from the financial sources of the economic programming for its realization.

The peri-urban was thus a trade zone between city and countryside, between agricultural and urban policies that never conversed, and yet are both implicated in this territory, a frontier land that does not aspire to definitively being located on the city or the country side, but wishes to remain a territory in tension, in which to experiment with many goals starting from that which the population with its practices already does.

On a par with ecotones, it is a territory whose plan is located in the very midst of a hypothesis of territoriality of the ecological transition, whose architectures are yet to be written, discovered, and readapted.

4. *The 17th International Architecture Exhibition in Venice*

The most recent Architecture Biennale in Venice could not overlook the great debate raised by the consequences of the epidemiological crisis on the forms of space seen at every scale, from the house to the city, from territories to mental space, looking at the spatiotemporal dimension from within a profile of crisis. The architects were asked to take up a political stance with their own work, reinventing the habitable space, re-examining the spatial contract of "How will we live together?" in light of a new modality of cohabitation between human beings and non-humans, taking on the responsibility of solving the problem of the inequality and the polarizations that have in recent years witnessed the accentuation in the geographies of global space of the following: populations of political migrants without a country, families struck by climate disasters, a land deformed by environmental destruction.⁷

Among the many other proposals present the Israeli Pavilion was particularly interesting: the exhibition was titled *Land Milk Honey Animal Stories* and its contents were highly provocative. It examined the relations between humans and animals within the Israeli context. The protagonists of the exhibition were animals both wild and domestic.

7. Biennale di Architettura 2021 Venezia Catalogo della mostra

The setting was the so-called *Land of Milk and Honey*, the region between the Jordan River in the Mediterranean Sea – for many a Holy and Promised Land – the highly contested territory between Israel and Palestine. The expression "Land of Milk and Honey," which has been in use for thousands of years to describe this area, first appeared in the Old Testament and became a common metaphor to indicate abundance and prosperity. Nonetheless, there was a great difference between the way people imagined and experienced their arrival.

When Palestine was colonized by the British in 1917, and even more consistently after the State of Israel was created in 1948, work to transform the local landscape was begun to better adapt it to the European ideals of abundance. In just a few decades the territory underwent environmental changes on a vast scale following initiatives of an agronomic, engineering, architectural, and legislative nature. The land of milk and honey was transformed from a religious promise into a plan of action: fresh water wells were drilled, the irrigation canal was opened, the swamps were reclaimed and converted into fields for farming. Whole areas were submitted to intensive processes of forestation and the bodies of animals were transformed into machines for food production.

Urbanization, infrastructures, mechanized agriculture remodeled the environment. The successful transformation of the region into fertile farming land took place at the cost of huge damage to the local fauna and flora as well as the destruction of entire habitats.

Based on five case studies, cows, goats, bats, water buffaloes, this story is reconstructed while focusing on the spatial transformations of a context crossed by the evolution of the relationship between humans and the environment, synthesizing the process in five acts: the mechanization of the territory, cohabitation, extinction, post-human. The transition is told through the zoocentric analysis of a land that is radically transformed by the power of ideology, religion, and technology.

5. *Landscape and sustainability*

It is hard to take stock after dealing with such an open theme. We can only say that the perspectives for work in the future will, first and foremost, have to start from the promotion of social capacities that can allow urban planning the opening up of an important field of comparison with urban design, architecture, and social policies. That is to say, observing a perspective that takes place

within the attempt to give back a role to the population and to the direct effects on the forms of use of the territory, embracing an approach that is both radical and realistic, which involves the social, institutional, and cultural dimension with respect for a fair distribution of the costs of this transformation. The dimension of the territory in this process is essential: territory as living support, a space for differences that facilitates the process of the the capacitation of human capital.

The pandemic crisis has shown that there are no territories that are not affected and that only within a cohesive social dimension with shared processes can transition truly occur, resorting to the help of technological innovation and involving a socio-ecological vision. The transformation above all requires a change in life models, but it also guarantees the intensity of work capable of creating new enterprises, professional profiles that affirm a new relationship between work, society, and care for the territory.

The transition, therefore, will have to be like a process of decidedly high semantic intensity, involving technical and humanistic knowledge that by now cannot be distinguished from the field of emerging planning that interweaves anthropo-ethnographic and technical-practical problems with the scientific and high-technology issues of the network.

The urban project of the ecological transition actually confirms the extent to which the notion of landscape is a wide and complex conceptual wedge that takes in the vision of the environment,

just as the vision of the landscape cannot help but be sustainable.⁸ The landscape is the palimpsest of the territory that has always guided transformations in time, in turn transformed by impressing symbolic signs and values, incorporating them in the forms at times following aesthetic intentionality. Environmental sustainability is also the social, symbolic, sensible, and identity-oriented one for which the environmental resources impressed by human action take on patrimonial meanings and value in the sense of landscape common goods. Recognition of the landscape for the ways it is perceived by the population authorizes its subjective evaluation as a prerogative of those who inhabit it and of those who transform it knowingly via the project and landscape policies. We have always carried out ecological transition. It is the visible form of human action upon the territory over time. Today, the means of the past must be given other values, radically changing perspective, practicing the approach to other natures, trying to "move beyond ourselves." Try to construct a parliament of living beings so that everyone can speak.

To do so urban planning must go back to its reformist mission, placing it within a type of radicalism that will make its growth inclusive, using the imagination, as well as one's determination, to explore the intersection between innovation and social inclusion within a sustainable future for all. Reformism that recalls radicalness that can no longer be delayed.

8. M. Mininni (2021) "Paesaggio e sostenibilità," in N. Martinelli, M. Mininni (eds.), *Città, sostenibilità, resilienza. L'Urbanistica italiana di fronte all'Agenda 2030* (Rome: Donzelli).