edited by
Francesco Casalbordino, Fabiola Cristalli, Francesca Di Fusco, Elvira De Felice,
Maria Fierro, Mario Galterisi, Sara Riccardi, Giovanna Spinelli

RIVELAZIONI

Confinamenti →therightSpace← 05

Research Tools and Methods for Exploring the Denied and Invisible Spaces of Contemporary Society

Book of abstracts of Rivelazioni International Conference

CRATÈRA

Confinamenti –>therightSpace<– 05

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RIVELAZIONI

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Book of abstracts of
Rivelazioni International Conference
-
University of Naples Federico II
Department of Architecture
October 9-10th 2025

CRATÈRA

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Rivelazioni.
Abstracts from the International Conference

Francesco Casalbordino, Fabiola Cristalli, Elvira De Felice, Francesca Di Fusco, Maria Fierro, Mario Galterisi, Sara Riccardi, Giovanna Spinelli

In recent years, interest in invisible, denied, marginalized spaces, removed from representation and citizenship, has intensified in various fields. Architecture, urban planning, sociology, law, geography, art, postcolonial and environmental studies have progressively turned their attention to the material and symbolic devices that produce confinement, exclusion, and invisibility, questioning how such spaces can be recognized, understood, and transformed.

The RIVELAZIONI conference is part of the research project "RiSP – Right to Space, Space of Rights. Design Actions to Rethink Prisons," funded by the University of Naples Federico II, between 2022 and 2025. The research explored the relationship between spatial justice and architectural design, with a particular focus on detention spaces. From this focused field of action, RIVELAZIONI opens new explorations and new research horizons to be unveiled, in the knowledge that prison represents both a significant reality and a broader reflection of the contradictions of contemporary society. The conference thus arises from this critical tension and the desire to initiate an interdisciplinary dialogue on methods, tools, and languages capable of restoring form and visibility to the denied and invisible places of contemporary life. This volume collects the abstracts presented at the conference, the result of an open call initially structured around three axes of reflection: Visions//Perspectives, Tools//Methods, Experiences//Narratives.

The Visions and Perspectives axis invited a rethinking of the role of design disciplines as critical and operational tools capable of impacting processes of exclusion, questioning the boundaries between theory and action, knowledge and practice, observation and participation. The collected researches move toward the construction of new theoretical and pedagogical perspectives, in which reflection on contemporaneity becomes an opportunity to imagine horizons of possibility and emancipation.

The Tools and Methods space explored the ways in which research has made visible realities excluded from dominant representations of the city and the territory. Maps, drawings, performative practices, visual narratives, and design devices were configured as tools capable of revealing the mechanisms of denial of bodies and spaces. The experiences presented propose a way of conducting research that intertwines analytical rigor and sensitive engagement, transcending the rhetoric of neutrality and merging objectivity and subjectivity, science and activism.

The Experiences and Narrations constructed a situated atlas of denied places: confinement camps, post-industrial areas, geographies of hardship, invisible infrastructures, militarized or removed territories. Through stories, testimonies, memories, and practices of traversal, these experiences delineate a counter-geography of places of exclusion, capable of subverting established perspectives and reactivating relationships, imaginaries, and processes of resignification.

These axes delineated the field of research that transcended mere revelation to become a practice of resignification, spatial justice, and transformation. To clarify the diverse "revelations" brought to bear, the numerous contributions collected were then recomposed into a new mosaic, a collection of fragments that convey the complexity of contemporary life and the plurality of its geographies. The "revelations" are structured around six thematic clusters – confinements, ecologies, differences, post-metropolitan conditions, heritages, and devices – which, despite their heterogeneity, share a common striving to reconstruct a spatial knowledge capable of addressing questions of social, environmental, and ecological justice.

Each abstract represents a piece of this mosaic, a fragment of the world that, like Borges's *Aleph*, contains within itself the entire universe of possibilities for investigation and revelation. The contemporaneity of the themes is not understood as a simple adherence to the present, but as a horizon projected into the future: the research collected here does not simply describe, but opens avenues, produces perspectives, and generates processes.

This simultaneity of times and perspectives is the strength of the volume: its ability to convey the complexity of the present – largely Western, but not exclusively – and to offer it as a critical space for reflection and transformation. Revealing, in this sense, means acting, restoring to places, physical and immaterial, denied and invisible, the possibility of being seen, inhabited, thought about and shared again.

T1 – Confinements

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The session Confinements stems from the need to reveal those places where society concentrates and conceals tensions, exercises control and produces marginality. Prisons, borders, and urban thresholds are not only physical spaces: they are fields where rules, powers, everyday practices, and possibilities for transformation intersect. Bringing them to light means not only describing what remains invisible but also questioning the ways in which these forms of confinement shape contemporaneity and open scenarios for change.

The contributions focus mainly on prison, often reduced to a simplified image of segregation, but in reality a complex system, traversed by contradictions between educational aims and logics of power. In this perspective, the total institution- described by Goffman, capable of reshaping every aspect of individual life, is at the same time crossed by interstices in which practices of resistance emerge. Educational, cultural, and artistic activities carried out inside reveal the needs and desires of those inhabiting these spaces and, once translated into spatial configurations, generate forms of autonomy and openness, even within the rigidity of penitentiary control.

The design of spaces dedicated to culture, work, and affectivity, together with the use of art as a tool of mediation, shows how the transformation of space can affect the quality of daily life and activate regeneration processes grounded in respect for fundamental rights, capable of resonating in the social fabric and in the relationship between prison and city.

The gaze then turns to geopolitical borders, where walls, fences, barriers, and surveillance technologies produce landscapes of exclusion and geographies of control. Here, practices of counter-mapping, testimonies, and informal architectures emerge as tools of revelation and resistance, questioning the apparent neutrality of infrastructures of control and opening up the possibility of imagining different, more inclusive and shared landscapes.

In this perspective, the Confinements session is situated within the broader framework of a reflection on the “space of rights”. The collected contributions not only shed light on the contradictions of contemporaneity but also open up the possibility of imagining different spaces, consistent with constitutional principles and with a vision of justice based on dignity and inclusion.

Sociology in the Service of Emancipation: the contribution of Pierre Bourdieu

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keywords: prison, Bourdieu, education

This paper aims to explore the contribution that Pierre Bourdieu (1930-2002), a critical sociologist, made to our understanding of a total institution such as the prison.

The paper is organized into two parts.

The first is dedicated to a brief presentation of the theoretical and empirical tools that make Bourdieu a useful author for interpreting the criminal field. An eclectic sociologist open to different disciplinary languages (art, photography, anthropology, etc.), he never dealt directly with prisons, but in recent times criminological and sociological literature has increasingly used some of the French sociologist's theoretical-empirical constructs – habitus, field, capital, symbolic violence, symbolic power of the state – to study criminal phenomena and the prison system.

The second part, which is more empirical in nature, aims to show the intrinsic ambivalence of the prison system when it comes to the role of culture in prison. Using the tools provided by Bourdieu and his studies on the state, we aim to highlight how educational, cultural, and university activities in prison, while certainly offering inmates tools for growth, emancipation, and resistance to the infantilizing and de-cultivating logic of the prison system, on the other hand, they do not escape the risk of manipulation, neutralization, and ambivalence when they are carried out and deployed in the context of a total institution such as the prison, with its rituals, liturgies, power relations, and the coexistence of physical and symbolic violence within it.

This is because prisons share with the institution that created them, the state, a programmatically ambivalent nature, a concentration of material, punitive, and symbolic power, ceremonial and rhetorical, capable of modulating its role without ever failing in its task of controlling prisoners. A brute power and at the same time a symbolic power that leaves spaces open, showing its most welcoming face to the outside world, without ever jeopardizing the primacy of the prison.

Recognising the Complexity of Prison

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keywords: marginality, invisibility, acknowledgement

The lack of visibility and information for those who have no direct contact with the prison system creates a vague and often simplistic perception of what prison is: a building that houses those who have done wrong for a period of time, separated from free society by a wall. But prison is much more than that, both conceptually and spatially: among those who are detained there are people in pre-trial detention and awaiting trial, who are therefore innocent until proven guilty, convicted appellants, and those who have been definitively convicted; inside the prison, some work there, prison officers, educators, volunteers, and visitors. There are many spaces, ranging from the most private areas in the sleeping quarters to indoor and outdoor social areas, as well as training and work spaces. Beyond the wall that isolates the prison from its surroundings and makes it largely impenetrable, there is a world of its own where time seems to stand still or flow at its own pace, where, according to the Constitution, one should prepare to build a future by living as much as possible according to what happens outside, as stipulated by European prison rules.

Entering these spaces, one senses feelings of degradation, discomfort, oppression, anguish, abandonment, and loss of self: real places that nevertheless seem to belong to an imaginary world that Piranesi admirably represented in his "Carceri d'invenzione".

The experiment carried out during the Design for Living course in the Bachelor's degree in Architecture at Politecnico di Torino sought to overcome the stigma surrounding the Italian prison system: bringing students, who will be the architects of the future, into prison and encouraging them to talk to those who live and work there allows them to recognise that prison is not a simple place, that it needs to be understood first and foremost, analysed, designed and set up according to the needs of all its users, which, if properly satisfied, can have a positive effect on their future behaviour.

Architectures of Desire

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keywords: prison, desire, detention

What is desire, if not a vision, a projection, the utterance of a verb conjugated in the future perfect tense? Desires, like people, are unique, and everyone knows what it means to have one. However, there are people whose desires are akin to the possibility of making free choices in daily life: taking a walk, playing with their children, going to the seaside. These are prisoned people, who, within the prison space, project their needs outward, often without the possibility of seeing them represented.

This contribution – excerpted from the doctoral research titled "Denied Dwellings" – aims to present another way of inhabiting space through projects that refer, in part, to the real dimension of the existing prison space, and in part to the dreamlike dimension from which they originated. The study – whose outcomes are presented here – was carried out through a co-design experience between the author and the inmates of the Trieste Prison, who, through drawing, revealed various ways in which they attempt to "make space" for themselves within the prison, where the deprivation of freedom is accompanied by the deprivation of dwelling – understood by definition as a place that offers shelter, even temporarily.

Redesigning cells, inmates outlined a current state of affairs, highlighting its critical aspects. The presence of an unused space became an opportunity to propose their own projects, giving architectural form to their needs and desires. These spaces were translated by the author into "architectures of desire" – metaphysical projects that express, in architectural language, what the inmates had expressed through their drawings.

The experience presented here is closely tied to the importance of working within the institution as a means of contributing to change, where incarcerated individuals became bearers of highly valuable information about architectural space, based on their lived experience as its inhabitants.

Life Inside: how do previously incarcerated people perceive architectural space in prison and what can we, as architects, learn from this?

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keywords: architects, prison, experience

Increasing prison populations and high rates of re-offending in the UK evidences the state's emphasis on punishment, which clearly fails as a deterrent, over rehabilitation (Moran, 2017). During the 19th century architects carried huge power in translating the punitive attitude of the state into prisons of monolithic stature (Dunbar and Fairweather, 2000). Although steps were taken towards rehabilitation in the 20th century, security and economic setbacks meant architects became "subservient to the building process" (Derbyshire, 2000, p. 76).

Environmental psychology has been applied to prisons in an attempt to understand person-environment interactions (Gifford, 2002), yet current research has not been enough to push carceral design to a human dimension (Jewkes, 2024).

Very few architects involve themselves directly in user research, despite the fact this can be crucial in challenging conformities and providing ammunition to push through important design decisions (Rowden and Jones, 2015).

One way to better our understanding of the effects of penal architecture on experience, is to ask. Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) is a research methodology used to better understand the intricacies of how people make sense of certain experiences (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2022) and yet its use in prisons has been limited.

This research will adopt a qualitative IPA approach on a small sample size of previously incarcerated people. Interview data, will be analysed and explored to better understand their individual experiences of space and how they make sense of life in the prisons they inhabited. By inserting ourselves, as architects, directly into research examining the impact of design on the lives of the people it effects the most, we allow ourselves to understand the gravity, potential and future of our design decisions and, hopefully, use our position as mediator between the prisoners and the client to push for real reform.

“Leave no one Behind”: a hybrid evaluation approach for a human right-based prison

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keywords: human rights-based approach, rights-space relationship, hybrid evaluation approach, social impacts

In a prison system nowadays often characterized by overcrowding, weak guarantees of rights, repressive logics, and operational fragmentation, rehabilitative activities can generate significant social benefits both within and beyond prison walls. The rights-space relationship plays a fundamental role: space is not merely a physical environment, but a place of relationships and opportunities, capable of influencing the effective protection of rights.

In the sustainable development perspective (United Nations, 2015; 2016) in which “no one is to be left behind”, it is essential to know and recognize the transformative value of such activities by providing empirical evidence of the multidimensional benefits they can produce (Giordano et al., 2019).

In light of an increasingly urgent and current debate on prisoners’ rights, the constitutional function of detention, and the rehabilitative role that penal institutions should fulfill, the metrics used to assess the social impact of the aforementioned activities – both inside and outside prison walls – play a fundamental role. Aligned with the four priority pillars introduced by the United Nations (conditions of incarceration, human rights safeguard for prisoners, security and safety, organizational culture) for a “healthier and safer” human rights-based prison system (United Nations, 2021), this contribution proposes a hybrid evaluation approach to evaluate the social impact of rehabilitation activities, with reference to both the inside (prison) and outside (community) contexts, with a particular focus on the Secondigliano Penitentiary Center (Naples), recognising that the quality of detention spaces is an essential condition for the effective exercise of rights.

This approach may represent a useful and operational tool to orient and guide prison policies towards more human-rights-based models, inclusive and grounded in the full recognition of the inherent dignity and value as human beings.

Deconstructing Detention Spaces through Art. The ReverseLab experience at Milan-San Vittore prison

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keywords: action-research; contemporary art; San Vittore-Milano prison

San Vittore Prison and the city of Milan have long maintained a complicated and ambivalent relationship. Originally built at the end of the nineteenth century on a marginal site, the city’s expansion quickly overtook it, and today it stands as a detached presence in one of the most central districts. San Vittore symbolises an ongoing debate: some view the prison as an extraneous element to be removed from the urban fabric, while others argue that its urban location offers an opportunity for both the correctional institution and the surrounding area.

In 2023, Laboratorio Carcere, a research group at the Politecnico di Milano, alongside other partners, conceived and implemented ReverseLab at San Vittore: a space for contemporary art situated between the prison and the city, with the aim of activating a “double gaze”: seeing the inside from the outside and the outside from the inside. Contemporary art was embraced as a tool to interpret this duality and to foster dialogue between the city and the prison.

The project progressed along two complementary paths: a spatial intervention aimed at rehabilitating the first wing’s basement of the prison, which had been abandoned for years; and, in parallel, a participatory art workshop led by an artist that involved inmates and prison staff in the co-creation of an artwork reflecting life inside San Vittore.

The exhibition of the work in the reclaimed space – Autumn 2024 – became a tangible encounter between internal and external communities. ReverseLab aims to trigger a process that returns a once-abandoned area to the prison and establishes a hybrid space, between artistic and rehabilitative practices that open to the city at scheduled times. This contribution offers a reflection on the potentials and challenges of an experience that seeks to promote the prison as a service to the community, fostering dialogue with other related initiatives.

Invisibility is a Resource. The new library at Udine's prison

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keywords: prison, library, transformation

Invisibility is an extreme attribute; it pertains to exclusive spaces but also to those that exclude. Prison is one of these, and it is above all a matter of time and space.

As part of a research agreement between the University of Udine and the DAP (Department of Penitentiary Administration), our work dealt with the furnishing of the new library of the Udine prison through two main actions. On the one hand, we imagined a project that would "celebrate" the idea of reading in an adequate space (50 square meters) obtained from the renovation of the former women's prison within the structure of the men's prison. On the other hand, we involved the Friulian territory, which, through local companies, has made available to us the construction material that has been assembled and installed by the prisoners. The library was inaugurated on July 31, 2025, and also includes, among other things, the installation of four terminals connected to the municipal library of Udine to allow prisoners to read newspapers from all over the world. The room is designed to be easily transformed, if necessary, also into a classroom.

The project, in agreement with the prison management and with the guarantor of the rights of persons deprived of personal liberty, is part of a broader scenario of interventions that, in individual fragments, within a unitary framework guaranteed by the collaboration between the University of Udine and the DAP, aims at a light, incisive, and radical transformation of the prison of Udine as an articulated and complex place.

Geographies of Control: from the material frontier to the virtual borderland

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Amid the growing materialization of borders and devices of separation, militarized boundaries increasingly assert themselves by constructing liminal landscapes and infrastructures of exclusion. Walls are not mere architectural objects but complex devices capable of redefining identities, movements, and imaginaries, producing both visible and invisible forms of confinement.

This contribution specifically examines the border between the United States and Mexico, combining field observation, comparative study, and a critical reading of spatial, technological, and affective stratifications. Along this frontier, at least three landscapes emerge: the river borderland, the desert borderland, and the wall borderland, which defines a threshold of radical separation that is at once porous and unstable. To these a fourth dimension is added, less visible yet increasingly pervasive: the virtual borderland – advanced surveillance technologies (drones, sensors, radars) that operate through the thinning of physical signs and the intensification of control.

These devices, seemingly "neutral" or less invasive, deeply shape the experience of space, introducing an environmental and atmospheric surveillance that acts upon the body and perception. Invisible barriers generate forms of unease, fear, and emotional disturbance, inscribing an affective geography of control into the landscape.

Through a comparison with the Cypriot, Irish, and Korean cases, this work shows how the wall, in its multiple manifestations, does not merely separate but constructs ideological visions. Finally, it invites reflection on how memory, embodied experience, and counter-narration can become tools of revelation and resistance. Within this scenario, practices of counter-mapping, ephemeral architecture, and situated testimony emerge as instruments for re-signifying border space, opening possibilities for affective, political, and design transformation.

Housing and the City: reintegration pathways after incarceration

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The conditions of contemporary urban spaces – shaped by complex, asymmetric, and conflictual dynamics that reflect social, economic, and environmental crises – call for new reflections to address the lack of interrelations in urban life, particularly among the city's most marginalised human resources. Within this context, the condition of formerly incarcerated people exemplifies how material and symbolic exclusion from the city both reflects and amplifies processes of marginalisation and barriers to reintegration. Physical isolation and social stigmatisation associated with imprisonment generate mechanisms of exclusion that persist beyond the sentence, preventing access to essential resources such as housing, employment, and relational networks. This invisible reality demands design tools capable of enabling trajectories of urban reintegration while also providing tangible support for the post-detention transition. The issue of adequate housing for recently released individuals emerges as one of the most critical and complex challenges of spatial justice, with significant implications for the effectiveness of social reintegration and thus for reducing the risk of recidivism. The research focuses on detention and transition houses as operational and political devices able to address the emerging and complex housing needs at the end of incarceration, without resorting to specialist, segregative, or standardised models. These pedagogical living spaces, conceived as a manifesto of social architecture, act as intermediaries between public and private space, between restricted and free dwelling, supporting social relations, dignity, and effective reintegration into civil society, thereby contributing to the prevention of further unlawful behaviour. The adopted method is based on observation and comparative analysis of international case studies, through which recurring or emerging spatial strategies and devices can be identified and critically replicated.

Theatre in Prison

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keywords: theatre, prison, spaces

Theatre for inmates takes on a clear therapeutic significance among cultural activities in prison, as a valid and meaningful tool to encourage alternative behavioral models that support social integration and job placement, by acquiring specific professional skills related to theater professions also. It impacts positively both in changing conditions within the prison walls for inmates and in affecting rehabilitation processes. Building parallel reality, inmates break the temporal and existential fixity of their prison conditions and acquire the ability to distance themselves from their criminal identity, albeit through discipline and respect for rules of behavior.

A comprehensive plan of action is essential to create spaces specifically dedicated to this activity, which will enable material recovery of relational, cultural, and resocializing skills on which it is based. In order to confirm relevance of the issue, the paper is aimed to highlight the very recent bills C. 474 and C. 1382 (Chamber of Deputies, Dossier no. 480, July 22, 2025), containing provisions aimed at promoting and supporting theatrical activities in prisons. In order to achieve these objectives and implement coordinated measures throughout the country, the Department of Prison Administration is required to allocate some resources earmarked for extraordinary measures to expand and modernize the spaces used for prisoner work; furthermore it is expected to appoint specific spaces to be dedicated to theatrical activities and the development of artistic, including experimental, courses aimed at the employment of prisoners, in prisons have not them yet.

Between the Prison and the City. The Penitentiary University Hub as a transformative opportunity for the 8th Municipality of Naples

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keywords: transitional spaces, urban context, territorial network

There is little reflection on prisons, often rendering them invisible within the urban context, and overlooking, for instance, that they are spaces for inhabiting where, within the constraints imposed by custodial regulations, inmates can engage in crafts, study, and tend to vegetable gardens and green spaces. Prisons, much like asylums in the past, hold the secrets of those who reside within: the needs, aspirations, talents, fears, and anxieties of individuals who, while awaiting reintegration into society, serve their sentences under state supervision. Transforming prisons into spaces of inhabiting requires an expansive perspective, one that looks beyond mere containment, actively engaging with the pulse of urban life to develop mechanisms that serve as a bridge between the outside world and the interior of these institutions.

Planned in isolated areas, modern prisons create a barren landscape around them. In their immediate vicinity, spaces for life are rarely cultivated, and essential services tend to be sparse and distant. Beyond a café and a public transport stop, it is uncommon for amenities such as fitness centers, children's playground, urban farms, daycare facilities, or markets to emerge within the prison's perimeter. Nevertheless, these services could not only support family visits and facilitate access for regular visitors, but they could also attract additional users, providing transitional spaces capable of fostering opportunities for interaction with the surrounding community.

To substantiate this thesis, a pilot exploration was conducted within the urban design studio of the Architecture Degree program at the University of Federico II, focusing on the Pasquale Mandato Prison in Secondigliano. The paper outlines a three-year educational journey that, by emphasizing the role of the University Penitentiary Hub as a catalyst for relationships between the Scampia district and the prison, has been dedicated to studying the physical and social context of the 8th Municipality of Naples, with the aim of creating bridges between the prison, the neighborhood and the city.

Presence and Abscence of Spaces designated for the private Excercise of Rights to Affectivity and Sexuality for Individuals confined in juvenile detention Facilities

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The combination of non-visible spaces and unspoken themes can play a significant role in the effective enjoyment of rights that are merely abstractly enshrined. The prison environment –simultaneously invisible to the external gaze and hypervisible to internal control – conveys both the image and the substance of a place that is undoubtedly problematic, and in principle limiting, for the full expression of human personality. Within this context, the exercise of sexuality in carceral settings and – with its own specificities – by those imprisoned as minors, emerges as an element variably interpreted, whether aptly or not, as physiological, educational, rewarding, impossible, necessary, or unnecessary. In reality, the right to free and informed sexual expression for each individual is grounded in the principles of liberty, autonomy, and self-determination, and is aimed at ensuring the implementation of these principles. When recognized for individuals deprived of personal liberty under custodial regimes – as unequivocally and thoroughly affirmed in constitutional review proceedings concerning the provisions of the Italian penitentiary system –, this right ought to be generally applied through the provision of specifically designed areas within prisons (commonly referred to as "rooms of affection"), ensuring both privacy and dignity. While the visibility of prison living conditions remains a marginal issue in the social sphere, the right to concealment of (what occurs within) spaces of intimacy implies the preliminary claim to privacy that is intrinsically at odds with the overall image of individuals who are systematically subject to totalizing forms of discipline. The establishment of such spaces and practices consequently exerts a substantial influence on this domain of human rights, reflecting culturally embedded conceptualizations of legal subjectivity.

Prison and Monument

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Can the concept of architectural restoration be applied to historic penitentiary buildings? Can we imagine heritage preservation practices for these buildings? Can the act of taking care for these buildings serve as a means of taking care for the individuals detained within them?

This paper aims to present the outcomes of a multidisciplinary research project conducted collaboratively by professors Filippo Lambertucci and Pisana Posocco, architects, and professors Marta Acierno and Maurizio Caperna, architectural restorers, with the support of a penitentiary law expert, professor Pasquale Bronzo. The work seeks to outline a concrete operational framework both for recognizing the value of historic prisons and for implementing architectural interventions aimed at their revitalization, alongside the proposal of new detention models.

The research begins with an in-depth examination of the specific case of the Regina Coeli prison in Rome, employing historical documentary research, in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of this particular reality, identify potential areas for intervention, and develop operational solutions that might be replicated in other contexts. The reflection is then extended to the broader context of Italy's penitentiary heritage, attempting to engage in a wider-scale analysis.

Historic prisons can recover the status of monuments, allowing their historical and architectural value, as well as their placement within the urban fabric, to foster a transformation in the self-perception of the detainees, driven by the rehabilitation of penitentiary spaces. At the same time, the presence and enhancement of these buildings can stimulate public attention to the prison issue within civil society.

Revealing the invisible Sacred. Actions for interreligious Architectures in Places of Detention

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keywords: interfaith, prison, Architecture of Dignity

The increasing religious plurality within Italian prisons raises urgent challenges not only for the legal system but also for architectural disciplines, which are called upon to give form to a fundamental yet often disregarded right: freedom of worship. The Geneva Convention (arts. 41-42) establishes that every inmate must be able to practice religion, access sacred texts, and receive spiritual assistance, especially where a significant number of adherents share the same faith. Italian law (art. 26, Law 354/1975), reaffirmed by the Constitutional Court (ruling 26/1999), incorporates these principles, yet structural inadequacies and the absence of protocols for coexisting ritualities remain unresolved.

While the presence of Muslim inmates has highlighted systemic deficiencies – from the lack of spaces for daily prayer and ritual fasting to the misunderstanding of basic liturgical gestures – the issue now extends to the coexistence of diverse faiths: Judaism, Hinduism, Sōka Gakkai, Orthodox Christianity, and syncretic religions.

This plurality renders the traditional "chapel," conceived in a monoconfessional key, inadequate and demands a typological reformulation: the interreligious room. Not a neutral or sterile void, but a setting able to host ritual difference through universal spiritual elements – light, silence, orientation, living matter – configuring a locus where the sacred can be revealed beyond specific affiliations. The systematic adoption of such spaces within prisons – architectures of concealment by vocation and representation – would disclose a renewed dignity of dwelling within deprivation. Giovanni Michelucci's Giardino degli incontri at Sollicciano prison offers a precedent: an "open" environment introducing beauty, relation, and care as inalienable human rights.

This paper examines selected Italian prisons to expose both deficiencies and potentials, and advances design hypotheses for intercultural liturgical spaces conceived as thresholds of reconciliation – capable of restoring meaning and dignity to place and person through primary phenomenologies and ontologies, even within architectures of constraint.

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T2 – Ecologies

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We exist in an era where the forms of living, producing, and consuming intertwine in an unstable landscape. Industrial heritage is shadowed and blended with technological hyperconnectivity, while new material and digital ecosystems reshape the planet. How, then, can we reveal the contemporary reality of our "common home"? What remains of it after the passage of post-industrialization processes that, especially in the Western world, have transformed once-productive territories into worlds of consumption? What remains are contaminated spaces, geographies of extraction, disconnected and forgotten internal areas. These are some of the dimensions explored by the authors, who contribute to the construction of a constellation of revealed ecologies. But not only that. Aware that the post-industrial and technological reality continues to evolve, the authors question what new kinds of spaces and what novel architectural typologies are emerging, often hidden behind the need for technological innovation. Non-human zones such as data centers, intensive agricultural facilities, or automated production hubs – spaces where human presence is marginal or absent – occupy ever-larger portions of territories, consuming land and resources. And it is precisely how and what think about resources that seems to be at stake in imagining new different ways of being for such complex contemporary ecologies. What model of living should we conceive today? What practices, projects, and strategies can we implement to transform a way of living that is now unsustainable, based on domination, violence, and exploitation, fueling conflict and social, spatial, and environmental injustice? Possible responses revealed by authors include processes of naturalization and local ecologies, along with a redefinition of the agents that actually operate on the planet, in a perspective that transcends the anthropocentric vision to recognize more-than-human forms of agency. New ways of living are thus emerging, based on care – not only from humans, but from the Earth, and from the diverse species and ecosystems that inhabit it. These are the questions and revelations that run through this section: ecologies as places, spaces, and habitats, but also as relationships, practices, and networks of agents, inviting us to rethink the relationship between humanity, the environment, and technology in the construction of our common home. In this interweaving of spaces, relationships, and agents, the studies presented reveals the forms of the visible and the invisible, the more and more blurred distinction between what is natural and what artificial, inviting us to rethink our presence on Earth not as domination, but as an act of coexistence and care.

Ma l'anima rimane intatta

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keywords: mutations, testimonies, tales

"The landscape allows itself to be lived in," declared Eugenio Turri, "welcoming everything," even if this involves irreversible transformations capable of altering already established balances. Carlo Levi stated that "there is no landscape without people," describing them as capable of "conquering" the territory to their advantage. Contemporary progress, which is advancing at an ever-increasing pace, means that nothing is stable and that what is innovative today will be obsolete tomorrow. In this scenario, it seems inevitable to surrender to the idea that all the places we love will one day change or cease to have the value we attribute to them. While for our ancestors the process was more linear, for us today it is different. Luigi Ghirri's photos reveal this scenario and tell us about the poetics of places condemned to the immobility of a present that is already too past to be able to look to the future. Questioning which conditions are most easily "hidden" by contemporary life allows us to reflect not only on their forced preservation, but also to analyze the phenomena at work without excluding the possibility that the persistence of a phenomenon or practice is not necessarily indicative of a correct correspondence to the structure and balance of the place. It must be understood that anthropogenic 'care' is not the only perspective. In addition to study practices, memory is the fundamental tool for preserving the intangible sensations generated by places, without which we would lose essential clues. However, capturing images is always different: "to live is to interpret reality." Just think of abandoned railway stations, once symbols of progress, or agricultural fields that were once the resource of a territory and are now uncultivated. How do these places live on in collective and individual memory? They once promised a fertile future and now they are the barren past of something that cannot find balance and resist.

Living on the Floodline: revealing the invisible narratives of a suburbian district under demolition

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This proposal explores the invisible forms of inhabiting a neighborhood in Villeneuve-Saint-Georges (Parisian suburbs), currently undergoing evacuation due to flood risks and targeted for an "ecological renaturation" project. Located along the Yerres river, the area combines degraded suburban housing, informal constructions, and houses gradually being sealed off by authorities. Beyond the media portrayal of a "high-risk zone", on-the-ground observations reveal the persistence of uses, resident resistance, and makeshift spatial appropriations despite forced evictions and demolitions.

This research questions the contradictions between ecological discourses promoting a return of nature and the silent social violence inflicted by these operations. Behind the promise to "give the river back its space" and "saving lives" unfolds a process of erasing ordinary memories and marginalizing vulnerable communities. Using the case of Villeneuve, the project aims to interrogate how environmental policies may function as a vector of urban "invisibilization".

The project focuses on what must be revealed: the traces of domestic life, micro-architectures of survival, paths of resistance, and residual sociability in a condemned space. We will ask: what clues allow us to perceive the underlying life in a disappearing neighborhood? These indices include leftover personal belongings, reappropriated public spaces, unmaintained but inhabited houses, and narratives of return after eviction.

Methodologically, the research will combine on-site observations, sensitive cartographic mapping, photographic documentation, and short interviews with remaining inhabitants. The goal is to produce a visual and spatial narrative, highlighting the paradox of a disappearing district coexisting with ongoing, albeit fragile, life forms.

The project contributes to a critical reading of fragile forms of inhabiting, reflecting on the tensions between ecological transitions, urban policies, and informal resident resilience.

Marginal Spaces as Infrastructures of Possibility. Urban ecologies for an active transition

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keywords: infrastructure of possibilities, eco-social hubs, sustainable production

Contemporary cities, which consume large amounts of energy and depend on long supply chains, are based on a consumption model that is disconnected from production sites, a structural imbalance that generates waste and pollution. Within this paradigm, there is a widespread geography of residual, interstitial, underground spaces that elude urban representation and governance. These are not simply urban voids, but denied places, removed from the active cycle of the city. However, it is precisely in these spaces that a latent potential for regeneration can be recognised: no longer passive territories or spaces to be filled, but infrastructures of possibility. This contribution offers a theoretical and operational reflection on the idea that such spaces can be transformed into active places of sustainable, cultural and social production, activating processes of eco-systemic transition. In particular, it explores the possibility of imagining these places as distributed nodes of a new urban ecology: micro-centres of food production, ecological education and community activation, capable of reducing the distance between consumption and production, between citizens and territory. The local project is built not on what is missing, but on what exists and can be regenerated as a collective use value (Magnaghi, 2010). The approach adopted moves between transdisciplinary design practices, territorial strategies and forms of research-action, which, through the use of visual tools, participatory maps and co-production devices, combine analytical rigour and sensitive involvement. The study therefore proposes a vision of the city as an archipelago of local ecologies, in which neglected places become drivers of systemic change. They take the form of eco-social hubs, where the dimension of doing is intertwined with that of knowing, generating new forms of active and conscious citizenship. In an era of systemic crisis, revealing means activating: giving shape to new relationships between body, space and environment, restoring to the city the possibility of producing, not just consuming, life.

Ecological Counter-Narratives: the landscapes of non-human zones

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keywords: non-human ecologies, rewiding, counter-narratives

During the course of history, areas that were off-limits due to wars, industrial disasters or geopolitical reasons – such as the demilitarised zone between North and South Korea, the Chernobyl exclusion zone or the ex European Iron Curtain – have unconsciously become places of extraordinary renaturalisation. The absence of humans has activated spontaneous ecological processes which, over time, have encouraged the restoration of habitats, increased biodiversity, and the formation of non-intentional landscapes, defined as "non-human zones" (Massenberg et al., 2023). These areas, often removed from the collective imagination or associated with memories of disaster, reveal a counter-narrative of the landscape: not places of anthropogenic construction, but of emerging ecology, where nature reveals itself in the absence of planning: fauna returns, vegetation expands, ecosystems self-regulate (Arias, 2024). In a context marked by climate and environmental crises, these spaces question the role of abandonment as a generative form, challenging the rhetoric of care and abandonment and raising tensions between protection and absence, control and autonomy. What does it mean to "design" in these places? Is it possible to conceive of forms of coexistence between human inactivity and ecological regeneration? Post-human renaturalisation forces us to question the established categories of design and representation. Through analysis and critical comparison with case studies, this contribution proposes a counter-narrative of the denied landscape, where absence becomes a revealing sign, offering a reflection on alternative forms of environmental projects that do not fall into the logic of domestication but recognise the generative value of non-intervention. Passive rewilding practices and post-abandonment transformations (Navarro & Pereira, 2012) show how, in the absence of human intervention, new forms of habitability emerge, suggesting management models based on inaction, indirect care and respect for ecological autonomy. In these geographies, the landscape ceases to be a representation and becomes living testimony to the broken, and perhaps to be repaired, relationship between human and non-human.

Natural Regenerate.
New post-industrial landscapes for Naples

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keywords: design, landscape, post-industrial

Natural Regenerate is a scientific, theoretical, and design-oriented project focused on the specificity of landscape design in addressing the issue of regenerating contemporary territories that have been left undetermined, abandoned, and undefined due to the cessation of productive activities.

Starting from a critical reading of a selection of books by international authors and concrete recent experiences carried out, through design and educational experiments, exhibitions and conferences, and shared urban walks, an interpretative and design approach is proposed for this wide range of contemporary landscapes.

In the proposed approach, the recent past is compared with the present and the near future to create a happy and fruitful tension and friction between memory and innovation, including through a new elaboration that overwrites, surpasses, or even eclipses previous configurations to give meaning to the present.

The project does not completely erase existing anthropic traces but rather ennobles them by elevating them to the rank of true "ruins" of a bygone modernity. Thus, natural processes, whether spontaneous or induced, interpreted according to principles of coexistence and coevolution among living beings, are also considered the driving force behind the natural regeneration of contaminated territories.

Warehouses, chimneys, pylons, cisterns, metal platforms, reinforced concrete columns and beams, brick walls blend in with the natural and newly planted vegetation, interacting with perceptive architectural devices and slow mobility systems introduced to enable their use.

The results are New Landscapes, unprecedented expressions of aesthetic, ecological and social qualities that interpret the post-industrial condition of contemporaneity.

Living Opacity:
towards a subtle semantics of the post-industrial city

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keywords: fabric, subtlety, opacity

The contemporary city and its surrounding territory are today punctuated by opaque and inert bodies. Large-scale architectures, outcomes of a past urban phase devoted to Expansion in all its forms, now persist as rigid signs, underutilised or entirely abandoned. Yet, what would occur if these spaces were reconsidered as malleable project material? Which new urban meanings could emerge from signifiers now obsolete? A renewed semantics – understood as the identification and differentiation of relations through implicit conventions – becomes possible, leading to an architectural and urban design process no longer vertical – from context to site – but circular. In fact, through a multi-scalar approach it is possible to deconstruct the technical networks of the city, exposing their latent vitality. Grey residual spaces, decommissioned industrial areas, cisterns, and mobility infrastructures all bear their own imprint within the urban fabric, now legible as a submerged framework from which new centralities may arise. In the transition from an urbanism of Expansion to one of Intensity, coinciding with the shifting of political and economic centralities, built artifacts may cease to be read as relics and instead operate as transformative nodes: flexible containers for collective dwelling, public spaces where relational dimensions are reactivated, new sites in which design loses its dominant character, giving way to a weaker, imperceptible one – sometimes reducible to a simple seat in a concrete void. In this sense, these obsolete signifiers can recover implicit relations that reassign a meaning, reinstating that linguistic relativism whereby the weak project can reshape our perception of reality and our mode of conceiving the city, no longer as a unitary entity but as a multiplicity of interconnected forms.

Beyond the decorated Shed

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keywords: gasoline stations, photography, abandonment

Once a symbol of an increasingly fast-paced world, gasoline stations are gradually turning into urban relics – remnants of a vision of progress that has long become outdated. While their abandonment is not a new phenomenon, it has become increasingly visible today. Whether situated on the urban periphery or within the city fabric, once they lose their function, gasoline stations bring a host of challenges: the creation of urban voids, potential environmental problems, regulatory issues related to land use, and the low economic appeal of both the site and its surroundings. Even though the removal of these structures is problematic, their absence does not necessarily restore continuity to the urban landscape, but rather leaves behind undefined areas, awaiting new narratives.

These transformations have been explored through photography, which since the 1960s has documented the presence of gasoline stations in the urban environment. Edward Ruscha's Twenty-Six Gasoline Stations (1963) inaugurated a documentary approach to these structures, followed by the works of Jeff Brouws, Xavier Aragonès, and Éric Tabuchi, who have reinterpreted the format to emphasize themes of abandonment and change within the built environment. Photography thus becomes a critical tool for revealing the ambivalence of these places: spaces that are neglected yet remain active in the collective landscape, capable of sparking new interpretations and design possibilities.

The postcard presented aligns with the perspective of more recent photographers. The shed endures, stripped of its decoration and reduced to its most essential form. Even its potential demolition would not constitute a conclusive act but rather represent yet another form of erasure. In this ambiguous state – between trace, intention, and disappearance – a critical space emerges, one that interrogates the possibilities and limitations of its own transformation.

Against Amnesia: Taranto in the mirror

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keywords: Taranto, hyperobjects, geography

Covering an area of approximately 15 km², the Italsider plant in Taranto – now Acciaierie d'Italia – is the largest steelworks in Europe. Since 1965, and until the 1990s, the factory embodied the ambition to replace the desolation of a horizontal landscape with the vertical hope of its chimneys. The artificial clouds rising into the sky sketched the figures of a mirage that time has turned into deprivation – the same deprivation that has condemned the city's historic island to be called "old" rather than "ancient."These are the materials of an artificial geography that encodes not only a sequence of images, but also the awareness of an exhausted system that has overshadowed reality by replacing monuments and social ties. The design project thus becomes a tool to once again traverse forgotten geographies – spaces not always recoverable, yet still rewritable through instruments able to define interpretive theories as well as operational strategies. Words and materials therefore shape not only a framework of thought, but also an action that continuously redraws the threads and boundaries of a territory that "instead lays the groundwork for another vision, and urges us to bring it into the public arena, overcoming our self-censorship as designers" (Garofalo 2012, p. 7). This contribution offers a critical reading of the space of Taranto understood as a hyperobject, in the sense proposed by Timothy Morton: an entity so vast and complex that it resists any totalizing vision. In this context, the only possible stance is to inhabit the "inside" – to interrogate what resists, what transforms, what acts. Objects, atmospheres, traces, actions: these are the clues of a possible counter-geography, one that does not merely describe where things are, but what they represent (Farinelli 2003). The starting point is Gian Maria Tosatti's work Storia della notte e destino delle comete, presented at the 2022 Venice Art Biennale: a pavilion devoid of human bodies, traversable, where the collapse of industrial civilization becomes both matter and narrative. Building on this installation, the contribution proposes a reading capable of revealing the latent forms of the Taranto landscape, activating new paradigms for design practice. Beyond the dreamlike suspension into which parts of Southern Italy have fallen, it becomes necessary to detect an apparatus of "historyless" architectures – figures capable of outlining a counter-geography of the city, overturning the notion of amnesia. Social, political, and spatial change, and by the broader idea of sustainability in inhabiting the Planet, this contribution explores visions and projects of the night as a means to uncover hidden, inhabited, and inhabitable parts of the city.

Going Dark, on the Invisibility of inner Villages and Territories

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"Going Dark" is the title of a contemporary art exhibition held at the Guggenheim Museum in New York (October 2023 – April 2024), addressing the theme of real and metaphorical invisibility that defines our present age in an increasingly unequal society. It cuold be an apt expression for describing the path toward invisibility of many villages and territories in inner areas – already depopulated and marginalized – that are sinking into oblivion as a result of political choices and of degradation, primarily cultural, stemming from the complete absence of governance over local processes. This decline profoundly affects social conditions, patterns of habitation, and the physical environment itself. The act of unveiling – of deeply knowing these contexts, understood as unities of places and people, to be studied and interpreted by uncovering their settlement histories, vocations, resources, geographies, and the living conditions of all species inhabiting them – through documenting, recording, interpreting, and connecting, while engaging with multiple forms of knowledge, represents first and foremost a means of mapping situations of decay and abandonment. In doing so, it brings them out of darkness, while simultaneously constructing a framework of opportunities for regeneration, enhancement, reuse, and the building of a future for those mortified and forgotten places and landscapes. This process outlines a form of new contextualism, one that demands in-depth knowledge pursued with full awareness of disciplinary expertise, yet constantly intersecting with other perspectives born of diverse experiences and disciplinary approaches, without neglecting the insights of those who live or have lived in these places – knowledge that is, precisely, "contextual." Juxtaposing maps of abandonment with those of notable virtuous experiences (best practices) – which are emerging in ever greater number as sparks of regeneration within the study of inland villages and territories – offers an immediate perception of the transformative potential of converting the geographies of abandonment into conditions of opportunity, capable of triggering regenerative processes made possible only through a deep cognitive effort. In this direction, the paper proposes – drawing transversally on several ongoing research initiatives (PNRR Borghi projects currently under implementation, research agreements with local authorities: municipalities, unions of municipalities, regional administrations) – a methodological reflection on the relationship between unveiling and the activation of regenerative processes, and on the role that urban, architectural, and landscape design may assume within these processes.

Unveiling the Invisible: sustainable strategies for the revitalization of contaminated lands

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The contemporary city is traversed by a network of invisible and neglected places: areas which, although integral to the urban and territorial fabric, remain inaccessible, degraded, and marginalized. From coastlines interdicted due to contamination, to abandoned industrial sites, and contexts of widespread decay, these spaces constitute genuine open wounds in the territory. Delays in remediation interventions – prolonged, complex, and above all costly – hinder their reactivation and restitution to the community.

The urgency of the issue is underscored by the attention devoted by the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP) to the so-called "orphan sites," namely contaminated areas lacking an identifiable or accountable responsible party. Further confirmation can be found in the Sites of National Interest (SIN), for which the State provides special legislation and accelerated procedures. The allocation of European funds also to non-remediated private lands highlights both the scale of the phenomenon and the need for an approach that transcends proprietary logics. An ethical and programmatic principle is thus affirmed: environmental remediation, as the protection of a common good, must prevail over all other considerations and requires a collective, cross-sectoral effort.

This contribution proposes to explore innovative modalities for reactivating such areas, positioning natural remediation as the methodological and design fulcrum. The underlying hypothesis is that architectural and urban design can integrate low-impact remediation systems – such as phytoremediation, the use of selected plant species, and agricultural practices – while simultaneously generating new landscapes and territorial identities. Through case studies and emerging research, strategies will be analyzed that render remediation processes both sustainable and regenerative, thereby transforming marginalized and often invisible spaces into ecological, productive, and socially inclusive places.

Making Citizenship: gestures, places, and relationships for living with abandonment

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keywords: inner areas, active citizenship, temporality

The abandonment of the so-called "Inner Areas" is often narrated through the rhetoric of loss and decline, where resignation to depopulation risks turning into a silent surrender that paralyzes any possibility of imagining alternatives. The dominant narrative denies design – both architectural and strategic – the chance to intervene in a critical, creative, and context-sensitive way.

This contribution proposes to overturn that perspective: what if abandonment, instead of marking an ending, were the beginning of a transformation? What if marginality itself could become a generative threshold, capable of activating new ways of inhabiting and of being citizens?

In this vision, abandonment is not a void to be filled according to restorative logics, but rather an open field for civic invention, where unprecedented forms of belonging can be experimented with. It is in these fragile spaces – apparently at the margins – that the possibility emerges to design a new form of citizenship: not imposed from above, but built from below through the direct investment of one's own body and labor.

Taking possession of a neglected space often means physically fixing it with one's own hands: building temporary structures for a festival, reopening an abandoned house, or carrying out small-scale collective restoration projects. In such cases, design is never neutral or abstract but becomes time freely given and effort collectively shared.

Different experiences – from solidarity-based cohabitation that brings abandoned housing back into use, as in Riace, to ephemeral festivals that reignite presence in depopulated villages, like Sponz Fest in Irpinia or Borgofuturo in the Marche – show how inhabiting can become both a political and poetic act, intertwining care with disobedience.

In these contexts, design acknowledges and supports diverse forms of active citizenship, revealing possibilities invisible to institutional radars. The aim is not to offer ready-made solutions, but to create connections between those who stay, those who return, and those who arrive.

Sinking Grounds: mapping the voided landscape of Acque Albule

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keywords: extraction, labour cities, critical cartography

Roman Travertine is the stone of the empire, it has characterized the city of Rome, and unexpectedly conditioned the Acque Albule hinterlands. Its extraction is interlaced with invisibility, dictated the dominance of the industry and the collective coercion of human-actors (labor, their resulting living conditions), and non-human actors (soil, multiple water systems, and ecosystems). Through political ecology and interdisciplinary analysis, this research unearths the rich ecological, historical, and political narratives surrounding travertine, attempting to reveal its consequences through a mapping project. These critical maps intersect complicated dynamics of water, waste, and labor to bring the non-human forces resisting extraction into stark relief.

This proposal maps the visible and invisible transformations of the Acque Albule plain, a territory shaped by centuries of extractive activity and marked today by geological fragility. Natural subsidence and sinkholes, both hidden and exposed, are exacerbated by thermal water extraction and quarry dewatering, turning the land into a slow-moving hazard. At the core of this transformation are i fossanti, the travertine workers who carved the land, built homes, and sustained the area's stone economy. While others profited from the travertine boom, they now face the collapse of their own houses, built from the very ground that sinks beneath them. The maps of surface topography and subsurface depression reveal not just ground deformation, but the lived experience of precarity. Depression velocities, measured in imperceptible millimeters per year, conceal structural damage, minor quakes, and chronic unsuitability for habitation. These invisible voids are rendered visible only through cartographic and narrative tools that combine data, from geologists, hydrogeologists, and social scientists, placing the landscape discipline in the middle. Mapping here is not neutral: it is a critical method to uncover how denied places are produced, geologically, economically, and socially, and to question the imaginaries that continue to erase them.

Architecture's silent Complicity: granite, radon, and the geographies of mining

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keywords: vibrant materials, building health, radioactive contamination

This article investigates the overlooked intersections between architecture, geology, and public health in mining-affected communities, focusing on Urgeiriça, a Portuguese town where locally quarried granite – the very same granite that contains uranium and is mined for nuclear materials – forms the fabric of its buildings. While granite is traditionally celebrated for its durability and cultural significance, this study reveals its silent complicity in perpetuating environmental and health risks through radioactive contamination by radon gas, a byproduct of uranium deposits embedded in the region's geology. Through a spatial and material analysis, the article unpacks how architecture, as both a cultural and material practice, becomes entangled with the geographies of mining, exposing residents to invisible hazards. By revealing these hidden geographies, the study challenges conventional narratives of architectural heritage and calls for an urgent reconsideration of the responsibilities tied to building materials. Ultimately, it advocates for a critical rethinking of the relationships between architecture, environment, and health to promote safer, more just living environments in mining landscapes and elsewhere.

Data Center. Future trajectories of inaccessible spaces

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keywords: spaces without humans, data center, invisible landscapes

The progressive dematerialization of the physical realm into digital data, alongside the automation of both productive and creative processes, is radically transforming the spatial conditions of human habitation. Within this emerging paradigm, Data Centers, logistics hubs, and automated agricultural facilities delineate new technological landscapes – largely invisible yet operationally pervasive – in which human presence becomes functionally obsolete. These environments, which may be defined as "human-less spaces," are characterized by the physical absence of individuals, who no longer occupy them directly but engage with them only as indirect users.

Among these, the Data Center assumes a paradigmatic architectural role: an opaque and inaccessible structure, it functions as a fortified archive of collective digital memory. Echoing Michel Foucault's notion of heterotopia, these spaces may be compared to museums or libraries – places where "time never stops accumulating and gathering upon itself" – preserving material artifacts, but intangible information. The inherent inaccessibility of these infrastructures presents both a conceptual and design challenge, opening new trajectories for architectural experimentation. These explore potential interfaces between human presence and automated systems, questioning how such typologies might be spatially reimagined. One example is The Spark, a project developed by the architectural firm Snøhetta.

Approximately 200 server racks are housed within a mineral core, around which collective spaces are organized, all unified under a functional canopy. Piloted in the city of Lyseparken, Norway, the project aims to reduce energy consumption by up to 40%, transforming the Data Center into an active energy resource for the surrounding urban fabric.

This architectural inquiry into the Data Center raises pressing theoretical and practical questions: can a space conceived for human absence be meaningfully integrated into the contemporary urban landscape, whether consolidated or newly developed? And within these "human-less spaces," is it possible to identify new spatial relationships between human presence and automation?

Fragile Topographies.
A reading of the mining legacy of Monteponi

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keywords: fragile, mining ecology

The paper investigates the topic of fragility within the abandoned mining landscapes of south-western Sardinia. It explores potential critical directions for design capable of addressing contemporary emergencies and urgencies, grounded in a formal reading of these territories. During the second half of the twentieth century, the mining experience of the Sulcis-Iglesiente was particularly marked by the strategic exploitation of subsurface primary resources. Yet it progressively bequeathed transformed post-industrial archaeologies, vast territorial voids, extensive spoil heaps, and toxic traces. Today these places, marked by a desolate austerity, call for adequate responses. The latent, critical, and generative condition of fragility – intrinsically rooted in the delicate negotiation among different agencies – can open new possibilities for design hermeneutics. Starting from the elementary act of backfilling – a primary gestural operation that shaped many of these places through a processual exposure of matter from the subsoil to the surface – the reflection puts forward a controversial topographic case study: the experience of the "Fanghi Rossi" (Red Muds) of the Monteponi Mine. It stands as a paradigmatic example, given its dual contemporary condition as both protected monument and contaminated residue, a material memory of past metallurgical activities. In the raw exposure of intrusive matter – only apparently inert, static, and inactive – mining fragility has both repelled and, unpredictably, accommodated diverse agencies over a century-long time span. In this light, it configures itself as an open-air laboratory capable both of retaining certain risk conditions and of suggesting ecological forms of decommissioning, which from the outset preserve spontaneous clues for their "survival".

Revealing marginal Italy:
Hirpinia Station as a dispositive of unveiling

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keywords: high-speed rail stations, railway infrastructures, intermediate Italy

In the contemporary debate on denied places, the inner areas of Italy appear as marginalized geographies. This marginality does not stem from a lack of natural or cultural assets but from a set of structural factors – including political disinterest, economic decline, and demographic erosion – that have contributed to their invisibility within national planning and policy frameworks. Within this context lies Hirpinia Station on the Naples-Bari HS/HC line. It is an infrastructure designed to connect two metropolitan poles – Napoli and Bari –, yet it simultaneously produces new fractures in the marginal territories of Irpinia.

This contribution, developed as part of the research carried out under Spoke 7 PE9 GRINS (PNRR), considers Hirpinia Station as an emblematic case study, in which architectural design is understood as a tool of interpretation that can reframe the relationship between territory and infrastructure, and as a potential device for making visible marginalized geographies and denied inner territories. On this basis, the contribution reflects critically on the tensions between the space and the possibilities represented by the station and the lived space, composed of slow landscapes, stratified memories, agricultural communities. The aim is to outline perspectives for a design approach that does not merely insert itself into the territory but can subvert sedimented narratives by listening, revealing, and projecting new imaginaries for a counter-geography oriented towards the territorial sustainability of Italy's inner and denied marginal areas.

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T3 – Differences

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The city is not only what appears but also, and often, what is silenced, kept at the margins, rendered opaque. To address denied spaces means engaging with geographies suspended between the visible and the invisible. In this perspective, difference is not a defect to be corrected, but a generative principle that produces ephemeral choreographies, subtle infrastructures and practices of belonging that exceed official maps. The assembled research in Differences shows how bodies, communities and other species redefine urban fragments by adapting interstices and institutions. From architectures of intimacy to those of the sacred, from the thresholds of care to the territories of incarceration, counter-geographies emerge that question design by asking how to recognise what demands protection without delivering it to control, and how to render accessible the nodes that are currently excluded from citizenship.

Through notions such as threshold, palimpsest, spatial justice and interdependence, the city emerges as a field of conflict and possibility, where what is removed continues to orient trajectories of growth and what is marginal produces forms of knowledge, rituals and occasions for encounter. The guiding question is therefore twofold: how can we give public form to these geographies without betraying their opacity? And how can we transform the urban, architectural and pedagogical project into an act of recognition that redistributes visibility, rights and care, restoring to each person the possibility of inhabiting and of being remembered in the common city? The aim is not to seek single solutions, but a lexicon for equitable cities, where opacity protects, care is political, and memory becomes project.

Speaking of differences does not mean fixing them; rather, it means creating conditions of appearance and of choice, taking interdependence as a fundamental principle. The politics of denied places is therefore a politics of situated rights, where not everything should be made visible, but everything should be made habitable. The challenge is to include what the city has removed without extinguishing its mystery, so that the plurality of experiences may become a common project.

Opaque Geographies of Desire. Cruising landscapes, queer landscapes

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keywords: desire, queer, cruising

Cruising areas represent one of the most radical and ambiguous forms of queer spatial production: territories where the public and the intimate intersect, transforming fragments of cities, infrastructures, or natural settings into sites of desire, freedom, and risk. Seemingly neutral environments are re-read and reconfigured by queer bodies through informal codes, generating a parallel geography – difficult to capture, and deliberately kept invisible.

To expose these sites does not mean to render them visible at the cost of appropriation, control, or repression. These are spaces that require concealment. Yet silence also reinforces their marginality, confining them to a precarious and muted existence. How, then, can we narrate a landscape that emerges precisely in the tension between visibility and invisibility?

The paper proposes to understand cruising as an opaque geography (Glissant, 1990): not a territory to be mapped for the institutional gaze, but an experience to be apprehended and described through its dispositifs, practices, and imaginaries. Cruising is not reducible to a physical location: it is ephemeral architecture encoded by gestures; a choreography of bodies tracing paths and defining thresholds (de Certeau, 1980); an alphabet of looks and signals accessible only to those familiar with its unwritten rules. By subverting the logics of dominant, heteronormative sexuality, these sites are not merely temporary refuges but crucial dispositifs for the construction and recognition of queer identity – laboratories of belonging and resistance.

Adopting a narrative and phenomenological approach, the contribution seeks to frame cruising not as a space to be "normalized," but as a geography of desire (Muñoz, 2009): a practice of reappropriation that unsettles normative orders and discloses alternative ways of inhabiting space. In this sense, to reveal does not mean to betray, but rather to acknowledge the political and symbolic density of these hidden landscapes, inscribing them within collective memory without extinguishing their mystery.

Counter-Geography of the Sacred. Submerged architectures of Islamic worship in contemporary Rome

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According to data from the Ministry of the Interior (2016), Italy counts 1,251 Islamic places of worship, yet only four are formally recognised as mosques. In Rome, a 2017 survey recorded more than 100 worship spaces, many of which operate in precarious and unofficial conditions: environments adapted for religious use, devoid of architectural quality, and often located at the city's margins or within its invisible interstices. Despite their informality, these spaces function as devices of belonging and resistance: thresholds through which diasporic communities reinscribe themselves into the body of the city. However, the absence of a defined architectural form – the denial of a figure – produces a symbolic subtraction, an exclusion that no longer operates at the juridical level but at the aesthetic and ontological one. Architecture, in this sense, becomes an instrument of citizenship: what lacks recognition in form is excluded from collective memory, from the urban narrative, and from the regime of visibility (Bourdieu, 1993; Arendt, 1958). This contribution proposes a mapping of invisible worship spaces, outlining a counter- geography of negated sites and analysing how their distribution has influenced new vectors of urban expansion, contributing to diffuse and unprecedented morphologies within the contemporary city. Where official mosques are absent, it is these silent presences that orient urban growth – by negation or by adaptation. The aim is not to design new mosques, but rather to reveal – in the Foucauldian sense – the invisible structures of the sacred that already inhabit the city. Architectural intervention is thus conceived as a form of urban microsurgery: a precise, situated practice capable of restoring dignity to marginal spaces through the conscious use of absolute elements – light as epiphany, matter as memory, symbol as a form of collective resonance. From this perspective, architecture becomes an act of care and recognition: a gesture that renders visible what the city has repressed, and that restores to these negated worship spaces their full status as places of being, where body, time, and belonging are reconciled within space.

Within the Womb of the Aqueduct. Another overlapping narrative to the palimpsest

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For the poet Alfonso Gatto, "men make the cities alive and dead". Indeed, it is through men and their interactions that cities change their face and come alive in always different shapes. The urban landscape is the narrative palimpsest where, as a result of the evolution of events and their perception, reciprocal and continuous changes, in spaces and their inhabitants, take place.

Catastrophes, either caused by nature or by men themselves, represent the element of discontinuity that, by destructuring the existing order and stability, triggers processes of recreation and redefinition of the self, which, in turn, lead to new languages and communities (Fabbri, 1973).

The Second World War bombing of Rome could be taken as an example of such catastrophic events. Displaced people in the San Lorenzo neighborhood occupied the arches of the Felice aqueduct, which, from Porta Maggiore, cross the urban area of the Mandrione. Its architectonic configuration, combined with the emergency conditions created by the catastrophe, caused a transformation of the collective space. Pasolini was so much attracted by this "desperate vitality" that the aqueduct became the stage for his films.

Nowadays, the Felice aqueduct has come back to life thanks to the Bangladeshi community, which is settled in the Tor Pignattara neighborhood and has a symbiotic relationship with the cozy shapes of the aqueduct. New urban activities are taking place between the arches and the park. Some take shelter from the sun, some lean on the walls or on cardboard to play cards. These spaces represent an Italian-style gap: the difficulty to ensure the co-existence between the conservation of archaeological assets, on the one hand, and, on the other, the ability and possibility to reinterpret and experience the contemporary project, leaving traces of the present civilization (Di Carlo, 2016). The arches of the aqueduct, as the case of the Bangladeshi community demonstrates, could turn into an urban design tool, and no longer just a background. The aqueduct within the urban landscape, understood as a place of collective memory (Morgia, 2020), regains one of its many historical meanings, adding another overlapping narrative to the palimpsest.

Beyond the Enclosure: historic zoos, Modern Architecture and interspecies coexistence. The case of the Naples Zoological Garden

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The modern zoo represents one of the most controversial sites of the contemporary city: a space of captivity and pedagogy, of control and spectacle, where the historical relationship between humans and non-humans is reflected. Zoological gardens built in the twentieth century – such as the Naples Zoological Park, designed in the postwar period by Luigi Piccinato – now raise urgent questions of environmental justice, animal welfare, and architectural conservation. What should be done with these spaces once they are deemed obsolete? How might they be transformed into places of coexistence without erasing their material and symbolic memory?

This essay seeks to explore design scenarios for the transformation of the Naples Zoo, integrating different disciplinary perspectives: architecture, post-natural theory, zooarchitecture, and urban studies. Through a critical analysis of the site and its transformations, the research approaches restoration not as a neutral act of recovery but as an act of revelation and transformation, capable of weaving together the demands of modern heritage with those of interspecies coexistence. In this way, the zoological garden becomes a device through which to question the boundaries of the human, rethink spaces of care, and imagine a new agency for non-human bodies in the city.

The zoo is interpreted here as a "denied space" both for animals – confined within artificial habitats – and for modern and contemporary architecture, often neglected or erased. The design proposal also confronts extreme scenarios – from decommissioning to rewilding – in order to restore visibility and meaning to a liminal space, suspended between memory, oblivion, and possibility.

The Inversion of the Subject and the Search for Identity

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keywords: architecture and mental health, threshold, care, memory, and narration

"Both the doctor and the architect must provide a response that meets the needs of the oppressed rather than those of the dominant logic [...] one emerges from the enclosed place in which man could only be an object, while man, on the contrary, expresses himself as a subject." With these words, Franco Basaglia establishes a radical paradigm shift: the person affected by psychological distress is no longer the object of treatment, but the active subject of their own care.

This reversal is also reflected in psychiatric architecture, which, starting from the 1950s, progressively abandons the institutional logic to explore new spatial modalities that foster expression, dignity, and relationships. The environment thus takes on an essential therapeutic role, influencing physical, psychological, and social well-being. Architects and psychiatrists begin to design flexible and non-hierarchical spaces that adapt to the needs of the individual.

However, architecture, by its very nature, is more rigid than care practices, risks reproducing exclusionary forms if not accompanied by a profound change in the doctor-patient relationship. In recent decades, neuroscience and architecture have initiated a dialogue in which approaches such as Healing Environment and Evidence-Based Design demonstrate the positive impact of natural light, privacy, nature, aesthetics, and orientation on the patient's experience, proving that space can itself be "care" when conceived as a sensory and social experience.

It is within this framework that the author's doctoral research is situated, aiming to reformulate the dialogue between care, memory, and the narration of mental health through the evolution of architectural spaces. Conducted with an interdisciplinary approach, the study combined theoretical analysis and field observation, exploring the educational, symbolic, and inclusive value of spaces of care. In particular, emphasis is placed on the concept of the "threshold" as a relational space, capable of connecting separate worlds and generating transitions between exclusion and belonging, between illness and participation. From this perspective, architecture becomes an active tool in the therapeutic and social process, restoring to the subject the possibility of inhabiting a space in which they can recognize themselves.

Persistent Rhetorics and Possible Narratives in the Design of Spaces for "Extraordinary People"

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The UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities has expressed deep concern about "the trend towards re-institutionalization of persons with disabilities and the lack of reallocating resources from residential institutions to promoting and ensuring access to independent living within the community" (2016).

The doctoral thesis Atypical, Self-determined, Interdependent People. Possible Housing Options for Extraordinary People investigates the dilemma between the ideal of autonomy and the inherent tension towards interdependence in the design of living environments for neurodivergent people, including conditions such as autism, Alzheimer's disease, and intellectual impairments. The research examines historical, modern, and contemporary places in which persons with disabilities have been contained, assisted, or forced to dwell. In these "invisible asylums" architecture embodies educational and communal ideologies for the so-called "unproductive". The proposal is to include within the "geographies of marginalization" the numerous "forced stays" (Tarantino 2024) imposed on many "extraordinary people". It further calls for renewed engagement of design disciplines, recognizing architecture's role in shaping spaces and narratives that challenge persistent rhetorics and open new possibilities. An Inventory of Projects provides a historical and cross-national mapping of architectures for the collective dwelling of persons with intellectual disabilities. An Inventory of Words juxtaposes contemporary terms with older expressions such as "institute" or "feeble-minded", sometimes erased only from language but not from practice. Words and projects together underscore the persistent scarcity of vocabulary to describe, without normalizing, diverse subjectivities, and a corresponding poverty of spaces capable of welcoming, without negating, the multiple ways of being and inhabiting. The image documents, by contrast, an invention of possibilities: the project SON Cascina San Carlo in Milan, designed by Stefano Tropea (b22 architettura) with Carlo Venegoni.

Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) as Invisible Infrastructure

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keywords: invisibility, infrastructure, resilience

> "I am invisible, understand, simply because people refuse to see me"
> Ralph Ellison The Invisible Man

For the 2024 presidential election, VP Kamala Harris, chose her alma mater, Howard University, in D.C as her official campaign headquarters to watch the results. The live images that were broadcast to the nation were from an Historically Black College and University (HBCU), the type of institution that has occupied the invisible margins for the dominant American culture. There are both private and public HBCUs that exist primarily in the former slave states. During segregation, they provided people of African descent a place to gain an education since they were denied attending white universities (Predominantly White Institutions – PWIs). The advent of desegregation gave African Americans access to PWIs. So why do HBCUs still exist today? This essay argues that the HBCU functions as a powerful form of invisible social and intellectual infrastructure. It exposes how spatial networks can be sustained in a place where communities have been excluded from dominant educational and economic systems. Whilst they may not always appear in mainstream narratives of innovation or urban development, the HBCU has long nurtured the progress of Black America through the transmission of cultural knowledge, leadership development, and community resilience. An HBCU campus is a place that provides a safe space for cultural rituals, sites of memory, and intergenerational links that positively reinforce identity whilst promoting social mobility. This invisible infrastructure operates beneath the surface of the public recognition of the dominant culture, yet it supports the visible structures of civic engagement and professional advancement. This research narrates how architecture programs at HBCUs nurture students to enact positive change to the American built environment, particularly to under-represented, invisible, black communities. For many of the graduates of such programmes, as opposed to those from PWIs, there is an embedded sense of responsibility to make constructive contributions to cultural and political landscapes, even if said contributions remain under-acknowledged in conventional accounts of institutional power.

Welfare Horizons. Perspectives from the reception and integration service (SAI) in the metropolitan area of Naples

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keywords: migrations, welfare, urban landscapes

The widespread network of reception facilities for asylum seekers, refugees, and unaccompanied foreign minors activated by the S.A.I. project (Reception and Integration Service) outlines a hidden welfare system in the metropolitan area of Naples, innovative in its intrinsic ability to engage with the specific characteristics of diverse urban contexts and to interpret the dreams and needs of contemporary citizenship.

The social services provided – both tangible and intangible – are not addressed solely to the direct beneficiaries of the project, but also respond to a broader range of needs within both resident and temporary communities.

The research project Forms of Accomdations (2023-2025), conducted by the authors in a multidisciplinary environment with the support of local authorities and Third Sector associations, has laid the methodological foundations for a dynamic mapping of active structures across the territory.

Conceived as a tool for orientation and dialogue among stakeholders involved in reception processes and local communities, this multiscalar mapping compares material and immaterial forms of reception, typological and morphological aspects of the facilities and urban fabrics, current conditions of the sites, and exemplary case studies. It inherently contains the premises for triggering urban and social regeneration actions, particularly valuable in marginal areas.

This hypothesis was tested through design experiments that explore the potential of reception centers to become new urban landmarks, renewing and updating a tradition embedded in the genetic code of the metropolitan city.

The horizon of possibilities outlined through these design imaginaries can be decoded to give rise to procedural practices, in which regulations safeguarding spatial justice are nourished by a renewed awareness of the specificities of landscape contexts and the contribution that "architectural dignity" can make to the social cause.

Spatial Marginalization of Detention Facilities and Accessibility Challenges for Users and Families: the case of the 'Pasquale Mandato' prison in Scampia

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keywords: prison accessibility, equitable mobility, urban marginality

In contemporary urban geographies, prisons constitute both symbolic and material sites of marginalization. The "Pasquale Mandato" correctional facility in Secondigliano, located at the metropolitan edge of Scampia and weakly connected to Naples' mobility and service networks, exemplifies how spatial segregation operates not only on incarcerated populations but also on families, legal practitioners, volunteers and staff. The difficulty of accessing the facility creates an invisible boundary between "inside" and "outside," accentuating the disjunction between the penal institution and the wider urban system. In this way, the prison functions as an infrastructural void, a denied urban node that is excluded from civic life and absent from spatial representation. A substantial academic literature and case studies, from Loïc Wacquant to Ruth Wilson Gilmore, has demonstrated how the peripheral siting of prisons is not incidental but rather reflects planning strategies that contribute to the invisibilization of detention and the territorial marginalization of affected communities. Gilmore's notion of carceral geography underscores how spatial configurations themselves reinforce exclusionary processes. Within this framework, prison visits, already shaped by emotional and bureaucratic burdens, become complex logistical journeys that intensify isolation and weaken social connectivity.

In a democratic and constitutional context such as Italy's, founded on the dignity of the person and the rehabilitative principle of punishment, it is increasingly untenable that physical inaccessibility should serve as an additional layer of exclusion. This paper advances a critical and multidisciplinary reflection on the nexus between spatial organization, accessibility, and justice. It argues for the reframing of prisons as integral components of the metropolitan structure, calling for planning imaginaries and practices that prioritize integration, connectivity, and spatial justice.

Reinhabiting the Margins. The city beyond the prison

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keywords: prison, regeneration, care

Numerous studies demonstrate the influence exerted by prisons on the territories that host them. Nevertheless, the prison-city relationship has received limited attention within the design disciplines; consequently, the prison continues to be experienced by the city as a problematic presence. In Italy, this question was central to Giovanni Michelucci who – conceiving the prison as a component of the city understood as a place of civil coexistence – argued that their design must be interrelated. This paper engages with that perspective and asks whether the prison-city relationship can be renewed through urban planning, by presenting the project I CARE: inclusione, carcere, architettura, rigenerazione, ecologia (hereafter I CARE), developed by theLab of Critical Planning & Design [Dida-Unifi] and aimed at the urban regeneration of the peripheral territory in which the prisons of the city of Florence are located.

Infantocratic Counter-Geographies: spatial production in childhood and the case of Jongensland

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In the aftermath of Nazism's defeat, in a Europe still marked by authoritarian discipline and social control, a radical experiment in childhood liberation took shape in Amsterdam: Jongensland, "the land of boys". Established in 1948 by Dutch urban planners and psychologists as a reaction to the pedagogical rigidity of the regime, Jongensland was conceived as a liberated space – an island accessible only by boat – where the conventional boundaries of the city, of childhood, and of urban design were unsettled.

This educational and urban experiment, now almost forgotten, anticipated practices of spatial empowerment, self-construction, and the deinstitutionalization of play, while interrogating the relationship between freedom, space, and citizenship. It represented a conscious political act, challenging the forms of authority and control that regulate both urban space and the child's body, and advancing autonomy and play as instruments of resistance and reappropriation.

From this case study, the intervention reflects on the possibility of reading Jongensland as a form of counter-geography generated by childhood – one capable of evading mechanisms of surveillance and proposing a radical alternative to dominant spatial and educational models.

As a space resistant to domination, Jongensland demonstrates how childhood can become an active agent in the production of space. In such territories – utopian islands, "infantocracies" (domains of childhood power and autonomy), or temporary autonomous zones with restricted access – the potential emerges to transform what elsewhere remains denied, invisible, or forgotten.

Narratives of Resistance: satire as anti-ableist critique

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keywords: disability, narrative architecture, satire

Despite representing the world's largest minority, disabled people and their perspectives, communities, and histories are consistently excluded from architectural discourse. Architect and scholar, Jos Boys, writes that disability is assumed to be "unable to bring any kind of criticality or creativity to the discipline of architecture," and remains "stuck in a non-historical, atheoretical, and […] seriously underexplored category" (Disability, Space, Architecture, Routledge, 2017). While emerging scholarship has begun to assess our profession's limited engagement with disability (David Gissen, The Architecture of Disability; Wanda Liebermann, Architecture's Disability Problem), these engagements depend on a narrow range of research tools and methods. Reliant on the restrained, patient sincerity of rational analysis, they have largely failed to capture the attention of architects.

Alternatively, architecture's legacy of subversive spatial narratives (e.g. the work of Superstudio, Rem Koolhaas, Jimenez Lai, and WAI Think Tank) has proven to be both a compelling and inclusive mechanism for counter-cultural critique. As a "response to the inability to provoke radical change by the usual methods," satirical narratives disrupt the complacency of hegemonic discourses through the subversive capacity of humor and parody (Narrative Architecture, nai010 Publishers, 2020).

This article proposes Narrative Architecture as a method of resistance to the complacency of contemporary architectural discourse, emphasizing its capacity to recenter excluded perspectives and realities. It will explore the experimental deployment of satire and manifesto in the lead author's award-winning thesis project, "Towards an Anti-Ableist Architecture," (Virginia Tech, 2023), exploring, in particular, its application of WAI Think Tank's "Post-Colonial Method" ("A Loudreaders Guide to the Post-Colonial Method," koozArch, 2023) as a means of revealing hidden connections between ableism and architecture.

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T4 – Post-metropolis

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"The global city is anything but smooth, light, and transparent: it is creased and wrinkled, it smells; it is made of frontiers, ruptures, voids, and densities, of struggles and intense clashes of words, weapons, and bodies" (Trad. Eng. Lazzarini, 2020).

The session explores the tensions and opportunities that emerge when engaging with the denied places of the contemporary city – the "Postmetropolis" as theorized by Edward Soja twenty-five years ago. It is a polycentric, networked city, decentralized and dispersed, constantly traversed by flows of people, goods, symbols, information, practices, and visions. The boundaries between formal and informal, legal and illegal, are continuously crossed, loosened, and renegotiated, while urban forms remain in constant flux. When borders cut across central spaces and margins shift toward the core, the effects are ambivalent: long-standing connections dissolve, yet new micro-cultures and hybrid forms emerge.

Each contribution presented in this session reveals a fragment of this "global city", reflecting an apparent marginality – a network of residual spaces that embody the complexity of today's urban condition, seen as a field of control, appropriation, and transgression. Ports, former industrial areas, urban gardens, public spaces, and informal settlements outline an urban landscape still marked by restriction, suspension, and division. Yet within these compressed settings, forms of life appear that elude prediction: community practices, domestic routines, and symbolic gestures that restore voice to those inhabiting the city in their everyday experience. It is within this tension that new narratives and experimental design practices emerge, redrawing the boundaries between what is official and permitted and what endures on the margins.

What connects the various studies is the intent to reveal and re-signify the invisible. Across the physical, psychological, and cultural edges of the contemporary city, critical interpretation becomes a tool for surfacing latent possibilities and imagining alternative futures amid contradictions. Reflection on urban transformation no longer stops at description but aims – through collective writing – to propose new languages and tools that can open spaces for coexistence. The post-metropolis is no longer only a city of control and constraint, but one of counter-spaces: places that embrace fragility, experiment with new forms of citizenship, and remind us that the city exists only insofar as it is lived, crossed, and shared – within and beyond its boundaries.

Invisible Geographies: denied spaces of Napoli Est

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keywords: Napoli Est, urban regeneration, urban spaces

Napoli is a city shaped by successive layers of history and urban development that coexist and sometimes negate one another. The observation of the eastern territories, beyond the historic centre, reveals the presence of almost invisible territories: "denied" spaces that are unacknowledged by the collective gaze and excluded from the dominant narrative of the urban fabric. The eastern area of the city is particularly fragmented, with material and immaterial discontinuities and interruptions hindering its accessibility and legibility.

Abandoned industrial sites and infrastructure that cuts across and overshadows the built environment constitute a constellation of inaccessible areas that are often perceived as marginalised, particularly the coastal strip, which is now reduced to the backdrop of the productive zone and is largely subordinated to the authority of the port.

This paper critically examines such spaces, employing a methodology that combines observation, drawing and photography. The aim is to describe, classify and, above all, reinterpret these places, recognising their potential as resources for the active regeneration of Eastern Naples. The investigation considers how these non-places could be reimagined as spaces for collective use and urban life. Rather than viewing them as peripheral voids, the paper reframes their role as threshold devices capable of activating new forms of openness, opportunity, and inclusion.

Who's City? Sit at My Drying Rack: The city of tables and mass turification

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keywords: Naples, touristification, space

Naples is a city that has always lived in tension, among contradictions, coexistence, and resistance. But today, in the race after tourism, the historical center has turned into a system of consumption. The "derogation ordinance for the use of public space," introduced to revive the post-Covid economy, has speeded up a process already underway: the replacement of daily life space with space for consumption. The tables, today symbol of this on going process, draw both real and symbolic boarders: they exclude, channel flows and impose staying only when dictated by consumption.

This transformation has highlighted the absence of third spaces, where objects become language: they mark who can and cannot stay. The center grows hostile to informal living, while in the margins of the city the relationship with space remains tactile, daily, shaped by private extensions that become public.

This research emerges from listening to those who live the city every day, like Nives Monda, owner of Taverna Santa Chiara, and developed through a photographic investigation of objects in the urban space and a series of public interventions. At its core lies a simple gesture: bringing back the drying rack: an ordinary, domestic object, a marginal symbol into the heart of the city.

A dissonant presence, opening a space for dialogue on the phenomenon of touristification. A way to interrupt the flow, to bring questions to the surface. The clash of narratives turns the drying rack into an intrusive matter an invitation to observe, to remember that this risks leaving behind what UNESCO has recognized in the document "The Spirit of Naples": the city's intangible heritage, people.

Hostile Cities:
the role of resistence in the urban contemporary space

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keywords: precariousness, bodies, revolution

The spaces where the sea meets the land, where marine practices relate to the urban ones, are porous ecosystems: some of the most vulnerable coastal areas. The Practices belonging to the two different spheres collide, drawing geopolitical boundaries that make the sea itself an urbanized territory, as Carola Hein and Coulin Nancy point out in "The Urbanization of the Sea: from concept analysis to design". The water that binds global territories together becomes the battleground for different interests, that lead to tangible and intangible transformations. In this sense, the margin of this binding force reflects this continuous metamorphosis made up of collisions, migrations, extractions, and changes imposed by the rise of the Anthropocene. The territory of the port city consequently becomes an urban category, a no one's land but also an example of those borders seen as "a laboratory for observation, challenges to be faced" (Vanessa Lacaille and Mounir Ayoub). In the continuous battle between land and water, what would happen if the port boundary were to disappear? Would new horizons open up beyond ships, containers, oil rigs, fishing boats, and lighthouses? The coast, as a liminal place, becomes a contested territory; that over the years has increasingly extended towards the maritime sphere, becoming introverted to the urban one. The conquest of the margin, where concrete embankments alternate with privatized beaches, potentially becomes "the places where human impulses and desires arise […] human experience is gathered" (Zygmunt Baumann). In the reclamation of stolen places, the products of the post-metropolis become opportunity of coexistence between the city and the industry, between the maritime and urban spheres. The denial of the sea horizon, which lasted for too long, fuels the negotiation of these spaces in the future dialogue between city and port, between coast and coast, between different seas.

On the Potential Within:
the great park of Naples historic center

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keywords: transition, gardens, monasteries

Within the limes of Naples' Historic Center lies a concealed and fragmented heritage: convent gardens, cloistered orchards, and residual green spaces embedded within the urban blocks, often inaccessible. These places, originally conceived as spaces of production, contemplation, and care, now emerge as reservoirs of urban biodiversity and natural microclimates capable of counterbalancing the dense fabric of the ancient city. The proposal aims to explore the potential reconnection of these green enclosures within a systemic vision that enhances their ecological, social, and cultural value: a diffuse urban park that is not constructed through addition, but rather through unexpected revelations and unprecedented connections of the existing.

The research hypothesis seeks to define a system of minimal interventions on the connective elements of the monasteries of the Historic Center – thresholds, passages, portals – in order to activate a network of accessibility and usability among spaces currently denied or marginalized. In this perspective, convent gardens are not transformed but rather brought into relation with one another, prefiguring a new ecological infrastructure which, by traversing the insulae of the consolidated city, can offer an unprecedented modus vivendi of the urban natural heritage, too often neglected or underutilized.

This line of inquiry aligns with pressing contemporary themes related to the imperative ecological transition, proposing a model of urban regeneration characterized by low energy impact and high symbolic intensity in terms of sustainability. It is an attempt to address the challenges posed by contemporary society through the activation of a coherent green system for the community. The question here is not the necessity of adding greenery, but rather the possibility of recognizing and appropriately valorizing it. Ultimately, it is about making space for the nature that already inhabits the city, placing it at the center of a participatory and sustainable urban scenario.

Reveal the Sea

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keywords: city, sea, urban project

This article aims to tackle a thorny issue that has been plaguing Naples, a city of "unresolved contradictions," for some years now: its relationship with its coastline. While a casual and superficial reading of the city might suggest that its relationship with the sea is straightforward and obvious, the reality, as evidenced by Anna Maria Ortese's novel "Il mare non bagna Napoli" and Antonio Piero Toma's book "Storia del Porto di Napoli", tells us of a bond that, especially in the last 150 years, has gradually cracked until it finally broke due to the construction of the large port infrastructure: a real barrier that, extending for about 5 km from Molo San Vincenzo to San Giovanni a Teduccio, prevents the entire consolidated city (ancient and historic center) from enjoying the waterfront. This proposal seeks to restore the ancient spatial continuity between the city and the sea by resorting to the only tool capable of defining a possible, or even better, desirable transformation of the city: the urban project. Based on the results of the educational and experimental experiences of "Progetti per Napoli" and the International Design Seminars "Naples. Architecture and City" seminars, which on two occasions dealt with the large study area of the port, an attempt is made to identify a series of architectural and urban solutions which, from a formal point of view and in several places, from the San Vincenzo Pier at the eastern end, passing through the definitions of continuity with Via Duomo (trapezoidal junction) and Corso Garibaldi (Carmine junction), the small beach of Borgo di Loreto, and the Maddalena Bridge, describe the possibility of reconfiguring the southern border of Naples, healing the existing fracture with the coast and reminding, or perhaps we should say "revealing," to the consolidated city the existence of that now forgotten asset that belongs to it: the sea.

Magnesia Revealed.
Rediscovering and re-inhabiting spaces taken away from the city

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keywords: ancient city, architecture, urban morphology

The article[1] examines the case of Magnesia on the Meander, an ancient Thessalian colony in Asia Minor, whose fragmentary remains now emerge as shining masses of light between the clear waters of the Lethaios River (today's Gümüşçay, "silver stream") and the rocky embroidery of Mount Torax (Gümüşdağ, "silver mountain"). Between the whiteness of the large dry-stone blocks and the colourful agricultural landscape, the geometric and luminescent residual stones of the city can be glimpsed, bearing witness to the fragile presence of the polis: a fragile heritage partly hidden from view by the passage of time and partly disfigured by recent road and rail infrastructure. Although motivated by legitimate needs for protection and connection, these corrupting works risk severing the original link between the city and the chora. In response, in order to restore coherence and meaning to the site, four intervention techniques are proposed – the striga, analogue hatching, syntagmatic relation and analogy in praesentia – conceived as tools aimed at reactivating the formal memories of the place. They pursue two inseparable objectives: on the one hand, to make those ancient bonds that welded the territory and human work into a single sensory experience intelligible once again and, on the other, to reveal, through justified transformative action, the geometric and spatial relationships linked to the process of the genesis of the form of ancient cities.

[1] This contribution presents an excerpt from the author's doctoral research, The Founding Order of the Ancient City. Reasons and methods of intervention for the poleis of Ionia, discussed on 3 March 2025 at Sapienza University of Rome (XXXVII cycle of the Doctorate in Architecture and Construction), under the supervision of Prof. Renato Capozzi and Prof. Federica Visconti, with Prof. Alessandro Camiz acting as external examiner.

Gardens on the Margins: negotiating the meaning of belonging and spatial rights in asylum shelters

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keywords: spatial justice, refugee accommodation, everyday spatial practices

In this contribution, I explore the role of gardens in the spatial and social fabric of Swiss asylum accommodations. These places, which might seem small and not important, are actually places where people show their feelings, talk, and take care of each other. Through field visits, interviews with residents, and theoretical frameworks from environmental psychology and spatial justice, I examine how these gardens serve as tools of resilience and informal spatial appropriation.

In institutional settings characterized by control, temporariness, and restriction, gardens provide moments of rootedness and self-determination. They become arenas where women and children assert presence. These children are often among the most marginalized within an already precarious system. They cultivate routines and build relationships with place. Here, the act of gardening exceeds mere land occupation; it becomes a spatial practice that challenges the invisibility and standardization of asylum infrastructures.

This paper argues that gardens in refugee accommodations are political, not merely therapeutic or symbolic. They expose the underlying tension between state-imposed spatial regimes and lived forms of emplacement. The garden is to be framed as a counter-space, a modest but powerful response to spatial exclusion, in order to contribute to broader debates on the right to space, belonging, and the architecture of social marginalization.

This work is situated at the intersection of architecture, migration studies, and spatial agency. It questions how asylum spaces are designed and inhabited and how they are transformed and quietly resisted.

Forced Space: a human architectural narrative during the Gaza war

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keywords: resilient architecture, forced space, Gaza war

"The Forced Space: An Architectural and Human Narrative during the Gaza War" explores the profound and complex transformations that have affected the architectural and human landscape of the Gaza Strip throughout the brutal period of war. The book goes beyond merely documenting the physical destruction and ruin of buildings; it delves deeply into how Palestinians reshaped the meaning and existence of space amid the rubble and devastation. It examines how "forced commons" turned into "forced spaces" imposed on displaced people under extremely harsh conditions, where these areas often lack the most basic requirements for dignified living and fail to meet daily human needs.

The book traces the displacement transformations on both philosophical and human levels, demonstrating that displacement is not just a physical relocation but an experience that deeply affects the fabric of place and reshapes social relations and living behaviors.

In addition, the book presents numerous architectural and human stories and narratives, illustrating how these forced spaces and commons have affected the residents and, in turn, how the residents have influenced and reshaped these spaces. Each story is accompanied by detailed architectural and human analysis of the forced space, including sketches, elevations, and perspectives of the spaces, as well as maps tracing each family's displacement journey since the beginning of the war and examining how each forced location impacted their lives.

It emphasizes that architecture is not merely a physical construction but a human and ethical act reflecting people's memories, responding to their needs, and reinforcing their resilience against severe challenges.

This work calls for a fundamental rethinking of residential space design and architecture – towards flexibility and humanity – that respects individuals and their privacy, while fostering life-sustaining resistance, dignity, and continued existence amid ongoing destruction.

The Capitol and the Capital: a case study of activating citizenship in Chandigarh

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The UNESCO World Heritage Site of the Capitol Complex Plaza, at Chandigarh (a modernist, postcolonial city designed by Le Corbusier) is a famous and highly published public space. It was meant to be used by the judges, advocates, and legislatures, but it was also intended to be accessible to the citizenry. It is after all, owned by the people, constructed with people's money, hosts institutions funded by the people; forming spaces for public gathering to make public statements in the interest of the public. However, the heavy-handed regulation by the city's elites and exclusion of the public in the past have weakened civic participation and eroded public life in the Capitol Complex. As the Capitol exists outside the everyday fabric of the Capital city, it exits almost as a separate, elite category of land use.

My work on Chandigarh draws from my lived experience (as a third generation resident) and practice in architecture and urban design, along with my role as an academic-activist in the city. Through practice research, I work with methods of photography, interviews, as well as filmmaking and film screenings in Chandigarh by bringing the people together. My work is foregrounding different urban situations, notable in their complexity, to create a relational space, with/for those who are responsible for and those who are impacted by them. By integrating cartography, choreography, and community engagement, my work reimagines filmmaking as a spatial and political practice. It positions film as both a research method and a communicative tool, fostering dialogue between citizens, space, and scholarly inquiry. Through this paper, I open up my decade long work in academic-activism, spatial design and filmmaking to (re)introduce the Capitol Complex Plaza to the people of Chandigarh, inviting them into this public space and at the same time, inviting this space into the active consciousness of the working class.

Fragile Bodies in Radical Spaces: imagining the inclusive city

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keywords: psychiatry, city, care

This paper examines the relationship between space and the body affected by psychiatric vulnerability. more than forty-five years after the enactment of law 180 – through which italy, the first country worldwide, closed psychiatric hospitals and established a territorial, community-based system of mental health care – the reform remains in many respects unfinished, while psychiatric vulnerability continues to grow. Against this backdrop, the article asks what new bonds of care can be woven between territory and mental health. It advances a reflection on the notion of the caring city, understood as a project of mental health and social cohesion grounded in a renewed "alliance among bodies," and between those bodies and territorial resources. the purpose is to consider, theoretically and operationally, the possibility of conceiving research "devices" – provisional yet generous – capable of approaching, In a "radical" manner, the construction of a city that includes people labelled as "mad." On the one hand, this entails developing new interpretive and narrative lenses to rethink the conditions that produce exclusion in contemporary urban contexts; on the other, it requires envisioning planning mechanisms capable of conceiving and designing an open social space that re-collectivises the responsibility for the care of people labelled as "mad" or "deviant" within the community.

I, a man, look for the space of Ithaca. Sailing in the city of objects of the XXI century

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keywords: Ulysses, space, sailing

In the city of the twenty-first century, unstoppable urbanization has forced us to reconsider the relationship between buildings and the spaces that surround them. They are no longer just residual voids, but key elements that define, once the historic centers have been abandoned, the urban experience of the "borgatosphere" (Mattioli 2024). The proposed paper examines how the interstices between architectural objects – whether they are squares, alleys, courtyards or the simple distances between facades – profoundly influence the livability, functionality and identity of our urban fabrics. A lack of design will for these spaces, in some urban contexts, makes today's citizen take on the features of an alternative contemporary Ulysses who seeks a safe route in the indeterminacy of spaces that have become "sea" between objects: it is the narrative of an insecure man who loses all point of reference as soon as he crosses the "threshold" (Cirlot 1969).

The painting "Return of Ulysses", dated 1968, by Giorgio De Chirico, depicts a Homeric hero in which the artist identifies himself by depicting his room as a fantastic vessel where he can make "adventurous journeys worthy of a stubborn explorer". An inner vessel, a room, which must however collide with the agitated spaces of the outside that it sees from the windows. If De Chirico's Ulysses is, like the Homeric hero, constantly looking for answers about his own existence, perpetually restless and thirsty for knowledge, today's Ulysses/citizen is in constant search of spatial landmarks and places in the city in which he can recognize himself.

Para-Urban Sovereignties: spatial illegibility and the politics of survival in Karachi

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keywords: sovereignty, displacement, dwelling

This paper examines the production of para-urban sovereignties in Karachi – territories that operate beyond the institutional recognition of the state, yet form durable spatial and social orders. Through a close study of long-term refugee enclaves and communities displaced by state-led demolition campaigns, the research interrogates how spatial coherence is achieved in the absence of legal tenure, infrastructural provision, or cartographic representation.

Drawing on AbdouMaliq Simone's theorization of relational urbanism and Achille Mbembe's critique of postcolonial sovereignty, these spaces are read as sites of abandonment and authorship. They emerge from conditions of expulsion – of Afghans, Bengalis, and Rohingya rendered stateless by history and geopolitics, or of internally displaced residents evicted through climate change rationales and infrastructural megaprojects. Yet these spaces do not remain provisional. They stabilize through repetition: domestic routines, informal land negotiations, spatial improvisation, and embedded social contracts. Where the state enforces visibility through erasure – via demolition, non-recognition, or planning-by-absence – residents construct alternate forms of spatial legibility. These may include self-enumeration, vernacular zoning, or collective memory inscribed in material form. The result is a complex para-sovereign condition: one that does not oppose the state in overt resistance, but instead sidesteps it through strategies of opacity, endurance, and infrastructural invention.

Methodologically, the research combines ethnographic observation, field photography, and counter-mapping practices with a critical rereading of Giorgio Agamben's concept of "bare life." While Agamben locates bare life at the threshold of political abandonment, this project seeks to reframe such life as spatially productive – a form of agency exercised through spatial adaptation rather than political recognition.

By theorizing para-urban sovereignty as a lived negotiation between displacement and inhabitation, the paper contributes to a growing discourse on ungoverned urbanism, the aesthetics of illegibility, and the architectures of survival at the city's margins.

From up here the Earth is beautiful, without frontiers or borders[1]

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keywords: migrations, inclusivity, urban design

Philosopher Andrea Tagliapietra has argued that the phenomenon of migration should be thought of not as "[…] a wandering nomadic destiny […] but as a need and demand for land to care for, a place to plan and build lives, allowing the singularity of both those who host and welcome and those who need to rediscover not a natural right to escape, but that freedom and dignity of living that are inscribed in the very term civilization" (Tagliapietra, 2018). Sharing this 'political' premise, the INCLUCITY (FRA2022) research project focused on an architectural experiment on the theme of migrant housing, assuming Naples as its field of application. "At the beginning of 2021, Campania's foreign population totalled 249,548, representing 5% of the total number of foreigners registered in the country. It is the leading region in terms of number of immigrants residing in Southern Italy, while nationally it is the seventh […] considering the surveys on residents [and] if the analysis is limited to provincial capitals, Naples (6.1%) and Caserta (5.3%) present numbers above the regional average" (Dandolo, 2023). The observation of an interesting phenomenon whereby Campania, once a transit region, is becoming a place where migrants stop and seek the stability of life evoked by Tagliapietra, is a topic to be added.

Therefore, the research INCLUCITY proposes a paradigm shift that looks at the "migrant housing issue" changing the gaze: from a problem – mostly addressed in emergency terms – it becomes to a potential trigger for solving issues that affect the future of our city for all its inhabitants, together: because this is what a city should be. In the eastern area of Naples, migrant housing seeks to reveal itself through the implementation of a large-scale collective project, consisting of settlements capable of redeveloping this area. These settlements are sustainable because they establish a renewed relationship with nature, and inclusive because they can offer a home to groups with different abilities and difficulties accessing the housing market, but also because they integrate residence with workplaces and representative spaces, buildings, and public spaces. By theorizing para-urban sovereignty as a lived negotiation between displacement and inhabitation, the paper contributes to a growing discourse on ungoverned urbanism, the aesthetics of illegibility, and the architectures of survival at the city's margins.

[1] This is the phrase pronounced by Yuri Aleksyevich Gagarin, the first man in space, on April 12, 1961

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T5 – Heritages

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The Heritages session collects contributions that investigate heritage as a fragile, plural and, at times, invisible dimension, emerging in the tension between memory and project, between denied places and the possibility of new meanings. The authors explore diverse spaces – from industrial archaeology to rural landscapes, from marginalized sacred sites to former asylums, from border colonies to wartime shelters – which become occasions to interrogate what has been neglected or forgotten.

The common thread lies in the ability of architecture, research and social practices to reveal the invisible, restoring meaning to stigmatized places, transforming spaces of constraint and loss into open thresholds, traversable and generative of new relations. From this perspective, heritage is not only what we inherit, but what is revealed through design and participation.

The contributions therefore assume a critical sound: they do not simply describe places marked by abandonment but show how these sites become heritage at the very moment they return to be visible and shared. The challenge, then, is not only to preserve but to activate processes of connection between communities and territories, transforming disregarded spaces into laboratories of cultural and social experimentation.

Heritage emerges as living organism, capable of intertwining temporal stratifications and dialoguing with present needs; it is no longer simply memory, but an agent of innovation that suggests how to connect architecture with communities, how to transform what appears invisible into an opportunity for the future.

In this sense, Heritages is configured as terrain of comparison between social, cultural and political value of space: an invitation to rethink our role not as consumers of history, but as custodians and interpreters of the future, where memory and project intertwine to shape new possibilities for architecture.

Landscapes of the Sacred between the Visible and Invisible

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keywords: hieraphony, landscape, itinerary, religious tourism

Despite the variety of contexts, the growing demand for cultural tourism is triggering a greater recognition of, and representation of the historical and artistic heritage spread across territories. This is redefining the boundaries between the local and the global. Two main implications can be seen to result from this process. Firstly, it can reinforce the value of heritage and the sense of belonging of local communities. Secondly, however, it can expose certain sites to such high levels of global visibility that overtourism is generated. In both cases, the architectural perspective, which has the potential to reveal lesser-known heritage, remains marginal and does not assume the central role it should.

It is from this standpoint that the research commences, exploring the function of the design of sacred places, at differing scales, in addressing the opportunities for tourist utilization as an interpretation of places, as opposed to the musealization of the past.

The case of Calabria is explored in depth, proposing new maps and historical narratives, together with new approaches and contemporary itineraries.

Since the departure of Grand Tour travellers, the region has experienced marginalisation and peripheralisation, but places of the sacred could offer it redemption as a historical-artistic tòpos.

Paths and sanctuaries form part of the landscape design, helping to restore a sense of place. The architectural project contributes to the restoration of the landscape, rejecting the idea that a figurative and landscape identity is fixed and defined.

The text presents three examples of the project in Calabria that address the concept of the sacred and its relationship with place on three different scales: Dialogue with history: project for a new cenoby in the Stilaro Valley; Itinerary: Landscapes of memory A spiritual space dedicated to Blessed Rosella Stàltari; new symbols in the diffuse periphery: the project for the Co-Cathedral of St Benedict in Lamezia Terme.

Invisible Productions: systemic strategies of re-signification for inhabiting marginal spaces

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keywords: systemic design, marginal spaces, resilient supply chains

This contribution offers a critical reflection on operational models capable of activating processes of re-signification within residual, marginalised, or subterranean sites. Starting from a reinterpretation of the interstitial territories of the city, often erased from the collective imagination, it considers the possibility of valorising them through localised agri-food production practices, attentive to waste and oriented towards the construction of resilient and conscious supply chains. Such practices, implemented in climatically protected contexts disconnected from the urban fabric, function as instruments of re-semantisation: a means of mending spatial and social fractures.

The figure of the monaciello in Naples, custodian of cisterns and tunnels, discloses the historical and symbolic value of hypogeal spaces, once places of storage and production, today deprived of meaning. Their juxtaposition with the wartime gardens documented by the Archivio Luce (Rome, 1942) reinforces the interpretation of such practices as reactive devices under extreme conditions. Within this framework, value is ascribed to an approach inspired by the sensing/actuating equation delineated by Carlo Ratti (2013): spatial data are not merely records, but triggers for bottom-up actions capable of influencing behaviours in the built environment.

The proposal is situated against the backdrop of the crisis of linear agricultural models, as indicated by the Future of Nature and Business Report of the World Economic Forum (2021), which stresses the urgency of regenerating production processes. Through selected case studies, the contribution investigates experimental models capable of transforming excluded spaces into plural horizons of habitability, grounded in interactions between knowledge, actors, and resources.

As in Metropolis (Fritz Lang, 1927), the tension between surface and depth becomes a metaphor for an urban structure still to be unveiled. In this sense, “the future does not happen to us, we build it” (Thackara, 2006): revelation is design.

The social Reuse of Confiscated Assets as a Tool for Reclaiming Spaces and Rights

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keywords: social reuse, confiscated assets, openness

Properties confiscated from organised crime are neglected spaces, places taken away from the community, marked by the domination of illicit powers and symbolically contaminated. The social reuse of confiscated assets is a practice that traverses space, subverts it and re-signifies it in order to return it to the public sphere. This contribution investigates social reuse as an enabling device for triggering practices of reclaiming spaces and rights using the Antonio Esposito Ferraioli farm as a case-study.

The Masseria Antonio Esposito Ferraioli is the largest confiscated property in the Metropolitan City of Naples. Located on the border between Afragola and Casoria in North Naples, in the territory of the Land of Fires, since 2017 it has been entrusted to a network of individuals committed to promoting legality, social inclusion and environmental sustainability.

This space, long perceived as a barrier in the peri-urban landscape and a symbol of illegality, has currently been transformed into a fertile threshold.

The Masseria is home to 328 urban gardens, a biodiversity museum, educational spaces, a social beekeeping project, and a gastronomic workshop. It will host soon a shelter for women who are victims of violence.

Through assemblies, shared rules and renewable contracts, the Masseria is experimenting with a form of bottom-up governance that redefines the relationship between citizenship, space and rights. Care practices become tools for re-signification and for opening up the space to multiple uses and unprecedented possibilities.

Seizing and confiscating assets is the State's way of showing its strenght, attacking the wealth of organised crime and undermining its prestige, resources and operational capacity. When integrated into valuable networks and shared pathways, social reuse practices can take on an anti-systemic role, acting as antibodies against mafia power and returning valuable resources to the community. In the transition from neglected spaces to places liberated and returned to the community, confiscated assets are transformed into open and accessible thresholds, fostering relationships and offering a new way of inhabiting the territory.

Invisible Heritage Between Memory and the Possibility of Revelation

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keywords: confinement colonies, sociotechnical innovation, abandoned heritage

This paper addresses the theme of 'discard' in relation to abandoned heritage and questions its survival to prevent it from becoming, over time, waste. The focus is placed on the fascist-era confinement colonies. Originally designed as isolated settlements, these structures in fact represent complex spatial microsystems grounded in the imposed relationship between man and artifact, building and workplace, design model and social stigma, individual and collective dimensions. They are closed, introverted systems to which, by regime decree, relationships with places, cities, and territories were denied. Today, apart from a few significant examples, these are decomposing cells, but they still hold values related to history, material culture, and society – significant and meaningful places of dwelling. A particularly interesting case is the Agricultural Center in Pisticci, in the province of Matera, the first facility built between 1938 and 1939 on the mainland. It was a place of work that hosted rebels against the regime and, at the same time, was part of a national network from which the ideals and aspirations to build Italy's new future emerged.

The proposed case offers an opportunity to imagine forms of reconversion into regenerative microsystems, through a method that, in the process of work, becomes a way to re-found, assign value to new life cycles, and reuse a marginal, invisible heritage. For this purpose, the paper identifies four interpretative and regenerative categories: memory, balance, survival, and re-signification, through which to focus attention on what pre-exists, on what must be revealed, and promote its rebirth – a rebirth based on new balances between conservation and innovation, between what resists and what transforms; between architecture and landscapes, highlighting the sociotechnical history of a heritage where the enterprise of re-founding becomes a collective effort.

The Project as a Process in Transition: the case study of the Hotel Pasteur in Rennes

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keywords: transition, experimentation, adaptive reuse

The relationship between temporal and spatial dimensions is certainly not foreign to the project, understood as the act of configuring a space in the present that, through design, is "projected" into the future. In Europe, numerous cases of temporary reuse have already been tested, in which interdisciplinary groups of designers, in agreement with public administrations or private owners, are temporarily entrusted with disused buildings while awaiting future plans.

France is among the most advanced countries in Europe with regard to such experiments: since 2016, a set of regulations has allowed, within predetermined timeframes, the launch of transitional use projects for vacant buildings. These projects are permitted to deviate from current urban planning and building regulations, thanks to their ability to generate social, economic, and environmental value. Experiments based on the factor of time highlight how an architectural reuse project can effectively work "in the long term," if conceived in relation to the evolving dimension of time – and therefore of space in relation to time – where temporary uses can serve as a trigger between a "before" and an "after." From this perspective, the project is understood as a process in transition, in which the architectural gesture adds and directs new perspectives, fostering future implementation.

This contribution presents the case study of the Hôtel Pasteur in Rennes, a 19th-century historic building that stands as an emblematic example of such experiments in France. The project began in 2012 through a participatory governance model that involved various local stakeholders, with the aim of temporarily transforming the building into a place for social and cultural experimentation. It represents an example of creative heritage reuse, where temporary experiments paved the way in 2017 for a "long-term" redevelopment project. A process of "non-programming" facilitated the adaptation of the building to users' needs, combining a "fixed" use of the building (a kindergarten) with hybrid, "unplanned" spaces open to the unexpected.

The narrated Asylum: the importance of memory for the redevelopment of Sant'Osvaldo

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keywords: memory, inclusion, redevelopment

This paper analyzes the redevelopment process of the area of the former psychiatric hospital of Sant'Osvaldo in Udine, which is being implemented following a European call for tenders promoted by ASUFC (Azienda Sanitaria Universitaria del Friuli Centrale) and involving a research group from the University of Udine. The site is located within a lively neighborhood that has long coexisted with the "Black Cat," the local nickname for the psychiatric hospital derived from an adjacent public establishment; locals rarely used the term "asylum," perhaps to avoid its stigma. Even today, "Black Cat" remains a common appellation for the park and its buildings, which still retain a fragile collective memory.

The design approach adopted to reveal these areas is based on enhancing the genius loci and integrating sustainable technologies for their restoration and environmental rehabilitation. The project promotes an architectural approach sensitive to the site's historical and environmental characteristics, fostering interaction between the complex and the urban context. This entails choosing to preserve certain buildings by "freezing" their condition as spaces of constraint – understood as "places of memory" within a paradigm of historical and identity valorization – and creating an archive of patients' medical records and photographic documentation that together form the asylum's narrative.

This experience prompts reflection on design practice as a tool capable not only of intervening in the built environment but also of reactivating the symbolic and cultural dimensions of marginalized sites. A once denied space, through the regeneration project, is revealed by a process that positions memory as an essential instrument for defining a new horizon of possibilities.

Contemporary Mythopoiesis in the Phlegraean Fields: from extractive landscape to spaces of emergency

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keywords: landscape, phlegraean fields, emergency

In the unstable heart of the Campi Flegrei, the land narrates stories of fire, beauty, and abandonment. Here, the foundational mythopoiesis of Naples, between Cuma, Baia and Miseno, intertwines today with the risks of bradyseism and with new geological and social urgencies. Where pulvis puteolana was once extracted, the material that fueled Roman architectural inventiveness, fractures now emerge, placing memory and design, survival and landscape, in tension.

The Phlegraean quarries, scattered like wounds across the volcanic terrain, stand as traces of a forgotten industrial landscape. Piers and cableways, devices that once connected land and sea, survive as ruins: remnants of an extractive economy that reshaped both the morphology and identity of the territory. These marginal places, excluded from official narratives, remain active in shaping the geography of contemporary emergencies.

These voids, in part concealed by vegetation, can today be reconverted into strategic evacuation areas in the event of volcanic crises. The landscape thus becomes a protective device, assigning to architecture a revelatory role: to unveil, to recognize, to imagine.

This contribution proposes a path across the "ruined landscape" of the Phlegraean arc, beginning with the bay of Baia, submerged crater, archaeological and industrial landscape, and leading to the rediscovery of piers, quarries, tunnels, and former military sites, in dialogue with fragments of classical memory. Through situated mappings, archival research, photographic explorations, and cartographic restitutions, new readings of these sites emerge as geopoetic palimpsests, where emergency and discovery overlap.

Within the framework of the Metropolitan City of Naples, which recognizes in the Campi Felgrei the original nucleus of its identity, these marginal areas acquire centrality: spaces to be rethought not only for their operative function, but for the imaginative and mythological potential they continue to embody.

Suspended Time for L'ABCI: co-design and site-specific exhibition as a trigger for the reactivation process of a confiscated asset

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keywords: transition, co-design, transdisciplinarity

This contribution presents the account of an exhibit design experience developed within a "hybrid" and transdisciplinary context of research and teaching, aimed at defining tools, methods, and co- design strategies to reveal places which, after a long period of opacity, become accessible again, turning into opportunities for inclusion, storytelling, and the sharing of histories and values. Suspended Time is a site-specific exhibition, the outcome of a workshop, set inside a property confiscated from organized crime in the city of Naples. The property, which will be managed on a temporary basis by DiARC after nearly twenty years of abandonment since its confiscation, will be returned to the community as a space for cultural and social experimentation. The exhibition represents the first action of DiARC's project, L'ABCI. Bene Confiscato in Transizione: Laboratorio socio-culturale di co-esplorazione territoriale, which involves collaboration with various local actors. Through both material and digital artifacts, the exhibition explores the concept of suspended time in waiting: collective or intimate forms of waiting – for justice, freedom, healing, transformation, and regeneration. Each installation conveys an emotional perception of time understood as a transition between different conditions, free of judgment, yet imbued with empathy and hope. L'ABCI occupies the ground floor and two basement spaces, confiscated for around twenty years, located within Palazzo De Liguoro, a sixteenth-century building. The area surrounding the building is of remarkable historical interest; some of the installations highlight its architectural and historical value, evoking the nearby Greek-Roman defensive fortifications, once part of the Neapolis city walls, as well as the ancient aqueduct. The aim is to recount the actions, methodologies, and languages experimented with throughout the process of reappropriation, in which body, testimony, memory, and action have contributed to unveiling the possibility of giving back to the community a once-denied and invisible place – opening it to the writing of new stories, the sharing of new values, and the construction of new relationships within a space to be re-signified.

Echoes of the Unseen: stories from Gaza's hidden spaces

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keywords: Gaza, hidden spaces, resilience

This project is a visual and narrative exploration of life under war in Gaza, told from the perspective of someone who is living through it. As a student of Interior Design at Al-Aqsa University and New Media at Al-Quds Open University, I use design, photography, and personal storytelling to document the invisible spaces of displacement, fear, and resilience.

The project focuses on makeshift shelters, destroyed homes, and the emotional geography of daily survival – spaces that are rarely shown to the world, yet hold deep stories of loss, strength, and identity. It blends artistic methods with lived experience, offering postcards from real places affected by conflict, drawn from my personal journey and the stories of others around me.

Through this proposal, I aim to give voice and form to the unseen dimensions of war – the quiet pain, the stolen spaces, the fragments of beauty that survive. I believe in the power of design and narrative to resist erasure and to reveal truths often hidden beneath rubble.

Revealing the Invisible Heritage; narration through form: architectural composition in the ruins of Paestum

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keywords: spatial narration, architectural composition, denied heritage

Among the archaeological landscapes of Paestum, far from the monumental temples, lie domestic ruins once rich with life – now fragmented, flattened, and rendered invisible. These marginal remnants, stripped of spatial continuity, no longer narrate the daily rituals, social dynamics, and lived realities they once contained. Discarded as architectural background, they represent a denied heritage overshadowd by major monumental narratives – excluded not only from preservation priorities but from the collective spatial imagination of the city itself. Amid the ruins, not all stones speak. Far from temples and forums, fragmented domestic ruins as an example, slip into invisibility, discarded as background, though once they composed the city's living fabric. Stripped of continuity, these silent ruins are denied their power to narrate, to reveal, to belong.

Yet, as Carlo Scarpa believed, ruins are not dead – they are fragments through which memory may be reawakened. To reveal them, one must first sense their nature and help them speak again (Murphy, 1990).

This contribution explores how architectural composition can act as narrative mediator through which is possible to restore not just the form, but the perceptual and experiential dimension of ruined domestic spaces. Through a specific case study of house with a marble floor in the Paestum archaeological park, the research proposes an interpretive museography that reactivates the spatial logic of the site. The house, once rich in visual and spatial qualities, is today flattened by its fragmented condition. By reconstructing essential architectural forms, the research constructs a counter-narrative to the site's current invisibility – reimagining how it might have been seen, moved through, and experienced.

This process is not a reconstruction in the traditional sense, but a spatial testimony: a layered reading that bridges the gap between lived space and its remains. It contributes to a counter-geography of denied heritage, where invisibility is not only physical but symbolic, and where form become instrument of narration.

The Monfalcone Air-raid Shelter Tunnel. From a hidden space to a living symbol of memory, resistance, and cultural reappropriation

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keywords: monfalcone air-raid shelter tunnel, karst plateau, war memory

The Monfalcone air-raid shelter tunnel, excavated from the karst rock between 1943 and 1945, is a significant example of a "denied place"– one among the wartime infrastructures that have faded from public memory. Built to protect the inhabitants during the bombings of World War II, the tunnel was sealed at the end of the conflict and remained hidden for nearly eighty years, forgotten not only physically, but also within the urban and historical narratives of Monfalcone.

Its recent rediscovery and reopening to the public mark a significant moment: a shift from oblivion to cultural reappropriation, creating new memories and connections. The tunnel's restoration project goes beyond a standard museological approach. It invites reflection on the interconnection between infrastructure, territory, and shared memory. Once a place of fear, refuge, and resistance, the tunnel now reflects deep tensions between lived and represented space, between repression and narration.

Its architecture becomes a space capable of sharing both direct and indirect testimonies of the conflict.

In doing so, it creates a counter-geography that challenges the historical and cultural marginalization shaping this place for decades – transforming it into a space of active memory.

The reopening of the tunnel offers a chance to rewrite the future of abandoned military infrastructure. It offers new ways to reintegrate them into contemporary society, and to restore visibility and meaning to a heritage marked by contradictions, hidden memories, and unused potential. Through this process, a once-confined space becomes open to dialogue, reflection, and reconciliation, offering new perspectives on a complex and layered past.

Rural Landscapes and Heritage marginalised in the Modern Age. Land reclamation and reform sites between rediscovery, situated knowledge, new possible narratives and participatory regeneration practices

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keywords: agrarian land reform, rural colonization, situated knowledge

The proposed contribution is specifically aimed at inland areas that emerged as a result of the agricultural transformation process that took place in Italy between the first and second half of the last century, and in particular at the vast settlement and architectural heritage that still exists today but has been largely forgotten and is often in an advanced state of decay and neglect.

Almost seventy years after their construction, many of these rural settlements – whether centralised (residential villages) or scattered (service centres and farmhouses on estates) – are in different states of conservation and use, having in many cases lost their original agricultural function, mainly due to the early failure of the land reform project in many areas of the country.

Starting from these assumptions, the proposal aims to analyse some possible strategies, approaches and collective practices that will enable the main latent potential present today in these marginal territories to be assessed, promoting new processes of "re-signification" and "re-territorialisation" by the local communities concerned, with specific reference to some case studies in the Apulia-Basilicata area (including the villages of Taccone, Santa Maria d'Irsi and Boreano). The survey aims to explore some experiences of restoration and enhancement of these settlements, based also on the involvement of third sector associations and potential new inhabitants (e.g. refugees and economic migrants in the Bradanica area).

These processes of 'reappropriation' of abandoned places must start from a shared memory and situated knowledge, alongside the promotion of sustainable practices such as agri-civism, slow tourism, walkabout experiences, and the development of local characteristics and values, both tangible and intangible.

The denied Karst: new horizons between Italy and Slovenia. War scenarios, memory architectures, and perspectives for cross-border cooperation

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keywords: Karst, war memory, cross-border planning

The Karst landscape between Gorizia and Monfalcone is an emblematic area, revealing strong interrelations between memory, war, and landscape. Profoundly shaped by the conflicts of the 20th century, the Karst is filled with extraordinary material traces – memorials, stone markers, monuments, trenches, fortifications, and bunkers – that form a large system of memory architectures. Often concealed by vegetation, these presences are silently integrated into the natural surroundings, but still capable of dialogue with contemporary sensibilities.

This research proposes an interpretation of the Karst as a "denied place": a neglected area often excluded from official historical narratives, yet one that is characterised by complex cultural and symbolic dynamics.

Particular attention is paid to the process of monumentalisation by the Fascist regime, which shaped its own rhetoric of wartime mourning, and to the following post-war resemanticisation towards democratic values. This was later

followed by the militarisation of the area during the Cold War, with several defensive installations, now abandoned.

This evolution has produced a fragmented landscape, marked by neglect, contradictions, and the absence of cohesive regional planning, leading to institutional invisibility. Through case studies set in the Gorizia and Monfalcone areas, as well as across the Slovenian Karst, with a parallel network of wartime memories, the research explores the potential of these places as an alternative memory map. Aligned with the aims of the conference, the project takes a multidisciplinary approach, seeking to valorise marginalised territories. It promotes shared strategies and cross-border initiatives that acknowledge the historical, cultural, and environmental features of the context, while also exploring opportunities for sustainable tourism.

Confiscated Assets in Transition. An operational atlas for the metamorphosis project

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In some cases, assets confiscated from the mafia constitute an extensive and heterogeneous collection of public goods whose value remains largely unexplored. Ignored or removed, they suffer from a deficit of description, which should instead be undertaken as a fundamental action in the creation of a new system of critical knowledge. Identifying and describing the role of the forms built by criminal forces in the processes of urban territorial construction is the basis for a more articulated strategy of social and political regeneration, which must be implemented through the concrete metamorphosis of confiscated buildings, in order to re-signify their spatial and semantic values and thus complete their transition to public assets.

The PRIN 2022 PNRR research project Confiscated Assets in Transition, From the Anti-city to the Third Heritage (UniRC dAeD, (PI); UniNa Federico II, DIARC; UniPa, DARCH) aims to investigate the role of the project as a practice for transforming criminal spaces through the construction of an Operative Atlas. This one is intended as both a synthesis tool for newly uncovered knowledge about Confiscated Assets and as an intervention tool. Its purpose is to emancipate the transformative action from the mere reuse defined by the legal framework, converting it instead into a substantial metamorphosis that forcefully proposes new values of civic reappropriation for these spaces, now symbols of the state and once denied.A collective introduction will be followed by the three specific approaches with which the research units have explored the subject, focusing respectively on the relationship between confiscated assets and social reuse, institutional reuse, and transitional practices and uses in the three emblematic cities of Reggio Calabria, Palermo, and Naples. The direct relationship with the case studies, their territories, the institutional actors and the communities involved in the restitution processes will serve as the framework for the continuous interplay between theoretical, critical, interpretative and interdisciplinary levels in which the research has developed and continues to unfold.

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T6 – Dispositifs

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The Dispositifs section explores the critical tools capable of revealing the denied, latent, and neglected spatialities of the contemporary urban conditions. Recognizing their existence and coexistence, the contributions address key research questions: What approaches, dispositifs and languages can make visible the realities excluded from the dominant representations of the city? What role do design, cartographic, performative, and visual practices play in the mechanisms of negation that affect both bodies and spaces?

Through its heterogeneity, the section operates on two levels: it investigates methods and instruments for observing and rethinking neglected spaces, constructing a mosaic of revealing dispositifs; and it problematizes the categories of negated spatialities, generating a new demand for knowledge. These contributions articulate multiple forms of revelation, intertwining diverse fields and research interests from which intersecting perspectives emerge. The essays show how the dispositif can take multiple forms – narrative, artistic, pedagogical, technical, or design-based – becoming tool of revelation that generates new gazes and unprecedented viewpoints.

This collection invites reflection on how, and from which point of view, it is possible to construct alternative ways of seeing and acknowledging conditions that escape dominant gazes. Diaries, maps, sounds, photographs, singular conditions, journeys, crossings, installations, history, and spatial setups are among the many practices that reactivate spaces and imagine new possibilities – opening alternative projective scenarios rooted in that negated urbanity where unexpressed potentialities lie.

The authors reveal that dispositifs are not merely theoretical categories but situated, generative and political practices; tools through which one chooses what and how to see. Each dispositif became an act of revelation: a lens that renders the invisible visible, giving form and voice to what has been erased. The contributions trace trajectories beyond descriptive logics, calling for a constant renewal of languages, methods, and nomenclatures to reveal what remains unseen and to construct imaginaries grounded in spatial justice.

Critical Regionalism as Counter-Cartography: grid, pathway, and the re-inscription of denied urban terrains

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keywords: critical regionalism, Dimitris Pikionis, cultural resistance

With this paper we try to offer a possible answer to the questions of the conference by investigating the process by which the Greek architect Dimitris Pikionis mapped Philopappos Hill at the base of the Athenian Acropolis, trying to figure out from the archive of drawings (Benaki Museum – archive of Dimitris Pikionis' works), which neglected areas caught his attention, how he represented them to be indicative of what was there, but also to give birth to a proposal and to create new relationships between existing places, but also between places and contemporary users. We want to go beyond the aesthetics of this project, by investigating the processes, material logics, participatory approach and critical sensitivity to place that Pikionis integrated and that we can use today as a methodological apparatus.

Thus it will be proposed to offer solutions to contemporary neglected spaces through topographic and geological reading, which will produce a stratigraphic analysis of the place and a mapping of perceptions from a phenomenological point of view, by trying to recover materials and tactility, in order to produce a critical and sustainable architecture, reactivating the material memory of the place and avoiding global uniformization, and through participative workshops with the communities that will use the initially marginalized space, creating an attachment to the place by involving them in this process in which local craftsmen could participate, who can thus be integrated in the production of contemporary architecture, transforming the building process into a collective act.

Last but not least, the aim of this way of intervening in neglected spaces is not just to 'clean' or 're-use' them, but to form sites of cultural resistance, where layers of urban memory are recovered and proposals such as land art or ephemeral interventions address an invitation to reflect on the history of the place.

This is (not) an Atlas: the field diary as a contemporary device for revealing and rewriting the landscape

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keywords: slowness, situated knowledgw, living archive

Far from the recognised routes of tourism, exist marginal and complex landscapes that are wounded, forgotten, and overridden. These are places that escape the neutrality of the map and resist abstraction, as they carry memories, conflicts, and desires. This contribution investigates the enduring relevance of the field diary, reinterpreted as a sensitive and unstable atlas, capable of bringing to light the deep stratifications of the contemporary landscape. This is not a tool of control from above, but a device of knowledge able to activate an affective, situated, and relational counter-geography. Drawing on transdisciplinary practices of knowledge, the field diary becomes a space for the emergence of invisible traces through the collection of images, voices, and exchanges. It is a living archive, where rationality and desire, data, and lived experience intertwine, in line with Barthes' distinction between studium and punctum (Barthes, 1980).

Through the field experience of the Bike Tour developed in the thesis Antologia in cammino. Linee lente e narrazioni di territori nascosti, the field diary reveals itself as an alternative epistemological practice, one that does not generalize but restores voice to the fragile, the plural, the submerged.

The landscape is not considered as an object to be contemplated, but as a space passed through, crossed, and transformed by individual and collective experience, where bodies act as sensors and seismographs. Aligned with the critique of travel understood merely as an occasion for "sightseeing" (Burgelin, 1967), this approach rejects both the postcard-like aesthetics of the landscape and the technical perspective focused on the "hardware" of the itinerary, shifting the attention instead to its "software": relations, stories, and sensitive matter. As Paolo Pileri suggests, the designer of routes is also a narrator: the field diary is his or her critical and creative trace, capable of generating new forms of civic, ecological, and design awareness.

2024 DMU Summer Institute Freedom Ride: a journey of unlearning, relearning, and design justice

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This paper examines the role of travel as a critical mode of architectural learning, situating its contemporary relevance within a longer historical trajectory – from the 17th to 19th-century Grand Tour undertaken by British aristocrats, to the educational pilgrimages of the 19th and early 20th-century Latin American creole elite, and the institutionalization of study-abroad programs in North American universities during the late 20th century. Unlike these earlier models, which often centered Europe and its canonical heritage, this research focuses on travel to geographies marked by racial violence, segregation, and Indigenous erasure in the Deep South of the United States – spaces often omitted from architectural discourse.

The project documents the cross-institutional Summer Institute that brought together 25 students and 25 educators in architecture, landscape architecture, and urban design from across the U.S. and Canada. Inspired by the Civil Rights-era Freedom Rides, the program reimagines travel as both a logistical and pedagogical framework – transforming the journey itself into a site of situated knowledge production. Through immersive, site-responsive workshops, peer testimonies, narrative reflection, and collaborative learning outside traditional academic settings, the program invited participants to critically engage with themes of design justice, identity, and resilience.

Framed as a process of unlearning and relearning, this paper explores how architectural knowledge emerges through dialogue, critique, and shared experience. In doing so, it foregrounds the importance of peer-to-peer learning and collective inquiry as vital tools for confronting systemic inequities and rethinking the architect's role in society. The research ultimately advocates for experiential and collaborative pedagogies as essential to cultivating deeper, more enduring forms of architectural understanding.

The "Remainder" of the architectural Survey. Two explorations in the design studio

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Modern architecture, shaped by Cartesian rationality, has long depended on systems of totalization – grids, projections, and representations that promise full legibility of space. The failure to fully comprehend, measure, and order the existing world in its entirety has engaged researches from various fields. The Romanian philosopher Alexander Baumgarten is concerned with the philosophical nature of the "remainder" – that which remains outside these efforts of knowledge.[1]

In this context, the architectural survey occupies an ambiguous yet provocative position. While having evolved into an autonomous and scientifically validated discipline throughout the centuries, surveying remains a selective act, operating as an abstraction process that often disregards the "remainder". The modern paradigm of things existing insofar as they can be measured – an inherent justification of the survey as a tool of knowledge – somehow dismisses the distance between reality and method, between the inhabited and the represented world.

Thus, the present inquiry aims to challenge the validity of the dialectical thinking of space as visible – invisible, interpreting how surveying contributes to this delimitation, as its 'bringing to light' is somehow the result of excluding what does not fit into its logic.

Two exercises developed within the design studio (second year students), both located in the periphery of Bucharest, are meant to explore the comprehension of a place throughout the lens of the "remainder" rather than the grid. The first one required the invention of an unconventional unit of measurement, meant to reveal a character of the place emerging from elsewhere than the usual systems of measurement. The second started from the standard imprint of a housing unit – the 8x8m square plan of a group of semi detached houses – aiming to investigate dwelling scenarios throughout the addition of remainders.

[1]Restul ca problemă a filosofiei, Iași: Polirom, 2021.

On a summer afternoon, under the shade of the shadow of the trees

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keywords: trees, ghost, shadow

"The trees traced by the shadows upon the ground made the deepest impression on me" (Boullée, 1799).

Inexplicable architectures appear within the ordinary, vujà-dé returning unstable territories and intertemporal revelations, producing impossible landscapes, as exemplified by the Art Biotop Water Garden 2019. The studio Junya Ishigami+associates, in "preserving" the memory of a landscape threatened by demolition, relocates an entire forest atop a meadow that had once hosted a rice paddy, superimposing historical stratifications of inherently incompatible landscapes. The shadow of 318 trees delineates the morphology of the underlying clearings, generating a new urban garden, "l'espace public naît à l'ombre d'un arbre" (Rahm, 2020). By refusing the felling necessitated by the construction of a hotel, the project seeks to establish new topographical elsewheres, that is, "the place in which shadows gather, the new address of the deceased" (Jankélévitch 1966), transforming absences into new presences, invisibilities materialized as ghosts.

In the summer of 2021, a shadow condenses among the crowns of the trees of an old Japanese house, evoking from the past the memory of a lost atmosphere. At Kudanshita, in the Chiyoda district of Tokyo, Junya Ishigami+associates realized the Kokage-gumo pavilion, structuring the imperative to reveal the nature of Japanese gardens. Nearly a century after the construction of the house, once surrounded by the imperial gardens of the Showa era, the district is now encroached upon by tall residential skyscrapers. By studying the bodies of the ancient centuries-old trees, Ishigami anchors domestic reality to the shadow of a constructed shadow, simultaneously refreshing the garden and concealing the view of the surrounding tall structures. "The pitch-black structure is a cool shadow floating among the old trees on a summer afternoon" (Ishigami, 2021); an approach of subjectivation that "projects the disturbing shadow of transience into the very heart of youth" (Ferrari, 1994), where the spaces denied by contemporaneity reveal themselves in the shadow of "this thickness of darkness" (Maeterlinck, 1894), that is, the "return of the repressed body" (Freud, 1919), a ghost.

Site-specific Art in residual Places: a revelatory process and a transformative tool

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This paper aims to investigate the revelatory potential of site-specific artistic practice through a theoretical survey of its evolution and a selection of some contemporary case studies.

Site-specific art installations serve as critical interventions in urban spaces, challenging dominant narratives and making visible the social, historical, and ecological layers often suppressed by conventional representations of the city. By intertwining physical context, social critique, and participatory aesthetics, site-specific installations articulate a counter-cartography of the urban landscape, amplifying voices and presences excluded from hegemonic urban imaginaries.

Artists and architects like Gordon Matta-Clark experimented this approach in the 1970s, opening up gaps between abandoned buildings to reveal the spatial and socioeconomic decay hidden behind the city's modernist facade. His "anarchitecture" criticized not only the functionalist aesthetics of the time, but also the broader systems of abandonment and exclusion inherent in urban redevelopment policies.

With the advent of new technologies, concrete physical interventions have been joined by new models of multimedia interventions that works on the ephemeral border between natural and artificial, real and virtual. Capable of suggesting the hidden potential of places, enriching our experience without erasing its naturalness, multimedia art can design new methods of revelations of places.

Contemporary collectives like Quiet Ensemble extend this tradition by using technology, sound, and performance to draw attention to hidden urban ecologies and ephemeral phenomena. Their works often activate neglected or residual spaces, offering sensory experiences that disrupt normative uses of the city and propose alternative modes of interaction. These interventions not only democratize public space, but also reframe it as a living archive of repressed memories, contested histories, and future possibilities.

Embodied Revelations: affects and sonic landscapes of the unspoken city

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keywords: sensitive cartography, excluded landscapes, affective synesthesia

In the crisis of traditional spatial representations and in the marginalization of places that are emotionally dense yet urbanistically invisible, there emerges an urgent need for tools capable of restoring form and visibility to excluded landscapes. Official cartographies, anchored to a presumed objectivity, overlook the sensory and affective experiences of inhabitants, leaving entire lived territories out of the frame. This contribution proposes the use of affective sound maps as a critical and synesthetic methodology to reveal the invisible city. Such practices combine listening, memory, emotion, and corporeality, generating atmospheric representations that make perceptible forms of discomfort, exclusion, or resistance that are usually undetectable. Unlike conventional acoustic mappings, aimed at noise containment, the sonic dimension is here interpreted as an affective and political language, capable of generating bonds and meaning. By engaging with experiences such as Pallante's Augmented Rome or the visceral sonic mapping of Duffy, Waitt, and Harada, the paper explores tools and languages able to activate new modes of reading and designing marginal spaces. In this context, synesthesia is not only a rhetorical figure but an epistemological and design method that intertwines multiple perceptions and plural subjectivities. The work situates itself within the research trajectory initiated with the author's doctoral thesis – focused on the analysis of border walls through the construction of affective sound maps – and continued through theoretical and practical experiments aimed at building a sensitive and critical cartography. From this perspective, representation is not a neutral act but a transformative and political one, capable of restoring voice and form to the excluded landscapes of contemporaneity.

Temporary Revelations: ephemeral practices as urban seismographs

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In the search for tools capable of restoring visibility to neglected realities, exhibition design can be understood as a critical and sensitive device. Through interference, amplification, and temporariness, it activates forms of revelation that challenge dominant processes of representation. In this sense, it can be likened to a seismograph: a situated, ephemeral, and disruptive practice that intercepts weak signals and amplifies them, giving voice and presence to what usually remains invisible.

While Annalisa Metta has used the metaphor of the seismograph to describe landscape architecture as a responsive and sensitive practice, this paper proposes to extend the image to exhibition design, reframed as a means of revelation and temporary activation of urban space. The exhibition project can thus act as a "foreign body", both subtle and disruptive, functioning as a contrast medium that exposes other actors, intentions, and ongoing transformations (Metta 2022).

Its strength lies precisely in its temporary nature: it operates in moments of transition, in construction sites, on thresholds, in suspended conditions, and in unforeseen situations. Exhibition design becomes a tool for monitoring and listening – able to disappear, reappear, and adapt – but also a tool of wonder, capable of producing ruptures, subverting meanings, and stimulating new imaginaries.

The paper explores this capacity of exhibition design to act as an urban seismograph through the analysis of projects that intervene in marginal or overlooked contexts, often excluded from official debates. Among them: Holy Temple and Spacebuster by raumlabor, Vuoti d'interesse by Orizzontale in L'Aquila, and The Cineroleum and Folly for a Flyover by Assemble Studio. Each demonstrates how temporary, situated interventions can trigger revelations and activate alternative forms of presence in the urban realm.

Night Space.
Visions and projects 'in the dark'

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Day and night: it seems like a hierarchy. That is why it is interesting to note how, at night, hierarchies disappear: the powerful go home, those who work at night usually belong to the lower classes. And at night, skills also change. […] At night people help each other more than during the day. (Burkhardt, 2019, 173-4).

On September 28, 2003, around 3:30 in the morning, a major blackout struck almost the entire Italian territory, ushering in one of the longest nights in the country's history. Cities like Rome, which was hosting the first edition of the "Notte Bianca," were paralyzed, leaving thousands of citizens trapped in the streets and the metro. The absence of electricity generated a new dimension of the city, marked by unprecedented forms of adaptation by its inhabitants, as well as new ways of sociability and interaction.

This research proposes to analyze darkness – often associated with the "figure" of the night – as a tool for urban and design inquiry, exploring its relationships with the human, space, and the environment. Darkness becomes a device for visible certain realities excluded from the most common representations of the city, through subordinate or not yet fully explored theories and practices.

The transformation of spatial perception in darkness, during nighttime hours, has become a ground for theories and design explorations that – through more or less experiential lenses, among them the weird (Fisher 2016) and the uncanny (Vidler 1994) – have provided architectural design literature with latent images.

In the absence of hierarchies, as with Lucius Burkhardt, what role do design, performative, and visual practices play in revealing the denied space of the night?

In response to the need for new strategies to face the challenges posed by social, political, and spatial change, and by the broader idea of sustainability in inhabiting the Planet, this contribution explores visions and projects of the night as a means to uncover hidden, inhabited, and inhabitable parts of the city.

Architecture – What History?
Rethinking History as a Tool for Building Equality

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keywords: women, history, intersectionality

One of the most powerful devices of marginalization is historical narrative. The absence of women from the stories we listen to and tell shapes the present, normalizing the invisibility of those who have been erased. Is it possible to use architectural history as a tool for building equality, restoring visibility to women in the past and, therefore, in the present?

This paper investigates the methodologies and aims of architectural history in order to reposition it as a means of social justice. It does so through a specific case study: the intersection of architecture, the Southern Question, and the colonial question in post-unification Italy and in the ruralist policies of the Fascist regime. In this context – dominated by male figures (theorists of land reclamation, politicians, military men, as well as architects) – the text explores strategies to "make space" for women in a history not exclusively centered on gender issues. This involves bringing to light the critical contributions of women authors and activists who wrote and acted in specific territorial contexts; searching photographic documentation for traces of women's activities and forms of work; collecting women's stories through direct interviews or by mobilizing family memories; and, more generally, placing the female question at the center, by interrogating spatial choices from the standpoint of maintaining patriarchal power.

Overall, I argue that shifting perspective means not simply inserting female presences into a traditional narrative, but interrogating the very foundations of the historical-architectural account. By moving beyond a history in service of design – defined by the production of heroic examples and figures – architectural history can become a critical tool for dismantling multiple, interconnected structures of oppression and extraction.

Transitioning Ground – A Practice-Led Methodology for Site-Specific Sustainable Installations

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keywords: fragile, methodology, low tech

Invisible spaces are hidden not by distance but by extractive logics that detach them from the surroundings and people. This paper presents a practice-led framework that reunites materials, makers, and territory through low-tech, site-specific installation art.

Developed at Konstfack Research Lab and tested in four works, the framework rests on three devices:

• Site-specificity: concept, production, and after-life unfold in situ, letting local surroundings and identities act as both catalyst and outcome.

• Sociological engagement: Through structured workshops and participatory processes, it aims to understand local narratives, traditions, and material cultures.

• Ecology and Sustainability: Towards the lowest environmental impact and carbon footprint possible, it utilizes locally sourced materials, little to no machinery, vernacular techniques, and methods. Installations are impermanent and require no deep foundations or invasive infrastructure.

Focus is placed on: Fragile (Accademia di Danimarca, Rome, 2025): Site-specific installation situated inside the former painter's studio of the Romanian Academy. Consisting of unfired clay tiles, the installation invites the audience to walk on and take part in the artwork's life and change. The project shows how "denied" sites – post-industrial rooms, obsolete ateliers – can become laboratories for climate justice and repair.

Combining visual language, material investigation/mapping, and collective involvement, the contribution demonstrates that ephemeral installations can act simultaneously as artwork, archive, and pedagogical agent. The methodology offers researchers, designers, and artists a replicable toolset for revealing hidden ecologies, fostering inclusive local participation, and promoting a regenerative future. Transitioning Ground questions normative artistic approaches and outlines footprints, memories, and fragility, not only visualising confinement and exclusion but transforming them into shared experiences.

Crossing to Know.
Photography as a method of insight in transitional territories

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keywords: sensitive crossing, photography as method, transitional territories

At a time when cities and territories are becoming increasingly complex and fragmented, it is necessary to renew the tools we use to observe and narrate them. Photography – especially when guided by a conscious, authorial, and reflective gaze – is not merely documentation, but a cognitive device capable of revealing thresholds, discontinuities, and both material and immaterial stratifications. To cross places, to walk through them or fly over them with a drone, means exposing oneself to a different gaze: not one that simplifies, but one that relates and interprets. In this sense, photography becomes both method and tool, part of a broader and interdisciplinary inquiry.

It is not about creating aesthetic atlases, but about constructing spatial narratives capable of conveying the meaning of ongoing transformations and of landscapes that either endure or disintegrate. The reference goes from twentieth-century social reportages – from Evans to Misrach – to new practices of sensitive mapping that integrate walking, close-up observation, zenithal readings, and critical restitution of the observed landscape. Thus, photography becomes a form of visual cartography, neither neutral nor passive, which complements the technical tools of planning and surveying by offering critical insights and, at times, revelations.

In the context of vulnerable and layered territories such as the Campi Flegrei, aerial photography allows us to grasp invisible relationships between nature and artifice, between past and future, between imagination and project. Images captured from above allow us to read a fragile geography, marked by slow yet persistent dynamics, by historical wounds and new settlement pressures. Craters, lakes, archipelagos, and cities emerge as signs of a deep and ever-changing memory. Flying over thus becomes a gesture of active observation, an exercise in vision that seeks not only to see, but to understand.

Landscapes on the Edge.
Ecological strategies of resistance

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keywords: wild urban plants, margins, coexistence

In the contemporary urban landscape, spontaneous vegetation occupies marginal positions: it grows along edges, in voids, in the cracks of asphalt. It is invisible or unwanted, often removed in the name of decorum or efficiency. Yet weeds, labeled as invasive or useless, reveal a resilient and adaptive form of life, capable of challenging the logics of exclusionary design.

This research investigates the transformative potential of weeds as a critical and design device for re-signifying the marginalized places of the city, questioning the categories of decay, abandonment, and uselessness that govern the representation of public space.

Through an ecological and transdisciplinary approach that interweaves landscape design, multispecies studies, and grassroots urban practices, the study proposes new visions of spatial justice, grounded in interspecific coexistence and in the recognition of forms of life often excluded from planning processes. Weeds thus become instruments of interpretation and activation: marginal presences that invite us to observe, to slow down, to care, and to imagine other ways of inhabiting.

Drawing on theoretical and design frameworks that acknowledge spontaneous vegetation as an active component of urban projects, and on the observation of shared practices of care for spaces – including the experience developed in Naples by the collective erbacce – this contribution aims to show how interventions attentive to spontaneity and the unexpected can transform the urban imaginary, restoring value to what is fragile, temporary, and outside the norm. In this scenario, weeds are not merely objects of study, but allies in rethinking landscape design as an ecological, political, and poetic act.

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This volume collects abstracts of contributions presented at the international conference “RIVELAZIONI. Research Tools and Methods for Exploring the Denied and Invisible Spaces of Contemporary Society”, organized in October 2025 by the RiSP (FRA 2022) research group of the Department of Architecture at the University of Naples Federico II. RIVELAZIONI brought together scholars from diverse fields – architecture, urban planning, sociology, geography, art, law, postcolonial and environmental studies – to reflect on the methods and tools capable of making these places visible, comprehensible, and transformable. Through theoretical contributions, design experiments, and research practices, the book composes a mosaic of perspectives on spatial justice and the relationships between space, power, and rights. Each abstract is a small revelation, a fragment of the world that unlocks new possibilities for knowledge and transformation.

RIVELAZIONI is both an investigation and a political gesture: an invitation to investigate the interstices of the visible, to reconsider the role of design as a critical tool, and to restore space, voice, and form to what contemporary reality tends to hide.

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