

SMC

SUSTAINABLE MEDITERRANEAN CONSTRUCTION
LAND CULTURE, RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY

SMC | SPECIAL ISSUE 4-2020

LANDSCAPE AT RISK vol.1

LUCIANOEDITORE

SMC - Official Magazine of the SMC (Sustainable Mediterranean Construction) Association - Online Edition: <http://www.sustainablemediterraneanconstruction.eu> Autorizzazione del Tribunale di Napoli n. 29 del 09/06/2014.

Many different phenomena could produce alteration, decay, depletion or loss of material and immaterial assets that mark out landscapes. In this Special Issue, "Landscape at risk" is understood as concerning all the phenomena that could alter or interrupt that relationship between community and places, which lead to landscape features creation. Therefore, the topic "Landscapes at risk" is addressed considering its multiple meanings: Landscapes under environmental risk, climate change effects, but also landscape at risk of abandonment, or at the contrary landscape overexploited by tourism and other intensive activities. Landscapes endangered by environmental phenomena are analysed taking into account the way risk influences everyday life and the population-resources relationship underpinning landscape creation. Special consideration is given to climate-change related risk and to methodological improvements to develop criteria and tools to achieve the integration of mitigation and adaptation measures within landscape. In addition, landscapes suffering drastic depopulation are investigated and the most suitable management processes to prevent modification on landscape features are proposed. Finally, causes, effects and possible solutions are examined for landscapes where exploitation levels maxed-out saturation or where resources enjoyment is mainly based on an intensive consumption pattern and on the appropriation for commercial purpose, which lead to jeopardize the resources themselves, as mass tourism does.

Carlo GERUNDO is PhD, Research fellow at the Department of Civil, Environmental and Architectural Engineering of University of Naples "Federico II". He published works on the topic of cities adaptation to climate change and Natural-based solutions implementation in urban planning. He is designer in urban planning activities and advice for Public Administrations. He is a member of Italian National Institute of Urban Planning (INU).

Marialuce STANGANELLI is PhD, Associate Professor of Urban and Territorial Planning at the Department of Civil, Environmental and Architectural Engineering of University of Naples "Federico II". She is an expert in Geographic Information Systems applied to decision support systems and in risk management. On these topics she published several works and took part to international research projects. She is expert member of the international Committee on Historic Cities, Towns and Villages (CIVVIH) ICOMOS. She is member of the Federico II group of UNISCAPE, the European network of universities dedicated to landscape studies and education according to the principles of the European landscape convention.



FOCUS ON
LANDSCAPE AT RISK
VOL. 1

LUCIANOEDITORE

SPECIAL ISSUE
N. FOUR 2020



SMC MAGAZINE - SPECIAL ISSUE N. FOUR 2020

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PREFACE

The European Landscape Convention (ELC) allowed achieving important results through the promotion of approaches oriented to landscapes safeguard and valorization. Nevertheless, in the present context, risks and hazards able to threaten landscapes resources have been increasingly growing: environmental risks intensified by a wild urban development, climate change, excessive landscape exploitation or, on the other hand, landscape abandonment and depopulation. Twenty years on from ELC enactment, this special issue wants to take a stock of how much is still required to cope with all the different form of risk threatening “the significant or characteristic features of a landscape, justified by its heritage value derived from its natural configuration and/or from human activity” (ELC, 2000).

The special issue aims is to deal with all the different reasons that could produce alteration, decay, depletion or loss of material and immaterial assets that mark out landscapes. Therefore, risk is also understood as risk of alteration or interruption of the relationship between community and places, which lead to landscape’s features creation according to ELC. Therefore, the issue “Landscapes at risk” will be addressed considering its multiple meanings, starting from landscapes affected by natural risks, moving to the ones suffering shrinking or gentrification risk or even overexploitation and/or congestion, up to landscape in transition.

The first section of this special issue analyzes landscape affected by natural risks, from technical, organizational and social point of view. Landscapes are modelled by risks in many different ways. Some types of risks shape orography and influence the characteristic of natural environment (i.e. volcanic and hydro-geological risks) promoting specific economic activities more than others, generating population movements/settlements. Furthermore, grey works to struggle hazard (i.e. river banks, retaining walls, etc.) could distort landscape features. To cope with landscape alteration due to risk prevention new solutions that are landscape-consistent have been recently set up and local knowledge in dealing with disasters is reconsidered as a welcome supplement to scientific knowledge. Traditional practices to face risks could contribute to find solutions for risk mitigation, which are more respectful of nature, i.e. there is an expanding body of knowledge on locally rooted strategies for risk mitigation.

Furthermore, the presence of a permanent condition of risk affects the relationship inhabitants-territory and the way people live places under the constant threat of hazard; while some places are abandoned by population after a disaster, in other places people came back in hazardous areas to rebuilt their houses and their system of life. Sense of belonging, cultural identity, risk and landscape perception and representation, on one side, and social networks, information channels and risk communication modalities, on the other one, should be considered before and after a disaster, and have a special attention in Disaster Risk Reduction strategies. A special attention should be paid to cultural heritage and landscape features that are representative of identity and pride and needs to be proactively considered in post-disaster recovery. Safeguard of heritage and landscape features have a significant role in social cohesion and sustainable development especially in time of crisis.

The papers presented in this section focus on traditional techniques and customary practices to face hazards; everyday life and community resilience underpinning landscape creation; post-disaster reconstruction examples, which are consistent with landscape features.

The second section deals with the risks provoked by Climate Change for urban and rural landscapes. In particular, hydro-meteorological extreme events are increasing in frequency and intensity, generating dramatic negative impacts on ecosystems and increasing the hazards of other risks, such as fires, sea-level rise and biodiversity loss.

Climate change, thus, has been also altering the value system through which local communities traditionally interacted with landscape, and this change can be perceived both in a negative or positive way. If at one hand climate change is one of the main causes of rapidly changing landscape scenarios, on the other hand adaptation and mitigation strategies can become themselves drivers of profound land transformations.

The need to face climate-related risk has been pushing researchers, local authorities and policy makers to find and test viable solutions to mitigate climate change negative effects and to make landscapes more resilient to these effects. The implementation of solutions will significantly modify urban and rural landscape and its perception by communities. Examples of sustainable solutions that can transform the relation between landscape and its community can be found at urban scale, such as the implementation of sustainable mobility-oriented traffic policies (e.g. restricted traffic areas, bike lanes, etc.) or nature-based solutions. At a wider scale, climate-sensitive management of agriculture practices (e.g. by shifting to crops with higher carbon storage potential or reducing forest clearing for agricultural expansion) can contribute to significant reduction of CO₂.

This section presents contributes investigating how to ensure the reduction of risk by climate change with the landscape preservation and promotion. Papers included deals with:

- 1) methodological improvements or new modelling approaches to support strategies, measures or actions for the mitigation and adaptation of rural and urban landscapes.
- 2) case studies and experiences on urban planning and design, at nationally or international level and at different scales and extents, dealing with nature-driven urban and landscape regeneration (NBSs, green and blue infrastructure, ecosystem services, soil sealing recovering).

The third section deals with Landscape at Risk of abandonment. All over Europe there are extensive cultural landscapes at risk of depopulation. These landscapes typically belong to peripheral areas that were cut off by the main development dynamics. They have gradually become marginalised due to depletion of the local economy and demographic decline. Frequently these areas conserve uncontaminated natural environments with a rich cultural and historical heritage composed of a network of small historical centres, abundant high quality agricultural products and knowledge and skills utilised in traditional ways of working. This heritage is at risk since population decrease is leading to abandonment of these areas with the consequent decay of the tangible cultural heritage. These settlements play an important role in safeguarding the territory, custodians of memory and beauty, and their depopulation has led to a freezing and deterioration of places, an emptying of relationships, a desertification of the environment and culture.

These areas are often lacking in accessibility, have scarce economic visibility, low levels of enterprise, and have difficulties in becoming part of effective economic hubs. The global economy favours the concentration of assets in big cities producing isolation of peripheral areas. The broken link between generations, between

young and old people, prevents the natural transmission of traditional knowledge, which is based on previous experiences and drives the loss of intangible heritage composed of traditional skills, social organization forms, awareness, understanding and ability to use natural resources. The loss of intangible heritage with the associated culture, memories, skills, knowledge and imbedded sense of identity linked to these landscapes may further compromise the competitiveness of these regions. New ways of thinking, living and housing, are necessary to give new chances to these territories, using culture and traditional local resources as a leverage for a new tailored development.

This section explores different development paths for these landscapes, where the elements that are traditionally considered as weaknesses for economic growth could become the strengths of a new concept of development, the starting point of a “different” development pattern.

There is a strong request for new researches based on the:

- 1) creation of networks able to systematize and revitalize landscape resources;
- 2) engagement of local community (e.g. new forms of inclusion, hospitality projects, innovative agriculture, etc.);
- 3) triggering of intercultural and intergenerational dialogue to cope with the loss of heritage;
- 4) exploitation of the “different” resources held by these landscapes;
- 5) examples of development based on the hybridization of natural and cultural driven.

The section presents papers aiming at identifying innovative patterns for the revitalisation and regeneration of these landscapes at risk.

On the contrary, the fourth section deals with landscape at risk of overexploitation. It is evident how the intensity of landscape exploitation is producing unprecedented changes in places perception and configuration, in the levels of biodiversity and in social and cultural relations. In detail landscapes exploitation for touristic purposes has been producing extremely relevant effects on tangible and intangible landscape values through the construction of infrastructures, building densification, urban spaces and functions transformation, installation of seaside tourist accommodation structures, both seasonal or not.

Landscape resources are threatened by the intense overexploitation, for touristic aim and not: the massive growth of intensive cropping modifies the mosaic of rural land use, while the pervasive “hit and run” tourism produces severe impacts on urban historic centers, such as the replacement of traditional activities with facilities for tourists or the substitution of local population with tourists themselves. However, some practical experiences have shown how is possible to achieve a “delicate balance” between the landscape values enhancement the protection of natural environment and local identity and the promotion of tourism. According to these premises, this section tries to investigate which are or how should be the tools and good practices for the “sober enjoyment” of the anthropized and/or natural landscape, through a controlled exploitation of the resource.

The papers hosted in this section deal with case studies of tourism development patterns that are consistent with material and immaterial values of landscapes and strategic responses to enhance the ability of territories to manage and recover the tourism shocks and to cope with the loss of identity.

LANDCAPE AT RISK

Guest Editors

Carlo GERUNDO (Department of Civil, Environmental and Architectural Engineering, University of Naples "Federico II" ITALY)

Marialucre STANGANELLI (Department of Civil, Environmental and Architectural Engineering, University of Naples "Federico II" ITALY)

Scientific Coordinators

Marialucre STANGANELLI (Department of Civil, Environmental and Architectural Engineering, University of Naples "Federico II" ITALY)

Elvira PETRONCELLI (Department of Civil, Environmental and Architectural Engineering, University of Naples "Federico II" ITALY)

Scientific Committee

Gilda BERRUTI (Department of Architecture, University of Naples "Federico II" ITALY)

Francesca BRUNI (Department of Civil, Environmental and Architectural Engineering, University of Naples "Federico II" ITALY)

Fabio CORBISIERO (Department of Social Science, University of Naples "Federico II", ITALY)

Paola DE JOANNA (Department of Architecture, University of Naples "Federico II" ITALY)

Claus-Peter ECHTER (President, CIVVIH ICOMOS)

Dora FRANCESE (Department of Architecture, University of Naples "Federico II" ITALY)

Juanjo GALAN VIVAS (School of Art, Design and Architecture - Aalto University FINLAND)

Christofer KILBURN (University College of London, UK)

Daniele LA ROSA (Department of Civil Engineer and Architecture, University of Catania, ITALY)

Tana LASCU ("Ion Mincu" University of Architecture and Urban Planning Bucharest, ROMANIA)

Tessa MATTEINI (University of Florence, ITALY)

Rita OCCHIUTO (University of Liegi, BELGIUM)

Anna Laura PALAZZO (University of Rome 3, ITALY)

Juan Manuel PALERM SALAZAR (Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, SPAIN)

Elvira PETRONCELLI, DICEA University of Naples Federico II

Chao REN (University of Hong Kong)

Michelangelo RUSSO (Department of Architecture, University of Naples "Federico II" ITALY)

Patrizia TASSINARI (University of Bologna, ITALY)

Daniele TORREGGIANI (University of Bologna, ITALY)

Anna Maria ZACCARIA (Department of Social Science, University of Naples "Federico II", ITALY)

The editors and the Publisher are not responsible for each individual contribution's content.

All the articles of this Special Issue of SMC magazine were submitted to a double peer blind review.

Cover | Graphic elaboration by Carlo Gerundo of the frontispiece of the book entitled *Dell'incendio di Pozzuolo Marco Antonio delli Falconi all'illustrissima signora marchesa della Padula nel MDXXXVIII*, Marco Antonio Passaro, Napoli 1538.

Graphic design | Luca BUONINCONTI, Carlo GERUNDO

For more information, please contact us: smc.association@mail.com or infouniscape@unina.it

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80138, NAPOLI

[HTTP://WWW.LUCIANOEDITORE.NET](http://www.lucianoeditore.net)

E-MAIL: INFO@LUCIANOEDITORE.NET

ISBN: 978-88-6026-279-0



REBUILDING THE SCHOOL ACCORDING TO THE LANDSCAPE WIDE OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

Abstract

Can a local community, rooted in its daily landscape, upon a dramatic event such as an earthquake, come up with a vision and rise once more from its own "idea" of landscape?

Set by a team of the University of Brescia, the project of the new school in Gualdo (Macerata, Italy) started with an interactive Workshop aligned with the orientation of the European Landscape Convention on the theme of recognizing the quality of places by inhabitants. This experience has demonstrated that it is possible. The children involved in the Workshop have elaborated their idea of school through indications of spaces and functions; but, above all, they expressed their desire for landscape in the form of detailed and precise indications of panoramic views that the new building had to have. The experience of this participatory Workshop, clear in the new building, has confirmed that the local community recognizes the landscape as a place of identity: the landscape idea may be the starting-point to live again in a town that has been damaged.

Keywords: Gualdo, Earthquake, Participatory Laboratory, Landscape, School

Introduction

Can a local community, rooted in its daily landscape, upon a dramatic event such as an earthquake, come up with a vision and rise once more from its own "idea" of landscape? This question is even stronger if the members of the community are children between the age of three and thirteen.

It is this issue that gives rise to the research hypothesis which is the baseline of the field experience illustrated here. Our aim is to investigate whether, following a traumatic event, a local community made up of children has a common and shared perception of the place where it lives and, at the same time, whether it is cohesive and pro-active in providing indications and scenarios on new school spaces, to restart daily activities safely. Since the project was directed to an age group ranging from childhood to pre-adolescence, one of the approaches chosen relied on their memories and/or perceptions of the landscape itself and of the buildings no longer existing. In other words, has the young community an emotional attachment to the local heritage, described as "sense of place" [1]?

Another approach used was to stimulate the imagination of functional spaces as never seen

before according to the specific needs of the population that would occupy them. The focus was on the integration between memories and imagination reflecting upon the characteristics of the new school building, making it be familiar and unprecedented at the same time.

The entire paper focuses on the phases and results of the project itself rather than on the theoretical framework. The objective was to bring real-life proof of the post-seismic reconstruction which also helped the inhabitants to psychologically process the loss and mourning of places and spaces lived on a daily basis. In this case, the key to understanding does not consider the risk of "alteration, decay, depletion or loss of material and immaterial assets that mark out landscape" (to mention the topics of the Conference); it shows instead that, in the case presented, the "risk of alteration or interruption of the relationship between community and places" did not occur.

A field research experience: first assumptions

The project we would like to present is part of an institutional activity of the University of Brescia¹, and it started after an environmental event that had a strong influence on the landscape of central Italy: the earthquakes that struck Marche region on August and October of 2016. Many school buildings in those areas were destroyed or seriously damaged. After these events, the newspaper "Giornale di Brescia" launched a public fundraiser to help the community of Gualdo (a little village in the area of Macerata) in the reconstruction of the school, so severely damaged like the historical downtown declared red zone and completely impassable (Fig. 1).



Fig. 1. Some photographs of the historical downtown of Gualdo, all red zone (photo credits: I. Passamani, 25/11/2017).

The Department D.I.C.A.T.A.M. of the University of Brescia² offered its skills to analyze the destroyed building and the opportunity to arrange the new layout of the area where the school is and to plan a new building. The entire study and the proposal were offered as a donation to the community of Gualdo.

This activity needed to be coordinated with an Association founded by a local newspaper ("Giornale di Brescia"); it was called "Don't leave them alone".

A similar title was given to our procedure: "School in Gualdo#Don't leave them alone".

The following considerations were made clear and evident at the first official survey and after the meetings with the community of Gualdo:

- the local community was very fond of Gualdo and did not want to abandon it for any reason;
- the local community considered the school as a relevant building;
- the local community was afraid and did not accept the idea to go back to the old building, despite the widespread affection to the institution itself;
- the local community wanted the new building in the same site and having the same size. The old building, actually, had a very particular position in the urban context, as we explain here later [2].

All these considerations led us to the decision to involve the beneficiaries of the new school in a Laboratory project activity (a simplified version of "Participated Planning Laboratories" mostly used in urban space design³, preventive and functional to the project itself. After the dramatic event of the earthquake, we thought the students could envision a design taking off from their idea of landscape. The interactive Workshop was aligned with the orientation of the European Landscape Convention on the theme of recognizing the quality of places by inhabitants. This involvement is very important and meaningful, because it increases awareness and education for a landscape culture [3].

In the book "Mindscapes" [4] it is highlighted that in the Convention the psychological aspects of the landscapes are not dealt with. However, in the case of Gualdo, it was evident that there were situations of damage or risk, shown in the words and drawing of the children. In some maps drawn by memory, for example, the young students marked with red pencils the barriers used to divide the red inaccessible area, severely damaged by the earthquake (Fig. 2).



Fig. 2. Map of the area of the school and its surroundings, by memory: the red line clearly divides the inaccessible red zone downtown (Francesco, 16/12/2016).

Methodology

The field experience "School in Gualdo#Don't leave them alone" was organized in three different phases:

- Phase 1_Workshop "The school from which we'll see the world" by DICATAM⁴; Assisted workshop, aimed at girls and boys, to prepare the project activity of the new school as a multifunctional building;
- Phase 2_Project of the new building (Surveys of the area, detailed plan, architectural project) by DICATAM⁵;
- Phase 3_Final executive project by professional Association of Architects and professional Association of Engineers, with participation of DICATAM⁶.

The children involved in the Workshop "The school from which we'll see the world" elaborated their idea of their school building through indications of spaces and functions; but, mostly, they expressed their desire to see the landscape in the form of detailed and precise indications of views that the new building had to have.

The workshop "The school from which we'll see the world" (Phase 1)

Based on the age, three groups were formed (kindergarten, elementary school, middle school); the workshop had different activities, depending on the grade level: games, practical-graphical activities and discussions allowed the children to think about the school as a place from which to look at the future with recovered confidence. We proposed some questions: which features should be saved from the old building? What would they like to recover in the new setting? We invited children attending the elementary classes to reflect about the links between the location of their school and the surrounding space. They expressed an impressive "sense of landscape" requesting panoramic views of the Sibillini mountains and of the high trees, swaying with the wind; the kindergarten children worked with modeling clay on wood tablets and they suggested familiar and comfortable spaces they would like to have in the new building. The older boys and girls of the middle school, with sense of responsibility, designed new spaces to take care of, even during extracurricular time.

The suggestions of the children found confirmation in the indications received from the entire community of Gualdo, during our meeting.

School is an important landmark and it plays a role as a significant symbol, a fulcrum in the collective life; for this reason, it is consolidated in the landscape. It is important that its image, its perceptibility remains unchanged.

In summary, two thoughts emerged:

- the school (blue) as a link (red axis) between the historical downtown and the ancient monastery, present day nursing home;
- the downtown has been defined as "the heart of the village, where life pulsates" and the nursing home as "the heart of the memory, where grandparents preserve the history of the community";
- the position of the building on the ridge of the hill allows a double panoramic view of the gentle landscape of the Marche hills on the north, and of the Sibillini mountains on the south, making the school an amazing "view-bridge" (Fig. 3).

Those thoughts demonstrate that young people identify themselves with landscape [5].

We are dealing with "mindscape: paesaggi raccolti nella psiche e psiche immerse nei paesaggi. Percezioni visive che diventano visioni mentali" [6] which can be translated as "mindscape: landscapes gathered in the psyche and psyches nestled in landscapes. Visual perceptions that become mental visions".

Characteristics of the project

A traumatic event, such as an earthquake, causes a sudden change in the characteristics of the building and, in general, of a consolidated landscape, imposing serious reflections on what must be done when you think you can carry out its reconstruction⁷.

Each building becomes a case in itself, being the object of diagnostic investigations, mainly aimed at identifying the damage and possible consolidation interventions, but when all this testing highlights structural problems that do not justify its maintenance, the conclusion is to demolish the construction.

A similar situation has been found for the school of Gualdo with evident static issues and a constant fear of accepting its reuse (Fig. 4). Being any technical insurance, not possible in the case in question, the community did not accept that their children's return to that building, despite the widespread affection that the institution possessed.

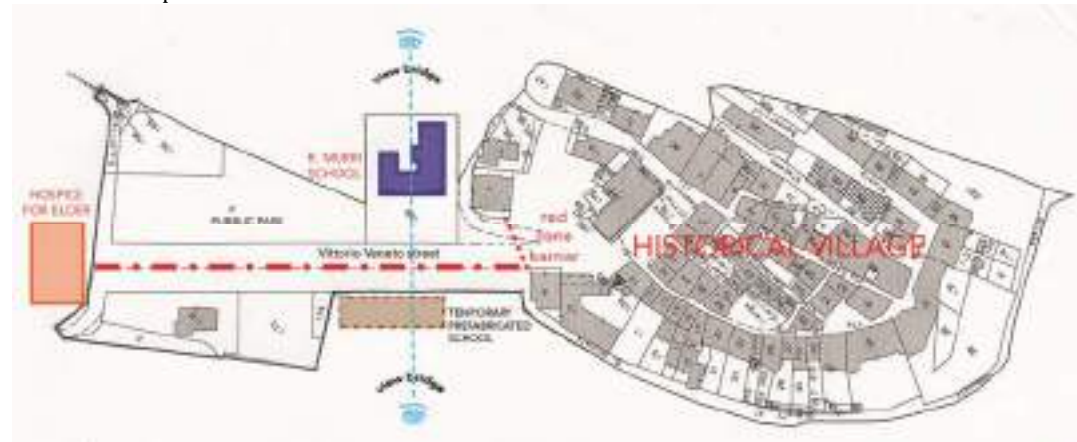


Fig. 3. Gualdo, cadastral map with some focus and remarks during the briefing with children: it is evident the role of the school both as a "view bridge" to the landscape, and as central point between the nursing home and the hearth of the historical downtown (source: I. Passamani, 16/12/2016).



Fig. 4. Gualdo, the old school "Romolo Murri" after the earthquake: the main façade and a classroom (photo credits: R. Marmorì, 16/12/2016).

It was therefore necessary to choose to operate the demolition/reconstruction intervention. The first aspect to deal with was to confirm the location of the construction, as well as to establish the formal arrangements, especially volumetric, of the new building.

These assessments were significant, since the introduction of any variation would have produced an alteration of the characteristics of a consolidated landscape, sufficiently homogeneous for the type of construction and finishing materials.

For this reason, workshops with children were activated and, at the same time, discussions with the community, well represented by its Mayor, Giovanni Zavaglini.

Following the meetings, it was understood that the school should have been rebuilt in the same place, being a site always designated to host it, and that a compact volume with typical finishes of the place should have been proposed in order to recall the ones in the historic center of Gualdo.

Project of the new building (Phase 2)

Thanks to these indications and to the commitment made by the University of Brescia, in particular to DICATAM, we began to develop a general design, addressing all the possible aspects of future intervention.

As a matter of fact, the city of Brescia, which wanted a concrete gesture towards compatriots who lived difficult times, had chosen to offer the reconstruction of a symbolic building using the money quickly collected with the subscription launched by the "Giornale di Brescia".

In the spirit of solidarity, the University of Brescia also wanted to offer its contribution. It was decided to donate to the Association "Non lasciamoli da soli", which was specifically set up

the interior and exterior of the building, and “sign” in the prospect that identifies the entrance to the school.

Overall, the project proposes a new block-type building, with a rectangular shape, whose sides measure 29.46 x 24.27 m, for two floors in height, inside which there is a square courtyard, 8.16 m per side, which offers adequate brightness to all internal views.



Fig. 7. The main staircase with two continuous ramps of the new school “Romolo Murri” of Gualdo, from the square courtyard (8,16 m per side), which offers adequate brightness to all internal views (photo credits: I. Passamani 15/09/2018).

The total gross area is 1,251.60 square meters, more precisely 615.40 square meters on the ground floor and 636.20 square meters on the first floor. As children requested during the Workshop, the project has also been set up to guarantee the use of some spaces, such as the gym, the library or the multipurpose room, even outside the school hours so that the community could have new public areas: in fact both gym and library have a completely independent access or use vertical connections placed in immediate contact with the main entrance.

Phase 3: Final executive project

A working team was established between professionals outside the University, in order to gather all the professional skills necessary to develop the documentation of a contract.

Only a few months have passed since January

2017, the start date of the adventure, and the rest belongs to real life: the executive material is ready at the end of summer, the contract is awarded, the first stone is laid on 25 November and the “Romolo Murri” School is inaugurated on 15 September 2018, ready for the new school year.

The very short time and quality of the work carried out have been extremely satisfactory for all those who participated and the correct crowning of the exceptional gesture of solidarity made by the Brescia community.

Results

Can a local community, rooted in its daily landscape, upon a dramatic event such as an earthquake, come up with a vision and rise once more from its own “idea” of landscape? The question, at the end of this particular field research experience, got an affirmative answer. The young citizens were at the same time both actors and spectators of their own daily landscape, according to the interpretations by Turri [7]. They were able to give their definition of landscape [8].

The experience of the Workshop confirmed that they recognize the landscape as a place of identity: the landscape idea may be the starting-point to live again in a damaged town and to help and steer the project too, supporting the choices of the best solutions not only for the safety but also for the well-being of the future users. In this way, they moved from the “identity” point of view to one of “belonging” [9].

The Workshop, aligned with the orientation of the European Landscape Convention on the theme of recognizing the quality of places, helped young students become better citizen in the future. The children that lay their “first stone” during the official ceremony will remember this meaningful gesture in the future: touching the stone to create a new architecture [10]. Probably, while they reflect on the dramatic event that destroyed the school, they will think about the different steps of their experience: the tents, the temporary prefabricated wooden school, the demolition, the groundbreaking... and finally the new building also designed by themselves (Fig. 9, Fig. 10).

Acknowledgements

Despite having shared objectives, methodologies and results of this field research experience and planning activities, it is highlighted that Passamani is the author of Abstract and Paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4 and 8; Marmorì of 5, 6, 7.



Fig. 9. Some steps of the experience about the new school “Romolo Murri” of Gualdo. The old unfit school; the classrooms-tents; the official groundbreaking; the opening of the new school (photo credits: I. Passamani 14/11/2016; 25/11/2017; 15/09/2018).

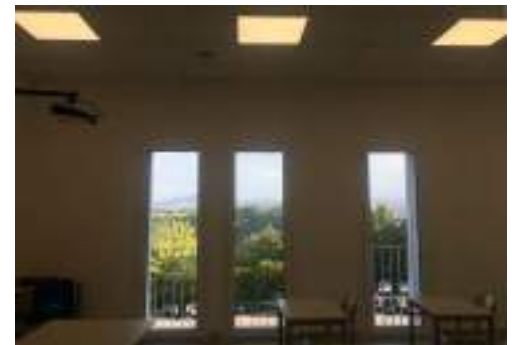


Fig. 10. One of the panoramic views from the classrooms of the new school “Romolo Murri” of Gualdo, according to the requests of the children (photo credits: I. Passamani 15/09/2018).



Fig. 8. Project of the new school “Romolo Murri” of Gualdo. Cross section of the open space-cloister in the middle and of the covered space-Agorà. The maximum height are 7.43 m at the eaves extraction and 9.16 m at the top higher (source: L. Notarantonio 22/09/2017).

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NOTES

- 1. I. Passamani coordinated the whole institutional project "Scuola a Gualdo #Nonlasciamolisoli" as Rector's Delegate for Buildings and Properties of the University of Brescia.
- 2. The first official proposal was by the Director of the Department, Giovanni Plizzari.
- 3. <http://www.mappadicomunita.it/>
- 4. B. Badiani (D.I.C.A.T.A.M.) designed and coordinated the Workshop, teamwork B. Badiani, C. Manfredini, I. Passamani.
- 5. R. Marmorì was the team-leader of the equipe of D.I.C.A.T.A.M. (Angi, Arenghi, Badiani, Clerici, Colleselli, Fappani, Longo, Metelli, Passamani, Plizzari). To ensure a cultural-compositional continuity and not significantly modify the basis handed over to the "Don't leave them alone" Association, the development of the architectural executive (Phase 2) was by arch. Luca Notarantonio, who has collaborated with the studio of Marmorì.
- 6. M. Belardi was the Project Manager of the equipe of experts: "Don't leave them alone" Association (Belardi, Ferrari, Meini, Seccamani, Strepavara Torri); UNIBS-D.I.C.A.T.A.M. (Marmorì, Metelli, Passamani, Plizzari); professional Association of Architects (Camadini), professional Association of Engineers (Armanini, Bettini, Castioni, Guerra, Manfredini, Perani, Poli, Tininini, Torquati).
- 7. Bibliographical references about the focus earthquake/consequences/activities mainly deal with relevant and technical aspects about survey and reconstruction activities [11] [12] [13] [14].

ALVARADO Oscar A., The Hague Academy for Local Governance (NETHERLANDS)
ANDREASSI Fabio, University of Rome "Guglielmo Marconi" (ITALY)
ANTONIADIS Stefanos, Department of Civil, Environmental and Architectural Engineering, University of Padua (ITALY)
BELLONE Cinzia Barbara, Department of Sustainable Engineering, University of Rome "Guglielmo Marconi" (ITALY)
CACACI Elisa, Department of Engineering and Architecture, University of Trieste (ITALY)
CARCIOTTI Sara, Department of Engineering and Architecture, University of Trieste (ITALY)
CASTIGLIANO Marica, Department of Architecture, University of Naples "Federico II" (ITALY)
CERRETA Maria, Department of Architecture, University of Naples "Federico II" (ITALY)
CIANCI Maria Grazia, Department of Architecture, University of Roma Tre (ITALY)
CLAIRAY Philippe, University of Rennes 2 Haute-Bretagne (FRANCE)
CORBISIERO Fabio, Department of Social Science, University of Naples "Federico II" (ITALY)
D'AGOSTINO Angela, Department of Architecture, University of Naples "Federico II" (ITALY)
DE JOANNA Paola, Department of Architecture, University of Naples "Federico II" (ITALY)
DE SALVO Paola, Department of Political Science, University of Perugia (ITALY)
DI IORIO Fabio, Department of Architecture, University of Naples "Federico II" (ITALY)
DUȘOIU Elena-Codina, Department of Study of Form and Ambience, "Ion Mincu" University of Architecture and Urbanism of Bucharest (ROMANIA)
ERBANI Margherita, Department of Architecture, University of Roma Tre (ITALY)
FABBRI Edoardo, Department of Philosophy, University of Naples "Federico II" (ITALY)
GERUNDO Carlo, Department of Civil, Architectural and Environmental Engineering, University of Naples "Federico II" (ITALY)
LA ROSA Daniele, Department of Civil Engineer and Architecture, University of Catania (ITALY)
MARMORI Renato, Department of Civil, Environmental, Architectural, Engineering and Mathematics, University of Brescia (ITALY)
MELISSANO Francesca, Department of Architecture, University of Roma Tre (ITALY)
MONDELLI Francesca Paola, Department of Architecture, University of Roma Tre (ITALY)
MOTTA ZANIN Giulia, Department of Civil, Environmental, Land, Building Engineering and Chemistry, Polytechnic University of Bari, (ITALY)
PAPPALARDO Viviana, Department of Civil Engineer and Architecture, University of Catania (ITALY)
PASSAMANI Ivana, Department of Civil, Environmental, Architectural, Engineering and Mathematics, University of Brescia (ITALY)
PETRONCELLI Elvira, Department of Civil, Architectural and Environmental Engineering, University of Naples "Federico II" (ITALY)
PETRONI Luca, Department of Architecture, University of Roma Tre (ITALY)
PIZZI Marco, Department of Political Science, University of Perugia (ITALY)
PONE Maria, Department of Architecture, University of Roma Tre (ITALY)
RABAZO MARTIN Marta, Department of Architecture, University of Roma Tre (ITALY)
ROSSITTI Marco, Department of Architecture and Urban Studies, Politechnic University of Milan (ITALY)
SCILLIERI Francesco, Department of Architecture, University of Roma Tre (ITALY)
SERGIO Marianna, Department of Architecture, University of Naples "Federico II" (ITALY)
STANGANELLI Marialuce, Department of Civil, Architectural and Environmental Engineering, University of Naples "Federico II" (ITALY)
TORRIERI Francesca, Department of Industrial engineering, University of Naples "Federico II" (ITALY)
VANNELLI Giovangiuseppe, Department of Architecture, University of Naples "Federico II" (ITALY)
VINGELLI Federica, Department of Architecture, University of Naples "Federico II" (ITALY)
ZIZZANIA Piero, Department of Architecture, University of Naples "Federico II" (ITALY)