Editorial 2

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Old and new topics in architectural and urban design

Abstract
Of the articles selected for the call for papers *Coronavirus, city, architecture. Prospects of the architectural and urban design*, this article offers a critique regarding their content, grouping them in a number of thematic blocks in order to achieve a better organisation of the knowledge for the purposes of transmissibility. A complex varied picture emerges in which the topics of the call are directed at situations that are very remote, such as in the case of Korea or China, with useful observations and operating recommendations that will certainly provide food for thought in the disciplinary research of architectural design and urban planning.

Keywords
Covid-19 — Urban design — City — Architecture — Transmissibility

With this double issue (the most substantial ever) FAM wished to offer the scientific community of architectural and urban design a place in which to collect a great number of ideas that the unusual lockdown situation has stimulated in many (if not, all) experts on architecture. In fact it is due to our professional training that we usually analyse situations in order to propose solutions.

As we have seen, many architects have expressed themselves through the various media available and have perhaps presented an alternative to the debate on Covid-19 second only to that of the doctors (virologists and epidemiologist) and politicians. In that period of excited initiative we have seen many proposals (from the most quixotic to the most elementary) but above all at the limits of professional and deontological ethics.

For our part, in the conviction that the disciplinary corpus of architectural and urban design has much to propose, we have worked towards the creation of an international call for papers, the broadest in terms of acceptance of proposals centred on the viewpoint of architectural and urban design.

Thus the proposals received by the editorial staff were numerous with more than one hundred and thirty abstracts from all over the world. This was a remarkable result considering the concurrence of dozens and dozens of schemes that the magazines or the scientific community offered for architects to think about. Of all the abstracts, the vast majority were at a very high level and of unquestioned scientific quality.

The articles were selected (in the meantime increasing from twenty to more than thirty to make room for researchers to express themselves)

following the criterion of greatest relevance to the topics stated in the call with a propensity for those that put questions (and offered answers) which were of use within the discipline. The material received was also subdivided into thematic blocks (or organisation by topic) which made it possible to give some order to the contributions (all to the benefit of the critique).

Selection is always a difficult task, sometimes unpleasant, but necessary also for the purposes of transmissibility of the content and coherence with the cultural objective that we set ourselves.

The articles selected were then subjected to a double blind peer review procedure and for the first time fielding a considerable number of registered reviewers to whom I wish to express my thanks.

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Concerning the end of the call text (previously presented), some questions summarised the operating nature of the experts' call concerning the situation experienced[1].

All the articles in fact tackled the problem directly or indirectly, analysing it and considering possible corrective planning actions to either mitigate or solve it completely or at least partially.

Although the articles always treat the matter broadly, we thought it would be useful to identify the main features of the content in order to guide the reader through the various types of solutions.

The thirty articles selected were in fact organised and grouped into thematic blocks each responding to a particular feature.

1. On the home

The first thematic block gathers the articles that commented on and proposed solutions on the home and the domestic environment in particular. They are articles which start with the condition, often experienced directly or seen and understood, and propose solutions connected with the place of primary importance.

The first concept that emerged was the flexibility of domestic space, in other words the consideration that a certain functional independence of spaces can be attributed without giving them a specific purpose in a rigid uncompromising way. Massimo Zammerini develops a solution which starts with some concrete examples and identifies the spaces which can effectively be adapted to different functions such as work, sport and hospitality, but also independent living in the case of children showing the first signs of independence from the family for which there are corresponding cases. The discussion clearly becomes increasingly complicated as the idea of the flexible room/space interacts with the various types of buildings, from the most unfettered in terms of spatial organisation (single-family dwelling) to the more constrained cases of multi-storey terraced houses.

The article by Giorgio Gasco and Giuseppe Resta can be considered on the same level. They identify the sofa as an interesting space, as the threshold of a traditional Turkish home, to be introduced in the modern home. Following the post-war studies of Sedad Hakki Eldem they describe some of their experiments at Bilkent University of Ankara aimed
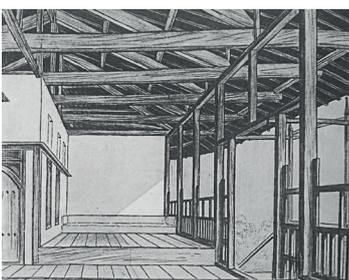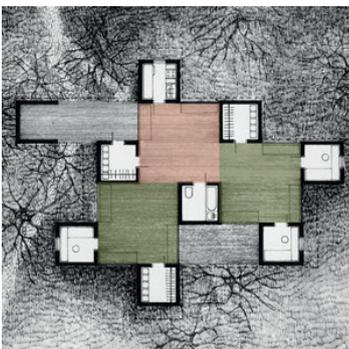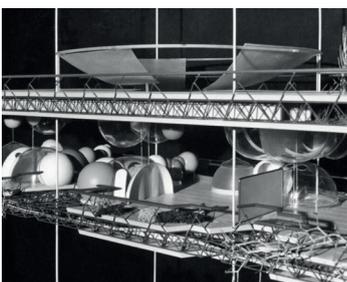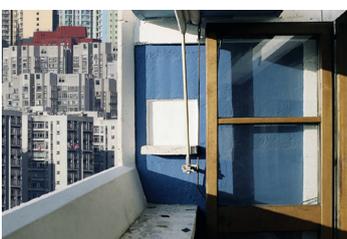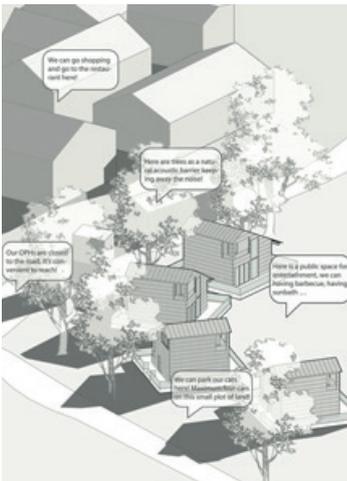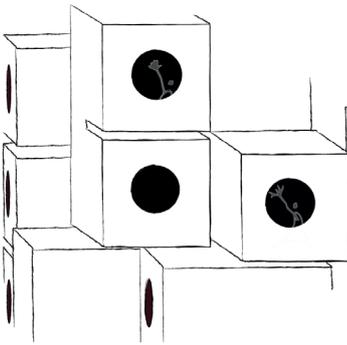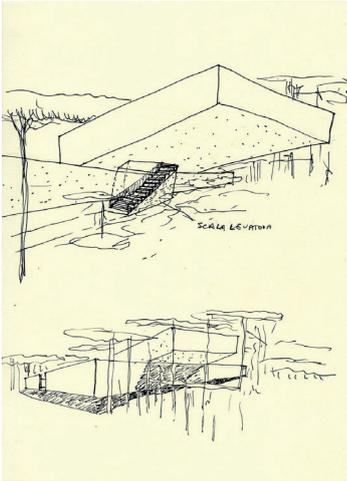
at demonstrating how the Turkish sofa can also be a venturian "device for inflection in the composition".

Ottavio Amaro, considering the mainly transformative possibility of design, considers the home as a new central place in which to perform the various necessary functions and find the primary value of protection. A domestic microcosm in where functions usually carried out in the city take place.

If in the vision of Amaro the home is and remains in any case a real tangible fact that re-appropriates its original function of giving form to man's needs also through an archetypal concept, the view of Grazia Maria Nicolosi, on the contrary and by analogy with a certain cyborg culture, raises questions on the home as a space of the virtual, or simulated reality: this leads one to consider new architectural forms that better adhere to the physiognomy of man (eliminating any possibility for artistic expression for the sake of techno-scientific expression) as a capsule, a shell or house-body. The article becomes an interesting review of the experiments conducted around the concept of virtual architecture and that Covid-19 has contributed to causing a crisis and highlighting its limits with respect to man.

While around the single person and the construction of one's minimal living space – *One Person House* –, revolves the considerations of Alberto Bologna and Marco Trisciuoglio who transform the contextual situation experienced into a didactic stimulus through which architecture students attempt four design exercises of the type "research by design". They are substantially based on the analogy between man and architecture from which they obtain the elements to design.

Antonino Margagliotta and Paolo De Marco, are hoping for liberation of the home to bring it back to the spirit of necessity, ethical aspiration and aesthetics of the essential. A type of home that we imagine located in a situation of collective living, as the modern architecture has suggested by the Unité of Corbusier to Social Housing. The real principle on which to rely in design, analogously to what happens for the disabled, is adaptability: a predisposition for the different tasks to be done in the current home including study and work.

2. On the home/work combination

It is precisely on this aspect, the configuration of space destined for doing work at home, that the second thematic block is dedicated and which we can consider as an extension of the preceding block. There is no doubt that the pandemic condition experienced has affected in various ways the relationship between the home and the workplace. One aspect in particular concerns the possibility, made conceivable by openness to remote working to combine the two categories of home and work in a single space (the domestic one).

In the first article the author, Marianna Charitonidou, takes up the theme of the studies by the Greek architect Takis Zenetos who, in the seventies, designed the IT revolution of the home and the city of the future, studying and anticipating its repercussions. In particular he takes up the idea of a home optimised to the conditions of remote working (individual living unit) within which he designs multipurpose furnishings and a "postural chair", understood as an extension of the human body.
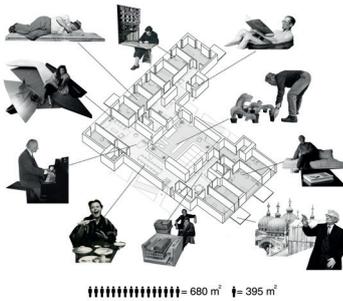
The second article by Edoardo Marchese and Noemi Ciarniello, uses the categories of production and reproduction within which they metaphorically place their considerations on the home space. There is no doubt that production (work) has undergone a process of domestication during the pandemic: recalling the concept of Mack Sennet on porosity, the two authors however extend the consideration to include the type of home, suggesting collectivisation and sharing of functions that would optimise human life between productive work and reproductive work.

Roberta Gironi shifts her focus from the home to the landscape of work spaces, pointing out how for some time they have evolved from the compartmented fixed work post toward the multipurpose open space. Furthermore, following this evolution, the author arrives at a concept of the office workplace as a new relational hub made possible by the relocation of production into homes. This concept, altered by the flipped classroom, allows a redefinition analogous to a new flipped workspace formulated on the acknowledgement of different types of work (communication, concentration, contemplation, cooperation) that lead to proposing environments organised specifically for different purposes (brainstorming, presentation, focus, relax, socializing, etc).

3. Between the building and the city: space for relations

The third thematic block specifically concerns space for relations, variously defined in architectural literature also as an intermediate, neutral, threshold space, in between, infra, etc.

Giovanni Comi focuses his thoughts on the empty space between the building and the city, the space for relations which is too often undervalued (and rejected) in favour of economic performance. The author opens by presenting the difference between the habitable and inhabitable which leads him to underline the importance of the intermediate architectural elements (threshold, portico, roof) unlike certain spaces in the modern city which would be uninhabitable due to the inability to conceive how to inhabit them before even thinking about how to build them.

Claudia Sansò and Roberta Esposito use the representative potential of a collage to demonstrate through dystopian visions how during the pandemic there has been an inversion of the busy city which has become empty and the emptiness of indoor spaces which have become full. Between the urban desert and the domestic dream reigns the space of the threshold, consisting of the window (frame from the film) which is made to react with the pictures.

Paola Scala and Grazia Pota apply the concept of an elastic place (a place conceived to favour the building of social networks but also able to react in the event of emergency and becoming equipped spaces) and propose an intermediate design scale that starts with the experiences of Chermayeff and Alexander concerning the relationship between public and private spaces.

4. At the scale of the settlement: design of the contemporary city

Leaving the residential microcosm and entering the urban macrocosm we come to the fourth thematic block which deals with the question of designing the contemporary city, its form in the light of the recent experience we have had. It is pointless to say that the articles analysed
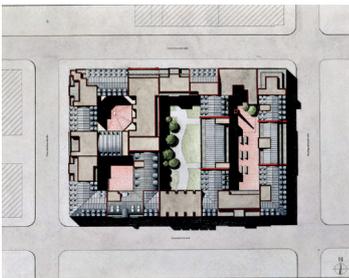
below contain a harsh criticism of the city as it has come about and been established in recent years and which has revealed its functional limits during the period of the pandemic.

A city without form and without limits, which has grown over time by the addition of nucleuses that continue to revolve around the main city centre, has led Antonello Russo in his article to propose an idea of urban expansion by nucleuses in which architectural densification and urban thinning out are possible simultaneously. What follows is a composition of archipelagos and islands, distinct but interconnected settlements that originate from experiments on the district, from the horizontal city to the extended city up to the more recent experiments.

René Soleti proposes the theories of Samonà again – reinterpreted through the projects of his student Polesello on Venice – identifying the category of architectural empty spaces as the instrument for replanning the post-Covid-19 city: in fact the empty space is an organisational element, an instrument of measurement and dynamic balance. Apart from the unquestioned "compositional" value of this approach, planning with empty space also becomes an opportunity to reorganise the places and parts of cities.

Pascal Federico Cassaro and Flavia Magliacani place emphasis on the regenerative potential of the urban fabric and identify the European city block (and in all the studies, mostly French, aimed at developing it and emphasising its design value) as the spatial element to be used in proceeding with the planning of the post-Covid-19 city. The city block or multiple thereof, the îlot or macrolots, a possible collective dwelling in multifunctional conditions (with this term referring also to the satisfaction of needs for sport, wellbeing and leisure time) and energy and environmental sustainability. A sort of city within a city defined by the perimeter of the public streets which takes inspiration from the works in Schützenstraße in Berlin by Aldo Rossi.

Similarly Giuseppe Verterame, in his article, is inspired by the macro city block understood as a spatial prototype which, starting with the invariant morphological type of the block, improves the quality of living conditions by means of compositional operations in the dialects between construction and open space, in the context of new primary functions, local services and improvement of the standards of environmental sustainability. In these terms the macro city block contributes to creating a settlement structure where the continuity of the fabric is determined by independent parts created that have a mutually relationship that depends on the various levels to which they are complementary.

The article by Li Bao and Die Hu, takes stock of the critical points that have affected Chinese cities during the pandemic and suggest a series of proposals that involves three distinct planning areas (urban, architectural and community) capable of providing an even better answer to the pandemic situation in the future.

The article by Ken Fallas and Ekaterina Kochetkova indicates the resilience of the Korean city as a model for intervention against Covid-19. The situation of modern man's isolation and social inequality described in the recent film Parasite are renounced in favour of a global urban planning approach defined as K-urbanism based on the use of technology but focused on man. This is a type of approach made possible by a capillary

IT infrastructuring and an urban model different from the European one.

5. The role of the public space

The fifth thematic block concerns the relationship and role played by the public space in the way the city works. In general the considerations and planning approach collected here are more in the management-administrative sphere and often connected with planning methods that are endorsed, shared and cooperative that also include the reclaiming and consequent reuse, even if only temporary, of abandoned spaces. It is interesting to note how the three approaches presented originated differently from urban planning, cooperative architecture and tactical urban planning, even though they converge on the objectives and solutions.

It is precisely on the temporary reuse of abandoned spaces that the article by Nicola Marzot concentrates. After an articulate analytical explanation he presents the experience of the "Ex Scalo Ravone" area of Bologna, a symbol of the reclamation of disused spaces, the subject of a specific exploration of original solutions to include in the regional implementation plan. It is a public area that is proposed again for its multiple possible uses which are also compatible as a place for reconstruction of the sense of community.

Similar to the preceding article Riccarda Cappeller also suggests putting areas of an important historical past of the city to uses in a new way and not originally considered in order to involve the population in active participation and reappropriation processes. Not just reuse but considering the spaces and architecture as "open to continual change" and open to modernisation. On the basis of the works proposed the idea of cooperative architecture, understood as the co-creation of places, spaces and opportunities for use, makes sense.

Fabrizia Berlingieri and Manuela Triggianese propose a strategy of reappropriation of residual public areas for the purposes of greater capacity for adaptation to risk by means of methods typical of the so-called Tactical Urbanism. This involves low cost projects carried out with the active involvement of the population (creation of cycle tracks, redevelopment of squares and reappropriation of residual spaces). Various projects in cities of Milan and Rotterdam are given as an example.

6. Planning culture in relation to the Pandemic

The sixth thematic block includes articles that deal with the question of planning culture in relation to the pandemic. Two articles in particular emphasise renewed interest in proxemics, a discipline that could help architects and architectural design – the same echo in the foreword of the book published in Italy by Hall refers mainly to them – specifically dealing with the relationship between space and the body. An outline is thus given of a flexible elastic city that has many independent centres rather than a single centre around which the external parts revolve.

In his article, Luca Reale proposes restarting with 'bodies in space' rather than the 'city as a body' (sick and in need of regeneration). Besides the general considerations on domestic space the author imagines a new balance between city and public health which would confute the tendency toward densification in favour of a rebirth of the district (perhaps reassessing the INA-Casa experience) and its pedestrian use.
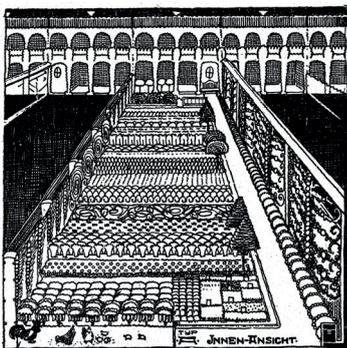
In the article by Anna Veronese proxemics is proposed as a specific planning instrument useful for rethinking the spaces "on a human scale". We are thus reminded of the four spheres of distancing (intimate, personal, social and public) by which we can imagine respective scales of city organisation. A concept that measures the distance which in the event of use underpins the project of La ville du quart d'heure produced by Carlos Moreno – the expert of the Sorbonne Smart City – in the context of the programme for re-election of Anne Hidalgo, the mayoress of Paris.

By the paradigm of the raft with which humanity is to be saved, according to the thinking of Richard Neutra in Progettare per sopravvivere, Elisabetta Canepa and Valeria Guerrisi propose a review of the main Italian magazines on architecture during the great health crises of the 20th and 21st centuries in search of how planning culture reacted to previous pandemics (Spanish flu, Asiatic flu, Hong Kong fever, Swine flu). The outcome shows how regardless of the extent of contagion it is the media amplification that creates the base or the project magazines which most of the time deal with the urban problem in terms of livability and consequent accessibility, as well as the danger of high density.

7. The care of the city paradigm

The seventh thematic block gathers together articles that have recourse to the Geddesian paradigm of care. The city is seen as a sick organism and as such in need of care: needless to say that in this case the condition that generated the problems, including those of an urban type, i.e. the medical health problem, ended up shifting in an abnormal spillover also to the city and to architecture changing the scheme of diagnosis/cure by medical practice. In particular the article by Alessandro Oltremarini considers the characteristics of the cure intersecting them with those of measurement: if the cure attends to the plural relations between different parts and their continually changing meaning, it acknowledges the character of necessity that belongs to the measurement of "things" and the relations between them.

The cure of the city, – but also with the meaning of care – from the viewpoint of Landscape Architecture is the content of the article by Sara Protasoni in which it is necessary to find a new balance between architecture and nature. For example, the author presents a planning approach of this type, describing it as the work of the three architects Mitte, Figini and Porcinai.

Silvana Segapeli reinterprets and applies a good part of the Geddesian lesson to the current reality, outlining in four specific points the concept of care applied to planning. It is the article that most resumes the theories of Geddes to whom the reader is referred for an exhaustive treatment

There are also some articles that take up the defence of the city and in contrast the defence of suburban life in the abandoned or underpopulated districts. This tendency is also considered in the article by Enrico Bascherini who, supporting the broader and more general movement which for some years has tended to develop and repopulate internal areas, identifies the greatest problems (or risks) such as ensuring that those places are refounded in community terms, starting a medium to long term process. I agree with the author when he affirms that in this collective
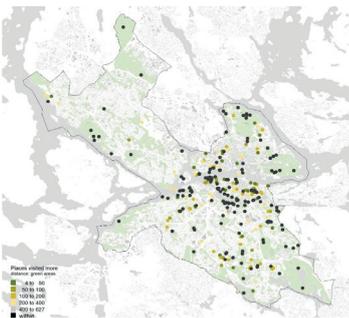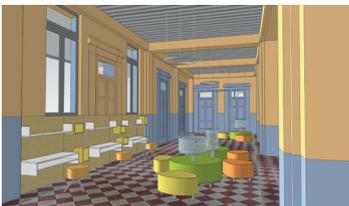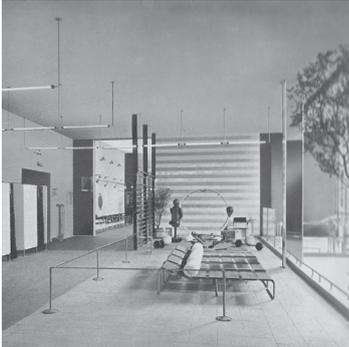
rediscovery of being a community, a feeling can and must arise in which the district system can be a social and economic life choice but definitely not a substitute for the city.

In fact, not only the necessity of having a city, which cannot be replaced, is the conviction of Costantino Patestos but also that it has not exhibited any serious defects in handling the pandemic. It must be (regarding the care paradigm) cared for, says the author, but not hospitalised. Against the speculators of the situation, guilty of using the pandemic to rehash already superseded solutions, he proposes some fundamental disciplinary points including: defence of the old city centre; opposition to inequality; replanning of internal peripheries of the city and promotion of a new territorial multicentricity; reclamation of the quality of public areas.

Lastly, some contributions on functional subjects outside the primary ambit of living such as that of Laura Anna Pezzetti and Helen Khanamiryan that deal with the space of the schools or investigations on change in urban behaviour in Sweden analysed by Ann Legeby and Daniel Koch.

In the first article the two authors dwell on the importance of the educational space and its implementation in regard to advanced functional criteria (space as a "third educator") and to use in the emergency pandemic conditions such as we still have[2].

Ann Legeby and Daniel Koch instead, sent questionnaires to the population of three Swedish cities (Stockholm, Uppsala and Göteborg) during the pandemic to record the changes in behaviour consisting of greater use of services bordering the residential areas and public parks and spaces typically having extensive open spaces.

Notes

[1] It should be said that in regard to a truce in the summer, at the time of writing, 31 October 2020 we are going through a second wave of the pandemic which in Europe is creating alarm (a few days ago France went into lockdown again and Great Britain is trying not to despite having an even more serious situation): after the first partial closure order we will probably see a new lockdown, perhaps a total one or at least geographically limited to the areas mist seriously hit.

[2] In summer 2020 an attempt was made ensure ongoing teaching and the resumption of lessons introducing specific distancing measures in the schools. At the moment lessons are attended in primary and middle schools while senior school lessons are held using remote teaching methods.

Enrico Prandi (Mantua, 1969), architect, graduated with an honours degree from the Faculty of Architecture of Milan. He has collaborated with Guido Canella in teaching and research work. He is a Doctor of Research in Architectural and Urban Composition at the IUAV of Venice obtaining the title in 2003. At the moment he is Associate Professor in Architectural and Urban Composition at the Department of Engineering and Architecture at the University of Parma. He is Director of the Festival of Architecture of Parma and founder-director of the first class international scientific magazine FAMagazine. Research and projects on architecture and the city (ISSN 2039-0491; www.famagazine.it). He is scientific director for the Parma unit of the ARCHEA project. Architectural European Medium-Sized City Arrangement (https://site.unibo.it/archea). His publications include: *Il progetto del Polo per l'Infanzia. Sperimentazioni architettoniche tra didattica e ricerca* (Aión, Firenze 2018); *L'architettura della città lineare* (FrancoAngeli, Milano 2016); *Il progetto di architettura nelle scuole europee* (in European City Architecture, FAEdizioni, Parma 2012); *Mantova. Saggio sull'architettura* (FAEdizioni, Parma 2005).