



OBSOLESCENCE and RENOVATION

20th Century Housing in the New Millennium

Conference: 14-15 December 2015

Abstract / Initial Proposal Form:

1. Paper / Proposal Title: Re-thinking the obsolescent Ruins of contemporary age: between gentrification and the "green washing" of the public spaces.

2. Format: Written Paper and collages

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6. Abstract (300 words): Inside the Postmodern City (Amendola), the obsolescent 20th Century housing could be described as a particular kind of the architectural heritage. These contemporary ruins are often considered a symbol of bad conditions of living. These urban objects, waiting to be demolished and replaced, are now urban realities (Fatti Urbani, Rossi) that have to be "forgiven" by the urban communities rather than to be forgotten. There are multiple: one is that generations of citizens have grown inside these neighborhoods that are now memories inside the stratified urban palimpsest, like

the old abandoned factories. Another reason could be the fact that famous architects had designed some of these districts, architects that are now studied after becoming part of the recent history of architecture. This change of point of views has produced a new interest for this "critical heritage". In order to create, or increase, the consensus of the citizens, the authorities have focused a lot on organizing competitions to *re-think* these critical places, stressing the topic of "sustainability", both socially and environmentally, one of the "magic word" of the contemporary scene in the media. After seven years of crisis, it's possible to define some tendencies inside the design, or the re-design, of those districts. Analyzing the projects through their open and closed spaces, public and private. It's clear that the common aim is to increase the quality of the space, but also the economical value. So we ask if this is a process of a new type of gentrification, or is it a real improvement of the living conditions of the inhabitants of these areas? Are the sustainable design strategies a sort of "greenwashing" of architecture, or are they defining a new way of living and building?

7. Author(s) Biography (200 words maximum for all authors): Phd student from Politecnico di Milano in co-supervised thesis with Universidad de Sevilla. His research topic is about the crisis-scapes: the quick obsolescence of the spaces in the Mediterranean city during the actual phase of the late capitalism. The title of his thesis is: "Ruins of contemporaneity: concepts, strategies and design methods for the transformation of abandoned places"

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