The meaning of historic cities in the digital age: Genoa historic center regeneration.

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“No doubt there is no architecture without some modification of what already exists”, states Vittorio Gregotti in his famous article published in the architectural magazine Casabella 498/9, in 1984, focusing on the topic of Architecture as Modification. In the XXI century, the theme of modification regarding urban design and planning in historic towns assumes a completely new meaning.

It is the end of traditional planning. The old conception of masterplan is no longer effective since the project is now approached as an in-progress strategy. Designers are finding themselves performing an essentially new set of actions, starting to design in time and not against time, working with territory without destroying it but with layering on it to renew its roots, in a conscious syntony to improve the city.

Moreover, a further change is underway due to the recent and substantial technological developments connected to the so-called digital transformation. This change leads to a completely new way of designing. Projects now focus on the concept of sustainability
and resilience, not only from an environmental point of view but also from a digital one, intended as the capacity to adapt to the changing needs of citizens, increasingly driven by new technologies.

The progress of an "experimental" project for the regeneration of Genoa's historic center, developed by the Università di Genova in collaboration with the Municipality, is shown. Innovation in urban regeneration solutions, digitalization of services, sharing of choices with residents, users and institutions present in the historic center are the main paradigm of the project. The city of Genoa is a suitable example to discuss the issues of the complex relationship between the preservation of historical and cultural heritage and today’s challenges/requirements.

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Renata Morbiducci (Genoa, 1966: Full Professor in Architectural Engineering, Ph.D. in Structural Engineering) is an architect, member of the RINGO No-Gov. Delegation COP-UNFCCC; Research Delegate, Delegate for the Regeneration Project and Member of Research Ethics Committee (Università di Genova); Scientific Coordinator of International and National Projects; Author of more than 90 Publications, Co-founder of the “Sustainable Design and Construction” Editorial Series (GUP-Genoa); Member of the Doctoral Research School of Architecture (Università di Genova), Teacher for PhD, Master and Bachelor for International and National Universities and External Organizations; “Wise person” of the Town Planning and Public Property Department (Municipality of Genoa).

Vittoria Bonini (Genoa, 1993: degree in Building Engineering-Architecture, PhD student in Architecture and Design) is an architectural engineer and external collaborator at the Department of Architecture and Design (dAD) of the Polytechnic School of Genoa. Her research, within the Project Theory, focuses on the definition and possibilities of movement in architecture, distinguishing between the nature and consequences of kinematic applications play on the intrinsic relationship, between architecture and human being, and extrinsic, between architecture and environment. As a teaching assistant, she follows Architectural Composition and Sustainable Architectural Design courses at the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering (DICCA) and Architectural Design at the Department of Architecture and Design (dAD) of the Polytechnic School of Genoa.

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