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**Towards
a Circular
Regenerative
Urban Model**



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CREATIVE CITIES: THE CHALLENGE OF “HUMANIZATION” IN THE CITY DEVELOPMENT

Luigi Fusco Girard

Abstract

Small cities can offer interesting practices of urbanization at the human scale, in achieving benefits for a more balanced regional order and also for the regeneration of “central” cities, i.e. big cities. High quality of landscape enhances city attractiveness and thus development perspectives. This quality depends on the density of circular and synergistic processes, i.e. on their capacity to multiply the flow of benefits. In the examined experiences, the “piazza” becomes the catalyst for communication, relationships, exchange of ideas and not only for marketing goods: the place of regeneration of all forms of energies and thus places for humanization. It is here that the quality of the complex landscape is maximized. The regenerative model development, that starts from the new circular metabolism and economic processes, should be extended to the whole city-region, modifying land and space use. The “piazza” characterized by a rich complex landscape as engine of social, symbiotic and economic exchanges, should be multiplied in the city: every urban building should become a little “piazza”. In this paper some elements that should be included in the new Urban Agenda in order to implement the human scale of urbanization are proposed.

Keywords: circular economy, symbiosis, synergies

LE CITTÀ CREATIVE: LA SFIDA DELL’“UMANIZZAZIONE” NELLO SVILUPPO DELLA CITTÀ

Sommario

Le città piccole possono offrire delle interessanti pratiche di urbanizzazione a scala umana, per ottenere benefici a favore di un assetto regionale equilibrato ed anche della rigenerazione delle città “centrali”, cioè le grandi città. Un’elevata qualità del paesaggio accresce l’attrattività di una città e quindi le sue prospettive di sviluppo, qualità che dipende dalla densità dei processi circolari e sinergici, cioè dalla loro capacità di moltiplicare il flusso dei benefici. Nelle esperienze esaminate, la “piazza” diventa il catalizzatore della comunicazione, delle relazioni, dello scambio di idee e non soltanto di beni di mercato: il luogo della rigenerazione di tutte le forme di energia e pertanto il luogo dell’umanizzazione. È qui che viene massimizzata la qualità del paesaggio complesso. Lo sviluppo del modello rigenerativo, che parte da nuovi processi economici e dal metabolismo circolare, dovrebbe essere esteso all’intera città-regione, modificando così l’uso del suolo e dello spazio. La “piazza”, caratterizzata da un paesaggio ricco e complesso, quale motore di scambio sociale e di scambi simbiotici ed economici, dovrebbe essere moltiplicata all’interno della città: ogni edificio urbano dovrebbe diventare una piccola “piazza”. In questo articolo vengono proposti alcuni elementi che andrebbero inclusi nella nuova Agenda Urbana per realizzare un’urbanizzazione a scala umana.

Parole chiave: economia circolare, simbiosi, sinergie

1. Introduction

We are in the century of cities. This is the time to think urban (UN-Habitat, 2013). Today, more and more, cities and especially large cities are to be considered as the engine of the regional and national development. Their barycentric role in the new theory of economic development is recognized: the globalized economy is heavily centered on the cities. Not only much of the economic wealth is produced here, but also global economy new dynamics of the is decided in cities.

At the same time, cities are geographical areas where the maximum ecological and social entropy is produced. They are black holes where the greatest amount of energy is consumed, with all the negative effects on the environment in terms of air pollution and greenhouse gases.

Moreover, divisions and social fragmentation tend to multiply in cities. The growing number of “informal” neighborhoods, as a concrete indicator of growing social poverty, is determining a new and more and more degraded urban landscape.

In the last *Rio + 20 Conference* a specific paragraph was dedicated to the role of integrated planning for urban regeneration (UN, 2012b).

The UN Habitat World Urban Forum in Medellin – on the topic *Cities for life* – has been organized on the general objective to «further advance of outcomes of Rio+20 UN Conference on Sustainable development» (UN, 2012a), toward a more “human” and sustainable development model for cities: in order to promote the «transition of city’s social and political landscape from violence to peace and hope».

In which way city governance can implement wealth conservation, production and redistribution to reduce growing inequalities? Which tools for measuring results in order to «create a feedback loop for continuous improvements?» (UN-Habitat, 2013).

The notions of identity, belonging, public good, common goods, commons, social capital, social economy, proximity economy are frequently evoked in the general framework of the Meeting. Clearly, the percentage of people living in slums is a good indicator of existing and growing inequalities (Tab. 1).

With a demographic increase rate between 4.5% and 8.5% (Tab. 2) which kind of sustainable urbanization is possible to implement? The general outcome of this un-balanced growth is represented by the increase of social fragmentation (generating reduction of social cohesion, conflicts, etc.) and hampering poverty, together with the loss of identity and sense of belonging. Public spaces, cultural tangible and intangible heritage, natural ecosystems are more and more consumed and destroyed. The social and ecological resilience of urban systems of both the areas of people’s emigration and the establishment of new concentration of population is putting more and more strain.

Rio + 20 recommends developed countries to support Africa’s development (§§ 183-184). The reason is that Africa is today in the midst of a major transition (UN-Habitat, 2013), with new opportunities and new challenges. It is – after Asia – the second most populated world region: the population will pass from 1 billion in 2010 to 2 billion in 2040, to 3 billion in 2070. In which way it is possible to implement a «well planned sustainable and integrated planning» (UN, 2012a, § 134)?

«Holistic approaches to urban development are required [...] for urban regeneration [...] and for conservation of the natural and cultural heritage [...], the revitalization of historic districts and rehabilitation of city centres» (UN, 2012a).

Which specific holistic approaches can be proposed?

Tab. 1 - Percentage of population living in slums in Africa (2009)

Country	Percentage
Benin	69,8%
Central African Republic	95,9%
Chad	89,3%
Ethiopia	76,4%
Madagascar	76,2%
Malawi	68,9%
Mozambique	80,5%
Niger	81,7%
Somalia	73,6%

Source: UN-Habitat (2012)

Tab. 2 - City population growth rate

City	Growth rate 2005-2010	Growth rate 2010-2015
Abuja	8,33	5,01
Lilongwe	5,35	5,01
Limbe	4,99	5,06
Luanda	6,01	4,62
Mbuji-Mayi	4,48	4,22
Onaggadougou	7,25	6,52

Source: UN-Habitat (2012)

The big challenge for making life for inhabitants less in-human, especially in cities under new urbanization processes, requires new researches. There are no formulas or recipes to be applied mechanically. We recognize more and more that we need a new paradigm in urban development. The model of “regenerative city” (Girardet, 2010) is often evoked. It implies the capability to “regenerate relations” between inhabitants, between inhabitants and ecological system, between inhabitants and economic system.

This model of “regenerative city” starts from the regeneration of public spaces considered as spaces of economic specific attractivity, but also as common goods.

The ecosystems health – and thus the health and (physical, psychological, cultural/spiritual) well-being of the population – depends on the quality of vital existing commons.

2. Toward a new Urban Agenda to face the humanistic challenge

Habitat Agenda was the set of rules and suggestions and tools to promote a sustainable local development. But it was proposed when two-thirds of world population was still living in rural areas (UN-Habitat, 2013).

It recognizes the importance of health as the pre-condition for sustainability (§§ 128-143). Also the right to job, to housing, to good environment, to development (emphasized in §§

7, 22, 26) are still extremely topical.

It recognizes the fundamental role of evaluation (§§ 51, 52, 65, 66, 70, 91, 136, 137, 138) to improve governance. And this is certainly still relevant today.

But *Habitat Agenda* should be integrated and reshaped in order to face the challenge of humanization of growing and rapid urbanization.

It does not recognize the important role of resilience of urban system (that is not only linked to vulnerability) (§§ 43, 170) and the key importance of creativity/innovation to implement sustainability (§§ 18, 45, 76). The role of social/solidarity economy (or the civil economy) is totally ignored. Also the key role of private companies is undervalued. The importance of financial tools is only very briefly included. Also the role of the ecological base of urban economy is practically ignored.

The same observation can be proposed regarding the role of culture in urban strategies, that is not adequately stressed.

Habitat Agenda is based on the culture of human rights, but – for example – the right to cultural heritage covers only three paragraphs (152, 153, 154). Culture should be considered more in depth in planning for the human scale of city development, because it determines the successes or the failure of all public policies. The notion of landscape is included only in few paragraphs (30, 43, 152, 153, 154).

The experience of many small cities that have improved their economic conditions investing in the urban landscape of some specific sites, where the value of the landscape itself is particularly high (the squares/places), could be offered to integrate some items of existing *Habitat Agenda*.

This model is in part implemented in some small cities in Europe. It can become a possible perspective that could be offered to some African and Asian cities for their urbanization, avoiding the mistakes of many western cities and to implement the human dimension of sustainable development, through its intelligent interpretation and adaptation. African and Asian cities should creatively identify their own development trajectories, based on their specific identities.

3. How to carry out the model of “regenerative city”

Urban landscape is considered as a key component of city commons. It is here proposed toward an holistic approach for planning and development. The quality of landscape has been interpreted as the engine of a new economic dynamic: indeed, as the most important endogenous resource, which replaces the chimney of the development model based on industrialization (Fusco Girard, 2014).

In other words, the perspective of landscape is here introduced, as the holistic perspective able to integrate many different specialized knowledge, centered on the human being in all his relationships. Landscape is interpreted here as a catalyst of development, insofar it is a consequence of implementing and multiplying the circular virtuous processes, and then synergies and symbiosis.

The circular processes are those that mimic the organization of natural systems, which are able to self-reproduce themselves during the time, as a virtuous spiral. They provide high environmental and economic benefits.

The circularization of processes is here enlarged and transferred from the specific sector of waste management to other sectors and to the comprehensive organization of the city: its economy, its social system, its governance. The ancient city of Shibān (in Yemen) is a well

known example of city circular organization that links the physical asset with agricultural activities with socio-economic ones (Laureano, 1995).

Existing cities are organized on the base of abundant availability of oil. Their metabolism is linear. This organization has shaped not only the landscape but also the behavior itself of inhabitants: their way of life and their culture.

A more compact and effective circular organization is now required, limiting the urban sprawl, through reusing, recycling and regenerating resources (land, physical assets, energy, water, etc.).

To sustain this new comprehensive organization bottom up, we need also a new cultural city base, founded on relational thinking of inhabitants (Fusco Girard, 2013). To the extent these processes are multiplying and also relate to the way of thinking of inhabitants towards a “relational” perspective, and thus to the “cultural regeneration” (i.e., to their way of life) this model becomes instrumental to achieve the paradigm of the “humanization” of urban development.

The thesis of the paper is that the general principles to implement the human dimension of urbanization are circularization of processes, symbiosis and creative synergies. They modify and improve the existing urban landscape. More in general, they allow to face the challenge of the new human paradigm, inspired by the wisdom of nature: from principles of natural ecosystems organization, they become also the general principles of the new city economic system, of the social system and of governance for the human city of 21st century. The urban square/place becomes the space in which to catalyze new circular virtuous processes.

The empirical evidence (based on some good practices discussed in the following paragraph) shows that the above is feasible. Many small cities are offering some interesting practices for their regeneration but also interesting perspectives for the regeneration of the larger cities: some key element to implement this paradigm of humanization of the urbanized world can be found in the experiences of some small cities.

The paper shows that a creative stimulus for the revitalization and for the humanization of “central cities” can arrive from geographical “peripheries”, if suitable conditions (approaches, tools, etc.) are developed. In fact, some resources, that are scarce in larger cities, are retraced here: there is often a vitality, a particular humanity, due to still existing forms of micro-communities and networks of personal face to face relationships. But above all there is a particular culture, a different way of thinking than unsustainable “disposable” current urban culture, that makes easier the challenge of circularization and synergies. Often, these are the networks of interpersonal relationships because everyone is perceived as a “person”, related to other “people”, whom communicates, interacts and acts with. In small cities there is still a connection between people, local institutions and their representatives, made up of personal trust relationships. This is a good pre-condition, because the model of “urban regeneration” requires cooperative/collaborative behaviors between the various components to be put into practice.

Public goods and public spaces, as common goods, are key component for regeneration.

Examining the experiences of small cities under this perspective, positive and limits are identified. A “strategy of places” (“piazzas”, where the values of landscape are very high) is proposed in the last paragraphs of the paper: the regeneration of square/piazza that imitates the circular functioning of nature ecosystems, for regenerating all forms of energies and humanization itself.

The new perspective opened for urban planning and design is discussed: for example, how Living Labs can stimulate new synergies and circular processes, but through new evaluation tools.

Significant indicators need for assessing the outcomes of the new integrated planning, able to capture qualitative and not only quantitative impacts. The search for new indicators is a key problem to implement holistic planning considering qualitative performances and outcomes, and not only quantitative ones. A good example is the indicators of public spaces that is often proposed in percentages of urban land, as if the vitality of places could be assessed only in these quantitative terms.

4. A key local resource: the complex urban landscape

Cities of small size, where a considerable proportion of people lives, are trying to implement innovative approaches for their development, founded on synergistic use of all forms of capital existing at local level.

Here we want to draw attention to the transformation of small town, i.e. towns not exceeding the 50,000 inhabitants threshold (Cittaslow International, 2013; Fusco Girard, 2014). Nearly 66% of the Italian population (ISTAT, 2011) lives in these towns; and nearly 77% of French population (INSEE, 2011); nearly 60.5% of German population (Statistisches Bundesamt, 2008); nearly 83% of Swiss inhabitants (Swiss Federal Statistical Office, 2014). These towns are characterized by specific disadvantages, but also by a potential competitive advantage against the big cities (Kuntzman, 2010).

Small towns reacted to impacts of globalization trying to develop innovative forms of urban economy, directly related to different existing resources. That is, they are trying to exploit forms of local economy strongly territorialized, linked to “places”: to history/culture and nature. For example, they have often promoted processes of food production at “0 km”, in order to ensure the supply by reducing transport of goods, with all the consequent positive environmental impacts. They have tried to take advantage of renewable forms of energy available locally to feed themselves (and not just themselves). They are rationalizing the waste cycle through initial virtuous circularization processes of natural resources, developing micro-intervention projects, micro-business and micro-enterprises, and stimulating local entrepreneurship. In short, they are trying to make resistance to the process of homogenization, standardization, erosion and consequent degradation of urban landscape (often resulting in the reproduction of “vicious” circuits), producing a series of creative initiatives which have their starting point in valorizing specific identity elements and then differences. They have focused their actions on soft variables, starting with the quality of landscape to regenerate employment, not having effective internal workings of the labor market.

If it is assumed the category of landscape, and it is interpreted as the result of a complex dynamic and adaptive system, in which the center are the “relationships” (between different subjects and between communities, between communities and ecosystem; between economic and ecological components, etc.), it is possible to say that many small towns have implemented innovative actions to “regenerate” their local landscape. They have regenerated relationships in the ecological, man-made, cultural, social, economic and human landscape, with the result of improving overall resilience of the landscape itself.

The challenge is to create landscapes that are organized as living processes: landscapes of circular relationships, synergies and dynamic symbiosis that “tell” and in turn promote new

connections, relations of reciprocity and interdependence. In this complex and multi-dimensional perspective, the landscape becomes the first element to reconstruct “attractiveness”, and thus work and development (Fusco Girard, 2014).

The “complex urban landscape” consists of combinations and interaction amongst six landscapes: natural, man-made, man-made/cultural, financial, social, human landscape. The specific character of a city, its particular identity (its attractiveness) derives from the particular intensity and reciprocal combinations of these landscapes (Fusco Girard, 2014): natural landscape, infrastructure man-made landscape, cultural man-made landscape, social landscape, human landscape, financial landscape.

External forces such as climate change, processes of urbanization/migration, ageing of population, economic globalization, etc., are shaping a new urban landscape. They are putting a strain onto with their (often not provided) impacts on the various landscapes, and on the equilibria of urban system.

The institutional capital, which governs access to various forms of capital (through rules, regulations, laws, etc.) and which regulates interdependencies between the different landscapes and conservation/transformation initiatives, “shapes” reactions from within city: practical initiatives for conservation, maintenance, redevelopment, management and re-creation of the overall urban landscape and within each type of landscape.

A city expresses its resilience through these actions. Negative impacts, arising from these external forces, can be so reduced, amortized and metabolized, reproducing prosperity.

Many and different landscape (or various “landscapes”) evaluation processes, and landscape changes, are needed to support the choices of what, where, how, when, by whom, with whom, to do for restoring, conserving, managing the landscape, especially if it is assumed the systemic perspective of complex urban landscape (Fusco Girard, 2013).

Landscape is not only visual/perceptual, or artifact-cultural, but it is a complex landscape. It should be not only preserved, but also “regenerated” through appropriate transformations.

5. The experiences of some small cities

The perspective of landscape offers an integrated, holistic and systemic approach centered on the human dimension, for analyzing urban transformations. It was also noted that actions that are intended to modify, enhance, re-build landscape are useful to improve resilience. The concept of resilience is linked to dynamics of system changes and to identification of critical thresholds beyond which, springing up new processes and circuits of readjustment, there is less capability to preserve original organizational structure.

Many of the innovative activities carried out by small towns relate to the promotion of the urban landscape development. Indeed, often the key to success in many cities has been linked to the preservation and enhancement of the urban landscape as an entry point to reduce processes of degradation and loss of identity/attractiveness.

Starting from the observation that a poor and degraded landscape determines a loss of systemic (touristic-accommodating, economic, social/cultural, etc.) attractiveness and an economic loss, the quality of landscape has been considered as an economic engine for urban regeneration, in turn capable of delivering a number of benefits.

In fact, the visual quality of landscape is an important factor (Smit, 2011), but often not enough to linger people and activities, and to attract others, for the resulting positive externalities (Scott, 2013).

A conservation capacity of existing activities and an attractive ability to new activities

(especially innovative ones) is linked to a quality landscape if there is first of all a social quality landscape, formed by dense networks of trust and personal relationships (Hwang and Horowitz, 2012).

The quality of complex urban landscape contributes to productivity of economic activities especially of the most innovative, and not only of the touristic ones. It also determines the perception of well-being, and in turn it increases productivity of work itself, contributing to local economy and employment.

There is a relationship that can be empirically assessed between “quality” of urban landscape and choice of location of economic activity, in particular of economic more creative activities. It could be built a formal relationship between quality and quantity of landscape and its ability to attract, that shows how much and in which way and to what extent the quality of landscape is a “force” that guides/affects the development of activities, especially the cultural, high tech/professional ones.

In a survey aimed at “creative” entrepreneurs, 40% of respondents said that landscape has influenced their choice of location (Smit, 2011).

Landscape made up of space, streets, architecture, historical/cultural heritage, etc., is the fundamental element of identity/specificity that is ability to make a difference with other areas, through elements of uniqueness/integrity/authenticity.

This landscape can become a catalyst for productive activities, especially creative/innovative ones if a careful governance is carried out, involving all forms of landscape. In this perspective, also preservation/valorization management of the landscape becomes a tool for the reconstruction of collective memory and therefore the social/cultural resilience of a community.

Networks of small towns interested in the promotion of endogenous development are multiplying worldwide: the Transition Town Network, the International Cittaslow Networks, Networks of “Virtuous City” in Italy, etc. (Boschini, 2005; RuR, 2012; Hopkins, 2008). In Italy approximately 39.5 million people – up from about 59.5 million in total – live in these towns with less than 50,000 inhabitants (Tab. 3).

The advantages of small towns are many: a more accessible real estate market both for residence and business functions and tertiary; an immediate accessibility to natural capital/ecosystem; ease communication between different entities, given that they are less numerous, which means more bottom-up participatory opportunities, and in a much easier construction of consensus in the development of a shared strategic long-term vision; a sense of “human scale” of settlement itself that determines the perception of high quality of life and safety (Kunzman, 2010). Many small towns are introducing a number of innovations, based on the identification and valorization of specific competitive advantages that they can offer, building on them targeted development strategies.

Development strategies are designed to balance disadvantages of small towns, mainly due to the reduced supply of employment opportunities; lack of specialized, mainly cultural services; lack of financial resources from the national level (not being able to access to the national/international institutional networks); shortage of skilled labor.

Small towns that, enjoying easy access to central areas/metro, are able to compensate the absence of specialized services and employment opportunities, typical of big cities, have been particularly successful.

The success has characterized especially those strategies that have managed to integrate their efforts to produce natural and built landscape with the quality of the social, human and

man-made landscape (Fusco Girard, 2014). In this way they have regenerated a demand and then a positive trend.

Tab. 3 - The sample of cities belonging to the network of Slow Cities

Slow city	Country	Resident population 2011
Amalfi	Italy	5,162
Bazzano	Italy	6,691
Caiazzo	Italy	5,652
Castel San Pietro Terme	Italy	20,447
Castiglione del Lago	Italy	15,412
Cerreto Sannita	Italy	4,065
Chiavenna	Italy	7,306
Cisternino	Italy	11,714
Città della Pieve	Italy	7,772
Città Sant' Angelo	Italy	14,404
Fontanellato	Italy	6,956
Francavilla al Mare	Italy	23,785
Giffoni Valle Piana	Italy	12,024
Giuliano Teatino	Italy	1,259
Hersbruck	Germany	12,229
Mendrisio	Switzerland	14,213
Montefalco	Italy	5,676
Nordlingen	Germany	19,051
Orvieto	Italy	21,018
Penne	Italy	12,686
Positano	Italy	3,860
Ribera	Italy	19,279
Santarcangelo di Romagna	Italy	20,820
Teglio	Italy	4,656
Tirano	Italy	9,093
Todi	Italy	16,900
Torgiano	Italy	6,509
Trani	Italy	55,826
Valmondois	France	1,228
Wirsberg	Germany	1,907
Total		367,600

Source: Cittaslow International (2013)

Their strategy can be ascribed to the re-generation of a complex landscape to stimulate/regenerate a demand and then the economic profitability for investments. To generate employment, avoiding that local economy will become increasingly dependent on public transfers, they are trying to intervene reducing the conventional energy

consumption and thus pollutant emissions. Innovative activities tend to concentrate in the natural landscape and in particular in the following areas: agricultural/food production; water; energy; local products; recycling of waste; more efficient use of local natural resources.

Often, they have stimulated the promotion of micro-enterprises, as well as networks of micro and small enterprises, mostly small family activities, connected by circuits of new synergies and circularized economies. This system of urban economic organization makes local economy much more linked to the specific territory and promotes, on the other side, the companies which are better hinged in the territory and are themselves more resilient (the “circular companies”). For example, in the food industry, consumption of imported goods from abroad and sold in large supermarkets and out-lets corresponds to a loss of wealth that is transferred from local economy to other areas each year, with an evident consumption of energy and a greenhouse gases production.

The third sector (and in general social landscape) helped to play a role of increasing support to meet the demand for social services, also coming from an ageing population.

In the field of energy efficiency of buildings (built capital) and renewable energy (Aeolian, solar, biomass, geothermal), the network of micro and small enterprises has produced new jobs and new profits.

Recycling/regeneration of waste has been successful when more cities were connected in network, strengthening their relations of complementarity/synergy. The availability of suitable space to locate the processes of composting is easier in small towns. But it must then proceed to complete the chain of activities of recycling/regeneration.

In this way, the conservation of complex landscape becomes integrated with economic development, in the sense that natural, man-made, social landscape contributes to development and this, in its turn, improves landscape itself.

6. Toward the human scale of development: the cities of the Cittaslow network

Looking at a sample of small towns belonging to the international network of Cittaslow, it has been possible to detect a particular concrete implementation of the above Tab. 3. The sample is approximately 1/3 of the Italian slow cities. It was compared with a similar size sample of Germany, Switzerland and France. For each city we proceeded to carry out inspections, through targeted interviews, comparing the degree of match of supply by local institutions with the demand of people, traders, etc. The on-site interviews with mayors, auditors, technicians, traders entrepreneurs and residents have included: identity of the city, its unique creativity, fundamentals “attractors” of demand and results of public actions taken, state of urban and planning tools, trend of real estate market, etc. In other words, it has built up a picture of historic urban landscape (in terms of infrastructural artifact, cultural, commercial, ecological, social, human landscape) and actions for the conservation and improvement of the same.

The cities that have been really successful have been those who have developed a creative process of governance, starting from measurement of specific comparative advantages, based on a particular identity (Tab. 4), which are subsequently integrated in a multidimensional /multisectoral process.

The beauty of the local landscape interpreted as a natural and man-made system, which is a common element in many slow cities (Chiavenna, Teglio, Mendrisio, Castiglione del Lago, Città della Pieve, Sant’Angelo, etc.), has often been the entry point of various local

development policies. This “beauty” has been the subject of careful preservation and enhancement strategies, both directly and indirectly.

Tab. 4 - The specific identity of the cities sample

Slow city	Identity of the cities
Amalfi	Historic Maritime City, UNESCO heritage
Bazzano	City of Multi-ethnic Integration and Music
Caiazzo	City of Wellbeing and Good Food
Castel San Pietro Terme	City of Spa - City of National Observatory of Honey
Castiglione del Lago	City of Beautiful Natural and Built Landscape
Cerreto Sannita	City of Art and Ceramic
Chiavenna	City of “Crotti”
Cisternino	City of Music
Città della Pieve	City of Art
Città Sant'Angelo	City of “Maestri”
Fontanellato	City of Fairs
Francavilla al Mare	City of “Cenacolo cultural”
Giffoni Valle Piana	City of Festival of Kid Cinema
Giuliano Teatino	City of Home Composting
Hersbruck	City of Health
Mendrisio	City of Energy
Montefalco	City of “Sagrantino”
Nordlingen	Industrial City (fast) and Slow City (and of circular walls and of circular walls)
Orvieto	City of the Dome
Penne	City of International Tailoring
Positano	City of Summer Fashion for Women and International Tourism
Ribera	City of Higher Education in Art and Music - City of Oranges
Santarcangelo di Romagna	City of Wine and Art
Teglio	City of Accademy of Pizzoccheri
Tirano	City of the Red Train of Bernina
Todi	City of the Festival
Torgiano	City of Wine
Trani	City of Romani Architecture and Trani Stone
Valmondois	City of Nature
Wirsberg	City of Healthy Air

The beauty of the local landscape interpreted as a natural and man-made system, which is a common element in many slow cities (Chiavenna, Teglio, Mendrisio, Castiglione del Lago, Città della Pieve, Sant'Angelo, etc.), has often been the entry point of various local development policies. This “beauty” has been the subject of careful preservation and enhancement strategies, both directly and indirectly.

Creativity has been interpreted as fundamental “ingredient” to “make and exalt the difference” and thus to promote sustainable development (Baycan and Fusco Girard, 2013): to stimulate the promotion of “synergies” and “circular processes” capable of triggering virtuous spirals (likely self-sustaining over time, as in Giuliano Teatino, Penne, etc.), where synergies can be in: ecological system, social system, cultural system, economic system, urban system, system of governance. This perspective may cover many cities simultaneously. The centre/heart of the concept of synergy is represented by the systemic-relational approach: each element exists in a relationship of interdependence with other elements. Among these elements/components positive, circular or spiral or negative relations/spirals, relations can intervene. Therefore “synergies” express ability to connect, i.e. to relate, and then to integrate different elements/components together: people, institutions, forms of capital, different forces/energies, ideas, production of new creative/innovative solutions and then added value (not just in economic terms).

Synergies can refer to a single city, or to city and countryside, or to network of different cities. In general, when enabled, synergies generate: processes of communication, collaboration, cooperation, co-development, co-production that stimulate circular economy.

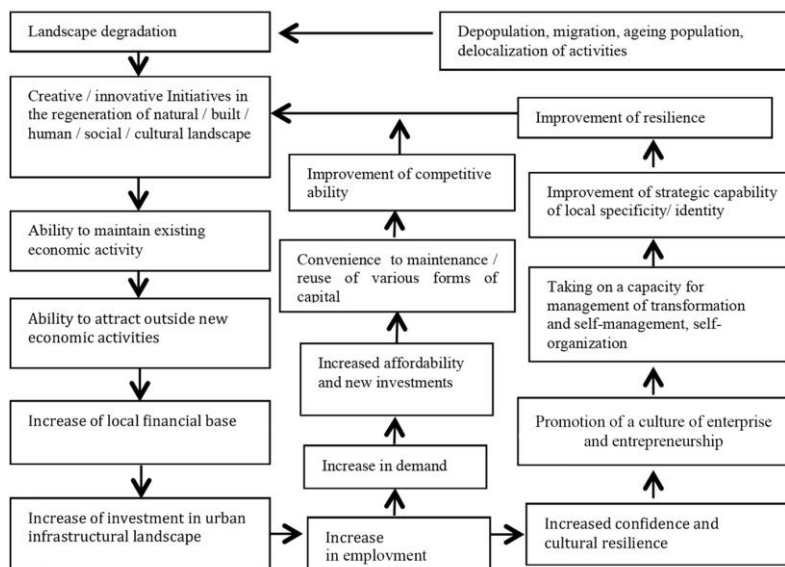
7. Toward the circularization of economic processes

The focus of small cities strategy has been to promote initiatives aimed at increasing local resilience through virtuous circles able to interrupt and redirect existing “vicious” circuits, to cope with the impact of globalized economy and ongoing economic crisis (Fig. 1).

The attention to promote forms of “relational economy”, an economy that is “circularized” because it “closes” the circuits, transforming the “chains” in a virtuous spiral, joins together some of these concrete experiences.

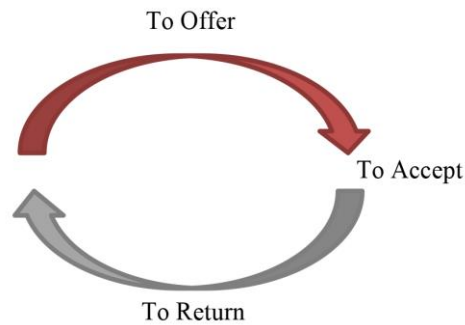
An example of “integrated” economy anchored in the ecology is the one that mimics natural symbiotic processes: for example, it proposes processing of waste or by-products in new resources and wealth, reducing emissions of pollutants and greenhouse; and promotes recycling and regeneration of materials/energy/water (Fujita, 2012). It is also the economy that considers benefits not only for an entrepreneur who invests, but also to other subjects that are involved by external effects.

Fig. 1 - Virtuous circles to reduce the urban decline



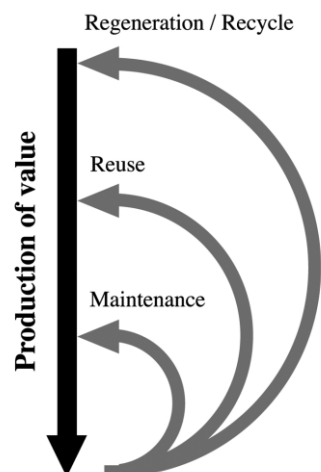
The solidarity/social economics, which transforms investments into profits by re-investing to better meet the social demand, is a form of circular/relational economy as well as the economy of cooperation, of social exchange are forms of market that enhance reciprocity, being based on a virtuous circle: to provide/receive and to donate/return (Fig. 2). They change the traditional “financial/economic landscape” and open up new and richer perspectives of “human economy” (Hart *et al.*, 2010).

Fig. 2 - The circuit of reciprocity



A similar circuit should characterize the investments in welfare activities: a new social complex value should be generated, thus transforming the linear process into a circular one. Maintenance, reuse, rehabilitation, restoration, recycling and regeneration of materials and energy are enhanced in circularized economy.

Fig. 3 - The circuit of creation and re-creation of value



In turn, this circularization has contributed to support maintenance activities of different forms of capital, reuse and regeneration as further circularization in the circuit of value creation (Fig. 3). New processes of value creation are triggered with the symbiosis between industrial activities, between cities and production activities, between cities and countryside; leading to new wealth and new jobs (Fujita, 2012).

The economy of cultural heritage requires the capacity to attract (visitors/tourists), but also an ability to “export” goods and services outside of the areas of use (Fig. 4).

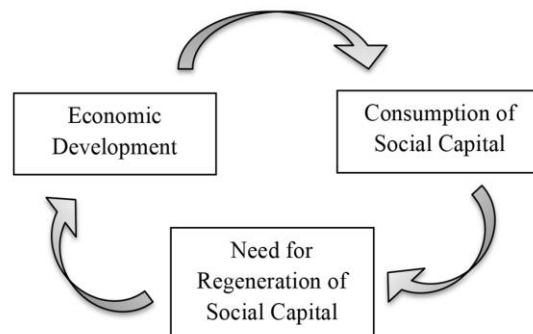
Fig. 4 - Circularization in the tourist economy



These circular processes, that contribute to the promotion of resilience and thus to the sustainability of the “landscape system”, have particular implementation if there is a strong social landscape.

In fact, a frequent entry point is the promotion of local traditions through festivals, religious events, sports, fairs, exhibitions, etc., by which a community rebuilds its cultural memory, reinforcing bonds of co-belonging, reciprocity, and identity. In this way the social capital is rebuilt, i.e. the social landscape, which is an essential element for economic development and to create strategies based on synergy and symbiosis (Fig. 5).

Fig. 5 - The role of social capital in circular production process



8. Different landscapes and public spaces: the conditions for success

A common key element in all practices refers to the valorization of public spaces: squares and “places”. Public spaces, squares, gardens, plazas and open spaces, monumental sites are central elements of the “historic urban landscape”, that small towns have certainly improved. Here the comprehensive value of landscape is maximized.

“Places” represent the spirit of a city. In urban “places” a particular urban economic vitality, social vitality, energy, attractiveness, that are potential generators of synergies, is expressed.

A special “place” is the “square”, which has been in the history the multi-dimensional and multi-functional geographical area where multiple interactions and interdependencies are concentrated. It is the space where urban landscape reaches the highest levels of quality. It expresses concretely the way in which it was interpreted the relationship between private interests and public interests.

The “squares”, and in general, the “places” are contexts in the urban space where it has been possible to enhance synergies. The “square” is indeed a metaphor for the circularization of urban processes (Franklin *et al.*, 2013).

In these “places” economic, social, symbolic, cultural exchange occurs, and then the processes of urban circularization can be multiplied; here not only goods and services for money, but also ideas, experiences, knowledge, confidence, emotions, etc., are exchanged.

The “piazza” is a “place” where the opportunities can become more intense than anywhere: where continually knowledge and also ideas are combined and re-combined, and that can regenerate economic, social, cultural life of a city, in a spiral that tends to self-sustaining over time. The result is evaluable in terms of livability, trust, openness, welfare, community building, the promotion of a culture of sustainability and, more generally, the creation of a stimulating environment.

It is possible to analyze the experiences made by small towns (Knox and Mayer, 2013) through the perspective offered from the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) (Bandarin and van Oers, 2012).

The Historic Urban Landscape adopts a systemic approach that recognizes, for example, that people are in relationship with each other, and in turn they interdepend with physical layout/space, according to certain rules/standards; houses are in relation to workplaces, and also in connection with system of public services and welfare; various productive, urban, residential, ecological functions are interdependent.

The Historic Urban Landscape, especially when it is characterized by a high aesthetic quality, was considered the great “catalyst” in many of these experiences: from Castiglione del Lago, to Teglio, Mendrisio, etc. In this landscape of outstanding beauty, specific activities and creative actions aimed at enhancing the particular identity of the different cities have been included: the Academy of Pizzocchero in Teglio, the Bernina Express in Tirano, the great Golf Course in Castel San Pietro Terme, the international Tailoring industry in Penne, the film Festival in Giffoni Valle Piana, etc.

Their membership of the Cittaslow network led to a particular attention to valuing, creating synergy and complement these initiatives in the course of daily life, often linking them to “green” redevelopment of building heritage, local agri-food production, artistic/cultural production and more generally to production of “places” (starting with squares).

What can small cities, and that is “cities of peripheries” can “teach” to cities of a larger size, or to metropolitan cities?

In the light of the foregoing, it can be concluded that small cities, and in particular, the slow cities seem to be able to propose a new model of development to metropolitan cities for their regeneration: they are able to show that the new paradigm of “humanization” of urban development and the process of urbanization is operationally feasible, starting from the regeneration of complex urban landscape of their places.

If small cities are connected in an efficient network between them, they are able to promote a more balanced regional asset, reducing demographic pressures on big cities, with the dual result of an internal and external quality landscape. They are also able to provide useful knowledge for the regeneration of central cities/metropolitan areas, promoting a new relationship between “center” and “periphery”.

The overall message for “central” cities, which comes from “peripheries”, is represented by a city characterized by a decentralized structure, composed of many “small towns” (i.e. districts), organized around a network of “attracting places”, dynamic in their adaptive/evolutionary components, and as far as possible also capable of self-regeneration, self-regulation, self-management thanks to an efficient “neural system” of mutual and continuous connection (similar to what occurs in living organisms) that connects “centre” to other centers and to “periphery” introducing new energies.

Practically, the above mentioned cities have been able to transform negative spirals in circular virtuous processes, thus promoting forms of self-regeneration. In this respect, they can offer a perspective to promote the model of “regenerative cities”: not only for themselves but also for bigger cities towards the new paradigm of humanization.

To summarize the reasons for their success, we can propose the following concluding remarks:

1. the success of the innovative actions is linked to systemic “bottom-up” and not “top-down” approach;
2. positive results depend on the capability to implement rational synergies: within the city, between city and countryside, between cities and cities. A special synergy refers to the ones between small cities (Città della Pieve, Castiglione del Lago, Orvieto, Montefalco, Torgiano, etc.); between small cities and large cities (Valmondois, Hersbruck, Nordlingen, etc.), also in reference to the rent of holiday homes (in small cities by residents of large cities);
3. success is connected to the capability to circularize some urban processes: from reuse, recycling and regeneration of water/natural resources/energy, to bio-architecture, green industry, etc.;
4. the success depends on activation of a local economy not only based on ecology, but also on social exchange: solidarity economy, the third sector economy, the human economy: the economy of proximity relations. It grows mainly in small business, in renewable energy, in community/welfare services, in reuse/recovery building, in sustainable tourism, in some agricultural productions, in the ethical finance. This solidarity economy is linked to territory;
5. the effectiveness of actions is linked to the production of places, capable of promoting relations of co-belonging (between people and the physical space), shared identity, and sense of community;
6. the success is linked to the promotion of investment in basic urban culture, that is, in the training/education system: in the networks of schools and vocational training. This system changes the way of thinking and makes more resilient and creative every

inhabitant.

It should be noted that policies of conservation/enhancement of landscape must go beyond a certain fragmentation of efforts, to have real success in the medium-long term. For example, separate collection is necessary to start with new projects in which water, plastic, glass, paper, metals recycling, etc., becomes a concrete condition to produce profits.

A more decisive experiment in reconstruction of local economy is needed, which is based on technological innovations (especially in energy field), and then on the circularized economy: on the symbiosis industry-city.

Slow cities have implemented interesting experiences. But it should also be noted that the slow culture, which emphasizes slowness as a condition not only for good life but also as a way to track the actions on the basis of critical reflection, in many experiences was not metabolized by inhabitants. It has not found a firm rooting in the lifestyle and culture of residents, without which there will not be a real taking care of landscape and an effective regeneration. Finally, development policies based on aesthetic quality of landscape, to be successful, must be integrated with social and human landscape, in view of the already mentioned “complex landscape”: in this way, they can stimulate the work market and then regenerate the economy.

The experience of small cities and slow cities, however, has helped the spread of culture of commons (landscape, biodiversity, soil fertility, cultural/artistic heritage, etc.). Around some specific common good such as the landscape was regenerated a community; together with a regeneration of supply and demand of specific jobs. A good social landscape, rich of social loops, is the best ecology for stimulating creativity and innovation (Hwang and Horowitz, 2012). It is more or less widespread acknowledgement that if urban economy does not change in the direction of circularization, there is no possibility of improving conditions of inhabitants. Processes of circular economy and multiple synergies are all based on the culture of creativity, which leads to increased urban resilience, with emphasis on “shorts” circuits between production and consumption: from local food to local energy, local resources etc.

9. Learned lessons: “places” and “squares” as a catalyst for regenerative processes

The square represents the multidimensional space in which all forms of landscape intertwine and are maximized: the context in which it is possible to regenerate new (economic, ecological, social, cultural, symbolic, spiritual) values. In fact, the square becomes the centre of the strategies for the “regenerative city”: it is the multifunctional space where there is a continuous flow of (natural, energy, economic, cultural, social, symbolic) resources that are exchanged through market and not-market processes.

Architectural/artistic/cultural heritage is concentrated here: square itself becomes a “monument” of the city.

Therefore, investment in reuse, recovery, rehabilitation, restoration, regeneration, i.e. in circularization process and for the activation of a new urban metabolism and new symbiosis, are also concentrated here. The concept of symbiosis, which arises from industrial ecology as a collaborative relationship between two or more subjects, in which waste product of a subject becomes productive input to another entity, with mutual benefits/advantages, can be extended to urban processes and in particular to some places such as squares, are not just economic “attractors”, but they have a multifunctional role (Ayres and Ayres, 2002).

The “piazza” was the place not only of economic exchange of goods and/or services, but also of a social exchange and of cultural, symbolic and religious/spiritual exchanges (Kourtit, 2013). Place and “piazza” express space where human need to relate to other people, to come together with others, is satisfied. In the square/piazza the prospect of “relational men”, which enters into a relationship with others, is realized. It is the space of “I” and “We”, where it is possible to break the increasing solitude.

The meaning of small cities and slow cities insistence in the celebration of the rites/local festivals should not only be interpreted as the extension of tourist season, but especially as a tool in the construction of a social landscape, i.e. a social ecology of a “we-ness”: of a “We” linked with an “I”. Landscape becomes the medium for the cultural memory. It has the purpose of keeping cultural memory of a community over time, to avoid that past disappears compared to present (Adorno, 1960). It aims to build resistance to the “absolutism of the instant” and to maintain/restore (through memory) connective structure that creates confidence, bonds of community.

This celebration and actualization of memory, which should mean building resistance to the structural amnesia of present (which standardizes all aspects into one-dimension of the “here and now” of the economy) (Marcuse, 1964) is realized in public spaces (such as squares and places).

Here small cities proceeded to re- build the cultural resilience of the community.

Squares and places are certainly spaces of the economy of experience (Pine and Gilmore, 1999). In squares processes of self-organization, self-management or co-management of certain common goods (theaters, libraries, unused cultural religious heritage or public spaces etc.) has been also stimulated, thus making them sites of regeneration of mutual relationships and responsibility.

Many actors are localized/concentrated here: public institutions, economic institutions, public services of welfare, producers of private services and goods, property owners, lending/financial institutions, cultural/scientific institutions, museums/art organizations, social/community institutions, educational/training/educational institutions, subjects of professional world. Each one of them has its specific objectives to be achieved. New bridges should be created to transform these particular interests into a general one, through mutual/reciprocal relationships.

The concentration of synergies between different actors creates a “field of attractive force” towards outside the square, attracting talents and creative activities: it can regenerate a demand to the extent that new opportunities materialize here. This spatial concentration generating flow of ideas, new combinations of ideas/knowledge, production of innovations, makes easier interactions, cooperation between actors, which could lead to new processes of value creation (Franklin *et al.*, 2013). In fact, there is nothing new in all this. In urban history, square was the space where demand and supply of labor met.

But today, square/piazza can become the engine of new processes of urban metabolism: of circular or spiral processes. The case of raw materials coming from maintenance and rehabilitation of existing heritage for the construction of new roads et/infrastructures is a first example. A second example of symbiosis that can be localized in the square concerns waste management. Square as place of concentration of activities and consumption (restaurants, bars, hotels, offices, etc.), is also a strong producer of waste.

The management of waste, in the perspective indicated by the functioning of natural ecosystems, should refer to circularization, typical of symbiosis.

In square it is possible also that processes of cultural symbiosis occur. Some by-products from scientific activities can become inputs for new productive processes, oriented toward the market for satisfying specific needs.

The piazza can be regenerated through Living Lab approach, as tool for open innovation (Thomke and von Hippel, 2002; Chesbrough, 2003; Porter, 2003; Van der Walt *et al.*, 2009). In this perspective, the piazza can become the space for concretely implementing the Triple Helix model (Etzkowitz, 2008; Kourtit, 2013), for regenerating local economy, through the implementation of circular subsidiarity principle.

Another aspect of the circularization of processes refers to governance, and in particular to the process to improve choices that involve different subjects. These choices relate to innovative initiatives to conserve, manage, and transform “complex urban landscape”. Which actions? Where to implement them? Whom with? Whom for? Which time priority? How to fund them? Which operational tools to support these choices?

10. The evaluation process to implement the circularization principle

The circular principle can be implemented through the evaluation process, assessing the productivity of actions in terms of produced outcomes and thus of re-generation of values, resources, opportunities, etc.

The evaluation serves not only to compose alternatives already “given”, but above all to identify new and more creative design/planning solutions, in a circular/virtuous spiral (Fig. 6). Evaluations of different possible futures, understood as interpretations, anticipation of impacts, comparison are an essential tool not only to promote synergies in order to make organization of city more efficient and less dissipative: circularization processes reduce urban entropy. They are also necessary for the construction of creative public-private-social partnerships, without which, in the context of scarce public resources, to effectively provide for the development of different forms of urban landscape, and in particular the establishment of symbiosis in the actual space of “places”, becomes difficult.

On one side, it is necessary that cities can be engaged in making more rigorous evaluation processes of proposed investments by private actors, considering all quantitative-qualitative impacts in short, medium and long time. An opportunity to develop monetary valuations (i.e., real estate impacts) refers to the “capture” of a percentage of real estate capital gains that are associated with redevelopment. It is essential to allow a financial circularization locally (Fusco Girard, 2014).

Projects for the re-use and re-generation of urban landscape (de-industrialized areas, contaminated sites, historic districts, etc.) should be able to raise resources through specific indirect instruments, capable to improve the local financial base (Fig. 7). They are classified in different ways (betterment capture, capture compensatory, tax increment financing, community infrastructures tax, impact fees, etc.), but they have this common goal. New specific tools are to be experimented to transfer a percentage of private benefits (coming from landscape change projects) to public institutions in a circular process. Such tools should involve the private sector to achieve the public interest in a contractual perspective in synergy with the social/civil sector. From these experimental projects, new rules and financial economic incentives are also deduced.

On the other side, the regeneration of places produces many not monetary impacts in the surrounding areas that should be assessed through a multidimensional approach. Economic Impact Assessment, Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment, Heritage Impact

Assessment, Landscape Impact Assessment, Health Impact Assessment, Social Impact Assessment, are examples of evaluation tools that should be integrated into a comprehensive approach. For example, the visual assessment proposed by Heritage Impacts Assessment (HIA) (ICOMOS, 2011) is not consistent with the multidimensional, systemic and complex landscape approach (Fusco Girard, 2014), if is not enriched also with an economic assessment of the landscape.

Fig. 6 - The circular/virtuous process of evaluation

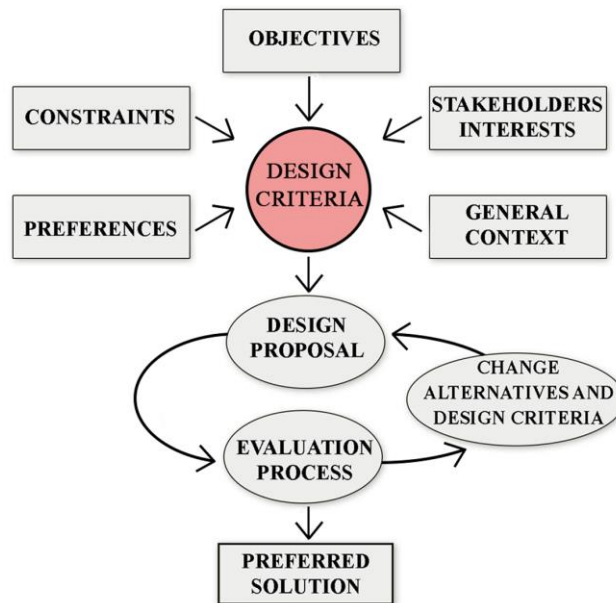
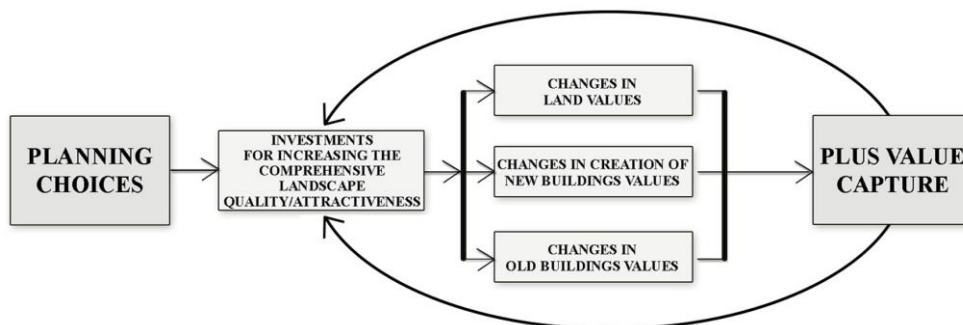


Fig 7 – Financial effects of urban landscape re-generation



The evaluation of synergies and symbiosis that may be proposed in social landscape improvement requires other evaluation approaches, based on participatory processes. The implementation of processes of Living Lab involves non-monetized impacts but rather qualitative ones. Living Lab is a tool for promoting innovations: through reciprocal learning, different actors are put in a new condition for identifying better solutions to react to their socio-economic needs.

Living Labs offer a real prospect for combining technical evaluations, proposed by expert knowledge, with participant evaluations, drawn from common knowledge, in order to carry out a community co-design of transformation of landscape. Living Labs are a tool that can contribute to a new governance, based on circular (bottom-up and top-down) processes.

With Living Labs it is possible to implement the “circular subsidiarity” principle of governance (Zamagni, 2013).

Here, the construction/reconstruction/management of different “landscapes” is traced to reference community, with its own specific values, needs and interests, through a progressive exercise of communication and critical insight.

In the Living Lab workshops we move from data collection to production of information, from this to production of knowledge and in particular to critical knowledge. It also seeks to broaden the horizon, moving from a short-term perspective to pay attention also to long term perspective, which is essential requirement for the development of strategic proposals. Living Labs can become laboratories of self-government and self-management, in which each participant should be transformed into an “artist of citizenship” (Fusco Girard, 2012), able to evaluate and combine/integrate creatively particular interests and general interests: utility, fairness and beauty. Living Lab processes should be able to transform natural/ecological values or artistic/cultural values in social/civil values: of mutual trust, co-existence, legality. These are essential resources of local landscape for the economic development. But above all, Living Labs are an effective way to develop creative actions about desirable urban future, based on social and relational base (Cerreto *et al.*, 2010). They are tools to implement the new metaphor of urban “piazza” (Kourtit, 2013) where ideas and knowledge are produced, where different interests are represented through a dialogue and where possible synergies are experimented to provide market oriented activities.

Through dialogic and evaluative processes activated in Living Labs it is possible to communicate/convince that “cooperation is advantageous” (also economically), and then conditions that are the real secret of all economic dynamics, trust, etc. are produced. In addition, from acquired critical awareness descends the condition of not remaining passive spectators, but of building creative initiatives of common interest, operationalizing the principle of circular subsidiarity concretely. The indicators for discussion, interpretation and evaluation in Living Labs should be grouped with reference to the different examined landscapes.

11. Conclusions: integrated planning for “well planned and developed cities”

Small cities can offer interesting practices about the human scale of urbanization, in achieving benefits for a more balanced regional asset and also for the regeneration of “central” cities, i.e. cities of large dimensions.

The learned lessons are that high quality of landscape enhances city attractiveness and thus development perspectives. This quality depends on the density of circular and synergistic processes, i.e. on their capacity to multiply the flow of benefits.

The regenerative model development, that starts from new circular metabolism and economic processes, should be extended to the whole city-region, thus modifying the land and space use. All circularization processes and synergies can be implemented in the space of the city/territory through integrated planning: planning is the institutional tool to transform the existing into the new city organization based on circularization, symbiosis and synergy principle. Planning reshapes the city landscape, improving the quality of the natural/built landscape, integrating ecological approaches with technological ones, toward the zero carbon /regenerative model.

Urban planning supports the new city comprehensive organization, founded on ecological, economic and social principles of regeneration, considering the city and the countryside together as a unique living system, subject to continuous fluxes of inputs and outputs to be included into a circular framework. It can increase the capacity of the system to absorb negative impacts, enlarging natural capital and biomass, and sustain the circularization processes of the urban economy, leading to the co-evolution of city and nature (McHarg, 1969, Soleri, 1969, 1971, 2006; Register, 2006). It should contribute to the change of urban economy, toward ecological economy sustained by social/civil economy (with a new balance between industrial economy, knowledge economy, ecological economy, social economy).

Certainly, agglomeration economies can be enhanced through planning, reducing costs, time and energy.

Creative urban design/planning improves the city wealth because it produces “places” and not only marketing man-made assets to multiply real estate value and business.

Integrated urban planning, improving the city complex landscape, is able to increase the value of the different assets/capitals, and thus the city attractiveness and competitiveness. The lack of good planning can determine pollution, under-uses of resources, waste, and thus dis-investments. City planning and urban design should enhance, with priority, the public spaces as “places” of synergies, circularization and symbiosis, imitating circular organization of natural systems. City planning, which serves to recover efficiency in the use of resource “land”, now should take charge of new aspects, according to a systemic approach, aimed at connecting flows of resources into virtuous loops. The flow of resources and energy exchanged in a city, and in its different locations, must be known for activating a new urban metabolism, based on circularization process, which entails ability to maintain/enhance different natural and man-made landscape and to activate new production processes: i.e. the regeneration of the complex urban landscape, for the regeneration of local economy. In the examined experiences, the “piazza” becomes the catalyst for communication, relationships, exchange of ideas, etc. (and not only for marketing goods) (Kourtit 2013; Nijkamp and Kourtit, 2013): the places of regeneration of all forms of energies and thus places for the humanization. Here the quality of the complex landscape is maximized. Design quality is more and more recognized in making the difference of places in the standardization of urban landscape and thus in the localization of new business investments. The city should be organized in a network of smart dynamic self sufficient places, characterized by rich complex landscapes, that reflect the complexity of their functioning. Each piazza should become a “social piazza”, of mutual acknowledgment, where social bounds are generated and re-generated. These places (“piazas”) characterized by a rich complex, and also hybrid (because of dualities between private and public space) landscape as engine of social, symbiotic and economic exchanges, should be multiplied in

the city: every urban building should become a little “piazza” (Fusco Girard, 2014), where citizens offer specific services in exchanges for help and sharing, also through digital network.

New approaches and new tools are necessary. New indicators for new evaluation processes are required to operationalize new planning approaches. An Evaluation Office at all levels of government should be proposed. Living Lab processes represent an effective tool of new city planning. They are a platform capable of offering many innovative perspectives in the above-mentioned direction: places where new ideas are produced, compared and evaluated, useful to trigger new market processes; where common knowledge and expert knowledge are integrated and critical thinking is built, to implement smarter solutions. But they can become also places for symbiosis and cooperation: for transforming linear processes into circular ones and thus producing employment, wealth and wellbeing.

A barrier to implement regenerative and synergistic model is the current behavior of inhabitants. They should be convinced to strongly participate in the city change towards the “regenerative city” that needs the collective creativity/intelligence of all people.

The regenerative city requires new behaviors from its inhabitants, based on mutual trust that comes from a circular way of thinking of all city agents (in businesses, public administration, political actors, residents, etc.), opening the perspective to a strategic multidimensional vision, attentive to interdependences and connections, to cooperation and coordination of actions, incorporating as much as more future in every choices.

A new way of thinking means a new way of evaluating, based on relational rationality, that puts in relation all impacts and aspects in a critical perspective (Fusco Girard, 2012, 2013).

These are all elements, principles, approaches and tools that - starting from the key role of culture and nature in the city new organization - should be included in the new Urban Agenda to promote the human scale of urbanization.

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