Chapter 14
Does the Future Belong to Mediterranean Cities?

Lucrezia Lopez

> *The Mediterranean is not merely geography.*
> *Its boundaries are drawn in neither space nor time.*
> *There is in fact no way of drawing them:*
> *they are neither ethnic nor historical, state or national;*
> *they are like a chalk circle that is constantly traced, that the*
> *winds and waves, that obligations and inspirations expand and*
> *reduce. (…)*
> *Europe was conceived on the Mediterranean.*
>
> Predrag Matvejević (1999, pp. 7, 10)

Abstract Post-modern human beings are in search of an alternative to the global lifestyle model, and Mediterranean cities, with different social foundations and economic cultures, could fulfill this requirement. Mediterranean cities and lifestyles exceed the current global model, which have not actually been influenced as they continue to preserve their previous customs. In this sense, the complexity of Mediterranean cities is the essence of post-modernism, which reaches its highest expression in the combination between modern and post-modern tradition. The aim of this paper is to reflect on the features of Mediterranean cities in post-modern terms to rediscover their potential as cities that are able to respond to post-modern social, cultural, and economic demands. After a slight digression relating to the main ideas about post-modernity, I analyze the features of the Mediterranean cities that must and want to rediscover their potential, their history, and their topicality. To do so, I apply the methodology from the urban interpretation that the geographers,

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Ash Amin and Nigel Thrift (2002), created considering Anglo-Saxon cities and which, in reality, can be used to rediscover Mediterranean cities, revealing substantial coincidences with the nature of the latter. In conclusion, I show how post-modernity allows for a revival of Mediterranean cities in that the Mediterranean model could become a solution to the linearity crisis of modern times.

Keywords Mediterranean city · Post-modernism · Informality · Porosity · Mediterraneity

14.1   Introduction

The global cities that dominate the urban scene in the most industrialized countries (Friedmann 1986) present an intensive use of technology, which has reduced urban social relationships to a technological scale (Castells 1999, 2001; Grahman and Marvin 1996; Morley and Robins 1995; Sassen 1994). They are global economy cities citing the *global village* metaphor expressed by the Canadian communication theorist Herbert Marshall McLuhan (1964). A similar global order has negative effects on the social and cultural dimension; individuals limit their face-to-face social relationships and prefer virtual ones, and they have learned to move about spaces that are defined as *non-places* (Augé 1992; Farinelli 2003). These spaces are neither identifying nor relational, but they are lonely spaces, which is a consequence of an economic culture becoming more globalized (Harvey 1989).

Culture is becoming all the more determined by the technology being used, cancelling out any cultural identity, and so, in order to understand the current cultural heterogeneity, it is necessary to recognize and listen to the differences. Cultural identity is comparable to a field of differences. Therefore, cultural understanding is a process that requires an internal perspective: culture is experienced from the inside (Geertz 1973). Both the American anthropologist Clifford Geertz (1973) and the American sociologist Welby Griswold (1994) agree in declaring that the human beings are afraid of chaos and that they inevitably need collective representations and symbols to act. Among these, C. Geertz (1996) believes that religion plays a fundamental role. Even for Ulf Hannerz (1991), modern cultures are complex; if, on the one hand, he identifies some aspects that are capable of dealing with cultural complexity, on the other hand, however, unlike C. Geertz (1973, 1996) and W. Griswold (1994), he makes no reference to symbols or cultural objects, and in order to express the way to produce or convey the meaning, he resorts to the flow metaphor. Lastly, both C. Geertz (1973, 1996) and U. Hannerz (1991) agree in ascribing a dialogical nature to human beings, thanks to which culture is the result of multiple human acts.

Post-modern human beings are trying to escape from the alienation caused by technology and global culture, reclaiming cultural identities and social relationships. They are searching for an alternative to their global lifestyle model, and it is

here that they rediscover the role of the city and Mediterranean lifestyles which exceed the current global model (Copeta and Lopez 2008; Lopez 2015). Post-modern human beings are looking toward a lifestyle that is similar to the one that has always been adopted by Mediterranean cities, not only because of logic and reason but also for pleasure, socialization, and distractions according to a spatial consumption model. As stated by the Greek geographer Lila Leontidou (1993), Mediterranean cities never sleep, because here people stay longer in the bars and on the streets: "it is the complex interweaving of traditional, modern and post-modern conditions, which in fact gives Mediterranean cities their complex palimpsest" (Leontidou 1993, p. 958). For these reasons, the complexity of Mediterranean cities is the essence of post-modernism, which reaches its highest expression by virtue of the combination between modern and post-modern tradition. The aim of this paper is to echo the features of Mediterranean cities in post-modern terms, as stated by L. Leontidou (1993, 1996), to rediscover their potential as cities that are able to respond to post-modern social, cultural, and economic demands. After a slight digression relating to the main ideas about post-modernity, I analyze the features of the Mediterranean cities that must and want to rediscover their potential, their history, and their topicality. To do so, I propose the qualitative methodology from the urban interpretation that the geographers, Ash Amin and Nigel Thrift (2002), created considering Anglo-Saxon cities and which, in reality, can be used to rediscover Mediterranean cities, revealing substantial coincidences with the nature of the latter.

14.2 Some Definitions of Post-modernity

Modern culture is ever-more complex and fragmented. This is also thanks to electronic communication, which teaches the individual to simultaneously operate in both local and global contexts (Griswold 1994). If, on the one hand, the post-modern human beings communicate with more communities without being conditioned by space or time, on the other hand, they are all the more overwhelmed by a strong sense of individualism and need symbols and collective representations as forms of protection. Post-modern culture presents several features such as:

- *Lack of depth*: post-modern culture is not aware of the historicity of the cultures that make it up; there is no effort to achieve a deep understanding of reality, but it focuses on the superficiality of the values. Unlike what occurs in Mediterranean cultures and cities, they are true birthplaces of urban cultural heritage that currently boast a long urban and cultural tradition (Corna Pellegrini 1998; Leontidou 1993).
- *Rejection of meta-narratives*: modernity has created great narratives via a rational and scientific method. It supported the importance of a society based on specialist awareness, but this method has failed. Post-modernity responds cynically and superficially, rejecting any type of narrative, convinced that culture is just a set of images without any reference to an underlying reality (Griswold

1994). Therefore, the time for great narratives on identity, tradition, and culture has long gone; now there are no longer any formulas that are able to harmonize the reality, which is more and more fragmented, built like a puzzle of differing stories narrated in languages that do not understand one another (Hannerz 1991).

• *Fragmentation*: the post-modern culture welcomes all that is fragmented, ephemeral, and sporadic; it's a chaotic culture (Griswold 1994; Jencks 1992). The product of such flows is a catalog of ever-more assorted identities that demand visibility (Geertz 1996) and the resurrection of a spatial differentiation (Lyotard 1984).

Post-modernity recognizes the coexistence of a range of affiliations and ways of life that interact and live together in the same territories (Hannerz 1991). It is, therefore, useless to look for harmonizing global life models or formulas because the reality is always more fragmented, and as the metaphor used by the Croatian writer Predag Matvejević states (1999), wind and waves write and erase. The dynamism and porosity of current society produce a catalog of identities constantly being rewritten and reformulated. According to C. Geertz (1996), post-modernity is rather close to the idea of culture as an organization of diversity which is managed to avoid the post-modern culture becoming an omni-comprehensive formula. Therefore, from a political point of view, post-modernity requires destructured policies such as the *politics of recognition* from the Canadian sociologist Charles Taylor (1994). He distinguishes between recognition in the private domain and recognition in the public domain. In the former, recognition is understood as the formation of identity comparable to an uninterrupted dialogue with another, while recognition in the public domain requires a policy that will guarantee equal dignity for all citizens. Therefore, a policy of recognition is equally a *policy of equality* (because all citizens must be considered in the same way; they must have the same rights and be respected in the same way) and a *policy of difference* (cultural identities must not vanish, but actually be considered). So, consistent with the post-modernism features that escape the cultural homogenization, the *policy of difference* of ethnic values is necessary to defend collective cultural values. The model proposed by C. Taylor (1994) presents these hypothetical risks, in that the claim for collective rights feeds segregation and division within a society, and thus, besides a multicultural society, we must discuss a fragmented society where each individual is too committed to claim spaces for their own ethnic group or religious community to think about dialogue with another. In this regard, the Italian geographer Vincenzo Guarrasi (2011) defends the relevance of social interactions to define identity itself, built through "otherness." It is a difficult task to carry out as interactions are asymmetrical. In this sense, he denounces the lack of contacts in current cities, where, by intensifying urban social relationships, the contact areas which are facilitators of inter-cultural dialogue are reduced. This contact with other cultures seems to threaten conventional images, but until this implemented transition is adopted and admitted and a cosmopolitan perspective is embraced, it will not be possible to create new interpretation systems.

The aforementioned transformations have an impact on space, producing post-modern spatial logics that geography must access to design new interpretative

practices in order to obtain "post-modern sensibility" (Minca 2000) which is not confined to interpreting the signs but cultural flows, understood as meanings that individuals create through adaptation in the general sense, and in the interpretations that individuals provide of such manifestations (Geertz 1996; Paradiso 2019). These flows generate a post-modern townscape that is made explicit via "the combined effects of heritage preservation, urban design, post-modern architecture, gentrification (…) and community planning" (Relph 1987, p. 252).

14.3   Approaching the Mediterranean Cities: Some Peculiarities

The Italian geographer Chiara Brambilla et al. (2019) believe that the Mediterranean space should be understood as a historical and social phenomenon that is able to adopt different operational methods and ways in time and space. In this sense, it is a relational "place" that is independent from the traditional spatial-temporary coordinates of fixedness and continuity in territorial boundaries of states (Bialasiewicz et al. 2009; Cuttitta 2007; Scott et al. 2018). Speaking about the Mediterranean means making reference to its cities (Viganoni 2018), since the Mediterranean is a set of seaways and land that are interconnected, and thus cities which, as the French historian Fernand Braudel (1949) metaphorically stated, hold each other's hand. Mediterranean urbanization is a complex process based on flexible concepts on different levels (Vaiou 2004) that the Italian researcher Luca Salvati (2014, p. 34) sums up as follows:

> 'Southern' interpretations of Mediterranean urbanity criticized reductionist approaches by (i) proposing a reflection on the need for novel assessment frameworks based on the peculiar characteristics of these urban systems, (ii) rejecting deterministic interpretations based on 'convergence' paradigms, (iii) accepting a critical review of the uneven gap between socio-cultural and economic systems and, finally, (iv) opening up the discussion to additional (e.g. territorial, environmental, socio-ecological) components of the development debate.

Identifying and classifying the features of Mediterranean cities is a difficult exercise due to the multiplicity of definitions, concepts, stories, and cultures associated to them (Conti and Segre 1998; Matvejević 1999; Salvati 2014). Despite this, below, some typical elements of Mediterranean cities have been highlighted. According to the Italian geographer Giacomo Corna Pellegrini (1998), Mediterranean cities are connected by several features, but the main one is that "almost all of them were founded hundreds, perhaps thousands of years ago. What is more, most Mediterranean cities have been inhabited ever since they were first founded and their civic institutions have been functioning ever since then" (Corna Pellegrini 1998, p. 62). In order to highlight this social and cultural dimension, the Italian sociologist Franco Cassano (1996) coined the expression "the southern European mindset" (*Pensiero Meridiano* in its original Italian language) through which he defends a way of rethinking about the south from its history. The past and the Mediterranean lifestyle

can become springboards of revival for Mediterranean cities, understood as an alternative to the lifestyles in the western world, and no longer a negative symbol of backwardness and silence (Giaccaria and Minca 2010; Salvati 2011, 2014). In this way, the reassessment of the peripheral position must also be applied to the Mediterranean, so that it takes on a new interpretation (Minca 2004). Becoming Mediterranean metropolitan cities does not mean approving the western model, but rather preserving their own historic and cultural identities (Cassano 1996). At the same time, the lack of development, modernity, and progress has produced a sense of embarrassment; coming from the south was seen as a burden, while in light of the consequences that hectic modernity has delivered, it can be said that the values of identity only exist and are still strong in the south:

> A southern mindset contains those thoughts that begin to be felt wherever the sea starts, when the shore interrupts the earth's fundamental elements (particularly the economy and development), when it is discovered that a border is not a place where the world ends, but it is where the outsider's touch and the relationship with another becomes real and difficult. (proper translation from Cassano 1996, p. 4)

14.3.1 Mediterranean Cities Between Informality and Spontaneity

According to the Greek geographer Lila Leontidou (1993), Mediterranean cities have always been post-modern, because since the concept of post-modernity was created in the 1970s, identifying links with Mediterranean cities is possible. Post-modernity is not new because it has always existed here, given that Mediterranean cities have always shown a series of features that are very close to post-modernity. Therefore, post-modernity in Mediterranean cities is not positioned after modernity, but it is a cultural alternative inherent in the lifestyle, and they are an example of how history is not necessarily linear. In order to explain her theory, L. Leontidou (1993) recaptures the aspects that the sociologist Ihab Hassan (1985) attributes the post-modernity: (1) diversity and spontaneity, instead of rationality and planning; (2) flexible integration, instead of a functional separation; (3) ironic eclecticism and quotations, instead of the avant-garde; and (4) deconstruction, instead of counter-revolutionary arguments and representation. From her point of view, spontaneity, informality, and irony are reflected in a more general cultural diversity that corresponds to a multi-dimensional mixture of tradition, modernity, and post-modernity (Leontidou 1993). L. Leontidou adds a further characteristic: communication; she actually considers that communication must be constantly on the rise in post-modern societies. This doesn't only concern new technologies but also the emergence (or re-emergence) of new cultures, movements, and conflicts, such as gender and race, where more so than community, talking about challenges is more preferable. For this reason, intensifying communication also means considering rising mobility (Paradiso 2019).

Post-modernity is also interpreted in urban construction, in that if, on the one hand, modern cities follow a logic that is too rationale to the extent that they deprive the city of its beauty, post-modern cities prefer criteria of spontaneity, setting up democratic planning for a city built over time. In fact, Mediterranean cities have been the birthplaces of urban development that is oriented toward preserving cultural heritage and the city's beauty through spontaneity and informality (Corna Pellegrini 1998). Given that spontaneity and informality within the Mediterranean context are understood as a lack of discipline in both work ethics and the use of resources, urban development has been strongly fragmented, without urban reforms and provisions, ultimately leading to speculative development (Leontidou 1990, 1993). The processes of speculative development have involved cities and their corresponding coastal strips (Lemmi 1998) as well as the countryside. In fact, another peculiarity of Mediterranean cities is the close bond with their hinterland, as the coast-hinterland communications reveal through ways of communication (Corna Pellegrini 1998; Farinelli 1998). There is, therefore, an actual theory of urban growth in the Mediterranean that is based on an urban expansion model that, in reality, according to the Italian geographer Franco Farinelli (1998) is born out of an unspoken or explicit agreement between state administration, municipal motions, and real estate production.

In Mediterranean cities, the spontaneity and informality pair produces a fragmented development of cities whose result is the coexistence of buildings dating back to different historical times: stratigraphy. The apparent architectural confusion bears witness to the history of civilizations that have left their heritage in urban structures, and so through stratigraphy, it is possible to tell of the urban past and the influences from the different cultures "the passage of time is thus partly written on the built environment, where different periods and different styles are superimposed" (Leontidou 1993, p. 952). Considering the historicity of Mediterranean cities stated above, "the overlapping of many different layers of civilizations makes any reading of their history a complex, often mysterious, but always enthralling experience because at each level we have to use a different code if we are to interpret what we are examining" (Corna Pellegrini 1998, p. 62). This is why the stratigraphy of Mediterranean cities can be horizontal and vertical; in the former, it is due to the juxtaposition of assets from different historical periods, and it can be noticed visually, while in the latter, it is a true overlap of historical periods that can be rebuilt from archeological or cultural awareness to understand what the urban space has under the ground. We only need to think about the numerous excavations which shed light on the remains of hidden civilizations.

With regard to informality, it has a pervasive nature because it has a long tradition and it concerns all the domains of urban life (Farinelli 1998; Leontidou 1993). In the economic field, for example, during post-modernity, people reconsidered the importance of flexibly accumulating resources (particularly the workforce), no longer necessarily linking work to the factory as was the case during Fordist times. Work flexibility allowed us to go back to work forms that were previously considered as pre-industrial, which in Mediterranean cities have never disappeared; consider small stores, seasonal work or piecework, subcontracted labor, and a myriad

Fig. 14.1 Tourist market in Dubrovnik's historic center (August 2014). (Own source)

of other jobs that populations have invented in order to survive (Fig. 14.1). In this regard, L. Leontidou (1990, 1993) recalls that the Italian intellectual Antonio Gramsci (1971) had recognized certainsociocultural peculiarities in European Mediterranean cities united by a tradition for spontaneity and informality. In fact, he considered them the birthplace of cultural heritage that favored the citizen.

Resistance to discipline and order has exonerated Mediterranean cities from the work ethic, a value that was only neglected in other societies during post-Fordism. Even in this case, Mediterranean societies have preceded others by showing stubborn resistance to any form of discipline.

14.3.2 The Mediterranean Post-modern Economy

During Fordism, other types of local economies were developed in southern Europe with a low concentration of people with the aim of penetrating the global market (Farinelli 1998). They split the European economic scene into a *formal economy* and an *informal economy*; the latter was based on production systems with flexible labor hoarding, an aspect that is already linked with the aforementioned informality, which, along with lightness, allows for an informal economy, which resists discipline and creates communities that unite against any external threat, to continue. Informality is useful in recruiting workers, among which are women and the weakest of people (Schingaro 2019). In helping them is the family, which conducts the state's tasks; it is a form of support in the event of poverty, unemployment, illness, education, and true self-sufficiency founded on reciprocal support (Salvati 2014). But the family is also a mechanism of social control and self-control of offspring, which in some cases helps to nourish disagreement in terms of informal practices

(Gottfredson and Hirschi 1990; Hirschi 1969; Schingaro 2019). For L. Leontidou (1993), nowadays, the informal economy in Mediterranean cities can be considered as a reaction to modern corporations, strongly approved and incapable of safeguarding identity; furthermore, thanks to post-modernity, the Mediterranean informality has finally found images, symbols, and autonomous ways to organize itself in the workplace (Schingaro 2019).

The interest shown by the F. Farinelli (1995) about the Mediterranean region mainly concerns its informal economy. Today, in order to speak about the Mediterranean region, we must abandon the idea of uniqueness that the Mediterranean Sea has granted to all the countries looking out over it (F. Aymard 1987). Farinelli's (1995) Mediterranean space is a third space "between land and sea," more so than a binary contrast. This theory reclaims the position of the English geographer Halford J. Mackinder (1904), who resurfaces the idea of a Mediterranean empire. H. J. Mackinder developed a *ternary model* according to which the Mediterranean space was a kind of "crescent" that transformed its position from being apparently marginal to strategic, adopting a role as a mediator between dry land and the sea.

And it is within this function of the Mediterranean's space as a mediator between land and sea, provided with internal substance on account of its traffic intentions (Bonazzi 2019), the port, as an emblem of Mediterranean cities cannot be ignored. It was designed for commerce and exchanges which were the beginnings of Greek civilization (Lefebvre and Regulier 1985). According to P. Matvejević (1999), for example, Mediterranean cities aspire to be free zones, and so in the Mediterranean, "cities with ports" are distinguished from "city ports." In the former, the ports are built out of need, and in the latter, they are built according to the nature of the places (Fig. 14.2). There are ports that are forever just moored or anchored, while others become whole worlds, where everything is gathered and things flow from everywhere – they can be reached by land and also by sea: these are free ports. The majority of coastal Mediterranean cities arise in the direction of the main ways of communication, thus becoming important interchanges; their position favors the circulation of information and strengthens the *relational informal economy.*

F. Farinelli (1998) believes that the Mediterranean has introduced two large economic models: the global system[1] and the anti-global system. If, on the one hand, everything that works according to the rules is known as a global system, on the other hand, there is "the anti-global system." The latter is a marginal place that even in its extra-territorial position serves the whole global system. In the anti-global system, there is an informal and illegal economy, which is inevitably linked to the global economy that it provides resources to (Farinelli 1998, 2003). In this free zone, domestic legislation is partially applied, and any legal activity is permitted, trafficking weapons and drinks, casinos, and tax havens; it is a free zone for trade and business exchanges; it is a place for experiencing new activities and marketing strategies. They are enclaves of an extra-territorial nature that make them the perfect

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[1]According to Immanuel Wallerstein (1978), the global economy must be understood to be an economic system on a worldwide scale, which he believes to have existed for 500 years.

Fig. 14.2 The port of La Valletta (June 2013). (Own source)

targets for foreign entrepreneurs. Furthermore, the way the anti-global system works coincides with the Mediterranean, whose economy has always differed from the world economy; in fact, F. Farinelli (1998) defines it as an economy with cavities, *enclaves*, free zones in which there is a place for an information economy, where flows of information move between what is international and what is specifically local (Farinelli 1998, 2003; Montanari 1998). The Mediterranean city is therefore so separate between areas in the city that they have witnessed a certain development and others that know a condition of marginality, be it spatial, economic, or cultural (Schingaro 2019). The informational, informal economic space is the key between the global system (and the flow regime: information economy, information flow management, abstraction of goods, international management) and the anti-global system (regulation method: computerized economic space where the main value is the accumulation of local resources).

The information that F. Farinelli (1998, 2003) discusses is something abstract and intangible that is easily transportable. The space in which information moves between local and global cannot be defined, and so the state has no possibility to control it, and here it shows the growing powerlessness of states facing a rise in movement. If we think about the Mediterranean space, it has always been characterized by movement where the state always has problems. The *informal* or

Fig. 14.3 Resting at Barcelona's Park Güell (February 2008). (Own source)

underground economy is an example of it since it is founded on contrivances that are not fully legal, which becomes a standard consolidated in time and developed without any hindrance (Lefebvre and Regulier 1985; Schingaro 2019).

Of the several economic sectors, tourism and its flexibility, seasonality, informality, and production methods (including crafts), it is the post-modern economic sector par excellence (Leontidou 1993). At the same time, this success is owed to the images that are partly responsible for international flows of tourism (Miossec 1977; Raffestin 1986), in the case of the Mediterranean basin, fed by myths and metaphors (Minca 1998), like in the film *Mediterraneo* by Gabriele Salvatore in which, according to C. Minca (1998), it is possible to identify an image of the Mediterranean that corresponds to that "of escape and abandonment, made up of clear blue waters, sunny skies, refreshing breezes, and open and generous people-the ideal background for the ephemeral and therefore temporary re-creation of an ancient and, somehow, reassuring world of values" (Minca 1998, p. 259) (Fig. 14.3). Another winning aspect of the Mediterranean image is the historicity of buildings which offer tourism different ways to consume the beauty. There is, therefore, a *Mediterranean tourist style* (Amendola 1993) that takes inspiration from post-modernity since it highlights the local and historical dimension of the region (Jameson 1991) and because:

> The Mediterranean Style, rather than homogenizing the landscapes it inspires, in reality, it favors a certain eclecticism in the construction of tourist space (…). The Style thus draws upon a territorial discourse of local nature, clearly reinterpreted and represented for the enjoyment of the tourist space. (Minca 1998, p. 262)

14.4 Deconstructing Mediterranean Everyday Life: Experimenting a Qualitative Urban Interpretive Framework

The reconsideration of the space concept in social science attributes the function of interpreter between the space and social behavior to geographic discourse and the task of reading and interpreting spatial theories to geographers (Minca 2000). This exercise is carried out by becoming aware of the representation crisis and recognizing that post-modernity requires a "more than representational" approach. With this expression, the English geographer Hayden Lorimer (2005) states the importance of the metaphor and the material expressions and those experienced in the place. It is an approach that is observant of the most strictly subjective dimension, without which it cannot be understood how the experience in a place can change (della Dora 2011, 2012). This presumes the research of "dissociated fragments, shards of reflecting glass which at once illuminate, reflect and distort" (Cosgrove and Domosh 1993, p. 29).

The post-modern paradigm, therefore, requires new interpretative frameworks to study the post-modern reality, which no longer responds to linear logic but requires a destructured approach (Leontidou 1993) produced from "cognitive tools which would help us to, somehow, navigate across the disorienting amalgam of virtual stimuli, ecological anxieties and the instability of meaning which now frame our daily life" (Minca 2000, p. 192). According to C. Minca (2004), geographers must reflect on the narrative themes of space, borders, horizons, resorting to a combination of qualitative and quantitative methodologies. It is therefore necessary to rediscover new societal study methods that will allow for a voice to be given to the micro-narratives of a dynamic, complex, and fragmented society (Lopez 2015). Certainly, qualitative methods can provide a solution to the need to embrace Mediterranean urban societies (Schingaro 2019), and for that purpose, an interpretative framework of modern cities is proposed which was posed by the geographers, Ash Amin and Nigel Thrift (2002), which, while being devised for post-modern cities in northern Europe, can also be used for Mediterranean cities since they have also kept their "footprints from the past" and their "Mediterranean rhythms" and they are talked about in their lives every day (Copeta and Lopez 2008; Lopez 2015). The starting point of this analysis is to recognize that cities have become complex, and so it is no longer possible to analyze them generally. According to A. Amin and N. Thrift (2002), modern cities have often become more like urban conglomerates of areas with different features, thus taking on a highly heterogeneous look which would, to some extent, refer to the previously cited development model on Mediterranean cities (Farinelli 1998; Leontidou 1993).

A. Amin and N. Thrift (2002) believe that the development of the city and social urbanization have not deprived cities of their spatial landscapes, and places in cities (even the more recent ones) have their own footprints. These are created and recreated with the change in communication methods and the ways to socialize, and they

believe that even in today's metropolitan cities, it is possible to identify places understood to be corridors of communication with a potential presence for family spaces in cosmopolitan cities. They prefer to adopt a method that will allow for the city to be reconsidered in light of the growing complexity and mobility, and they conceive the city as a virtual entity, a series of wherewithals with unpredictable and constantly new elements: "cities take shape through a plethora of 'fixed namings'. The challenge of reading the city thus also lies in the study of the devices through which cities are named" (Amin and Thrift 2002, p. 24). Urban problems and solutions are developed simultaneously; every moment of urban life can become an unexpected and unpredictable representation, often bringing to light forgotten or overlooked temporality and spatiality:

> The approach we pursue in this book is one which strives to be close to the phenomenality of practices, without relapsing into a romanticism of the every day, and of action for itself. Necessarily then, we accept that urban practices are in many ways disciplined, but we also believe that these practices constantly exceed that disciplinary envelope. Each urban encounter is a theater of promise in a play of power. (Amin and Thrift 2002, p. 4)

From the moment that every urban encounter is a game of power, they have studied the city by placing focus on practices disciplined by the rules and provided with an individual meaning. The purpose of further focus on the present is to put the romantic sentiment of the past to one side and to listen to the city at present, which is rich in potential but sometimes not understood as such; it is the reason why we must act in according with urbanism that will highlight the city's mobility which must be interpreted from its recurring phenomenological strategies (Amin and Thrift 2002). Furthermore, given that the coherence of the city is researched through the study of its cognitive dimension, in order to identify the recurring practices of daily life, they apply the theory of the daily life city using three metaphors:

1. *The metaphor of transitivity (porosity)*: through which the spatial and temporary opening of the city is expressed; this metaphor refers to the tradition of *flânerie*.
2. *The metaphor of city rhythms*: it is used to analyze the daily rhythms (it is a tool to rediscover neglected temporalities).
3. *The metaphor of urban footprints and namings*: it considers the effects of the footprint on the organization of urban life; it analyzes the traces of movement left from the past and the present and the connections that cross and exceed the city's limits.

Below is the conceptualization of these metaphors and their corresponding relationship and contextualization in Mediterranean cities. To do so, a qualitative methodology is referred to based first of all on the walk, followed by the description, and, lastly, by the interpretation (Lopez 2015). It is important to recognize that the act of walking is a form of interaction and communication with the space surrounding us (Paba 1998) which produces a series of walkscapes, meant as an introspective and experiential landscape resulting from the aesthetic act of walking that is a simultaneous act of reading and writing the surrounding environment (Careri 2006). These intimate and personal territorialities emerge from the walking experience.

14.4.1   The Metaphor of Transitivity (or Porosity)

The German sociologist Georg Simmel (1950) and the German literary critic Walter
Benjamin (1979) inspire A. Amin and N. Thrift (2002) to define the term *transitiv-
ity,* used to describe the city as a place with mixtures and improvisations that origi-
nate from its porosity and the different spatial influences. According to W. Benjamin
(1979), transitivity/porosity allows for the city to constantly reshape itself, to serve
as an example as to how the past and the present are interconnected. Porosity unites
space and time to define the urban dimension, for example, the informal exchanges
that usually take place at ancient monuments. Lots of informal markets actually take
place at monuments or along roads that evoke the past. The city of everyday life
reinterprets the city from its roads; these are complexities that offer maps and stories
to understand how life works inside it. In order to collect stories about the roads, a
pilgrimage is needed, a kind of wander; this is why the city is similar to a flânerie
and the "theorist" is a flâneur who, with his sensitivity and poetic science, decides
to lose himself in the rhythms of daily life (Amin and Thrift 2002). The flâneur
moves about the city to research stories which will help him to understand it; it is
through these stories that spatial qualities and meanings are highlighted. Since the
stories have a subjective point of view, the everyday city stops there; it must also use
other technologies of knowledge that are able to describe the city moving from the
past to the present. This requires sources of information that will record the changes
taking place over time, for example, photographs (e.g., video sequences, shots over
the year), books, and films that show the city's global connections (e.g., stories
about cultures from the diaspora).

Mediterranean cities have a conception of space that is decidedly different to the
norm as here space is experienced on all its possible variants, from open to close,
from the inside out; public and private spaces are often merged (Giovannini and
Colistra 2002). Spaces are therefore *transitive* and *porous* because they are open to
any unpredictable interpretation (Fig. 14.4), and, as A. Amin and N. Thrift (2002)
state, streets make it possible to "read" the complexities of a city.

The image of a transitive and porous city can also be evoked from its border posi-
tion, in that the Mediterranean Sea is a boundary but it is an invisible boundary and
so the city's space and the sea's space seem to be one. Furthermore, spatial transitiv-
ity is an aspect of Mediterranean cities that differentiates it from others regardless
of the urban structure it takes on. Its construction is designed for exchanges between
men, and therefore the true center is the square, a public place par excellence that
revokes the Greek *polis* and the Roman forum. In this sense, squares and roads
become meeting places, and above all, as post-modern man has learned to do, the
Mediterranean man has always been attracted to the old part of his city, where he
can find his memories and identity (Copeta and Lopez 2008) (Fig. 14.5). In these
cities, the spaces and places are experienced at all times.

Fig. 14.4 Clothes hanging in the Dubrovnik's historic center (August 2014). (Own source)

Fig. 14.5 People in Ferrarese Square, Bari (February 2010). (Own source)

14.4.2   Rhythms and Analysis of the Rhythms

According to French philosopher Henri Lefebvre (1992), cities depend on the rela-
tionships between neighbors; by looking at the city, we can see how it is crowded by

a myriad of people that move in different directions, that is to say, the city is made up by different rhythms. Therefore, cities can be understood by accessing their "rhythmanalysis," that is, the analysis of their rhythms (Lefebvre and Regulier 1985). H. Lefebvre and C. Regulier (1986) proposed the role of a "rhythmanalyst" in Mediterranean cities, which they compare to an "enigmatic personage" wandering the streets and using the different tools to access the real urban meaning. The English geographer John Allen considers that:

> By city rhythms, we mean anything from the regular comings and goings of people about the city to the vast range of repetitive activities, sounds and even smells that punctuate life in the city and which give many of those who live and work there a sense of time and location. This sense has nothing to do with any overall orchestration of effort or any mass coordination of routines across a city. Rather it arises out of the teeming mix of city life as people move in and around the city at different times of the day or night, in what appears to be a constant renewal process week in, week out, season after season. (Allen 1999, p. 56)

Also for A. Amin and N. Thrift (2002), urban rhythms are useful coordinates for visitors and locals in order to understand the urban experience and learn about how time has marked the city. They are useful to understand customs in the city and hidden temporalities, such as the domestic space, which is intertwined with public life. For this reason, the analysis of the city's rhythms is linked to the sociology of daily life in the city. In order to understand the rhythms, it is important to also consider the role of technologies that have had an impact on communication methods (the Internet). This approach regarding urban rhythms refers to the "window" metaphor already used by the H. Lefebvre (1992) that considered it as an objective instrument for reading the city since it offers a higher perspective that it "allows the city (…) to be read from a certain height and distance so that the comings and goings can be perceived in combination. The window is thus both a real site to view varied rhythms juxtaposed together, and a tool for speculation, presumably with the help of technology such as maps, drawings, texts, photos and film" (Amin and Thrift 2002, pp. 18–19). Windows are a way of looking out at the world, at the city, to perceive and reflect on the catalysts it offers (Fig. 14.6).

A highly important aspect of the Mediterranean lifestyle that has been reassessed is linked to "time" in the south (Cassano 1996). The rat race of the modern age has been viewed from the outside at a distance with amazement and skepticism; Mediterranean cities have stayed away from the "speed"; while in the rest of the world, people are in a rush, in Mediterranean cities time slows down, it is stretched out, and small customs are still maintained (walking along the road or the promenade), such as the *siesta* or break; this "slow pace" allows us to see and scrutinize the past and to recover values and identity (Copeta and Lopez 2008; Lopez 2015). The different way in which time has marked the south has made it a privileged holiday destination to underline how, here, life goes by slowly. In recent years more attention has always been paid to the Mediterranean area and its identity. In many cases there have been attempts to reproduce a Mediterranean lifestyle; the revival of the *Mediterranean culture* begins with reassessing and valuing Mediterranean nature.

14.4.3   Urban Footprints and Identification

If from a socioeconomic perspective it is difficult to identify the boundaries of a city, A. Amin and N. Thrift (2002) recall that the urban space is defined by urban planning and rules, besides a transport network. According to their theory, the metaphor of the footprint is closely linked to the metaphor of porosity, in that the footprints are the result of a link between the past and the present. The past crosses the present through a spatial porosity and a temporary porosity. Footprints are in fact identified on every layer of urban archeology because every urban layer has a system of interconnections. Footprints are left in places belonging to different periods of history, so if the city is considered from the point of view of the connections between the different footprints, a method of research that represents the city according to a tidy and linear development has to be abandoned. Recognizing the urban footprints helps to better understand the complexity and urban transformations, the city mix, the symbols of the past, and the post-modern urban identification elements. This footprint method evokes the theory of urban stratification created by L. Leontidou (1990). Although, if on the one hand, A. Amin and N. Thrift (2002) aim for their proposal to show a generalized global view, urban complexity does not allow for a unique identification. As can be seen in Figs. 14.6 and 14.7, by walking through the cities, footprints from the past can be traced, and post-modern cities incorporate them into their landscape in a different way. Urban footprints become elements of recognition, identification, and urban marketing.

Fig. 14.6   A window on Haifa (July 2010). (Own source)

Fig. 14.7 The defensive wall in Dubrovnik's historic center (August 2014). (Own source)

Fig. 14.8 Roman columns on the promenade in Bari (February 2010). (Own source)

Figure 14.7 shows the defensive wall that surrounds and goes through Dubrovnik's old town. It is an urban footprint that evokes the Middle Ages and the Mediterranean's structural defenses, whose function was to spot the enemy. Figure 14.8 portrays columns from an old Roman road that owes its name to the Trajan emperor that had it built in 103 A.C.; it was commissioned instead of the Appia Road, and it touched the city of Bari (*Barium*) in its journey from Benevento to Brindisi. The new link was supposed to avoid having to pass through the Daunian Apennines and make a more pleasant journey, as it was a coastal road.

14.5 Conclusions

The growing interest for cultural studies has led us to consider the importance of culture and the need to reflect on new roles for spaces, places, districts, and cultures (Copeta and Lopez 2008). Global cities, united by the intensive use of technology, reduce their social relationships to a technological dimension. In this global village, individuals reduce their face-to-face social relationships preferring virtual ones, and they move in spaces that are defined as *non-places* (Augé 1992; Farinelli 2003). Meanwhile, culture seems to be more defined by the type of technology that is adopted, cancelling out any cultural identity.

Post-modernism bears witness to the state-nation crisis and their borders, which, in the global world, have become less visible and easier to overcome. We are living in a highly dynamic society; flows of people, goods, and information are shifting at all times to all parts of the world (Paradiso 2019). Informality and illegality have always existed in Mediterranean cities, while post-modern human beings (not Mediterranean) have now learned to reject orders and rules, and by being detached from any ties, they now feel freer to move about. In reality, they are trying to escape this alienation by recovering cultural identities that will reclaim their spaces. Post-modern human beings are also reclaiming their "social space," in the sense that they intend to recover the social relationships that they have lost. In other words, post-modern human beings are searching for an "alternative" to their global lifestyle model, and it is here that they rediscover the role of the city and Mediterranean lifestyles which exceed the current global model (Lopez 2015).

Post-modernism in Mediterranean cities is not a cultural form that follows modernism, but rather a cultural alternative to modernism (Leontidou 1993). Given that Mediterranean post-modernity, as stated by L. Leontidou (1993, 1996), has always existed, the "post" suffix can be removed. It means recognizing the authenticity of post-modernism in Mediterranean cities, which have always been hatcheries for a similar culture, which from a peripheral and *other* position has the right to reclaim its central position. Also, according to F. Farinelli (1998), post-modernity will be part of the Mediterranean, in the sense that in the post-modern age, the state dimension will be reduced to a more regional dimension, and overall economic activity will provide a cavity structure again. Both, therefore, consider post-modernity as a revenge of the Mediterranean cities. The interpretation of the everyday city based on A. Amin and N. Thrift's methodology (2002) confirms that the Mediterranean model can be a solution to modernity's linearity crisis. This analysis and interpretation model allows us to rediscover local narratives that disregard the linearity of time and space (Leontidou 1990). Since post-modernity is interested in rebuilding territorial identities, according to V. Guarrasi (2011), Mediterranean cities are privileged places for generating identity. At a time when the Mediterranean alternative is shared, the basin of the Mediterranean abandons the marginal and peripheral position it was bound by.

Mediterraneity should no longer be solely and exclusively defined through the otherness of global cultures, but rather it should recover its historical, cultural, religious, and urban heritage to scream out about its centrality and thus recover whatever it has lost.

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